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Self-Styled Inquisitors: Heresy, Mobility, and Anti-Waldensian Persecutions in Germany, 1390–1404

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in History

by

Eugene Smelyansky

Dissertation Committee:
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2015

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DEDICATION

To my parents for their love and support every step of the way.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Self-Styled Inquisitors: Heresy, Mobility, and Anti-Waldensian Persecutions in Germany, 1390–1404

By

Eugene Smelyansky

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Irvine, 2015

Professor Emeritus James B. Given, Chair

In the last decade of the fourteenth century, German Waldensian communities became targets of a wave of inquisitorial campaigns. A significant part of these campaigns, unmatched by any other waves of anti-heretical persecution during the century, was perpetrated by mobile inquisitors—professional itinerant "heresy-hunters"—who served as catalysts for anti-heretical actions throughout the German lands. Analyzing and reconstructing the "careers" and motivations of these agents of persecution, this dissertation aims to outline a constellation of factors—social, political, cultural, and religious—that enabled itinerant inquisitors to intensify anti-Waldensian persecution in Germany during one decade.

Three itinerant inquisitors—Martin of Amberg, Peter Zwicker, and Heinrich Angermeier—reacted, among other factors, to the internal fissures and problems within Waldensian communities across the German-speaking lands, as well as to the relative absence of stable institutions charged with repression of heterodoxy in Central Europe. Rise of city-centric ideology in German towns, as well as significant Waldensian communities there provided inquisitors with a particularly powerful way of establishing their authority in urban environments fraught with conflict. Motivated in part by the reformist ideology and religious developments in Prague, the Empire's cultural and intellectual center, itinerant "heresy hunters" sought to strengthen Christian faith and Western Christendom as a whole by re-routing illicit spirituality into Catholic venues by promoting persuasion and conversion as methods of combating Waldensianism. Relying on networks of prestige, diplomacy, and influence that united the fragmented Holy Roman Empire, inquisitors also formed their own long-distance networks of persecutors, informers, and recent converts, which allowed them to pursue heresy more effectively and across all of the German territories.

Introduction

In late August of 1393, the residents of Augsburg witnessed an eight-day long spectacle in the heart of their city: each day a solemn procession of men and women walked—two by two, with lit candles in their hands—from the Benedictine Abbey of St Ulrich and Afra to the cathedral of the Virgin Mary. If anyone needed an explanation as to the procession's reason, yellow cross-shaped badges sewn onto the front and back of their clothing marked the members of the procession as repentant heretics.[1] According to the contemporary chronicle accounts, the processions followed a brief inquisitorial trial held at the square in front of the cathedral, where thirty-four individuals abjured their heretical Waldensian beliefs and were condemned to perform penance. In addition to wearing penitential crosses of yellow cloth, the repentant heretics had to walk between the cathedral and the abbey of St. Ulrich and Afra, along Augsburg's principle thoroughfare, past the Perlach tower of the Church of St. Peter, the seat of the city council, and the guildhouses of some of Augsburg's influential guilds.[2] In addition to serving as the civic core of the city, the route between the cathedral and the Benedictine abbey was also imbued with religious meaning. By parading the road between the two holiest places in the city, the repentant heretics were being integrated back into the fabric of urban existence, while simultaneously providing the onlookers with a cautionary tale. By 1393, urban heresy carried a strong connotation of disobedience—an antithesis of good citizenship—and therefore had to be punished in a visible and public manner.[3]

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[1] "Und man macht iedem ketzer ain gelwez krütz an sin gewand hinden und vorn zů ainem urkünd ires posen glouben, den si gehebt hetten." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

[2] Adrian, *Augsbourg à la fin du Moyen Âge*, 31.

[3] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 75-79.

The ritual behavior performed by the repentant Waldensians was also highly instructive. The Waldensians walked in pairs, carrying lit candles. Once their solemn procession reached the cathedral, they repeated the Hail Mary prayer seven times, then received aspersions with holy water from the cathedral priest and proceeded to the cemetery to read the Our Lord and the Hail Mary prayers for the dead. Processions between churches, candles, holy water, Hail Mary, and prayers for the dead were all elements of Catholic religious practice that contradicted the beliefs of medieval Waldensians. By performing these elements repeatedly, the repentant heretics were forced to disobey the teachings of Waldensian ministers and to demonstrate the truthfulness of their earlier abjuration of heresy.[4] The resulting public spectacle, moreover, reminded the citizens and residents of Augsburg of the Waldensians' status. Even after eight days of negating their former beliefs, the former heretics were supposed to wear cross-shaped badges on their clothing for a year, a reminder of their liminal Christian and civic status.[5] Decades after the inquisition, the shame of those associated with heresy had not diminished in the public eye. In 1435, an Augsburg woman suffered abuse from her neighbors because of the rumors that her husband was among the individuals tried for heresy forty-two years prior.[6]

The inquisition in Augsburg was only one of a chain of anti-Waldensian persecutions in German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe between 1390 and 1404. German Waldensians faced persecution before the 1390s, but the persecutions during this decade and a half are set apart by a number of important factors. First, the inquisitions of the 1390s had a particular anti-

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[4] "item quod debent ire per octo dies, de S. Udalrico usque ad Sanctam Mariam, semper duo et duo, et quod debent portare candela ardentem, et in Ecclesia Beatae Mariae Virginis debent orare septem Ave Maria, et Presbyter debet ipsis dare aspersionem, et in cimiterio debent orare tria Pater noster et Ave Maria pro defunctis." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 602. It is unclear how many times a day the penitent had to perform this procession. See also, Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 61-63.

[5] On the use of penitential crosses as punishment for heresy, see Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 84-86.

[6] Stadtarchiv Augsburg, *Missivbücher*, 3, fol. 359r. The incident is described in Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 68.

Waldensian focus, which was unusual given the reluctance of ecclesiastical authorities to persecute members of this heretical movement in the earlier decades. Breaking away from the fourteenth century's tendency to investigate communities of "beghards" and "beguines"—loosely defined terms for men and women living quasi-monastic lives without accepting an approved monastic rule, usually in urban settings—the inquisitors of the 1390s appear to have ignored these groups for most of the decade.[7] Aside from a few instances, German beguines and beghards were pushed to the sidelines of persecution, only to be "remembered" by the inquisitors in the early fifteenth century. Waldensians, on the other hand, found themselves at the center of inquisitorial attention, with large-scale campaigns against them taking place throughout German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe.

The persecutions of the 1390s were also highly unusual in their scope and intensity. Just as the prior decade saw little interest towards German Waldensians, the decade after the 1390s also demonstrates a relative decline of inquisitions, with only a few instances of persecution on the fringes of the German lands. With many towns and regions experiencing anti-Waldensian inquisitions during the decade, the usual tactic of fleeing persecution by migrating to another town or even another region proved likely less effective. Moreover, an inquisition in one place in the German lands could have a domino effect on areas far away, as news of or refugees from one inquisition served as catalysts for other inquisitions. For example, a refugee from Donauwörth in 1394 caused the inquisition against a former Waldensian couple in Regensburg, while the news

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[7] According to a papal bull from the late fourteenth century, for most of that century somewhere in Germany beghards and beguines were sent to the stake almost every year. This likely exaggeration cannot be taken at face value, but nevertheless suggests a high degree of repression of these religious movements. Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 19.

of the inquisition in Bern pushed the magistrates in Fribourg and Strasbourg to investigate their own Waldensians in 1399-1400.[8]

The most important factor that distinguishes the inquisitions of 1390-1400 is the role of a particular group of individuals, the so-called itinerant inquisitors. These mobile persecutors with a talent for aligning themselves with powerful ecclesiastical and secular patrons often initiated inquisition in regions that lacked the will or infrastructure to persecute local Waldensians. The semi-independent status of late medieval inquisitors, men like Peter Zwicker, Heinrich Angermeier, and Martin of Amberg, played a particularly crucial role. Unlike inquisitors in Southern France and Northern Italy in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, these inquisitors were not tied to any particular region or diocese. Unlike their predecessors, the Dominicans Gallus of Neuhaus (d. 1355) and Walter Kerlinger (d. 1373), these 'freelance' heresy-hunters were not affiliated with the mendicant orders, and thus were favored by local clerical elites who had come to distrust or compete with the mendicants during this period.[9] Reacting to the existence of complex networks of heretical communities throughout Germany, these inquisitors followed leads from one community to another as they saw fit, acting as persecutors, consultants, expert witnesses, and authors of anti-heretical treatises. Even if in certain cases the itinerant inquisitors lacked the authority to prosecute their targets, their presence in an area and the reputation that preceded them played a role in inciting a wave of religious intolerance. This demonstrates that itinerant inquisitors, ecclesiastical, and urban authorities operated in a complex web of affiliations and rivalries (religious and political), of resistance and consensus. For these reasons, and for their ability to track heretical contacts across different regions of Germany, a study of itinerant inquisitors provides information about a crucial—

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[8] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66-67; Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 64-66; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 11-12.

[9] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55; Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 134-35; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 169.

and understudied—process that led to a decade-long chain of inquisitions all over the German-speaking lands. This study's emphasis on the persecutors, *as well as* the persecuted, makes an important intervention in the historiography of medieval Waldensianism.

The inquisition in Augsburg was only one of many anti-heretical campaigns at the end of the fourteenth century. The 1390s and early years of the fifteenth century saw an unprecedented intensification of religious persecution targeted primarily at Central and Eastern Europe's most numerous heretical movement, Waldensianism.[10] Having attracted relatively little inquisitorial attention in the previous decades, Waldensian communities from the Baltic to the Swiss Alps and from the Rhine to the Danube were targeted in a series of inquisitions that uprooted their communities, apprehended their members and religious leaders, and disrupted their religious practice. A majority of the inquisitions involved professional itinerant "heresy hunters" who served as catalysts for anti-heretical actions throughout the German lands. Analyzing and reconstructing the careers and motivations of these agents of persecution, my dissertation outlines a constellation of factors—social, political, cultural, and religious—that enabled itinerant inquisitors to intensify anti-Waldensian persecution in Germany. These itinerant inquisitors were reacting in part to the internal fissures and spiritual problems within Waldensian communities across the German-speaking lands, as well as to the relative absence of stable institutions charged with repression of heterodoxy in Central Europe.

A study of individual anti-heretical persecutions presents us with a case of religious intolerance and violence within a local context. Taken as a whole, this decade of inquisitions leaves us with an insight into the interplay between heresy and orthodoxy within the realms of

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[10] Lerner, "Waldensians," 12:508; Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 449. Peter Zwicker, writing in the later fourteenth century, expresses a similar sentiment: Zwicker, *Cum Dormirent Homines*, 278A: "nostris temporibus haeresiarchae, sectae Waldensium haereticorum, plurimam Christi fidelium multitudinem... infecerunt"

later medieval political, social, and religious lives. Taking place against the background of political crises in the Holy Roman Empire and during the height of the Great Schism, the anti-Waldensian inquisitions demonstrate the effect of these large-scale processes on the local level. In particular, Waldensian criticism of the Church hierarchy and reluctance to buy into the rituals that had emerged as mainstays of Catholic religious practice by the later middle ages made them into an easy target for anti-heretical preachers, reformers, and inquisitors alike.

Waldensianism had its origins in twelfth-century Lyon, as a byproduct of lay spirituality and the attempt to lead an apostolic lifestyle. There is little certainty about the origins of this religious movement, as the sources for its early history, the Anonymous of Laon being the most detailed among them, draw on a number of *topoi* that one encounters in medieval hagiographies.[11] The movement's founder was a man named Valdes. He was a wealthy merchant who experienced a moment of personal religious conversion while listening to the life of St. Alexius narrated by a wandering performer. Alexius, a fifth-century saint, who left his wealthy bride for a life of prayer and ascetic existence in Syria, provided Valdes with a model of religious life that called out to him. Inspired by a gospel quote—"If you wish to be perfect, go and sell everything that you possess"—Valdes first engaged in charitable works, using his wealth to provide food and shelter to the poor and the ailing.[12]Crucially for the development of his later movement, after giving his wealth away Valdes did not enter a monastic order, but chose to remain a layperson, living off alms in the streets of Lyon.[13] Another source for Waldensianism's

[11] *Chronicon universal anonymi Laudunensis*, 447-9. For a more detailed analysis of Valdes's conversion and Waldensianism's origin story, see Cameron, *Waldenses*, 11-17; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 70-75; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 7-15. All three scholarly overviews point out the lack of evidence about Valdes' life before his conversion; even the ubiquitous statement that he was a merchant has no firm evidence and there is a hypothesis that Valdes was an administrator for the diocese. See Cameron, *Waldenses*, 12 n.4.

[12] Matthew 19:21.

[13] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 13; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 71.

origins (albeit, written by an inquisitor, Etienne de Bourbon) points out that from the early days of his conversion, Valdes was interested in reading passages from the Scripture in their vernacular translations. Eventually he began to preach the contents of these passages publicly.[14]

If abandonment of wealth and voluntary poverty made Valdes and his early followers a troubling sight for Lyon's clergy, public lay preaching was an actual transgression of the divide between the priests and the laity. Having been forbidden to preach by the archbishop of Lyon, Valdes and his companions appealed to the highest authority in Christendom, Pope Alexander III (r. 1159-1181). According to both the Anonymous of Laon and the account of Walter Map, an English cleric at the papal curia, Valdes attended the Third Lateran Council (1179) and tried to acquire papal permission to preach. Map's description of the "Waldensians" (*Valdesii*) is particularly acerbic; to him, they were naïve and unlearned pretenders, whose assertion that Christianity was somehow better off in the "ancient" (i.e. apostolic) times appeared arrogant and dangerous. The Laon Anonymous relates, on the contrary, that Valdes was well-received by the pope, but that Alexander III left the ultimate decision regarding Waldensian preaching to the archbishop of Lyon.[15]

At this crucial juncture in Waldensianism's early history, Valdes and his followers were likely perfectly orthodox, aside from their desire to engage in preaching. Possibly in order to defend themselves from accusations of heresy, the Waldensians composed a "profession of faith and proposal of a way of life," which outlined their support for all major doctrines of Catholicism, including its creeds, the Trinity, and both Testaments. The "Profession of Faith" ends with a call for a new way of life, which included strict poverty and a literal reading of the guidelines for apostolic life from the Gospels; preaching was not explicitly allowed, nor was it

[14] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 15.
[15] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 16-17.

forbidden. This ambiguity led to a major rift between the Waldensians and the Church. At some point after 1182, the archbishop of Lyon expelled Valdes' followers from the city. Finally, on November 4, 1184, Waldensianism was officially condemned alongside Catharism in the papal bull *Ad abolendam*. The new heresy was created.[16]

Heretical Waldensianism represented an outpouring of lay piety at a time when the Church was already facing increasing pressure to reform itself. Valdes' insistence on poverty and apostolicism was likely perceived as an affront by the affluent clergy in Lyon and beyond. His vernacular preaching threatened to unseat the primacy of the Church's religious guidance. Finally, Valdes' disinterest in taking monastic vows was equally problematic for the Church, which did not have a structure that could accommodate his vision of lay spirituality.[17] At the same time, as fledgling Waldensian communities began to be persecuted, the new religious movement started to shift further away from orthodoxy. Rejected by the Church, later Waldensianism acquired distinct Donatist as well as Biblicist features. The clergy, from the pope to the parish priest, were powerless, their sacraments ineffective.[18] Reacting to persecution, Waldensianism found itself divided into two groups: the ministers, who practiced the apostolic lifestyle of poverty, itinerancy and preaching; and their more numerous followers, whose participation in religion was limited.[19] Gradually, as far as we can observe, Waldensianism began to limit preaching only to particular members of their communities. It has been argued that in this process of "churchification" (*Verkirchlichung*) only male ministers emerged as preachers, while women were relegated to secondary roles. However, one must be careful not to take these

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[16] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 17-21; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 14-16.

[17] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 15-16; for a discussion of the sharpened distinction between priesthood and laity after the Gregorian Reform, see Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 7-9.

[18] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 72-73

[19] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 80-81.

descriptions for granted, as most of them were written by hostile authors, who may have projected their own understanding of religious organization onto the Waldensians.[20]

Having originated in Lyon, by the fourteenth century (and possibly already in the early thirteenth), Waldensianism had spread eastward into the German-speaking lands. The first Waldensian communities in the Holy Roman Empire appeared along the Rhine, in the borderlands between the French and German-speaking lands; we hear about a heretical community (of uncertain kind) in Toul and Metz at the end of the twelfth century.[21] Gradually, the Waldensian networks spread eastward, with religious ideas being carried into Eastern Europe by German colonists who settled in Bohemia, Prussia, Silesia and Hungary.[22] Living in relatively small and well-integrated urban and rural communities spread throughout German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe, late medieval Waldensians adhered to the 'cutting away of what were seen to be the excrescences of orthodox belief in purgatory, in images, in pilgrimages'.[23] Cults of the saints and the Virgin Mary were attacked as lacking Biblical origins; Waldensian preachers insisted on praying to God alone, and eschewed all prayers except for the *Pater Noster*.[24] Other Biblicist practices and beliefs, such as a reluctance to swear oaths and an avoidance of violence, which anti-heretical writers have long associated with Waldensianism, may have been practiced by some, but not all believers.[25]

While the eastward migration of the thirteenth century allowed new Waldensian communities to appear on the eastern fringes of the German-speaking world, pastoral approaches

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[20] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 125-33; Kaelber, *Schools of Asceticism*, 133-35.

[21] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 77; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 97.

[22] Kaelber, *Schools of Asceticism*, 151. Persecutions of the later fourteenth century support this hypothesis: the Waldensians who appear in the inquisitorial records have predominantly Germanic names.

[23] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 168.

[24] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 281; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 105.

[25] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 139; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 93-95.

remained relatively unchanged. Now spread out across the Empire and beyond, Waldensian communities still relied on visiting itinerant ministers, whose ministering circuits had to stretch accordingly. By the late fourteenth century, the same Waldensian ministers visited communities in Strasbourg and in Brandenburg, on the opposite edges of the Empire.[26] Frequent long-distance travel made pastoral visits rarer and the ministers correspondingly less accessible to their followers. One Waldensian woman in 1393 claimed that she had not been able to hear a minister preach in 40 years.[27] Long-distance journeys also exposed traveling ministers to the dangers of pre-modern travel, exacerbated by secrecy and the risk of capture. This may also explain why only a relatively small number of individuals undertook the apostolic mission and why some ministers reverted back to Catholicism at the end of the fourteenth century. These conversions could have an impact. Since only a small circle of preachers attended to the Waldensian communities across the German-speaking lands, each minister possessed knowledge of a large number of heretical communities. This information, if extracted (not necessarily by force), could provide persecutors with a list of "leads" to pursue.[28] This risk was evidently understood by the Waldensian followers themselves, who used violence to "silence" renegade ministers as a method of self-defense.[29]

While Waldensian reliance on a close-knit communal structure linked by itinerant preachers was "both a safeguard and a liability," this structural weakness was never fully exploited before the 1390s.[30] Indeed, until the end of the fourteenth century, Waldensian communities in German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe attracted little attention from

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[26] Biller, "Heretics and Long Journeys," 99-100.

[27] Kurze, *Quellen*, 200.

[28] Utz Tremp, "Multum abhorrerem," 166; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 140-41.

[29] The Waldensian community in Strasbourg *c.* 1374 purportedly hired assassins to kill a minister who converted to Catholicism. Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 43-44.

[30] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 57.

inquisitors. Unlike the Waldensian communities in Southern France and Northern Italy, where Waldensian ministers and followers alike were frequently persecuted alongside Cathar "good men and good women" and their supporters, German Waldensians benefited from a relative reluctance of local prelates to eradicate heresy.[31] Two-year inquisitorial career of Conrad of Marburg (d. 1233), whose anti-heretical rampage and indiscriminate accusations led to his assassination, provides the notorious exception. Overall, aside from Conrad's activity and a brief period of anti-heretical persecution in the 1260s, there is little evidence of any organized attempts to combat heresy, including Waldensianism, until the early fourteenth century.[32]

This lull in inquisitorial activity, however, should not be mistaken for indifference towards heterodoxy in Germany. On the contrary, Waldensianism was condemned repeatedly in the sermons of Berthold of Regensburg (c. 1220-1272) and in the anonymous text against heretics, Jews, and the Antichrist, the so-called "Anonymous of Passau" (c. 1266). This text addresses primarily Waldensians living in Austria and presents a picture of a heretical movement thriving in small towns and villages there.[33] Investigated repeatedly in 1311, 1313-15, and 1360-70, Austrian Waldensians nevertheless remained strong enough in the face of persecution to show resistance during the inquisition of the late 1390s.[34] The mountainous terrain they inhabited may have helped these communities survive into the fourteenth century and beyond.

Bohemian and Moravian Waldensians also became a focus of inquisitions in the mid-fourteenth century. The Dominican friar Gallus of Neuhaus appears to have been the main agent of a persecution that may touched on over two thousand Waldensians (with as many as 200 of

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[31] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 54-55; Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 14.
[32] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 14-16; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 98-99.
[33] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 165-66.
[34] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 40; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 168-69; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 53-54.

them burned at the stake). Only a fragment of the evidence for Gallus' inquisitorial activity in the Czech lands survives (containing names of 180 heretics, 15 of whom were executed), and the approximate total numbers are extrapolated from these records.[35] This was the most aggressive attempt to eradicate Waldensianism in German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe before the 1390s. Gallus was assassinated in 1355, thus ending his one-man crusade against heresy.[36]

Chapter One examines mobility as a factor behind the inquisitions of the 1390s, while also providing a much needed brief overview of the current state of knowledge about the lives and careers of three itinerant inquisitors: Peter Zwicker, Martin of Amberg and Heinrich Angermeier of Stein. Although each of these men will be discussed in a greater detail in subsequent chapters, this chapter will provide narratives of their activity, as well as discuss the sources that inform these narratives.

Much of what we can learn about the place of late medieval Waldensians in society is incomplete without a thorough study of the inquisitors: their careers, methods, and motivations. To this author's knowledge, no such study exists, even if certain topics related to the involvement of itinerant inquisitors have been addressed in earlier scholarship. For example, in his doctoral thesis and in later publications, Peter Biller has proven beyond the shadow of a doubt that the polemical treatise known as *Cum dormirent homines* (c. 1395) was composed by Peter Zwicker, an inquisitor active during the 1390s, whose investigation of German Waldensians informed it. Biller's attribution allowed scholars to use details of Zwicker's biography to produce a new interpretation of *Cum dormirent homines*, one that distinguishes between layers of anti-heretical *topoi* within the text. Other itinerant inquisitors have not fared as well in the historiography. Richard Kieckhefer's magisterial *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* remains the only

[35] Patschovsky, *Quellen zur böhmischen Inquisition*, 20-22.
[36] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 169-70.

discussion of all three itinerant inquisitors in English. However, the work's focus on over two centuries of anti-heretical persecutions in all of the German-speaking Central Europe only allows a brief discussion of these individuals.[37]

Moreover, the chapter will provide an overview of the historical context of the period 1378 through the 1390s as a way to situate the decade of anti-heretical persecution vis-à-vis the ecclesiastical and political crises that befell the Holy Roman Empire in the later fourteenth century. Taking place during the height of the Schism between rival popes in Rome and Avignon, and in the midst of the political disarray in Germany during the reign of King Wenceslas, the chain of anti-Waldensian persecution demonstrates the way these large-scale processes manifested themselves at the local level.

Chapter Two focuses on the structure of Waldensian communities across the German-speaking lands. While rural Waldensians have been studied in detail, following the publication of inquisitorial sources from the trials in and around Stettin (1392-1394), urban Waldensians remain relatively understudied. Syntheses of Waldensian history published at the turn of the twentieth century attempted to provide an update on the state of knowledge about German Waldensianism; nevertheless, they demonstrated significant lacunae in the scholarship. First, these monographs almost completely omit any discussion of Waldensianism in urban settings (in part because they were published before the aforementioned studies by Utz Tremp and Modestin), relying instead primarily on the sources from Brandenburg and Pomerania published by Kurze.[38]

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[37] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 53-73, but especially on 55-57. Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg are mentioned in a brief section in Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 145-48.

[38] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*; Cameron, *Waldenses*; Kaelber, *Schools of Asceticism.*

The omission of urban heretical communities leaves these studies with a somewhat distorted picture of German Waldensianism as a primarily rural phenomenon. Indeed, the historical sociologist Lutz Kaelber goes so far as to argue that German Waldensians by the fourteenth century consisted mainly (with the exception of Bohemia) of "rustics and simple craftsmen and -women in rural areas."[39] Malcolm Lambert further posits that although urban Waldensians existed and even gave their "financial weight and muscle… to the movement," heretical communities in the cities were "never centres" of their movement. Eventually, according to Lambert, urban Waldensians became victims of their own success, as their wealth and political engagement made them easier to detect.[40] While this may be so, the mechanisms behind the existence and eventual (also hardly pre-destined) demise of the urban Waldensians still need further investigation. The fact that Waldensians communities in places like Strasbourg, Fribourg, Nuremberg, and Vienna remained on the preaching circuits of the fifteenth-century ministers demonstrate that the lifespan and importance of these groups were far from over.[41]

Building on the scholarship produced by historians of Waldensians living in the cities on the Rhine and in the Swiss lands, the chapter addresses the interpretation that views the second half of the fourteenth century as a "crisis" of Waldensianism. While heretical communities during this period faced significant pressures both from the outside and from within—and a number of communities disappeared during the 1390s—there were also important continuities that outlived the decade of persecution. Moreover, late medieval Waldensian communities underwent crucial transformations as the long-distance networks of wandering ministers all but disappeared after over twenty of them converted to Catholicism circa 1390. Instead, evidence

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[39] Kaelber, *Schools of Asceticism,* 151.
[40] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 181.
[41] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Bewegung und Weg," 80-82.

from Strasbourg and Fribourg clearly demonstrates the increasing role of individual communities in ensuring their self-preservation and in establishing ties with other Waldensian communities in the region. Crucially, the crisis of the institution of itinerant ministers may have spelled the opportunity for religiously active women to become important (if not the only) repositories of Waldensian religious lore in their communities.

Chapter Three approaches urban Waldensian communities from another side by examining the role heretics—real or imagined—played in urban politics. The chapter compares two inquisitions organized by Heinrich Angermeier in Augsburg (1393) and Rothenburg ob der Tauber (1394-95), trying to explain the inquisitor's failure to convict a heretic in Rothenburg despite his earlier successes in Augsburg. The chapter argues that both inquisitions must be interpreted not merely as acts of religious persecution, but as results of long-standing conflicts between local bishops and urban governments. While in Augsburg the anti-heretical inquisition was used as a setting for the contest of authorities over urban space between the bishop and the city council, in Rothenburg Waldensianism became a pretext for political persecution in a conflict between members of the urban elite. In both cases, the involvement of an outside heresy-hunter, an itinerant inquisitor, played an instrumental role in catalyzing anti-heretical sentiments

To provide context for the persecutory "zeal" many scholars attribute to itinerant inquisitors, Chapter Four reconstructs the life and career of one of them, Peter Zwicker. Zwicker's persecutions of Waldensians focused on producing converts to Catholicism by using persuasion and exploiting contradictions within Waldensianism itself. The chapter reconstructs Zwicker's life before the 1390's and draws on his writings, his anti-Waldensian treatise and a virtually unexamined schematic exposition of the Lord's Prayer, in order to demonstrate that Zwicker's motivation to persecute Waldensians stemmed from the reform movements that

influenced him while he was studying in Prague. Arguing that the proliferation of heretics was caused by the lack of moral character among the clergy, Zwicker viewed the Waldensians whom he was able to convert back to Catholicism as new "good" Christians in whose name one could enact the reform of the Church.

Chapter Five complements the previous chapter by addressing the mobility of itinerant inquisitors and the contingencies involved in their successful persecution of German Waldensians. Scholars writing about the persecutions of the 1390s (with some exceptions) tend to focus on individual anti-heretical campaigns, instead of tracing connections between them. Although most studies speak of the "wave" or "chain" of persecutions, there is little discussion of the mobility—of both the persecutors and their targets—that underpinned and enabled the series of inquisitions across the German-speaking lands. While local focus has been instrumental in establishing the social and political contexts for individual inquisitions, it is nevertheless crucial to observe external, often long-distance influences that shaped the outcomes of the local campaigns. The work on Strasbourg done by Georg Modestin, for example, demonstrates the importance of communication between Strasbourg and Bern in inciting an inquisition in the former. Similarly, Modestin has also demonstrated the influence of the inquisition in Augsburg (1393) on the course of the campaign in Strasbourg seven years later.[42]

The chapter approaches the decade of anti-heretical activity using network theory, a concept previously used by historians to describe the spread of religions (e.g., early Christianity) and—more recently—proposed as an analytical approach for examining inquisitorial methods. We can imagine two long-distance networks in existence in German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe during the 1390s. One linked a relatively small number of highly mobile

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[42] Modestin, *Quellen*, 197-99; Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozess von 1399," 65-67; Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 49.

Waldensian ministers to a larger number of heretical communities dispersed throughout the land. Another, formed in response to the first, consisted of three itinerant inquisitors, who were also linked to a much larger number of local communities, patrons, associates, and informers. The overlap between the two networks, caused by the betrayal of Waldensian communities by renegade ministers, enabled the inquisitors to unleash a chain of unprecedented persecutions during the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century. As the decade progressed, the inquisitorial network began to lose important patrons, including the archbishop of Prague, leading the inquisitors like Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg to continue their pursuit of heresy further away from the German heartland. On the other hand, the Waldensian network, albeit severely disrupted by the crisis of its wandering ministers, survived at the level of local communities and was able to recover some of its losses.

Chapter One

Contours of Religious Persecution, 1390-1404

To date, the anti-Waldensian persecutions in the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century have not received the systematic study they deserve. Unprecedented in their intensity in Central and Eastern Europe, the inquisitions took place throughout the German-speaking lands: along the Rhine (Mainz) and in the Swiss lands (Bern, Fribourg), in Swabia and Franconia to the east (Würzburg, Augsburg, Donauwörth, Dinkelsbühl, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Regensburg, Bamberg, and Nuremberg), further away in Austria (Steyr, Linz, and their environs), and further yet in Thuringia (Erfurt), Brandenburg and Pomerania (in Stettin and surrounding settlements), and Hungary.[1] While individual inquisitions may have taken place in disparate regions of German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe, each inquisition affected those that followed and was, in turn, affected by the preceding campaigns.

Since taking into consideration the succession of anti-Waldensian trials is crucial for understanding their causes and effects, this chapter will provide an overview of the inquisitions that occurred during the 1390s and provide a politico-religious context for this decade. The inquisitions of the 1390s have not received a recent scholarly overview in the English-speaking academy since Richard Kieckhefer's important, if brief, *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* (1979). Even such detailed and important surveys as Euan Cameron's *Waldenses: Rejection of Holy Church in Medieval Europe* (2000), Gabriel Audisio's *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c.1170-c.1570* (1989), and Peter Biller's collection of essays, *The Waldenses, 1170-1530: Between a Religious Order and a Church* (2001), do not provide a

1 For an overview of the anti-Waldensian persecutions, see Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 53-73; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 1-12.

coherent overview of the persecutions and do not include the most recent scholarship in the field published in English and German.[2]

Taking place during one decade and targeted narrowly at a particular kind of heresy, the anti-Waldensian inquisitions of the 1390s were shaped not only by their local context, but also by the mobility of both the victims and the persecutors. In addition to discussing the narrative of persecutions and their context, this chapter provides an overview of lives and careers of the principal agents of the anti-Waldensian inquisitions, itinerant inquisitors. Unhindered by regional affiliations, mobile, and skilled at acquiring patrons, itinerant "heresy-hunters" served as catalysts for anti-heretical campaigns even in areas that lacked the incentives to pursue heresy otherwise. While all three inquisitors—Peter Zwicker, Martin of Amberg, and Heinrich Angermeier—are going to be discussed in a greater depth later, here I will briefly address the current state of knowledge about each of them.

Political and Ecclesiastical Contexts, 1378-1400

In order to understand the mechanisms and contingencies behind the decade of unprecedented anti-Waldensian persecutions, we have to consider two crucial historical processes that informed this decade. These influenced each other, creating an environment in which persecution of heresy was instrumentalized and exploited by a variety of agents. The first process involved the gradual dismantling of the networks of administrative and political authority that Emperor Charles IV (d. 1378) had developed by means of forging a union between regional nobility, powerful bishops, and key cities in his realm. His son, and successor, Wenceslas IV (r. 1376-1400), who did not have his father's talent for administration and diplomacy, was unable to continue his success. As a result, most of his reign was marked by

[2] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*; Deane, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution."

urban strife, conflicts between cities and the nobility, and the unprecedented wave of inquisitorial activity of the 1390s.[3]

Another defining historical process of this period was the Great Schism between Rome and Avignon. The Schism began before the death of Charles IV in 1378. Following the return of the papal court to Rome after its seventy-year stay in Avignon and the death of Pope Gregory XI (d. 1377), the cardinals elected Urban VI as the next pontiff. Some of the cardinals later contested the election, claiming that they were forced to elect Urban by the raging Roman mob. The dissenting cardinals left the papal court and met in Fondi, where 13 of them elected Clement VII as the "true" pope, splitting the ecclesiastical loyalties between two rival popes.[4] Evidently, the emperor recognized the importance of the Schism and attempted to remedy it by embarking on a personal visit to Paris in 1378. Unable to reason with the king of France, Charles V (1338-1380), and likely exhausted by his journey, the emperor died in November of that year. By the end of 1378, the king of France proclaimed his allegiance to the Avignonese Pope Clement VII, thereby turning the Schism into a feature of the ecclesiastical landscape for the next forty years (1378-1418).[5]

The split between rival popes, which put France and the Empire into opposing ecclesiastical camps, not only complicated politics, but also created a distinct sense of uncertainty about correct allegiance. This uncertainty was particularly pronounced in the western part of the Holy Roman Empire, where the bishops and archbishops were particularly prone to

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[3] Recent scholarship has attempted to reconsider Wenceslaus's tumultuous reign by tracing its crucial problems—namely, the political fallout of privileges and concessions given to the Church and regional nobility—to the later years of Charles' rule. Still, even a more balanced portrayal of Wenceslaus' rule depicts him as lacking the penchant for administration and diplomacy that defined his father's ability to leave a lasting legacy on the political structure of the Holy Roman Empire. Hlaváček, "The Luxemburgs," 556-57; Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity*, 84.

[4] Rollo-Koster, "Civil Violence and the Initiation of the Schism," 9-13.

[5] Kaminsky, "The Great Schism," 278.

shift their loyalties between the rival popes. For example, the Archbishop of Mainz, Adolf of Nassau (r. 1379-90), earned his position at Mainz (one of the most important archbishoprics in the Empire) by first promising allegiance to Avignon and then shifting it to Rome only two years later (1381). Clearly not concerned with the possible theological implications of vacillating between popes, Adolf demonstrated the kind of shrewd political maneuvering that undermined the authority of the Church in the eyes of his subjects.[6] Indeed, as a contemporary anonymous *questio* that circulated in the Rhineland in the 1380s advised, if one was asked which rival pontiff was the true pope, the safest position was ignorance or indifference.[7]

The Schism, however, was exploited not only by the enterprising prelates, but also by their direct competitors: urban governments in search of more political independence. Urban strife and conflicts between German free and imperial cities and the bishops proved to be a defining characteristic of the period. Large German towns and their governments during this period were involved in a long-term transformation. Economic development in the cities was correlated with the rise of a peculiar urban world view that saw urban communities as self-contained systems and argued for a greater control of oligarchic city councils over urban affairs. The cities, formerly possessions of members of the landed aristocracy or the higher echelons of the Catholic Church, gained the right to govern themselves, to engage in diplomacy, and to interact with the rulers of the Empire. In exchange, free and imperial cities promised their support to emperors in times of political instability.[8] Although this was a gradual process and large cities in Upper Germany had won a significant degree of independence in the later thirteenth century, a hundred years later the struggle was still underway. In the second half of the

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[6] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 209; Jürgensmeier, "Adolf von Nassau," 411-12.
[7] Cod. Vienna 5064, fols. 104-106. Cited in Deane, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution," 78-79.
[8] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, pp. 77-89; Moraw, "Cities and Citizenry as Factors of State Formation," 642-43.

fourteenth century, urban communities turned their attention to less obvious signs of their dependence on outside magnates. A drive for greater control over church property and the right to tax the clergy became controversial issues of the day, especially in the capitals of bishoprics (Augsburg, Strasbourg, Mainz, Würzburg, Constance) where clerical presence was overwhelming. For example, in Augsburg (which counted around 15,000 residents in the later fourteenth century), there was the cathedral, 7 monasteries, 10 mendicant houses, 7 beguinages, and 4 parishes—a veritable city-within-a-city that remained immune to urban taxation and control.[9]

A well-recorded example of such use of the Schism in a conflict between an urban commune and its bishop comes from Würzburg, which throughout the 1380s and 1390s was trying to achieve self-rule or at least expand its autonomy. In the 1380s, the city was pitted against the bishop of Würzburg, Gerhard of Schwarzburg (r. 1372-1400)[10]. Würzburg's struggle was part of the decade of intermittent conflicts between regional city leagues in Upper Germany, and princely leagues consisting of the nobility and the Church elites. During the 1380s, Würzburg entered a defensive league with neighboring imperial cities Schweinfurt and Windsheim in order to resist the attempts of the bishop to restrict its rights and raise taxes.[11] For Würzburg, the confrontation worsened after the Peace of Eger (1389), where the cites that had previously suffered a military defeat were prohibited from uniting into defensive leagues and forced to pay reparations. In response to the Eger treaty, the city council of Würzburg appealed to the Roman pope Boniface IX seeking the reaffirmation of old privileges granted to the city in 1260 by one of his predecessors. Although the pope granted the city's plea, he entrusted Bishop

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[9] Eberhard Isenmann, *Die Deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter*, 624-25.
[10] Schlenker and Flachenecker, "Gerhard von Schwarzburg," 900-902.
[11] Schlenker and Flachenecker, "Gerhard von Schwarzburg," 90

Gerhard with providing the required document to the city council; and Bishop Gerhard withheld it. In response, in 1392 the magistrates reached out across the lines of the Schism and sought a similar affirmation from Pope Clement VII in Avignon, essentially recognizing his authority over Boniface's.[12] The Würzburg example clearly demonstrates that—despite repeated outcries over the loss of ecclesiastical unity in Western Christendom from a wide range of theologians and clerical writers—on a more pragmatic level the Schism created a sense of hierarchical ambiguity, which was exploited by political agents.

A city-centric worldview, which emphasized the city's independence in matters secular and religious to a point where the two merged into one concept of civic spirituality, was both a byproduct of these political changes and an impetus for them.[13] Living in a city and for a city became an ideology best summarized in a foundational essay by the German historian Bernd Moeller. Writing about the role of German cities during the Reformation, Moeller observed that by the later fourteenth century, over one hundred years before Luther, the development of urban ideology made city-dwellers perceive their communities as self-governed and self-sufficient units. Moeller explains:

> Material welfare and eternal salvation were not differentiated and thus the borders between the secular and spiritual areas of life disappeared. We can grasp the essential trait of the late medieval urban community if we characterize it as a 'sacred society'. … Elsewhere, even the lower classes of the urban population… were embued with the communal spirit. ... [The

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[12] Haupt, "Der revolutionären Bewegungen in Würzburg," 28.

[13] Origins of the gradual change from portraying cities as an antithesis of Christian life to seeing them as the embodiment of holiness can be traced back at least to the thirteenth century. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1978), 197-217. See also, Haverkamp, "'Heilige Städte' im hohen Mittelalter," 119-56.

> urban communities] united not only to defend their economic interests, but also to work for the eternal salvation of their members by controlling morals and justice, by supporting altars and masses for the souls of the dead, and so forth.[14]

Scholarship on social stratification and urban conflict has challenged Moeller's claim that this city-centric ideology was shared by all levels of urban society and therefore served as a catalyst for the "Reformation from below." Although Moeller has been rightly criticized for not taking into account divisive social and economic conflicts in late medieval towns, his thesis is still relevant, in particular for the study of urban political culture 150 years before the Reformation.[15] Although clearly not shared by every member of an urban community such as Augsburg or Strasbourg, the view of a town as a 'miniature *corpus christianum*' was prevalent among the urban elites and therefore influenced their policies, the ways in which their justified their authority, and their broader worldview.[16]

Despite their growing economic and cultural importance, German cities remained relatively marginal in imperial politics. While Charles IV's imperial 'constitution,' the Golden Bull (1356), codified privileges of the clergy and the nobility, especially of the secular and ecclesiastical princes whose support Charles needed to ensure the political success of his dynasty, cities did not fare well in that document.[17] At the heart of the new imperial 'constitution' were the princes: they elected the new emperor, upheld peace, and, in effect, wielded the imperial power in their respective territories. A crime against a prince of the empire

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[14] Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 46-47.
[15] For a historiographic overview, see, Hsia, "The Myth of the Commune," 203-15.
[16] Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 49.
[17] Hlaváček, "The Luxemburgs," 557-58; Leuschner, *Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, 163.

was *lèse-majesté*, tantamount to a crime against the emperor himself. Cities, unless they were crucial imperial allies like Frankfurt and Nuremberg, were viewed as detractors from princely rule. Among other restrictions, towns were forbidden from forming defensive unions or leagues.[18] Moreover, during the later years of Charles' reign, as he attempted to acquire the electors' votes for his son, Wenceslaus, urban privileges were also frequently ignored and used as gifts to ensure cooperation. Although the emperor's goal of securing the imperial throne for Wenceslaus succeeded, it came at a price which his rather less politically savvy successor had to pay.[19]

Although the Golden Bull's prohibition on city leagues had been ignored even during Charles IV's lifetime, his death ushered in a decade of tension—even open warfare—between long-distance associations of the towns and the regional nobility. By 1379, the Swabian League of imperial cities included members not only in Swabia, but also in Alsace, paving the way for further unions between these regions and their cities.[20] Within months of his father's death, Wenceslaus reaffirmed the Public Peace (*Landfriede*)—an *ad hoc* agreement that obligated its signatories to abstain from the use of violence in solving their disputes—in January of 1379; while this tactic had proved effective under Charles, the new king failed to ensure the execution of his Peace and its longevity. In early 1380, the noble association "Order of the Lion" confronted the defensive force of the Rhenish cities under the walls of Frankfurt, pushing the cities to establish even stronger ties among themselves.[21] Naturally, the noble leagues were also

[18] This prohibition was largely forgotten once the imperial power declined after Charles' death, but its existence in the Bull is reminiscent of the emperor's attention to the needs of the imperial elites. See Barraclough, *The Origins of Modern Germany*, 317-18; Hlaváček, "The Luxemburgs," 554.

[19] Hlaváček, "The Luxemburgs," 555-56.

[20] Moraw, "Cities and Citizenry as Factors of State Formation," 644; Forsén, "Was There a South-West German City-State Culture?" 95

[21] Kolpacoff, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution," 85-86. On the German tradition of using

growing and by the early 1380s included all of the Rhineland electors; the ensuing years of conflicts sapped the area of its economic resources and further weakened royal power. In 1384, Wenceslaus succeeded in bringing the warring sides to an agreement at Heidelberg; although also short-lived, this peace treaty is viewed as one of the principal achievements of the king's reign. However, by 1385 the conflict resumed and lasted until 1389, when the cities suffered a number of crushing defeats by their enemies. Finally, the bloody and anarchic decade came to an end with the signing of the Peace of Eger, where the defeated cities were saddled with financial penalties of thousands of gulden (60,000 in reparations to the Count Palatine alone!).[22]

While the Swabish and the Rhenish Leagues conducted warfare outside of the city walls, within the cities the citizens aimed their ire at the clergy. In addition to clerical privileges being a burden on urban economies, participation of the highest echelons of the German clergy in the war between cities and nobles on the side of the latter exacerbated the antagonism between the secular and the clerical authorities. With the archbishop of Mainz, and his suffragan bishops of Strasbourg, Augsburg, and Würzburg fighting against their former capitals, clerical privileges and freedom from taxation within these and other cities became an intolerable sign of external rule. In response, an anti-clerical revolt in Worms erupted in 1384, at the height of the war between the cities and the Order of the Lion, forcing the city's clergy to flee the city and abandon its possessions there. In the same year, similar anti-clerical violence caused the clergy in Mainz to cease the performance of divine services; most canons of the cathedral left the city as well. [23] When Bishop Burkhard of Augsburg joined the Order of the Lion in 1379, bands of residents vandalized his property in the city and, later in the conflict, forced all clergy to swear

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Landfrieden as instruments for curbing violence, see Brown, *Violence in Medieval Europe*, 223-25.

[22] Hlaváček, "The Luxemburgs," 556-57; Forsén, "Was There a South-West German City-State Culture?" 95-96.

[23] Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 53-54; Kolpacoff, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution," 102-103.

an oath of loyalty to the city. Furthermore, in 1387, in response to the bishop's seizure of the goods carried by Augsburg's merchants on their way from Venice, a mob of residents ransacked the episcopal properties in the city: his palace, mint, warehouse, and the domicile of the cathedral's dean.[24]

Although the grievances against urban clergy were political and economic in nature, they were often portrayed in negative religious terms by the ecclesiastical authors. Images of citizens assaulting the clergy were depicted as acts of un-Christian lawlessness. When the residents of Mainz ignored the archbishop's interdict that forbade the performance of divine services in the city, the ecclesiastical chronicler and vicar of Mainz cathedral, Johannes Kungstein, observed that "the citizens were not perturbed [by the interdict], even mocked [it] because they were wallowing in heresy."[25] By equating any crime against the prince-electors to *lèse-majesté*, the Golden Bull turned urban resistance and self-defense into signs of their perpetrators' questionable status as Christians or even humans. Remarking on the Swiss cities' victory in the Battle of Sempach (1386), where the urban militia routed an army of Austrian knights and killed Duke Leopold of Austria, chronicler Kungstein calls the Swiss "beastly lordless men" (bestiales homines sine domino).[26] In an act of remarkable cruelty, Count Palatine Rupert II burned sixty prisoners from the Urban League in a brick oven, an act of mass incineration that likely reminded its witnesses of the similar burning of the Jews in Strasbourg and Basel after the plague pogroms of 1349; public burning of the captives was also highly reminiscent of the prescribed punishment for heresy.[27]

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[24] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 91-93.

[25] "quod cives minime curabant, ymmo deridebant, quia pullulabant in heresi." Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 54.

[26] Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 57.

[27] Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 60; Kolpacoff, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution," 94.

The decade of anti-Waldensian persecutions that came after a period of weak monarchy, the Schism, urban unrest, anti-clericalism, and war between cities and princes embodied elements of all of these crises. The rule of Wenceslaus IV, at first indecisive, then unengaged, did little to alleviate the vacuum of political authority left after Charles IV's death in 1378. Although most of the Empire remained in the pro-Roman camp, the Schism compounded the problem by creating a sense of religious uncertainty and severely undermining the status of the Church. Struggles for political and economic independence and the growing power of the princes catalyzed the development of a peculiar city-centric worldview that imagined cities as idealized sacred communities, in charge of their secular as well as spiritual affairs. As a result, toleration of any visible heterodoxy became problematic. On the other hand, princes and bishops perceived the very notion of urban self-rule as potentially heterodox and therefore used accusations that urban communes harbored or tolerated heresy as a political tool. The constellation of political and ecclesiastical crises gave a new meaning to heresy, especially the most numerous and widespread heretical movements, such as Waldensianism. The Waldensian community, whether in a city or a region, became a polysemic category containing a variety of meanings. To a city council it marked a weakness in their imaginary sacred community. To a bishop trying to punish a defiant city, the heretics' existence created an opportunity to show strength, as well as to remind his subjects of the guiding role of the church. To a reformer, pious Waldensian followers promised rejuvenation of the Church, if they could be converted back to Catholicism. Finally, to secular rulers, Waldensians—at least as they were imagined and presented by their persecutors—

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600 Jewish men and women in Basel were burned inside a house, likely built for this purpose, on January 16, 1349; a month later a similar fate befell the Jewish community of Strasbourg, where an unknown number of victims was also burned inside a wooden structure. See Aberth, *From the Brink of the Apocalypse*, 158-59.

constituted disobedient and potentially dangerous subjects. In the 1390s, heretical communities meant too much for too many to be ignored.

Chronology of the Persecutions, 1390-1404

The decade of anti-Waldensian persecutions began with a protracted inquisition in Mainz (1390-1393), which set the tone for the inquisitions that came after. The proceedings against the Waldensians in Mainz began within a few months of the election of its new archbishop, Conrad II of Weinsberg (r. 1390-1396). Conrad was a somewhat unlikely figure to occupy this position in that he was not a member of one of the influential noble dynasties in the region (unlike his predecessor, Adolf of Nassau), but rather a former scholastic of the Mainz cathedral. While the new archbishop was certainly a 'dark horse,' his election was enabled by Count Palatine Rupert II to ensure that the influential archdiocese remained loyal to the Roman pope in the Great Schism. If Rupert II was looking for an archbishop concerned with orthodoxy and correct obedience (a crucial departure from Adolf of Nassau's interest in imperial politics), Conrad was a perfect candidate.[28] As Jennifer Kolpacoff Deane has demonstrated in her study of the Mainz inquisition (1390-1393), the new archbishop took control of his province, ravaged by a decade of urban strife, conflicts between cities and the nobility, and anti-clerical revolts in large towns (including Mainz itself).[29] In part, to restore ecclesiastical power to its former levels, Conrad II—whose previous position as a scholastic of the Mainz cathedral had allowed him to observe the earlier hostilities firsthand—unleashed an inquisition on the city's Waldensian community.

Fragmentary sources for the campaign do not allow for a detailed reconstruction. It is clear, however, that the inquisition consisted of a number of stages. The first stage began in September of 1390 and involved a 'discovery' and punishment of an unspecified number of

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[28] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 209-11.
[29] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 207-09.

individuals, whose beliefs allow for their identification as Waldensians. By the end of November, the papal Dominican inquisitor for the archdiocese of Mainz, Nicholas Böckeler, punished eighteen heretics by having them wear crosses of blue cloth as a sign of their repentance—a traditional punishment for heresy.[30] However, in 1392 the archbishop issued a new commission, designating three representatives of the secular clergy—Bishop Frederick of Toul, the dean of the church of St. Stephan, Nicholas of Sauwelnheim, and John Wasmod, an altar chaplain of the Mainz cathedral—as inquisitorial judges.[31] The commission ordered these men to pursue heresy within the city and throughout the diocese, both among the laity and the clergy. This time, Nicholas Böckeler seems to have been relegated to a secondary role, although the text of the commission reminds the three archiepiscopal inquisitors to cooperate with him.[32] Whether this influenced the outcome of the proceedings or not, the second round of the inquisition resulted in thirty-six men and women being burned at the stake during the same year in Bingen, a nearby town owned by the archbishop. Three more Waldensians, this time from Bingen itself, were sent to the stake in the following year. Thus, the persecution, interpreted by Deane as a show of force on the part of the archbishop, took the lives of at least thirty-nine men and women, but affected many more in the heretical community that had likely existed in the city undisturbed for decades.[33]

Since this was the first in a long chain of anti-Waldensian persecutions during the 1390s, it is tempting to consider Archbishop Conrad II (d. 1396) as a main agent behind the decade of investigations of German Waldensians. Whether or not Conrad II inspired this decade of

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[30] Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 63. On the use of penitential crosses, see Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 84-85.

[31] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 214.

[32] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 204. An edition of the archiepiscopal commission is contained in Gudenus, *Codex diplomaticus*, vol. 3, 598-600.

[33] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 218-20.

persecutions, his own investigation in Mainz set an example of persecuting heresy in a number of crucial ways. First, the inquisition in Mainz targeted exclusively Waldensians, possibly because of their disregard for clerical and even papal authority that was only too familiar to Conrad.[34] Second, aside from the three Waldensians from Bingen, the inquisition in Mainz focused on the heretical community in Mainz itself, as a way for the archbishop to assert his authority over the recently rebellious capital. Throughout the decade, other bishops in the Holy Roman Empire would adopt anti-heretical campaigns as a weapon against their detractors and, in particular, defiant free cities. Third, the campaign targeted a well-established Waldensian community, which had likely existed undisturbed for decades and owned at least one property dedicated to communal meetings (the so-called "domus Spiegelberg," as it is named in the *Chronicon Moguntinum*).[35] Lastly, the inquisition, at least in its second and more violent stage, involved non-mendicant inquisitors appointed by the archbishop himself; this practice would become the defining characteristic of the majority of anti-Waldensian persecutions during the decade.

While it is hard to know how far the news of the Waldensian persecution in and around Mainz in 1390-1393 spread throughout the empire, the fact that the Waldensian heresy became the target of one of the most influential ecclesiastical figures in the realm may have caused other prelates to follow suit. Although causality is hard to prove, anti-Waldensian persecutions in Würzburg and Erfurt (both cities are located in the archdiocese of Mainz) in 1391-1392 may demonstrate that this particular heresy began to attract episcopal attention. Similarly, urban Waldensians were persecuted in 1393-1395 in Swabia, Franconia and Regensburg, while rural heretical communities around Stettin (present-day Szczecin, Poland) were investigated in 1392-1393. Later in the decade, the focus of the anti-Waldensian persecution shifted to Upper and

[34] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 211.
[35] Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 63.

Lower Austria (after 1395) and parts of the Kingdom of Hungary, with the exception of an inquisition in Nuremberg (1399). All of these inquisitions, which account for the majority of anti-heretical campaigns in this period, involved three itinerant inquisitors: Martin of Amberg, Peter Zwicker, and Heinrich Angermeier; they will be discussed in detail in the following section and later in the dissertation.

By the end of the decade, other cities in German-speaking Central Europe began to realize that the presence of heretics posed a significant threat to the stability of their self-rule. Likely prompted by the inquisitorial campaigns in Upper Austria and Swabia, where urban Waldensian communities came under attack between 1393 and 1398, the city council of Bern conducted an inquisition that involved a Dominican friar, Nicholas of Landau from Basel. Although the actual inquisitorial records did not survive, the chronicle account of Conrad Justinger relates that the inquisitor found over 130 Waldensians in the city and succeeded in collecting 3000 gulden in fines from the accused.[36] Although the inquisition in Bern involved a Dominican inquisitor from Basel, the initiative for conducting the inquest seems to have come from the city council itself, a fact that may help to explain its aftermath. Even while the anti-heretical trials were still going on, the representatives of the Bern city council met with their counterparts from nearby Fribourg in November of 1399, in a clear attempt to initiate a similar inquisition in the neighboring town as well.[37] Whether this action was an attempt on the part of Bern to project its influence or merely a way of dealing with those Waldensians who had escaped persecution by fleeing the city, the pressure from Bern did force the magistrates of Fribourg to conduct an inquisition of their own. Surprisingly, however, the inquisitors invited to investigate the Waldensians in Fribourg were not from "pro-Roman" Basel, but from "pro-Avignon"

[36] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 57-58.
[37] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 64-66.

Lausanne, thus ensuring a lack of cooperation between the two inquisitors.[38] What could have been a conscious attempt to sabotage an unwanted investigation proved to be successful. By Christmas of 1399 the Dominican inquisitor found no presence of Waldensianism in Fribourg and issued the city a document (meticulously reproduced in the city records) that proclaimed Fribourg's status as heresy-free.[39] Ironically, we know that Fribourg did have a thriving Waldensian community in 1399 as it did in 1430, when another inquisition brought its existence to light.[40] Still, in 1399 the magistrates of Fribourg were able to resist the pressure of their neighboring city by carefully organizing an inquest that was meant to produce a convenient outcome.

Strasbourg's Waldensian community was not so fortunate. As the city councilors of Bern pressured Fribourg into conducting an inquest, they sent a letter to the magistrates of Strasbourg, suggesting that the city had a Waldensian presence. In March of 1400, the Strasbourg city council reacted by conducting a swift inquisition that uncovered the city's Waldensian community; twenty-seven of its members were expelled from the city as a result.[41] In early April, mere days after the expulsion of the heretics, the city council wrote a response to their Bernese counterparts. In that letter they minimized the size of the Waldensian community and the social status of its members in an attempt to present their city in the best possible light.[42] Even after removing problematic residents from the city, the magistrates did not dare to admit to having done so, claiming instead that the heretics in the city were, for the most part, recent immigrants.

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[38] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß," 64-65; Modestin, "Les vaudois de Strasbourg devant leurs juges: une étude comparative; Berne (1399) - Fribourg/Suisse (1399) - Strasbourg (1400)," 12-13.

[39] Utz Tremp, *Quellen*, 230-32.

[40] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß," 79-83; Kieckhefer, Repression, 69.

[41] For a detailed study of the inquisition in Strasbourg, see Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt* (Hannover, 2007).

[42] Modestin, *Quellen*, 197-99. Although the original letters from and to the Bernese city council did not survive, Georg Modestin discovered a complete draft of the letter to Bern, from which the content of the earlier letter from Bern to the Strasbourg city council can be reconstructed.

Indeed, after a decade of intense persecutions, even admitting to ever having a robust, well-integrated Waldensian community in the city was not merely inconvenient, but also shameful and dangerous for its existence.

Itinerant Inquisitors and Their Careers

Starting with the persecutions in Erfurt and Würzburg in 1391-1392, we can observe the involvement of a new type of inquisitor: the freelance, itinerant persecutor. These itinerant inquisitors were outsiders, usually unaffiliated with the church hierarchy in their areas of activity. They were also not members of the mendicant orders—Dominicans or Franciscans—traditionally entrusted with the pursuit of heresy. There is an agreement among scholars that itinerant inquisitors active in the 1390s were likely the initiators of individual campaigns, acting as catalysts of persecution and approaching local secular and ecclesiastical authorities in order to secure their support for the inquisition.[43] This mode of operation allowed the persecutors to remain surprisingly mobile and to be able to follow long-distance links between individual heretical communities, rather than to limit their inquisitorial activity to only one region or an ecclesiastical province. As a result, three itinerant persecutors—Martin of Amberg, Peter Zwicker, and Heinrich Angermeier—were responsible for the majority of persecutions that took place between 1390 and 1404.

To date, there is very little scholarship addressing the careers and activity of these three men who—because of their strong motivations for persecuting heresy and a penchant for self-promotion—served as catalysts for a decade of intensified anti-Waldensian persecutions. Although I will examine these individuals in greater detail in subsequent chapters, it is valuable to provide brief biographical narratives for each of them here. These narratives will provide a

[43] Kieckhefer, *Repression*, 55-57; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 139-40.

brief overview of the careers of these individuals and touch upon the available sources that inform our reconstructions of their lives.

Martin of Amberg (c. 1340- after 1401)

We know surprisingly little about Martin of Amberg's life before his collaboration with Peter Zwicker in the 1390's and the early years of the fifteenth century. Judging by his name, he originated from Amberg, a town in the Upper Palatinate, about 50 kilometers east of Nuremberg. Martin, a common name in medieval Germany, was probably even more common among the inhabitants of Amberg, where a gothic parish church of St. Martin still graces the market square. Unfortunately, because of the name's popularity, it is hard to pinpoint the future inquisitor's origins or his life's trajectory before his move to Prague in the 1360s or 1370s. Indeed, the ubiquity of Martin's name has complicated his identification, since the sources frequently alternate between calling him "Martin of Amberg" and "Martin of Prague." This led earlier scholars to assume that these were references to different individuals, although this misconception has been remediated in more recent scholarship in light of considerable evidence for the two Martins being the same person.[44]

Martin of Amberg has been known to scholars of late medieval German literature as the author of the so-called "Mirror of Conscience" (*Der Gewissensspiegel*, c. 1380), one of the earlier vernacular German catechisms. Although the breadth of Martin's education is hard to gauge, he was clearly well-versed in a wide range of literature, including Latin catechistic

[44] Malm, "Martin von Amberg," 612-614. See also, Martin of Amberg, *Der Gewissensspiegel*. A manuscript held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich contains an edition of a pseudo-Bonaventure treatise on preaching attributed to "lord Martin of Amberg inquisitor of heresy" ("editus a domino Martino inquisitore hereticorum Amberge"). BSB Munich, Clm. 3764, fol. 35r: The manuscript is described in Charland, *Artes Praedicandi*, 69. Another manuscript attributes the conversion and punishment of Waldensians in Erfurt in 1391 to "Martin of Amberg" and his associate, Zwicker. "a. D. 1391 per D. Martinum de Amberg et fratrem Petrum Celestinum omnes in Erfordia sunt convicti et conversi, abjurati et cruce signati." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330.

manuals, as well as classical and patristic texts. Martin likely wrote the *Gewissensspiegel* in Prague, influenced by the works of Johannes of Neumarkt (c. 1310 – 1380), bishop of Olomutz and chancellor to Emperor Charles IV.[45] Martin's textual knowledge is particularly obvious in his tendency to draw on all of these sources in the spirit of early humanism that became well received in fourteenth-century Prague. Werbow observes that Martin used an example from Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, along with references to the vernacular *Life of St. Jerome* by Johannes of Neumarkt, whose style Martin mimicked in his own work.[46] However, the themes raised in the *Gewissensspiegel* clearly indicate Martin's interest in eradicating heterodox beliefs and catechizing the laity. In particular, Martin's interest is clearly inspired by the *Decretum* of Burkhard of Wörms (d. 1025), the *Compendium of Theological Truth* (*Compendium theologicae veritatis*) by Hugh Ripelin of Strasbourg (d. 1270), and the preaching of Berchtold of Regensburg (d. 1272).[47] In the catechism Martin places a particular emphasis on arguing against folk beliefs in magic, divination, and worship of the goddess Diana.[48] Another text, Martin's edition of the treatise on the "Art of Amplifying Sermons" (*Ars dilatandi sermones*, before 1268) by Richard of Tretford, demonstrates his interest in rhetoric and preaching.[49]

Although the *Gewissensspiegel* is silent on the matter of heresy, Martin's passion for catechizing and preaching orthodoxy likely made him into a suitable candidate for the role of an inquisitor. In 1374, Martin, described in the sources as "a priest from Bohemia," was sent to Strasbourg to assist the local bishop, Lambert of Brunn (r. 1371-74) in his campaign against the

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[45] Werbow, "Martin von Amberg," 278; Bistřický, "Johann von Neumarkt," 512–513.
[46] Werbow, *Der Gewissensspiegel*, 8; Werbow, "Martin von Amberg," 278
[47] Malm, "Martin von Amberg," 612; Werbow, "Vorwort," 13.
[48] Martin of Amberg, *Der Gewissensspiegel*, 40-43.
[49] BSB Munich, Clm. 3764, ff. 35-40. See also, Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 326-27.

beguine community in the city.[50] As the inquisition commenced, the relatively new bishop—Lambert, former bishop of Speyer, had been elected to the Strasbourg see in 1371—mounted an attack against the beguines in the diocese by accusing them of breaking the prohibitions of the Council of Vienne (1311) against the "new orders" or quasi-monastic forms of religious life among the laity.[51] The bishop's order that the beguines disband within fifteen days or face punishment was not concerned with their doctrinal errors, but rather criticized their way of life: poverty, distinct dress, hierarchy and common habitation, all in absence of an approved monastic rule. Additionally, the bishop accused the beguines of taking communion from the mendicant friars, contrary to the canon law; thus, Bishop Lambert's attack on the beguines was also an attack on the mendicants, who defended and enabled them.[52]

The resulting inquisition, "not conducted by the mendicant orders but actually leveled in part against them" proved to be particularly influential for Martin of Amberg's later career.[53] Not only was it the first anti-heretical persecution in which he played a key role, but it was also the first campaign that connected Martin to Lambert of Brunn, whose willingness to persecute beguines in Strasbourg may have been key to his promotion to the bishopric of Bamberg within the same year.[54] Indeed, Martin's involvement must have also won him the favor of the archbishop of Prague, Jan Očko of Vlašim (r. 1364-1378) and of his nephew and successor, Jan of Jenštejn (1379-1396).[55] Already in 1374, Martin was trusted enough by the archbishop of Prague to be sent across the Empire to Strasbourg to spearhead the inquisition there. His official

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[50] "Martinus, Presbyter ex Bohemia" BSB Clm. 14216, 178rb; edition in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 378.

[51] Van Engen, *Sisters and Brother of the Common Life*, 38.

[52] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 98-100.

[53] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 98. Martin is described in the episcopal decree against the beguines of Strasbourg as "dominus Martinus Presbyter ex Bohemia … per dominum Lampertum Argentin. Ep. ad hujusmodi officium exercendum Argentinam accersitus"

[54] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 97-98.

[55] Hlebníková, "Johann Očko von Vlašim," 589-90; Seifert and Hlebníková, "Johann von Jenstein," 590-92.

mission as an episcopal inquisitor of heretical depravity was at least in part aimed at reducing the influence of the mendicant orders in the diocese of Strasbourg; he must have been expected to succeed in such an intricate political affair. Similarly, echoes of the anti-mendicant thrust of the Strasbourg inquisition reverberate throughout Martin's later career in the 1390s, inasmuch as neither he nor his associate Peter Zwicker ever collaborated with mendicant inquisitors.

Martin's inquisitorial success in Strasbourg likely proved his ability to persecute heresy and earned him the trust of important patrons like Lambert of Brunn and the ecclesiastical elites in Prague. Little is known about Martin's activity in subsequent decades. It is safe to assume that at some point in the later 1370s, he was occupied with the composition of the *Gewissensspiegel*, which can be dated to c. 1380.[56] In the second half of the 1380s, we find him as an inquisitor in Regensburg, likely sent there by the archbishop of Prague.[57] There Martin accepted the abjurations of at least two Waldensians, the first recorded instance of his involvement in the persecution of this type of heresy. Although it is unclear how long Martin remained in Regensburg, his activity there was remembered a decade later, when one of the individuals he absolved, Conrad Hutter, was accused of relapsing into heresy.[58]

Martin's itinerary is better documented in the 1390s. In 1391 he was active in Lower Franconia and Thuringia, where he once again targeted exclusively Waldensian communities. In Würzburg, Martin acted with the permission of the local bishop, Gerhard of Schwarzburg, who

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[56] Werbow, introduction to *Der Gewissensspiegel*, 12.

[57] In 1381, the archbishop of Prague warned the bishops of Regensburg, Bamberg, and Meissen that if they failed to appoint inquisitors of heretical depravity in their respective dioceses, the archbishop (as papal legate for these provinces) would send his own. Höfler, *Consilia Pragensia, 1353-1413*, 26. Kieckhefer proposes that Martin of Amberg may have been sent to Regensburg as an appointee of the archbishop of Prague, which may explain why he would style himself a papal inquisitor (i.e., appointed by a papal legate) in correspondence with the acting inquisitor in Regensburg in 1395-96. See Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55n.11.

[58] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66-67.

had a very strained relationship with the city and its government.[59] As I will discuss in subsequent chapters, itinerant inquisitors like Martin could serve as an important asset in a conflict between a bishop and a city council. An anti-heretical inquisition was a powerful weapon in the hands of a bishop, who could aim it at his defiant subjects, while also formally staying within the realm of his pastoral duties. After prosecuting nine Waldensians in Würzburg, Martin headed northeast to Erfurt, where he was joined by another future itinerant inquisitor, Peter Zwicker.[60] The inquisition in Erfurt was simultaneously more intensive and undertaken on a larger scale than the one in Würzburg. There Martin of Amberg and Peter Zwicker succeeded not only in producing a significant number of converts, but also in apprehending around twenty itinerant Waldensian preachers and converting them as well.[61] Because of the network-like structure of the German Waldensian communities, itinerant heretical ministers were in possession of crucial information about the locations of Waldensian communities throughout German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe. One of the converted masters, Nicholas of Solothurn, had reportedly visited heretical communities as far apart as Strasbourg and Brandenburg, his preaching circuit thus spanning the breadth of the Empire.[62]

The converted Waldensian ministers shaped inquisitorial activity for the rest of the decade and into the early years of the fifteenth century. While Peter Zwicker continued the pursuit of Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania, Martin of Amberg appears to have returned to Prague and served as an altar priest at the Church of the Virgin Mary before Týn. We find him occupying this position in the spring of 1396, when he was consulted by an inquisitor

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[59] Haupt, *Die religiöse Sekten in Franken*, 23-24.

[60] Haupt, *Die religiöse Sekten in Franken*, 23-24; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55.

[61] Two list of converted magistri were compiled in the early 1390s, as part of Zwicker's inquisitorial dossier, the so-called *Processus Petri*; see, Biller, *The Waldenses*, 234-6. The so-called "shorter" and "longer" lists are published in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 367 and 330 (respectively).

[62] Biller, "Heretics and Long Journeys," 100; Utz Tremp, "Multhum aborrerem," 166.

from Regensburg regarding one of the individuals who had abjured heresy before Martin in 1380.[63] In his response to the inquiry, Martin states that he has consulted converted Waldensian preachers residing in Prague (*heresiarchis recenter conversis*), which suggests that even in his capacity as an altar priest, Martin remained in touch with his earlier inquisitorial career.[64] Martin's roles as priest and inquisitor were compatible to him, and likely others, as a document from an inquisition in Bamberg in 1399 clearly describes Martin as both: "Martin, altar priest in the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary before Týn (*ante Letam Curiam*)… inquisitor of heretical depravity."[65] During the same year Martin reappears in the inquisitorial records and was likely involved in the anti-Waldensian inquisition in Nuremberg in April of 1399, which resulted in the execution of six women and one man, while eleven others were forced to wear penitential crosses, several were banned from the city, and nineteen more fled the city.[66] While Martin acted in the city most likely on the authority of his old patron, Bishop Lambert of Bamberg, he was likely well-received by the local magistrates. In the same year, Martin appears in the city's register of official gifts (*Schenkbuch*) as the recipient of a municipal gift of 6 quarts of wine, worth 17 shillings. The gift was unlikely a mere formality. For comparison, in the same period, similar gifts were given to the *hofmeister* and secretary of the archbishop of Mainz and to a representative of the royal chancery.[67] Moreover, according to the city chronicle, the following

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[63] Kieckhefer, *Repression*, 66-67.

[64] Cod. Vindob. 3748, fol. 150r; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66-67.

[65] Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*. An even later document (1400) refers to Martin as a "priest" (presbiter) suggesting that he may have retained his position in Prague even as he was conducting an inquisition in Trnava (modern-day Slovakia). See, Truhlař, "Inquisice Waldenských v Trnavě r. 1400," 196.

[66] Schultheiß, *Die Acht-, Verbots- und Fehdebücher Nürnbergs von 1285—1400*, 158-59 n.37.

[67] Weizsäcker, *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, 88.

year the city council appointed one of the citizens of Nuremberg to investigate heresy within its walls, which demonstrates the city council's concern about religious heterodoxy.[68]

After the inquisition in Nuremberg, Martin headed north to conduct inquisitions in Bamberg itself. The surviving records indicate that the inquisitor held court in that city in May and June of 1399. He received mostly abjurations of Beghards, in a stark departure from his earlier anti-Waldensian focus. Nevertheless, the list of abjurations is followed by a formula used for abjuring Waldensians (*forma abjuracionis sectae Waldensium*), which may suggest that there was some Waldensian presence in and around Bamberg after all.[69] With the death of Bishop Lambert in July of 1399, Martin was left without a reliable patron in Franconia and joined his former junior associate, Peter Zwicker, for an inquisition in Trnava (present-day Slovakia) in 1400.[70] The inquisition there—its records preserved only in a few brief fragments—was concerned exclusively with Waldensians living among the German-speaking colonists in the region. In early January of 1401, they held a trial of a group of Waldensians of both sexes in Ödenburg (present-day Sopron, Hungary). The condemned were assigned penitential crosses and were ordered to perform public penance.[71] A few weeks later, on February 27, both Martin and Zwicker sentenced three women to be released to the secular arm for relapsing into heresy in Hartberg, in Styria (Lower Austria).[72] The aging inquisitor's trek from Franconia to Trnava and Styria—it is very likely that by 1401 Martin of Amberg was in his sixties—perhaps serves as the best demonstration of his personal passion for the persecution of heresy.[73] It is likely that these

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[68] Mülner, *Annales*, fol. 861a.

[69] Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*.

[70] For an overview of inquisitorial activity of Martin of Amberg and Peter Zwicker in the Kingdom of Hungary, see Hammann, "Waldenser in Ungarn, Siebenbürgen und der Slowakei," 428-41.

[71] Haupt, *Waldenserthum und Inquisition*, Appendix 1, 114-16.

[72] Haupt, *Waldenserthum und Inquisition*, Appendix 2:3 121-24.

[73] Malm places Martin's year of birth around 1340 (although, he does not provide any justification for that date),

inquests were Martin's last, as his name disappears from the records after the inquisition in Trnava and subsequent trials in the same region mention only Peter Zwicker.[74]

Peter Zwicker (d. after 1404)

Peter Zwicker's life and career, although somewhat better documented than Martin's, also contains a lot of lacunae that this sketch will attempt to fill. Peter Zwicker was born c. 1340-50 in Wormditt, East Prussia (present-day Orneta, Poland).[75] The earliest record of him appears in the notarial documents from Zittau, in Upper Lusatia, where Zwicker is noted as a schoolmaster (*rector scolae* and *ludimoderator*) of a local school between 1363 and 1381.[76] Evidently, at some point before 1363 Zwicker had migrated to Upper Lusatia and acquired some level of education. While the level of schooling required from a schoolmaster in later medieval urban schools varied from one town to another, the fact that Zwicker is described as a *rector* and even said to have had a junior teacher (*locatus*) on his staff, suggests that Zwicker had some formal education before accepting his position.[77] It is likely that Zwicker attended the University of Prague before becoming a schoolmaster in Zittau, likely to acquire enough funds either to continue his education or to pay the graduation fee—as was often the case among medieval students. Zwicker's study at the University of Prague may explain his move from East Prussia to Bohemia; founded in 1338 by Emperor Charles IV, the University of Prague was the first

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which would make the inquisitor 34 during the anti-beguine campaign in Strasbourg (1374). Malm, "Martin von Amberg," 612.

[74] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 6; Neumann, *České sekty, 6**.

[75] "Magistri Petri Czwickers de Wormpnijt, civitatis Prusziae." Gartner, *Geschichte des Gymnasiums zu Zittau*, vol. 1, 3. For a brief biographical sketch, see Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 25-34.

[76] Gartner, *Geschichte des Gymnasiums zu Zittau*, 3.

[77] "rectoris scolae hujus, magistri Petri Czwickers… fuit locatus et succentor"Gartner, *Geschichte des Gymnasiums zu Zittau*, 3.

university in Central and Eastern Europe and attracted students from all over the German-speaking lands.[78]

We find Zwicker's name on the list of students who successfully stood for their bachelor's examination at the University of Prague in 1379.[79] Having received a degree, Zwicker continued teaching at Zittau until 1381, when he joined the order of Celestine monks at the nearby convent of Oybin. A number of reasons could have prompted Zwicker to choose a contemplative life, from the recent death of Charles IV to the beginning of the Schism to a particularly cruel outbreak of the plague in Bohemia, which had until then relatively untouched by the disease.[80] Why he chose to join a relatively small monastic order, although one with important connections to the Luxemburg dynasty, is not clear. By all indications, Zwicker's new vocation suited him. In 1391, Zwicker became the abbot at Oybin; a few years later he was elected provincial of the Bohemian Celestines.[81]

If the Celestines, by virtue of being a more rigorous offshoot of the Benedictine order, put particular emphasis on withdrawal from the world, Zwicker's life after becoming an abbot was a surprisingly itinerant one. In the same year he was made abbot, Zwicker joined Martin of Amberg during his inquisitorial campaign in Erfurt. There is nothing to suggest how the two men met, but it is possible that it happened in Prague, where the only other Celestine house in Bohemia was located. The cooperation between the two, although a brief one, defined the decade of persecutions that followed. First, it introduced Zwicker to a wide range of practical inquisitorial skills, which Martin of Amberg already possessed. Moreover, the anti-Waldensian

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[78] Kintzinger, "Schoolmasters and the *Artes* in Late Medieval Europe," 168-69. On the level of education among schoolteachers in late medieval towns: Sheffler, *Schools and Schooling in Late Medieval Germany*, 129-31.

[79] Beránek, *Liber decanorum facultatis philosophicae Universitatis Pragensis*, 187.

[80] Fudge, *Jan Hus*, 21; Abel, *Agricultural Fluctuations in Europe*, 88.

[81] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 94-95; Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 26-27.

campaign in Erfurt provided Zwicker with initial knowledge about Waldensianism and acquainted him with a group of converted Waldensian ministers, who served as informants for both inquisitors. Newly-converted Waldensian preachers proved to be especially useful for Zwicker, as they provided him with crucial information about the beliefs and composition of Waldensian communities throughout the German-speaking lands. Judging by the geographic origin of converted ministers, the information they related to Zwicker defined his inquisitorial itinerary as he moved from one area with a well-established Waldensian presence to another: the Mark of Brandenburg and Pomerania, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, and Hungary.[82]

It is likely that by conducting the inquisition in Erfurt under Martin of Amberg's guidance, Zwicker acquired not just a list of "leads" for his future inquests, but also a number of skills and techniques that allowed him to organize large-scale persecutions of Waldensians. Perhaps the most important technique that Zwicker successfully adopted was the use of uniform questionnaires that allowed most interrogations to follow the same model. During this inquisitorial campaign in Brandenburg and Pomerania (November 1392-March 1394), Zwicker conducted over 450 interrogations and clearly needed a reliable organizational strategy that the questionnaire provided. First, the list of questions simplified the very process of interrogation, making sure all important questions were asked in a particular order. This order progressed from relatively straightforward questions about the person and his or her family to more complex queries about the individual's religious belief. The questionnaire ends with a set of questions dealing with the individual's prior abjurations before an inquisitor and his or her intentions to convert to Catholicism and abjure heresy.[83] Second, the particular order of questions made

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[82] Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31, 367.

[83] Kurze, *Quellen*, 73-75. Kurze notes that the questions regarding one's beliefs are phrased in such a way as to prevent the individual under interrogation from guessing the correct answer.

interrogation records easier to consult: the reader could skim through the less important parts, knowing that he would not lose track. Moreover, subdivision of questions allowed for easy retrieval of a particular kind of information. Thus, if the reader wanted to learn about the family of his interrogated subject in order to place him within the social network of Waldensians in the region, he could do so by consulting the earlier part of the interrogation record. Conversely, if one wanted to learn more about the actual beliefs of Waldensians, he knew to consult the information contained in the middle part of each testimony. Finally, standardized questionnaires allowed Zwicker to delegate interrogations to his associate, Nicholas of Wartenberg (although the surviving records only show this happening once, towards the end of the inquisition).[84]

Highly uniform records allow us to reconstruct the general course of each interrogation. The individual suspected of being a heretic was summoned to appear in front of a tribunal presided over by Zwicker himself. The interrogation opened with an oath—which the individual was supposed to swear in vernacular German—to speak the truth.[85] The oath was followed by the interrogation proper, following the order within the questionnaire. Finally, the individual was asked if he or she wanted to abjure heresy and return to the fold of the Church. Another vernacular oath followed, this time instructing the oath-taker to abjure all heretical beliefs.[86] Finally, the inquisitor was supposed to conduct a ritual absolving the abjured individual of his sins.[87] Alternatively, if the interrogations did not prove that the individual was in fact a Waldensian, a vernacular oath of expurgation allowed the individual to purge himself of any accusations and swear that he or she had never harbored any heretical beliefs.[88] If the inquisition

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[84] Kurze, *Quellen*, 256-57.
[85] Kurze, *Quellen*, 75.
[86] Kurze, *Quellen*, 76.
[87] Kurze, *Quellen*, 77.
[88] Kurze, *Quellen*, 75.

in Brandenburg and Pomerania was the first place where Zwicker tried this method of conducting interrogations, he clearly deemed it a success. He later incorporated all the *formulae*, as well as the list of questions, into a compendium known as *Processus Petri*. Later versions of the *Processus* found in Austria, likely used by Zwicker during his later Austrian campaign, show regional modifications (e.g., they invoke the name of the bishop of Passau), which strongly suggest that Zwicker used the same interrogation techniques in his later inquisitions.[89]

After spending over a year pursuing Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania, Zwicker shifted his attention to Upper Austria. In 1395 Zwicker arrived in Steyr ready to launch the second large-scale inquisitorial campaign of his career. However, the Austrian Waldensians, who had faced inquisitors before, proved to be more resilient and resistant in the face of persecution. Unlike their less organized brethren from the banks of the Oder, the Waldensians in Upper Austria were ready to use violence to defend themselves. It is likely that Zwicker himself was a target of Waldensian violence, nearly burned alive when someone set fire to a barn of the parish priest in Steyr, where Zwicker and his associates were spending the night. In turn, he became less lenient with the condemned.[90] After a period of unrest in Austria following the death of Duke Albert III (d. 1395), Zwicker was only able to begin his persecution in earnest in 1397.[91] In the end, Zwicker's inquisition prevailed, resulting in over a hundred death sentences, among other punishments. Also in Upper Austria, Zwicker attempted to record his inquisitorial

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[89] Kurze, *Quellen*, 75. The edition by Kurze uses the manuscript from Cod. Seitenstettinensis 252, Seitenstetten Abbey, Lower Austria.

[90] The incident was described by Zwicker in the letter he addressed to the nobility and clergy of Austria, exhorting them to support his inquisition. "Nam nuper in nocte vigiliarum natalis beate virginis genitricis dei Marie combusserunt horreum domini plebani in Styra eo quod in domo sua colligit fovet et nutrit inquisitores pravitatis heretice cum sua familia." Preger, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus über die österreichischen Waldesier," 250. Although Zwicker never admits that he was the victim of this attack, he was likely the only inquisitor in Steyr at the time. Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 218.

[91] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 212-18.

experience in writing, in the form of an extensive disputation with imaginary Waldensian "heresiarchs." It is possible that Waldensian resistance made him aware of his mortality and pushed him to set out his methods for converting Waldensians in writing.

The resulting treatise, named after its incipit *Cum dormirent homines* ("While the men slept…", Matt. 13:25) is, in the words of its principal scholar, Peter Biller, "the single most important literary text on the Waldensians from the later middle ages."[92] In the process of his "disputation," Zwicker undertakes a thorough refutation of individual Waldensian tenets, as well as a critique of the spiritual and organizational problems related to the mode of clandestine Waldensian preaching. Somewhat surprisingly, the treatise does not discuss practical matters of persecution, examination, or sentencing of actual Waldensians. Indeed, *Cum dormirent homines* does not even identify its author as an inquisitor (arguably, this task was performed by the *Processus Petri*, which was often distributed along with the treatise).[93] As I will discuss in a later chapter, Zwicker's composition of the treatise has to be understood in the context of the catechizing attempts of late medieval Church reformers and of Zwicker's own desire to provide useful polemical arguments for other reformers who, like him, sought to use Waldensian converts as convenient "good Christians" for whose sake such a reform needed to be undertaken.

After the campaign in Upper Austria, Zwicker followed his "leads" from earlier in the decade to the Crown of Hungary and Lower Austria (Styria). Some of the resulting inquisitions Zwicker undertook together with his old mentor, Martin of Amberg. After conducting inquisitions in Trnava, Ödenburg, and Hartberg, Zwicker headed—without Martin—to the easternmost point on his itinerary, Buda (Budapest, Hungary) in 1404, before returning to

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[92] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 237; Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*.

[93] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 253-54. For a list of extant manuscripts of *Cum dormirent homines* and *Processus Petri*, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 264-69.

Vienna during the same year.[94] The evidence for these inquisitions was preserved in the most fragmentary form, and we know little more than their date, location, and occasionally the names of the individuals involved. Still, it is clear that in Hungary and Lower Austria Zwicker pursued German-speaking Waldensians, who had fled earlier persecutions. Thus, in Buda, Zwicker accepted the abjuration of Elisabeth Sneyder, who had been previously converted in Ungarisch Brod (Uherský Brod, Czech Republic) earlier in the century by Heinrich of Olomutz (c. 1370) and presumably relapsed later.[95] Another fragmentary source from 1404 informs us that the last recorded inquisitorial trial presided over by Peter Zwicker was attended, rather fittingly, by Nicholas Gottschalk of Brandenburg—now a catholic priest and a canon—one of the masters whom he and Martin of Amberg had converted in the early 1390s.[96] One of the men who helped to initiate the decade of persecution of German Waldensians witnessed the last inquisition of its main agent.

Heinrich Angermeier of Stein

Virtually nothing is known about the third itinerant inquisitor active during the decade, Heinrich Angermeier, apart from his brief career as an inquisitor. Despite being responsible for a chain of inquisitions in Swabia and Franconia in 1393-1394, Heinrich Angermeier remains little more than a name. The first mention of Angermeier, describing his arrival in Augsburg in late July of 1393, describes him as a "priest from Bamberg," which may suggest that he was in some way connected to the bishop of Bamberg, Lambert of Brunn, known for his interest in persecution of heresy and associations with Martin of Amberg.[97] There is no evidence for this

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[94] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 5-6.

[95] "…abiuravit Elisabeth Sneyder, conversa per dominum Henricum de Olmütz in Broda Ungaricali." Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*.

[96] "Nicolao Gottschalk canonico" Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*.

[97] "In dem 1393 jar nach sant Jacobs tag do kom ain pfaff her von Baubenberg…" "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

speculation, however. Considering Angermeier's mobility, he could have simply passed through Bamberg on his way to Augsburg.

Angermeier began his known inquisitorial career in Augsburg in 1393, when his arrival in the city initiated a persecution of Waldensians by the bishop of Augsburg. An anonymous author of a city chronicle states that a priest—later identified as Heinrich Angermeier—arrived in the city as a traveling preacher, and gave a sermon against heresy which provoked a Waldensian to attack him. The failed attack likely served as a catalyst for a persecution that allowed the bishop of Augsburg to show his power over the defiant city council. Varying accounts of the inquisition claim that it involved between 34 and 46 Waldensians, who were condemned in the presence of the bishop himself and had to perform public penance. Urban chronicles mention that Angermeier participated in the inquisition alongside the Dominican Peter Engerlin, indicating that Angermeier may have lacked inquisitorial experience to act on his own.[98]

The inquisition in Augsburg earned Angermeier the trust of the bishop of Augsburg, who unleashed the inquisitor onto smaller towns in the diocese. In the fall and early winter of 1393, Heinrich Angermeier was involved in a swift succession of smaller inquisitorial campaigns, in which he acted as a representative of the bishop of Augsburg and his inquisitor. In early November, Angermeier oversaw a trial in Wemding that ended with the burning of ten men and women at the stake.[99] Almost simultaneously, the inquisitor presided over a trial in Dinkelsbühl, where an unknown number of men and women were accused of following Waldensianism, but

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[98] "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96-97. For a detailed reconstruction of the course of the inquisition in Augsburg, see Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 43-68.

[99] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620. Oefele erroneously reports Johannes Mair's name as "Johannes Gair." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

only two were burned.[100] A month later, in Donauwörth as many as forty Waldensian were condemned to various punishments (including the execution of as many as twenty-six).[101] Unlike in Augsburg, where Angermeier had to cooperate with a local Dominican inquisitor, in later inquisitions he was entrusted with full episcopal authority. The Dinkelsbühl trial records, for example, call the inquisitor a "venerable and circumspect man, lord and master Heinrich, called Angermeier... deputy of the bishop of Augsburg in the matter of the Waldensian sect."[102] Likely, having proved his ability to persecute in Augsburg, Angermeier was given free rein in the surrounding region.

Describing the wave of inquisitions, a contemporary chronicler from Nördlingen, another town in the region, quipped that the persecutors tended to spare the poor and send the wealthy to the stake, suggesting—albeit in a somewhat vague manner—that the principal cause of this practice was the bishop's greed.[103] Although accusations of venality could have been simply a response to the threatening progress of inquisitions in the region (the Nördlingen chronicler could have feared for the fate of his own city), it is clear that outside of Augsburg, Angermeier's authority to persecute originated with the bishop. This may explain why all the persecutions took place inside the Augsburg diocese (or just outside of its border, as in case of Wemding), within the bishop's jurisdiction or sphere of influence. Conversely, Heinrich Angermeier's attempt to conduct an inquisition in the neighboring diocese of Würzburg resulted in a spectacular failure, when he accused a merchant from Rothenburg ob der Tauber of being a heretic, but failed to

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[100] Christian Bürckstümmer, "Waldenser in Dinkelsbühl," 274-5.

[101] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620; "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

[102] "…venerabilem ac circumspectum virum, Dominum et Magistrum henricum, dictum Angermayr, a Reverendo in Christo patre et Domino, Domino Burckhardo dei et apostolicae sedis gratia Augustensis ecclesiae Episcopo Deputatum, propter Sectam Waldensium." Origional capitalization preserved. Bürckstümmer, "Waldenser in Dinkelsbühl," 274.

[103] "Tandem finaliter inventum est, quod Domini illorum, qui combusti fuerunt, receperunt bona ipsorum, & pauperes dimiserunt. Credo, quod causa principalis fuerit mala." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620.

prove it during the trial. Left without episcopal support, Angermeier disappeared into obscurity.[104] In 1403 his name appeared in the municipal records of Swiss Lucerne, where Angermeier attempted to find unspecified heresy (perhaps in an attempt to replicate his earlier success in Augsburg), but failed.[105]

As the careers of the three itinerant inquisitors demonstrate, the 1390s were a decade of unprecedented intensification of anti-heretical persecution in the German-speaking lands. And yet, both the campaigns that found their victims and especially those that failed to do so prove that the reasons for their success and failure were rooted in the local context, as well as in the motivations of the inquisitors who initiated them. Moreover, these three inquisitorial careers show the importance of networks of affiliation between the inquisitors as well as their patrons. Acting on an ad hoc basis, itinerant inquisitors had virtually no institutional or personal authority of their own; rather they needed to acquire authority and support from their patrons. In particular, the brief inquisitorial career of Heinrich Angermeier shows the importance of this process. As the patrons—bishops, in particular—came to use anti-heretical persecutions as a political instrument, itinerant inquisitors served as catalysts for such processes; the arrangement was mutually beneficial. On the other hand, changing climates of patronage frequently forced itinerant inquisitors to move from one part of the German lands to another. This surprising mobility—both among the persecutors and the persecuted— which characterized German Waldensianism and its repression during the later Middle Ages created new areas of anti-Waldensian activity. As a result, even heretical communities in locations that remained outside

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[104] For Angermeier's unsuccessful inquisition outside of the diocese of Augsburg, see Schnurrer, "Der Fall Hans Wern," 31-4; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 72-3.

[105] Utz Tremp, 'Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 70 n.41. It is also possible that one "Henricus de Lapide" (that is, Latinized version of Heinrich [Angermeier] of Stein) was involved in the inquisition against "Lollards and Beguines" ("Lollhardorum et Beginarum") in Mainz in 1406, but there is no further evidence except for a brief chronicle reference. Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, 82.

of the scope of the itinerant inquisitors experienced religious intolerance by the end of the decade. While some were able to avert it, as the examples of Fribourg and possibly Lucerne demonstrate, Waldensian communities in other towns fell prey to the rising intolerance towards religious heterodoxy. As a result, the 1390s remain in the historical record as a decade of seemingly unceasing inquisitions, with each episode defined by a number of local political, religious, and social factors that dictated the degree of its success, scope, duration, participants, and victims.

Chapter Two

“Forgotten Heretics”: Waldensian Communities in German Cities

Introducing medieval German Waldensianism to a general audience of *The American Scholar* magazine in 1986, Robert E. Lerner lamented that they are “the Middle Ages’ forgotten heretics.”[1] Although the situation has improved dramatically since then and the interest in German Waldensians has surged after the publication of syntheses by Euan Cameron and Gabriel Audisio, and a collection of essays by Peter Biller, there are still significant lacunae in our understanding of this clandestine religious group.[2] In particular, Waldensians who lived in German cities and towns remain particularly understudied, although a number of recent studies (most of them published by German and Swiss scholars) have improved the situation by calling attention to the heretical communities in Strasbourg, Fribourg, and Mainz.[3] This chapter will provide a socio-economic sketch of urban Waldensian communities and discuss their religious beliefs and practices. This information is crucial for understanding the decade of persecutions—the majority of which took place in cities—and its effects on Waldensian communities.

Building on the scholarship produced by historians of Waldensians living in the cities on the Rhine and in the Swiss lands, this chapter addresses the interpretation that views the second half of the fourteenth century as a “crisis” of Waldensianism. While heretical communities during this period faced significant pressures both from the outside and from within—and a number of communities disappeared during the 1390s—there were also important continuities that outlived the decade of persecution. Moreover, late medieval Waldensian communities

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[1] Lerner, “The German Waldensians,” 234.

[2] Biller, *The Waldenses*; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*; Cameron, *Waldenses.*

[3] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*; Modestin, *Quellen*; Deane, “Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution”; Utz Tremp, *Waldenser, Wiedergänger, Hexen und Rebellen.*

underwent crucial transformations as the long-distance networks of wandering ministers all but disappeared after over twenty of them converted to Catholicism circa 1390.[4] Evidence from Strasbourg and Fribourg clearly demonstrates the increasing role of individual communities in ensuring self-preservation and in establishing ties with other Waldensian communities in the region—a process that started before the 1390s, but proved to be crucial for Waldensianism's survival during the decade of intensified persecutions. Crucially, the crisis of the institution of itinerant ministers may have given religiously active women to the opportunity become primary repositories of Waldensian religious lore in their communities.

Our knowledge about Waldensian communities in Germany, both urban and rural, comes from the sources written by their persecutors, a significant obstacle on our path to analyzing the structure of these communities and their religious culture. The information about Waldensians often distorted by a number of *topoi* traditionally associated with medieval anti-heretical texts (illiteracy, simplicity, marginality, social deviancy, etc.), some of which will be addressed later in this and other chapters. Moreover, our reliance on primarily inquisitorial sources skews the available sample—only those communities that came under persecution in the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century are represented in the historical record and only those records that survived until the modern period. Thus, our knowledge about Waldensian communities is necessarily conditional and involves extrapolation from a relatively small data sample. When it comes to the urban Waldensian communities, the most informative sources were produced during the investigations in Strasbourg and Fribourg (1399-1400); more fragmentary evidence is available from a few more cities that underwent inquisitions during the decade.

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[4] At least 20 Waldensian ministers either converted to orthodoxy or were arrested by 1391. Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 79-80. Two list of converted magistri were compiled in the early 1390s, the so-called "shorter" and "longer" lists are published in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 367 and 330 (respectively).

German Waldensians: A Historiographical Sketch

German Waldensians—because of evident similarities between their and later Protestant religious beliefs—had long been adopted into the ranks of martyrs and forerunners of the Protestant Reformation, alongside the Czech Hussites, by early modern Protestant historians and polemicists. Most notably, Flacius Illyricus (1520-1575), in his influential *Catalogue of Witnesses to the Truth* (*Catalogus testium veritatis*, 1556), devoted a great deal of attention to Waldensianism; later scholars followed his example.[5] Protestant appropriation of medieval Waldensians elicited a response from the Jesuit scholar Jacob Gretser (1562-1625), who published an edition of the polemical treatise entitled (after its incipit) *Cum dormirent homines* ("While the men slept [the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat]"), a text that methodically criticized Waldensian history and religious beliefs.[6]

Large-scale studies of heresy and its persecution in late medieval Germany began to appear in the later nineteenth century, as monumental publishing efforts by German archivists and medievalists made collections of inquisitorial documents from regional archives accessible to the academic community. This source-driven approach revealed the scope of the wave of anti-Waldensian persecutions at the end of the fourteenth century. Although the works produced by Herman Haupt and others contain a bird's-eye view of these inquisitorial campaigns and are lacking in nuance or historical context, this generation of scholars was the first to establish a narrative of anti-Waldensian persecutions in late medieval Germany.[7]

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[5] Flacius Illyricus, *Catalogus testium veritatis*. See also, Biller, *The Waldenses*, 241-42. For a discussion about the historiographical connection between "heresy" and religious reform, see Kaminsky, "Problematics of 'Heresy' and 'The Reformation'," 1-22.

[6] Peter Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*. Cf. Matthew 13:25.

[7] Döllinger, *Beiträge*; Herman Haupt, *Waldenserthum und Inquisition*; Haupt, *Die religiösen Sekten in Franken*.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the history of Waldensianism (and of heretical movements in general) has developed in four broad directions. First, Herbert Grundmann's pioneering work on medieval religious movements—mainstream and heterodox—invited scholars to observe parallels between them. Herbert Grundmann's study of the *topos* of the heretic coupled with a critical reading of inquisitorial sources as a genre inspired later historians to consider the "reality" of heresy and ask about the ways in which inquisitors and Catholic polemicists invented certain heretical movements by projecting their social and religious anxieties onto their targets. As part of the same intellectual movement, scholars of medieval heresy began to question the most basic assumptions about it, from heretical literacy to the social structure of heretical communities to the cultural differences between "popular" heretical culture and the "elite" culture of its persecutors.[8] In a similar vein, Marxist interpretations provided a materialist vision of heretical communities as proto-revolutionary organizations of oppressed peasants and urban craftsmen, who expressed their class grievances in religious terms.[9]

Another major contribution of twentieth-century scholarship lies in the development of important studies of local inquisitorial campaigns. Building upon the collections of sources first identified by the nineteenth-century historians, these studies re-examined and re-evaluated them in the vein of social and cultural approaches to heresy and its persecution. Dietrich Kurze's article "Zur Ketzergeschichte der Mark Brandenburg und Pommerns vornehmlich im 14. Jahrhundert. Luziferianer, Putzkeller und Waldenser" examined the history of anti-heretical persecutions in

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[8] Grundmann, *Religious Movements*; Grundmann, "Ketzerverhöre des Spätmittelalters als quellenkritisches Problem"; Grundmann, "Der Typus des Ketzers in mittelalterlicher Anschauung." Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*; to some extent, Pegg, *Corruption of Angels*; Moore, *The War on Heresy* (Cambridge, 2012). Pertaining to Waldensianism, Grado C. Merlo argues that the use of the term "Waldensianism" implies coherence between historically independent, in his opinion, branches of this religious movement. He proposes to use the term 'Waldensianisms' for differentiation between multiple regional forms of Waldensian belief. Merlo, *Valdesi e valdismi medievali II*. For a counter-argument, see Biller, "Goodbye to Waldensianism?" 3-33.

[9] Werner, *Ideologische Aspekte des deutsch-österreichischenWaldensertums im 14. Jahrhundert*; Erbstößer, *Sozialreligiöse Strömungen im späten Mittelalter.*

Brandenburg and Pomerania, culminating with Peter Zwicker's large-scale inquisition of Waldensians around Stettin. The article was followed by a volume of published sources, which made the relatively obscure interrogation records available to the wider community of scholars.[10] Similarly, a study of Bohemian inquisitions of the 1330s-1350s (also accompanied by a volume of sources) by Alexander Patschovsky expanded our knowledge of Waldensian communities in that part of the Empire, revealing the large number of Bohemian Waldensians and their diverse social standing.[11] More recently, work done in Swiss Fribourg by Kathrin Utz Tremp and in Strasbourg by Georg Modestin has brought attention to urban Waldensians living on the western border of the German-speaking lands.[12] Both studies demonstrated a somewhat unexpected social make-up of the heretical communities: Waldensians in Fribourg and Strasbourg were predominantly members of urban merchant and craftsmen elites, with connections to the political structures of their cities. In other words, regional and case studies of both rural and urban Waldensians revealed an unusual variety among heretical communities across Central and Eastern Europe, which invited reconsideration of some of the pre-existing paradigms. The following sections of this chapter will provide a brief account of Waldensian communities, their beliefs and structures, in order to establish what kinds of heretical communities came under attack at the close of the fourteenth century, in what Richard Kieckhefer has called "one of the most important repressive endeavors of fourteenth-century Europe, and surely one of the most vigorous antiheretical campaigns of all medieval Germany."[13]

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[10] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte der Mark Brandenburg und Pommerns," 50-94; Kurze, *Quellen*.

[11] Patschovsky, *Die Anfänge einer ständigen Inquisition in Böhmen*; Patschovsky, *Quellen*.

[12] Utz Tremp, *Quellen*; Utz Tremp, *Waldenser, Wiedergänger, Hexen und Rebellen*; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*; Modestin, *Quellen*.

[13] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55.

Waldensianism: Between Beliefs and Practice

Since the inception of the Waldensian movement in later twelfth-century Lyon, where it was started by Valdes—traditionally identified as a wealthy merchant—as a charismatic group of gospel preachers, who emphasized charity and humility, it underwent a number of crucial transformations. Its key tenets appear to have been expanded and elaborated, both as a result of the conflict with the church and under influence of the long history of persecution (over two hundred years by the 1390s). Forced to define itself in opposition to mainstream Christianity, Waldensianism became rooted in scriptural fundamentalism, shunning every aspect of Christian belief and practice absent from the Gospels. In its fully-fledged form, Waldensian beliefs represented, as Malcolm Lambert puts it, "a cutting away of what were seen to be excrescences of orthodox belief in purgatory, in images, in pilgrimages; in an insistence on moral life; and in the literal observance of the texts of Scripture."[14] Other beliefs surfaced mostly in anti-heretical tracts or in lists of errors compiled during inquisitions; much information in these comes from a long textual tradition of writing about heresy and heretics, rather than from actual Waldensians. While such elaboration on what Waldensians *did not believe* may have been expressed by a few, if not imagined wholesale by clerical writers in an attempt to portray Waldensians as irredeemable radicals, most lists of errors compiled in the 1390s tend to emphasize a bare minimum of the most crucial points of departure from orthodoxy.[15]

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[14] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 152

[15] The longest list of Waldensian "errors" appears in a letter written by Peter Zwicker to the rulers and clergy of Austria (1395). The most accessible edition of the list is in Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus über die österreichischen Waldesier," 246-50. Other contemporary lists of "errors" a more brief. A list from Augsburg (*c.* 1393), preserved in the chronicle of Johannes Mair [Gair], counts only 16 items. Gair, *Nördlingani brevis Historia*, 620. A contemporary list from Bingen (1393) contains only 10 Waldensian tenets. Mainz, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. I 151, fol. 205r. Neither of the lists concerns itself with non-theological errors, i.e. statements that emphasize heretical 'otherness' in non-religious spheres.

Perhaps the most pressing concern was the validity of the sacraments performed by the clergy and their effect on one's salvation. The direct result of the Waldensian criticism of clerical and sinfulness and misbehavior was the worry that sinful clergy cannot hear confessions, absolve sins, or perform other sacraments. These neo-Donatist views on one hand, and unyielding belief in the spiritual power of the itinerant ministers (*magistri*) on the other, were expressed by most individuals questioned during the last decade of the fourteenth century. Thus, the Waldensians in Strasbourg admitted that they "have no faith in priesthood" (*kein globen hettent an die priesterschaft*) and therefore did not attend the mass or only went to church to avoid attracting the attention of their non-Waldensian neighbors.[16] Only their sect's *magistri*, they claimed, could hear confessions to absolve a believer's sins. This ability remained the main service a minister could provide to his flock and the most valuable one. Given the fact that most Waldensians did not believe in Purgatory and eschewed prayers for the dead, receiving a timely absolution of one's sins remained a crucial priority for most believers. In fact, in some of the lists of "errors" the two beliefs are mentioned in proximity to each other. For example, in the lists from both Strasbourg and Augsburg, disbelief in Purgatory and the statement about confessions to the *magistri* are mentioned next to each other; the Augsburg list and the list contained in a letter by Peter Zwicker (likely informed by his earlier inquisition in Brandenburg and Pomerania, but exaggerated for polemic effect) open with the statement on confessions.[17]

Generally speaking, there was not much difference in terms of belief between the urban Waldensians and their rural brethren, which in my opinion comes from a degree of communication—mediated through itinerant *magistri*—between communities across the

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[16] Modestin, *Quellen*, 169-70.

[17] Augsburg: Gair, *Nördlingani brevis Historia*, 620; Strasbourg: Modestin, *Quellen*, 154-55; Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus über die österreichischen Waldesier," 246.

German-speaking lands. If we are to find any distinction between urban and rural Waldensianism, it lies in the practice of these beliefs, in the way "errors" recorded in inquisitorial documents translated into religious observance. As in any religious system, Waldensian religious practice was colored by the needs of their existence in a particular environment. Thus it appears that the Waldensians in rural Brandenburg and Pomerania tended to combine the teachings of the wandering ministers with some of the beliefs from mainstream Catholicism, often colored by a patina of popular superstition. Two Waldensians questioned by Peter Zwicker in Pomerania (1392-1393) claimed that although they did not believe in the power of holy water, as Waldensian masters taught, they still believed it to have special qualities, saying that it remained fresh longer than the unconsecrated kind. Another Waldensian follower (*credens*) put sacramental palms on the fire, expecting to calm storms this way.[18] Yet another believer, an elderly woman, admitted that she simultaneously believed that holy water washed away sins, as the Church taught, *and* that it did not, as the Waldensian preachers told her. Perhaps rare visits of the *magistri* and relatively constant exposure to mainstream Catholicism made it easier to believe both.[19]

This brings up another crucial aspect of Waldensian religious practice—the necessity to practice religion in accordance with both mainstream Christianity and Waldensianism. The resulting dual religion over time created intriguing syncretic beliefs, aimed to maximize the chances for salvation for individuals and their family members. Although the lists of Waldensian tenets often claimed that heretics considered each other to be among the elect number of "those in the know" (*notos* or *Kunden*) and thought that orthodox Christians, whom they called "strangers," (*alienos* or *Fremden*) could be saved, in reality the lines between Waldensianism

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[18] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 135.
[19] Kurze, *Quellen*, 155. Reference in Biller, "Goodbye to Waldensianism?," 29.

and orthodoxy were often blurred.[20] Theoretical disbelief in Purgatory was often questioned by individual *credentes*, as they wondered how a not wholly good person could go to heaven or pondered whether they should pray for the dead. Similarly, although Waldensianism proclaimed disbelief in the power of the saints, some believers still admitted to having a personal saintly patron to whom they prayed; some explained that they had "acquired" the patron before joining the Waldensians. Some went on pilgrimages, even as far as Rome, for the sake of liberating the souls of dead family members or ordered masses for the dead. Although many *credentes* claimed that they did these things in order to blend in, one has to wonder at what point pretending to be an orthodox Christian became reality, especially considering that most acts of "blending in" contradicted major tenets of Waldensianism. At any rate, the attempts at "playing Catholic" demonstrate that by the later fourteenth century German Waldensians were not as strongly opposed to lying as some of the authors of anti-heretical texts imagined them to be; the need to survive was clearly a priority.[21]

In light of the differences between Waldensian tenets and practice, some scholars have made the argument that rural Waldensians showed more commitment to their religion than their urban brethren. While rural Waldensians had relatively few outlets for lay spirituality and therefore tended to side with devoted visiting preachers over their oftentimes inadequate local clergy, in urban communities heretical belief had to compete with mendicant preachers, religious confraternities, and other outlets for lay spirituality that sapped devotion and ultimately led to the waning of this kind of religious counterculture in towns. This line of reasoning is supported in

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[20] Mair, *Nördlingani brevis Historia*, 620; Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus über die österreichischen Waldesier," 249.

[21] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 135-37.

part by the fact that Waldensian communities in rural areas did, in fact, endure into the Early Modern Period and the Protestant Reformation, and beyond, while those in urban areas did not.[22]

Aside from the relatively obvious pitfall of judging the robustness of a religious community at a specific point in time by how long it lasted, a question remains about the level of religious commitment shown by urban and rural heretical communities. On the one hand, urban Waldensians were perhaps part of a world where lay spirituality could find outlets that were within the limits of orthodoxy. Members of the community in Strasbourg did confess to the mendicant preachers and we cannot ignore the fact that the community appears to have been without the spiritual guidance of the *magistri* throughout the 1390s.[23] Nor can we deny that the bulk of the information about the community came from a circle of women who decided that it was better to be an informant than an accused. On the other hand, the communities in Strasbourg and in Fribourg had a number of meeting places used for religious purposes, remained in contact with each other and even after a decade without access to a wandering minister could still be identified as a community. Moreover, even after a tumultuous decade of persecution that befell urban communities in Southern Germany, and a few crucial campaigns in the early decades of the fifteenth century, the Waldensian presence in these places continued to merit visits from fifteenth-century travelling ministers like Friedrich Reiser (d. 1458) and even inspired him to try to unite these communities with the Hussite movement in the Czech lands. In 1458 Reiser was apprehended and later executed in Strasbourg, suggesting, according to Lambert, that the Waldensians there were unable to prevent this outcome.[24] While Lambert interprets this as a sign of the weakness of the Waldensian community in Strasbourg, it also means that preaching to the

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[22] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 181; Treesh, "Europe's Peasant Heretics," 120-8.
[23] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 121-23.
[24] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser - Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 83-86; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 147-49.

Strasbourg Waldensians in the 1450s was still important enough for Reiser to run the risk of arrest.[25]

Nor does the longevity of the rural communities in Brandenburg and Pomerania, as well as in parts of Austria, necessarily prove their members' religious commitment. We encounter cases where children raised in Waldensian families rebelled and left their communities, with one of them claiming that he would "rather go for a beer than confess to them [i.e., to Waldensian *magistri*]." Another individual became disillusioned after receiving a harsh penance from a Waldensian minister.[26] Nor were the heretical ministers themselves, despite the level of devotion that made it possible for them to endure the life of wandering and semi-poverty, not to mention the threat of prosecution, immune to crises of faith. Records from the early 1390s show that a number of them converted back to orthodoxy to the great detriment of the communities of *credentes* whom they betrayed to the inquisitors in exchange for absolution. Rather it is likely that the heretical communities in the countryside persisted because of their relative isolation and the lack of interest of the local clergy in eradicating heresy. By contrast, urban communities by the end of the fourteenth century became engaged in the power struggles between urban governments, interested in keeping their towns as "*corpus christianum* in miniature," powerful prelates, and other towns. This process will be addressed in a greater detail in the following chapter.[27] In addition to their importance for urban and ecclesiastical politics, the higher—as a rule—socio-economic status of Waldensians in Southern German cities made urban Waldensian communities into expedient targets for persecution.

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[25] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 181.

[26] "…libencius ivisset ad cervisiam quam ad confitendum eis." Kurze, *Quellen*, 185. Cf. Kurze, *Quellen*, 251.

[27] Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 49. See also, Lilley, *City and Cosmos: The Medieval World in Urban Form*, 144-45.

Urban Waldensian Communities: A Socio-Economic Portrait

Although overviews of later medieval Waldensianism tend to emphasize its rural and small-town nature, a careful observation of the evidence from significant urban centers allows one to see that heretical communities, much like the larger communities in which they were situated, drew on all levels of medieval society. The tendency to locate Waldensians among the lower strata of peasants and day laborers is especially pronounced in the works produced by scholars in the former German Democratic Republic, which analyzed heresy within the Marxist framework, as a "spontaneous reflex to the crisis in the feudal economy."[28] It is likely that peasants and small-time laborers and craftsmen did comprise the bulk of the Waldensian movement—just as these social and economic groups constituted the bulk of medieval society in general—but it is important to recognize the role of urban Waldensians, who could have been responsible for providing the itinerant preachers with crucial resources that allowed them to traverse the Empire on their pastoral rounds.[29] Urban communities also attracted the most attention from the inquisitors during this period (although this conclusion might merely be a product of the better documentation practices that existed in German towns).

Because most of the inquisitions that took place in the 1390's and particularly those initiated by itinerant inquisitors have left so little in terms of actual documents (interrogation records, verdicts and other informative sources), it is impossible to talk about specific socio-economic and socio-religious portraits of each Waldensian community that experienced persecution during the decade. This makes the two inquisitions that did leave extensive evidence in their wake more important for understanding the way urban Waldensian communities operated. The inquisition in Strasbourg (1400), conducted by the city council of that town, and

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[28] "...spontaner Reflex der Krisenerscheinungen in der feudalen Ökonomik." Werner, *Ideologische Aspekte*, 224.
[29] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 181.

Peter Zwicker's inquest in Brandenburg and Pomerania (1393-4), present us with a rare possibility of hearing the voices—however muffled in transmission—of actual German Waldensians. The inquisition in Strasbourg in particular has left us with a rich cache of sources that, because they were conducted by a tribunal unfamiliar with a long-standing tradition of inquisition of heretical depravity, seems to have been collected using fairly flexible methods of interrogation and recorded in the local vernacular.[30] Strasbourg records remain unmatched in presenting us with a portrait of a well-established Waldensian community in a large city in Upper Germany. Although these records inform most of the discussion of urban Waldensians at the end of the fourteenth century in this chapter, it is my contention that even if the Strasbourg inquisition was not typical of others in the 1390s, the Waldensian community in the city was. Like Strasbourg, Augsburg and Nuremberg were centers of urban manufacturing, fueled by long-distance trade and immigration into the cities after a few decades of intermittent plague epidemics. Protected by Free Imperial City status, all three cities lay on a major trade route across Europe and during the period emerged as centers of textile production. Population numbers for all three were also comparable, around 20,000 in later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.[31] Finally, all three had sizable Waldensian communities that experienced inquisitorial attention at the end of the century.

A good example of Waldensian involvement in urban merchant culture is evident from the life of Friedrich Reiser (c. 1402 – 1458) who served as an apprentice to Hans of Plauen, a merchant from Nuremberg. Reiser was born in a Waldensian family shortly after the end of the decade-long persecutions. Although the exact date eludes us, we know that at some point in or

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[30] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 147.

[31] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 113; Isenmann, *Die deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter*, 62.

shortly after 1416, he left his home in Daiting in the vicinity of Donauwörth and headed north.[32] Like many young men and women before and after him, Friedrich traveled about 50 miles to Nuremberg, the largest town in the region, in search of economic opportunity fostered by the city's trade and manufacturing. Young Friedrich must have experienced the signs of this growth himself, exemplified in the flow of goods from and to Nuremberg that passed through his native Daiting. Friedrich's father, a merchant, was also linked inexorably to the economic pull of Nuremberg—one of the largest towns in the Holy Roman Empire, sitting in the middle of its 160 hectares of territory and counting about 20,000 inhabitants.[33] Daiting lies only 6 kilometers away from the imperial highway (*Reichstrasse)* that passed through Donauwörth and linked two commercial centers of the region, Nuremberg to the north and Augsburg in the south. Not too far was yet another trade route—from east to west—which connected Regensburg on the Danube to Ulm and beyond.[34] In other words, however small Friedrich's village, it was located in a region that benefited from European trade in all directions. Perhaps this, too, influenced Friedrich's decision to travel north, to Nuremberg and to become a merchant himself.

It may seem somewhat surprising that Friedrich, an outsider from a small village far beyond the outskirts of Nuremberg was able to secure an apprenticeship with a well-established merchant. It is moreover surprising, given that Friedrich's family had been involved in trade as well, that he had to seek an apprenticeship far from home. One fact, however, helps to provide an explanation for Friedrich Reiser's surprising move to Nuremberg: Friedrich, his parents, and Hans of Plauen all belonged to a dispersed community of German Waldensians. In addition to

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[32] A typical age for entering into an apprenticeship is between 12 and 16. See Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London*, 144; Isenmann, *Die deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter*, 816.

[33] Johanek, "Imperial and Free Towns of the Holy Roman Empire" 297; Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser—Herkunft, Berufung, und Weg," 77-78.

[34] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser—Herkunft, Berufung, und Weg," 77.

his involvement in long-distance trade, Hans of Plauen was a Waldensian minister and studying under him, Friedrich learned not only the skills of a late-medieval businessman, but also trained to be a minister to his future flock.[35]

Decades later, in the spring of 1458, Friedrich Reiser was arrested on the orders of the Strasbourg city council, interrogated, and burned at the stake.[36] His trial records present us with an itinerant Waldensian preacher's autobiography, albeit filtered through the later medieval judicial system.[37] Still, since most of the inquisitorial records from this period are usually concerned with regular followers, not *magistri*, we know relatively little about the life trajectories of the latter. Like any inquisitorial record, Reiser's testimony is a problematic source, produced most likely under duress. One must at least entertain the possibility that the preacher was, at times, feeding false information to his interrogators to soften the repercussions of his testimony. It is, however, likely, that the information Reiser revealed about his early years can be trusted, as far it can be corroborated by other sources.

Although Reiser lived in the first half of the fifteenth century, his early years and experiences were not too far removed from the 1390s, so as to make the use of his testimony anachronistic. Moreover, the region where Reiser was born was affected by the inquisitions of the 1390s, and the memory of these repressive campaigns must have existed in the Waldensian community in their aftermath.[38] However, Reiser's testimony demonstrates that the Waldensian

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[35] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser—Herkunft, Berufung, und Weg," 78-82; Machilek, "Huss und die Hussiten in Franken," 23-24. Dietrich Kurze identified Hans of Plauen as one of Waldensian *magistri* mentioned in interrogation records from Peter Zwicker's inquisition in Stettin. Kurze, "Märkische Waldenser und Böhmische Brüder," 467-8.

[36] De Lange, "Friedrich Reiser und die 'waldensisch-hussitische Internationale,'" 29-30.

[37] For the text of Reiser's testimony, see Utz Tremp, "Einführung", 21-28.

[38] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 7-9. Sources disagree on the number of Waldensians who perished in the inquisition. Johannes Mair in *Nördlingani brevis historia* claims that ten men and sixteen women were burned out of forty individuals tried by Heinrich Angermeier. Gair, *Nördlingani brevis Historia*, 620. The anonymous chronicle from Augsburg reports that five men and eleven women were executed. "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

communities survived these persecutions, were going strong throughout the first half of the following century, and even entertained the possibility, at least in Reiser's case, of joining forces with the Hussites.[39]

Despite revealing a great deal about the training of a Waldensian *magister*, the source contains a number of frustrating silences. We do not know, for example, why Conrad Reiser decided to send his son away to Nuremberg, instead of teaching him himself. It is possible that he wanted Friedrich to expand his horizons by living in a larger city, while apprenticeship under Hans of Plauen could enable young Friedrich to be familiarized with both Waldensian teachings and networks. Moreover, Daiting or even nearby Donauwörth were no match for the cultural and commercial giant Nuremberg, which attracted intellectual and most importantly theological luminaries from the surrounding regions.

Like Reiser, Hans of Plauen had once been a newcomer to Nuremberg. In 1407, he had acquired the status of a citizen, most likely in recognition of his business being successful and beneficial for the city, as only 12 individuals received this privilege that year.[40] The affluent household of a long-distance trader, according to historians Dietrich Kurze and Franz Machilek, was a perfect place to acquaint oneself with the latter. Indeed, during Friedrich's stay at Nuremberg, Hans of Plauen may have played host to the Lollard and later Hussite theologian Peter Payne in 1418, who was on his way from England to Prague.[41] It is also likely that a few years earlier Hans of Plauen encountered Jan Hus himself, when the theologian stopped over at Nuremberg on the way to his trial at the Council of Constance in October of 1414. The religious atmosphere in Nuremberg appears to have been slightly more tolerant than in the rest of the

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[39] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser," 82-5.

[40] *Die Nürnberger Bürgerbücher*, 56

[41] Machilek, "Hus und Hussiten," 23; Kurze, "Märkische Waldenser," 468.

region. After all, when Hus stopped in the city and engaged in a discussion about matters of faith that lasted for over four hours, he did so at the invitation of the parish priests of St. Sebald (one of the two principal churches in Nuremberg) and members of the city council. The discussion took place five years after Hus had been accused of heresy by the archbishop of Prague; clearly Nuremberg's elite was not thrown off by these accusations.[42]

Nuremberg was also an economically vibrant place. While it is possible to dismiss Hans of Plauen's, Conrad Reiser's, and later his son's engagement in long-distance trade as a mere cover for their Waldensian preaching, one can also see that the two professions might not have been perceived to be incompatible with each other. During the trial, an inquisitor asked Friedrich Reiser why a man, who claimed to have taken a vow of poverty, was apprehended with the considerable sum of 200 guldens on his person. Although Reiser stated that the money were donations from his followers, not earnings from trade, his response otherwise shows a great deal of pragmatism—he states that the point of the vow of poverty is not to avoid money altogether, but to be satisfied with an amount necessary for survival.[43] Moreover, the realities of long-distance travel in later medieval Empire dictated the need for a steady income, considering that itinerant preachers, like Hans of Plauen and Friedrich Reiser, had to travel the width and breadth of the German speaking lands. From the scant evidence one can gather from Reiser's testimony, during his first eight years as a preacher, he visited Fribourg and Basel in the Swiss lands, as well as Vienna.[44] Finally—if one could speculate—given that we encounter a significant number of merchant *credentes* in contemporary records, it is possible that a merchant *magister* could appeal to the sensibilities of his flock better than one from another background.

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42 Machilek, "Hus und Hussiten," 19.

43 Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser—Herkunft, Berufung, und Weg," 81.

44 Valdo Vinay, "Friedrich Reiser und die waldensische Diaspora deutscher Sprache im XV. Jahrhundert", 29-30

If being engaged in long-distance trade was important to Friedrich Reiser or his family, then Nuremberg at the turn of the fifteenth century was among the most economically thriving places in Central Europe. As scholars of medieval commerce have demonstrated, Nuremberg's economic success predated that of Augsburg, with the city's merchants trading on the Baltic and the Mediterranean, on the Black Sea, in Asia Minor, and throughout continental Europe. Nuremberg's central location, in relative proximity to both the Main and the Danube, and easy access to the rich deposits of iron ore in the region, ensured the city's success. By the end of the fourteenth century the city was growing beyond its formidable walls, to include the suburbs of Gostenhof and Wörd, along the banks of the Pegnitz River. The river, too shallow to be navigable, ran with enough force to power the city's manufacturing enterprises, its metal and cloth mills.[45] The imperial highway that connected Nuremberg to Italy via Augsburg facilitated the city's reputation in long-distance trade. As Wolfgang von Stromer observes in his overview of Nuremberg's economic rise, "at least six of the fifty-four available *camerae* (rooms) in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice were permanently reserved for several Nuremberg firms."[46] Although the paucity of sources does not allow us to count Hans of Plauen among Nuremberg's most successful merchant houses, like those of Stromeir, Paumgartner, or Pirckheimer, he must have nevertheless benefited from the economic boom in the city.

It is worth noting that Hans of Plauen was by no mean a unique example of an affluent Waldensian, who combined long-distance trade with this form of Christian heterodoxy. Surviving rich sources from Fribourg and Strasbourg, analyzed by Georg Modestin, Kathrin Utz Tremp, and—to some extent—by Peter Biller, demonstrate how economically potent the

[45] For a concise overview of Nuremberg's economic growth in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Stromer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics of the Middle Ages."

[46] Stromer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics of the Middle Ages," 211.

Waldensian communities were in these towns and provide possible models that can be applied to towns elsewhere in the German-speaking lands. In particular, it was long-distance trade that provided Waldensian families with their financial security and allowed them to withstand persecution or distribute resources within the communities in times of need. Trade between merchants who were members of Waldensian communities from distant cities not only indicates that these individuals were aware of each other's existence, but also forces us to reconsider the existing model that poses functional distinctions between itinerant *magistri*, serving as go-betweens for the sedentary *credentes*. Trade connections between the Swiss Fribourg and Strasbourg demonstrate that regular members of Waldensian communities saw the benefits of trading among their own kind and fostered commerce even if these trade connections were harder to justify economically. Indeed, Philippe Dollinger, a leading historian of trade and economy in the later Middle Ages—unaware of the Waldensian presence in these cities—was puzzled by the existence of trade between towns that were not otherwise suited to exchange goods with each other.[47]

A little over 20 miles southwest of Bern in the Swiss Alps, Fribourg was not the most obvious trade destination for Strasbourg's merchants. One had to first go up the Rhine to Basel and from there brave the mountainous terrain heading south to Bern and Fribourg. Most importantly, there was little economic incentive to make the trip. Unlike trade routes into France, down the Rhine into the Low Countries, north-east to the Hanseatic ports on the Baltic or across the Black Forest to Swabia and Franconia, trade with Fribourg had little promise because the town produced the same range of goods as Strasbourg itself. Indeed, to a lot of the destinations

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[47] Dollinger, "Commerce et marchands", 132.

mentioned above, Strasbourg's and Fribourg's cloth and tanned hides traveled together.[48] Alsace's other principal export item, wine, was also matched by wine produced locally in the Vaud to the west of Fribourg.[49] And yet, there is ample evidence that merchants from Strasbourg were interested in buying cloth and hides from their Swiss partners.

The evidence of trade and the lack of complimentary goods have led Kathrin Utz Tremp to argue that heretical teachings and possibly even texts were the main incentive for exchange between the two cities.[50] According to Peter Biller, “it is difficult to resist the conclusion that we are faced here with an example of a Weberian economic fact: religion... exercising pressure on economic facts, and helping to produce this pattern of trade.”[51] In other words, for Strasbourg’s and Fribourg’s Waldensian communities trade was a cover and a pretext for religious interaction. This hypothesis, however, presumes that the Waldensian merchants were consciously engaging in unprofitable trade. One wonders how they were able to survive and even flourish in the world of medieval commerce, given such blatant disregard for profit.

However, a closer look at the Waldensian merchant families who came under scrutiny during the brief but decisive inquisition in Strasbourg in the spring of 1400 reveals signs of political and economic success. Despite the Strasbourg Council’s attempts to create an impression that the “discovered” heretics were recent immigrants into the city and thus their heresy was foreign and untypical of Strasbourg as a whole, a considerable number of the accused came from families that were intimately involved in running the city and were part of its economic elite. For example, the zur Birken family, who lived in Münstergasse, near the

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[48] Ammann, *Von der Wirtshaftsgeltung des Elsass*, 169.
[49] Modestin, “Weiträumige Kontakte”, 28
[50] Utz Tremp, “Kaufleute und Häretiker,” 55.
[51] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 123.

Strasbourg cathedral—the focal point of the city and its pride—was trading in cloth and hides with Fribourg from at least 1356 until the 1390s. Because of their involvement with textiles, the family's male members were also members of the Tailors' Guild. The patriarch, Hermann zur Birken, master tailor, represented his guild on the city council in 1390 and oversaw the city's treasury in 1395. By 1400, both generations (Hermann and two of his sons) of the zur Birken had served as members of the Strasbourg city council. One of the sons, Claus zur Birken, represented citizens on the council for three terms (1390, 1396, and 1398), served as a judge of the Small Court (1395), a treasurer (1396), and even earned the right to a coat of arms.[52]

Beyond the zur Bircken family, one encounters consistent references to wealthy Waldensians in the city and to their trade connections with Fribourg. Another family consisted of one Voltze Haderer, who had been engaged in cloth trade with Fribourg in the 1370s, and his wife. The Haderer family resided in Oberstrasse, the city's main street, which demonstrates the profitability of their business, but they were not the only Waldensian residents there. Johannes Blumstein, a lesser noble, a citizen of the city, and a likely leader of the Waldensian community, also lived in that street, yet more evidence of the way the Waldensians were integrated into the very heart of Strasbourg.[53]

The socio-political portrait of the Waldensians in Fribourg is no less interesting and it closely resembles the Strasbourg model. As studies by Peter Biller and Kathrin Utz Tremp demonstrate, two inquisitions of 1399 and 1429-30 revealed that the Waldensian community in the city consisted primarily of the wealthy merchant families. The merchant interests in the city were also involved in long-distance trade with the Upper Rhine, Swabia, and Franconia (possibly trading with Waldensian merchants there too, although our only documented contact between

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[52] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 114; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 95-106.
[53] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 114.

Hans of Plauen and Fribourg is of a religious, rather than a commercial nature). The most prominent families, the Studers, the Praroman-Bonvisins, and the Mossu, were all involved in the cloth trade, as well as the urban government. Most were able to soften the blow of the persecution by paying exorbitant fines (as high as 3,468 guldens from 1431-33 in the case of Hanso Studer!) for themselves and for others.[54] Given the socio-political prominence of the Waldensians in the city, it is not surprising that the inquisition of 1399—forced upon the city by neighboring Bern—found no proof of heresy there and the community remained safe from repression for the next 30 years.[55]

Despite the high economic and social profile of Waldensian communities in these towns, some of the sources produced as a result of inquisition in urban setting try to minimize the social significance of anti-heretical investigation against members of urban elites. For example, when it comes to the records of urban inquisitions and of their victims' social status, chronicle records from Upper German cities emphasize the lower-class origins of those accused of being a heretic, at times to a point of contradicting themselves. From an urban government's point of view, placing the heretics on the lower rungs of the urban social ladder was a way to exonerate the city as a whole—and especially its elites—from any collective shame involved in having a heretical community within. Generally speaking, the heretics were characterized as unimportant people, preferably of low—or better yet—foreign origin. As Strasbourg's city council declared in a post-trial letter to their fellow councilors in Bern, "these persons… [are] humble people and of foreign origin, not from our city—except for two or three"[56] As I have shown above, this was far from

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[54] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 115-6; Utz Tremp, "Kaufleute und Häretiker," 46-57. See also, Utz Tremp, *Waldenser, Wiedergänger, Hexen und Rebellen.*

[55] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozess von 1399," 70-71.

[56] "Dieselben personen… unahtber lute und von frumden gegenen geboren, nit von unser stat—ußgenommen zwo personen oder drie". Modestin, *Quellen*, 198.

reality. Despite the fact that a number of the Waldensians in Strasbourg were either immigrants from other cities (17 individuals), or their children, we find all of the accused to be remarkably well-assimilated and—in cases of the zur Birken, the Blumstein, and the Erlebach families—heavily involved in urban politics.[57] The pronouncement made by the city council at the end of the inquisition encapsulates the real fallout from the fact that some of Strasbourg's respected citizens were Waldensians, and thus "brought great shame and dishonor to our city and the region."[58]

In a similar vein, the anonymous author of the city chronicle of Augsburg described the condemned heretics there as lowly people, weavers of the cheaper woolen cloth (*Lodwebern*).[59] Their purported low social status is semantically linked to another name for the heretics, "hole people" (*grüblin leut*), likely signifying their position at the bottom of the urban social space.[60] Does the contradiction between the actual and imaginary social status of the Waldensians that can be observed in Strasbourg hold for the community in Augsburg? Of the 34 heretics condemned in the late summer of 1393, only six had their names preserved in the city chronicles: Hans Lutz, who tried to attack the inquisitor Heinrich Angermeier and precipitated the inquest, and five men, who struck an unsuccessful deal with the bishop to commute their public penance (yellow crosses) into a payment of 70 gulden. Unfortunately, although all six appear in the city's tax records, there is no indication of the amount of taxes they paid. While it is impossible to arrive at their economic status, it is important to note that all paid taxes and therefore had resided

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[57] Johannes Blumstein's mother was born in Speyer; Hermann zur Birken originated in Friedberg (either near Darmstadt or in Swabia), the Erlebachs were from Dischingen (near Stuttgart). See, Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 83-4.

[58] "…das sú unser stette und dem lande große smehe und unere zůgefüget…" Modestin, *Quellen*, 194.

[59] "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

[60] A similar semantic connection can be traced to the Strasbourg term for Waldensians: *Winkeler*, i.e., corner-people. Cf. Peter Zwicker accusing Waldensian preachers of "lurking in corners" (*in angulo latitante*). Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 280D

in the city at least since the beginning of the decade (1390). Moreover, one of the accused, Conrad Steinlin (Stämlin), appears as a representative for the guild of the weavers in two constitutional documents from 1368, which may hint at his status within the city's artisan community.[61] Finally, the very fact that members of the Waldensian community were able to come up with the significant sum of 70 gulden and were concerned about their reputation enough to pay this amount for the removal of shameful penitentiary crosses indicates that at least some members of Augsburg's *grüblin leut* were of higher status than the chroniclers have acknowledged.

Similarly, in Bern, where no actual records survive from the inquisition of 1399 (which might have served as a catalyst for the inquisitions in Fribourg and Strasbourg), there is nevertheless a number of indicators that suggest the relatively high status of some of the members of the Waldensian community. First, we know that the city council assigned monetary fines to any heretics who had been accused for the first time; the exact number of those is unknown, but among them were "men and women, powerful, rich, and poor." The city chronicle of Conrad Justinger claims that the total amount of fines collected from the Waldensians in Bern exceeded three thousand gulden, which puts an individual fine in the whereabouts of at least 23 gulden (on the assumption that all 130 individuals were first-time offenders and all paid equal amounts).[62] Another indication of the Waldensians' social status comes from two laws passed by the city's council shortly after the inquisition. One of them prohibits abuse of those wearing penitential crosses, which indicates a certain amount of concern over their well-being, suggesting

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[61] Kieckhefer, *Repression*, 70, 138n.84; the documents (*Zunftbriefe*) in Meyer, *Urkundebuch der Stadt Augsburg*, vol. 2, 147, 152.

[62] "…etwe lüten zu Bern und uf dem lande, frouwen und man, gewaltig, rich und arm, me denne CXXX personen, wurden funden in unglouben… Und won es daz erstmale waz, daz sich der ungloub uf si erfand… daz si gaben me denne drüthusend guldin." Justinger, *Die Berner Chronik*, 186. See also Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozess von 1399," 58-64.

that some of the former heretics assigned to wear crosses came from a social group with whose protection the city council could concern itself. Another law, more explicit, bans the former heretics from occupying a position on the council itself, as well as in other institutes of urban governance. The city councilors were instructed to read out this law each year on Easter Monday to ensure that it was remembered and followed.[63] That such laws were passed less than a year after the inquisition (December 9, 1400) demonstrates certain urgency in the matter. Perhaps the "powerful" that Justinger's chronicle mentions in passing wanted to restore the *status quo* by becoming members of the city government.

Finally, in Nuremberg, where there is a regrettably small amount of evidence surviving from the inquisition of 1399, there is no way to ascertain the socio-economic status of the accused. Four out of seven individuals burned at the stake in the spring of that year, after an inquest conducted by Martin of Amberg, seem to have originated from outside of the city. Two of the heretics, Herman von Selingstatt vom Gostenhof and his wife, appear to have been residing in Nuremberg's suburb, just to the west of the city, particularly known for its cloth industry; another of the victims of Martin of Amberg is specified as a dyer (*Ferberin*).[64] Another of the victims of the inquisition seems to have originated from Herboltzhof, a village to the north-east of the city. Other, unnamed members of the community either were assigned penitential crosses or fled the city. Interestingly, Gostenhof, Herboltzshof, and another craft suburb, Wörd, appear in the records for the previous inquisition in Nuremberg in 1378, which may indicate that the Waldensian community in and around the city was well-established and linked to the city's cloth industry, repeating the Augsburg model.

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[63] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozess von 1399," 61-2; documents in Rennefahrt, *Stadterech*, 173-4, no. 226, no. 227.

[64] Melchinger, *Geographisches Statistisch-Topographisches Lexikon*, 341; Schultheis, *Die Ach- und Verbotbücher*, 159.

"And They Call Themselves 'In the Know'": The Religious Life of Urban Waldensians

Although there are many lacunae in the biographies of members of urban Waldensian communities, even the limited information about their political and economic trajectories demonstrates with sufficient certainty that Waldensian merchants were in no way strangers to financial gain and ran profitable enterprises, which involved contacts with members of Waldensian communities from other towns. Religious affiliations might have provided the merchants from both cities with an additional level of trust, even if they were not the sole purpose of the long-distance contacts. After all, medieval businessmen were "just as much merchants as they were heretics."[65] And yet, the image of communities of Waldensian *credentes* reaching out to each other suggests that the dichotomy between the passive religious role of the *credentes* as opposed to the active one of the *magistri* may need to be reconsidered.

This distinction between the "priests" and the "laity" has been recounted in numerous primary sources, inquisitorial manuals, and anti-heretical polemics; many scholars take this model for granted as well. It did have, however, a suspicious utility for the Catholic polemicists since it presented the majority of "heretics" as naive believers, whose only crime was being misled by the heresiarchs.[66] The tradition of portraying heretics as "simple rustics" is well-documented throughout the high and later medieval periods; this label provided the writers of anti-heretical polemics with a rhetorical device that may or may not have corresponded with reality. The low social status of uneducated heretics was contrasted with the elite educated status of the clergy, peasant superstition with the *litteratura* of the polemics' authors themselves.[67] These accusations, moreover, not only allowed the Church to dismiss heretical ideas without

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[65] Modestin, "Weiträumige Kontakte," 35.

[66] See, among others: Biller, *The Waldenses*, 170-71; Kaelber, *Schools of Asceticism*, 156-57; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 125-39; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 168-71.

[67] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 169-188; Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 27-30.

examining them, but also allowed the Church to act as a redeemer and savior of the lost and confused (provided they did not resist). It was used simultaneously with the trope that stressed a cunning nature of the Waldensian *magistri*. The resulting contrast vacillated between the two extremes, making Waldensians into "a sect [of] the very clever and the very stupid"; neither extreme can be taken at face value.[68]

The distinction is particularly stark in anti-heretical polemics, where the heresiarchs are compared with wolves attacking a sheepfold. It is with them that the Church and individual persecutors of heresy saw their quarrel; the *credentes* were considered worthy of attention inasmuch as they provided the heresiarchs with a crucial support network. This model originates in the earliest repressions of medieval heresies in the twelfth century and provided ecclesiastical writers with a useful structure to apply to an otherwise confusing proliferation of religious heterodoxy. Moreover, a passive laity instructed by an elite minority was strikingly similar to the way the Church imagined itself; in a way, heretical movements could be viewed as an anti-church of sorts—erroneous, but guided by the same organizational principles.[69]

How close was this model to the reality of late fourteenth-century Waldensians? There certainly seems to be ample evidence in support of the division of labor between *credentes* and *magistri*. There are sources that unequivocally claim that itinerant *magistri* existed and were, in fact, active in the later fourteenth-century Germany. Numerous individuals questioned by Peter Zwicker in Brandenburg and Pomerania in 1392-94 claimed that they had been visited by the

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[68] Biller, "The Topos and Reality of the Heretic as *Illiteratus,*" 170.

[69] For example, Peter Zwicker's anti-heretical treatise *Cum dormirent homines* creates a parallel between the organization of the Church and of Waldensians. Note the pairing in "omnes Christiani tam clerici, quam laici" and "omnes credentes heresiarcharum Waldensium […] cum suis magistris". Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 278C. Parallel also noted in Biller, *The Waldenses*, 280.

itinerant masters, confessed to them, and received their blessing.[70] Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg even compiled a list of these itinerant preachers at some point in the early 1390s.[71] Members of the Strasbourg and Fribourg communities received heretical preachers—sometimes as many as four at a time—in their homes. One such itinerant *magister*, Hans Weidenhofer, decided to confess to an inquisitor (possibly Martin of Amberg) during an anti-Beguine inquisition of 1374 and was assassinated.[72] Finally, both Friedrich Reiser and his teacher Hans of Plauen were itinerant preachers operating on a circuit of Waldensian communities throughout the land.

Far from claiming that itinerant Waldensian preachers did not exist, it must be said that the aforementioned model fits the social structure of rural, isolated communities better than larger, more integrated urban ones.[73] By the time the Waldensian community was discovered by the Strasbourg city council in 1400, it had not seen a Waldensian master for at least ten years. Hermann zur Birken, the only one of the community to provide the exact number of years since the last visit of a *magister*, Conrad of Saxony, told the city council that he "has not been to the heretics [i.e. heretical masters] for twelve years."[74] Georg Modestin sees this as sign of a religious community in crisis, under stress and lacking spiritual guidance. Peter Biller, Kathrin Utz Tremp, and Richard Kieckhefer also argue that the 1390s were a period of crisis for the

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[70] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 129-30.

[71] Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 367.

[72] On Hans Weidenhofer's murder: Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 51-53; on Martin of Amberg's involvement in Strasbourg, see Lerner, *Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 101. Weidenhofer's betrayal of his community and the anti-beguine inquisition launched by Bishop Lambert of Strasbourg and Martin of Amberg coincided (1374).

[73] Cameron writes that, based on the rural Brandenburg and Pomeranian records, "for the first time one can distinguish between the characteristic religiosity of the masters, the 'brethren' as they called themselves on one hand, and their lay followers on the other." Cameron, *Waldenses*, 125.

[74] "in XII joren by den winkelern nit gewesen", Modestin, *Quellen*, 105; Conrad of Saxony is named in the list of Waldensian masters who were either caught or converted, compiled by Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg circa 1391. Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31.

German Waldensians, marked by ministers renouncing their faith, seeking absolution, or simply getting arrested, and thus leaving their communities without guidance.[75] At the same time, the purported crisis of faith might simply be the product of the sources. Treating the conversion of the *magistri* as a sign of crisis relies too heavily on their role as the only source of spiritual guidance and does not account for a likely ability of the communities, at least in urban areas, to fulfill their spiritual needs at the local level, possibly by using their contacts with other Waldensian communities as a source of religious inspiration. The possibility of texts being exchanged between the communities might reinforce the notion of the religious autarky of urban Waldensians.

Reduction of the reliance on itinerant *magistri* might have been a reaction to the revival of inquisitorial attention towards the Waldensians in the 1390s. On the one hand, the lifestyle of wandering preachers made them more vulnerable to apprehension and interrogation; their knowledge of multiple communities' locations and of contact individuals along their preaching route made them into prized targets for those involved in the repression of heresy. On the other hand, the *magistri* were also able to return to orthodoxy willingly, again endangering the communities to which they ministered. The example of Hans Weidenhofer, a master who decided to confide in an inquisitor in Strasbourg in 1374 demonstrates the danger of the latter. Betrayal by the master demanded an urgent response and the Strasbourg community preserved itself by hiring assassins to dispose of the traitor. Furthermore, as the list of converted and arrested *magistri* circulated as part of Peter Zwicker's dossier demonstrates, early years of the

[75] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 233; Utz Tremp, “Multum abhorrerem,” 166-67; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55-56.

1390s saw a significant number of wandering *magistri* either lose their freedom or, more crucially, switch sides.[76]

In response to possible betrayal by the ministers, individual Waldensian communities developed ways of supplanting the ministers' communicative roles by reaching out to the communities in other towns or even regions. Evidence from urban Waldensian communities demonstrates that these were well-organized groups, with a clear hierarchical structure and with specific members occupying designated roles. Even before the 1390s, when the itinerant ministers still played a key role in Waldensian religious life, they had consistently relied on religiously active members of local communities for support. Depositions from the Brandenburg Waldensians suggest that a *magister* usually remained in one specifically designated house belonging to a member of the community, receiving visitors and new converts.[77] In Strasbourg, the Waldensian ministers were also received in the house of one member of the community, with other followers visiting him there. The existence of these safe-houses or hiding places permeates the language used by anti-heretical polemicists to refer to the *magistri*: "corner-preachers" (*Winkelprediger* or *predicatores angulorum*), who "lurked in the corners" (*in angulo latitante*); in both cases, the terms refer to clandestine preachers, who remained stationary in order to avoid detection.[78] The ministers' limited mobility within the Waldensian communities stressed the ability of the *credentes* to organize, introduce and vet new converts to Waldensianism, and deal with traitors.

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[76] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 233. See edition of the two lists of converts in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31, 367.

[77] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 128.

[78] Utz Tremp, "Multum abhorrerem," 183; Modestin, *Quellen*, 20; Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 280D.

One of the most important positions within a community was that of a "collector" (*Sammler*), who collected and managed the communal funds.[79] From his primary function—the collection, safekeeping, and distribution of donations from other members of the community—we can assume that individuals occupying these roles had the universal respect and trust of their coreligionists. The duty of collecting funds put the "collector" in contact with every member of the community and likely gave him or her some influence over other members. While the funds were intended presumably for supporting itinerant ministers, an important side effect of the "collector's" duties was the reinforcement of the sense of communal belonging. Sociological and anthropological studies demonstrate that the act of donating to religious institutions is linked to the individual's feeling of solidarity with other members of his community, as the very act of gift-giving separates the insiders from the outsiders.[80] Similar communal roles are attested in the depositions collected by Peter Zwicker in rural Brandenburg and Pomerania, where only two men acted as "collectors" for over four hundred Waldensians living in twenty-seven villages.[81] In this case, the role of the "collectors" in keeping the community together was likely even more crucial for its survival.

Communal funds were also used for protection of a community at times of crisis. For example, when the Waldensian minister Hans Weidenhofer converted to Catholicism in Strasbourg and likely posed a threat to other Waldensians there, he was murdered by three hired assassins from outside the city. The assassins, who appear to have also been Waldensians, were paid 50 pounds for their services, with the significant sum coming from a collection organized

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[79] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 105.

[80] Peifer, "Economics and Sociology of Religious Giving," 1577. See also, Komter, *Social Solidarity and the Gift*, 1-6.

[81] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 105; Kurze, *Quellen*, 172-73.

within the community.[82] A similar practice appears in the sources from other cities. It is likely that out of five individuals who approached the bishop of Augsburg in 1393 in an attempt to commute their punishments, one was also a "collector," who paid the bishop 70 gulden.[83] In this light, it is also possible that Willi Mossu, a wealthy merchant from Swiss Fribourg, who paid an exorbitant fee of 400 gulden on behalf of other members of the Waldensian community after the 1430 inquisition in the town, was also using a communal fund, which he held as a "collector" for the Fribourg Waldensians.[84]

There is also evidence of communal knowledge about the existence (and presumably the location) of other Waldensian communities. For example, when Kunigund Strussin's husband was executed at the end of the Augsburg inquisition (1393), she fled to Strasbourg and joined the Waldensians there.[85] Another Waldensian, the weaver Heinrich Borschön, left Regensburg after abjuring heresy to an inquisitor (possibly Martin of Amberg) c. 1385 and joined the Waldensian community in Strasbourg.[86] Moreover, when the Waldensians of Strasbourg needed to "silence" the renegade minister Hans Weidenhofer, they succeeded in recruiting fellow Waldensians from as far as Mainz and Bamberg.[87] Ample evidence of contacts between the Waldensian communities suggests that the members of these groups were more proactive in their religious practice than the *credentes-magistri* model would allow. Moreover, while the level of literacy necessary for preaching was harder to encounter in rural areas, it seems to be comparable to that of an urban merchant. If the merchants in Strasbourg were interacting with their Waldensian

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[82] Modestin, *Quellen*, 178-79.
[83] "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97; Modestin, 'Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess,' 57.
[84] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 116.
[85] See Kunnigun Strussin's biography in Modestin, *Quellen*, 210-11.
[86] Modestin, *Quellen*, 243-44.
[87] Modestin, *Quellen*, 178.

colleagues in Fribourg, Bern, and elsewhere, and if exchanges of texts were involved, one can at least consider that Waldensian learning in urban communities was less limited than among their rural brethren.

Exchange of texts between communities may mean an intriguing opportunity for communication of religious ideas between Waldensians of the Francophone, German- and Italian-speaking regions, something the scholars of Waldensianism are fairly certain had taken place earlier in the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth century.[88] A rare and important indication of literacy among the heretical communities is attested in both Fribourg sources and in the testimony of Friedrich Reiser. In Fribourg, Anguilla Perrotet mentioned the existence of the translations of the Gospels into German, which she sent to her sister-in-law in Basel. During the interrogation, Anguilla was also questioned about other books, an important indication that book ownership was not a surprising fact among early fifteenth-century Waldensians.[89]

An even more interesting revelation was made by Friedrich Reiser. During his studies under Hans of Plauen, the merchant and minister forbade him to learn French or Latin to preserve him from the influence of the Waldensian communities outside of the German-speaking lands.[90] This prohibition, however, means that Hans of Plauen himself was at least somewhat familiar with what these texts had to offer. If this was the case, then because of their geographic location the heretical communities of Strasbourg and especially of Fribourg are perfect candidates for being the points of contact (either personal or textual) with Waldensians outside of Germany. Both towns are located on trade routes into France and Northern Italy, as well as into the rest of the Empire. Like Nuremberg, Fribourg also had a resident Waldensian preacher—

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[88] Biller, "Goodbye to Waldensianism?," 25-26. There was an exchange of letter between Italian and German-speaking Waldensians in the 1360s.

[89] Utz Tremp, *Quellen*, 472.

[90] Machilek, "Hus und Hussiten," 23-24; Kurze, "Märkische Waldenser," 468.

Mermeth Hugo, one of three *magistri* (the other two being Hans of Plauen and Conrad Reiser), who "laid hands" on Friedrich Reiser to consecrate him a *magister* in 1420.[91]

Another important question related to the previous issue is the role of women in urban communities. Evidence from Strasbourg suggests an intriguing possibility about the role of women Waldensians there. Although the existence of Waldensian "Sisters" or female *magistri* has been a point of contention among scholars of medieval heresies for some time now, there is still little consensus on the issue.[92] Unlike multiple references to Cathar "good women" in the inquisitorial sources from the early thirteenth-century Languedoc, there are relatively few indications that late fourteenth-century German Waldensians allowed women to become itinerant preachers. Often the claims that heretical teachings were spread by "little women laden with sins" (*mulierculae oneratae peccatis*), made by opponents of the Waldensians, were a result of a strong anti-heretical *topos* of associating heresy with femininity (as opposed to masculinity of the orthodox).[93] Like other *topoi* invented by Catholic polemicists, accusations of following female preachers may not have had any reality behind them. Even if early heretical communities did allow women to preach in public, these cases were exaggerated and presented out of context by polemical authors who stressed the sinfulness of female nature and cited biblical prohibitions on female preaching.[94]

If women were indeed allowed to preach publically during the early stages of the Waldensian movement, this practice is less apparent in the later sources. The disappearance of women preachers after the Waldensians were proclaimed heretical has been interpreted within a

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[91] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 78.

[92] For an overview of the problem of identifying female Waldensian preachers, see: Biller, *The Waldenses*, 125-158. See also Shahar, *Women in a Medieval Heretical Sect*, 46f.

[93] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 139-43; cf. II Timothy 3:6.

[94] Merlo, "Sulle 'Misere donnicciuole' che predicavano," 93-112.

sociological framework of *Verkirchlichung* or "churchification"; as Waldensianism became better-defined in response to persecutions, it acquired a male-dominated hierarchy.[95] This explanation however seems to rely on the inquisitorial sources framed, to a large extent, by the questions put to them by their interrogators. Could women have remained "invisible" in the sources because the inquisitors stopped asking about them? For example, during his inquisitions in Brandenburg and Pomerania, Peter Zwicker asked no question about the religious role of women in any of the 195 surviving interrogation records.[96] Conversely, the interrogations of Waldensians conducted by the city council in Strasbourg in the spring of 1400 were likely conducted without the use of a particular list of questions and therefore the interrogated individuals had a relative freedom to share their knowledge of the Waldensian beliefs and practices with their interrogators.[97]

Moreover, the insistence by modern scholars on either finding or disproving the existence of itinerant women-preachers is limiting in its scope; there is a misleading presumption that only itinerant preachers had important roles to play in keeping Waldensianism alive. This assumption seems particularly questionable once we consider that the early years of the 1390s ushered in a period in Waldensian existence when a number of male *magistri* were either caught or collaborated with the inquisitors. This must have left significantly fewer active Waldensian ministers and undermined the trust between them and individual communities. In both cases, the Waldensian communities were left without guidance from the itinerant religious elite. If we credit Waldensians with surviving into the fifteenth century, we have to look for other factors,

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[95] The term *Verkirchlichung* is used by Gottfried Koch in his analysis of the changing attitude to women in late Catharism, with implicit parallels with Waldensianism, in Koch, "Die Frau im mittelalterlichen Katharismus und Waldensertum," 754-55.

[96] Shahar, *Women in a Medieval Heretical Sect*, 49.

[97] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 147.

perhaps at the local level that helped to perpetuate their communities; some of these evidently involved actions performed by women.

Although we have no direct proof for the existence of female itinerant preachers in the 1390s, there is plenty of evidence for women's involvement in their local communities; certain crucial roles seems to have been filled exclusively by Waldensian women. Evidence pointing to this comes both from the rural communities investigated by Peter Zwicker in Brandenburg and Pomerania, and particularly from the communities in Strasbourg and Fribourg; in the latter cases it seems that women were particularly involved in the running of urban communities, but this may be a feature of unusual source material coming from these towns. First of all, as has been pointed out by Peter Biller, the bulk of information about the Strasbourg Waldensians comes from five women, whose testimonies provided a most informative picture of Waldensianism to the city council. Crucially, the five women (Kunigung Strussin, her daughters Kunigund and Metze; Metze Berolfin and her daughter Else) provided the city council inquisitors with a list of beliefs and a fairly detailed description of the structure of the heretical community in the city, including the leading role of Johannes Blumenstein and the existence of heretical “schools” or safe houses where the Waldensian community could secretly meet the itinerant *magistri*.[98] Moreover, the women knew about two episodes when the community had to defend itself; from them we learn, for instance, about the assassination of Hans Weidenhofer in 1374, and about the encounter between Johannes Blumenstein and the papal inquisitor Johannes Arnoldi, when the former threatened the inquisitor and forced him to resign (1390).[99]

Another woman interrogated in Strasbourg, known in the records as “the Old [Woman] zum Hirtze” (*die Alte zum Hirtze*) is an excellent example of the crucial roles women played in

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[98] Modestin, *Quellen*, 88-104; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 32f; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 146-47.
[99] Modestin, *Quellen*, 177-79.

urban Waldensian communities.[100] Originally from Haguenau in Alsace, she lived in Strasbourg from the first half of the 1370s and ran "large and numerous" heretical "schools" from rear buildings of her household.[101] One of the five informants pointed out that she played host to the "highest school" (*öberste schule*), while the Old Woman zum Hirtze (*Die Alte zum Hirtze*) admitted to hosting "four to six" *magistri* in her house at certain times (*nie úber vier oder sehsse in irem huse gewesen*).[102] Other Waldensians also mentioned the "school" at her house. According to one, preaching took place on Christmas Night and, naturally, members of the Waldensian community would go to her house with more pleasure than to the mass at the parish church of Old St. Peter. When the wandering master had a book with him, he sometimes preached from (or on the basis) of it.[103] Zum Hirtze even uses two separate verbs, "taught" (*geleret*) and "preached" (*gebrediget*), clearly implying two different modes of religious instruction by the *magistri*.[104]

Was the role of women, like the Old Woman zum Hirtze, reduced only to that of providing food and lodging to the Waldensian preachers? Her in-depth knowledge of Waldensian tenets seems to suggest otherwise. The Old One zum Hirtze demonstrated an impressive command of Waldensian history as well, when she related the story of two men "called *Waldensium*" (*genant Waldensium*), who had traveled to Rome two hundred years earlier and acquired their correct beliefs from the Pope himself, who entrusted them with spreading these beliefs further.[105] The story that the woman was relating to the inquisitors was probably a

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[100] Biller translates the woman's name as "The Old One zum Hirtze." Biller, *The Waldenses*, 148.

[101] "das si die schule der unglebigen dicke und vil in irem himdern huse gehalten habe" Modestin, *Quellen*, 110.

[102] Modestin, *Quellen*, 110-11, 157.

[103] "wanne die winkeler hettent ir bucher, daruß si bredigent." Modestin, *Quellen*, 111. On the use of books by heretical preachers, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 166-67, 184-88

[104] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 150.

[105] Modestin, *Quellen*, 113

Waldensian version of the events that took place at the Third Lateran Council in 1179, where Valdes and his followers met Pope Alexander III and were commended for their religious zeal (yet ultimately told to seek permission to preach from the archbishop of Lyon).[106] Peter Biller observes that the story of the Waldensian visit to Rome closely resembles the version of the heretical movement's past contained in the "Book of the Elect" (*Liber electorum*), a fourteenth-century work of Waldensian history written before 1368. The *Liber electorum*'s version of the events in Rome, however, operates on two levels. On the one hand, it stresses that Valdes was ridiculed by the *heresiarchs* (as the Waldensians author of the *Liber electorum* calls hostile orthodox clerics) and therefore justifies Valdes' eventual break with the Church. On the other hand, it also uses Pope Alexander III and his largely symbolic approval as a source of authority for Waldensian beliefs.[107] The Old Woman zum Hirtze, however, not only knew the version that came straight out of the *Liber electorum*, but also emphasized the initial papal approval of Waldensian tenets. Delivering this flattering narrative during her interrogation, she was likely trying to exonerate her community's beliefs from being called heretical, which demonstrates that she had not only heard the Waldensian foundational legends, but was able to choose from competing narratives in order to defend her religious views. An examination of contemporary interrogation records from the inquisition in Stettin (1392-1394) shows that not all Waldensian adherents were as well-versed; some claimed that the original Waldensians traveled to paradise—sometimes in addition to descending to hell—to gain their secret knowledge.

The Old Woman zum Hirtze, as well the 5 women-informants, also stressed the fact that women were involved in the process of creation of new ministers, who were—as the sources make abundantly clear—both male and female. After it was determined that that the candidates

[106] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 72

[107] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 202-3

had the necessary respect and moral standing within the community, they swore to live a life of voluntary poverty, chastity, and loyalty to the Waldensian *credentes*, after which they were welcomed as a new minister (*meister* or *meisterin*), with the words "Welcome, dear brother/sister".[108] The exact functions of the female masters are not mentioned explicitly, but their title implies that they were involved in teaching, perhaps even in preparing the community for the rare visits of an itinerant preacher. Contemporary evidence from rural communities in Pomerania states that women were particularly important in procuring potential converts and bringing them to the *magister*. The Old Woman zum Hirtze's familiarity with the Gospels—she provided an explanation for why Waldensians did not believe in praying in churches, rooted in the Gospel of John—suggests that women could have been involved in local religious instruction of either new converts or of the community as a whole.[109]

Can we find similar examples of involvement of women in the running of Waldensian communities outside Strasbourg? One of the informants, Kunigund Strussin, was most likely the widow of Fritz Struss, a weaver from Augsburg, who perished in the inquisition of 1393.[110] Kunigund's familiarity with Waldensian tenets may suggest that she was involved in the Augsburg community before she had to leave the city. Women in Pomeranian communities, too, seem to have had a crucial role of screening and instructing new converts as well. The importance of this role in the life of a community is hard to overestimate. Not only did Waldensian women help to introduce new members and thus keep Waldensianism alive, they acted as a barrier, protecting itinerant masters' identities from anyone who could not be trusted. In one instance, found in Peter Zwicker's anti-heretical polemic, but likely based on his

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108 "Wilkum, lieber brůder, und wilkum, lieber swester." Modestin, *Quellen*, 175-6.

109 Modestin, *Quellen*, 115; cf. John 4:20.

110 On Kunigund and her deceased husband, see Modestin, *Quellen*, 209-211.

experiences as an inquisitor in Brandenburg and Pomerania, a group of women attempted to introduce a new convert, also a woman, to the itinerant *magister*, who, having suspicions about the convert's trustworthiness, rebuked them: "You have brought me not Rachel, but Leah!"[111]

In a fashion similar, to the religious role played by the "collector" (*Sammler*), discussed above, who was in charge of the Waldensian communal funds, some religiously active women managed the community's local spiritual capital by storing knowledge of Waldensian beliefs and origins, and by instructing new converts. The Old Woman zum Hirtze's knowledge of Waldensian history and her keenness to point out to the inquisitors that women too could be Waldensian ministers, strongly suggests she was trying to emphasise this fact to her interrogators.[112] As the reliance on itinerant masters diminished in the later 1390s, it is likely that the roles of the leading members of local communities kept them alive.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have attempted to provide an overview of various aspects of urban Waldensian communities. Urban Waldensians—who until recently have not attracted much scholarly attention—provide a number of crucial correctives to our picture of later medieval heretical communities. The realities of life in large cities in the German-speaking world affected if not the core beliefs of these men and women, then the practice of these beliefs and their understanding of their past. Moreover, by looking at urban communities in Upper Germany, we can observe the changing socio-economic make-up of urban heretical communities. This, in turn, may lead us to re-evaluate the role these communities and their primarily prosperous members played within German Waldensian religious networks during the period. Faced with a crisis of

[111] "…non Rachel, sed Liam posuisti mihi." Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 280D.
[112] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 150; Modestin, *Quellen*, 251-53.

the traditional model of religious organization, with its clear distinction between the lay believers and the itinerant preachers, Waldensian communities in Strasbourg, Fribourg and possibly Augsburg (and likely other cities, for which the sources do not survive) appear to have moved towards a more "autarkic" approach to religious practice. They can be seen establishing economic and religious ties with communities in other towns. They allowed women to participate in the preservation (and possibly the propagation) of religious teachings, in the absence of itinerant *magistri*. Literacy—a more common skill among the urban merchant elites—could also have played a role in fostering long-distance contacts between communities.

Since a majority of anti-Waldensian campaigns in the 1390s took place in urban settings, the portrait of urban heretics outlined above sets the stage for the place these communities and their members occupied in this decade of repression. As Germany experienced a series of ecclesiastical and political crises caused by the Schism, plague, and the weak reign of King Wenceslas (r. 1376-1400), urban heretical communities became involved in struggles between prelates and cities, in the towns' attempts to create and protect their distinct identities and political autonomy. Urban Waldensians became central to all of these historical processes and their involvement helps us to understand the stakes and motivation behind them.

Chapter Three

Urban Order and Urban Other: Political Conflicts and Inquisitions in Augsburg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber, 1393-1395

In late July of 1393, after the feast of St James (25 July), a traveling preacher visited Augsburg and delivered a fiery sermon against Waldensian heretics living in the city. The sermon, of which little is preserved in the urban chronicles, was successful enough to rouse the city and its bishop, Burkhard of Ellerbach (r. 1373–1404), to act against religious heterodoxy within the city walls. As the summer came to a close, thirty-four men and women were arrested in the ensuing inquisition.[1] The trial of Waldensians in Augsburg, which took place during a decade of intensified anti-heretical persecutions throughout the Holy Roman Empire, has received relatively little attention from scholars. While it is normally included in discussions of anti-heretical persecutions during the 1390s, most commentators merely note that the course of the inquisition was influenced by the problematic relationship between the city of Augsburg and its bishop, and by the involvement of an itinerant inquisitor, without delving into details.[2]

The details of the trial, however, are significant precisely because it was a product of historical processes underway in towns during the later fourteenth century. This chapter combines discussions about medieval heresy, primarily Waldensianism, with literature on urban growth and the city-centric ideology of the later Middle Ages. While there have been a number of studies that discuss the interactions between cities and bishops at the close of the fourteenth century, most of these works do not examine anti-heretical inquisitions in this context.[3]

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[1] "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96-97.

[2] For the most recent and most detailed overview of the inquisition itself, see Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 43-68. See also, Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 69-70.

[3] As a rule, studies of the relationship between the bishop of Augsburg and the city either omit the inquisition, Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*; or mention it in passing: Kießling, *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft und Kirche in*

Conversely, scholars of later medieval heresies rarely examine the political meaning that persecutions of heretics acquired in late-medieval towns.[4] Throughout the 1390s, records produced as a result of anti-heretical trials in urban communities emphasized the inherently violent and anti-social nature of the religious deviant. Heresy was thus incompatible with a growing self-consciousness among the urban elites that stressed strong connections between the political and religious aspects of urban life as German free and imperial cities struggled for a greater political autonomy. This chapter argues that the inquisition in Augsburg and its outcome were not merely a result of long-standing struggles between Augsburg and its bishop, but a constituent part of these struggles. A similar dynamic was at play in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, where an anti-heretical trial became a contest of internal and external authorities between the members of the city's urban elite and the bishop of Würzburg. In both cities heresy was instrumentalized in a struggle over political authority.

"Ez wer gar vil ketzer": The Inquisition in Augsburg, 1393

In the summer of 1393 one such struggle for authority began with the arrival of a traveling preacher—later identified as Heinrich Angermeier of Stein—a typical figure in the late medieval religious landscape.[5] During the spiritual and ecclesiastical turmoil caused by the Great Schism, and even during earlier decades, wandering charismatic preachers were particularly well-received in urban communities where their sermons provided an alternative to the preaching of local secular clergy and the mendicants. Wandering preachers often addressed certain religious

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Augsburg im Spätmittelalter, 317. The state of scholarship is similar for other urban inquisitions that took place during the decade.

[4] A notable exception is Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 197-224. See also, Deane, "Archiepiscopal Politics and Waldensian Persecution"

[5] Heinrich Angermeier"s involvement in the inquisition can be corroborated by trial records from other towns in the region, where he acted as an inquisitor in 1393-94. Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 65-67; Patschovsky, "Häresien," 764-765; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55.

concerns born out of the commercial pursuits that shaped urban existence (money lending, the accumulation of wealth and so on).[6] Although initially planning on preaching against usury, Angermeier delivered a sermon against heresy and heretics instead. From the pulpit, Angermeier proclaimed that he knew that many heretics resided in Augsburg; he offered to help to identify and punish them and even 'to shed his blood' for this cause.[7] After the sermon, according to the anonymous *Chronik von 1368-1406*, the preacher appealed to the bishop of Augsburg in order to receive his permission to act against the Waldensian heretics, which Bishop Burkhard of Ellerbach granted.[8] Now, armed with the bishop's authority and—presumably— with the anti-heretical sentiments he was able to stir up with his sermon, Angermeier posed a formidable threat to the heretical community in the city (or to anyone who could be accused of belonging to such a group).

Angermeier's sermon must have struck a nerve with his audience. The chronicle reports that shortly after delivering it, the inquisitor was stalked by a knife-wielding man—described in the chronicle as a heretic (*ketzer*)—in what could have been an attempt to derail an impending inquisition.[9] The would-be assassin miscalculated: his attempt to intimidate Heinrich Angermeier only served as a further catalyst for the inquisition. Once Angermeier's attacker was apprehended, the city gates were locked to allow the capture of thirty-four heretics at the orders of the traveling

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[6] Itinerant preachers during the period proved to be controversial figures, whose power to agitate their audiences was recognized by secular and ecclesiastical authorities. One such preacher, Johannes Malkaw, was active in cities on the middle and upper Rhine, preaching against the Great Schism and Avignonese obedience. Problematic popular agitation made Malkaw a target of an inquisitorial manhunt and a trial in 1391, when he was accused of being a heretic, but later acquitted. See Lerner, *Heresy of the Free Spirit,* 101-3; Tönsing, *Johannes Malkaw aus Preussen (ca. 1360-1416).*

[7] "…ez wer gar vil ketzer zů Augspurg und die wölt er rügen und furpringen, und wölt darumb sin plůt vergiessen." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

[8] "…und begert an bischoff Burkhart gnaden und gewaltz uber die ketzer, der ward im auch geben und erlaubt." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96. For a brief overview of bishop's life, see Weitlauff, "Burkhard von Ellerbach," 26-29.

[9] "Chronik von 1368-1406," p. 96.

inquisitor and his local associate, the Dominican friar Peter Engerlin.[10] That the arrests took place so swiftly suggests that the episcopal and city officials knew where to look. Inquisitorial procedure in the Middle Ages allowed individuals to be accused on the basis on their bad reputation (*mala* or *publica fama*) in absence of a formal denunciator, an important exception that allowed for a speedier prosecution.[11]

The social profile of the Augsburg Waldensians probably also helped to speed up their arrest. The anonymous chronicler reports that most of the accused belonged to the guild of weavers, specializing in making rough fulled woolen cloth (*lodweber*), with “very few among them from other crafts.”[12] This statement can be corroborated, to some extent, by the fact that two out of six Waldensians whose names were preserved in the sources, Fritz (Francz) Struss (Straus) and Conrad Steinlin, were identified as *lodweber* in municipal sources; the latter might even have even represented his guild—one of the Lesser Guilds in the city—in two constitutional documents (*Zunftbriefe*) of 1368.[13] Close association between Waldensianism and textile-related crafts was not unique to Augsburg. Members of the Waldensian community investigated in 1400 in Strasbourg were also heavily involved in the production and sale of textiles, while at least one weaver was among the Waldensians put on trial in Regensburg in 1385.[14]

Let us pause here and consider the available sources for this narrative of the inquisition.

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[10] “..und man beschloß alliu tor an der stat und fieng der ketzer 34, man und wip, und die stůnden in půß und sprachen, si wölten puͤssen und pessern den ungeloben, den si gehebt hetten.” “Chronik von 1368-1406,” 96. Modestin, “Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess,” 54-56.

[11] For an overview of the concept of *publica fama*, see Kelly, “Inquisition, Public Fame and Confession: General Rules and English Practice,” 9-12

[12] “Nota. Die ketzer waren all lodweber, wann gar lützel was lüt under in von andern hantwerken.” “Chronik von 1368-1406,” 96.

[13] Wahraus, “Chronik des Erhard Wahraus, 1126-1145 (1462),” 249. For Fritz Struss/Francz Straus: Modestin, “Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess,” 59n.74. For the editions of the *Zunftbriefe*, see Meyer, *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Augsburg*, 1:147, 152. See also, Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 70. On political role of the guilds in Augsburg, see Rogge, *Für den Gemeinen Nutzen. Politisches Handeln und Politikverständnis von Rat und Bürgerschaft in Augsburg im Spätmittelalter*, 12-27.

[14] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 97-106.

Unlike other anti-Waldensian trials that occurred in the German-speaking lands in the 1390s, the inquisition in Augsburg left no trial records or any other inquisitorial documents. What can be learned about the course of the trial comes from in the city chronicles, a particularly rich genre in later medieval Germany. While the absence of procedural sources complicates reconstruction of the events that occurred prior to and during the inquisition, the fact that all chronicles were written by urban rather than clerical elites, provides us with a particular, city-centric version of the events and allows us to consider the place heresy occupied in Augsburg's political landscape.[15]

The earliest and perhaps the most trustworthy account is preserved in the *Chronicle from 1368 to 1406*. It appears to have been composed during or soon after the events by an anonymous author who demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the city's internal affairs. Although the chronicle's author remains unidentified, it has been suggested that he might have been a member of the city's ruling elite, possibly even a city council scribe (*Stadtschreiber*), a position that allowed him to record Augsburg's history by consulting municipal documents.[16] On the other hand, despite providing an otherwise detailed account, the chronicler demonstrates little interest in preserving the names of Augsburg's Waldensians or of the preacher responsible for initiating their persecution, whom he describes merely as a "priest from Bamberg" (*pfaff von Baubenberg*).[17]

Another important source of information about the events of 1393 is the *Chronicle of Hector Mülich*, written by a member of the city's merchant elite, Hector Mülich (c. 1410–1487),

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[15] Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 50-51. A concise overview of the German city chronicles as historical sources and of their authors in English remains Du Boulay, "The German Town Chroniclers," 445-69. For the chronicles from Augburg, see Wolf, "Augsburger Stadtchroniken des 15. Jahrhunderts," 185-88.

[16] Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 51; Weber, *Geschichtsschreibung in Augsburg*, 32-33.

[17] "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

a generation after the events. Largely derivative and of questionable reliability, Mülich's account provides an abbreviated version of the events; but despite some factual errors, it supplies names of the individuals involved in the inquest and other important details, which the earlier chronicle lacks.[18] Crucially, the chronicler provides the name of the traveling preacher who initiated the inquisition, calling him "lord Heinrich the inquisitor" (*herr Heinrich der ketzermeister*), lists some of the heretical beliefs of the accused and describes their penance.[19] It is likely that, as one of his sources, Mülich perused an earlier chronicle by Hans Mair, a city councilor from Nördlingen, who preserved a list of the heretical 'errors' of the Augsburg Waldensians (a manuscript containing the list was owned by the Mülich family from the early fifteenth century). However, if Mülich did consult Mair's list, the account of the Waldensian beliefs he chose to give in his own account is fragmentary—centered primarily on the heretical disbelief in Purgatory and the condemnation of indulgences, holy water, consecration of church grounds and churches, blessing of palms and so on—and may be symptomatic of his highly selective presentation of information.[20] It is possible that by minimizing heretical beliefs (for example, by omitting any mention of Waldensian belief in confessing to their lay 'masters', which is listed first in Mair), Mülich was trying to mitigate the effect of heretics' existence in Augsburg on the city's reputation.[21]

Large German towns and their governments during this period were involved in a long-

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[18] For example, Mülich list the names of five individuals executed as a result of the inquisition, but mistakenly claims that they were pardoned. Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 60; Weber, *Geschichtsschreibung in Augsburg,* 50-55; see also Alberts, "Mülich, Hektor," 738-742.

[19] Mülich, "Chronik des Hector Mülich 1348-1487," 40-41.

[20] Mülich, "Chronik," p. 41. Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620. Oefele erroneously reports the chronicler's name as "Gair." The aforementioned manuscript (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 342) was acquired by Hans Mülich, Hector Mülich's grandfather. Karin Schneider, *Die Deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Stasatsbibliothek Munchen*, 365-66.

[21] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620.

term transformation. They changed from being properties of members of the landed aristocracy or the higher echelons of the Catholic Church to gaining the right to govern themselves, to engage in diplomacy and to interact with the rulers of the Empire, providing support to emperors in times of political instability and relying on their protection in return.[22] A city-centric worldview, which emphasized the city's independence in matters secular and religious to a point where the two merged into one concept of civic spirituality, was both a byproduct of these political changes and an impetus for them.[23] Living in a city and for a city became an ideology best summarized in a foundational essay by the German historian Bernd Moeller. Writing about the role of German cities during the Reformation, Moeller observed that by the later fourteenth century, over one hundred years prior to Martin Luther, the development of urban ideology made city-dwellers perceive their communities as self-governed and self-sufficient units, a "sacred society… embued with the communal spirit."[24]

As Thomas A. Brady observes, "the civic gospel of the common good bombarded the burghers from all sides through official ideology, popular myth, and oppositional visions."[25] Such distinctive ideology, which equated the moral and spiritual well-being of individuals with the well-being of the community as whole, produced particular tensions when it came to the city's 'others,' namely, social groups that did not conform to or that chose not to share this vision of urban life. Moreover, because the civic ideology fused sociopolitical concerns with religious ones, later medieval towns began to pay more attention to religious deviancy as well as social

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[22] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 77-89.

[23] Origins of the gradual change from portraying cities as an anti-thesis of Christian life to seeing them as the embodiment of holiness can be traced back at least to the thirteenth century. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*, 197-217. See also, Haverkamp, "'Heilige Städte' im hohen Mittelalter," 119-56.

[24] Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 46-47.

[25] Brady, "Rites of Autonomy, Rites of Dependence," 12.

deviancy, often blurring the boundaries between the two.[26] Religiously deviant groups offended belief in the sacred status of the city and simultaneously undermined the image a city sought to project to its neighbors, friends and foes.

Heretical communities, that is those who espoused religious views proclaimed erroneous by the Church, were particularly problematic because their members were hard to identify. The clandestine nature of heresy made it appear even more dangerous. Once heresy's presence in a town was made public, it emerged out of its normal—that is, hidden—place; its presence in the city compromised the community's spiritual integrity and attracted unwanted attention to its leadership. Thus, heresy polluted the city, to use Mary Douglas' classic definition of pollution as "matter out of place."[27] If cities were spaces of contested authority, heretical communities, because of their charged status, not surprisingly became entangled and instrumentalized in this contest.

Angermeier's decision to pursue Waldensian heretics may have been influenced by events elsewhere in the Holy Roman Empire. The preacher's visit to Augsburg coincided with the end of a protracted inquisition against Waldensians in Mainz (1391–93)—and Augsburg was part of the archdiocese of Mainz—which may have made such a target more politically expedient.[28] It is also possible that Angermeier found out about the presence of a Waldensian community in the city and decided to grasp the opportunity to preach on this subject. Moreover, German Waldensianism was undergoing a crisis of faith in the later 1380s and early 1390s, a direct result

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[26] In his survey of persecution of heresy in German context, Richard Kieckhefer observes that heresy began to be perceived as a civil disorder, similar to vagrancy, rioting and sexual deviancy. Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 77-78. A recent study by Laura Stokes also places intensification of urban persecutions of witchcraft from the early fifteenth century on within the context of urban reform. Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform*, 129-53.

[27] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36.

[28] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 197-99.

of the necessity to keep their religion a secret.[29] This crisis was, in part, caused by a number of itinerant Waldensian ministers—who had previously traversed the empire ministering to the dispersed communities of their followers—converting back to Catholicism and likely cooperating with the persecutors. A list compiled as part of an inquisitorial dossier by another itinerant inquisitor, Peter Zwicker, mentions some two dozen Waldensian ministers or "masters" (*magistri*) who had recently converted. Some served as informants to Zwicker and his associates and were even allowed to join the Catholic clergy. It is likely that converted Waldensian *magistri* revealed the locations of Waldensian communities throughout the German-speaking lands, providing inquisitors with 'roadmaps' for persecution for the rest of the decade.[30]

If Angermeier was targeting Waldensians specifically—and no other kinds of heretics are mentioned in the sources—what led both the bishop and the city council to support him? If Waldensianism was not attracting much attention from the church and civil authorities in the decades prior to the 1390s, why was its eradication suddenly on the minds of both the secular and religious lords of the city? As Hector Mülich's chronicle specifies, Heinrich Angermeier derived his authority from both the city council and the bishop, a sign of an unusual readiness to cooperate between recent political rivals.[31] Why were the city and the bishop willing to entrust

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[29] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 60; Peter Biller, *The Waldenses*, 95; Kathrin Utz Tremp, "Multum abhorrerem," 166-67.

[30] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 233-36; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 53-54; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 140. Nicholas Gottschalk, a converted Waldensian preacher, was allowed to join the priesthood in Vienna in 1392 and later appears in the fragmentary record of a trial conducted by Peter Zwicker in that city in 1404. Gottschalk was one of the most active Waldensian preachers in Brandenburg and Pomerania and likely provided Zwicker with information about the heretical communities there; in this case, highly unusual permission to join priesthood could have been his reward. Zwicker's lists of converted Waldensian masters mentions that four more of them were able to become priests. Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 80-81; Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*. For an edition of the list of coverted ministers, see Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31.

[31] In what could have been a later interpretation of the events, Mülich reports that the inquisitor's authority came from both the bishop and the city: "…dem ward erlaupt von der stat und dem bischof, ime die zů straffen." Mülich, "Chronik des Hector Mülich 1348-1487," 40; however, the earlier anonymous chronicle only mentions Angermeier asking for the bishop's permission: "und begert an bischof Burkhart gnaden und gewaltz uber die ketzer, der ward im auch geben und erlaubt." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96. Nevertheless, it appears unlikely that

an investigation of such a delicate affair to a wandering preacher?

Augsburg's Waldensians between the City and the Bishop

The city's behavior can be partially explained by the concept of civic shame. By delivering an anti-heretical sermon and claiming that Augsburg was home to a large heretical community, the future inquisitor essentially made what might have been Augsburg's hidden religious problem publicly known and shamed his audience into doing something about it. The rhetoric of shame appears time and again in the context of urban heresy investigations. For example, in spring of 1400, the city council of Strasbourg initiated an inquisition against local Waldensians. As a result, a group of Waldensians was expelled from Strasbourg for bringing "great shame and dishonor" to the city.[32] Moreover, Angermeier's sermon allowed the preacher not only to advertise his services to the urban audience, which may have included representatives of the city government, but also to portray the heretical community in Augsburg as inherently violent and diametrically opposed to the ideal of good citizenship so important to later medieval cities.[33] Recourse to the *topos* of heretical violence can be guessed as a possible context for Angermeier's promise to "shed his blood" in the process of rooting out heretics; highly-charged imagery must have implied that such a sacrifice would be necessary.[34]

The presence of a group prone to anti-civic behavior was very inconvenient for Augsburg's city council at this particular moment in the city's history. Since the later thirteenth century, political authority over the city had been contested between the city council and the

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the inquisitor could have acted against the heretics in the city without the city council's support or at least tacit approval; it is possible, that the city council decided to support the inquest later (e.g., after the attempt on Angermeier's life).

[32] "…große smehe und unere…" Modestin, *Quellen*, 194.

[33] The inquisition in Strasbourg was also prompted by a sermon by an itinerant preacher. See Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 13.

[34] "…und die wölt er rügen und furpringen, und wölt darumb sin plůt vergiessen." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96.

bishop. Bishop Burkhard of Ellerbach, like many German bishops in the fourteenth century, did not reside in his own cathedral city; indeed, over a century earlier, in 1276, Augsburg broke free from its former lord and won the right to be governed by an elected city council supported by the German Emperor.[35] As a rule, bishops dispossessed of political control over their capitals tended to settle outside them in smaller towns, although they remained in possession of cathedral complexes in their former cities. Cathedrals provided later medieval bishops with a vital link to the site of their power; they served both as a reason for staging an episcopal entry (*adventus*) into the defiant city, and as a principal stage from which to project the signs of episcopal power. During a period when these bishops were 'losing much of their political, judicial, and economic privilege, they continued to rule through ritual'.[36] Normally, bishops visited their former capitals only during religious feasts and on other special occasions. Each episcopal visit involved ritual and pageantry that tied it to its dual historical antecedents: the ritual of imperial entry as a sign of temporal power and, of course, the entry of Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.[37] Episcopal visits served as a symbolic reminder about the city's prior status; through these encounters the bishop could remind the city that although he was no longer its lord, he still had the right of entry.

Anthropological studies of ritual behavior reveal that the nature of ritual is polysemic, or as the historian Geoffrey Koziol describes it, "…every ritual action is capable of conveying several possible meanings, many of them contradictory."[38] For its part, through a carefully staged

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[35] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 86. For a recent study of Augsburg's politics and society in the later medieval period, see Adrian, *Augsbourg à la fin du Moyen Age*.

[36] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 103-4.

[37] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 112.

[38] Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor*, 308. On the polysemy of a ritual, see also Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 50. Thomas A. Brady makes a case for the use of anthropological theory in analyzing ritual entries of bishops and kings in later medieval and early modern Strasbourg. Brady, "Rites of Autonomy, Rites of Dependence," 20-23.

display, the city council cooperated in re-enacting the bishop's version of the past by allowing him within the city walls. However, from the magistrates' point of view, the ritual entry also restricted the bishop's movement through the city for the purpose of reminding him that the *present-day* Augsburg was independent of his political control. As Keith D. Lilley observes in his study of medieval urban culture, "rituals are performed in order to commemorate some past mythical event, imitating in the present that which has gone before."[39] Every time a bishop entered the city, both parties were reenacting the events that led to Augsburg's independence in the later thirteenth century.

There are no descriptions of similar visits from the 1390s, but we have detailed records of later episcopal entries into Augsburg from the fifteenth century to help us imagine the way in which Augsburg's topography was instrumentalized to both welcome the bishop and restrict his movement. These occasions were organized as public spectacles with many stages. First, the bishop was welcomed outside the city walls. He was then accompanied through the gates and guided through the city on his way to the cathedral, while citizens barricaded parts of Augsburg to prevent him from deviating from an agreed route.[40] In particular, the bishop and his retinue rode across the city by following the street that linked the abbey of St Ulrich and Afra and the cathedral, traveling past the seat of the city council on his way. If this route was taken during all or most later medieval visits—and scarcity of detailed descriptions does not allow us to be certain of this—then the only way a bishop could access his cathedral was by observing the embodiment of independent, local political authority.

The city maintained this carefully constructed relationship with the bishop through violence as well as ritual. The relationship between the city and its bishop was particularly dire in

[39] Lilley, *City and Cosmos*, 159.
[40] *Lord of the Sacred City*, 144-5, 147-8.

the 1380s, when the two waged an actual war against each other, taking sides in a larger conflict between the Swabian City League (*Schwäbischer Städtebund*) and the Brotherhood of the Lion (a princely league meant to combat the united cities), which included Bishop Burkhard's ecclesiastical superior, the archbishop of Mainz. The conflict proved somewhat inconclusive, with Augsburg gaining an upper hand early in the decade, only to be forced into submission by its end.[41] After all, despite their constant animosity and intermittent conflicts, the city and its bishop depended upon each other. The bishop could not be bishop without his cathedral, the ultimate source of his authority and its ritual center. The Augsburg Cathedral of the Virgin Mary was the place where bishops were 'born'; that is, assumed their position. It was also the final resting point for bishops.[42] In this manner, the cathedral connected the bishop to his predecessors. It was the only permanently fixed point in a bishop's itinerary and timeline.

The city, too, depended on its bishop. Despite losing his control over the city government, the bishop still controlled its mint and had the right to levy crucial tolls, affecting Augsburg's economy. The bishop also had a tremendous political advantage over the city. As the decade of warfare between Bishop Burkhard and the city of Augsburg demonstrated, while the city could be victorious for a while, in the end the bishop and his vast networks of political and ecclesiastical affiliations proved to be a more reliable source of power. The city's attempt to defend itself by joining the Swabian City League failed to produce a long-lasting political and military counterweight. By the end of the 1380s, the fragile equilibrium of authority had been restored after the city was forced to pay the bishop 7,000 gold pieces in restitution.[43] Finally, in 1391 the victorious bishop and the defeated city concluded a treaty, promising to put their

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[41] Gloor, *Politisches Handeln im spätmittelalterlichen Augsburg*, 339-40.

[42] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 146.

[43] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 92-3; Karl Schnith, "Die Reichsstadt Augsburg im Spätmittelalter (1368-1493)," 158-9.

disagreement to rest and to conduct their affairs in an amicable manner.[44]

From the perspective of this recent conflict, the inquisition that took place in 1393 may have provided the bishop with yet another opportunity to undermine the city's authority by pointing out some of its shameful residents and emphasizing that it was the bishop's role to guard his flock against heresy. Moreover, when the religious persecution reached its climax, the sermon and the trial took place in the *Fronhof*, a vast open space adjacent to the cathedral, the locus of the bishop's power in the city. Bishop Burkhard himself was allowed to observe the trial and no doubt used this occasion to visit the city and to demonstrate the level of power he still possessed.[45]

If Heinrich Angermeier was indeed furthering the political interests of the bishop by initiating the inquisition, then his efforts received an appropriate reward after the trial concluded. Within months after the Augsburg Waldensians received their punishment, Heinrich Angermeier appears in the records of smaller anti-Waldensian inquisitions in the region to the north of the city. In early November, Angermeier probably oversaw a trial in Wemding that ended with the burning of ten men and women at the stake.[46] Almost simultaneously, the inquisitor presided over the trial in Dinkelsbühl, where an unknown number of men and women were accused of following Waldensianism, but only two were burned.[47] A month later, in Donauwörth as many as forty Waldensian were condemned to various punishments (including the execution of as many as twenty-six).[48] Unlike in Augsburg, where Angermeier had to cooperate with a local

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[44] Meyer, *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Augsburg*, vol. 2, 244-8; Schnith, "Die Reichsstadt Augsburg im Spätmittelalter (1368-1493)," 158.

[45] "…und man tett ain predig uff dem fronhoff mit aller pfaffhait, und der pischoff was selb engagen." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 96: On the symbolism of the *Fronhof*, see Adrian, *Augsbourg à la fin du Moyen Age*, 346-7.

[46] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620; "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

[47] Bürckstümmer, "Waldenser in Dinkelsbühl," 274-5.

[48] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620; "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

Dominican inquisitor, in later inquisitions he was entrusted with full episcopal authority. The Dinkelsbühl trial records, for example, call the inquisitor a "venerable and circumspect man, lord and master Heinrich, called Angermeier... deputy of the bishop of Augsburg in the matter of the Waldensian sect."[49] Having proved his ability to persecute in Augsburg, it seems that Angermeier was given free rein in the surrounding region.

Describing the wave of inquisitions, a contemporary chronicler from Nördlingen, another town in the region, quipped that the persecutors tended to spare the poor and send the wealthy to the stake, suggesting—albeit in a somewhat vague manner—that the principal cause of this practice was the bishop's greed.[50] Although accusations of venality could have been simply a response to the threatening progress of inquisitions in the region (the Nördlingen chronicler might have feared for the fate of his own city), it is clear that outside of Augsburg, Angermeier's authority to persecute originated with the bishop. This may explain why all the persecutions took place inside the Augsburg diocese (or just outside of its border, as in case of Wemding), within the bishop's jurisdiction or sphere of influence. Heinrich Angermeier's inquisitions in the diocese may have caught the attention of his future patron, Heinrich Toppler, burgomaster of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, who invited the inquisitor—as it will be discussed later in the chapter—to investigate heresy in his city. Around a decade later we also encounter Angermeier's name in the urban records from Lucerne in Switzerland, where he also attempted (unsuccessfully) to conduct an inquisition.[51]

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[49] "…venerabilem ac circumspectum virum, Dominum et Magistrum henricum, dictum Angermayr, a Reverendo in Christo patre et Domino, Domino Burckhardo dei et apostolicae sedis gratia Augustensis ecclesiae Episcopo Deputatum, propter Sectam Waldensium."Bürckstümmer, "Waldenser in Dinkelsbühl," 274.

[50] "Tandem finaliter inventum est, quod Domini illorum, qui combusti fuerunt, receperunt bona ipsorum, & pauperes dimiserunt. Credo, quod causa principalis fuerit mala." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620.

[51] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 31-4; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 72-3. In 1403, Angermeier attempted to pursue heresy in Lucerne: Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," p. 70 n.41. It is also possible that one "Henricus de Lapide" (that is,

Heretical Violence and Urban Order

In the late summer of 1393, the attempted attack on the inquisitor, which precipitated the inquisition, was no doubt instrumental in gaining the city council's cooperation. Historical sources for the anti-Waldensian persecutions of the 1390s repeatedly attribute violence to the Waldensians, despite their earlier reputation as pacifists.[52] Depictions of the use of violence by the German Waldensians were part of a collection of *topoi* that emphasized the monstrous nature of the heretics. Although the view of heresy as violent was not new in the 1390s, it became more prominent as some of the older devices used to demonstrate the monstrosity of heterodoxy were failing during the zenith of the Great Schism (1378–1418). In particular, one view that contrasted the universal unity of the true Church with the fragmented and contradictory heretical movements was losing its force while the popes in Avignon and Rome struggled to establish their authority. Anti-heretical texts, like German polemics written before the 1390s, still used the following argument to point out that the Waldensians had no rightful claim to the truth: "they are divided in three parts in their opinions and errors. And therefore they by no means constitute a Church, since the Church is one, just as the faith is one, and not several…"[53] Now, however, the same argument could be used as a critique of Catholic Church during the Schism.

Mentions of Waldensian violence appear at least three times in the context of anti-heretical persecutions during the decade. In all cases, violent actions were interpreted as measures taken in response to an impending or an ongoing inquisition. Descriptions of heretical violence served as proof that heretics indeed posed a real threat to society at large. Preserved in

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Latinized version of Heinrich [Angermeier] of Stein) was involved in the inquisition against "Lollards and Beguines" ("Lollhardorum et Beginarum") in Mainz in 1406, but there is no further evidence except for a brief chronicle reference. Kungstein, *Chronicon moguntinum*, 82.

[52] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 81.

[53] Anonymous, "Attendite a falsis prophetis," quoted in Biller, "Goodbye to Waldensianism?," 31. Biller dates the manuscript to c. 1370. Biller, *The Waldenses*, 121 n. 61.

the records with a macabre attention to detail, violent acts reminded the audience of the anti-social behaviors that were bound to take place if heresy was left unchecked, including murder, mob intimidation and arson. These instances of violence were particularly effective in demonstrating why heresy was detrimental to public peace. They provided real-life examples that applied theological 'errors' to the realm of daily existence.

All three cases come from a German urban context, but are found in different types of historical records. One was the aforementioned attack on Heinrich Angermeier in Augsburg in the summer of 1393, when the inquisitor was allegedly followed by a knife-wielding man. Another case involved Hans Weidenhofer, a Waldensian preacher, who converted back to Catholicism, therefore potentially betraying and endangering the heretical community in Strasbourg. Weidenhofer was murdered by a hired hand funded by the Strasbourg Waldensians in 1374; the information about the murder was revealed during the inquisition in Strasbourg (1400) and served as an important justification for expelling Waldensians from the city.[54] Yet another case of heretical violence is related in a letter penned by Peter Zwicker in 1395.[55]

Zwicker's letter deserves closer attention as a collection of anti-heretical *topoi* that were probably exploited by Angermeier as well. In his letter written—among other addressees—to the nobility and clergy of Upper Austria, Zwicker lists ninety-two heretical "errors," exhorting his audience to take action against the heretical threat in the region. Intriguing in their scope, the 'errors' listed convey a sense that the Waldensians were the complete opposites of their orthodox neighbors. Not only did they disagree with the most crucial elements of Catholicism (the role of

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[54] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 51-53.

[55] A version of the letter used here was published in Preger, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Waldesier im Mittelalter," 246-50. Preger's version is based on Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 5338, fols. 244-6. Another version of the document, based on a different manuscript (Clm. 14959, fols. 4, 236) was published in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 305-11. Zwicker may have also encountered some resistance during his earlier inquisition against the rural Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania (1392-4). Dietrich Kurze, *Quellen* (Berlin, 1975), 233-4.

the Church in attaining salvation, the Eucharist, Purgatory, prayers for the dead, saints and relics), but they also ridiculed even such minor elements as clerical tonsures.[56] Here Zwicker was certainly aiming for general effect rather than for any practical application of his oversized list (unlike other much shorter lists of heretical errors that were used for guiding interrogations during an inquisition).[57]

Written in 1395, the letter's principal aim was to assure support for Zwicker's impending inquisition. The inquisitor's earlier patron in the region, Duke Albert III of Austria, died that year, leaving his domain in a dynastic struggle. With the death of his patron in Austria, Zwicker's anti-heretical ambitions were left without a political ally and, likely, without financial support.[58] According to Zwicker, who clearly sought to shock his audience, the region risked being overwhelmed by heretics if left without the support of a political leader. To illustrate the danger, Zwicker described acts of arson and "homicidal threats" (*terroribus homicidiorum*) that happened within days of Duke Albert's passing, as if to celebrate the occasion.[59] By placing Waldensian violence in the context of the duke's death, Zwicker clearly indicated that Waldensians made poor and disobedient subjects, a notion reinforced by his later statement that the heretics "condemned and disobeyed" secular authorities as well as "imperial laws."[60]

As a particularly vivid example of heretical "barbarity," Zwicker informed his readers that in Steyr, the focus of his inquisitorial attention at this point, the heretics had set fire to the

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[56] Preger, *Beiträge*, 246-7, 249.

[57] For example, a more modest list of errors of the Waldensians in Augsburg, preserved in the chronicle of Johannes Gair [Mair], counts only 16 items. Gair, *Nördlingani brevis Historia*, 620. A contemporary list from Bingen (1393) contains only 10 Waldensian tenets. Mainz, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. I 151, fol. 205r. Neither of the lists concerns itself with non-theological errors, i.e. statements that emphasize heretical "otherness" in non-religious spheres.

[58] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 217-8; Segl, "Die Waldenser in Österreich um 1400," 163-4.

[59] "…violencijs incendiorum et terroribus homicidiorum…" Preger, *Beiträge*, 246. Modestin notes that the act of heretical violence occurred on September 7, nine days after the death of Albert III. Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum Dormirent Homines*," 218.

[60] "…item dampnant et reprobant leges imperiales." Preger, *Beiträge*, 249.

barn of a local priest who had housed the inquisitor and his associates (*familia*). Not satisfied with arson, the attackers affixed a half-burned brand and a bloodied wooden dagger to the city gates as a warning against future inquests. Both acts of symbolic violence occurred on the eve of the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, making the heretics' act into a violation of sacred time and sacred space (since one can read the burning of a priest's barn as symbolic violence against his person and, through him, against the body of the Church).[61] An explicit exhortation to help in identifying, apprehending and punishing the heretics followed the description of heretical violence, concluding the letter.[62] Although it is hard to measure the direct effect Peter Zwicker's missive might have had on the Austrian ruling elites, the next duke, Albert IV, did support his inquisition. The formal anti-Waldensian campaign began in late May of 1397 and resulted in, among other punishments, over a hundred death sentences.[63]

How real were these instances of violence? Considering that violence perpetrated by Waldensians against their persecutors appears with more frequency towards the end of the fourteenth century, scholars of medieval Waldensianism and its persecution tend to assume that these incidents did indeed take place, and that they represented a reaction of the Waldensian communities against the inquisitors, perhaps a desperate attempt at self-defense.[64] Moreover,

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[61] Preger, *Beiträge*, 248-9. It has been suggested that Zwicker himself might have been the guest of the parish priest and, if the incident took place, might have witnessed the violence firsthand. Biller, *The Waldenses*, 271; Segl, "Die Waldenser in Österreich um 1400," 184.

[62] Preger, *Beiträge*, 250.

[63] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 217-18; Segl, "Die Waldenser in Österreich um 1400," 165-69.

[64] Modestin interprets all three cases as self-defense. Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 52-53. See also, Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 57. There is disagreement among scholars about the actual perpetrators of violence within Waldensian communities. Susanna K. Treesh argues that violent actions were undertaken by Waldensian followers (*credentes*) trying to protect themselves from persecution. Treesh, "The Waldensian Recourse to Violence," *Church History* 55, 3 (1986), 295-6. Martin Schneider, on the contrary, sees Waldensian violence as a notion advocated by the religious leaders within Waldensian communities. Schneider, *Europäisches Waldensertum in 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (New York, 1981), 82-3. Violent responses to persecution occurred earlier in the century. Dominican inquisitor Gallus of Neuhaus was threatened repeatedly and even attacked once during his anti-Waldensian inquisitions in Bohemia (1330-40), while Johann von Schwenkenfeld was assassinated

Peter Biller notes that the use of violence for self-preservation was relatively new to the Waldensian movement and possibly meant a departure from earlier doctrines, especially the strict prohibition against violence. Biller even posits the use of force as a possible sign of a crisis of conscience among the late-medieval Waldensians, "a long slow ebbing of the spirit and energy with which the doctrine was taught and implemented."[65]

Whatever the truth behind descriptions of Waldensian violence, there was certainly a relative proliferation of sources that portrayed the heretics as violent and anti-social. Waldensian violence was savored by medieval authors and retold with a surprising attention to detail. Since there were at least three instances of Waldensian violence recorded within the same decade, appearing in different types of sources, it is possible to consider the creation of a *topos.* This *topos* portrayed Waldensians as violent in an attempt to rekindle the will to prosecute Waldensian communities in the Empire and beyond. Moreover, since at least two recorded cases of Waldensian violence appear in the sources connected to itinerant inquisitors, it is likely that the *topos* of violent Waldensianism was particularly useful for this group of persecutors. While we cannot always reconstruct how inquisitors like Peter Zwicker and Heinrich Angermeier were able to establish their authority and to obtain powerful patrons, it is possible to trace common instances of the same anti-heretical *topoi* used by both men.

Incidents of Waldensian violence provided the inquisitors with specific examples of heretical abnormality and of anti-social behavior that deserved punishment. Acts of violence transgressed social norms in a way that endangered the community as a whole by redefining its public spaces as polluted by heretics. By 'polluting' public space, the heretics laid claim to it, just

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in Prague in 1341 (although in this case his assassination may have been prompted by a conflict between the bishop and the city of Breslau, in which Schwenkenfeld sided with the bishop). Patschovsky, *Quellen*, 54; Patschovsky, *Die Anfänge einer ständigen Inquisition in Böhmen*, 61-65; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 46.

[65] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 95.

as their ‘errors’, as represented in anti-heretical literature, attempted to reclaim orthodoxy by polluting or “infecting” it—to use Zwicker’s metaphor.[66] These public acts—or, rather, acts that occurred in public spaces, although sometimes carried out in a clandestine manner—were linked to the impious nature of heretics. Carefully explained in the texts, they reminded readers about the dangers of heresy and exhorted them, either implicitly or explicitly, to react to these acts of urban pollution by supporting an inquisition.

Violence transgressed both space—sacred and public—and time, and these multiple transgressions reinforced each other. The example of heretical violence provided in Peter Zwicker's letter lists these transgressions one by one, encouraging a rising sense of indignation in the mind of the reader. The acts of violence took place during a sacred time, in sacred and public space (i.e. an attack on the representative of the Church and the nailing of a bloodied dagger and a half-burned brand to the city gates as a warning against future inquests), all because “[the heretics] wanted to defend their heresy this way.”[67] By committing their crimes during a major feast, the perpetrators offended the Virgin Mary (in whose ability to intercede on behalf of humanity—as Zwicker points out explicitly in the preceding list of ‘errors’— Waldensians did not believe), and broke away from the religious calendar followed by the rest of Steyr’s population.[68] The tendency of social groups to synchronize their temporal perspectives, outlined by the sociologists Alfred Schütz and Eviatar Zerubavel, made this slight against the sacred calendar into an act that endangered the fabric of urban coexistence.[69] In later contexts, profaning

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[66] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36-37; Preger, *Beiträge*, 246.

[67] “Nam nuper in nocte vigiliarum natalis beate virginis genitricis dei Marie combusserunt horreum domini plebani in Styra eo quod in domo sua colligit fovet et nutrit inquisitores pravitatis heretice cum sua familia, et ad portas civitatis vel oppidi Styre affixerunt lignum adustum vel rhedam cum cultello ligneo cruentato, volentes taliter suam heresim defensare.” Preger, *Beiträge*, 250.

[68] Preger, *Beiträge*, 246.

[69] Schütz, “Making Music Together: A Study in Social Relationship,” 177; Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms: Schedules*

sacred time was used to emphasize religious distinction and potentially led to violent confrontations.[70]

While the chronological dissonance emphasized Waldensian otherness and incompatibility with the rest of the population, it was matched by a similar emphasis on spatial distinctions between the heretics and the rest of the population. As Zwicker reports, the heretics called themselves *chunden* or "those in the know" and referred to the orthodox Christians as "strangers" (*fremden*), thus creating an inverted sense of social space and claiming the norm. In a similar vein, sources unsympathetic to the heretics stress difference by placing Waldensians in problematic spatial settings. Thus, in the Augsburg chronicle the Waldensians are called "hole-people" (*grüblins lüt*), while during the same decade, the Waldensians in Strasbourg are referred to exclusively as "corner-people" or "corner-preachers" (*Winkeler* or *Winkelprediger*).[71] A similar expression, "corner-lurkers" (*in angulo latitante*), is used to describe heretical preachers in the anti-Waldensian treatise from 1395.[72]

Fears of heretical violence also tarnished the image the city wanted to project. The proliferation of images of late medieval heretics as violent must have had a particularly important meaning in urban centers of the Holy Roman Empire that strove to compete with bishops and archbishops—their former overlords—and to emphasize their political and spiritual

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and Calendars in Social Life, 105-10. As an example of sacred time, Zerubavel analyzes a plethora of meanings given to the Sabbath in Judaism and observes its importance for the creation of a distinct Jewish identity.

[70] Natalie Zemon Davis discusses Protestant women in sixteenth-century Lyon, who openly spun on Catholic feast days in order to demonstrate their religious difference. Davis, "Rites of Violence," 73.

[71] Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus über die österreichischen Waldesier. 1398," 249; Augsburg: Erhard Wahraus, "Chronik des Erhard Wahraus," 228; Strasbourg: Modestin, *Quellen,* 19-24. The term *Grüblinsmann* also appears in Augsburg's criminal records regarding a confidence man or a gambler, banished from the city in 1364. Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 79. A list of errors of the Waldensians from Augsburg also mentions the distinction between members of the community ("*notos*," i.e., those "in the know") and the outsiders ("*ignotos & alienos*"*)*. A similar dichotomy existed among the English Lollards. Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 214.

[72] Biller, *The Waldenses*, p. 278; Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 280D.

independence. Heresy presented the city fathers with an uncomfortable problem that had the potential to endanger the sacred status of their community. This was particularly true if the heretics were revealing themselves through violent acts that laid claim to the city's public space. In these cases, toleration of heretical violence presented the whole population as potentially heretical or, at the very least, poorly governed. After all, the blanket accusation that entire cities were full of heretics was the weapon of choice for ecclesiastical writers during the period. For example, during an anti-clerical revolt in Mainz in the 1380s, a local ecclesiastical chronicler lamented that the city was deaf to the archbishop's condemnation of the revolt because it was "wallowing in heresy."[73] Not surprisingly, after the revolt Mainz experienced a prolonged anti-Waldensian inquisition between 1390 and 1393, initiated by its archbishop Conrad II of Weinsberg, which probably set the tenor of persecution for the duration of the decade.[74]

The description of the attack on Heinrich Angermeier followed the model that we observe in Zwicker's letter. The incident happened on the road linking the Benedictine abbey of St Ulrich and Afra to Augsburg Cathedral, the two poles of Augsburg's sacred topography. The street between them, a major thoroughfare to this day, was imbued with civic and religious significance.[75] Augsburg's city hall is also located on this axis, approximately halfway between the abbey and the cathedral. While the cathedral, as has been discussed, was crucial to the bishop's prestige, the abbey of St Ulrich and Afra, on the other hand, became a locus of urban piety and a popular focus for donations from the urban elites; it acted as a symbolic and religious counterweight to the power of the cathedral. St Ulrich, once a bishop of Augsburg himself and the protector of the city during the Magyar invasions in the 970s, continued to serve as a

[73] "…quod cives minime curabant, ymmo deridebant, quia pullulabant in heresi." Kungstein, *Chronicon Moguntinum*, p. 54.

[74] On the inquisition in Mainz, see Deane, "The Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 197-99.

[75] Hoher Weg, Karolinenstraße and Maximilianstraße in present-day Augsburg.

convenient symbolic defender of the city against its *current* bishop throughout the conflicts of the 1380s and the 1390s. Forbidden from joining the cathedral chapter by a 1322 decree, Augsburg's urban elites favored the abbey of St Ulrich and Afra, as well as the lay confraternity of St Ulrich, which numbered over 5,000 members.[76] After the inquisition, those condemned to perform public penance were supposed to walk in processions from the abbey to the cathedral and back, parading the sacred axis of the city, trudging over the spot where Heinrich Angermeier was supposedly attacked by one of their kind, as if trying to erase this memory.[77]

This form of punishment and its ritual nature deserve an explanation. Standard punishment for a first-time offence of heresy involved the imposition of penitential crosses made out of yellow cloth that an individual wore on his or her clothing, demonstrating his liminal religious status to the world around him. Signifying both difference (and former deviance) and the fact that their bearer was on the path to rejoin the Christian community, the crosses placed the penitent individuals in a problematic social space. Thirteenth-century instructions for the use of penitential crosses reinforce this notion by ordering the penitents to participate in all religious processions while occupying a special place between the clergy and the rest of the lay participants.[78] Although it is unclear if this practice was still enforced in the 1390s, there is evidence of at least one penitent being ordered to stand in front of a church portal during Sundays and feast days, presumably to make himself an object of public shame.[79] Throughout

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[76] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 101. Increased lay membership in all ecclesiastical institutions except for the cathedral has been noted in Kießling, "Bürgertum und Kirche im Spätmittelalter," 211-212. See also Isenmann, *Die deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter, 1150-1550*, 657.

[77] Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," p. 620.

[78] On the use of penitential crosses as a form of punishment for heresy, see Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 69, 74-5. Participation of penitents in processions is prescribed in *Processus inquisitionis*, a manual for inquisitors compiled by Bernard of Caux and Jean of St Pierre in 1248/9, published in Wakefield, *Heresy Crusade, and Inquisition in Southern France, 1100-1250*, 255.

[79] Deane, "Archiepiscopal Inquisitions," 216-7.

the history of their use, bearers of the penitential crosses frequently attracted ridicule and abuse, demonstrated by repeated Church decrees meant to prevent such behavior. It is not surprising that some individuals undergoing this form of public penance chose either to remove the crosses or to flee their communities. Some paid for these attempts with their lives, since insubordinate actions were widely perceived as a sign of relapsing into heresy, a crime ultimately punished by death.[80]

It is notable, however, that those accused of belonging to the Waldensian community remained in the city and were allowed to do so. Increasingly, often by the later fourteenth century, urban governments came to view even repentant heretics as potentially dangerous residents and preferred to expel them from their cities. While this practice fulfilled the needs of urban authorities, it contrasted with the desire of the Church to contain heresy and keep individual heretics under control. Still, banishment as a form of punishment for heresy (as well as sorcery) became popular during the second half of the fourteenth century—a development Richard Kieckhefer attributes to the rising role of urban magistrates in anti-heretical persecutions in their cities.[81] During this period, Nuremberg banned its heretics—who possibly were Waldensians—in three separate persecutions (1354, 1362, 1379), threatening to hang some of them if they returned.[82] Augsburg used banishment against the wife of a vagabond preacher named Brother Hans in 1388. The preacher himself and four of his associates were executed. Similarly, after a later inquisition in Strasbourg, twenty-seven individuals were banned from the city. [83] Given this propensity for expelling repentant heretics, it is crucial to note that the Waldensians convicted in

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[80] Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 85-6.
[81] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 75-6; Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform*, 38-9.
[82] Werner Schultheiß, *Die Acht-, Verbots-, und Fehdebücher Nürnbergs*, 84, 150-1, 158-9.
[83] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 77-8; Modestin, *Quellen*, 192-6.

1393 were not banned from Augsburg, but were to be reintroduced back into their community through ritual behavior. While yellow crosses, as well as other forms of penance (e.g., prayers), were more traditional punishments for heresy, obligatory processions between the abbey of St Ulrich and Afra and the cathedral were imbued with civic importance as well. Rather than excluding the repentant Waldensians from their community, as the city did with other purported heretics in the 1380s, the magistrates of Augsburg attempted to reintroduce them by placing them into the city's ritual and symbolic center.[84]

The city council's decision to reincorporate former heretics back into the community emphasizes the role that civic ideology played in the city's participation in the externally-provoked inquisition. It also explains the final episode in this particular persecution. Later in 1393, the group of Waldensians who had been condemned to wear yellow penitential crosses decided to make their punishment less visible. They approached the bishop and offered him a sum of seventy gold pieces in exchange for a 'secret penance'—a permission to remove any visible signs of their former heretical status. The bishop agreed to the deal, but evidently the city council took this agreement amiss. Justice was swift; nine of the fourteen were forced to resume their visible punishments, while the other five men, likely the leaders, were burned at the stake later that month.[85] What was a perfectly regular practice of commuting punishment into a cash payment became grounds for a summary execution of heretics by the city council.

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[84] "…primo quod crucem in vestimentis parvam portare deberent per annum integrum in plateis: item quod debent ire pro octo dies, de S. Udalrico usque ad Sanctam Mariam, semper duo & duo, et quod debent portare candelam ardentem, & in Ecclesia Beatae Mariae Virginis debent orare septem Ave Maria, & Presbyter debet ipsis dare aspersionem, & in cimiterio debent orare tria Pater noster & Ave Maria pro defunctis." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620. Note the emphasis on elements of Catholic observance that contradicted Waldensian beliefs: prayers to the Virgin Mary, aspersions, and prayers for the dead.

[85] "Darnach umb sant Gallentag ware 14 ketzer, die komen mit dem pischoff uberain und gaben im 70 guldin, daz si die krütz solten ablegen, und legten si auch hin. Des wurden die purger innan und der raut und fiengen derselben ketzer fünf der pesten under in, und die wurden auch darumb verprant, die andern wurden begnadet und legten die krütz wider an sich und tragen si als vor." "Chronik von 1368-1406," 97.

From the city council's point of view, what happened after the inquisition, when a smaller group of Waldensians tried to strike a deal with the bishop, was not a joint effort, but an institutional overreach. By making a secret deal with the bishop, Augsburg's citizens broke the urban order. Not only had the heretics brought a bad reputation to the city and threatened its well-being by revealing their existence, now they were symbolically breaking the civic hierarchy and breaching the city's walls by dealing with a dangerous outsider. It is not at all surprising that the names of the five men burned at the stake in the aftermath of the inquisition were recorded by a near contemporary chronicler and later appear in Hector Mülich's account of the events. The only other name preserved in the account is that of the unfortunate Hans Lutz, who was accused of attacking the inquisitor.[86] If Lutz unwittingly served as a catalyst for the inquisition, endangering the city's sacred status, the five men made the situation even worse by dealing with the bishop behind the city council's back.

By punishing its heretics more harshly than the bishop, the city was making a claim about its ability to dispense justice more effectively than its rival. Heretics, as long as they were repentant, could still be part of the city, re-integrated into its fabric by perambulating along the route which emphasized the city's claim to be a sacred community, in possession of the hallowed graves of the former bishops and the ceremonial focal point of the current one. From this perspective, the only true outsider, the only true "other," was the bishop himself. Yes, he could commute public penance into a payment for a group of Waldensians, but the city could honor or ignore this bargain. Symbolic inclusion of the repentant Waldensians corresponded to the symbolic exclusion of the bishop. His right to decide cases dealing with heresy was denied within the city walls.

[86] Modestin, "Der Augsburger Waldenserprozess," 59-61. Mülich mistakenly lists the names of the five men among the pardoned. Mülich, "Chronik des Hector Mülich," 41.

Inquisition in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (1394-1395)

Taking place over a year after the Augsburg campaign, the inquisition in Rothenburg ob der Tauber adds an additional layer of complexity to our analysis of the persecution of heresy in medieval Europe. There are important differences between the two persecutions, some of them shaped by the local ecclesiastical and political context. If the trial in Augsburg was both chronologically the first anti-Waldensian inquisition of the decade in this part of the Empire and the first known trial that involved Heinrich Angermeier, the inquisition in Rothenburg—as far as we know—concluded his campaign of persecutions in Swabia and Franconia. If in Augsburg the trial involved a large group of men and women, in Rothenburg only one man, Hans Wern (d. 1406), was accused of being a heretic. Moreover, if the inquest in Augsburg ended with a spectacle of public abjuration and penance, the inquisition in Rothenburg saw a complete acquittal of its sole target.

And yet, despite these and other differences between the inquisitions in the two cities, there are important similarities. Like Augsburg, Rothenburg ob der Tauber was an imperial city and, for most of its recent history, had a strained relationship with the bishop of Würzburg, the region's most powerful prince of the Church.[87] The trials in both Augsburg and Rothenburg represented this conflict of episcopal and lay authorities, who contested the degree of political influence upon each other. Waldensianism and heretical presence—real or imagined—inside a city were instrumentalized by the competing sides in these contests. Heinrich Angermeier's role, as an outsider, freelance "heresy-hunter," was pivotal in both cases, even if his involvement produced drastically different results. Finally, while our knowledge of the Augsburg inquisition is informed primarily by local chronicle accounts, surviving inquisitorial and municipal

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[87] Schnurrer, "Rothenburg und das Hochstift Würzburg im Mittelalter," 239-53.

documents from the trial of Hans Wern allow us to examine this persecution from the perspective of urban politics.

The opening salvo of the inquisition occurred when Heinrich Angermeier arrived in Rothenburg ob der Tauber in early November of 1394 and accused Hans Wern of being "a leader and founder of all heretics."[88] From that point onward, the trial unfolded in an unpredictable manner. Hans Wern, whose social and political standing within the city brought him into close contact with many of its religious institutions, was able to relay the news of the accusation against him to the bishop of Würzburg, Gerhard of Schwarzburg (r. 1372-1400).[89] The bishop did not take the incident lightly and sent his vicar-general (*vicarius in spiritualibus*), Walter Schubel, to Rothenburg to preside over the trial. This decision left Heinrich Angermeier in the role of a denunciator, thus placing the burden of proving Hans Wern's guilt on him. It is possible that Angermeier was not expecting episcopal involvement and hoped to act the role of a judge instead, as he had during his anti-Waldensian trials in Swabia a year earlier. This may explain why throughout the course of the trial, Angermeier—described in the trial records with an almost perceptible air of derision as "a self-styled inquisitor of heretical depravity, heresy and specifically heretical errors of the Waldensian sect"—was unable to produce sufficient evidence of Wern's guilt.[90] Without any specific evidence against the accused, Schubel questioned him about his religious beliefs, including his knowledge of the sacraments and whether he held that

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[88] "do gab er dem rate zu erkennen, der were aller ketzer hauptman und vorgener, und nennet Hansen Weren." "List of Accusations against Hans Wern," StadtA Ro 778 a/II, fol. 49, article 6: For a narrative overview of the inquisition, see Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 31-35; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 72-73; Weigel, "Waldenserverhör in Rothenburg im Jahre 1394," 81-83.

[89] On Wern's involvement with and support of various religious institutions in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, see Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 27-29. See also Schlenker and Flachenecker, "Gerhard von Schwarzburg," 900-902.

[90] "magistiri Heinrici Angermair, se nominantis inquisitore heretice pravitatis de heresies et specialiater de erroribus hereticorum de secta Waldensium." Weigel, "Ein Waldenserverhör in Rothenburg im Jahre 1394," 83.

"a good layman can hear confessions and absolve sins" (i.e., the most telltale Waldensian tenet).[91] Satisfied with Wern's answers, the episcopal judge ordered him to produce five to seven character witnesses to swear to his innocence. In what was likely a conscious attempt to restore Wern's reputation, he found a remarkable number of witnesses: an abbot, ten regular and secular priests, and over fifty laymen. The heresy trial concluded with Wern's full acquittal on November 16, 1394, but Wern's legal troubles were far from over.

Despite the enigmatic nature of the Wern affair, it has barely received attention from scholars, particularly in conjunction with the other anti-heretical campaigns that happened in the same region during the 1390s. In 1917, Helmut Weigel published the court records from Hans Wern's trial, in the original Latin, with a short preface outlining the narrative of the trial (most details were garnered by Weigel from the document itself).[92] Presumably because Weigel was the first to bring this document to scholarly attention—and because Wern's trial was not recorded in contemporary chronicles—the inquisition in Rothenburg escaped being mentioned in either Hermann Haupt's influential "Waldenserthum und Inquisition in südöstlichen Deutschland seit der Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts" (1890) or Henry Charles Lea's *A History of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages* (1888), and therefore remained virtually unknown to scholars. In 1979, Richard Kieckhefer "re-discovered" the Rothenburg case in his seminal work *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* and introduced Weigel's original publication to a wider audience. Kieckhefer's retelling follows the somewhat misleading narrative contained in the proceedings that provides virtually no context for the trial. Incidentally, Kieckhefer concluded that the grounds for the eventual acquittal of Wern were "clearly substantive rather than political." In his

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[91] "…quod bonus laicus habeat potestatem audiendi confessiones et a peccatis absolvendi." Weigel, "Ein Waldenserverhör in Rothenburg im Jahre 1394," 85:

[92] Weigel, "Ein Waldenserverhör in Rothenburg im Jahre 1394," 81-86.

opinion, it was not Heinrich Angermeier's actions (the fact that he conducted an inquisition without the bishop's permission) that antagonized the judge, but rather the nature—that is the absence—of his evidence.[93]

Among the German scholars, the inquisition in Rothenburg remained relatively obscure for the most part of the twentieth century. In 2001, Ludwig Schnurrer, a local historian of medieval and early modern Rothenburg, who had also edited a two-volume collection of documents from Rothenburg's city archive, published an article in which he conclusively tied the inquisition to the conflict among the city elites.[94] Schnurrer's analysis reveals a surprising richness of surviving sources; in addition to the aforementioned trial proceedings, there are letters between Heinrich Toppler, Heinrich Angermeier, and the bishop of Würzburg and even a list of expenses that Angermeier's services were paid from Rothenburg's coffers. However, despite his painstaking attention to recreating both the narrative and the context of the inquisition, Schnurrer shows little interest in the persona of the itinerant inquisitor or in the inquisition itself; to him, the inquisition was merely a prelude to a more serious—and effective—embezzlement trial against Wern.[95]

Why was Hans Wern accused of being a heretic? Heinrich Angermeier's target came from a relatively obscure artisan background, but his rise to the top of Rothenburg's society coincided with the growth of the city's economy and, not surprisingly, with the conflict between the city's patriciate and the "new" elites during the 1360s and 1370s.[96] A representative of the new elites, Wern was an owner of property within the city, including his house on the Obere

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[93] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 72-73.

[94] Schnurrer, ed. *Die Urkundenbuch der Reichstadt Rothenburg*, 2 vols. (Würzburg, 1999); Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 9-54.

[95] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 35-43.

[96] In the earliest mention of this family name in Rothenburg's records it speaks of "baker Wern" (*Wern pistor*). Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 11.

Schmiedgasse—on a major thoroughfare in the vicinity of the seat of Rothenburg's city council—as well as involved in significant merchant enterprises, including the wine trade. Rothenburg, along with most of Franconia, was renowned for its wine, and Wern's involvement in the wine trade made him the principal supplier of wine in the city; this lucrative trade became an additional mark of prestige. For example, when Emperor Charles IV and his heir, King Wenceslas, were welcomed into the city in 1377 with a gift of wine—a common practice for honoring important dignitaries—it came from Hans Wern's cellar.[97] Politically, he had served as the burgomaster once in 1377, but continued his career in Rothenburg's treasury. Wern also took part in a number of delegations that represented Rothenburg ob der Tauber beyond its walls in dealings with the neighboring cities.[98] Although a representative of the new rich of Rothenburg, by 1394 he was a key figure in the town's political, social, and economic milieu.

These facts allow us to assume that when Hans Wern was accused of being a heretic and put on trial, his case warranted public attention. Based on the surviving evidence, Wern was an untypical person to be accused of adhering to heretical ideas—namely Waldensianism—in the wave of anti-heretical persecutions that took place in that part of the Empire in the 1390s. As far as we can learn, there is no mention, however brief, of any other suspects besides Wern, nor are there any other records of a Waldensian presence in Rothenburg. Although the trial record does not furnish us with any explanation for why the inquest centered on Hans Wern, a set of letters exchanged even before he was accused of being a heretic presents a striking image of late medieval urban politics. The earliest letter in this dossier, written by Heinrich Angermeier to

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[97] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 20; "Man schankt dem keiser und dem kůnige win, der kost 50 Ib. gen Hansen Weren." *Deutsche Reichstagakten*, I, 202. For a recent historiographical overview of German medieval wine- making and trade, see Scott, "Medieval Viticulture in the German-speaking Lands," 95-115. On wine-making in Fanconia: Schenk, "Viticulture in Franconia along the River Main," 185–204.

[98] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 24-27.

Rothenburg's burgomaster Heinrich Toppler, informs him of the inquisitor's intention to visit the city. This initiative did not come from Angermeier however. It is clear from the letter that he was in fact contacted by Toppler personally and the inquisitor's letter was a response to an invitation to investigate an unspecified matter in Rothenburg.[99] The letter, albeit vague, does suggest that the inquisitor was invited to Rothenburg by its burgomaster to conduct an inquisition and therefore may have been targeting Hans Wern from the beginning.

Historian Ludwig Schnurrer observes that surviving municipal records may hold an explanation for the conflict between Hans Wern and the burgomaster Toppler. Rothenburg's political history in the second half of the fourteenth century was plagued by repeated struggles for power: starting in the 1360s, the "new" elites succeeded in unseating the representatives of Rothenburg's patriciate, only to start a fierce competition among themselves. Wern's economic success was matched by his political involvement. After serving one term as burgomaster, Wern became involved with the city's finances, serving multiple terms as tax collector (*Steuerer*) and controlling its public works (*Baumeister*). Control of Rothenburg's treasury was likely extremely lucrative for Wern, whose income came to rival Toppler's, the richest man in Rothenburg at the time.[100] Both Wern and Toppler boasted residences in the Obere Schmiedgasse and coats of arms (in 1392, Toppler renewed the rights to his coat of arms from Duke Stephen of Bavaria).[101] In an oligarchic political environment where economic, symbolic and political powers were intertwined, burgomaster Toppler had reason to feel uneasy about his competitor.

Heinrich Toppler, also a representative of the city's new elite, started his political career

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[99] Schnurrer, *Die Urkunden*, vol. 2, 972. The document is held in the Stadtarchiv Rothenburg ob der Tauber, A 778 a/II fol. 34.

[100] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 25-26.

[101] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 15, 30-31. Heinrich Toppler's house is still extant.

in the early 1370s at the same time as Hans Wern. He was first elected as a member of the city council in 1373, and remained part of the city's government until his death in 1408. Between 1388 and 1403, he served continuously as Rothenburg's burgomaster, successfully winning every biennial election.[102] Thus Toppler's political career weathered the disruptive decade of unceasing warfare between the Swabian League of Cities (of which Rothenburg was a member from 1382) and the unified opposition of the regional nobility and clergy. After the League's defeat in 1389, Toppler remained in power, guiding the relatively small imperial city in its interactions with the powerful bishop of Würzburg and the burgraves of Nuremberg. By early 1392 he concluded a peace treaty with the bishop of Würzburg ending over a decade of conflicts.[103] Yet, like the peace treaty concluded between the bishop of Augsburg and that city shortly before the inquisition (1391), the peace between the bishop of Würzburg and Rothenburg did not eliminate contestation of political authority between the two, but merely made it less apparent.

The inquisition in Rothenburg is an example of a less direct form of such contestation. Burgomaster Toppler's decision to invite an itinerant inquisitor from outside the city and the diocese demonstrates his determination to accuse Hans Wern of being a heretic without involving any clergy from his own city. It is possible that the rumors of Heinrich Angermeier holding anti-Waldensian trials in Wemding, Donauwörth, and Dinkelsbühl in the fall of 1393 prompted Toppler to invite the inquisitor to Rothenburg to investigate heresy there. Toppler had strong ties to the urban merchant elites in these nearby cities, both as a remnant of the Swabian League and part of his personal network. Thus, Toppler may have been familiar with the sentiment expressed by Hans Mair of Nördlingen (Toppler's third wife, whom he married in 1392, was from that city),

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[102] Schnurrer, "Heinrich Toppler," 33-34.

[103] Schnurrer, "Heinrich Toppler," 34-35; Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 32-33.

that during the inquisitions of 1393, the rich were punished more harshly than the poor.[104] It is unclear whether Toppler realized that by inviting an itinerant inquisitor, he antagonized the bishop on whose direct prerogative he was encroaching. After all, as Richard Kieckhefer observes, canon law reserved to the Church the right "of determining whether an alleged heretic actually subscribed to heterodox doctrine."[105]

And yet, even after the bishop responded to the inquest against Hans Wern and even sent his vicar-general (*vicarius in spiritialibus*) Walter Schubel to preside over the trial, Toppler did not call off the inquisitor. Indeed, the surviving list of expenses incurred by Angermeier for which he expected to be paid from Rothenburg's treasury demonstrates that the inquisitor traveled as far as Augsburg and Ulm (presumably trying to find further proof of Wern's guilt), retained two mercenaries for protection, and spent 27 gulden on room and board alone. The expense account totaled at 53 gulden 259 pounds and 4 silver shillings, an impressive sum that suggests that Toppler did not cease his attempts to prove that his political competitor was a heretic and equally did not spare any expense to achieve this.[106] Even after Wern was fully acquitted by Schubel, Angermeier continued to look for more evidence, prompting the bishop to write to Toppler and order him to stop harassing Wern. The latter, meanwhile, left the city and temporarily moved to Würzburg to stay under the bishop's protection. Perhaps in hopes of gaining an additional legal protection, Wern acquired citizen rights from Würzburg in February

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[104] "Tandem finaliter inventum est, quod Domini illorum, qui combusti fuerunt, receperunt bona ipsorum, & pauperes dimiserunt. Credo, quod causa principalis fuerit mala." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620. Heinrich Toppler married Margaretha Mayler from a wealthy Nördlingen family. Schnurrer, "Heinrich Toppler," 28.

[105] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 78.

[106] Stadtarchiv Rothenburg ob der Tauber, A 778 a/II fols. 37-38. The list was published in Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 45.

1395.[107]

Given the narrow focus of the inquisition and the fact that Angermeier acted without episcopal permission to investigate Wern, it may be surprising that Bishop Gerhard did not simply dismiss Angermeier's accusations without proceeding any further. The bishop's reaction, however, demonstrates that even if he did not believe the accusations against Wern (as his support of Wern both before and after the trial demonstrates), he decided to conduct a formal trial in order to project his authority to conduct such an inquest on his own terms. This may explain why he appointed his vicar-general as an inquisitor to preside over the trial, instead of relying on local clergy from Rothenburg or any number of more junior-ranking clerics at his disposal. Nor was Bishop Gerhard opposed to delegating the task of pursuing heresy to an itinerant inquisitor. A few years earlier, in 1391 he had entrusted Martin of Amberg with the investigation of beghards and Waldensians in Würzburg itself.[108]

In 1394, however, the bishop's actions aimed to show that he did not take usurpation of his authority lightly. Indeed, the very involvement of Walter Schubel was meant to produce an acquittal and to remind Rothenburg's city council that it was encroaching on the bishop's jurisdiction. Schubel became the vicar-general for the Würzburg diocese only a few months before the trial, having previously occupied positions as a cathedral canon there, as well as in Bamberg, Augsburg, and Eichstatt.[109] Moreover, he had been involved in an earlier inquisitorial trial at Eichstatt in 1381, if only as a witness, and therefore was familiar with the process.[110] On

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[107] Schnurrer, *Die Urkunden*, vol. 2, 980, 984.

[108] Haupt, *Die religiöse Sekten in Franken*, 23-24.

[109] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 33, n.229

[110] Grundmann, "Ketzerverhöre des Spätmittelalters," 564-66. Schubel was one of the witnesses of a trial of one Conrad Kannler, a man accused of believing in the heresy of the "free spirit" in Eichstätt in 1381. Grundmann demonstrates that Kannler was in fact a victim of suggestive questioning and possibly his own delusions of self-grandeur. Later he withdrew his earlier statements and was absolved and assigned an unspecified penance.

the other hand, the bishop, who had concluded his conflict with Rothenburg only two years earlier, had to operate in an environment that precluded any direct action against Angermeier and Toppler or risk the reopening of the conflict. If the inquisition in Rothenburg was spurred by Heinrich Toppler's desire to get rid of a possible political opponent—and not in a way that would lead to direct confrontation between him and Wern—then a properly conducted trial ending in an acquittal constituted the best possible outcome for the bishop: restoration of Hans Wern's reputation and a public defeat for the unwelcome itinerant inquisitor. The trial, which ended on November 16, 1394, accomplished both of these aims.

The inquisition in Rothenburg presents an interesting aberration from or even a reversal of the more usual narrative of an inquisition initiated by the Church. Instead, in Rothenburg the secular authorities in the city accused a citizen of their city of being a heretic, while the bishop of Wurzburg brought the authority of the Church to the defense of the accused. Although on the surface the acquittal of Hans Wern may appear as a victory of the bishop's authority over Rothenburg's, in reality the inquisition was merely a prelude to a more sinister campaign. By February of 1395, Wern was on trial again, this time for a crime thoroughly within the competence of Rothenburg's city council—embezzlement from the treasury. The crime of embezzlement, not an unsurprising charge considering Wern's involvement with Rothenburg's treasury and tax collection, left him completely at the mercy of the Toppler-controlled city council.[111] In October 1395 when the bishop attempted to influence the course of the trial—using once again Walter Schubel as his representative—the city council likely reminded him that he was not to meddle in Rothenburg's internal affairs. The bishop restricted his involvement to

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Grundmann, "Ketzerverhöre des Spätmittelalters," 535-50. See also, Lerner, *Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 142-45.

[111] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 35-37.

asking for Wern not to be kept in such "harsh and painful" prison conditions.[112] The trial ended with Wern's imprisonment in March 1396 and practically bankrupted him with a staggering fine of 2000 gulden; Toppler was finally able to rid himself of a potential competitor.[113] Although, given the state of evidence, it is impossible to say whether there was any truth to Toppler's allegations about Wern's embezzling, the inquisitorial trial that opened the conflict between the two richest men in Rothenburg might have acted as a kind of character assassination, forced Wern to flee, and likely allowed Toppler to prepare the embezzlement accusations against him. Despite Angermeier's ultimate failure to prove Wern's heretical beliefs, Wern's *fama* was affected; the mere act of escaping harassment from the inquisitor became perceived as a flight from justice and the abandonment of his citizen's oath, providing yet another reason for persecution.[114]

The brief inquisition in Rothenburg challenges our understanding of the anti-Waldensian persecution of the 1390s. Although the persecution of heresy was most evidently instrumentalized by Heinrich Toppler, the bishop's response demonstrates a similar attempt to use a political trial for extending his authority over the imperial city. If in Augsburg the bishop did so by persecuting heresy, in Rothenburg the bishop used a trial that ended in an acquittal (uncommon during this period) as a demonstration of his competence and control in the matters of religion. By insisting on remaining in control of the inquisition in Rothenburg, the bishop reminded its citizens and its rulers of his pastoral duties. In the end, while both sides exploited the political potential of the inquisitorial trial, Toppler was able to use even the unsuccessful inquisition as a tool against his political opponent. By forcing Wern to leave the city with repeated accusations, Toppler exploited the city-centric worldview of late medieval cities that

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[112] "hertiklich und peinlich…" St A Ro 778a/II, fol. 29.

[113] Schnurrer, "Ein spätmittelalterlicher Elitenkonflikt in der Reichsstadt Rothenburg ob der Tauber," 37.

[114] St A Ro 778a/II, fol. 2r-3v, 11.

saw the very act of leaving the confines of a town (as a result of a sentence of banishment or voluntarily) as a transgression that endangered the individual's moral status. Wern's decision to seek protection at the bishop's side was likely interpreted as an act of treason—after all Bishop Gerhard and Rothenburg had only recently been fighting each other during the 1380s—and made the task of accusing Wern of embezzlement easier. Even if Toppler's attempt to get rid of a potential rival by accusing him of being a heretic failed, his eventual success in eliminating Hans Wern from Rothenburg's political stage demonstrates the political potential of the heresy charges from the late medieval urban perspective.

Conclusions

The inquisitions in Augsburg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber are only two incidents in a chain of anti-heretical persecution that took place in the last decade of the fourteenth century. Often initiated by itinerant inquisitors like Heinrich Angermeier or Peter Zwicker, these inquisitions exacerbated the struggles between towns and their rivals, placing heretical communities or single individuals in the middle of these conflicts. The presence of heretics—real or imaginary—in a city aggravated a highly ritualized contest over urban space and political power. To use the concepts developed by the historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith, the authority of the bishop of Augsburg was rooted in the "system [of] the sacred based on power" and derived from the historical significance of his cathedral, the locus of power and glory of this and all previous bishops in the defiant city.[115] This system, dependent on the bishop's access to the Cathedral of St. Mary, "his charismatic center," tied the exiled bishop to Augsburg.[116] The city, on the other hand, was able to base its authority and its new vision of urban spirituality on

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[115] Thomas, "Place and Memory: Response to Jonathan Z. Smith on *To Take Place*, 774.
[116] Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City*, 122.

its ability to create and uphold urban order based on inclusion (of the repentant heretics) and exclusion (of the bishop), on separating purity from pollution, and on ritualized ways of turning one into the other. Ultimately, sacred urban space in Augsburg provided an alternative to the more traditional structure of Church hierarchy; this allowed the city to imagine itself as a miniature version of Christendom, independent from external religious influence, even if the political reality was far from this ideal.[117] After all, as Burkhard Zink, another chronicler from Augsburg wrote in the fifteenth century, in cities "everyone wants to go to heaven."[118]

Urban communities and, in particular, urban elites were focused on salvation as a political concept that was indivisible from their independence; this merging of civic and religious sensibilities left no room for non-participation, especially if it endangered the whole city. The inquisition in Augsburg has to be understood as a contest of authorities in which the presence of urban heresy was instrumentalized and used in competing claims, included and excluded through signs and rituals. What began as an attempt to find a weakness in the image of sacred community that Augsburg's elites wanted to project ended with the city's decision to act on its own in punishing the errant, once again excluding the bishop from controlling the city. Simultaneously, accusations of heresy, reinforced by this notion of communal spirituality, could be used as a powerful political weapon in a contest between the urban elites. The inquisition in Rothenburg demonstrates how such accusations (even after they had been proven unfounded) retained enough potency to exclude one of Rothenburg's richest men from the city. Although local political conflicts shaped the outcome of the inquisition, the anti-Waldensian campaigns in Augsburg and Rothenburg have to be analyzed as an important contest of authorities in the larger context of power struggles between urban and ecclesiastical rulers. Most importantly, it helps

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[117] Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 49.
[118] "…dann iederman wolt gen himl." Zink, "Chronik des Burkard Zink," 45.

explain both the renewed attention towards Waldensianism at the end of the fourteenth century and the role of free and imperial German cities in this process.

Chapter Four

Peter Zwicker: Conversion, Repression, Reform

Lauded by modern scholars for his anti-heretical zeal and by his contemporaries for bringing hundreds of Waldensians back into the fold of the Church, the Celestine prior and inquisitor Peter Zwicker still remains in the shadows of historical obscurity.[1] Similarly, the main product of Zwicker's career as an inquisitor and an author, an anti-Waldensian treatise titled after its incipit *Cum dormirent homines* ("While men slept…"), although described by historian Peter Biller as "the single most important text on the Waldensians from the later middle ages," has not seen much attention since the two articles on this text written in late 1980s and early 1990s by Biller himself.[2] Perhaps surprisingly, given the paucity of studies of his life and writings, we can know more about Zwicker than about other inquisitors from this decade: his associate Martin of Amberg (Prague), and Heinrich Angermeier. More importantly, an analysis of Zwicker's writings can provide us with a glimpse of his approach towards Waldensianism and contribute to our attempt to understand the unusual intensification of inquisitorial attention to German Waldensians during the 1390s.

What we know about Zwicker's life and a close reading of his writings can help us determine the cultural, intellectual, and religious milieu in which Zwicker was immersed. Such analysis reveals that the future inquisitor, like his better known contemporaries, was concerned with the crisis of faith and ecclesiastical authority caused by the Great Schism, widespread anti-clericalism and the proliferation—at least in his view—of heretics, in particular the Waldensians.

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[1] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 71; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 139. For reference to Zwicker's conversion of heretics see *Refutatio errorum quibus waldenses distinentur*, 302G.

[2] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 237. The articles were later collected and published as parts of one book. The most recent overview of the treatise and its author by Georg Modestin for the most part recapitulates Biller's analysis. Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 211-229.

Although Zwicker's involvement in the repressive campaigns of the 1390s has been described as a product of his "zeal," the origins of this zeal have never been analyzed; nor is "zeal" a specific enough description.[3] Rather, one can talk about the inquisitor's interest in religious education of the laity—characteristic for the period—and view his anti-heretical efforts as a product of this interest.[4]

A look at the ecclesiastical reform movement that likely influenced Zwicker together with an examination of his anti-Waldensian treatise can demonstrate that his involvement with the repression of heresy at the turn of the fifteenth century was a more radical—one can almost say more forceful—effort at catechizing the laity and disseminating orthodoxy, part of the broader efforts to revive and reform the Church undertaken during the period. This chapter proposes to place itinerant inquisitors—using Peter Zwicker as an example—in their context, by placing his interest in heresy in the context of reform, anti-fraternalism, and lay preaching. It is my intention to view Zwicker's inquisitorial career as a product and a culmination of these influences. This chapter will first try to reconstruct these influences by examining the inquisitor's biography, and his cultural and religious milieu; then, Zwicker's anti-Waldensian treatise *Cum dormirent homines* and his exposition of the Lord's Prayer will be analyzed in order to demonstrate Zwicker's interest in catechizing Waldensian believers and, ultimately, in converting them.

A junction between persecution of heresy and reform is not unique to Zwicker. As Michael D. Bailey observes in his study of the writings of Johannes Nider (c. 1380-1438), this somewhat later theologian presented heresy—and a newly-formed concept of diabolical

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[3] Richard Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55; see also n. 1.

[4] On roughly contemporary attitudes to religious education of laity, see Copeland, *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages*; Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson*; Bailey, *Battling Demons*, 7-9.

witchcraft—as signs that the Church and Christendom in general were in dire need of reform. To Nider, the existence of witches, inspired by the Devil, created urgency for his reformist ideas; interestingly, heretical movements of his day received a more tepid treatment from the author, superseded by the fear of a demonic anti-human conspiracy.[5] It is not at all surprising that Nider's most famous work, the *Formicarius*, which delves into the nature of diabolical witchcraft, was composed during the Council of Basel (1431-37), during the ecclesiastical crisis that threatened to become the new Great Schism. To Zwicker, writing about forty years prior, heresy, especially Waldensianism, was also crucial in its ability to promote reform of the Church. While Nider was one of the leading proponents of religious reform in the early fifteenth century, Zwicker was not an active reformer per se, at least as far as the surviving evidence allows us to see. His membership in the Celestine order, however, suggests that he was deeply influenced by the reformist ideas of his time. An inquisitor *as well* as an author (unlike Nider), Zwicker was not content with merely intellectual uses of heresy as a sign of the crisis in the Church. Instead, he imagined the act of bringing heretics back into the fold as a way to ensure ecclesiastical reform. Heresy detracted from the Church, it kept religiously active—if misled—followers away from it. While heresiarchs, the primary target of Zwicker's polemic, were a living sign of the Church's deficiency, the *credentes* or followers, if persuaded to abandon their errors, could lead to the improvement of the Church. Thus, Zwicker's largest work, *Cum dormirent homines*, which will be discussed in greater detail below, provides an assortment of tools both for understanding the Waldensian movement and for effectively persuading its followers to convert back to Catholicism.

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[5] Bailey, *Battling Demons*, 2-3, 57

A number of factors in his biography make the Prussian-born provincial prior of the Celestine Order into a crucial figure in the history of later medieval inquisition in Central Europe.[6] First, Zwicker was not part of the mendicant religious orders, which had been associated with repression of heresy since the thirteenth century. In fact, the Celestine order—named after its founder, Pope Celestine V (r. 1294)—which gained ground in the Holy Roman Empire under patronage of Charles IV, was guided by a more austere version of the Benedictine Rule, which discouraged unwarranted travel by the monks. Pope Celestine—or Peter Morrone, as he was called before and after his short-lived papacy—was a himself a Benedictine monk before becoming a cave-dwelling hermit; his new order was also initially a more rigorous and ascetic branch of the Benedictines.[7] Although the prohibition against travel did not apply to the Celestine prior, persecution of heresy (especially on Zwicker's scale) was definitely not part of the Celestine monastic culture, which means that the inquisitor's interest in pursuing Waldensians needs to be looked for elsewhere.

Zwicker's role as a "freelance" persecutor of heretics was clearly unusual, which led later authors who wrote about the inquisitor and his campaigns to assume that he held papal authority, despite a clear lack of sources to support this assumption. Thus, the Dominicans at Prenzlau, who became custodians of the inquisitorial records from Zwicker's investigation in Brandenburg and Pomerania (1392-94), later attributed these documents to an inquisitor "specially sent to German lands and the diocese of Cammin by the apostolic See" (*ad partes Alemanie et dyocesim*

[6] For a brief biography, see Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 25-34.

[7] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 16-17. As a prior and an inquisitor, Zwicker frequently drew on support from local Benedictine houses, such as the one in Garsten, near Steyr in Upper Austria, where he composed his anti-Waldensian treatise. See, Peter Biller, *The Waldenses*, 256; Georg Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 223.

Caminensem specialiter destinatum per sedem apostolicam, 1432).[8] Although this remark should not be dismissed out of hand, as Dietrich Kurze has demonstrated in his study of Zwicker's records the Dominicans were most likely confused about the authority the inquisitor wielded. They were similarly mistaken about the dates of his inquest, claiming that it lasted from January 1393 to February 1394, despite the fact that the very page that contains the remark about Zwicker's papal commission states that the inquisition ended on March 30, 1393; clearly, the later Dominican archivists managed only a very superficial reading of the actual records. This misconception has afflicted modern scholarship as well. Robert E. Lerner, likely misled by the anonymous Dominican archivist, also considers Peter Zwicker, as well as his associate Martin of Amberg, to be papal inquisitors in his brief treatment of their persecutions of beguines and beghards in *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*.[9]

However, even those scholars who deny that Peter Zwicker ever possessed a papal appointment do not analyze the origins of his preoccupation with heresy and its repression Peter Biller, whose analysis of Zwicker's writings has greatly increased our understanding of the inquisitor and his campaigns against the Waldensians, does not address the question of why a Celestine prior spent a decade of his life traversing the Empire, away from Celestine houses (located in Bohemia). Evidently, he spent more time pursuing heresy than overseeing his order.[10] Although recognizing that inquisitors like Zwicker, Martin of Amberg, and their contemporary, Heinrich Angermeier, were instrumental in inciting the wave of anti-heretical persecution during the 1390s, scholars only note in passing that none of the three belonged to the Dominican order or held a papal sanction to proceed against heretics; they do not examine the sources of the

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[8] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 67, 72n.91; Kurze, *Quellen*, 28.

[9] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 146.

[10] Biller, *The Waldenses*, passim.

inquisitors' authority or study their motivation further.[11] This chapter will attempt to place Zwicker in his historical context and then use this information to interpret his writings: the anti-Waldensian treatise *Cum dormirent homines* and the exposition of the Lord's Prayer.

Peter Zwicker and his World

Detailed biographical information is hard to come by, especially for a man, whose vocation presumed asking questions, not answering them. Fragmentary evidence indicates that Peter Zwicker was born in Wormditt, in Eastern Prussia (present-day Orneta, Poland), although the date of his birth is unknown.[12] Nor do we know much about his early life, save for the fact that he was no stranger to long-distance travel even as a young man. By 1363 Zwicker had found his way from the shores of the Baltic to Zittau, in Upper Lusatia, then part of the Bohemian kingdom. There he served as a school teacher (named in the records interchangeably as *rector scolae* and *ludimoderator*) for almost two decades. [13] Although exact reasons for this move remain obscure, he might have moved to Bohemia to attend the recently created university in Prague (est. 1348), where he eventually received his bachelor's degree in 1379.[14]

What we know about Peter Zwicker's life before the earliest surviving record of him being involved in an inquisition presents him as an individual likely to be influenced by the religious movements of his time. First, most of his life overlapped with the Schism and various movements calling for spiritual and ecclesiastical reforms. Second, despite his impressive itinerary, Zwicker tended to gravitate towards Prague, the Empire's de-facto capital, its cultural

[11] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 54-55; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 254-5; Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 212-3.

[12] "…magistri Petri Czwickers de Wormpnijt, civitatis Prusziae." Gartner, *Quellenbuch zur Geschichte des Gymnasiums zu Zittau*, vol. 1, 3.

[13] *Quellenbuch zur Geschichte des Gymnasiums zu Zittau*, vol. 1, 3; Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 26.

[14] Scott, *The City-State in Europe*, *1000-1600*, 62; Šmahel, *The Charles University in the Middle Ages*, 6-8; *Liber decanorum facultatis philosophicae Universitatis Pragensis*, 187.

center, and focal point for the aforementioned reform movements; it stands to reason that if Zwicker was not part of the intellectual movements himself, he was certainly aware of them and likely exposed to their influences. If Zwicker's education is not immediately apparent in his writings, aside from an occasional logical tag or scholastic term, his time at the University of Prague introduced him to the reform ideas that were brewing in the Bohemian capital throughout the second half of the fourteenth century.[15]

Religious reform, like the university itself, was patronized by the emperor Charles IV, part of his ambitious program of making Prague into a cultural, as well as religious center, of Europe north of the Alps. The post-plague decades in the reign of Emperor Charles IV were characterized by an emphasis on piety and reform, especially the reform of the secular clergy, which grew wealthy through imperial patronage and Charles' habit of appointing clergymen to administrative positions. Indeed, his conspicuous piety and tendency to surround himself with ascetic clergy even reputedly led William of Ockham to dub Charles "the priestly king" (*rex clericorum*).[16] Perhaps trying to curtail clerical excesses, in 1363 Charles invited to Prague a charismatic Augustinian canon, Conrad Waldhauser (d. 1369), luring him away from Habsburg Vienna and supporting him through an imperially-controlled benefice.[17] Waldhauser's sermons, which addressed the clergy, Prague's upper classes, and even university students, emphasized piety and renunciation of excessive wealth. These messages were particularly well-received by the archbishop of Prague, Ernest of Pardubice, whose ascetic leanings contrasted sharply with the prevailing clerical wealth in the city. Conrad was also particularly vehement in his stance against the mendicants, matching another of the archbishop's interests. While Waldhauser's

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[15] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 273n.13.
[16] Thomas, *Anne's Bohemia*, 10.
[17] Winter, *Frühumanismus*, 81-2.

sermons against the mendicants in Prague were not particularly original—for the most part he attacked them along the same lines as their thirteenth-century critics, most notably William of Saint-Amour (c. 1200-1272)—the Augustinian was nevertheless demonstrating a clear tendency of the new reform movement among the secular clergy to treat friars with suspicion and view them as detractors from the moral reform.

> Waldhauser's controversial preaching had deep roots, in other words, in a widespread antimendicant tradition reaching back more than a century. For Waldhauser and other leading late medieval opponents of the friars like Richard FitzRalph, Nicholas of Jauer, and Conrad Megenberg, opposition to the mendicants and moral reform were two aspects of a single endeavor. Waldhauser believed that the moral condition of Prague's laity indicated a failure of pastoral care and that blame for that failure rested squarely on the shoulders of the friars. Even their preaching against sin, he charged, was compromised by their dependence on begging. Accordingly he accompanied every major message of his preaching with an antimendicant rant.[18]

In Waldhauser's case, moreover, strong reformist and anti-mendicant rhetoric was coupled with charismatic preaching in Latin, German and possibly even Czech, a language Waldhauser learned in order to appeal to the lay audience in Prague. This linguistic flexibility demonstrates the preacher's understanding of the people to whom he preached; his listeners responded in kind, filling the market square in front of the church of St. Gall to hear his sermons

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[18] Mengel, "Emperor Charles IV," 27.

and defending Waldhauser against his detractors. Thus, on his way across the town to defend himself against the mendicant charges of unauthorized preaching, Waldhauser roused a mob of laity and paraded it past the windows of the Dominican convent, in what, no doubt, was a show of force. In the end, it was perhaps the conflict with the mendicants that led to the charges of heresy leveled against Waldhauser by the papal curia, forcing him to spend the end of his life on the way to Rome and Avignon.[19] Waldhauser's sermons, however, were influential enough to inspire a number of supporters, who perpetuated his reformist and anti-mendicant messages, especially when it came to spreading these messages in the vernacular; soon the vernacular of the book followed the vernacular of the pulpit fueling an efflorescence of both German and Czech literature.[20]

In addition to his anti-mendicant rhetoric, Waldhauser was equally opposed to heresy, yet another problem that, in his opinion, prevented the reform. Blaming the nobles' lack of action against heresy on their preoccupation with wealth in a postil to the university students, the preacher built on the Gospel exhortation to beware of false prophets (Matthew 7:15) and thus called for rigorous persecution of heretics in the name of the reform.[21] It is particularly remarkable that the call to combat heresy was directed specifically at the university students; one could speculate that Waldhauser's postil could have been read by Zwicker himself. Even if Zwicker was not in Prague during Waldhauser's tumultuous reign as the capital's most popular preacher, anti-mendicant and anti-heretical undercurrents of the later-medieval reform movement clearly influenced the future inquisitor—whose anti-heretical activity remained strictly independent, if not parallel to, a more traditional Dominican inquisitorial infrastructure. This

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[19] Mengel, "Emperor Charles IV" 27.

[20] Winter, *Frühumanismus*, 85; Thomas, *Anne's Bohemia*, 11-2.

[21] Patschovsky, *Quellen zur böhmischen Inquisition*, 125-6. See also, Mengel, "Bones, Stones, and Brothels," 169; Patschovsky, "Heresy and Society," 37.

suspicion of mendicants may have later influenced Peter Zwicker and another future inquisitor from Prague, Martin of Amberg, to become involved in persecutions of heresy themselves. Similarly, Waldhauser's message resonated with a number of key bishops throughout the empire, who, in time, were more likely to entrust inquisitorial duties to non-Dominican inquisitors.

Conrad Waldhauser's preaching career in Prague left a significant mark on the city's religious landscape and prompted a number of followers, who took up and perpetuated his reformist ideas. In particular, anti-mendicant tendencies and an emphasis on vernacular preaching remained as hallmarks of this religious movement, however disorganized. As in Waldhauser's case, imperial support for the reform played a crucial role in providing the movement with material, as well as political, resources; the latter, however, were always contingent on the reformer in question staying within the boundaries of the mainstream Church and within the realm of political expediency. The limits of imperial tolerance towards the reformers are particularly visible in the fate of Jan Milíč of Kroměříž (d. 1374) whose ambitious, albeit controversial, reform agenda earned him friends and enemies alike. One of the most notorious followers of the Augustinian preacher, Milíč's rise and subsequent fall from grace demonstrated the thin line between religious reform and heretical error during the period. More importantly for the purpose of this study, Milíč's program of religious reform, which targeted the very bottom of society, demonstrates a number of similarities to Zwicker's inquisitorial activity in the 1390s.

Among Czech national historians, Jan Milíč of Kroměříž is recognized as one of the forerunners of the Czech Reformation and a man whose life has long been filtered through the subsequent rise of the Hussite movement many decades after his death.[22] Equally controversial

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[22] Winter, *Frühumanismus*, 86-7; Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 409-12; Kaminsky, *A History of the*

and influential during his lifetime, less than twenty years after his death Milíč was portrayed by his contemporary, a Czech master of theology at the University of Paris, Matthias of Janov (d. 1394), "as the second Elijah, crying out against the unmistakable influence of Antichrist in the church—a claim with some substance to it."[23] If Matthias of Janov was correct about one thing, it was Milíč's unyielding reforming fervor, although his life also fits within the paradigm of later medieval charismatic preaching, which makes him less of a Hussite-before-Hus, and more similar to men like Waldhauser.[24] Indeed, the life of Jan Milíč was an example of a later medieval narrative of personal conversion taken to the extreme. By the early 1360s Milíč had made a promising and lucrative career as a canon of the Prague cathedral of St. Vitus and a member of Charles IV's chancery; his resignation from these positions and refusal of benefices associated with them already presents Milíč as a man who, like many others in the later medieval period, experienced a spiritual transformation.[25] Milíč, however, was untypical in his choice of vocation after his conversion. Instead of joining a monastic order, which was an expected outcome, he began to lead a life even more public than before, preaching regularly, at least twice a day, in various locations in the city.[26]

Milíč was particularly taken with preaching to prostitutes in Prague's Old Town and it was this social group that proved to be the target of his most ambitious reform campaign. In 1372, Charles IV ordered the destruction of Prague's oldest and most infamous brothel, known as "Venice" (*Benatký* or *Venecie*), an apparent word play on "Venus" and "venereal," as well as a

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Hussite Revolution, 9-14.

[23] Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 409.

[24] Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia*, 255-60; Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 410-11.

[25] For an in-depth discussion of Jan Milíč and his reform efforts, see Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 407f; Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-century Bohemia*.

[26] Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia*, 57; Winter, *Frühumanismus*, 90.

nod to the licentious reputation of the Italian city.[27] Although "Venice" was one of many parts of the town where prostitution was tolerated, its fate was sealed by the imperial decision to join the Old Town and the New Town into a single city in 1367.[28] Once having been secluded on the southern side of the Old Town, near the city wall, now "Venice" was about to be offensively close to the center of the newly unified city and had to be razed. Part of Charles' ambitious reshaping of his capital, imagined as a "third Rome," the destruction of the brothel allowed Milíč to attempt to embody his reform agenda. Having been forced to somewhat mute his fiery sermons after a brief stint in the inquisitorial prison in Rome, Milíč likely seized the chance to try an actual reform in a seemingly uncontroversial setting and in line with the emperor's plans for urban development. [29] Already by 1372 his sermons were attracting both former and active prostitutes; around that time Milíč was even able to provide food and shelter to repentant *meretrices* and pay their debts to their procurers. Having destroyed "Venice," Charles IV allowed Milíč to found a chapel in its place—appropriately devoted to St. Mary Magdalene and two other prostitute saints—and to provide housing for the former prostitutes. Milíč, however, went even further: he used charity funds to acquire surrounding houses and established a religious community, which he aptly re-christened "Jerusalem."[30]

Although clearly not the first institution to offer assistance to repentant prostitutes, Milíč's community pushed the boundaries of the licit in a number of ways. Unlike other charitable institutions, "Jerusalem" provided housing not only to former prostitutes, but also to Milíč's male clerical followers. This was potentially scandalous, since even by associating with

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[27] "lupanar antiquum… qui locus Venecie dicebatur…". Beneš Krabice of Weitmil, *Cronica ecclesie Pragensis*, 546. On possible explanations for the name of the brothel, see Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 416n.31.

[28] In the Old Town alone there was at least one more location, the so-called "Hampays" (a Czech word meaning a "brothel") in the north-west. See, Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 413-14.

[29] Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 440; Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia*, 59.

[30] Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 431-32; Winter, *Frühumanismus*, 94-95.

priests an unmarried woman risked having her morals questioned; a community where former prostitutes lived together with clerics must have raised questions about Milíč's intentions in Prague's ecclesiastical circles.[31] The new community proved to be too controversial to last. According to Milíč's critics, "Jerusalem's" founder imposed strict, quasi-monastic discipline in absence of an approved monastic rule. Perhaps even more menacingly, Milíč was busy buying the surrounding properties to allow "Jerusalem" to expand and even attempted to have his community recognized as a separate parish.[32] The whole endeavor, which also claimed to be able to train new priests, contradicted the Fourth Lateran prohibition on the creation of new religious orders; while groups of women living in a quasi-monastic community were too similar to the beguine lifestyle to be tolerated. In 1373, a coalition of Prague's mendicant and secular clerics appealed to the pope, who in turn called on the emperor to withdraw his support from Milíč's commune. By 1374 "Jerusalem" was disbanded and its property given to the Cistercian Order. What was once "Venice" and then "Jerusalem," became "St. Bernard."[33]

Milíč's quest to come up with new—if unconventional—forms of religious life was likely a memorable episode in the history of Prague's religious institutions. No less important was Milíč's assertion that the rejuvenation of the Church was to come from communities of converted sinners. Milíč's sinners of choice were Prague's prostitutes with whom "he spoke every day and asserted that these women were preferable to sacred virgins [i.e. nuns]." His approach bears a striking similarity to Peter Zwicker's *modus operandi* as an inquisitor and an author.[34] As I will demonstrate below, Zwicker, too, was seeking to contribute to the reform by

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[31] Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 434-435; on single women associated with priests, see Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 422. See also, Karras, "Sex and the Singlewoman," 127-145.

[32] Mengel, "Topography of Prostitution," 437-8.

[33] Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia*, 66-7.

[34] "…et etiam easdem mulieres omni die communicavit, asserens, quo eaedem mulieres sint omnibus sacris

converting the errant, although he perhaps was more careful in doing so. Instead of converting a physical space, he explored the Waldensian belief system and used his knowledge of its internal weaknesses to facilitate conversion.

Peter Zwicker in the Celestine Order

Whether spurred by the crisis in the Church, the plague, his graduation from the University of Prague, or simply tired of teaching in Zittau, in the early 1380's Zwicker joined the Celestine Order.[35] Although this choice by itself is not too surprising—after all personal or "internal" conversion was a well-established tradition in medieval Christianity and repeated crises in the world around him might have contributed to the urgency of undertaking a monastic life—unusual was Zwicker's choice of a religious order to join. As an order, the Celestines were a peculiar institution, established in Bohemia by Emperor Charles himself. In 1366 Charles IV invited a number of Celestine monks from France, where they also enjoyed royal patronage, and established a monastery at Oybin, near an imperial castle of the same name, close to Zittau. Built by craftsmen sent by the emperor from Prague itself, the monastery and its Francophone community must have been a remarkable contribution to the ecclesiastical landscape around Zittau. It was likely noticed by schoolteacher Zwicker at the time, especially since Zittau also contributed to the new monastery's coffers.[36]

Close ties with French Celestines, however, became complicated after 1378, when France and the Empire were separated from each other by the Schism. As a result, the French Celestines acquired independence from the Italian foundation by forming the so-called "Gallic province"

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viginibus praeferendae." Palacký, *Über Formelbücher*, vol. 2, 183.

[35] Nicholas Orme argues that a teaching position in the later medieval period brought little satisfaction to those who occupied it and schoolmasters in general suffered from a poor reputation. See Orme, "Schoolmasters, 1307-1509," 238.

[36] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 94-95.

(*provincia Gallicana*) and electing their own provincial prior in 1380. This left the pro-Roman Bohemian Celestines in a tricky position, which they resolved by creating their own province of *Alemania*; using the fact that it had received its Rule from Italy, the Bohemian Celestines proclaimed their pro-Roman position in the Schism. The new German province was more than humble, with only two houses—in Oybin and in Prague—and never managed to grow during the middle ages; what mattered was its break with the French.[37] Thus, at the time of Zwicker's decision to join the order, the Celestines were occupying a contested space in the midst of the ecclesiastical conflict. The order's emphases on simplicity, reform, and asceticism remained unchanged, however, which might have swayed Zwicker's decision to join its ranks.[38] Although left without its principal patron after the death of Charles IV, the order saw itself as a sentinel of correct observance and orthodoxy, something that must have called out to Zwicker during this time of crisis.

Following a more ascetic version of St. Benedict's Rule, the Celestines put even more emphasis on withdrawal from the world. Travel between their religious houses was allowed only by a special dispensation from the order's superiors and long absences required a further dispensation still.[39] One has to wonder whether such a restrictive atmosphere appealed to Zwicker; based on his later career both within the order and as a traveling inquisitor, it likely did not. Nevertheless, ten years later we find him occupying the position of the order's provincial; he would remain the provincial at least until 1397, despite spending most of this time away from Oybin as he persecuted Waldensians in Thuringia, Pomerania, and Upper Austria. Particularly

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[37] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 126.
[38] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 219-20.
[39] Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 254-6.

illustrative is the fact that Zwicker's earliest inquisition took place the same year as he ascended to the rank of provincial (1391).[40]

The Celestine prohibition on travel did not apply to its provincial and Zwicker was able to spend the decade away from Oybin, traveling constantly in the pursuit of heresy. In 1391 he investigated Waldensians in Erfurt; also around 1391 Zwicker compiled a list of Waldensian ministers, who had converted to Catholicism and, likely, revealed their contacts in heretical communities throughout the empire.[41] The information from these crucial converts informed Zwicker's later activity. In 1392-93 we find Zwicker interrogating Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania, in the Baltic north-east of the Empire. By 1395 he had spent some time in Upper Austria, in and around Steyr, where Zwicker wrote his anti-Waldensian treatise *Cum dormirent homines*; later in the decade he would conduct an inquisition in this area as well. The early years of the fifteenth century saw Zwicker conducting trials against Waldensians in Vienna (1403) and in Hungary (1400-4).[42] According to the local tradition, he returned to Garsten shortly before his death in or after 1404 and was buried there.[43]

Conversion and Reform in *Cum dormirent homines*

If Zwicker's life coincided with an efflorescence of reform movements in Bohemia, his principal work demonstrates a keen interest in contributing to these movements by pursuing what he saw as their principal detractor, heretics. The treatise, based equally on his practical experience of pursuing heretics and upon his theoretical study of Waldensian texts, is known—from its opening Gospel quote—as *Cum dormirent homines* ("While men slept, the enemy came

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[40] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise *Cum dormirent homines*," 215; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55-6

[41] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 233-6

[42] Hamman, "Waldenser in Ungarn, Siebenbürgen und der Slowakei," 432ff.; Neumann, *České sekty ve století XIV. a XV.*, 6*; Truhlar, "Inkvisice valdenskych v Trnave r. 1400", 196-197.

[43] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 254-5; Modestin, "Peter Zwicker", 33.

and sowed tares among the wheat").[44] Composed in 1395, the treatise is an anti-Waldensian polemic, with chapters devoted to such diverse topics as the origins of the heresy, its presence in various parts of Western Christendom, its principal tenets, observations about its organization (admission of new members, peculiar customs, and modes of preaching), and a detailed condemnation of Waldensianism and its "errors." The wide range of information covered in the polemic makes it an invaluable source about Waldensianism and clerical attitudes towards it.[45] Zwicker's personal experience in dealing with Waldensians lends the treatise a particularly worldly approach; the treatise appears less tainted with multiple layers of anti-heretical *topoi* when compared to other examples from an extensive and well-studied genre of inquisitorial literature.[46] *Cum dormirent homines* approaches its subject with a certain amount of academic interest—one can almost discern a sense of wonder felt by Zwicker as he came face to face with heretical communities, while interrogating Waldensians from Brandenburg and Pomerania on the Baltic.[47] This interest transpires into the later treatise through a myriad of examples, and Zwicker's own observations about the heretical way of life.

Considering the wealth of material in *Cum dormirent homines* and its observable popularity at the time, it may be surprising that Zwicker's text has not received much scholarly attention until very recently.[48] Indeed, the sole printed edition of the text dates back to the early seventeenth century; vexingly the treatise escaped even the seemingly all-encompassing

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[44] Matthew 13:25; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 271-2.

[45] Biller, *Waldenses*, 237.

[46] For a detailed treatment of earlier anti-heretical polemics, see Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics in the Thirteenth Century*, 13-40.

[47] Zwicker's approach to the interrogation of Waldensians was also somewhat unusual. Although he used a specific questionnaire to guide his interrogation, the surviving records indicate that Zwicker varied the questions depending on the individual. Biller, *The Waldenses*, 255

[48] There are 46 extant full manuscripts of *Cum dormirent homines*, with the majority concentrated in Bohemia, Austria, and southeastern Germany. For a list, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 264-69.

publishing efforts of the German scholars in the mid-nineteenth century, who published other texts by Zwicker and his contemporaries. Part of the reason for the treatise's relative obscurity comes from its erroneous attribution to Peter of Pilichdorf (Höbersdorf), a scholar at the University of Vienna, procurator of the Austrian nation there, as well as its rector (1382; 1388), and a dean of the faculty of theology. Pilichdorf, praised as a scholar equal to his senior colleagues, Henry of Langenstein and Henry of Oyta, was indeed interested in Waldensianism and even wrote a shorter treatise, which was, in the case of one manuscript, compiled together with *Cum dormirent homines*, thus probably causing a mistaken attribution by seventeenth-century Jesuit scholars.[49]

In the late 1970s Peter Biller was able to demonstrate a firm connection between Peter Zwicker and *Cum dormirent homines*, by citing both internal and external evidence; among the reasons for the new attribution is the use of material in the treatise from an inquisition of Pomeranian Waldensians. As his excellent textual examination of the treatise has demonstrated, there are telling similarities between the inquisitorial records produced by Zwicker during his investigation of Waldensianism on the Baltic and *Cum dormirent homines*; these records, which remained in northern Germany would not have been available to the Vienna-based Peter of Pilichdorf had he been the treatise's author. On the other hand, Zwicker's pursuit of heresy led him from Brandenburg to Austria, where he likely composed the treatise at the Benedictine monastery at Garsten, near Steyr. Another important evidence of Zwicker's authorship comes from the only extant manuscript of *Cum dormirent homines* copied without the accompanying inquisitorial documents from the *Processus Petri*. This version of the treatise bears a title

[49] Aschbach, *Geschichte der Wiener Universität*, 160. A fragment of the actual treatise by Peter of Pilichdorf was published by Jakob Gretser in the same volume as *Cum dormirent homines.* Peter of Pilichdorf, *Fragmentum ex tractatu Petri de Pilichdorff contra paupers de Lugduno*, 299E-302F

"Scriptum d. p. c. contra Waldenses," expanded by Biller as "Scriptum D[omini] P[etri] C[elestini] contra Waldenses." Finally, the shorter text actually written by Peter of Pilichdorf is strikingly different in its style, language, and sources.[50]

If one is to agree with Carlo Ginzburg's assertion that the medieval inquisitor was, in a number of ways, a predecessor to the modern anthropologist, then it would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that in *Cum dormirent homines* Zwicker was engaged in an ethnographic project, one focused on describing the life and customs of an internal, rather than an external "other."[51] The "other" in Zwicker's treatise is viewed through a prism of long-standing traditions of portraying heresy and its adherents. Still, his use of these anti-heretical *topoi* does not invalidate the information collected in the text. As Peter Biller has shown, pre-existing stereotypes about Waldensians do not make Zwicker ignore his own observations, but rather exist in the text semi-independently from his own.[52] To Biller, Zwicker's polemic has an objective core, enveloped in layers of *topoi* that could be discarded by a careful medieval reader.[53] While this reading of *Cum dormirent homines* could be somewhat optimistic (it presumes that such a reader would want to discard the anti-heretical *topoi*), it is evident that the text was carefully constructed in such a way as to be both a source of information about the Waldensians as well as a primer for preaching against the heretical movement.

For example, unlike other authors, Zwicker explicitly denies the most extreme belief about the Waldensians, namely accusations of devil-worship, which elsewhere contributed to the

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[50] For a detailed discussion of the history of the attribution of the treatise and of Biller's justification of his own attribution, see Biller, *Waldenses*, 237-269.

[51] Carlo Ginzburg, "The Inquisitor as Anthropologist," 159-161. Although a more rigorous examination of similarities between these genres lies beyond the intentions of this study, it appears to me to be potentially fruitful. One has to think of a number of *topoi* existing in both genres, as well as their dialogical or even polyphonic nature.

[52] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 275-9.

[53] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 278

creation of a concept of the diabolical witch in the early decades of the fifteenth century. Impressed with what was a strongly-worded denial of devil-worship among the Waldensians, which Zwicker received from a man he interrogated in Pomerania, the inquisitor later echoed it in *Cum dormirent homines*, stating that the Waldensians "reject, indeed are sickened… by the Luciferans."[54] It has been also pointed out, however, that the context in which the rejection of devil-worship is presented demonstrates Zwicker's ability to turn even seemingly pro-Waldensian statements into a criticism. The statement that Waldensians abhor Luciferanism appears in a section that levels an attack on the heretics for precisely that: squabbles among diverse heresies, which put them in opposition to the unity of the Church (an argument that might have sounded weaker at the height of the Great Schism).[55] Still, it is worth pointing out that Zwicker's decision to discard the *topos* of devil-worship, despite its use against the Waldensians by other authors, demonstrates his willingness to at least take his interrogated subjects at their word.[56] Written during a period of ecclesiastical disarray, Zwicker's rejection of the devil-worship *topos* suggests that the inquisitor composed a more measured critique of the heretics, one born out of his extensive interrogations of Waldensian followers and probable conversations with converted heretical preachers.[57] This approach betrays a certain confidence in

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[54] Utz Tremp, "The Heresy of Witchcraft," 1-2. On Luciferanism: Biller, *The Waldenses*, 258; original passage in *Cum dormirent homines*, 280E: "reprobant, ymo nauseant … Luciferanos"; cf. "nauseam habeant de tam vilibus et abhominabilibus rebus, quantumcumque homines de huiusmodi menciantur." Kurze, *Quellen*, 88.

[55] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 220. As Zwicker explains to his reader, the unity of the Church proceeds naturally from the unity of God. See *Cum dormirent homines*, 279E

[56] On accusations of devil-worship, see Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 55-62; these accusations appear to have been particularly well-entrenched in Brandenburg and Pomerania, which explains why Zwicker asked a question about Luciferanism during one of his interrogations.

[57] Zwicker remained in contact with at least one of the former Waldensian ministers, Nicholas Gottschalk from Brandenburg, who converted in 1392 and became a Catholic priest in Vienna in 1393. In 1403 canon Nicholas Gottschalk was listed among the individuals present at Zwicker's trial of Waldensians in Vienna. Kurze, *Zur Ketzergeschichte*, 80-1; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 140-1; Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*

the author's own orthodoxy and in his ability to demonstrate the errors of Waldensianism based primarily on what the heretics themselves said and did.[58]

As a whole, the text is a rhetorical contest over correct belief, similar—to some extent—to the academic disputations Zwicker witnessed and took part in during his studies in Prague, albeit with an obvious imbalance of power in the inquisitor's favor. And yet, Zwicker is careful in letting his confessing subjects have their "say" on multiple occasions, which betrays his clear interest in *their* understanding of orthodoxy and of their reasons for turning away from the Church. While the ordinary "believers" are portrayed as somewhat naïve, uneducated, and often confused, the *magistri*, that is the wandering preachers, are presented as cunning, aware of their wrongdoings, and careful to employ their false (in Zwicker's opinion) holiness to resist persecution and conversion. Still, conversions back to orthodoxy did occur, both among the *credentes* and the Waldensian masters. Zwicker clearly claims impressive (and likely exaggerated) numbers of the converted heretics—a thousand of them converted in Bohemia, Moravia, Brandenburg, and Pomerania in two years, and a thousand more he anticipated converting in Austria and Hungary—as a way to assert the success of his mission (and arguably to advertise his skills at converting heretics, although Zwicker never states that they were converted by him).[59]

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[58] We see a very different approach undertaken by Zwicker in his "Letter to the Clergy and Nobility of Austria" (c. 1395). In the letter, Zwicker knowingly exaggerates the Waldensian threat (by comparing heresy to a deadly disease and portraying Waldensians as homicidal and violent) in order to secure the support for his later inquisition in Upper Austria.

[59] Two list of converted *magistri* were compiled in the early 1390s, as part of Zwicker's inquisitorial dossier, the so-called *Processus Petri*; see, Biller, *The Waldenses*, 234-6. The so-called "shorter" and "longer" lists were published in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 367 and 330 (respectively). For the editions of both lists, see Appendix. For mass conversions by Zwicker: *Cum dormirent homines*, 281E. Zwicker's role in conversions is noted in a contemporary anonymous text, where he is credited with saving 600 Waldensian followers; *Refutatio errorum quibus Waldenses distinentur*, 302G

Persuasion and Reform

Reform ideas permeate the text and Zwicker uses the very existence of heresy as an additional reason for promoting reform of the Church. Starting with the opening quote from the Gospel of Matthew, "While men slept, the enemy sowed tares among the wheat," Zwicker blames not just the "tares" (i.e., heretics) but also the sleeping "men" (i.e., the Church or the clergy) whose negligence caused the tares to be sown in the first place. This quotation is put at the beginning of the treatise to give it an overall theme, following the conventions of a scholastic thematic sermon, a style of preaching which became particularly popular in the fourteenth century.[60] Such criticism of the parish clergy was not new. By linking heresy to poor pastoral care, Zwicker makes a statement concordant with the contemporary mendicant Augustinian reform, as well as with the calls for vernacular preaching and productions of vernacular catechisms, particularly prevalent in urban environments.[61]

An important place in the treatise is occupied by a discussion of the comparative moral standing of the Waldensian followers, their preachers, and the Catholic clergy. Here again, although Zwicker is careful to present Waldensian views as erroneous, his tendency to relate them in detail, as well as his remarks elsewhere, betray a sense that he agreed—however grudgingly—with some of the accusations leveled by Waldensians against clerics. Thus, Zwicker reports that the Waldensian masters attracted followers by behaving like holy men, while—as they claimed—the "priests of the actual Church" (*Sacerdotes vero Ecclesiae*) were often sinful, especially carnally.[62] In another passage, Zwicker leaves the job of providing more specific

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[60] Roberts, "Sermons and Preaching in/and the Medieval University," 91-2.

[61] Saak, *High Way to Heaven*, 349-56; Bast, *Honor Your Fathers*, 7-11.

[62] "…credentes ipsorum viderunt, & quotidie vident, eos exteriori sanctitate pollere; Sacerdotes vero Ecclesiae quamplurimos, vitiis, proh dolor, & maxime carnalibus, insistere." *Cum dormirent homines*, 278F. Somewhat ambivalent interjection "shame!" (*proh dolor*) may refer both to the outrageousness of the accusation, as well as

accusations to his imaginary heretical interlocutors: the priests are accused of fornicating, engaging in usury, frequenting taverns, playing dice, and counterfeiting.[63] These statements may look like merely accusations used by the conniving heretical preachers to steal followers away from the church, but Zwicker's response to them demonstrates that he also saw clerical misbehavior as a problem. Surviving visitation records from the archdiocese of Prague (1379-82) by Archdeacon Pavel of Janovic contain numerous examples of parish priests drinking, frequenting prostitutes or supporting concubines, so Zwicker may have been writing from personal experience.[64]

Rather than trying to dispel accusations of clerical excesses as false, Zwicker devotes three sections of the treatise to explaining why the existence of bad priests does not invalidate the institution of priesthood or even diminishes its power: "just as a man's goodness does not confer priesthood, his depravity does not take it away."[65] This line of reasoning was, of course, not unique to Zwicker, or indeed to this time period. An important issue since the Donatist controversy at the time of St. Augustine, the question of hierarchical authority tended to resurface with every period of ecclesiastical crisis and reform. By the later fourteenth century, however, the issue became more urgent, after becoming a crucial theological argument of Wycliffites and, later, Hussites.[66] Therefore, Zwicker's efforts to prove that even bad priests should be obeyed and can perform sacraments are not novel, but indicative of his awareness of

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to the fact that such claims were not unfounded.

[63] "Obloqueris etiam sacerdotibus Ecclesiae dicens: *Fornicarii sunt; Usurarii sunt; Tabernarii sunt; [Taxillarii sunt; Falsarii sunt,] & alia multa vitia coniectas in eos.*" *Cum dormirent homines*, 281F. The passage in brackets is given on the margin of the printed edition as a footnote.

[64] Fudge, *Jan Hus*, 23-4.

[65] "Sicut autem bonitas hominis singularis non confert sacerdotium, sic eius pravitas non aufert ipsum." *Cum dormirent homines*, 281F-282E, at 281F.

[66] Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson*, 41-2.

the important topics of his day. Noteworthy is Zwicker's ability to explain complex theological points with analogies that would make sense to a lay audience.

Despite providing eight distinct analogies to support his point, along the lines of "a red rose glows the same in the hands of an emperor and of a foul woman" and supporting it with the apostolic enjoinders to show submission, Zwicker still finds it necessary to end on a defensive note.[67] To him, Waldensian preachers are not discerning critics, as they are happy to malign the entire priesthood "by applying the vices of one priest to all." "Why do you not speak well about good priests, but [speak] bad [things] freely about the bad ones?"[68] This objection demonstrates that Waldensian claims about the sinfulness of the clergy are, in fact, based in truth, while, conversely, Zwicker's counter-accusations that there are "many criminals" (*multos criminosos*) among the Waldensian preachers suggests that there were *some* moral ones as well.[69]

Zwicker's reform sensibilities emerge particularly clearly when he discusses perhaps the biggest crime of the Waldensian *magistri*, their theft of good Christians from the fold of the Church. Indeed, this "crime" in itself is part of a larger trope that portrays the heresiarchs as cunning thieves of Christian souls, who are attracted to their false holiness and conniving preaching. Anti-heretical treatises throughout the central and later middle ages are replete with heretical preachers being compared to foxes and wolves, attacking the fattest sheep and essentially decreasing the quality of the Christian community overall; Zwicker himself repeatedly used these animal metaphors to describe Waldensian preachers.[70] However, these metaphors were particularly poignant when compared to the calls for reform during the later

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[67] "Rosa rubens aequaliter rubet in manu Imperatoris, & alterius foetidae mulieris." *Cum dormirent homines*, 282A-B. See also, 1 Peter 2:18.

[68] "…unius perversi sacerdotis vitia, in omnes transfundere… Et quare non loqueris bona de sacerdotibus bonis, sicut libenter mala de malis?" *Cum dormirent homines*, 282E.

[69] *Cum dormirent homines*, 282E.

[70] Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics*, 154-161; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 277-8.

middle ages. Zwicker pulls no rhetorical punches when he attacks his heretical opponent for this particular crime. "When Christ said 'you are the light of the world' he said that your words and deeds should enlighten hearts across the world, which you, Waldensian heretics, do not do. You do not go out into the world, do not preach to great sinners…"[71] Unlike Milíč of Kroměříž, Waldensian ministers were not engaged in a reform of the Church or of habitual sinners (e.g., the prostitutes Milíč tried to reform in his "Jerusalem" community), but instead were content with the "peaceful, quiet, silent, composed, who but for you would remain sons of the kingdom... the fattest sheep of the flock"[72] Thus, the heretics were not only detracting from the Church, but also leading those who could have been its best members to damnation.

It is these passages in the text that betray the real concern behind its composition, if not behind Zwicker's inquisitorial career as a whole. Taking up the topic of the Waldensian preachers "stealing" good Christians from the fold of the Church early in the treatise, Zwicker launches into a long tirade attacking the heretical claim that their preachers were a direct continuation of the apostolic tradition. Unlike the apostles, according to the inquisitor, Waldensian *magistri* were picky about potential converts, always preached in secrecy, relied on local networks of Waldensian women (*mulierculae*) for vetting of potential converts, and overall did not behave like the "light of the world."[73] Although in these sections Zwicker clearly employs a number of well-established anti-heretical tropes, this does not mean that he is being disingenuous in using them. Writing during a religious crisis in Western Christendom, Zwicker

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[71] "Dixit ergo; *Vos estis lux mundi*; quasi diceret; Verba & facta vestra debent illuminate corda mundialia, tenebrosa. Hoc tu Waldensis haeretice non facis; non vadis ad mundum, non praedicas peccatoribus magnis…" *Cum dormirent homines*, 280C. Biller, *The Waldenses*, 278.

[72] "sed solos illos attrahis, quos audis esse pasificos, quietos, silentiosos, compositos, qui sine te manerent filii regni… de grege oues pinguiores." *Cum dormirent homines*, 280C. Zwicker's condemnation of Waldensian preachers is analyzed in Biller, *The Waldenses*, 283-4.

[73] *Cum dormirent homines*, 279G-280E; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 137; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 282-3.

was likely concerned about "losing" good Christians to heresy, especially to the heretical preachers able to employ existing problems within the Church (such as the moral lapses of its members) to "excite hatred of the clergy" among their followers (*credentes tuos in odium Cleri concitare*).[74] If Zwicker supported and longed for a clerical reform, heretical preachers were stealing good Christians, in whose name such a reform could be undertaken, away from the Church.

The section of the treatise where Zwicker lists the impressive numbers of heretical followers brought back into the Catholic fold acts not only as a source of Zwicker's credibility as a specialist in combating heresy, but also as an explanation for his activities in Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Upper Austria; Zwicker was saving good Christian souls from the snares of erroneous beliefs, one converted heretic at a time. His success, no doubt, contributed to the inquisitor's reputation and increased his authority in the eyes of those who entrusted Zwicker with his inquisitorial powers. Thus, Zwicker's performance in Brandenburg and Pomerania was likely instrumental in persuading the bishop of Passau and the dukes of Austria to allow him to conduct an inquisition in and around Steyr between 1395 and 1398. At the same time, we must be careful not to view Zwicker's list of converted heretics as exclusively a way of advertising his services. Any mention of converted heretics, for example, is markedly absent from the plea to support his inquisition that Zwicker addressed to the secular and ecclesiastical lords of Austria, where such an advertisement would appear fitting. Conversely, in *Cum dormirent homines*, which talks about conversions, Zwicker's name is nowhere to be found.[75]

If Zwicker's attempt to increase his authority by mentioning scores of converted heretics does not sufficiently explain their mention in the treatise, a possible explanation for that might be

[74] *Cum dormirent homines*, 282E; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 283-4.
[75] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 245-54

found in his understanding of religious conversion. Conversion involved a crossing of symbolic borderlines and therefore can be imagined spatially. If relatively rare conversions between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam were crossing lines between distinct religious territories, clearly marked by theological doctrines, rituals, spaces of worship, and—perhaps most importantly—by mutual understanding that such a crossing was taking place, conversions within Christianity were not so clearly demarcated. After all, both mainstream Catholics and the "heretics" were considered to be Christian, with the rights and expectations carried by this status. Blurred outward distinctions between the two resided primarily in religious practice, but even then were notoriously hard to navigate. Zwicker's inquisitorial records, as well as records from earlier inquisitions from other parts of Europe demonstrate that Waldensians in particular were apt at leading "double-lives" conforming to the religious demands of both orthodox and heterodox communities.[76] Bernard Gui's manual for inquisitors contains an imaginary "model" interrogation between the inquisitor and a heretic, represented as a battle of ruses and counter-ruses, which demonstrates the concern over decisively identifying or rooting out heresy during an inquisition. Although the dialogue ends with Gui's victory over the confessing heretic, its goal is not necessarily to persuade the heretic to change his or her beliefs (in fact, the inquisitor in the "model" interrogation does not try persuade his interlocutor at all), but rather to force one to admit to being a heretic and to abjure heresy publicly, regardless whether such abjuration was genuine or not.[77] The question of one's actual beliefs is less relevant to the inquisitor in that case; rather the goal is to place the suspected heretic within a legal system that guarantees the death penalty for any further misdeeds. On the other hand, *Cum dormirent homines* omits completely any procedural aspects of Zwicker's inquisitorial practice and lacks Gui's skepticism, stressing

[76] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 132-7.
[77] Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 46-47.

the definitive nature of religious conversion. In other words, the treatise does not show any doubt that Waldensians can be made into good Christians, one only needs to know how to do this.

Gui's emphasis on coercive interrogation techniques is markedly absent in Zwicker's treatise, and in his inquisitorial practice Zwicker showed surprising leniency. In 1394, he absolved a Waldensian woman named Sophia, who had abjured heresy repeatedly in the past, yet seemingly remained a Waldensian; canon law dictated that second offenders were supposed to be "released" to the secular arm for burning, but this clearly did not happen here.[78] Earlier in the decade, Zwicker, along with his associate Martin of Amberg allowed as many as five converted heretical *magistri* to be ordained as Catholic priests, an occurrence virtually without a precedent in medieval inquisitorial practice.[79]

The Treatise and its Audience

Zwicker's use of analogies raises a question of the intended audience for *Cum dormirent homines*: who was Zwicker trying to educate and persuade about the errors of Waldensianism? The treatise presupposes an extensive knowledge of the Bible; some biblical passages are shortened to only a few words and some are given without any indication of their origin. On the other hand, it uses colorful examples with homely imagery intended to appeal to common sense and requiring no previous knowledge.[80] The peculiar combination of the two foundations for his arguments against Waldensianism suggests that the intended audience possessed a good biblical knowledge, yet was appreciative of effective *exempla* illustrating more complex theological

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[78] Kurze, *Quellen*, 220.

[79] Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330. The best known example of a heretical preacher who entered the ranks of the Catholic clergy after conversion was Rainerius Sacconi (d. after 1262), who entered the Dominican Order after 17 years as a Cathar perfect and became an inquisitor in Lombardy. Wakefield and Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, 329.

[80] The vivid language of Zwicker's examples has been noted by other scholars. See, Biller, *The Waldenses*, 273; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 143.

points. In other words, Zwicker was hardly aiming at the Waldensian *credentes* (most of whom lacked the Latin literacy to read the treatise). Nor was he writing for fellow inquisitors, since the treatise lacks sufficient practical information to appeal to these audiences. For example, the text does not address the process of detecting and punishing actual heretics, unlike a more formulaic compendium of inquisitorial texts titled *Processus domini Petri de ordine Celestinorum Inquisitoris hereticorum*, which contains a list of abjuration oaths, an interrogation questionnaire, a model sermon for assigning penance, and similar procedural documents.[81] And yet, the considerable dissemination of Zwicker's treatise suggests that this text was read widely enough; the broad dispersion of the manuscripts also suggests that the inquisitor was not writing for readers in a particular locality.[82]

One can also ask what goals Zwicker set out to achieve by writing his treatise. Too long and carefully argued to be a mere call for action (a niche filled by Zwicker's contemporaneous letter to the clergy and nobility of Austria), *Cum dormirent homines* uses the Bible as the only source of textual knowledge, which makes its arguments for certain non-Biblical elements of Catholic observance (Purgatory, the cult of the saints and of the Virgin Mary) lengthy and laborious. Indeed, this reliance on Scripture alone, to the extent of omitting any explicit references to the Church Fathers, biblical commentaries, and canon law, suggests that Zwicker

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[81] The compendium of inquisitorial documents attributed to Peter Zwicker, known as *Processus Petri*, consists of formularies for oaths, abjurations and, absolutions to be used during an inquisition; notably, oaths that were intended for the interrogated individuals are recorded in the vernacular. There is also a list of questions an inquisitor had to ask during interrogations and two versions of a list of converted Waldensian preachers compiled in c. 1391. This collection of documents was often copied together with Zwicker's *Cum dormirent homines* (in 16 out of 46 extant manuscripts). For the list of surviving MSS, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 264-9. Formularies of oaths and the list of questions were published in Kurze, *Quellen*, 73-7.

[82] Georg Modestin suggests that the treatise was distributed through the Benedictine and, possibly, Augustinian monastic networks, judging by the provenance of surviving manuscripts. See, Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 223-4. Although this is probably true, considering that Zwicker possibly wrote the treatise during his stay at the Benedictine abbey in Garsten in Upper Austria, we know that *Cum dormirent homines* was clearly read outside of monastic circles, as well. For example, c. 1410 extensive excerpts from *Cum dormirent* homines were translated into German and included in Ulrich of Pottenstein's catechism. Wolf, "*Propter utilitatem populi*," 197; Segl, "Die Waldenser in Österreich um 1400," 186-7.

was willing to refute Waldensian errors by using the sources Waldensians themselves would have considered authoritative. Indeed, the absence of explicit references to non-biblical authorities has even been described by modern scholars as a sign that Zwicker was "more of a practical than academic cast of mind" and contrasted to other contemporary treatises.[83] For example, a short excerpt of the anti-Waldensian treatise *actually* composed by Peter of Pilichdorf (a little over three pages long) is replete with references to "St Augustine, St Ambrose, St John Chrysostom, St Gregory the Great, St Bernard, the *Glossa Ordinaria*, Haymo of Halberstadt, and Aristotle."[84] Although, as I have noted earlier, Peter of Pilichdorf was remarkably better educated than Zwicker, at least some—if not all—of the authorities mentioned above would be familiar to the inquisitor.

However, Zwicker's reluctance to demonstrate the extent of his university education did not mean that he was not using it when refuting Waldensian errors. For example, in a lengthy section devoted to the refutation of the Waldensian disbelief in Purgatory, Zwicker argues against the Waldensian insistence that Purgatory constitutes a "third way" in the afterlife, whereas the gospels only talk of two outcomes: salvation and damnation. In order to demonstrate that the Scripture should not be taken literally, Zwicker might have drawn on the hermeneutical approach of Nicholas of Lyra (c. 1270-1349), explaining that some parts of the Scripture cannot be understood literally, just as Christ's famous order to cut off a scandalizing hand (Matthew 18:8) is not meant to be followed to the letter. Indeed, in this case, it would be incorrect to go by the letter (*litera*), instead of the spirit of the passage or its "parabolic sense" in the words of

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[83] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 273. Despite this assessment of Zwicker, Biller notes occasional signs of formal education: logical tags, common academic theological phrases, and proverbs.

[84] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 250.

Nicholas of Lyra.[85] Thus, the absence of references to non-biblical authorities should not create an illusion that Zwicker was ignorant of the exegetical tradition; instead, it should demonstrate the author's ability to blend this tradition seamlessly with the rest of his argument. After all, Zwicker was clearly aware that Waldensians eschewed formal learning and might have tried to make his refutation accessible by seemingly using only Scripture as his tool.[86]

True to his method throughout the treatise, Zwicker follows the exegetical argument with one that does not require an extensive understanding of the Gospel. Even if one agrees that the literal sense of the passage about "two ways" is true, argues the inquisitor, Purgatory still fits this understanding since it is not a destination, but a temporary (*ad tempus*) stopover.

> Consider an example: the mighty king orders everyone with clear eyesight to go to Jerusalem; and everyone who is completely blind to go to Babylon; but those with not completely clear eyesight to go to Rome and to stay there until their eyesight clears; and afterwards go to Jerusalem. Thus, there are three ways, but eventually only two, because of the two destinations: Jerusalem and Babylon […][87]

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[85] Levy, *Holy Scripture*, 13-4; *Cum dormirent homines*, 286E-F.

[86] This approach was employed by at least one earlier theologian, Richard FitzRalph (c. 1300-1360), who composed an examination of the errors of the Armenian Church (1341-2) in an attempt to persuade the Armenians to recognize the primacy of the pope. Unsure if the pre-Chalcedonian Armenian Church would accept Western Church Fathers as authoritative, FitzRalph used exclusively the Scriptures. Although there is no direct evidence that Zwicker was aware of FitzRalph's work, it demonstrates that Zwicker's approach was not unprecedented. See Levy, *Holy Scripture*, 14-15; Jones, "The Armenian Church and the Papacy in the Fourteenth Century," 6-9. Nevertheless, towards the end of the century FitzRalph's theological works were influential among the reform-minded clerics in Bohemia, including Archbishop of Prague Jan of Jenstein (1348-1400). Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia*, 50-1n.65. On Waldensians eschewing higher learning, see Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 218.

[87] "Sumas exemplum; Imperet Rex praepotens, & dicat; Omnis qui habet oculos omnino claros, vadat Hierosolymam: & omnis, qui totaliter est caecus, vadat ad Babyloniam, sed qui habet oculos non omnino claros,

Put in simple language and prose, the *exemplum* likely originated as a sermon or in an argument Zwicker had during his interrogation of Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania and later found its way into the treatise. And yet, despite its homely composition, this passage is carefully constructed to further a number of points. First, it emphasizes the temporary nature of Purgatory, compared to the eternal damnation of Hell; that is, Purgatory was a way to "fix" one's imperfections before attaining eternal life. As another contemporary treatise explained, one does not throw away stained clothing, but cleans it.[88] The juxtaposition of Jerusalem and Babylon standing for salvation and damnation is part of a tradition going back to St Augustine; Rome, on the other hand—as a place of healing for one's spiritual "eyesight," or cleansing of one's soul from the stains of sin— may have been a deliberate indication of both Zwicker's pro-Roman position in the Great Schism and a clear reminder of the role of the Church in dispensing salvation.[89] If Heaven and Hell were represented as earthly locations in the example, then the equation of Rome with Purgatory reinforced the idea that one's path to salvation began with Rome, that is, with the Catholic Church it stood for.

Zwicker's preoccupation with Purgatory is not surprising; elsewhere in the treatise it is matched by his detailed refutations of other important elements of Waldensian belief. These sections of *Cum dormirent homines* emphasize Zwicker's understanding of the uncertainties many Waldensian believers experienced as they continued their dual existence.[90] Ample surviving inquisitorial materials from his earlier inquest in Brandenburg and Pomerania allow us

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vadat Romam, & ibi maneat, donec oculi clarificentur: Et post, etiam vadat Hierosolymam. Ecce tres vias, sed finaliter solum duas propter solum duos terminus Hierosolymam & Babyloniam…" *Cum dormirent homines*, 286G.

[88] "Ad idem patent exempla in veste, ornatu & aliis, quae non pro qualibet macula, seu vitio destruuntur; sed *sive per ignem, sive per aquam eduxisti in refrigerium*" (original emphasis). "Refutatio errorum quibus waldenses distinentur," 340. Cf. Psalm 66.

[89] Augustine, *City of God*, XVII, 16.

[90] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 132-6.

to trace the origins for some of the ideas that Zwicker later incorporated into his treatise. For example, although the "official" Waldensian belief denied the existence of Purgatory, the opinions of regular followers varied widely on this issue. Some, indeed, pointed out that there were only "two ways" after death and prayers for the dead, as one believer put it, were no more effective than "offering fodder to a dead horse."[91] On the other end of the spectrum, some were more willing to believe in Purgatory, arguing that those who were not completely without sin could not go to heaven. They wondered—understandably—what would happen to those deemed unworthy to be saved. One Waldensian mentioned that she believed in "two ways," but hoped for Purgatory, presumably doubting that she was fully deserving to go to heaven. Katherina Sachze, another Waldensian follower, went even further, by dedicating her pilgrimage to Rome to the salvation of her father's soul.[92]

An examination of similar key Waldensian beliefs filtered through the followers' understanding supports the emerging picture. Whether asked about their views on the veneration of relics or the cult of saints, the *credentes* questioned by Zwicker demonstrated an attempt to err on the side of salvation and to help those who had already departed to achieve it, as well. These anxieties, coupled with a wave of conversions of Waldensian ministers, might have pushed large numbers of followers to abandon Waldensianism. If Zwicker's treatise is indicative of the inquisitor's approach to individual heretics, his focus on the topics about which rank-and-file Waldensian followers were most anxious suggests an observable strategy. In the treatise and his interrogations alike, Zwicker does not merely suggest the existence of cracks in the Waldensian

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[91] "Nec oraverit pro defunctis, qui non ceciderit prodesse, sicud equo mortuo pabulum proponere prodesse non posset." Kurze, *Quellen*, 96.

[92] "…solum due vie essent, attamen crediderit purgatorium post mortem." Kurze, *Quellen*, 210, 145. Cameron, *Waldenses*, 136.

community, but also probes and pries them open in an attempt to persuade and ultimately convert Waldensian *credentes* to Catholicism.[93]

Heresy, Conversion, and the Lord's Prayer

Peter Zwicker's emphasis on preaching to the Waldensians is evident in another text he likely wrote in the second half of the 1390s. Housed at the Augustinian house of Saint Florian, near Enns in Upper Austria, the document bears the title "The Doctrine of Lord Peter the Inquisitor" (*Doctrina magistri Petri Inquisitoris*) and consists of a brief, diagrammatic exposition of the Lord's Prayer.[94] Despite its attribution to Peter Zwicker as an inquisitor, rather than a Celestine prior, this document has not been examined for its relevance to Zwicker's inquisitorial activity. In fact, it has been dismissed out of hand by historian Peter Biller as the "one work [by Zwicker] not connected with heresy," an indicator of the inquisitor's "sensitivity… to matters of worship and prayer."[95] While it stands to reason that not everything written by an inquisitor ought to be related to the persecution of heresy, Zwicker's ability to operate multiple *topoi* and construct multi-layered accounts of heresy in *Cum dormirent homines* suggests that the treatise deserves a detailed analysis.

The document fits on three pages of an early fifteenth-century folio paper manuscript, part of a collected volume of works of a catechetic, moralizing, and theological nature, including *Das spil das da hayzt Schachzabel*, a German translation of Jacobus de Cessolis' (1250-1322) book on the game of chess, in which the author, a Dominican friar, uses chess as a basis for a

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[93] The nature of surviving sources—interrogation records—from Zwicker's inquisition in Brandenburg and Pomerania does not allow for a more precise reconstruction of the process of conversion (e.g., there are no records that can tell us what punishments were assigned to the Waldensians, who abjured heresy and what awaited those who did not).

[94] Sankt Florian Stiftbibliothek, XI 96, fols. 298r-99r. The manuscript has been catalogued in Albin Czerny, *Die Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek St. Florian*, 41-2.

[95] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 274.

cycle of sermons on morals.[96] Zwicker's exposition of the Lord's Prayer fits the general theme of the collection, which, along with Ulrich von Pottenstein's translations from *Cum dormirent homines* suggests that the inquisitor's works were later received and appropriated as moralizing and catechetic, rather than inquisitorial, texts. This, however, does not mean that Zwicker himself did not write them with the mission to convert Waldensians in mind. Even though the treatise itself does not mention heresy or heretics explicitly, both its topic and composition demonstrate its anti-Waldensian purpose. Moreover, Zwicker's exposition echoes an earlier work by Augustinian friar Jordan of Quedlinburg (d. 1380), who composed an exposition of the Lord's Prayer in nine lectures. Jordan's career as a theologian, moreover, coincided with his involvement in the inquisition of Waldensians in Angermünde in the Mark of Brandenburg, whom he accused of worshipping the devil. Zwicker's was likely aware of this trial, which involved some of the individuals he investgated in 1392-94.[97]

First, the document's focus is the Lord's Prayer, the only prayer—according to Zwicker as well as other authors—Waldensians knew and respected. Although popular among the laity in general, the Lord's Prayer was likely chosen because of its Scriptural origins and as the only prayer that could fit the simpler, stripped-down form of religious practice Waldensians followed.[98] Zwicker's own observations demonstrate that some Waldensian followers were often ignorant of other key prayers of mainstream Christianity, such as the Hail Mary or the Creed, while others only learned those prayers in order to blend in with their orthodox neighbors. Lists of Waldensian errors compiled during this period also indicate that the heretics favored the

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[96] Sankt Florian Stiftbibliothek, XI 96, fols. 266r-293v; Classen, "Chess in Medieval German Literature," 21-2. See also, Adams, *The Literature and Politics of Chess in the Late Middle Ages.*

[97] Saak, *Catechesis in the Later Middle Ages*, 5; Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 55-6. Zwicker interrogated and absolved Sophia Myndeke, whose husband Hans was burned in Angermünde in 1336. Cameron, *Waldenses*, 141-2; Kurze, *Quellen*, 219-20.

[98] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 105.

Lord's Prayer because it did not mention the Virgin Mary and thus did not go against the Waldensian insistence of praying only to God.[99] Waldensian respect for the prayer, however, allowed Zwicker to use it as a common ground shared both by the inquisitor and his audience; the document's abbreviated nature suggests that its author could have intended the exposition to serve as a guide for preparing sermons that would explicate the connections between the theological concepts linked in the diagrammatic document.

The exposition's structure supports this hypothesis. It opens with a lengthy gloss on the first two words of the prayer, "*Pater Noster*," densely packed with Scriptural quotes that focus in particular on two themes: God's forgiveness (illustrated primarily by the reference to the parable of the prodigal son [Luke 15:19]) and the warning to fear false prophets (II Cor. 11:3); both themes are particularly pertinent for a potentially Waldensian audience. As he does in *Cum dormirent homines*, throughout the document, Zwicker relies exclusively on quotations from Scripture to support his theological arguments.

On the following two pages Zwicker provides the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer juxtaposed with other septenaries (groups of seven) from the Catholic catechesis. Thus, the first set of petitions corresponds to the seven deadly sins, the second deals with the seven sacraments, and so on. There are seven sets in total encompassing a variety of septenaries: vices, sacraments, gifts of the Holy Spirit, beatitudes, cardinal and theological virtues, spiritual and corporal gifts, and one more set whose guiding principle remains obscure to this author. Each set consists of two or three columns; the leftmost column always contains the prayer's petitions with lines connecting individual petitions to the set (or sets) of seven concepts in the column (or columns) to the right. There is little indication that Zwicker intended to cross-reference different sets of

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[99] Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 126-7; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 132-3.

petitions. Rather, the repeating structure within each set suggests that the author sought to demonstrate connections between individual petitions and concepts from other septenaries or even to prove that these septenaries derive their authority from the petitions themselves and thus—through the Gospel—from Christ himself.

Given the ubiquity and symbolism of the number seven in Christian theology, it is not surprising that Zwicker's exposition of the Lord's Prayer exploits sacred numerology by repeatedly juxtaposing groups of seven.[100] Far from being the first medieval author to do this, Zwicker was a beneficiary of a long tradition of attempts to derive moral and theological meaning by organizing diverse septenaries into coherent systems of knowledge. The most obvious pairing between the seven vices and the seven virtues (three theological and four cardinal) dates back to Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, a late antique epic poem that represented the struggle between individual vices and virtues as a violent gladiatorial contest.[101] By the high middle ages, pairings between vices and virtues were usually accompanied by sets of beatitudes (with the eighth beatitude omitted to make this set fit better with other septenaries) and by gifts of the Holy Spirit.[102] In most cases, such combinations of septenaries were inviting their audience to meditate on the way some groups of seven can provide additional help in the spiritual struggle against vices.

Although initially the petitions of the Lord's Prayer were not part of the aforementioned moral paradigm, their inclusion added a divine element, demanding humility and submission from anyone wishing to conquer sin. While Hugo of St. Victor might not have been the first to

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[100] In general, the Lord's Prayer has received insufficient attention from scholars of medieval religion. See Saak, *Catechesis in the Later Middle Ages I*, 25-30.

[101] James, "Prudentius' *Psychomachia*," 70-73

[102] See, for example, the *Summa de virtutibus* and *Summa de vitiis* by William Peraldus (d. c. 1265). Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 148-9.

include the petitions, they appear in his influential tract *De quinque septens seu septenariis*, in which the author discussed five sets of seven (vices, petitions, gifts, macarisms, and rewards) meant to illustrate the process of regaining spiritual health. As Hugo explains, the knowledge of five septenaries is necessary in order to heal a man whose sinfulness is akin to sickness: "the sins are wounds; God is the physician; the gifts of the Holy Spirit are antidotes; the virtues are health; the beatitudes are joys."[103] Thus, one is supposed to start by identifying a sin, then summon the "physician" through a petition, then use the gift of the Holy Spirit to combat sin, acquire a virtue, and finally receive the reward through a beatitude. This model is represented particularly vividly in a number of diagrams inspired by Hugh's vision; traditionally arranged in concentric circles, the stages of Hugh's path to self-improvement in these diagrams take the reader from the outer layer populated by vices, to the inner, filled with beatitudes and often marked by either a depiction of the cross or the image of Christ. Overall, the main idea of such groupings is to create a moral roadmap for spiritual self-improvement.[104]

The structure and composition of Zwicker's text suggests that he was pursuing a different goal. Rather than grouping multiple septenaries into one coherent system, unified by a clearly defined paradigm, Zwicker pairs each of them with the list of seven petitions. This pairing emphasizes that each septenary stems and receives its authority from the petitions of the prayer itself, or rather from the way it either follows or—as is the case with the seven vices—contradicts them. Notably, Zwicker places the sin of pride (*superbia*) not at the beginning of the list, but at its end, pairing it with the petition for deliverance from evil. This pairing, in fact, is in

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[103] "Haec ita primo loco distingue, ut intelligas ipsa vitia quasi quosdam animae languores, sive vulnera interioris hominis; ipsum vero hominem, quasi aegrotum; medicum, Deum; dona sancti Spiritus, antidotum; virtutes, sanitatem; beatitudines, felicitatis gaudium." Hugh of St. Victor, *De quinque septenis*, 405D.

[104] Freeburn, *Hugh of Amiens and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, 198. An example of a typical diagram that follows Hugh's model is contained in MS. Lat. th. c. 2 (R) (Bodleian, Oxford) . http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/s/8h6eai

perfect opposition to Hugh's; in *De quinque septens*, pride opens the list of errors, while the "evil" in the final petition is the sin of lust, an understandable choice given Hugh's monastic background. Zwicker, however, despite his own ties to monasticism, focuses his attention on pride instead of lust. Pride, a sin long associated with heresy, therefore is equated with evil, from which the petition seeks deliverance; indeed, in this Zwicker's understanding of pride is similar to that in an earlier anti-Waldensian treatise, the so-called "Anonymous of Passau" and even earlier anti-heretical traditions.[105] It was pride that led the heretics first to assume that they possessed a better understanding of Scripture than the clergy and pride that pushed them to defy the authority of the Church and its admonitions. In short, pride made heretics.

Zwicker's understanding of specific connections between the petitions and the sins is also more literal than Hugh's. For example, Hugh pairs the petition for daily bread ("*Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie*") with the sin of despair (*tristia*), by which he means that the "daily bread" of fortitude (one of the gifts) will vanquish sloth and despair.[106] Zwicker, on the other hand, links the "daily bread" with gluttony, glossed as not being "content with bread and asking for more."[107] Thus, while in Hugh the petition is used to vanquish a particular sin, Zwicker uses petitions as foundations for the sins themselves.[108] As a result, the pairing between petitions and sins suggests that Zwicker was trying to provide authority for the very notion of the seven deadly sins, presumably to build upon this authority later. In a fashion similar to his procedure of using only Scriptural sources to refute Waldensians in *Cum dormirent homines*, in this treatise, by

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[105] Patschovsky, *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 28-9, 89-94, 122; Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics*, 62, 155.
[106] Hugh of St. Victor, *De quinque septenis*, 409B.
[107] "Que non est contenta pane et petit superflua." Sankt Florian Stiftbibliothek, XI 96, fols. 298v.
[108] Pairing between the petition for bread and the sin of gluttony exists, for instance, in Jordan of Quedlinburg's Exposition of the Lords Prayer (composed between 1365 and 1380), although Zwicker does not follow's

using the Lord's Prayer exclusively, Zwicker finds common ground between Catholic and Waldensian beliefs, and develops his catechism upon it. [109]

The following sections of the *expositio* pair petitions with the seven sacraments. Here Zwicker's method of persuasion is particularly effective. Contemporary sources demonstrate that most sacraments—arguably the mainstays of Catholic religious practice—were rejected by the Waldensians. If they received the Eucharist at all, they did it at the hands of the Waldensian preachers; when forced to participate in a Catholic sacrament to conceal their heretical identity, the Waldensians—according to Zwicker—did not believe that such rituals, performed by a corrupt clergy, had any efficacy.[110] Another list of Waldensian errors compiled during the inquisition in Augsburg (1393) states that the heretics "did not believe in Confirmation" and held that only "brothers from their sect" could hear confessions, absolve sins, and perform the Eucharist.[111] Similarly, Waldensians from Strasbourg in 1400 did not believe in confessing to priests, while Peter Zwicker's own—albeit somewhat rhetorically exaggerated—list of errors claims that the heretics condemned the ordinations of clergymen.[112] The question of ordination was, of course, particularly problematic for a religious movement with Donatist leanings, and Zwicker's exposition—like his treatise *Cum dormirent homines*—pays particular attention to providing justification for this sacrament.[113]

Jordanus' pairing of other petitions and vices exactly. Saak, *Catechesis in the Later Middle Ages*, 32-3.

[109] "Immo dicunt, 'Plane nihil aliud orandum esse, quam *Pater Noster*.'" Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 293F.

[110] Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 281F-G.

[111] "Primo crediderunt, quo si fuerint confessi fratribus suae sectae, puris Laicis, exinde poenitentiam egerint, absolutionem peccatorum suorum ex ejusmodi confessionibus habituros. [...] Item quidam de Confirmatione nil crediderunt. [...] Item dicunt Apostolos eorum, quos habent posse consecrare corpus Christi." Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620.

[112] Modestin, *Quellen*, 168; Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus," 247.

[113] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 51-2.

By virtue of being paralleled with the prayer, the list of sacraments followed from—and was indeed inspired by—the petitions themselves. Thus, not surprisingly, the sacrament of the Eucharist corresponded to the petition for bread. More importantly for Zwicker, however, was the sacrament of ordination, which originated in the petition "thy will be done" (*fiat voluntas tua*), implying that the clergy received its power through the sacrament of ordination and through its performance of correct rituals, not because of its virtuous lifestyle. In *Cum dormirent homines* Zwicker echoes this sentiment with analogies: "It is more pleasant to drink nectar from the golden cup, than from an earthen vessel, but it inebriates no less."[114] In other words, the clergy is only a tool for divine will, and "the worst priest is more worthy than the most holy lay person."[115] Perhaps to reinforce this notion, in the following set of sevens, Zwicker ties the same petition to "counsel" (*consilium*), one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the ordained clergy not only fulfills God's will, but is also an embodiment of divine counsel.

Even a relatively superficial reading of Zwicker's exposition demonstrates that the document was very likely related to its author's principal interest in persecuting and converting Waldensians. By focusing the most popular prayer that even the Waldensians considered authoritative, the inquisitor was able to reach even those lacking literacy and unfamiliar with Scripture. The document's structure, influenced by earlier attempts at exploiting the ubiquity of the number seven in Christian theology, but not constrained by these attempts, emphasizes the prayer as a universal justification for a variety of concepts and practices: from sins to beatitudes to sacraments. With a striking similarity to his larger anti-Waldensian treatise, the exposition

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[114] Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 282A-B.

[115] MS Sankt Florian XI 96, 298v. "Pessimus ergo homo, qui est Sacerdos, dignior est sanctissimo homine, qui est Laicus." *Cum dormirent homines*, 281F.

uses a text already accepted as authoritative by its heterodox audience and, having found this common theological ground, uses it to preach against heresy and to facilitate conversion.

Conclusions

This chapter's reading of *Cum dormirent homines* and the exposition of the Lord's Prayer demonstrates Zwicker's awareness of the spiritual and logistic problems faced by the Waldensians in later medieval Germany. Left without regular pastoral care, Waldensian followers were relying on more local religious structures, but were also beginning to internalize some Catholic teachings. In this context, Zwicker's understanding of Waldensian origins and of their beliefs allowed him to come up with refutations of Waldensian teachings that relied on the theological authorities both the Waldensians and the Church respected; these refutations attacked preexisting fault lines within Waldensian communities, which Zwicker had become familiar with during his earlier inquisitions. Not satisfied with the mere repression of heresy—an approach that proved less effective in the later fourteenth century in the absence of coordinated or at least systematic efforts to persecute Waldensian communities—Zwicker exploited spiritual crises within Waldensian communities to convert their members.

By contextualizing what little is known about Zwicker before the start of his inquisitorial career and by identifying important cultural, religious and intellectual influences which may have shaped Zwicker as a university student, a school teacher, and a Celestine monk, we can deduce the possible motivations behind his unusual interest in religious persecution. Zwicker's ties to Prague and its reform movements suggest that he was likely aware of and possibly affected by these developments; he even underwent a conversion himself, "a personal experience of a life-turn," to borrow the phrase from John Van Engen, when he joined the rigorous Celestine

Order.[116] Zwicker's career as an inquisitor carries signs of these movements—in particular the anti-mendicant rhetoric and lay preaching of Conrad Waldhauser and Jan Milíč—aimed at the spiritual improvement of the Church. Milíč's revolutionary (if short-lived) community that combined repentance, liturgy, and religious education appears to have been particularly influential in shaping Zwicker's understanding of an inquisitor's mission. Zwicker's writings perform a similar task to Milíč's conversion of the infamous brothel into a religious community. Instead of converting a physical space, he infiltrates the Waldensian belief system and uses his knowledge of its internal weaknesses to facilitate conversion. Like the repentant prostitutes of Milíč's Venice-Jerusalem, two thousand heretics converted or expected to be converted by Zwicker symbolized—if only in the inquisitor's imagination—that the church still possessed a claim on divine truth. Zwicker's motivations for the persecution of heresy might not have been shared by the other two itinerant inquisitors active during the 1390s, Martin of Amberg and Heinrich Angermeier. However an analysis of the cultural, intellectual, and religious milieu that influenced him and the texts he authored may help us to understand, if only in part, what pushed individuals like him to pursue Waldensians in the German-speaking lands.

[116] Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life*, 18.

Chapter Five

Networks of Heresy and Persecution

While scholars writing about the anti-Waldensian persecutions in the 1390s point out their unprecedented intensity and admit that the inquisitors' efforts during this time made German Waldensians all but extinct, the mechanisms behind these persecutions have remained uncertain.[1] It is also unclear whether the persecutions were isolated events or can be regarded as in some sense part of a single campaign. Recently, for example, Georg Modestin has argued that the persecutions were localized and happened independently of each other. Therefore

> …it is misleading to speak of one huge anti-Waldensian campaign. The closer one looks at the events on a local level, the more this image of a singular, large-scale heresy hunt tends to dissolve… If some of the cases were actually linked, others do not seem to have been. Most of the affairs were stirred up by a triad of 'self-styled' itinerant inquisitors… who received their licenses to proceed against heretics from the local bishops.[2]

On the other hand, earlier scholarship favors viewing trials against the Waldensians as parts of one whole.[3] Neither position is fully justified: Modestin's argument does not explain the unusual frequency of the heresy trials that took place throughout the German-speaking lands during the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century. It is possible, of course, that earlier

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1 Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55f; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 139-44; Utz Tremp, "Multhum abhorrerem," 166-73; Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 1-12; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 40-59.

2 Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 213.

3 See note 1 above, with the exception of Modestin.

decades of the fourteenth century saw an equally large number of inquisitions of which only a few records survive, although this seems unlikely considering that the decades immediately after the 1390s also witnessed reduced attention to the Waldensians, despite improved record-keeping practices. However, the explanation that tends to group all inquisitions into one "wave of persecution" (*die Vervolgungswelle,* to borrow a term from Kathrin Utz Tremp) also fails to explain how such a coordinated series of anti-heretical campaigns could occur given the large degree of regionalism in the Holy Roman Empire and beyond.[4]

The goal of this chapter is to provide an explanation for the rise in anti-Waldensian persecutions by trying to analyze connections between the individuals involved in them. Although they were not part of a unified wave of persecutions, the individual heresy investigations did not occur entirely in isolation from one another. The Waldensian trials were the product of two overlapping networks of affiliations: on the one hand, a network uniting heretical communities and itinerant preachers, and, on the other, a network uniting the persecutors and their supporters (patrons, allies, servants, etc.). The Waldensian networks, long-distance and decentralized, were what are known as scale-free networks, that is, networks in which a small group of mobile individuals (Waldensian ministers) demonstrated a high degree of social interaction. To combat these scale-free networks, the inquisitors had to create a network of their own, one that spanned German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe.[5] The point of interaction of these networks, both heretical and inquisitorial, was a relatively small number of highly mobile ministers who were converted to Catholicism in 1390-1391 and acted as informants for Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg.[6]

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[4] Utz Tremp, "Multhum abhorrerem," 166.

[5] Ormerod and Roach, "Scale-free Networks," 645-52.

[6] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 126-7. The most accessible editions of the two lists of converted Waldensians, the so-called

After a brief introduction to the concepts of network theory and its application to pre-modern historical studies, the first part of this chapter will discuss the factors that allow us to characterize the Waldensian networks as scale-free. Waldensian ministers, with their high degree of mobility and large number of social interactions and contacts, were ideal agents for attending to the spiritual needs of heretical communities dispersed throughout the Holy Roman Empire and beyond. At the same time, their itinerancy made them more vulnerable to exposure and thus easy targets for apprehension or even conversion. The second part of the chapter will analyze—using Peter Zwicker's inquisition in Brandenburg and Pomerania as an example—the ways in which itinerant inquisitors relied on networks of assistants, affiliates, and informants in their persecutions. The inquisitors appear to have been aware of the structure of the German Waldensian network and exploited its structural weaknesses. Part three looks at the way itinerant inquisitors used yet another network, that of patronage and diplomacy that linked a number of powerful German bishops to the imperial court in Prague and to Prague's archbishop, Jan of Jenštejn (r. 1379-96). By conducting inquisitions in domains of bishops loyal to Prague's secular and ecclesiastical rulers, Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg found a source of institutional support and authority. It is not surprising that Zwicker began his career as an inquisitor in the east of the Empire. This region, which had only recently come under the control of the Crown of Bohemia, was more receptive to an inquisitor with a strong connection to Prague. Finally, the chapter will address the way Peter Zwicker—an inquisitor about whose tactics we know the most—left the parts of the Empire controlled directly by the Luxemburgs, the ruling dynasty, and the tactics he employed for attaining the patronage of the dukes of Austria.

"shorter" and "longer," are published in Döllinger, Beiträge, 367 and 330 (respectively).

Network Theory and Persecution of Heresy

The last few decades have witnessed a renewed interest in the use of network models outside of the field of mathematics; network theory is currently being successfully employed in disciplines ranging from epidemiology and ecology to social sciences and humanities. In social sciences, as well as historical studies, the use of network models—consisting of *nodes* representing individuals or institutions and *links* or *ties* representing interactions between them—is particularly useful in studies of communities formed over long distances and of communication between them. Of course, historians have long been interested in these subjects, using long-distance connections within a particular system (for example, the Mediterranean) to explain historical change and continuity. Both Fernand Braudel's *The Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II* and Shelomo Dov Goitein's analysis of trans-Mediterranean connections and trade between Jewish communities successfully speak of exchanges and networks without direct reference to network theory as such.[7] Recently, however, more conscious attempts to use network models have been made to analyze the development and spread of religious ideas and explain the formation of early Christian communities in the Mediterranean, among other subjects.[8] Most applications of network theory to pre-modern problems have been qualitative rather than quantitative in nature, since the available evidence is considerably more sparse than that used by modern historians, let alone the researchers in the social and "hard" sciences. And yet, the use of network theory can provide illuminating insights into the nature of social interactions and exchanges.

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[7] Braudel, *The Mediterranean*; Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*.

[8] Collar, "Network Theory and Religious Innovation," 155-60; Czachesz, "Women, Charity and Mobility in Early Christianity" 142-53.

In particular, network theory attracts historians because it differentiates between two kinds of interactions: the so-called weak and strong links. Strong links, put simply, are the bonds between nodes within a cluster (i.e., within the same community or social group) with a greater degree of interaction involved and a higher reliability of connections.[9] Strong links tend to form in close-knit communities, with a greater degree of solidarity and therefore last longer. Weak links, on the other hand, are connections between individuals representing separate groups of nodes (e.g., communities). Although weak links can be easily severed, they constitute crucial mechanisms for communication between disparate groups of nodes. Indeed, contrary to their name, weak links span distant clusters of the network, facilitating the sharing of information and fostering a shared "sense of community" among network members that may not know each other directly.[10] More importantly, because weak links bypass large sections of the network and are able to connect to a large number of distant clusters directly, they can facilitate a relatively fast exchange of information. Conversely, when weak links are broken, the network does not disintegrate completely, but the resulting structure delays the transmission of information between clusters. In the absence of more direct weak links, information travels through multiple nodes as separate clusters merge together to form one contiguous super-cluster to communicate through the strong links within it.[11]

The social networks of fourteenth-century German Waldensianism were characterized by strong links between members of individual communities and weak links between these communities and the itinerant ministers who served them. Hypothetically, the *magistri* also formed weak links among themselves, although there is scant evidence for this, except in cases

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[9] Collar, "Network Theory," 151.

[10] Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," 1373; Collar, "Network Theory and Religious Innovation," 151

[11] Shi et al., 'Networks of Strong Ties', 1.

when a number of ministers congregated for the initiation of a new *magister*.[12] Heretical networks were also scale-free, with a disproportionately large number of weak links connecting some highly mobile individuals (*magistri*) to other nodes, while the majority of nodes remained in contact only with those in proximity to them (albeit in this case, the links were more permanent).[13] From the point of view of an inquisitor, weak links between Waldensian masters and their communities were the most vulnerable part of the system. Thus, by converting a number of masters—nodes with a disproportionately large number of weak ties to disparate clusters of the network—in the early 1390s inquisitors were able to insert themselves into the network, using the long-distance connections that linked the Waldensian ministers to individual communities within it. As a result, weak ties that once connected Waldensian *magistri* to the communities of their followers now connected an inquisitor to the communities he was about to investigate. Moreover, by severing the weak links between heretical elites and their followers, inquisitors destabilized the Waldensian network, contributing to the weakening of religious sensibilities among the *credentes* and fracturing heretical communities, thus making them more vulnerable to future persecutions.

As a result, itinerant inquisitors during the 1390s were able to acquire a source of information about heretical networks that enhanced their ability to persecute. By doing so, itinerant inquisitors replicated the Waldensian network by creating one of their own, with nodes of inquisitorial activity supported by local patrons and ecclesiastical institutions; these nodes were in turn united into a coherent whole by a small number of highly mobile individuals, who often operated independently of one another, but whose activity sent shockwaves throughout the whole heretical network. Reliance on recent converts, as well as other informants, also explains

[12] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 127; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 151-52.

[13] Ormerod, "Scale-free Networks," 646-50; Collar, "Network Theory and Religious Innovation," 152.

the relative respite in anti-Waldensian activity after 1400. Having acted on the information about Waldensian communities acquired from the *magistri*, who converted in the later 1380s and the early 1390s, persecutors of heresy eventually ran out of "leads" to pursue. It is likely, for example, that it was this lack of information about Waldensians in Germany that led Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg to move eastward to investigate Waldensians in the crown of Hungary (present-day Hungary and Slovakia) in the early years of the fifteenth century. And yet, even this change of geographic focus was consistent with the model the inquisitors had successfully employed during the 1390s: at least a few of the converted masters were from the Kingdom of Hungary and therefore could have been used as informants about heretical communities there.

Waldensian Communities as Networks

In the fall of 1393 or perhaps the early winter of 1394, Johannes Oertel, a Waldensian from Donauwörth, found himself in Regensburg, enraged, homeless, and on the run. Having fled his town after an inquisition initiated there by Heinrich Angermeier, Oertel decided to travel some seventy miles east along the Danube to Regensburg, perhaps knowing that this large city had a Waldensian community of its own.[14] Benefiting from a trade network that also served as a conduit for itinerant Waldensian preachers, the heretical communities in Regensburg and Donauwörth knew about each other's existence, while their members paid visits to each other, perhaps combining mercantile, spiritual, and even familial affairs.[15] Now, Oertel was forced to rely on this network of strong links between communities to escape persecution. His contact in

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[14] Patschovsky, "Waldenser und Hussiten," 764; Kieckhefer, *Repression*, 66; Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620.

[15] Donauwörth lies on the important intersection of the east-west trade route between Regensburg and Ulm and the north-south route between Augsburg and Nuremberg. This makes the town a natural hub for regional commerce. Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 77.

Regensburg was Conrad Huter, a man of some standing and a citizen of the city; Huter had relatives living in Donauwörth and Oertel knew him from Huter's visit to the town in 1391.[16]

Oertel's hope for shelter and assistance in the new city was shattered when Conrad Huter refused to help him. During the previous decade the Waldensian community in Regensburg had not fared well and had undergone a persecution of its own. Huter and his wife had had to abjure heresy in early to mid-1380s, when Martin of Amberg investigated Waldensians in Regensburg with an archiepiscopal mandate. Having been caught practicing Waldensianism once, Huter no doubt knew that any association with a fugitive heretic from another diocese could result in his and his family's arrest and—if he was accused of "relapsing"—eventual execution. Studies of inquisitorial practice have demonstrated that there was no such thing as a *former* heretic.[17] A history of association with or support of religious heterodoxy, as in Huter's case, left the individual in a perpetual state of fear and uncertainty; any behavior that could be perceived as a sign of relapsing could be fatal. Moreover, Huter's sister and mother-in-law had been burned at the conclusion of the Donauwörth inquest (was Oertel himself the bearer of bad news?), making him feel embittered about Waldensianism in general.[18] If Oertel needed help, he had to seek it elsewhere.

Ironically, it was Huter's decision to refuse assistance to Oertel that got him into trouble. Jilted by his acquaintance, Oertel left Regensburg and remained a fugitive over the course of the following year. By the spring of 1395, he was apprehended by the servants of the bishop of

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[16] "Conradus dictus Huter, civis Ratisponensis." Cod. 3748, fols. 145r-155v, on fol. 145r. The manuscript source for the Oertel-Huter affair contains depositions by the two men, as well as Huter's wife. For a brief overview of the Regensburg trial, see Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66-67. See also, Heinrich Finke, "Waldenserprozess in Regensburg, 1395," 345-6.

[17] On the use of penitent heretical sympathizers by the inquisitors in Languedoc, see Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 84-86. On capital punishment for relapse: Ames, *Righteous Persecution*, 182-84.

[18] Cod. 3748, fol. 147r.

Eichstatt, likely intercepted as he was making his way back to Donauwörth.[19] Faced with an inquisitorial tribunal and likely blaming Huter for his unfortunate state, Oertel reported that his Regensburg contact and his wife were still practicing Waldensians. We do not know whether Oertel mentioned Huter out of a desire for revenge or out of desperation, but this information was carefully recorded and transferred to the bishop of Regensburg.[20] Four months later, when Oertel was interrogated again, a representative from the bishopric of Regensburg was in attendance and the questions asked concerned Huter and his family. Oertel reported that Huter visited Donauwörth in 1391, communicated with Waldensians there, and therefore still identified with the heretical community even years after his alleged conversion back to Catholicism.[21]

A week later Huter was arrested and interrogated by Frederick Süssner, an episcopal inquisitor in Regensburg. Two interrogations did not lead to a confession: Huter admitted that he and his wife had been Waldensians before their earlier abjuration but had not harbored any heterodox beliefs since. During Huter's visit to Donauwörth in 1391, he had associated with members of the Waldensian sect, including his sister and mother-in-law, but had thought that they too had abjured.[22] Huter's explanations were supported by the deposition of his wife, Elizabeth. When required to do so by the inquisitor, both demonstrated a sufficient (albeit imperfect) knowledge of Catholic prayers and tenets; the inquisition had thus reached an impasse.[23]

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[19] Finke, "Waldenserprozess in Regensburg, 1395," 345-46; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66.

[20] Oertel's depositions, taken in Eichstätt, survived as part of the Regensburg inquisitorial dossier, which means that the Regensburg inquisitor, Frederick Süssner, was furnished with a copy of them.

[21] Cod. 3748, fols. 148v-49r.

[22] Cod. 3748, fol.147v. Another Waldensian from Regensburg, Henrich Borschön, also abjured his heresy to Martin of Amberg at some point during the 1380s, but relapsed in Strasbourg. Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 66.

[23] Cod. 3748, fols.145v (Conrad Huter), 153v (his wife, Elizabeth).

Possibly unable to find sufficient proof of Huter's heretical beliefs and unwilling to send a citizen of Regensburg to the stake without firm evidence, Süssner decided to inquire with Martin of Amberg, who at the time resided in Prague. After all, Martin had received Huter's initial abjuration ten years earlier, perhaps his experience or records could help the investigation. Martin's response in May of 1396 was unambiguous: Huter and his wife were innocent. Not only did Martin himself find "nothing at all punishable" (*omnino nihil punibile*) in Huter's case, he had consulted recently converted Waldensian preachers residing in Prague who also denied that Huter had any current Waldensian affiliation.[24] The letter resulted in the release of Huter and his wife—a relatively rare occurrence during this decade of systematic anti-Waldensian persecution, especially given Huter's previous status as a heretic.

Huter's (and, to some extent, Oertel's) case tells us a lot about the role of information networks and exchanges during the inquisitions of the 1390s. First, it reveals significant tensions between members of Waldensian communities, a result of repeated persecutions. A deep sense of mistrust led German Waldensians to refuse assistance, intimidate, or even murder fellow heretics if they were deemed dangerous for the community as a whole.[25] It also suggests that even during this period of persecution, individual members of Waldensian communities knew more about the existence of similar communities in other cities and could expect (even if these expectations proved false) to receive support from fellow co-religionists. This attempt to supplement weak links between individual communities and the traveling *magistri* was likely a response to persecution. Faced with a disintegration of the preacher network, individual Waldensians were

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[24] Cod. 3748, fol. 150r.

[25] Evidence from Peter Zwicker's inquisition indicates that Waldensian community leaders in Klein Wubiser, a village in Pomerania, pressured individual *credentes* to prevent them talking to the inquisitor. Kurze, *Quellen*, 167-8. A converted master was murdered in Strasbourg in 1374, also likely out of fear of his cooperation with the inquisitors. Modestin, *Ketzer in der Stadt*, 43, 51-53.

reaching out to heretical communities elsewhere themselves. This was likely the case in Donauwörth and Regensburg, where individual Waldensian followers knew about each other's existence. Similarly, another Waldensian from Regensburg, the weaver Heinrich Borschön, left the city after abjuring his heresy to Martin of Amberg in 1385 and joined a Waldensian community in Strasbourg, on the western border of the Empire. It is possible that yet another Waldensian follower, Kunigund Strussin (or Straussin) of Augsburg had also found her way to Strasbourg after losing her husband to the inquisition of 1393.[26]

Although Waldensian communities were trying to 'close ranks' in response to persecution, the inquisitors still viewed converted Waldensian masters as crucial sources of information. While Conrad Huter's social status as a citizen of Regensburg likely played a role in preventing the inquisitor Süssner from convicting him of relapsing into heresy merely on the basis of Oertel's accusation, it was a brief but instrumental intervention from Martin of Amberg that resulted in Huter's release. Surprisingly, Martin's authority as an inquisitor remained intact even a decade after his activity in Regensburg (indeed, he even used this title in his letter to Süssner). During the inquest of 1395, Martin was merely an altar priest at the Church of Virgin Mary upon Týn in Prague—an important and wealthy parish in Prague's Old Town, but hardly one that put Martin above the acting inquisitor in Regensburg.[27] Rather, it was Martin's knowledge of Waldensianism and his access to converted Waldensian preachers that counted. Two lists of some twenty converted Waldensian masters, compiled in 1391 by Martin of Amberg and his associate Peter Zwicker, were, by all indications, not merely tallies of the inquisitors'

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[26] Modestin, *Quellen*, 243-4; 209-211.

[27] Martin occupied the position of an altar priest at least until 1399 (he is mentioned as such in an inquisitorial record from Bamberg). Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*-7*. Interestingly, he signed his response to the query from the Regensburg inquisitor as "Martin, inquisitor of heretical depravity" (*Martinus heretice pravitatis inquisitor*). Cod. Vindob. 3748, fols. 149v-150v.

successes in the field or an attempt to publicize their ability to convert, but rather lists of important contacts that remained useful—even years after their initial conversion—as sources of information about Waldensian communities throughout the German lands.[28]

Waldensian Informants and Inquisitors' Authority

As Richard Kieckhefer observes, "The tight organization of the Waldensians was both a safeguard and a liability."[29] The mass conversion of over 20 itinerant masters was, no doubt, instrumental in ushering in a decade of persecution throughout the German lands, but we should not assume that the existence of informants alone enabled Peter Zwicker, Martin of Amberg, and Heinrich Angermeier to pursue heretics. The conversions themselves and the information divulged—either willingly or under coercion—by the converts provided the inquisitors with an entry point into the Waldensian network. It was the way this information was used by the persecutors that proved instrumental in the persecution of German Waldensians. In particular, the information about heretical presence in a region provided inquisitors with a chance to persuade the authorities in that region to allow a campaign to proceed and even provide crucial support. Indeed, if an itinerant inquisitor remained one only so long as he could identify heretics, access to a network of reliable informants provided a considerable strategic advantage and a boost to one's authority. If we assume that Martin of Amberg's consultation with former Waldensian ministers in 1395 was not an exceptional occurrence (and nothing in the sources suggests that it

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[28] Scholars distinguish between two lists of converted masters; the so-called "shorter" and "longer" lists are published in Döllinger, Beiträge, 367 and 330 (respectively). For manuscript information on the lists of converted heretical masters, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 233-36. Although the use of repentant heretical preachers was practiced by earlier inquisitors, particularly in Languedoc, these conversions of the heretical elite were sporadic and relatively rare. Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 87-88.

[29] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 57

was), then it becomes clear that Waldensian masters could remain useful as informants throughout their lives.

Little is known about the inquisition in Erfurt (1391) that led to the initial conversions of over twenty Waldensian *magistri*.[30] While no reconstruction of Martin of Amberg's and Peter Zwicker's inquisitorial campaign in Erfurt in 1391 is possible, we can make a number of observations about it. First, it is likely that in this particular campaign Peter Zwicker was Martin's junior associate. Martin, having already been involved in a number of persecutions of heresy, was the driving force behind the persecution in Erfurt and possibly mentored Peter Zwicker, who, as a newly-appointed prior of the Celestine monastery in Oybin, lacked experience. By 1391 Martin had already held appointment as an episcopal inquisitor in Regensburg in mid-1380. Even earlier in the century, he had been involved in an episcopal investigation of the Strasbourg beguines in 1374, a political affair aimed at reducing the influence of Strasbourg's mendicant orders in which Martin served as an inquisitor and a representative of the archbishop of Prague.[31] Interestingly, the two itinerant inquisitors cooperated in Erfurt before parting ways for the rest of the decade and reuniting in 1400 to conduct an inquisition in the Kingdom of Hungary.[32] However, while in the sources relating to the inquisition in Erfurt conducted by these two inquisitors Martin's name is mentioned first, the records for the inquisition in 1400 put his name second to Zwicker's.[33] Clearly, by 1400, after

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[30] Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 55; Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 26-7.

[31] On Martin's involvement in the Strasbourg campaign against the beguines, see Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 97-101. This inquisition and its connection to Prague will be discussed later in the chapter.

[32] Thuhlář, "Inkvisice waldenských v Trnavě r. 1400,"

[33] "…per D. Martinum de Amberg et fratrem Petrum Celestinum." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330. In the records for the later collaboration between Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg we see the opposite: Zwicker's name is mentioned first: "Nos fr. Petrus provincialis fratrum ord. Celestinorum per Alemaniam et Martinus presbiter, inquisitores heretice pravitatis." Josef Truhlář, "Inkvisice Waldenských v Trnavě r. 1400", 196.

large-scale inquisitions in Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Upper Austria, Zwicker's fame as inquisitor had eclipsed that of his associate.

Although the Strasbourg campaign was aimed at local beguines, we should not exclude the possibility that Martin of Amberg also encountered the city's robust Waldensian community. After all, it was around 1374 that a Waldensian master, Hans Weidenhofer, was murdered there, allegedly for reverting to Catholicism. Even if Weidenhofer was silenced before he could fully betray the Strasbourg *credentes*, it is likely that the fact of his conversion did not escape Martin's attention. Fifteen years later, while compiling the list of converted masters, Martin mentioned Weidenhofer as well, noting that he was "murdered for turning away from the [Waldensian] sect."[34] While this mention itself does not prove that Martin knew Weidenhofer personally, it hints at that; otherwise, why would the list include a master who had converted over a decade earlier? If Martin did indeed learn about the renegade master's conversion and assassination, this might have suggested to him that converted Waldensians did exist, posed a threat to their community (to the point of prompting their assassination), and could be mined for information.

The cooperation of former rank-and-file members of heterodox communities or even of heretical preachers with inquisitors was not completely unprecedented. Although instances of such involvement are rare, at least two former Cathars from later thirteenth-century Northern Italy, Peter of Verona and Rainerius Sacconi, converted to Catholicism and were engaged in preaching against heresy. The latter, despite reportedly acting as a Cathar "good man" for many years before his conversion, was even allowed to join the Dominican order and serve as an

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[34] "…hi quinque interfecti sunt eo quod de secta se averterunt." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330. The murdered *magister* in the document is named "Conradus Waythoff." The name "Hans Weidenhofer" exists in the inquisitorial documents from the Strasbourg inquisition of 1400. In both cases the name of the murdered master was reported over a decade after the fact, which may explain the discrepancy in the sources. Both forms of the family name could derive from the master's origin in Waidhofen, Lower Austria. See Haupt, *Waldenserthums und Inquisition*, 85n.1; Modestin, *Quellen*, 269-70.

inquisitor of heretical depravity against his former co-religionists. Peter of Verona, on the other hand, fell victim to assassins in the 1252 and was subsequently canonized. Despite these examples, it must be noted that the conversion of heretical preachers was not typical for the thirteenth century anti-heretical campaigns. [35] Most heretical preachers in Southern France and Northern Italy were, if caught, usually "relaxed" to the secular authorities and executed.[36]

In contrast to this earlier pattern, converted Waldensian masters in later fourteenth-century Germany tended to face lesser punishments, possibly as a reward for their cooperation. None of the Waldensian masters listed by Martin of Amberg and Peter Zwicker in 1391 is described as imprisoned or executed; indeed, the list of Waldensians converted by the two inquisitors themselves opens with a note that the following individuals were "convicted and converted, abjured and marked with a cross [i.e., the penitential cross]."[37] Even more importantly, some of the converts retained a significant freedom of movement, although the fact that their new locations were known to the compilers of the list suggests that they were expected to stay in touch in a way loosely resembling a modern parole system. One Waldensian named Jacob is described as residing in Buda, Hungary, while another, Conrad of Erfurt, returned to Erfurt to convert his former brethren to Catholicism. The document notes that Conrad's mission produced no converts, and one can imagine—keeping in mind the fate of the minister killed in Strasbourg—that this missionary task was rather dangerous; the converted *magister* attempted to preach to the very community he had likely betrayed to the inquisitors. Some stayed on the move after conversion: the location of one Nicholas (Claus) Gottschalk of Brandenburg,

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[35] Rainerius Sacconi is best known for his tract "Summa on the Cathars and the Poor of Lyon" (*Summa de Catharis et Pauperibus de Lugduno*). See Wakefield and Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, 329.

[36] James B. Given observes that as Catharism became habitually persecuted in Languedoc, its leaders became more determined in their beliefs and therefore less likely to willingly surrender to the inquisitors. Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 87-88.

[37] "Omnes in Erfordia sunt convicti et conversi, abjurati et cruce signati." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330.

although not mentioned in the list, appears in other sources: after residing in Prague, he later moved to Vienna, where he became a Catholic priest.[38]

Evidently, not all converted masters remained loyal to their new faith; at least two had relapsed to Waldensianism at the time of the document's composition. Such "stubborn adherence to the Waldensian faith" should not seem surprising, if we consider that converted Waldensian masters often faced persecution—or at least isolation—from their former brethren. Indeed, some may have feigned conversion only out of immediate expediency and to avoid a heavier punishment.[39] Two known cases of the masters' return to Waldensianism, moreover, indicate the degree of freedom converted masters enjoyed in the early 1390s. It is hard to imagine that a master could reconnect with the Waldensian community under the watchful eye of the inquisitors or the Church. Still, the fact that the list—in both long and short versions—includes the unsuccessful conversions, suggests that its purpose was not merely to advertise the inquisitors' success at converting masters, but rather to provide a workable "database" (with places of origin, professions, and brief notes as to the converts' present status).

For example, a certain Johannes, a woolworker from Dichartz, near Krems in Lower Austria, who was arrested in Regensburg, was reported as "now truly relapsed" (*nunc vero relapsus*). Johannes' arrest in Regensburg, which occurred before 1391, could have been the result of the inquisitorial activity in the city led by Martin of Amberg.[40] Another *magister*, Claus of Plauen "who was a learned [*scolaris*] son of Conrad the woolworker, has stayed in the house

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[38] Kurze, *Quellen*, 99, 109. It is also possible that the master living in Prague was not Gottschalk, but his namesake. There were at least three Waldensian *magistri* named Nicholas in the list of converted Waldensian preachers. Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31, 367.

[39] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 236.

[40] "Item Johannes quondam lanifex de Dycchharcz, villa sita circa Chrems in Austria, qui fuit captus Ratispone et portavit crucem de heresi nunc vero relapsus." The relapse of one of the Waldensian masters, John (Johannes) of Dichartz is not mentioned in Kurze's or Döllinger's editions of the list of converts, but is present in another manuscript version of the same list. See Biller, *The Waldenses*, 235. See Appendix.

of Margaret in Wittenberg for two years and remains a heretic, frequenting schools [*scolae*, a name given to houses where Waldensian communities came together and possibly interacted with itinerant masters] there."[41] The information concerning Claus of Plauen is particularly intriguing, as it most certainly came from another heretical informant, who knew of Claus' habit of visiting heretical *scholae* in Wittenberg and of his relapsing into heresy. Although frustratingly brief, the note gives a glimpse of the information networks set up by the inquisitors, in which converted Waldensian ministers were required to observe each other and report any irregularities. This information was in turn collected in a list that made this and other knowledge about converted Waldensian masters both accessible and easy to disseminate.

If those Waldensian ministers who experienced a change of heart after their conversion to Catholicism risked being caught for a fatal second time, those converted *magistri* who proved to be useful to the inquisitors were rewarded. Somewhat unexpectedly, we encounter mentions of recent converts being allowed to become monks or even priests. The succinct list of converts does not provide any explanation for this, mentioning only that five of the individuals—Johannes of Vienna, Claus [Gottschalk] of Brandenburg, Friedrich of Hardeck, Heinrich of Ingolstadt, and Peter from Siebenbürgen (Transylvania)—"became Catholic priests after conversion."[42] Another individual, Hans of Mainz, joined a monastic order (*est factus monachus*).[43]

If receiving converted heretical preachers into the Catholic priesthood was unconventional enough, even more surprising was the speed with which this process occurred in the case of one such individual. According to the interrogation records from the inquisition in Brandenburg, at least two Waldensians confessed to Nicholas Gottschalk of Brandenburg in the

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[41] "Item Claus de Plawen qui fuit scolaris filius Conradi linificis [*sic*], hic duobus annis moratus est in domo Margarethae in Wittenberg et manens haereticus frequentavit scolas ibidem." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 331.

[42] "Isti quinque post conversionem eorum facti sunt sacerdotes ecclesiae catholicae." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330.

[43] Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330-31.

fall of 1391. However, in the record from December 10 of 1392 Gottschalk is reported as "converted heresiarch Nicholas, now in Prague."[44] Even more surprisingly, on December 23 of that year the converted minister is described as "a catholic priest residing in Vienna."[45] What can one make of this information? First, it indicates that, even occupied with the interrogation of Waldensians in Brandenburg and Pomerania, Zwicker remained informed of the status of some of the converted masters, even if they resided on the other side of the empire. Although the information about Nicholas Gottschalk is recorded as part of the interrogation records, it stands to reason that it was supplied by Zwicker himself, rather than by the subjects he questioned. For example, every time an individual would mention that he or she had confessed to Nicholas Gottschalk, Zwicker styled Gottschalk "already converted" (*iam converso*) to point out that the master in question had already been apprehended.[46]

Gottschalk's sojourn in Prague may suggest one way one could attain priesthood despite acting as a heretical minister only a year earlier. Prague, central to the lives and careers of both Martin of Amberg and Peter Zwicker, continued to feature prominently in their itineraries.[47] If Nicholas Gottschalk became a priest in Prague, he might have been able to do so with the help of Martin of Amberg, who by 1396—but possibly earlier—served as an altar priest in the Church of the Virgin Mary before Týn in Prague, a wealthy parish church associated with reform movements in the city. Having been involved with the higher echelons of the Church in Prague

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[44] On Waldensian followers confessing to Nicholas Gottschalk: Kurze, *Quellen*, 109, 166, 192; on Gottschalk living in Prague: Kurze, *Quellen*, 99: "Nicolao heresiarce converso iam in Praga." One of the individuals who confessed to Nicholas Gottschalk was his sister Geze.

[45] "Niclas Gotschalk, quondam heresiarcam nunc presbiterium katholicum habitantem in Wyenna."Kurze, *Quellen*, 109. Euan Cameron mistakenly dates Gottschalk's last visit to the Waldensians of Brandenburg to 1392, but that would have made the preacher's conversion and subsequent ordination, not to mention travel to Prague and Vienna, unbelievably fast. Cameron, *Waldenses*, 140.

[46] For example: "Nicolao heresiarce iam converse." Kurze, *Quellen*, 107; cf. Kurze, *Quellen*, 114, 115, 117.

[47] In addition to Martin of Amberg's position as an altar priest in Prague's Old Town, Peter Zwicker, as a provincial of the German Celestines, likely visited the Celestine house in Prague during the 1390s.

since the 1370s, Martin likely had some crucial connections that allowed him to assist recently converted masters. Indeed, Martin himself claimed to have access to converted heresiarchs in his letter in defense of Conrad Huter in 1396; perhaps these were the same men he helped to become priests.[48]

Cooperation between the inquisitors and former heretical preachers prompts one to question the reasons behind the sudden wave of conversions circa 1390-91. The unfortunate brevity of the surviving sources does not allow us to find out the methods used by Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg for securing such conversions. Were the *magistri* apprehended and forced to convert? Did such conversions and subsequent cooperation give the arrested Waldensians a chance to survive and even gain freedom? Two relapsed converts indicate that not everyone remained on the orthodox side for long. On the other hand, did the masters themselves initiate the conversions? Five Waldensian preachers who joined the Catholic priesthood, one *magister* who became a monk, are clear indications that some converted Waldensians attempted to preach Catholicism to their former brethren. In this case, one can consider possible causes for such a drastic change in one's life and spirituality. As Gabriel Audisio argues, the realities of existence in clandestine religious communities can lead to the deterioration of their belief systems and religious practices. Forced to preach and worship in secrecy since the later twelfth century, Waldensian communities throughout Western and Central Europe had to change their ways (as well as their beliefs) in order to avoid detection. As we have already discussed, recourse to violence and lying—two acts distinctly prohibited by earlier Waldensian teachings—became more widespread in this struggle for survival.[49] Gone were public preaching and open reverence

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[48] Cod. 3748, fols. 149v-50r.

[49] Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 60-61, 87f.; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 95; Utz Tremp, "Multum abhorrerem," 166-67.

towards the Waldensian *magistri*. In their stead came an environment of suspicion, furtive meetings, and security measures that were, in turn, sharply criticized by Catholic polemicists.[50]

Even if one considers a degree of exaggeration in Peter Zwicker's description of Waldensian preaching, it is not hard to imagine that some of the details were not far from the truth. Waldensian masters avoided unmediated contact with followers, relying on a small number of trustworthy "helpers" in each community, charged with vetting new converts. Waldensianism (or rather its persecution) divided families, forced its followers to lead a double-existence, even learning Catholic prayers they had been told were powerless, in order to blend in.[51] Could these precautions have weakened the resolve of some heretical ministers? After all, travelling preachers were in particular danger of being discovered. Spending up to half of each year on the road, Waldensian preachers had to endure the hardships of pre-modern travel on preaching circuits that spanned the German lands.[52] One master, Claus of Solothurn, is mentioned in depositions of Waldensians in both Brandenburg and Strasbourg; names of the ministers like "Symon de Galicz de Ungaria" (likely, "of Skalitz," present-day Skalica in Slovakia) and Peter of Siebenbürgen (in present-day Romania) suggest that some of the German masters originated from the settlements of German-speaking colonists in Eastern Europe, far from the German heartland.

The necessity to travel far and wide, "wheeling through the world," staying in "safe houses" of trusted followers, and risking capture was wearing on some of the Waldensian

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[50] Peter Zwicker addresses Waldensian *magistri* in his polemical treatise. According to him, these men behaved in a way unsuitable for someone purportedly following in the footsteps of the apostles: the *magistri* preached in secret, evangelized only to the most pious and trustworthy believers, and even abandoned their flock if danger was imminent. Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 279G-80E. Even if Zwicker is exaggerating, some of these practices appear as sound methods for eluding capture and were probably practices by the heretical preachers.

[51] Cameron, *The Waldenses*, 131-33.

[52] Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 279H-80A; Biller, *The Waldenses*, 288.

magistri.[53] Since none of the interrogation records for converted masters survive, we know little about them as individuals.   In some cases, however, we can extrapolate some details about their lives before conversion. One of the Waldensian converts allowed to become a priest—perhaps the best documented of all the *magistri* who converted in the early 1390s—Nicholas Gottschalk of Brandenburg, was the son of a non-Waldensian innkeeper and a judge (*cruger et iudex in opere*). He was introduced to heresy along with his mother and sister at some point in the mid-1360s.[54] We can assume that at a later point in his life, Nicholas was accepted into the rank of Waldensian ministers, which may seem somewhat surprising given the fact that he did not grow up in the sect. Still, the necessities of ministering to a number of communities dispersed across the empire likely pushed Waldensian ministers to actively seek apprentices.

Training, which involved learning about the Scriptures in the vernacular or possibly even attaining some degree of literacy, occurred on the road, where the student could also learn more practical aspects of his new vocation and be introduced to key members of Waldensian communities along his pastoral circuit. The list of converted Waldensian masters speaks of the "teachers" (*magistri*) and their students (*discipuli*), implying a sense of hierarchy.[55] A similar model of training is apparent from the later testimony of Friedrich Reiser (c. 1402-58), who spent some time as a student under *magister* Hans of Plauen, before becoming a Waldensian minister in his own right. Perhaps to underscore the itinerant nature of Waldensian ministry and to observe new recruits outside of their familiar environment, masters took them on the road right away. Two men interrogated by Zwicker in 1393 undertook such travels with the intention

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[53] "…per mundum gyrante." Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 280D.

[54] Kurze, *Quellen*, 109. The source of information for Nicholas Gottschalk's life is the confession of his sister, who in 1392 stated that she had converted over 26 years previously (i.e., circa 1366) It is possible that her brother and their mother converted at the same time as she.

[55] "…isti fuerunt Waldensium haereticorum magistri et quidam discipuli." Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330.

of joining the "brotherhood" of preachers (although in fact neither of them did).[56] One believer followed a master from his village of Klein Wubiser to Wittemberg in Prignitz (that is, from the eastern to the western border of the Mark of Brandenburg). Another *credens* accompanied a Waldensian master even further to Erfurt, Würzburg, and Plauen. The locations the potential disciple was taken to had a robust Waldensian presence (at least two Waldensian preachers came from Plauen) and were probably ideal for the training and vetting of new recruits.[57]

Having joined the Waldensian ministry, Nicholas Gottschalk remained active until the fall of 1391, when he was converted by Martin of Amberg and Peter Zwicker and joined the Catholic priesthood by the end of 1392. Judging by the large number of heretics who confessed to Nicholas when he was a Waldensian minister, he likely possessed an extensive knowledge about Waldensians living in Brandenburg. This information allowed Peter Zwicker to descend onto the region with a systematic inquisition in 1392-1394.[58] In return, Nicholas was allowed to become a priest in Vienna, possibly sent there in advance of Zwicker's later anti-heretical campaign in Austria. While the former heresiarch's role in the Austrian inquisitions is hard to gauge, his name appears in the records of an even later inquest in Vienna in 1404, where "canon Nicholas Gottschalk" is noted as one of the clerics in attendance.[59] Although frustratingly brief, this mention suggests that Gottschalk's cooperation with Peter Zwicker continued well beyond his conversion and proved to be rather lucrative for the former heretical minister. The prospect of priesthood, essentially a chance to continue his evangelizing efforts on a risk-free basis and to a wider audience, was likely instrumental in ensuring his cooperation.

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[56] "…ut in fraternitatem ipsum reciperent." Kurze, *Quellen*, 101.

[57] Kurze, *Quellen*, 107, 100-1. See also, Biller, "Heretics and Long Journeys," 86-103.

[58] Modestin, "Peter Zwicker," 32-33.

[59] "Actum in Wienna, Pataviensis dioces(is)… Nicolao Gottschalk canonico." Neumann, *České sekty ve století XIV. a XV.*, 6*.

Finally, if priestly status was indeed a reward for cooperation, then the five masters who became priests after their conversion may explain, in part at least, why Peter Zwicker (and Martin of Amberg after 1400) conducted their inquisitions in some places, but not others. Judging by the noted geographic origin of these *magistri*, it is likely that the most cooperative converts figured in inquisitors' decisions about the next place for an investigation. Out of the five, only Claus (Gottschalk) of Brandenburg came from northeastern Germany, but considering his preaching activity there, he was the most important source of information for Zwicker. Other converts were from Upper Austria, the place where Zwicker conducted his inquest later in the decade. Yet other converted masters originated from Hungary and modern-day Slovakia, where Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg traveled next.[60] Thus the geographic origins of the converted *magistri* match the inquisitorial activity by Zwicker and Martin of Amberg; a strong indication that availability of informants was a guiding influence on the inquisitors' activity.

Networks of Patronage

If tapping into a network of informants from the ranks of converted masters was crucial for initiating an inquisition in any given locale, so was access to a network of patronage. In many cases, patronage and its deficiencies influenced the outcome of the inquisition. As I have demonstrated in Chapter Three, the limited authority of Heinrich Angermeier's patron, the Rothenburg burgomaster Toppler, severely restricted his ability to conduct an inquisition there on his own terms and eventually led to his defeat by a representative of the bishop of Würzburg. The availability of powerful patrons and mechanisms for securing them are particularly important for our understanding of the way itinerant inquisitors operated. Careers and trajectories of individual itinerant inquisitors demonstrate that the ability to ally with patrons should not be

[60] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 126.

taken for granted. Forced to cooperate with local authorities, instead of trans-regional institutions like the Dominican Order, Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg exemplify the process of relying on ecclesiastical and secular potentates in a way that furthered their ability to persecute. This raises the question of what motivated these supporters. While it is clear that some patrons, such as the bishop of Augsburg, supported inquisitions in part for political reasons, one should not assume that each inquisition during the 1390s was inspired by this reasoning alone. Indeed, it was the role of the inquisitor to act as a catalyst, a new element that—when introduced—could start a persecution even in areas where Waldensian communities had survived undisturbed for decades, provided that he was able to secure support from the ecclesiastical authorities in the region.

It is tempting, when one speaks of inquisitors like Peter Zwicker, Martin of Amberg, and Heinrich Angermeier, to imagine these men functioning on their own. However, a careful examination of individuals present during interrogations and trials clearly demonstrates that anti-heretical investigations were conducted by small group of individuals, the inquisitorial *familia*, whose role in the anti-heretical campaigns has not been examined in detail. Moreover, the existence of such networks of personal and professional affiliation suggests that the inquisitors were able to conduct persecutions in different places simultaneously. Reliance on networks of affiliates and delegates sped up anti-heretical persecutions and no doubt helped the inquisitors to cover large territories within a relatively short amount of time.

Inquisitorial records from Zwicker's campaign in Brandenburg and Pomerania suggest that the inquisitor was particularly reliant on a cadre of individuals, whose functions often remained unspecified. Due to the large volume of surviving inquisitorial evidence, this inquisition in particular demonstrates the logistics involved in conducting investigations on such

a scale. Between early winter of 1392 and spring of 1394 (albeit with a break in the records between March 1393 and February of 1394) Zwicker interrogated at least 443 individuals, assisted in some capacity or other by around a hundred notaries, assistants, and witnesses. Over 120 locations are mentioned in the records of the inquisition, spanning the dioceses of Brandenburg, Lebus, and Cammin.[61]

In particular, the records bear witness to the existence of a small circle of "helpers", whose participation cannot be simply ascribed to notarial duties, since those were performed by a separate group of local notaries. The most important member of Zwicker's inquisitorial *familia* was Nicholas of Wartenberg, a fellow Celestine monk, described in the sources as "the inquisitor's associate from the Celestine order" (*socius inquisitoris professo ordinis Celestinorum*). [62] Nicholas is mentioned in 62 of the 195 surviving protocols. Some protocols survived as fragments, with the part listing individuals in attendance missing. Indeed, by the end of the inquest, Zwicker's Celestine assistant had been trusted to conduct interrogations on his own. On March 24, 1394, his name appears at the beginning of the protocol, stating that the interrogated woman appeared "before brother Nicholas of Wartenberg, deputy of Lord Peter the inquisitor."[63] No reason is given for Zwicker's absence during that interrogation, nor do the subsequent protocols written on the same day indicate whether he was absent during those as well.[64] It is important to note, however, that Zwicker officially delegated his assistant to conduct interrogations in his stead at least once, presuming a certain amount of trust between the inquisitor and his associate.

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[61] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 67, 72, 87. Dietrich Kurze believes that the total number of interrogation protocols written in the process of the inquisition was around 455; 195 of them survived. The latest surviving protocol is numbered 443. Kurze, *Quellen*, 18-19.

[62] Kurze, *Quellen*, 235-37.

[63] "…coram fratre Nicolao de Wartenberch subdelegato domini Petri inquisitoris." Kurze, *Quellen*, 257.

[64] Kurze, *Quellen*, 257-59.

No less interesting is the origin of the inquisitor's assistant, suggested by his name. Although there are a number of towns and villages called Wartenberg in the German-speaking lands, the most intriguing candidate for the deputy's place of origin is perhaps Wartenberg in Pomerania (today: Chełm Dolny, Poland), which was located within Zwicker's area of operation.[65] If Nicholas was indeed from that Wartenberg, then it is likely that Zwicker picked him as an assistant because of his local knowledge. Operating in an unfamiliar rural area—with a population that was uncooperative, if not openly hostile to the inquisitor—Zwicker no doubt had to rely on an individual who knew the area well and could advise him on its regional specificity. That an individual from Pomerania could be found among the ranks of the Bohemian Celestines is perhaps unusual, but not impossible. After all, Peter Zwicker himself was born in Eastern Prussia, far from the German (or Bohemian) heartland.

Another enigmatic group of individuals present during the interrogations in Brandenburg and Pomerania consisted of two laymen, Peter and Paul. Who were they and what functions did they perform? Peter of Tundorp and Paul of Enns, from the dioceses of Eichstatt and Passau respectively, attended multiple interrogations, usually noted in the protocols as "Paul and Peter, the inquisitor's assistants" (*Paulo et Petro famulis inquisitoris*), suggesting a particular reason for their attendance.[66] Overall, Paul of Enns is mentioned in 21 protocols and Peter of Tundorp in 6; both are listed together in 5 protocols.[67]

The term *famulus*, although used to denote a wide array of social ties, here refers most likely to these men's membership in the inquisitor's *familia*, a cadre of individuals that accompanied Peter Zwicker during the inquest. While the monk Nicholas of Wartenberg was

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[65] Kurze, *Quellen*, 205. An individual named Peter Thomas of Wartenberch was named as a possible suspect in the interrogation record of Hans Rudaw of Selchaw. There are towns of the same name in Hesse and Bavaria.

[66] Kurze, *Quellen*, 235.

[67] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 73-74.

probably Zwicker's primary assistant, Paul of Enns and Peter of Tundorp likely performed other functions, incompatible with clerical status, such as defense. It is hard to imagine that Zwicker was able to perform his functions without some form of a security detail, especially while traveling in rural areas. Although we do not hear of any reports of violence against Zwicker himself, instances of violence aimed at inquisitors during the decade suggest that at least one or two armed men at the inquisitor's side constituted a necessary precaution.[68]

Even if *famuli inquisitoris* were not merely bodyguards, their places of origins (Southern Germany and Upper Austria respectively) indicate that they were far away from home. Moreover, both men came from areas with a significant Waldensian presence. Indeed, only a few years after Zwicker's campaign in Brandenburg and Pomerania, Enns in Upper Austria would become one of the focal points for his inquisitorial activity, along with Steyr. Similarly, the diocese of Eichstatt and its neighboring provinces themselves experienced a series of anti-Waldensian inquisitions in the middle of the 1390s, possibly conducted by Heinrich Angermeier (Wemding, 1393) as well as local episcopal inquisitors. The origins of Zwicker's *famuli* suggest that they might have been former Waldensians themselves, and therefore acted as "consultants" or "advisers" for the inquisitor. Unfortunately, our sources do not contain any further support for this speculation, although we should not forget that such "consultations" did happen during the period.

The participation of Paul of Enns in Zwicker's inquest in Brandenburg may also suggest that the inquisitor considered turning his attention to Austria even while in the middle of

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[68] For a detailed discussion of violence against inquisitors (including Zwicker), see Chapter Three. The interrogation records relate one incident in which a messenger carrying Zwicker's letter of summons to the villagers of Klein-Wubiser was intimidated by a group of local Waldensians, aided by the village's magistrate. Kurze, *Quellen*, 233-4. In a few instances, Zwicker was called "the forerunner of the Anti-Christ" (*apellaverit inquisitorem precursorem Anichristi*) by some Waldensian believers. Kurze, *Quellen*, 260; cf. Kurze, *Quellen*, 107, 208.

interrogating northern German Waldensians. Considering the number of converted Waldensian ministers who originated in Austria, it is not surprising that this part of the empire attracted Zwicker's interest. Zwicker's plans are made obvious in *Cum dormirent homines* (written after the conclusion of the inquisition in Brandenburg), where he shares his hopes that at least a thousand converted heretics from Austria and Hungary will be added to another thousand of their brethren who have already converted in Northern Germany.[69] The same message—albeit worded more forcefully—appears in Zwicker's 1395 plea addressed to the nobility and clergy of Austria. Finally, already in December of 1392, the former Waldensian minister Nicholas Gottschalk was residing in Vienna and, considering his later collaboration with Zwicker, might have been sent there by the inquisitor himself. All of this evidence suggests that Zwicker's choice of areas to investigate was not random, but carefully planned, with methodical preparations accomplished through a long-distance network of associates.

Imperial Networks

As we have observed in the case of Heinrich Angermeier's rise and fall as an itinerant inquisitor in Augsburg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber, perhaps the most important source of authority and support for itinerant persecutors of heresy were German bishops. Their position and influence (both within and outside their dioceses) provided travelling inquisitors with a support network that enabled their very mobility. Conversely, a hostile bishop could impede an inquisition and, by doing so, demonstrate the tenuous authority of these itinerant agents of persecution. If episcopal involvement and trust were so crucial, how were they gained? A careful analysis of political connections between a number of German bishops and itinerant inquisitors can demonstrate episcopal motivations for supporting persecutions of heretics in their dioceses.

[69] Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines*, 281E.

The career of Martin of Amberg, who acted as an episcopal inquisitor in the decades prior to the 1390s, demonstrates how personal connections between bishop and itinerant inquisitors underpinned the anti-Waldensian campaigns at the end of the century. The first known anti-heretical persecution that involved Martin of Amberg was spurred by episcopal—and possibly even imperial—politics. As it was mentioned earlier, in 1374 Martin was sent by the archbishop of Prague at the invitation of the bishop Strasbourg, Lambert of Brunn (r. 1371-74), to assist him in his inquisition of the beguine community in the city.[70] As the campaign commenced, the relatively new bishop—Lambert, former bishop of Speyer, had been elected to the Strasbourg see in 1371—mounted an attack against the beguines in the diocese by accusing them of breaking the ruling against new orders and the prohibitions of the Council of Vienne (1311-12). The bishop's pronouncement, ordering the beguines to disband within fifteen days or face punishment, was not concerned with their doctrinal errors, but rather criticized their way of life: poverty, distinct dress, existence of a quasi-monastic hierarchy, and their common habitation, all in the absence of an approved monastic rule. Additionally, the bishop accused the beguines of taking communion from the mendicant friars, contrary to canon law; thus, Bishop Lambert's attack on the beguines was also an attack on the mendicants, who defended and enabled them.[71]

The resulting inquisition, "not conducted by the mendicant orders but actually leveled in part against them," proved to be particularly influential for Martin of Amberg's later career.[72] Not only was it the first anti-heretical persecution in which he played a key role, it was also the first campaign that connected him to Lambert of Brunn, whose willingness to persecute beguines

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70 "Martinus, Presbyter ex Bohemia." BSB Clm. 14216, 178rb; ed. in Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 378.

[71] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 98-100.

[72] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 98. Martin is described in the episcopal decree against the beguines of Strasbourg as "dominus Martinus Presbyter ex Bohemia … per dominum Lampertum Argentin. Ep. ad hujusmodi officium exercendum Argentinam accersitus"

in Strasbourg may have been key to his promotion to the bishopric of Bamberg within the same year.[73] Indeed, Martin's involvement must have also won him the favor of the archbishop of Prague, Jan Očko of Vlašim (r. 1364-1378) and of his nephew and successor, Jan of Jenštejn (1379-1396).[74] Already in 1374 the archbishop trusted Martin enough to send him across the Empire to Strasbourg to spearhead the inquisition there. His official mission as an episcopal inquisitor of heretical depravity was at least in part aimed at reducing the influence of the mendicant orders in the diocese of Strasbourg; he must have been expected to succeed in such an intricate political affair. Similarly, echoes of the anti-mendicant thrust of the Strasbourg inquisition reverberate throughout Martin's later career in the 1390s, inasmuch as he never collaborated with mendicant inquisitors.

Why was a local affair, even complicated by a power struggle between the bishop and the mendicant orders, overseen by a specially invited inquisitor from Prague? Indeed, Strasbourg was not even subordinate to the archbishop of Prague, while the archdiocese of Mainz, to which Strasbourg was subordinate, had its own papal-appointed Dominican inquisitor of heretical depravity.[75] The actual persecution of the beguines in Strasbourg was so swift that even its initiators anticipated hard questions about the reasons for the inquisition. A letter was circulated among the parish clergy in Strasbourg, who had to explain to their parishioners why beguines were suddenly to be repressed. In it, the author—possibly Martin of Amberg—instructed the clergy to claim that they were ignorant of the heretical community in the city and blame the

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[73] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 97-98.

[74] Hlebníková, "Johann Očko von Vlašim," 589-90; Seifert and Hlebníková, "Johann von Jenstein," 590-92.

[75] Papal bull "Ab exordio nascentis ecclesiae" issued by Gregory XI in 1372, gave the Dominican provincial of Teutonia the right to appoint and to dismiss inquisitors in the archdioceses of Mainz, Cologne, Trier, Salzburg, Magdeburg, and Bremen. Springer, "Dominican Inquisition in the Archdiocese of Mainz (1348-1520)", 327-28.

beguine's secretive nature. In the author's opinion, this response was sufficient, for "few people read papal laws on this point [i.e. on the errors of the beguines]."[76]

This rather weak explanation for the need to persecute the beguines in 1374 was meant to obscure the likely reason for the sudden attention to the communities of women cohabitating without a monastic rule. As I have discussed in Chapter Four, 1374 was also a year when Jan Milíč of Kroměříž (d. 1374) and his religious community of reformed prostitutes in Prague's Old Town were proclaimed heretical by Pope Gregory XI. The community, dubbed "Jerusalem," was disbanded by the end of that year, while its founder died on June 29 in Avignon, trying to plead his case before the pope.[77] Milíč's condemnation was particularly inconvenient for Prague's archbishop Jan Očko of Vlašim and Emperor Charles IV, who had initially supported "Jerusalem."[78] Less than two month after Milíč's death (August 19, 1374), the inquisition in Strasbourg was initiated in an attempt to underscore the emperor's (and archbishop's) categorical stance against heterodoxy.[79] Notably, the campaign targeted a heretical group that was very similar to Milíč's community of repentant prostitutes—the beguines. In addition, the persecution

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76 Quoted from Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life*, 42-43. The original passage in full reads: "Aliqui sunt homines utriusque sexus, qui dicunt: 'Si iste sorores duxerunt hactenus malam vitam vel fuerunt excommunicate, quare hoc episcopi et clerici tanto tempore sustinuerunt?' Dicatis et caute procedatis et premittatis ista subscripta: Primo quia nos ignoramus et nostri domini episcopi hoc ignoraverunt. Item religiosi se excusant et dicunt se multos defectus et errores ignorasse; et si devenissent ad noticiam eorum, ipsi predicassent contra eos tamquam contra hereticos et postea publicassent domino episcopo. Si ergo defectus ignoraverunt et fuerunt eis secreciores quam nobis, multo maius dominus episcopus et nos ignoramus, quia pauci legerunt constitucionem pape super illo puncto." Patschovsky, "Straßburger Beginenverfolgungen im 14. Jahrhundert", 185. Scholars usually credit Martin of Amberg, who was invited to direct the inquisition, with composing other documents related to the inquisition, including the list of questions to be asked during interrogations and the episcopal directive ordering beguines to desist. See Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers,* 42; Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 100-1.

77 Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 435-38.

78 Mengel, "Emperor Charles IV," 24-5. Charles IV transferred properties in the disbanded brothel district called "Venice" to Milič in 1372. In 1374, the pope sent a bull ordering the liquidation of Milič's religious community to the archbishop of Prague and key bishops in the region, as well as to the emperor, which suggests his anxiety that his order might be ignored unless it was widely circulated. Mengel, "The Topography of Prostitution," 435 n. 126.

79 To my knowledge, no other scholar has discussed the inquisition in Strasbourg in the context of the persecution in Jan Milič in Prague during the same year.

gave Lambert—recognized by scholars as one of the most trusted clerics in Charles' and his successor's circle—an upper hand in his power-struggle against the mendicants.[80]

In light of this, it becomes clear that Bishop Lambert's promotion to the see of Bamberg—which came so swiftly after the inquisition that his successor in Strasbourg, Friedrich II of Blankenheim (r. 1375-1393) had to deal with some of its aftershocks (e.g., the complaints of the city's mendicant orders against unjust accusations)—was visibly linked to Lambert's actions against the beguines.[81] Martin of Amberg's involvement in the affair, very likely instrumental to its success, must have been noted as well. His success in 1374 no doubt earned him favors in circles close to the archbishop of Prague and likely proved his skills as an inquisitor.[82] In the mid-1380s, Martin was investigating Waldensians in Regensburg (also under the aegis of Prague), while his and Peter Zwicker's joint inquisition in Erfurt and Würzburg might have been aided by Lambert, who was still the bishop of nearby Bamberg at the time.[83] Finally, Martin served as an inquisitor for Bishop Lambert in Bamberg and Nuremberg around the time of the bishop's death in 1399.[84]

No less significant is the role of Bamberg in the career of another inquisitor, Heinrich Angermeier. The earliest account of his inquisition in Augsburg, despite its relative lack of interest in the inquisitor himself (the anonymous chronicler omits the inquisitor's name, calling him simply a "priest"), nevertheless deems it important to note that the persecutor arrived from

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[80] Lambert of Brunn had accompanied Emperor Charles on his visit of Italy in the 1360s, and later served as the emperor's chaplain and adviser. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 97; Flachenecker, "Lamprecht von Brunn," 52-53.

[81] Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 98-99.

[82] Also while in Strasbourg, Martin may have learned about the murder of the converted Waldensian master Hans Weidenhofer or even contributed to his unfortunate conversion.

[83] Kieckhefer, *Repression*, 55.

[84] Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*-7*.

Bamberg.[85] While there is no evidence that Angermeier was in any way connected to the bishop of Bamberg, we should not discount the fact that the bishop was generally supportive of anti-heretical persecutions during the 1390s. At least in part, the impetus for episcopal support for inquisitions of heretics also stemmed from Prague. As early as 1381, the archbishop of Prague ordered his suffragan bishops of Bamberg, Regensburg, and Meissen to organize inquisitions in their dioceses or allow inquisitors to be appointed directly by the archbishop; the phrasing of this order implies that the bishops would have been better off appointing inquisitors on their own.[86]

Peter Zwicker and the Inquisition in Brandenburg, 1392-94

Studies of the anti-Waldensian persecutions in the 1390s usually do not problematize the choice of locations for the inquisition that took place during that decade. The underlying assumption is that the inquisitors persecuted heretics where they could find them. In addition, their ability to find heretical communities was often dictated by the confessions of converted heretical preachers. While, as I have been arguing in this chapter, this assumption is largely correct, one has to ponder why itinerant inquisitors chose to investigate certain Waldensian communities and not others, and proceeded in the order they did. For instance, after participating in the conversion of a number of Waldensian *magistri* in 1391, Zwicker was very likely aware (judging by the origins of converted heretics) of the existence of Waldensian communities in *both* Brandenburg/Pomerania and Upper Austria. Why did he decide to investigate the former first? A possible answer to this question lies in Zwicker's ability to navigate the social network of political allegiances and patronage that connected a number of crucial bishops in northeastern Germany with the ecclesiastical and secular rulers in Prague. If we assume that, being a relative

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[85] "…pfaff von Baubenberg." "Chronik von 1368-1406 mit Fortsetzung bis 1447," 96.
[86] Höfler, *Concilia Pragensia 1353–1413*, 26.

newcomer to the persecution of heresy, Zwicker had a limited ability to attract patrons, then his choice of Brandenburg, an area with strong ties to the Luxemburg dynasty in the second half of the century, as the locale for his very first inquisition is illustrative of the underlying political processes in the Empire.

Understanding these processes was crucial for providing an itinerant inquisitor with the resources necessary for conducting an inquisition. It has been pointed out that the itinerant inquisitors of the 1390s approached bishops in whose provinces they wanted to persecute heresy, rather than being invited to do so.[87] In some cases, as I have demonstrated earlier, bishops, like the bishop of Augsburg in 1393, exploited persecutions of heresy to further their political goals. However, not all successes of itinerant inquisitors during the 1390s can be explained by their patron's ulterior motives. Moreover, in some cases it was the bishop's proximity to the empire's de facto political center in Prague that played a role. Charles IV's reliance on appointing like-minded bishops as chancellors and advisors, one that likely earned him the epithet "priestly king," continued during the reign of his son, Wenceslaus.[88] Indeed, Wenceslaus' election to the throne has been attributed to the diplomatic skills of the bishop of Bamberg, Lambert of Brunn (r. 1374-99), while Prague's archbishop Jan of Jenštejn (r. 1379-96) headed the young king's chancery during the first decade of his reign.[89] Another bishop with strong ties to Prague's court was Johannes of Bruno (r. 1386-94). A chancellor of King Wenceslaus and a bishop of Cammin, his diocese in Pomerania became the primary target of Peter Zwicker's first campaign as an inquisitor in his own right.[90] Although in the absence of sources we can only speculate about the

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[87] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 56-7; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 139-40.

[88] Robert Suckale, Jiří Fajt, "The Circle of Charles IV," 40-41.

[89] Flachenecker and Rapp, "Lamprecht von Brunn," 53; Seifert and Hlebníková, "Johann von Jenstein," 591.

[90] I am grateful to Mr. Reima Välimäki (University of Turku, Finland), for pointing out to me Johannes of Bruno's connection to the imperial chancery.

specific reasons for Zwicker's appointment, his position at the head of the Celestine order with known imperial connections as well as his possible connection to the archbishop of Prague through Martin of Amberg may have been key in securing permission to investigate Waldensians in and around Stettin.

Thus, even though the decade of intensified anti-Waldensian persecutions began over ten years after the death of Emperor Charles IV (d. 1378), these inquisitions were beneficiaries of the trans-imperial networks of diplomacy and influence that tied the most disparate regions of the empire to Prague. While the reign of Wenceslaus IV was marked by the weakening of imperial power and repeated political crises, some of the institutions developed by Charles IV survived his son's rule. These networks, organized primarily around bishops who had ascended to power with Charles' assistance, remained loyal to the Luxemburg dynasty even after his death. A number of those promoted and appointed by Charles were still in power for part of the 1390s, keeping the crucial networks of diplomacy and favor intact. These unofficial ties proved to be most resilient and therefore could be exploited by an individual with a compelling agenda (such as the persecution of heresy) and a penchant for diplomacy. Of principal interest to this study are the bishops of Bamberg, Brandenburg, and Cammin, as well as the archbishop of Prague.

Although this has not been noted in earlier scholarship, Peter Zwicker's choice of the Mark of Brandenburg as the target of his inquisition demonstrates the inquisitor's awareness of the special role of this principality in the political system created by Charles IV and maintained by his heir. Brandenburg, whose ruler was one of the seven imperial electors, played a particularly important part in the Empire's political system. Having earned the emperor's crown after a bitter struggle with the Wittelsbach contender, Louis the Bavarian, Charles realized the importance of controlling this principality to the north of Bohemia. Brandenburg had been under

the Bavarian Wittelsbachs from 1323 until 1373, when Charles purchased it from its ruler, Otto V. Although the territory was acquired primarily to ensure the unproblematic election of his son, Wenceslaus, as the new emperor (by ruling both Bohemia and Brandenburg the Luxemburgs possessed two electoral votes in the imperial elections—a decisive advantage), Charles's administrative ambition prompted him to improve Brandenburg's administration and taxation; in other words, if the newly acquired principality was to be incorporated into the Bohemian Crown, it was to experience the style of governance Charles had established in his Czech domain. During the last five years of his life, the emperor twice made extended visits to the Mark (in 1374-75 and 1377), essentially acting as regent for the new margrave, his son Wenceslaus. There he conducted a tour of the region's principal towns, initiated its land survey (*Landbuch*), and established the groundwork for future rule.[91] Crucially for the focus of this study, in Brandenburg Charles also relied on friendly bishops for counsel and governance of the territory. Dietrich of Schulenburg, bishop of Brandenburg (r. 1365-93), whose long reign predated the Luxemburg takeover, was, as the emperor's advisor (*consiliarius*), instrumental to Charles' successful governance of the region. Another key bishop, Peter of Oppeln of Lebus (r. 1366-1375), was appointed "administrator and chancellor-general of the whole Mark" (*provisor et totius Marchie cancellarius generalis*) in 1374.[92]

Moreover, inquisitions conducted by itinerant inquisitors required, as far as we can see, relatively few resources from a bishop. Thus placing the task of persecuting heresy in the hands of an itinerant inquisitor like Zwicker could have been particularly expedient for an absentee bishop of Cammin. The existence of Waldensian communities in the Baltic north-east of the

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[91] Schmidt, "Brandenburg und Pommern," 203, 206-207; Winkelmann, *Die Mark Brandenburg des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 86-89.

[92] Winkelmann, *Die Mark Brandenburg des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 87. See also, Kopiec, "Peter von Oppeln," 342-43.

empire was relatively well known; earlier inquisitions there had produced documents that described Waldensians as devil-worshippers, emphasizing their danger for Christendom as a whole.[93] Zwicker himself likely expected to find evidence of diabolical heresy among the individuals he interrogated, explicitly asking about such elements of Waldensian belief. One man he questioned denied these allegations with such force—stating that Waldensians were not only repulsed but even nauseated by the very idea of worshipping the devil—that the inquisitor remembered it a few years later, when he was writing his treatise against the heresy.[94] Zwicker's involvement in the area, moreover, fit with the existing imperial policy; the second half of the fourteenth century witnessed repeated imperial decrees calling for the persecution of heresy or individual heresies, both during the reign of Charles IV and Wenceslas. These decrees were echoed by the archbishop of Prague, Jan of Jenštejn.[95]

The sources describe Zwicker as an inquisitor with permission to proceed against the heretics from the bishops of Brandenburg, Cammin, and Lebus; his authority applied only to the individuals who originated in these dioceses. Indeed, as both Kieckhefer and Kurze point out, Zwicker lacked authority in the neighboring diocese of Poznan, yet another proof that he did not possess any papal license that would have allowed him to transcend the borders of ecclesiastical provinces.[96] Moreover, it is very likely that Zwicker lacked permission to pursue heresy in the diocese of Poznan because its bishop, Dobrogost of Nowy Dwór (r. 1384-94)—the future

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[93] Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 62; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 54-55.

[94] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 279; Modestin points out that the actual statement about Waldensians being nauseated by diabolism appears in a fairly hostile passage that portrays heresies as warring and disjointed (in opposition to the unified "true" Catholic Church). Modestin, "The Anti-Heretical Treatise," 220-21. While this is a useful point, it does not invalidate, in my opinion, Biller's assertion that Zwicker was impressed by the strength of the Waldensian reaction against devil worship.

[95] Makowski, *"A Pernicious Sort of Woman": Quasi-religious Women and Canon Lawyers in the Later Middle Ages*, 120; Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 97-98; Höfler, *Concilia Pragensia*, 26.

[96] Kurze, *Quellen*, 23-24; Kieckhefer, "Repression of Heresy in Germany," 189.

archbishop of Gniezno (r. 1394-1401)—lacked the pro-Prague sympathies characteristic of his western neighbors. It is possible that Zwicker planned to acquire an inquisitorial license from the bishop of Poznan *post factum*, as he did interrogate five individuals who came from that diocese, essentially operating without episcopal permission to do so.[97] The interrogation records produced as a result of Zwicker's actions in the absence of an episcopal authorization demonstrate both the limitations of his authority and the inquisitor's methods for acquiring it. While normally the records were written by a local notary, the Poznan documents only mention Zwicker's closest associates and were possibly written by the inquisitor himself. Secondly, while Zwicker still considered it fitting to assign penance to the individuals he questioned, the records bear a brief clause stating that this penance was provisional, subject to later approval by the bishop.[98] Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the set of five interrogation records is prefaced by a formal statement about the identity and credentials of the inquisitor and of his deputy Nicholas of Wartenberg, and about the successes of their inquisition. Likely intended for presentation to the bishop of Poznan, the document mentions Zwicker as both a Celestine provincial prior for Germany (*per Alamaniam*) and as the inquisitor of heretical depravity deputized by the bishops of Prague, Lebus, and Cammin, who "found, examined, convicted, and assigned penance to over 400 heretics of both sexes from the Waldensian sect in the diocese of Cammin."[99] This model of self-presentation, drawing both on both of his roles as a Celestine provincial and an inquisitor, was likely followed whenever Zwicker approached other potential patrons, both secular and ecclesiastical.

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[97] Kurze, *Quellen*, 235-43. Three out of five individuals were brothers from the Spigilman family.

[98] Kurze, *Quellen,* 236.

[99] "Quia in diocese Caminensi plures quam 400 hereticos utriusque sexus de secta Waldensium reperit, examinavit, convicit et penitenciavit…" Kurze, *Quellen*, 235.

Peter Zwicker in Austria

In the mid-1390s, while Martin of Amberg served as an altar priest at the Týn Church in Prague's Old Town, Peter Zwicker embarked on a new phase of his anti-Waldensian activity, moving away from the Luxemburg network of political influence to one dominated by the Austrian Habsburgs. No direct evidence informs us of the reasons for such a drastic move. While—judging by the list of converted Waldensian *magistri*—Austria was clearly one of the principal origins of heretical preachers, it was home to a different dynasty rival to the Luxemburgs. It therefore constituted a more difficult political terrain. Nevertheless, Zwicker's Austrian campaign appears to have been carefully planned (albeit delayed by the unforeseen dynastic conflict among the heirs of the deceased Duke Albert III [d.1395]), supported by the Habsburg dukes and Austrian clergy alike, and meticulously executed.[100] Even more importantly, Zwicker the inquisitor never resumed his inquisitorial activity in the north, but instead chose to move even further east into Hungary after 1400.

There is evidence to suggest that the inquisitor was "preparing the soil" for his later Austrian inquisition while in Brandenburg. In one of the interrogation records, Zwicker notes that Gottschalk, one of the Waldensian ministers converted c. 1391, became a Catholic priest and resided in Vienna.[101] This level of awareness about the location of a former heretic implies the existence of reliable channels of communication between the two individuals. Gottschalk's residence in Austria may have been a coincidence, if not for the fact that he was involved in Zwicker's later inquisitorial trial in Vienna in 1404. Moreover, the appearance of Paul of Enns, listed as an "associate" (*socius* or *famulus*) in many inquisitorial protocols from Brandenburg

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[100] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 217-18.
[101] Kurze, *Quellen*, 109.

and Pomerania, may be indicative of Zwicker's interest in that Upper Austrian town with a well-established Waldensian community.

Another reason for Zwicker's migration southward may, once again, lie in imperial politics. Throughout the early 1390s, the network of influence built by Charles IV by melding ecclesiastical and secular powers and offices was disintegrating. The archbishop of Prague, Jan of Jenštejn, probably the inquisitor's most powerful patron, remained in a prolonged conflict with King Wenceslaus during the first half of the decade. Wenceslaus' diplomatic attempts to renew a former alliance with France were unacceptable—from the archbishop's point of view—during the height of the Great Schism that left Bohemia and France on opposite sides of the divide between rival popes. This principal disagreement, accompanied by more mundane conflicts over church property and ecclesiastical liberties (the archbishop was a staunch defender of both), which had forced the archbishop to resign as the king's chancellor in 1384, now was corroding his ecclesiastical position. In 1393, as Zwicker was in the midst of his inquisitorial activity in northeastern Germany, the archbishop's conflict with the king reached its peak, leading to the imprisonment and murder of the archbishop's vicar-general, Jan of Pomuk; in April of that year Jan of Jenštejn left Prague to seek justice from the pope in Rome and later—having found little support from the Holy See—became embroiled in baronial rebellion against the king.[102]

Zwicker's search for a new patron outside of the Luxemburg sphere of influence presented a challenge as well as an opportunity to create new inquisitorial networks. Austria, ruled by the Habsburg dukes and home to robust and long-standing Waldensian communities, presented the inquisitor with a chance to recreate his previous success in Brandenburg and

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[102] Deane, *History of Medieval Heresy and Inquisition*, 255-56; Thomas, *Anne's Bohemia*, 128.

Pomerania. Writing before the commencement of this anti-heretical campaign, Zwicker optimistically predicted that about a thousand men and women were to be converted in Austria and Hungary, further containing the Waldensian threat he himself described as the greatest heresy of his time.[103] It is likely that prior to his permanent move to Austria, Zwicker approached Duke Albert III and secured his support for the persecution. In this situation, as it appears from the political background of the inquisition, support from the bishop of Passau was of secondary importance: the bishop, Georg of Hohenlohe (r. 1389-1423), whose diocese included the capital, Vienna, was elected because of his pro-Habsburg allegiance.[104] The diocese of Passau, which spanned parts of Habsburg Austria and Wittelsbach Bavaria, was the center of a struggle between two rival bishops, each allied with one of the opposing dynasties. Given the political climate, it is likely that the pro-Habsburg bishop would support anything approved by the duke.

Unfortunately for Zwicker, his plan for enjoying the support of Albert III was not to be: on August 29, 1395 the duke died, leaving behind a succession conflict between his son, Albert IV, and his nephew, William. Political disarray, described by chroniclers as a “great division” or even a “schism,” complicated Zwicker’s position and spurred him into action. The likelihood of his anti-Waldensian campaign ever commencing depended on Habsburg favor. Moreover, the Waldensians in Austria were evidently more willing to defend their faith and demonstrated more violent resistance than their Baltic co-religionists. To Zwicker—according to the view he expressed in a letter addressed to the clergy and nobility of Austria—the rise in Waldensian resistance was directly connected to the political crisis.[105] If not stopped, the heretics, whom the

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[103] Zwicker, *Cum dormirent homines,* 281E
[104] Schmidt, “Georg von Hohenlohe,” 560-61.
[105] Modestin, “The Anti-Heretical Treatise,” 217-18.

inquisitor portrayed as murderously violent and seditious, threatened to overrun the entire duchy.[106]

It is unlikely that Zwicker's missive had any effect on the dynastic crisis, but by the beginning of winter the competitors for the ducal crown came to a peaceful agreement. The earliest evidence of direct orders from Albert IV in support of Zwicker's inquisition appear only in 1397; it is not unlikely that the inquisitor spent 1395-96 working on his treatise *Cum dormirent homines* or studying anti-Waldensian texts at the Benedictine library at Garsten, his Austrian base of operations. Unfortunately, although Zwicker chose Garsten as a repository for the Austrian inquisitorial records, they disappeared in the sixteenth century and—aside from a few brief interrogation reports—there is little evidence that can shed light on the details of Zwicker's inquisition in and around Steyr. It does appear, however, that in Austria Zwicker became more willing to subdue heresy with heavier penalties; perhaps in response to a better-organized Waldensian resistance, at least a hundred individuals were sent to the stake.[107]

It is also likely that the delay in Zwicker's launching of an inquisition in Upper Austria provided him with time to write his *magnum opus*, the treatise *Cum dormirent homines*. As Peter Biller demonstrates, during his work on the treatise Zwicker consulted a number of texts by and about Waldensians kept in the monastic library at Garsten, which was the inquisitor's residence between 1395 and 1400. The monastery at Garsten has long since disappeared, but Biller's analysis demonstrates that during his stay Zwicker had access to at least three documents written by Waldensians themselves: a text on Waldensian history called the *Book of the Elect* (*Liber Electorum*), a letter from Waldensians in Italy to their Austrian brothers, and a letter penned by a

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[106] Zwicker, "Bericht," 146. I discuss Zwicker's letter in a greater detail in Chapter Three.

[107] *Österreichische Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften*, 221: "…darumb hernach mer denn hundert keczer ze Steyr wurden verprennet."

former Waldensian minister, who converted in the 1370s. In addition, the Garsten library contained an anti-heretical polemic by Moneta of Cremona, which served as an important model for Zwicker's own treatise. [108] These two important sources of textual knowledge about the Waldensians—one sympathetic and the other hostile—lent Zwicker's work its complexity, as he attempted to reconcile them with each other and with his own inquisitorial experience. Zwicker used other anti-heretical tracts, namely the *De inquisitio hereticorum* by the pseudo-David of Augsburg and another anti-heretical treatise attributed to Reinerius Sacchoni, but better known in current historiography as the *Passau Anonymous*. While we do not know if there were copies of these at Garsten, both texts definitely existed in other monastic libraries in Upper Austria and therefore were within Zwicker's reach.[109]

The inquisitor's affiliation with the Benedictine abbey did not merely provide him with a rich library and shelter (although both were clearly important to an itinerant persecutor). The list of surviving manuscripts of *Cum dormirent homines*, as well as of Zwicker's procedural manual known as the *Processus Petri*, demonstrates that a large number of manuscripts of his works were held in Benedictine houses in southern regions of the Empire.[110] This strongly suggests that the inquisitor used Garsten as a point of entry into a vast network of Benedictine houses in Central and Eastern Europe. Using the Benedictine network as a way of publishing his treatise demonstrates that the inquisitor was approaching his task strategically. Although his position as a provincial of the German Celestines likely made him welcome at Garsten (Celestines were an

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[108] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 271-73. Biller's conclusion that Zwicker did indeed peruse the *Liber Electorum* at Garsten is based on a unique variant reading from that manuscript, which Zwicker reproduced in *Cum dormirent homines*. The Garsten manuscripts of the *Liber Electorum*, along with the two letters, are now in Linz, Studienbibliothek, MS 292, 2r-11r. Moneta's anti-heretical treatise is now in Linz, Studienbibliothek, MS 296.

[109] Biller, *The Waldenses*, 272.

[110] Modestin, "The Anti-Waldensian Treatise," 223-24. For a catalog of the extant manuscripts, see Biller, *The Waldenses*, 264-69.

offshoot of the Benedictine Order), in 1397 he improved his position further by joining the prayer community at Gleink, Garsten's daughter-house in Steyr. Similarly, in Enns, another focus of his inquisitorial activity in the later 1390s, Zwicker probably established friendly relations with the nearby house of Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine at St. Florian, which may have served as yet another venue for publishing his work. It is particularly notable that the library at St. Florian contains not only manuscripts of *Cum dormirent homines* and *Processus Petri* (including the list of the *magistri* converted in 1391), but also the sole copy of Zwicker's brief diagrammatic exposition of the Lord's Prayer (which presumably did not receive as wide a circulation within the Augustinian network as the two other texts).[111]

Limited records do not allow us to look into the Zwicker's mode of operation in Austria, but surviving interrogation records and the presence of Zwicker's *Processus Petri* in Austrian archives suggest that the inquisitor employed similar methods to those he had used in Brandenburg and Pomerania. As in his earlier investigations, Zwicker employed the same list of questions to be put to an interrogated subject. One of the surviving interrogation guides used by Zwicker mentions the bishop of Passau in its oath formula, which suggests that it has been adapted for use in Upper Austria.[112] As he had in the north of the Empire, Zwicker also relied on a network of local helpers and assistants. Zwicker's associate in Steyr was the parish priest of that town, Frederick, who (like Nicholas of Wartenberg in Brandenburg) likely provided Zwicker not only with shelter, but also with local knowledge.[113] Yet another participant in the inquisition, Stephan Lamp, served as Zwicker's notary in 1395, before becoming a parish priest in Gutau

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[111] Sankt Florian Stiftbibliothek, XI 234, fols. 84ra-92vb (*Processus Petri*), 93ra-112rb (*Cum Dormirent Homines*). Exposition on Lord's Prayer: Sankt Florian Stiftbibliothek, XI 96, fols. 298r-299r.

[112] The document is held at the Seitenstetten Abbey, Lower Austria. Kurze, *Quellen*, 75.

[113] It is very likely that Frederick was the parish priest mentioned in Zwicker's 1395 letter to the dukes of Austria, whose shed was burned by local Waldensians in revenge for his involvement in the impending inquisition. Zwicker, "Bericht des Inquisitors Petrus," 250.

(Upper Austria) and an inquisitor in the early decades of the fifteenth century.[114] Thus, Zwicker's activity in Upper Austria helped to establish an inquisitorial network in that region that outlasted the inquisitor himself.

Even more crucially, the inquisitor remained in contact with the Waldensian masters he had converted earlier in the decade. Whether he used them for information about specific Waldensian beliefs or for their knowledge of the location of heretical communities is not clear, but the previously mentioned former Waldensian minister and now Catholic canon, Nicholas Gottschalk from Brandenburg, appears in Zwicker's records from a trial he held in Vienna in 1404.[115] It is likely that the inquisitor and his informant remained in contact throughout the 1390s and beyond. There might have been other similar informants, like those consulted by Martin of Amberg in 1396, but their names are absent from the records.

As the decade of anti-Waldensian persecutions in German-speaking Central Europe drew to a close, Peter Zwicker, once again re-united, at least temporarily, with his earlier associate Martin of Amberg, shifted his inquisitorial attention to the kingdom of Hungary. In the final four years of his activity, Zwicker pursued Waldensians in Tyrnau (modern Trnava, Slovakia; fall of 1400) and in Ödenburg (Sopron, Hungary; winter of 1401). In both towns Zwicker's targets were exclusively Waldensian and, as far as it is possible to ascertain from their names, ethnically German, which suggests that Waldensianism in Eastern Europe was introduced primarily by German-speaking colonists. Although a detailed analysis of Zwicker's inquisitions in Hungary is complicated by lack of sources and lies beyond the scope of this study, one has to point out that his attention to the Waldensian communities there was also likely prompted by the geographic origins of converted *magistri* from the early 1390s. At least three Waldensian preachers

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[114] Segl, "Die Waldenser im Österreich," 182; Haupt, *Waldenserthum und Inquisition*, 93.

[115] Neumann, *České sekty*, 6*.

converted c. 1391 originated in Hungary. One of them, Jakob is described as “now [living] in Buda,” which likely informed Zwicker’s decision to pursue Waldensians there.[116]

Conclusions

As I have demonstrated in this chapter, despite the fact that Germany’s political fragmentation in the later fourteenth century precluded any coordinated attempts to persecute heresy, the itinerant inquisitors were able to construct networks that allowed them to operate successfully. It is important to analyze the inquisitions of the 1390s as a result of a network of affiliations, political loyalties, patronage, and influence. A network-oriented approach helps to place the anti-Waldensian persecutions within a framework that explains the mobility of both persecutors and some of their victims. Indeed, this mobility, shaped and enabled by trade routes, contacts between cities, ecclesiastical and dynastic networks, as well as flows of information, allows us to approach an explanation for the sudden intensification of inquisitorial activity in German-speaking Central and Eastern Europe. The overlap between the two networks, caused by the betrayal of Waldensian communities by renegade ministers, enabled the inquisitors to unleash a chain of unprecedented persecutions during the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century. The information provided by the converted masters allowed the inquisitors to conduct inquisitions in distant parts of the Empire. Moreover, the existence of semi-formal networks of influence that connected upper echelons of the Church in the German-speaking lands to the Luxemburg court in Prague guided the inquisitor’s choice of the communities to persecute. Two out of our three itinerant inquisitors active during the decade had strong ties to Prague, either to the imperial court or to the archbishop in that city. These ties provided the inquisitors with an additional source of authority and underpinned their activity. For example,

[116] “Item Jacobus, qui jam est Budae in Ungaria.” Döllinger, *Beiträge*, 330.

the bishop of Cammin's role at the imperial court likely influenced Peter Zwicker's decision to conduct his first inquisition in that diocese. Competing or parallel networks of patronage, moreover, provided Peter Zwicker and Martin of Amberg with an ability to move from the Luxembourg-dominated part of the Empire to Austria and even Hungary.

While scholars have posited that the wave of anti-Waldensian campaigns was triggered by a large number of Waldensian *magistri* converting to Catholicism and becoming sources of information for the inquisitors, this chapter demonstrates that these converts were more than a one-time source of information. Surviving evidence suggests that they remained in contact with the inquisitors and continued to provide information throughout the decade. The geographical location of the *magistri* and their places of origin defined which areas became targets for the inquisitors; areas likely to experience the highest degree of anti-Waldensian activity were also the regions that produced the most heretical preachers (and therefore had well-established Waldensian communities).

The resulting overlap between the two networks (heretical and inquisitorial) allowed highly mobile inquisitors to exploit the scale-free nature of the long-distance Waldensian networks. Supported by a network of associates and patrons, the itinerant inquisitors succeeded in unleashing a period of persecutions of unprecedented intensity. These anti-heretical campaigns, although decentralized and uncoordinated, nevertheless did not occur in isolation from each other. Each successful persecution contributed to the rise of interest in Waldensianism and to the growing reputation of individual inquisitors, aided by texts like *Cum dormirent homines*. Operating on the ad hoc basis and depending on personal affiliations, the inquisitorial network lasted only as long as the itinerant inquisitors who created it. On the other hand, the Waldensian network could renew itself by initiating new ministers and, as Chapter Two

demonstrates, relying on religious self-sufficiency among individual heretical communities. Although severely disrupted by the crisis of its ministers, German Waldensians survived at the level of local communities and recovered some of their losses in the fifteenth century.

Conclusion

Around 1402, as Peter Zwicker was pursuing German-speaking Waldensians in the Kingdom of Hungary and Lower Austria, Friedrich Reiser was born in the village of Daiting, in the vicinity of Donauwörth. Over two decades later Reiser became a Waldensian minister who attempted (or so it has been argued) to unite the fifteenth-century German Waldensians with the remnants of the Bohemian Hussite movement. Eventually he was caught in Strasbourg and burned at the stake in 1458.[1] Reiser's tragic fate and his ambitious mission to find powerful allies for his Waldensian followers lie beyond the chronological boundaries of this study. However, Reiser's biography, reconstructed from his lengthy testimony before the inquisitors in Strasbourg, provides us with a glimpse of Waldensian life after the decade of persecutions that severely disrupted Waldensian networks in Central and Eastern Europe. Reiser's year and place of birth suggest that even in areas where anti-Waldensian persecutions hit the hardest—the Waldensians of Donauwörth were investigated in 1393—some remnants of their communities remained.[2]

What can we glean from Reiser's testimony about life in post-inquisition Donauwörth? First, we know that the city, or at least smaller settlements around it, preserved some Waldensian presence. Friedrich's father, Conrad Reiser, was a merchant, a lucrative occupation in a region that sat on the crossroads of the east-west and north-south trade routes. If Conrad Reiser did not live in Daiting during the inquisition of 1393, he probably moved there soon after, which suggests that the Waldensians were returning to the areas where they lived before the persecutions. Similarly, Friedrich's future mentor, the Waldensian minister Hans of Plauen,

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1 Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 77-84; Cameron, *Waldenses*, 147-50.

2 Gair, "Nördlingani brevis Historia," 620; "Chronik von 1368-1406 bis 1447," 97; Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 66-67.

moved to Nuremberg in or before 1407, also only a few years after the inquisition in that city. Also a merchant, Hans appears to have been one of the few known Waldensian ministers who did not convert to Catholicism around 1391; he was, however, mentioned in one of the testimonies from Peter Zwicker's inquisition in Brandenburg and Pomerania. In the early fifteenth century Hans of Plauen became a citizen of Nuremberg and from there conducted his mercantile and pastoral activities.[3]

The Waldensian community in Fribourg also experienced an inquisition in 1399 as well, but was able to derail it. It is likely that in the context of the relative disruption of Waldensian networks across the German lands, the community of Fribourg emerged as a powerhouse of Waldensianism in the fifteenth century. It is telling that when Friedrich Reiser was ordained as a Waldensian minister, the three ministers who performed the ritual were his father, Hans of Plauen, and Mermet Hugo of Fribourg. Eventually, Reiser himself visited Fribourg as an itinerant minister, which suggests that Hugo's attendance at his ordination was, in a way, a form of diplomatic contact between the distant Waldensian communities.[4] After the mass conversions of the early 1390s and subsequent betrayals, Waldensian followers could only trust the ministers they knew personally. Distrust of strangers and fear of persecution instilled by the wave of inquisitions became a matter of practice and survival among the fifteenth-century Waldensians.

While these cautious tactics likely helped to avoid further persecutions, German Waldensians benefited primarily from the shift of inquisitorial attention from them to the "usual suspects," beghards and beguines, as well as new groups. Within years after the burning of Jan Hus at the Council of Constance (1415), Bohemian reformers and the Hussite movement

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[3] Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 75-78; Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 79; *Die Nürnberger Bürgerbücher*, 56.

[4] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 64-73; Schneider, "Friedrich Reiser – Herkunft, Berufung und Weg," 78.

emerged as the primary concern of both ecclesiastical and, more importantly, secular authorities.[5] The Hussites embodied the kind of nightmarish vision of heresy presented by the likes of Peter Zwicker in the 1390s: armed, militant heretics, who were not afraid to defend themselves against the rest of the Empire. In response, secular authorities across the German-speaking lands began to question the religious and political allegiance of their own subjects, demanding public loyalty oaths and seeking out religiously heterodox communities in their midst.

In addition to being perceived as potential allies of the Hussites, Waldensian communities attracted attention as possible diabolical agents. In 1430, friar Ulric de Torrenté conducted a new inquisition in Fribourg. This time he found a robust Waldensian community, which faced trial that involved both the Dominican inquisitor and the members of the city council.[6] The timing of the inquisition was crucial in ushering in a new target for persecution, the diabolical witch. The inquisitorial records from Fribourg mention accusations of heresy as well as harmful magic (*maleficia*), while the local francophone term for Waldensians, *Vaudois*, came to mean both a heretic and witch to the inquisitors. Fribourg, situated on the linguistic border between francophone and German-speaking parts of the Swiss lands, provided testing grounds for the new idea of a diabolical witch for a few years circa the anti-Waldensian inquisition of 1430.[7] Initially confined to a particular regional and religious context—the Waldensians living in the diocese of Lausanne—the concept of diabolical witchcraft was noted by the Dominican author and reformer Johannes Nider. Nider saw the existence of diabolical witches—devoid of the term's previous association with Waldensianism—as a sign of a deep crisis in Christendom, a

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[5] Cameron, *Waldenses*, 144-46; Kieckhefer, 96-99.

[6] Utz Tremp, "Der Freiburger Waldenserprozeß von 1399," 79-83.

[7] Blauert, *Frühe Hexenverfolgungen*, 27-8; Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform*, 10-11.

notion popularized through the Council of Basel (1431-37).[8] At that same council, the Church managed to reach a compromise with a moderate wing of the Hussite movement, effectively putting an end to this threat. Bereft of their political meaning and overshadowed by the new fear of diabolical conspiracies, the German Waldensians were soon forgotten.

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As this dissertation has demonstrated, instrumentalization of Waldensianism for a variety of purposes initiated the decade of intense anti-heretical persecutions during the 1390s and the early years of the fifteenth century. The inquisitorial campaigns of that long decade—each rooted in its local political, social, and religious context—were nevertheless part of a larger wave of persecutions that shared mobile agents and victims and sent shockwaves across the network of Waldensian communities in the German lands. While the very first inquisition of the decade in Mainz (1390-1393) may have been the result of archiepiscopal politics, it reminded both ecclesiastical and secular authorities of the heretics that lived among their subjects. The ensuing inquests ushered in a number of uses for these heretics, as they began to face systematic persecution. In the environment of weakened ecclesiastical authority, political disarray, and urban strife of the 1390s, the persecutors instrumentalized the Waldensians. Real or imagined, they were used as pawns in a conflict between cities and bishops, as "good Christians" led into heresy by clerical neglect, as dangerous and seditious subjects, or simply as useful polemical straw figures that could be used as to promote orthodoxy. These political, social, religious, and cultural perceptions of German Waldensians came together to underpin a period of intense obsession with Waldensianism followed by relative disinterest.

[8] Utz Tremp, "Von der Häresie zur Hexerei," 117-18; Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform*, 10-11; Bailey, *Battling Demons*, 2-3, 57.

At the fore of this wave of persecution were three individuals whose careers defined the decade of persecutions, even if they did not participate in every one of them. Itinerant inquisitors—Peter Zwicker, Martin of Amberg, and Heinrich Angermeier—whose mobility enabled the anti-Waldensian campaigns of the 1390s, were also a unique product of this period. They were not associated with the mendicant orders, not limited by the confines of a particular diocese, and operated within a network of patrons with various levels of political authority, which made them perfect candidates for following the long-distance links of the Waldensian network. Equally, the inquisitors, especially Zwicker, demonstrated an unusual leniency towards some of their targets. Often they dispensed lighter punishments than traditionally prescribed for relapsed heretics or allowed converted ministers to join the Catholic priesthood in exchange for their information about Waldensian communities. These strategic decisions to be lenient and flexible in their practices no doubt allowed the inquisitors to acquire a sufficient number of informants, whose cooperation ensured effective persecutions.

On the other hand, the freelance status of the itinerant inquisitors allowed them to serve as external agents of persecution, often in places that did not have the incentive to pursue heresy otherwise. Thus Heinrich Angermeier's arrival in Augsburg in the summer of 1393 spurred the bishop's use of the inquisition as a political tool against the defiant city council. Later that year, Angermeier acted as an episcopal inquisitor in Dinkelsbühl, Donauwörth, and Wemding. In these smaller cities he purportedly served as an instrument of bishop's greed by punished affluent Waldensians more harshly than the poor ones. Moreover, the absence of any specific ecclesiastical position enabled itinerant inquisitors to seek patrons at all levels of the political system and throughout the Empire. Heinrich Angermeier's involvement in Rothenburg ob der Tauber on one side of a conflict between the members of the urban elite demonstrates the

political use of the accusations of heresy as a tool for removing political opposition. Peter Zwicker's decision to persecute Waldensians in Upper Austria meant persuading the dukes of Austria and the bishop of Passau that such a campaign was crucial, a task Zwicker accomplished by providing a dramatic and exaggerated description of Waldensian beliefs and practices.

In the *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany*, Richard Kieckhefer concluded, that a sudden increase of inquisitorial attention towards Waldensianism can be most effectively described by invoking a an "ideological—or perhaps 'socioreligious'—factor," especially when it comes to analyzing the motivations of the itinerant inquisitors and their lay supporters.[9] The current study, however, goes further by explaining what this "factor" or, rather, factors were. First, medieval Waldensians became targets of internal re-conversion, part of the ideology of ecclesiastical reform. To Peter Zwicker, rank and file followers of heretical preachers were good (if naïve) Christians, maliciously misled by the "heresiarchs." His emphasis on conversion, therefore, has to be understood in the context of the preaching aimed at the laity of reformers like Conrad Waldhauser and Jan Milíč, who also sought to rejuvenate the church by tapping into the spiritual potential of marginal social groups (Prague's prostitutes, in the case of Milíč).

Another form of ideology, born in the urban struggle for political and economic independence, saw heresy as detrimental to the civic spirit and incompatible with the vision of cities as sacred communes that fused political and spiritual concerns in a city-centric spiritual worldview. In this setting, heretical elements were perceived as dangerous and had to be expelled or exterminated (Strasbourg, Nuremberg) or ritually reintegrated after their abjuration (Augsburg and possibly Bern). Both ideologies, tied to the larger political and ecclesiastical crises in the Empire fueled this decade of intensified persecutions that disrupted lives of many thousands of

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[9] Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy*, 110.

individuals across the German lands in a complex web of conflicting religious ideals, political authorities, and enterprising individuals.

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Appendix: Editions of the Two Lists of Converted Waldensian Ministers, c. 1391

I. "Short List"

Ed. Dietrich Kurze, "Zur Ketzergeschichte," 94 (from MS Herzog-August-Bibliothek Cod. Guelf. 466, Helmst. 431 fol 8v)

Variations are given from:

Ignaz von Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte*, vol. II, 367 (from MS Würzburg Universitätsbibliothek M. ch. f. 51).

Sankt Florian Stiftsbibliothek XI 234, fol. 84va.

Anno domini MCCCCLXXXXI die quarta[1] mensis Septembris infrascripti reperi sunt rectores protunc secte Waldensium hereticorum. Primo Nicolaus de Polonia. Item Johannes de Polonia de villa, filius cuiusdam rustici. Item Conradus de Saxonia de villa dicta Dorbran[2] prope Witteberg, filius cuiusdam rustici. Item Ulricus de Haydekk[3], ex artificio sutor. Item Symon de Galicz de Ungaria, ex artificio sutor[4]. Item Johannes quondam lanifex de Dycchharcz, villa sita circa Chrems in Austria, qui fuit captus Ratispone et portavit crucem de heresi convictus pronunc[5]. Item Conradus de Gmunde in Svevia, filius cuiusdam rustici.[6] Item Hermannus de Mistilgwe in Bavaria faber. Item Nicolaus de Plauwe terre advocatorum, filius cuiusdam molitoris. Item

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[1] "die quarta" absent in Döllinger.
[2] Döllinger: Derbrim; St. Florian: Debrim.
[3] Döllinger: Haydek; St. Florian: Haidek.
[4] Dollinger and St. Florian: sartor.
[5] Instead of "convictus pronunc": Döllinger: nec vero deficit; St. Florian: nunc vero relapsus. This and other variations between Kurze's edition and MS St Florian were first pointed out by Biller, *The Waldenses*, 235-6.
[6] St. Florian inserts: Conradus de Wierczburg.

Gotfridus de Ungaria sutor. Item Johannes[7] dictus de Arena in Bavaria faber. Item Nicolaus de Solotern de spacie[8] circa Veronam in Svicz, rasor pannorum et ceteri quam plures.[9]

II. "Long List"

Ed. Herman Haupt, *Der waldensische Ursprung des Codex Teplensis und der vorlutherischen deutschen Bibeldrucke gegen die Angriffe von Dr. Franz Jostes*, 35-36, (from MS Würzburg Universitätsbibliothek M. ch. f. 51).

Variations are given from: Sankt Florian Stiftsbibliothek XI 234, fols. 87vb-88ra

Nota: Isti fuerunt Waldensium hereticorum magistri et quidem discipuli et sunt iam per dei graciam et misericordiam ad fidem ecclesie katholice conversi: primus Johannes de Wienna, item Claus de Brandeburg, item Fridericus de Hardeck, item Haynricus de Engelstat factus est crucifer. item Petrus de Septem castris Ungarie. isti quinque post conversionem eorum facti sunt sacerdotes ecclesie katholice quorum unus cum alio quodam presbytero et scolare etiam converso et aliis duobus - nomen unius Ulricus Paur, alterius Conradus Waythoff - hy quinque interfecti sunt eo quod de secta se averterunt. item Jacobus, qui iam est Bude in Ungaria. item Nicolaus de Wienna qui prius fuit sartor. item Conradus de Erfordia qui prius fuit sutor. hic post conversionem suam revenit Erfordiam et coram hereticis eiusdem secte reclamavit errorem suum predicans eis veram Cristi Jesu fidem et nullus voluit converti nisi soror eius que fuit uxor Mathei Witenberg pileatoris. postea tamen anno domini 1391 per dominum Martinum de Amberg et fratrem Petrum Celestinum omnes in Erfordia sunt convicti et conversi abiurati et cruce signati.

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[7] Instead of "Johannes": Döllinger: Zohes
[8] Instead of "de spacie": Döllinger: delsacie; St. Florian: alsacie.
[9] "et ceteri quam plures" absent in Döllinger and St. Florian.

item Hans von der Steiermarch filius textoris. hic similiter sicut Conradus predictus reclamavit et revocavit errorem suum coram predictis in Erfordia. item Fritz vonn Stierland, qui fuit prius ein wolnschlaer. item Herman Straus qui fuit filius pileatoris. item Hanns von Steyrstadt qui fuit textor parchani[10]. item Hans von Ens qui fuit faber, item Niclas von Plawn, qui fuit cerdo.[11] item Hanns similiter[12] de Steyrmarch qui fuit filius cuiusdam rustici. item Hanns de Maguncia prope Renum qui fuit sartor et est factus monachus. item Claus de Plawn qui fuit scolaris filius Conradi linificis; hic duobus amis moratus est in domo Margarethe in Wittenberg et manens hereticus frequentavit scolas ibidem. ecce XX conversi quorum alii magistri, aliqui discipuli fuerunt in secta et modo omnes conversi.

[10] St. Florian: parchanista.
[11] St. Florian: "coriator" instead of "cerdo."
[12] "similiter" absent in St. Florian. Two further manuscripts described by Biller list the minister's name as "Hans synnler." See Biller, *The Waldenses*, 235.