“Qui tacet consentire videtur”:
Christoph Andreas Fischer’s Polemical Exchange
with the Hutterite “King” Klaus Braidl (1603–04)

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La littérature polémique de la fin du XVI^e siècle et du début du XVII^e siècle ne fait que commencer à être étudiée comme telle, du point de vue des stratégies rhétoriques et des tropes littéraires. Cet article propose une analyse littéraire de l'échange polémique entre un prêtre jésuite, Christoph Andreas Fischer, et un chefhutterite anabaptiste, Klaus Braidl, qui a eu lieu entre 1603 et 1604. L'échange entre Fischer et Braidl est un témoignage du conflit hargneux en basse Autriche et dans le sud de la Moravie au sujet de la tolérance envers les anabaptistes, dont faisaient preuve les seigneurs de cette zone, y compris celui de la région de Fischer et Braidl, Karl von Liechtenstein.

The study of polemical exchanges from a literary perspective is an important counterpoint to analyses that focus primarily on the theological arguments made by writers in the confessional era of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Scholars in a number of fields, including Germanic studies, dialogue analysis,¹ linguistics, and literature, have begun to augment the work done by church historians and theologians on these kinds of writings.² The rise of Renaissance humanism as an educational alternative to the traditional scholasticism of the late medieval period³ makes attention to literary tropes and rhetorical strategies that much more important when dealing with a controversial literature that was written to vilify the confessional enemy, persuade those in doubt, and edify fellow believers.⁴ Polemical exchanges should be subject to analysis not only for what authors say, but also how they say it.

With this insight in mind, I now turn to a vernacular polemical exchange from 1603–04 between a Jesuit priest in Lower Austria and the leader of the communitarian Anabaptist group in the Margravate of Moravia known as the Hutterite Brethren.⁵ The priest, Christoph Andreas Fischer, lived and worked in Feldsberg (Valtice) just across the border from southern Moravia, a region well known by Reformation scholars as a land of confessional pluralism and toleration.⁶ His opponent, Klaus Braidl, was the Hutterites' Chief Elder, or *Vorsteher* (r. 1583–1611), and lived at their

“capital” at Neumühl (Nové Mlýny) just a few miles north across the border in Moravia. Their polemical exchange was structured like many other such exchanges during the Reformation and post-Reformation era: work by A, refutation by B, and counter-refutation by A.⁷

The immediate context for this controversy is as follows. Both Fischer and Braidl shared the same overlord, Karl von Liechtenstein (1569–1627), a convert to Roman Catholicism in 1600 from the Hussite group known as the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Bohemian Brethren. On the one hand, Liechtenstein tolerated the Anabaptists at Neumühl on his property at Eisgrub (Lednice) in Moravia; on the other, he brought Christoph Andreas Fischer to his primary estate, Feldsberg, in 1601 to help bring his Lower Austrian estate back to the Roman Church. Liechtenstein’s religious motives are ambiguous. Scholars have suggested that Liechtenstein, like many Protestant nobles at that time, converted to the Roman cause to secure advancement through Habsburg patronage.⁸ The appointment of Fischer in Feldsberg may have been a symbolic attempt to show the Hapsburgs that he was serious about counter-reform in Lower Austria despite his policy of toleration in Moravia. Thus the literary conflict between Fischer and Braidl, although ostensibly about what the Anabaptists believed in contrast to the Roman Church, was in many ways a battle over the social position and treatment of the Roman Catholics and the Anabaptists on Liechtenstein’s properties.

“On the Cursed Origins and Godless Teaching of the Anabaptists” (1603)

The exchange began with Fischer’s *Von der Widertauffer Verfluchtung Ursprung, gottlosen Lehre und derselben gründliche Widerlegung ...* (*On the Cursed Origins and Godless Teaching of the Anabaptists and a Thorough Refutation of the Same*, henceforth *On the Cursed Origins*).⁹ This lengthy tract (over 175 quarto pages) was published by the Premonstratensian monastery at Bruck on the Thaya river in 1603 with the permission [*cum licentia*] of Cardinal Franz von Dietrichstein, the leading ecclesiastical magnate in Moravia from his bishop’s seat at Olmütz (Olomouc).¹⁰ In his dedication to Liechtenstein, Fischer notes that the Anabaptists deny the validity of infant baptism, reject secular authority, tear marriages apart, deny the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and believe that community of goods is necessary for salvation.¹¹ He alleges that the Anabaptists take their teachings from “the rebellious little man Balthasar Hubmaier from Friedberg, who was burned at Vienna in Austria.”¹²

Fischer's mention of Balthasar Hubmaier (ca. 1480–1528) is no accident, for he was well aware that the famous first-generation Anabaptist leader had dedicated several of his writings to Liechtenstein's forefathers [*Vorfahren*] Leonard and Hans von Liechtenstein, who welcomed Hubmaier and his followers to the Nikolsburg (Mikulov) estate in 1526.¹³ In a letter to Liechtenstein, Hubmaier had played on the name "Liechtenstein," i.e., "stone of light," in an allegorical interpretation of Matthew 5:14 and 7:24ff, whereby Nikolsburg "is the house in the rock, built on the foundation of holy scripture and shining forth its light."¹⁴ Fischer makes a similar rhetorical play on the name to confirm Karl as the true Liechtenstein:

Just as the above-mentioned Hubmaier wrote his little tract out of presumptuousness, in which he explained his error to your grace's forefathers, thus have I, from a humble heart and grateful disposition, written and dedicated the refutation of the same errors to Your Grace, who also comes from this praiseworthy house and noble stem ... thus I published it in your grace's name, because you shine like a true Liechtenstein, as you have now joined the universal Catholic faith, outside of which no salvation is to be hoped for.¹⁵

Noticeably, Fischer is silent about Leonard and Hans's active role in allowing the Anabaptist heresy to spread in the 1520s as well as his own lord's toleration of the Hutterites in Neumühl.¹⁶ Instead, he simply exhorts Liechtenstein to live up to the promise of his Roman Catholic name.

Fischer also explains the primary reason why he took up his pen against the Anabaptists:

After entering into my parish at Feldsberg I saw this godless mob dealing and exchanging quite often, not only here, but rather in the entire lordship, seducing the poor Christians, taking advantage [of them] and cutting the bread from their mouths. Thus I often wished to deal with them myself, or to have a report on the writings of their religion, both of which I at length achieved, because not only do I have oral reports about their religion, but I also have come upon their writings, both manuscripts as well as printed works, the crudeness of which amazed me.¹⁷

Besides demonstrating obvious concern for his parishioners' spiritual welfare, Fischer is also mindful of their temporal well-being; he uses the common slogan "cutting the bread from their mouths" [*das Brot für dem Maul abschneiden*] to convey the negative economic impact of the Hutterite presence in the area.¹⁸ Interestingly, while Fischer evinces contempt for the "crudeness" [*grobheit*] of the Hutterite writings he had "come upon" [*überkommen*], he nevertheless appears to have gone to great pains to gather information about them.¹⁹

Following the dedication, Fischer engages in an extensive theological onslaught against the Hutterite Anabaptists and exhorts the lords to expel them from their lands. The first part is his refutation of Anabaptist teachings on the incarnation, original sin, adult baptism, community of goods, secular authority, divorce, and the taking of oaths. In the second part he takes up the question of whether the Anabaptists should be tolerated in the land by attacking various customs and practices of the Hutterites, such as their child-rearing practices. He also addresses the alleged damage they inflict on the economy of the region.²⁰ Using scriptural, patristic, medieval, and contemporary authorities to make his case, Fischer modeled the tract on those of earlier anti-Anabaptist polemicists, especially Christoph Erhard's *Basic, Short History of the Münsterite Anabaptists and how the Hutterite Brethren are also Justly called Anabaptists*, published in 1588 and again in 1589.²¹

Fischer's theological attacks against the Hutterite Anabaptists include at least four kinds of arguments. First, Fischer traces a genealogical connection from the Hutterites to the Münsterites and to Martin Luther himself as the heresiarch of the Reformation era.²² Second, Fisher attributes their origins to the Devil, who often appears as an angel of light, i.e., in the guise of a moral Christianity that perverts the truth of the Gospel. He condemns the devilish Anabaptists as soul-murderers [*Seelmorder*]; they were worse than Herod or Pontius Pilate, because if these tyrants killed the bodies of their victims, the Anabaptists killed their souls.²³ Third, Fischer demonstrates that the Anabaptists are divided amongst themselves, further proof that they had fallen away from the truth of the Church led by the Holy Spirit. Finally, Fischer offers reasons why the Anabaptists should not be tolerated, by taking a closer look at the temporal and spiritual consequences of their life and customs. Fischer believed these reasons would appeal to his noble readers' desire to maintain a hierarchical and ordered society. He warns his readers that the continued toleration of the Anabaptists by the Moravian lords would endanger the lords' salvation and cause God to punish the land through war, plague, and famine.

Fischer never aims at a historically accurate picture of the Brethren. In this he is like earlier anti-Anabaptist polemicists. He uses scripture, tradition, and the testimony of human reason to portray them as closet anarchists inspired by the Devil. He wanted to show the Moravian nobles that they were tempting fate and would be punished in eternity for continuing to allow Anabaptists to live and work on their estates at the expense of their hard-working Christian vassals.

Answer to Klaus Braidl (1604)

The Hutterites were less than enthusiastic about Fischer's *On the Cursed Origins*. Klaus Braidl quickly responded to Fischer's lengthy tract with *Ein Widerleg unnd warhafft verantwortung der aller grausamesten / abschewlichsten / und unversschamisten Gotts-lesterung / Schmach / unnd ganz unwarhafftigen Beschuldigungen so Christoff Andreas Fischer Pfarrherr zu Veldtsperg ... über uns Brüder erdacht* (A Refutation and True Answer to All the Most Horrible, Damnable and Outrageous Blasphemies, Disgraces, and Completely False Accusations [that] Christoph Andreas Fischer, Priest at Feldsberg, made up about us Brethren, henceforth Refutation and True Answer).²⁴ Unfortunately, scholars have been unable to locate any existing manuscript of this piece,²⁵ which survives (as far as we know) only through Fischer's extensive quotation of Braidl in his reply, *Antwort Auff die Widerlegung so Clauß Breütel / der Wiedertauffer König oder Oberste sampt seinen Spießgesellen hat gethan auff das Buch so verschieen Jahr unter diesem Tittel wider sie ist außgangen. Von der Widertauffer verfluchten Ursprung* (Answer to the Refutation of Klaus Braidl, which the Anabaptist King or Head together with his Accomplices, set forth against the book that appeared last year against them under this title, *On the Cursed Origins*, henceforth Answer to Klaus Braidl) published in 1604, also at the Praemonstratensian monastery at Bruck an der Thaya.²⁶

The rest of this essay focuses on the rhetorical strategies that Fischer uses to attack the Hutterite leader in his *Answer to Klaus Braidl*. One of the most basic strategies employed by Fischer was repetition, as many Roman Catholic authors felt comfortable drawing upon the history of the Church time and time again to denounce the new sects of the Reformation era. The *Answer to Klaus Braidl* is no exception; Fischer repeats many arguments and examples from *On the Cursed Origins*. The *Answer to Klaus Braidl* is also structured similarly, although its 37 "Refutations" [*Widerlegungen*] are generally preceded by excerpts from Braidl's polemic that refute the original points in *On the Cursed Origins*.

The difference between the two works, however, is that Braidl's response allowed Fischer to deride his foe brutally through a number of rhetorical strategies commonly employed in personal responses. Two such strategies were 1) the disparaging of the opponent or alleged "founder" of the opponent's group to dismiss the rest (a particularly Roman mode of attack, based on the genealogy of heresy),²⁷ and 2) the use of common proverbs to support basic points with traditional wisdom in order to condemn one's opponent.²⁸ In his condemnation of the Münsterites as the precursors of the Brethren, Fischer cites the "common proverb" [*gemeine Sprichwort*] that the Hutterites were the apple that did not fall far from the tree.²⁹ I focus below

on four basic strategies used by controversialists from this era: defense of honour, personal attack, the principle of comprehensive reply, and the use of proverbs and other expressions of wisdom.³⁰

“Ab Illaudatis vituperi, est laudari”: Fischer defends his honour

From the very beginning of the *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, Fischer portrays himself as an innocent victim of Hutterite slander. To this end, Fischer writes a preface to defend his honour,³¹ which had been offended by Braidl’s untrue allegations: “I want to deal with such matters not with reviling and blaspheming, as they did with my book, but with the truth and reason.”³² Fischer also claims, “I have taken it upon myself to refute these [articles] out of zeal [*auß eyffer*], so that through it the Anabaptists may recognize their error and again convert to the holy Roman Catholic Church, outside of which no one can be saved.”³³ The Jesuit’s concern for the souls of the Anabaptists is clearly a strategic move, for after making this claim, Fischer reports that the Anabaptists have no such concern for him. Instead, they

sent forth pasquills [anonymous lampoons] concerning me, they call me in the fourth refutation a devil [*Teuffel*], in the tenth an impudent man [*frechen Menschen*], in the eleventh a fool [*Narren*], in the fourteenth a fool [*Toren*], Satan, a murderer [*Mörder*], [and] a liar [*Lügner*], in the thirty-third a sorcerer [*Zauberer*] [and] a child of the devil [*Kind deß Teuffels*], full of every lust and mischief [*voll aller lüst unnd Schalckheit*], an enemy of all righteousness [*Feind aller Gerechtigkeit*], which I want to suffer and can for Christ’s sake.”³⁴

The Jesuit defends his honour by saying, “I do not regard [these names] at all because just as they can give me no honour [*Ehr*], so they can also take none away from me. In fact, I consider their slurs praise, according to the common proverb: *Ab illaudatis vituperari, est laudari*. [To be denigrated by those not worthy of praise is to be praised].”³⁵ Fischer then contrasts their treatment of him with their own self-regard: they call themselves “an innocent pious people,” “a people of God,” “a temple of God.”³⁶

Fischer generally follows this strategy throughout his *Answer to Klaus Braidl*. There is one instance, however, when instead of rejecting the slanders of the Hutterites by considering the source, Fischer appears to take them personally. In his refutation of Braidl’s protestation that the Hutterites did not seek to harm anyone, Fischer draws upon the passage in II Corinthians 11:14 on the devil disguising himself as an angel of light to show that Braidl’s response is a lie.³⁷ He answers as follows:

You say you desire to kill no one, or to cause pain to anyone. How can you say that? Do you not think or know that one can kill someone in a spiritual way, and cause him pain? Have you not killed me with your blasphemies, as you call me (as to be seen above in the foreword to the reader) a devil, an impudent man, a fool, a fool, a liar, a murderer, a sorcerer, a child of the devil, full of every lust and mischief, an enemy of all righteousness, and similar things. Do you think that such things do not hurt me, yes, even more than if you had cut a wound into me, by which you had stolen my honor? Do you not remember the common verse:

Thorns and thistles stick very much,
yet false tongues [hurt] much more.
Thus I would rather bathe in thorns and thistles
than be burdened with false tongues.³⁸

Have you not caused me enough pain, having released disgraceful and obscene pasquills against me? These were seen for the first time at Kostel and Neumühl among you Anabaptists [and] there is great suspicion that you did them ...³⁹

Here Fischer no longer defends himself on the basis of the status of his accusers, but portrays himself as an innocent victim of spiritual violence.

The "Anabaptist King" and "Dear Claus": Fischer's Personal Attacks

Personal attacks are the counterpoint to the defense of one's honour.⁴⁰ Although Fischer does not engage in much specific name-calling beyond his general denunciations of the Anabaptists as a group, he communicates his feelings toward Braidl in the use of condescending epithets. Fischer calls Braidl the "Anabaptist King" [*der Wiedertauffer König*] on the title page and uses Proverbs 26:5 as an epigraph: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."⁴¹ While Fischer's use of fool [*Narren*] is self-explanatory, his choice to use the word "King" to describe Braidl requires some historical unpacking. The term "king" had a loaded meaning in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century among the enemies of the Anabaptists. Fischer's readers would invariably be led to connect Braidl to Jan van Beukels, the infamous Anabaptist "Tailor-King" of Münster who instituted polygamy in the city and publicly beheaded one of his wives. It is no coincidence that Fischer also mentions Braidl's craft as a shoemaker at the beginning of the pamphlet to show that, like the Tailor-King, he is also nothing other than a common craftsman masquerading as a king.⁴²

Fischer uses the Münster-Hutterite connection through the title "King" on a number of occasions. In his discussion of Anabaptist polygamy and adultery, Fischer

concludes, “was this teaching not confirmed in the work of your first king Jan von Leiden, a tailor?”⁴³ He adds, “didn’t your king at Münster have fifteen wives?”⁴⁴ Fischer also asks Braidl about some examples of Hutterites who left their spouses, as if Braidl should have exact knowledge of all Hutterite dealings: “you, as a king, without a doubt must know about these things ...”⁴⁵ Fischer adds to this derision of Braidl as the king of the Hutterites in his mention of the headquarters at Neumühl: “The noble and strict Lord Stephan Schmidt, at present lord of the Eisgrub estate, reported to me about you Anabaptists in Neumühl, where you Claus, have your royal seat [*Königlichen Sitz*], that you do one-sixth the labour services as his other vassals.”⁴⁶ For Fischer, it was laughable that the Anabaptists had a king and a capital when they were really just a bunch of soul-murdering thieves.

Fischer also degrades the Hutterite “King” by addressing him in a condescending use of the familiar, as if Braidl were an intimate inferior or a child. He calls Braidl “dear Claus” [*Lieber Claus*] or “my Claus” [*Mein Claus*] throughout the refutation.⁴⁷ He asks, “How can you, dear Claus, say with a good conscience that your Hutterite Anabaptists took no part of and had no community with the Münsterite and Amsterdamite Anabaptists?”⁴⁸ Moreover, to defend himself against Braidl’s charge that he wrote from “pure hatred and envy” [*auß lauter Haß und Neyd*], Fischer writes, “No, my Claus, you are mistaken, I did such things on account of my office.”⁴⁹ Fischer portrays himself as one seriously invested in the spiritual care of his parishioners while putting down the Hutterite “King.”

While Fischer believes Braidl may be addressed by phrases that one addresses to familiars and inferiors, he rejects Braidl’s own use of the same familiar language toward himself:

As I read this, your refutation, dear Klaus, I was very astonished that you deal with me in your entire writing as if I were your familiar acquaintance [*Dutzbruder*], because almost in all your refutations, you say “my Christoph, dear Christoph [*lieber Christoff*], look, see, and what you [*du*] do, and similar things.” ... I am not at all your brother, and I will never desire to be your brother my whole life long; our lord God protect me from such a brotherhood, because I belong to the holy universal Catholic Church, in which I, with the help of God, want to be saved.⁵⁰

Fischer, of course, was well aware that it was a common practice among Anabaptists to reject “worldly” titles.⁵¹ He comments in a later work that the Hutterites called one of their allies among the Moravian nobility, Friedrich von Žerotín, by the familiar “Our Fritz” [*Unser Fritz*] against the explicit command of a Moravian statute.⁵² By condemning Klaus’s use of “du” in a passage where he addresses Braidl as “dear Klaus,” Fischer reinforces his noble readers’ sensibility for the respect that must

be accorded to those of higher status while also putting Braidl and the Hutterites down as lowly peasants and craftsmen.⁵³

"Qui tacet consentire videtur": No comprehensive reply from Braidl

As Thomas Gloning notes, one of the key principles at work in polemical controversies is the "principle of comprehensive reply," whereby "each and every point that an author made in a pamphlet and that is given the opponent as a task (*auffgegeben*) has to be dealt with sufficiently in the opponent's counter-pamphlet."⁵⁴ Fischer is no stranger to this tactic, as he attacks Braidl a number of times for not answering all of his refutations. It is perhaps his favourite way to show that Braidl and the Hutterites are guilty of what he wrote about them in *On the Cursed Origins*:

In my previous book written against you, did I not in the sixth chapter give five arguments from holy scripture that Christ had taken true flesh? But where do you think this argument is in your refutation? In the seventh chapter did I not offer six arguments with which I proved that the little children are burdened with original sin? Where do you refute it? In the eighth chapter did I not demonstrate in eight reasons that the little children are to be baptized? In which place did you overturn this? In the ninth chapter did I not offer six arguments that you do wrong when you rebaptize one who has already been baptized? Where did you give me an answer to this? In the twelfth chapter did I not show with eight fundamental reasons that Christ was truly in the venerable sacrament? Why are you silent about all this?⁵⁵

Fischer continues this barrage of rhetorical questions throughout *On the Cursed Origins*, damning the Hutterites for their silence on the most basic truths of the Christian faith. He writes: "do you not know the legal rule that goes as follows? *Qui tacet consentire videtur*⁵⁶ ["he who is silent seems to agree"]. And this is the same interpretation: *maxime cum possit contradicere*. If you were able to answer one article, why not all of them? But because you have not done this, thus you are responsible for the unanswered articles. You see, my Claus, you trap yourself in your own words."⁵⁷ Fischer interprets Braidl's choice to refute only a select set of refutations as a sign of victory for the Roman Church.⁵⁸

Dodging tolls at night: Fischer's comprehensive reply

If Fischer repeatedly accuses Braidl of not answering his charges and holds it forth as proof of the falseness of Hutterite belief and practice, he also makes sure he answers Braidl's refutations quite thoroughly. Indeed, his answers usually give specific

examples to prove his points. Fischer's eighteenth refutation of the Hutterites begins as follows: "As I have accused that they cheat⁵⁹ the people, seduce, and desire to eradicate Christendom, they refute it as follows: "That is in no way so, and will not be proven, and why should we wield the sword without reason?"⁶⁰ Because Fischer cannot prove that the pacifist Hutterites themselves took up the sword to destroy Christian society, Fischer insists that the Hutterites are waiting for their chance to rise up like the Münsterites.⁶¹ He cites the legal maxim "*Qui tacet consentire videtur*" again to condemn Braidl's silence on the issue of cheating and gives several examples of how the Anabaptists cheat the people.⁶² Fischer's first example is worth citing, not only for its specificity and rhetorical flair, but also because it shows the kinds of practical issues that Fischer connects to his theological arguments about the deceitful nature of heresy:

In October of 1603 the Anabaptists who live in Nikolsburg bought wine at Liechtenwart and took it home in three wagons. But because Feldsberg is on the border between Moravia and Austria, one has to give the additional surcharge [*auffschlag*].... But these, so that they would not have to hand it over, rode very late and very quietly around Feldsberg, did not register with the officer [*Auffschläger*], and they thought they had really deceived the Christians. But the little thing was soon revealed, and someone hurried after them, so that they had to turn the wagon around and come back, and they remained an entire day at the officer's house. Claus, if you do not call that cheating, I really don't know what cheating is. I have the testimony of the entire town of Feldsberg, so it is not to be denied.⁶³

Fischer dismisses the potential objection that the wagon-driver did not know about the surcharge on the grounds that people had seen him travel through the area several times before. He then cites a similar incident from February 4, 1604 involving three wagons loaded with iron going from Vienna to Kostel (an estate belonging to the Žerotín family).⁶⁴ When the Hutterites again tried to cheat the toll-man on their way back to Moravia, they were fined 24 thalers as a penalty.⁶⁵

Fischer, however, goes beyond the claim that the Hutterites cheat the local people out of temporal goods. He says, "you not only desire to seduce and cheat their bodies, but also their souls through your false prophets."⁶⁶ He claims that some Feldsbergers, "Georg Tiffenbeck, Hans Opuss, and many other unmarried [*ledige*] people" told him that the Hutterites tried to recruit them.⁶⁷ Second, while the Hutterites commonly celebrated their fallen missionaries as martyrs, Fischer celebrates their capture and death.⁶⁸ He presents a list of such men and their punishment: Caspar Tauber, decapitated at Vienna and then burned; Georg Wagner, burned at Munich in 1527; Hansel Schmidt, executed at Aach at only twelve years old; Hans Müssel, burned in 1571 at Warthausen in Swabia, Wolf Binder, beheaded

at Scharding in Bavaria; Jacob Mandel and Heinrich Summer, drowned at Baden in Switzerland in 1582. Fischer claims that they are not martyrs at all, because, according to Matthew 5:10, they did not suffer for righteousness' sake.⁶⁹ In other words, Fischer goes out of his way to make a case that the Hutterites cheat the people out of both worldly goods and services, and eternal life—especially their own followers. He turns Braidl's succinct denial into a detailed refutation of the cheating practices of the Hutterites.

Fischer makes his case against Braidl more than once using this same kind of comprehensive reply. Many of his reasons deal with the alleged adultery of the Brethren, while others bolster his attack against the wealth and favoured status of the Hutterites. In response to Braidl's contention that soldiers consumed over 5800 gulden worth of Hutterite goods in the year 1602, to refute Fischer's claim that the Brethren do not pay war taxes, Fischer cites several counter-examples of recent memory: for example, the “Merßburgische Regiment, within only a few days here in Feldsburg in the little city, consumed 2500 gulden worth of wine, flesh, and oats” in 1599, and “the Altheimische Regiment, within fifteen days, consumed 4348 gulden only in flesh, wine, and oats” in 1603.⁷⁰ Fischer asks Braidl, “where, at the same time, was there one soldier among you, [and] which regiment did you house?”⁷¹ Fischer adds, “if we see it in the cold light of day, it will be found that where you Anabaptists have to house one soldier, we Christians have to house ten or more, according to that proportion.”⁷² As in the eighteenth refutation, Fischer lambasts Braidl in a detailed rejoinder to Braidl's short response—or at least what Fischer gives us of that response. Overall, Fischer's comprehensive replies may have been more effective than his more general theological claims in *On the Cursed Origins*. At the very least, the local lords who read the *Answer to Klaus Braidl* had more specific examples of the Hutterites' alleged selfishness and treachery to keep in mind for the next meeting of the Moravian Diet.

“Do you not know the common proverb?”: Fischer's use of proverbs and other expressions of wisdom

Sixteenth-century authors were quite fond of using common proverbs, or *Sprichwörter*, as well as legal and philosophical maxims to help make their points. These sayings were brief, easily remembered expressions of a kind of shared wisdom among members of an ordered society.⁷³ While Fischer uses these expressions in all of his polemics against the Hutterites, here he deploys them most effectively. After all, Braidl's *Refutation and True Answer* allows him to demonstrate Braidl's

apparent lack of knowledge about the most basic truths of life by asking sarcastic questions such as “Do you not know the common proverb?” [*Weist du nicht das gemeine Sprichwort*]. Fischer portrays himself and his noble readers as members of a shared culture of letters and wisdom while caricaturing Braidl and the Hutterites as ignorant fools.

I have already given several examples of Fischer’s use of these kinds of expressions above in the service of my other arguments. First, Fischer cites the proverb “the apple that did not fall far from the tree” in both Latin and German [*Nec procula a proprio stipite poma cadunt: Der Apffel fällt nich weit von Stam*] to show that the Hutterites were the true heirs of the Münsterites.⁷⁴ He follows this up by saying that it would be “a great wonder” if “this proverb should err for the first time with respect to you,”⁷⁵ thus reinforcing the traditional wisdom of the proverb as it applied to the genealogy of the Hutterites. Second, Fischer uses the maxim “To be denigrated by those not worthy of praise is to be praised” [*Ab illaudatis vituperari, est laudari*] to defend his honour against the name-calling Hutterites; he also deploys the “common verse” [*gemeinen Verß*] about thorns and false tongues to make the opposite point. Finally, Fischer uses the legal maxim “he who is silent seems to agree” [*Qui tacet consentire videtur*] in accordance with the principle of comprehensive reply. The maxim gives legitimacy to Fischer’s claim that Braidl did not respond to most of his attacks in *On the Cursed Origins* because they are true.

There are several other places where Fischer uses these kinds of expressions to support his points. For example, to support his claim that the faith of the Hutterites is a “worldly or political faith” [*Weltlicher oder Politischer Glaub*] in contrast to a “divine faith” [*Göttlichen Glauben*],⁷⁶ Fischer alleges that most of the people who join the Hutterites do so to avoid prosecution as criminals in their native lands.⁷⁷ He asks Braidl, “Do you not know the common proverb: It must be a cold winter when one wolf eats another? Do you not know the other: birds of a feather flock together [*Gleich und gleich gesellet sich gerne*]?”⁷⁸ Here Fischer uses these proverbs to remind his readers that the Hutterites were a rag-tag bunch of scoundrels who deserved each other; new recruits could not possibly have joined the Brethren because they believed in the truth of the Hutterite Church. In response to Braidl’s claim that Fischer had “come out with a poisonous writing” against his Brethren, Fischer responds that he has simply refuted the Hutterites’ false teachings and exposed their way of life.⁷⁹ He then relies on the “alte und gemeine sprichwort: Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parir. Die Wahrheit macht Feindschafft,” that is, the “old and common proverb” that devotion to the truth causes enmity.⁸⁰ In this case, Fischer uses the proverb to back up the truth of his claims against the

lies of Klaus Braidl. Finally, in support of his refutation of Braidl's claim that the Hutterites are not wealthy, Fischer cites the story of an ex-Hutterite who revealed to the local lords that the Hutterites once hid their treasure in a small barrel within a larger barrel of sour wine. Fischer argues, "this is the common story, as in Moravia as well as Austria, and without any doubt there must be something to it, because one says in the common proverb [*gemeinen Sprichwort*]: 'One has not sucked such things from his finger' (i.e., no one just made it up)."⁸¹

Fischer's use of these kinds of expressions to support his claims and thereby ridicule Braidl and his fellow Hutterites comes out most clearly in Fischer's reflection on where the Hutterites got their name:

I will never know why you call yourselves Hutterite. Perhaps from an Anabaptist who was a hat-maker? If this is so, I am astonished with [your] great foolishness, because I have never heard or read that anyone calls a heretic by his founder, as even you [do], because all [heretics] say and have said that they have their origin and teaching from Christ and his apostles. This is not so with you, but rather you name yourselves after a hat-maker. Then did a hat-maker die for you? Do you hope in the name of a hat-maker to be saved? Because you take your teaching and name from a hat-maker, this should be a certain argument for you that your mob does not agree with the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. Or perhaps you call yourselves Hutterite because you enjoy playing under the little hat? If this is so, you bear your name not unjustly, because you now and always have played under the hat. For did you not capture the city of Münster with cunning practices? Read a little Surius, Sleidanus, and others, and also the third chapter in the book I wrote against you. With what outward appearance do you not seduce many simple and poor people, so that they come to you because they think that if it glistens it must be gold? Doubtless, when you gave yourself such a name, you thought about the common proverb, that one must connect the name with the deed, and to the Latin verse: *Conveniunt rebus nomina saepe suis*.⁸²

This passage is rife with common proverbs and expressions of wisdom. First of all, Fischer denigrates Jakob Hutter (d. 1536), the "founder" of the Hutterites, by wondering if the Hutterites believed a lowly hat-maker had died for their sins. He then playfully connects Hutter's name to the colloquial expression "play under the little hat" [*unter dem Hüttlein ... spielen*], which means that they secretly scheme and plot. Finally, in another stab at the ignorance of the Hutterites, Fischer claims that "without a doubt" Braidl is thinking of the Latin verse that translates: "names often fit the things they are used for."

Conclusion

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Fischer's *Answer to Klaus Braidl* is that we do not know if Braidl was the straw man that Fischer makes him out to be; only the discovery of Braidl's *Refutation and True Answer* may give us the opportunity to find out. Nevertheless, we are left with Fischer's presentation of himself as well as Braidl and his fellow Hutterites through rhetorical strategies common to the controversial literature of the Reformation era. Klaus Braidl takes on the features of the stereotypical Anabaptist since the fall of Münster in 1535. He is foolish, ignorant, and a name-caller, a model for his followers as was the Tailor-King before him. Braidl proves the truth of *On the Cursed Origins* because he does not address most of Fischer's original refutations. On the other hand, Fischer uses the refutations that Braidl does answer to offer comprehensive replies in support of the Roman Church.

Fischer presents himself as the persevering Catholic priest fighting against the calumnies of the seductive Anabaptists who frequented Feldsberg. The Jesuit appears to be concerned not only for the souls and bodies of his parishioners, but also for the poor, lost Anabaptists, who should recognize the truth of the Roman Church. He uses his education and office to emphasize his conformity with the wisdom of both Roman and German culture against the ignorant Hutterites, who presumably do not know common proverbs and legal and philosophical maxims. "Do you not know the common proverb?" is one of Fischer's favourite rhetorical questions. Along with his use of "dear" and "my" to address Klaus Braidl, this question and others like it allow him to patronize the Hutterites by reminding them of their place in the social hierarchy.

Fischer ends the *Answer to Klaus Braidl* much as he did *On the Cursed Origins*, that is, by pointing out the duty of the lords to expel the Anabaptists in order to protect the region from God's wrath. Fischer exhorts the lords to emulate Emperor Theodosius, who provided a model for the local lords with respect to the treatment that heretics deserved.⁸³ Indeed, the rhetoric in the *Answer to Klaus Braidl* is more strident than *On the Cursed Origins*, owing mainly to the palpable anger with which Fischer refutes Klaus Braidl's *Refutation and True Answer*. It seems that with Braidl's reply, things got personal for Fischer, who clearly took issue with being called a devil, a fool, and a liar by those who, to him, were themselves inspired by the devil.

Braidl's refutation of *On the Cursed Origins*, while intended as a defense of the Hutterites against Fischer's "completely false accusations" [*ganz unwarhaftigen Beschuldigungen*], was an occasion for Fischer to compose a rejoinder that

was ultimately more vitriolic than his previous work. The goal of the *Answer to Klaus Braidl* for Fischer was not the conversion of his Hutterite opponent, but the chance for Fischer to advertise and promote his Roman confessional identity to a wider audience and to bring the Hutterites into disrepute among the nobles who tolerated them. Braidl had the opposite goal of demonstrating to the local lords that Fischer was a liar. If we believe Fischer, the Hutterites were spreading their own literature among his parishioners at the time and even denounced him publicly in his own town.⁸⁴

While it is clear that our understanding of the basic theological differences between Roman Catholics and Anabaptists is vital to understanding the polemical exchange between Fischer and Braidl, our grasp of the literary tropes and strategies of controversial literature is no less important. Taken as a whole, the Fischer-Braidl exchange is evidence of a bitter literary battle in the tolerant border region of southern Moravia-Lower Austria. Fischer's literary devices allowed him to do more than just refute the heresy of the Anabaptists in dry, scholastic prose. He deployed them with a flair sure to delight his sympathetic readers, infuriate his opponents, and perhaps influence the actions of those with questionable confessional allegiances like his own overlord Karl von Liechtenstein.

Notes

* All German translations are the author's own.

1. Dialogue analysis has been a particularly fruitful line of inquiry into the literary function of polemical exchanges. For an overview of the aims of dialogue analysis as applied to polemics, see esp. Marcelo Dascal, "Types of Polemics and Types of Polemical Moves," in *Dialogue Analysis VI*, ed. S. Cmejrkova, J. Hoffmannova, O. Mullerova, and J. Svetla, (Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Dialogue Analysis, Prague 1996, Vol. 1, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer: 1998), pp. 15–33.
2. The following books and articles are a small sample of the growing literature on polemics not from a church historical or theological perspective: Kai Bremer, *Religionsstreitigkeiten : Volkssprachliche Kontroversen Zwischen Altgläubigen Und Evangelischen Theologen Im 16. Jahrhundert*, Frühe Neuzeit. Vol. 104 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2005); Richard Ernest Walker, *The Uses of Polemic: The Centuriae of Johannes Nas (1534–1590)* (Göppingen: Kümmerle Verlag, 2000); Jesse Lander, *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and Literary Culture in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Ute Lotz-Heumann and Matthias Pohl, "Confessionalization and Literature in the Empire, 1555–1700," in *Central European History* 40 (2007), pp. 35–61; Andreas H. Jucker, Gerd Fritz, and Franz Lebsanft, ed., *Historical Dialogue Analysis* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999); T.L. Hetteema

- and A. van der Kooij, ed., *Religious Polemics in Context: Papers Presented to the Second International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (Lisor) held at Leiden, 27–28 April, 2000*, with an annotated bibliography compiled by J.A.M. Snoek (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2004); Pierluigi Barrotta and Marcelo Dascal, ed., *Controversies and Subjectivity*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005).
3. For an overview of sixteenth-century tensions and conflicts between those trained in *studia humanitatis* and traditional scholastic methods, see Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and the Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). There are a number of older and more recent studies on Renaissance rhetoric and early modern humanism: see Donald Lemen Clark, *Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance: A Study of Rhetorical Terms in English Renaissance Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922); Heinz Otto Burger, *Renaissance–Humanismus–Reformation: Deutsche Literatur im europäischen Kontext* (Zurich: Gehlen, 1969); Albert Rabil, Jr., ed., *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1988); Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Marc van der Poel, Cornelius Agrippa, *the Humanist Theologian and his Declamations* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Heinrich F. Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (New York: de Gruyter, 2004).
 4. For different perspectives on the ends of controversial literature, see: Miriam Usher Chrisman, “From Polemic to Propaganda: The Development of Mass Persuasion in the Late Sixteenth Century,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 73 (1982), pp. 175–95; Lucy K. Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews of Medieval Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2004), esp. Chapter 5, “Polemic and Performance: The Dialogus and the Auto de los Reyes Magos,” pp. 182–203; D. Jonathan Grieser, “The Writing of Polemics and the Shaping of Religious Experience” (*Sixteenth Century Studies Conference*, October 2004).
 5. On the history of the Hutterite Brethren in the sixteenth century, see Werner Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings: Communitarian Experiments during the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), and Astrid von Schlachta, *Hutterische Konfession Und Tradition (1578–1619): Etabliertes Leben Zwischen Ordnung Und Ambivalenz*, Veröffentlichungen Des Instituts Für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Abteilung Für Abendländische Religionsgeschichte 198 (Mainz: Von Zabern, 2003).
 6. There are numerous studies outlining the confluence of economic and political circumstances that led to the favourable reception of Anabaptism in Moravia. See Jaroslav Pánek, “The question of tolerance in Bohemia and Moravia in the age of the Reformation,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
 7. For example, the controversial exchange between the Jesuits Georg Scherer and Christoph Rosenbusch and the Protestant Lucas Osiander led to the production of nine pamphlets between 1585 and 1589. As Thomas Gloning notes, “controversies of

this kind and style were all-pervasive at that time. The controversy Osiander contra Rosenbusch & Scherer was just one of bulk of religious quarrels that also had important political implications": see Gloning's "The Pragmatic Form of Religious Controversies around 1600," in *Historical Dialogue Analysis* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999), p. 83.

8. On the conversions of members of the upper nobility in the Empire to Roman Catholicism, including the Liechtenstein family, see Thomas Winkelbauer, *Fürst und Fürstendiener: Gundaker von Liechtenstein, ein österreichischer Aristokrat des Konfessionellen Zeitalters*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 34 (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), esp. Chapter 3, "Konfession und Konversion," pp. 66–158. On the strategies of the Austrian nobility to secure patronage from the Hapsburgs, see Karin Machardy, *War, Religion, and Court Patronage in Hapsburg Austria: The Social and Cultural Dimensions of Political Interaction, 1521–1622* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), and R.J.W. Evans, *The Making of the Hapsburg Monarchy 1550–1700: An Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 171.
9. Christoph Andreas Fischer, *Von Der Widertauffer Verfluchten Ursprung, gottlosen Lehre, und derselben gründliche Widerlegung ...* (Bruck an der Thaya, 1603).
10. For detailed biographical information on Franz von Dietrichstein, see Erwin Gatz, ed., *Die Bischöfe des Heiligen Römischen Reiches 1448 Bis 1648: Ein Biographisches Lexikon* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996), pp. 129–33.
11. *On the Cursed Origins*, p.):(* ij v. [* Fischer uses these symbols for the pages in his introduction; he then begins his first chapter with the usual A, B, C, etc. He does the same thing in his introduction to the *Antwort*.]
12. *On the Cursed Origins*, p.):(iij r.
13. *The Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren* (Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1987), pp. 48–50.
14. Martin Rothkegel, "Anabaptism in Moravia and Silesia," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, Vol. 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), p. 169.
15. *On the Cursed Origins*, pp.):(iij v–iij r.
16. Fischer first mentions the Hutterites community at Eisgrub under the "king or leader" Klaus Braidl in his condemnation of the Anabaptist rejection of secular authority: *On the Cursed Origins*, p. Ziiij r.
17. *On the Cursed Origins*, pp.):(iij r–v.
18. On the oft-strained relations between the communitarian Hutterites and their neighbours in Moravia, see James M. Stayer, *The German Peasants' War and Anabaptist Community of Goods*, McGill-Queen's Studies in the History of Religion 6 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), pp. 139–59.
19. John Hostetler has even argued that Fischer posed as a Hutterite convert in order to gain access to their writings, *Hutterite Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 62; see also Fischer *On the Cursed Origins*, p.):(iij v; *Answer to Klaus*

- Braidl*, p. Aj r. The Hutterites were very secretive with their writings, so this may well have been the case. If Fischer did infiltrate the Brethren as a spy, it would certainly suggest that he believed they were formidable opponents despite his claim to the contrary.
20. Johann Loserth argued that Fischer was a particularly dangerous enemy of the Hutterites because he attacked them from an “economic angle”: see Cornelius J. Dyck and Dennis D. Martin, *The Mennonite Encyclopedia; a Comprehensive Reference Work on the Anabaptist-Mennonite Movement* (henceforth *ME*) (Hillsboro, KS: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1955), vol. 2, p. 332.
 21. *Gründliche kurtz verfaßte Historia von Münsterischen Widertauffern: und wie die Hutterischen Brüder so auch billich, Widertauffer genent werden ...* (Munich: Adam Berg, 1588, 1589). Although there were many anti-Anabaptist controversialists throughout the sixteenth century, scholars generally regard Erhard as the first to write specifically against the Hutterite Brethren during their self-proclaimed “Golden Years” (1565–1591). Erhard had been the parish priest of St. Wenceslas Church in Nikolsburg (Mikulov), Moravia, from 1582–1586, which was right across the border from Feldsberg. This work is his attempt to write a true history of the seditious origins, false beliefs, and immorality of the Hutterite Brethren in Moravia. Given the strength of the Hutterite Brethren in the area, it is easy to see why the Jesuit Fischer continued the literary campaign against them that Erhard had initiated in his earlier work.
 22. On the central role of the fall of the Kingdom of Münster in 1535 in subsequent anti-Anabaptist polemics, see Sigrun Haude, *In the Shadow of “Savage Wolves”: Anabaptist Münster and the German Reformation during the 1530s*, *Studies in Central European Histories* (Boston: Humanities Press, 2000).
 23. *On the Cursed Origins*, pp. MMj r–v.
 24. *Ein Widerleg unnd warhafft verantwortung der aller grausamesten / abschewlichsten / und unversschamisten Gottslesterung / Schmach / unnd ganz unwarhafftigen Beschuldigungen so Christoff Andreas Fischer Pfarrherr zu Veldtsperg ... über uns Brüder erdacht*, title cited in *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Aiiij r–v.
 25. It is doubtful that Braidl had the refutation printed, because Fischer probably would have mentioned that; instead he talks of anonymous writings that appear to have circulated in manuscript form (see below). Since Fischer is our only source of Braidl’s polemic, we cannot be sure of exactly what Braidl says. This does not mean that this analysis is flawed, however, because Fischer may simply have been employing the common polemical strategy of misrepresenting Braidl’s refutation.
 26. *Antwort Auff die Widerlegung so Clauß Breütel / der Wiedertauffer König oder Oberste sampt seinen Spießgesellen hat gethan auff das Buch so verschieenen Jahr unter diesem Titel wider sie ist außgangen. Von der Widertauffer verfluchten Ursprung ...* (Bruck an der Thaya, 1604).
 27. Perhaps the most obvious example of this strategy at work is the Roman Catholic condemnation of Martin Luther on moral grounds. For example, in 1586 Christoph Erhard rails against the Wittenberger as a “verlauffener unnd außgesprunger

Mönch / zorniger / hoffärtiger Fantast / verkehrer der heiligen Bibel und deß Götlichen Worts / unverschämter loser Mensch / und grob verlogner Mañ" (a runaway monk, a wrathful, arrogant dreamer, a perverter of the Holy Bible and of the word of God, a shameless promiscuous man and a coarse lying man") in *Der Lutheraner Zweiffelsknopff: Mit angehängter gründtlicher Erweysung, daß Luther vnd sein Anhang, vnseren Herren Jesu Christo vnd den lieben Aposteln, augenscheinlich zuwider lehren, schreiben vnd predigen* [*The Lutheran Knot of Doubt ...*] (Ingolstadt: Eder, 1586), p. Hiiiij. As for the Protestants' use of this strategy, Thomas Gloning cites the example of a pamphlet from 1600 that puns on the word Jesuits [*Jesuit*] as "Jesuwider," i.e., those opposed to Jesus, p. 96.

28. The use of proverbs as pedagogical or polemical tools during the Reformation and confessional age is well documented. Erasmus's *Adagia* (1523) and Sebastian Franck's *Sprichwörter* (1541) are only the most famous proverb collections from the era. On Martin Luther's use of proverbs, see Wolfgang Mieder and Dorothee Racette, ed. *Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions in the German Works of Martin Luther* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1997). For a Roman Catholic use of proverbs in polemics during the Counter-Reformation, see Timothy Nelson, "O du armer Luther ..." *Sprichwörtliches in der antilutherischen Polemik des Johannes Nas (1534–1590)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1992).
29. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Cj r.
30. Here I draw on Thomas Gloning's explanations of these strategies as they apply to various polemical exchanges.
31. Johannes Schwitalla, commenting on his analysis of the Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn Controversy, notes that "viewed later from the angle of the Reformation period, it is striking how often the opponents claim that they have to defend their honour." See Schwitalla's "The Use of Dialogue in Early German Pamphlets: On the Constitution of Public Involvement in the Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn Controversy," in *Historical Dialogue Analysis* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999), p. 123.
32. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aiiij r.
33. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aj v.
34. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aij r.
35. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aij r. Fischer reverses the valence of the Latin proverb "turpe est laudari ab illaudatis," ("it is degrading to be commended by those who are not themselves worthy of praise"); see *A New Dictionary of Quotations from the Greek, Latin, and Modern Languages* (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott & Co., 1860), p. 451.
36. "ein unschuldiges frommes Volck"; "ein Volck Gottes"; "ein Tempel Gottes," *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aij r.
37. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Biiij r.

38. The German is in rhyming couplets:
Dorn und Distel stechen sehr /
Falsche Zungen noch viel mehr.
Doch wil ich liber in Dorn und Disteln baden
Dann mit falschen Zungen sein beladen.
39. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Cij r–v.
40. Gloning writes, “the pamphlets written around the year 1600 are full of personal assaults, personal polemics, and all kinds of insults and calumniation against opponents and their work,” p. 98.
41. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, title page.
42. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Aij v, Niiij r.
43. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Eij r.
44. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Fij v.
45. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Gij v.
46. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Oiiij v.
47. Gloning notes that “pamphleteers use familiar forms of address like lieber Osiander ‘dear Osiander’ that lacked the usual expression of respect,” p. 99.
48. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Biiij v.
49. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Bj r.
50. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Aij v–Aiiij r.
51. This rejection of “worldly” titles is grounded in the basic Anabaptist claim of “Absonderung,” or separation from the world, since the beginning of the movement in the Swiss cantons. In this dualistic ecclesiology, the outside world is understood to be a sinful place that one leaves by voluntarily choosing to be part of the true Church through adult baptism. See the Schleithem Articles of Michael Sattler (1527), in *The Radical Reformation*, ed. Michael G. Baylor, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 172–80.
52. *Vier und funffßig Erhebliche Ursachen Warumb die Widertauffer nicht sein im Land zu leyden* [Fifty-Four Important Reasons Why the Anabaptists Are Not to be Tolerated in The Land] (Ingolstadt: Andreas Angermeyer, 1607), p. Fj r.
53. Fischer was by no means the only one to attack the social status of the Hutterites. The Jesuit Georg Scherer writes that “although the Anabaptists are for the most part peasants, farmers, craftsmen, and common riff-raff gathered together, they all want to be learned in scripture, and they grub around in the Bible like a pig in a turnip field,” cited in Fischer, *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Qiiij r.
54. Gloning, p. 102. Gloning also notes that some polemicists employed the principle of brevity, the counterpoint to the principle of comprehensive reply: “a reply should be as short as possible. Therefore it is acceptable or even necessary to discuss only major points from the opponent’s pamphlet,” p. 103. Braidl appears to have done this in his refutation of Fischer, because in Fischer’s citation of Braidl’s introduction, Braidl claims that it is not necessary to refute every blasphemous attack in Fischer’s “disorderly long writing” [*unordentlichen langen Schreiben*], but only the worst ones, *Answer*

to Klaus Baidl, p. Aiiij v. Fischer's lengthy *On the Cursed Origins* hardly lent itself to a detailed refutation.

55. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, pp. Liiij v–Mj r.
56. Fischer cites this legal maxim two more times in his refutation of Anabaptist exegesis, *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, pp. Kij v, Sj v.
57. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Bij v.
58. Gloning notes that the demand that an opponent follow the principle of comprehensive reply allows the polemicist to "interpret omissions as a sign of weakness of the opponent and even as a partial victory on the side of the author," p. 102.
59. While I usually translate "betrügen" as the more generic "to deceive," here I translate it as "to cheat" because Fischer uses specific instances of Hutterite fraud in his examples of how the Anabaptists deceive the people in the temporal sphere, i.e., out of "worldly" goods in the Pauline sense.
60. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kij r.
61. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kij v.
62. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kij v.
63. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij r.
64. *ME*, vol. 2, p. 859.
65. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij v.
66. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij r.
67. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij r.
68. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij r.
69. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Kiiij r–v.
70. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Oiiij v.
71. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Oiiij v.
72. *Answer to Klaus Baidl*, p. Oiiij r.
73. Wolfgang Mieder has argued that proverbs are used in particular contexts as strategic bearers of traditional wisdom in both their oral and written forms: see *Deutsche Sprichwörter in Literatur, Politik, Presse und Werbung* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1983), and *The Politics of Proverbs: From Traditional Wisdom to Proverbial Stereotypes* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press). As Karin Doerr notes, "proverbs are embedded in a people's culture and passed on from one generation to the next where they take seed and flourish. Though tacitly accepted to the extent that they are almost invisible, if asked, most people would associate them with the common values and tradition by which a society wishes to be known." See Doerr's "'To each his own' (Jedem das seine): The (Mis-)Use of German Proverbs in Concentration Camps and Beyond," in *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* 17 (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 2000), p. 71. There are several collections of German proverbs, including Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wander, *Deutsches Sprichwörter Lexikon*. 5 vols. (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1867–1880), and Edmund Philipp Kremer, *German Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases with Their English Counter-parts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955).

74. Fischer goes out of his way to demonstrate Anabaptist ignorance of Latin. For example, he cites Jodocus Coccius against the Hutterite view of original sin as follows: "*Negant peccatum originale, & pueros sine peccato immunesq; ab omni labe nasci*. Because you cannot [read] Latin, I will put it in German for you: They deny original sin, and they believe that children are born without sin or stain," *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Dj v.
75. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Cj r–v.
76. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Oj r.
77. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Oj v.
78. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Oij r.
79. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Aiiij v.
80. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Bj v. Attributed to Terence, Erasmus uses this proverb in his *Adages*, 2.9.53.
81. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Piiij r.
82. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Bij v–Bij r.
83. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, p. Tj v.
84. Cf. *Answer to Klaus Braidl*, pp. Fiiij r, Sij r; *Fifty-Four Important Reasons Why the Anabaptists Are Not to be Tolerated in The Land*, pp. Jij r, Kiiij r. In her exposition of three Hutterite apologetic writings written between 1593 and 1605, Astrid von Schlachta makes it clear that the Hutterites were quick to defend their way of life against their confessional opponents, "'Against Selfishness': Community of Goods as Life Choice," in *Commoners and Community*, ed. C. Arnold Snyder (Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 2002), pp. 263–68.