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Labels and Identities. Classification of the Moravian Anabaptists in Sources from the 16th and 17th Centuries

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ABSTRACT

The study critically examines and compares the various 16th and 17th century lists of diverse Anabaptist groups reported to exist in Moravia between 1526 and 1622. In addition to the Hutterite Chronicles, the paper analyzes a range of other sources including the documents of the Moravian government and local authorities; polemical works of Sebastian Franck, Georg Eder and Christoph Erhard; but also reports of the Italian weaver Marcantonio Varotta and the Lutheran nobleman Christoph Kereczényi. Comparing the different classifications of Anabaptists as presented in these sources challenges the dominant narrative of Hutterite supremacy in Moravia after their establishment in 1530s. Mapping the reports of non-Hutterite Anabaptist groups reveals that several of them persisted much longer than previously recognized. Through this analysis, the study initiates a broader critical reflection on the historical construction of group identities and their transformations from the early Anabaptist presence in Moravia to its decline in the post-White Mountain period.

Keywords: Anabaptism; Moravia; dissenting religious groups; 16th and 17th century; classification and discourses

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Introduction

In the early 1620s, fragmented Anabaptist groups represented a marginal phenomenon which did not seem particularly viable. Those groups started expanding in 1525, and in the following years they spread to central and southern areas of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, including parts of Bohemia and Moravia.¹ The Anabaptists formed a diverse movement of various groups which started to settle down in smaller villages in South Moravia after 1526. During the following two decades they became known under different names and labels, through which they identified themselves, or were identified by their environment.² Besides the most well-known Hutterites, there were the Philippites, the Gabrielites, the Swiss Brethren, Sabbatarians and others. They were fighting, merging and splitting³ without any obvious external pressure to make doctrinal or ritualistic compromises.⁴

Along with the development of the Anabaptist faith in German-speaking countries after 1526, and later in Moravia as well, both the Catholic and Reformation parties attempted to terminologically grasp and characterize this diverse religious movement. In practice, this was a question of how these “new Christians” would be viewed in Moravia from the official, legal, and tax points of view. At the same time, the Anabaptists were defining themselves using various designations which were spreading beyond their communities. Works aimed at combating them were created with the rise of re-Catholization, and they included detailed lists of dozens of Anabaptist “sects”. All of these contemporary sources co-formed the awareness of the Anabaptists in Moravia for a long time even after their expulsion from Moravia in 1622.⁵

The aim of our study was to analyze the different terminologies, classifications and concepts of that time, and to point out various Anabaptist classification systems with regards to the historical context of the origin of these sources. A comparison of selected early modern lists of Anabaptist groups was made by Henry

1 Martin Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck and the Fellows of the Covenant: The Short and Fragmentary History of the Rise and Decline of an Anabaptist Denominational Network,” *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 85, no. 1 (2011): 8.

2 On the settlements of the Hutterites, see Jiří Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců na Moravě* (Etnos, 2021).

3 The formative years of the Anabaptists in Moravia was talked about in detail by Werner O. Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings. Communitarian Experiments during the Reformation* (The John Hopkins University Press, 1995).

4 Representatives of the Unity of the Brethren were willing to discuss doctrinal issues with the Anabaptists. Compare Jarold Knox Zeman, *The Anabaptists and the Czech Brethren in Moravia 1526–1628* (Mouton, 1969).

5 The awareness of these groups was also geographically widespread, as testified in the work of the French theologian Pierre Annat, active in Toulouse, *Apparatus ad positivam theologiam methodicus* (Venezia, 1744), 369–70, which provides a list of Anabaptist groups, most of which were no longer in existence at the time.

DeWind in his study from 1955,⁶ and it was also addressed by Peter-Claus Clasen in 1972⁷ – however, without any deeper analysis of their significance. Modern research focuses more closely on specific Anabaptist groups and also deals with the formation of their mutual ties.⁸ In this text, we do not want only to compare lists and classifications, but also to reach a more comprehensive understanding of whether and how various classification systems interacted in time, how invariable the group names were, whether they pervaded each other or not, and how the Anabaptists themselves could affect the public discourse related to them. Unveiling the different discourses of knowledge about Anabaptism and their mutual relationships can facilitate an understanding of the connections between the mental concepts of the individual social strata and the confessional parties which were shaped during the 16th century. Nevertheless, we do not consider the terminologies and classifications recorded in the period the only relevant sources; nor are they an accurate indicator of the historical reality of early modern Moravia, but rather a reflection of the period tools used to grasp it. Therefore, we see this analysis of terminologies and classifications as the first step of more extensive research into the forms of the period conceptualization of the group identity of the Anabaptists in Moravia between 1526 and 1622.

Nevertheless, comparing the different classifications of Moravian Anabaptism brought an important finding which problematizes the existing, largely accepted chronology of the presence of certain non-Hutterite Anabaptist groups. Contrary to the accounts of the Hutterian Chronicles, several non-Hutterite sources indicate that certain non-Hutterite Anabaptist groups continued to exist independently for much longer than was previously assumed.

Before dealing with the particular classifications and their historical contexts, the general terminology related to the social organization of Moravian Anabaptists requires some commentary. Firstly, it is necessary to draw attention to the term “sect” (Lat. *secta*, Ger. *die Sekte*) used here to refer to individual Anabaptist groups. This is a term recorded in period sources which speak of “many sects”⁹ where, however, it has very negative connotations reflecting early modern anti-Anabaptist authors’ fears of heresy. In times of the Counter-Reformation, we even encounter the phrase “bloodthirsty sects”.¹⁰ The term “sect”, in the context of literature on Anabaptists, has a long history. It appears in the period genre

6 Henry A. DeWind, “A Sixteenth Century Description of Religious Sects in Austerlitz, Moravia,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 29 (1955): 44–53.

7 Clasen, “Anabaptist Sects.”

8 Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck.”

9 Sebastian Franck, *Chronica, Zeytbuch vnd geschychtbibel von anbegyn biß inn diß gegenwertig MDXXXI. Jar*; (Balthassar Beck, 1531), fol. 264v.

10 Adam Darlage, “The Feast of Corpus Christi in Mikulov, Moravia: Strategies of Roman Catholic Counter-Reform (1579–86),” *The Catholic Historical Review* 96, no. 4 (2010): 651–77: 664. See also note 105.

called “heretical history”, which originated in the early 1530s and which focused on classifications of “sects” providing their enumerations and characteristics.

The use of the term “sect” to refer to Anabaptist groups is relatively common even in modern scholarly discourse;¹¹ however, the term is significantly value-loaded, and it is important to acknowledge the fact that this load can shape the historiographic discourse.

Martin Rothkegel, in his attempt to distinguish between an Anabaptist group and a traditional general religion loyal to Rome together with the Protestant territorial religions which came into existence through confessionalization, uses the term “denomination”. He defines it as a religious group consisting of various congregations in different places which are united by the awareness of a shared religious identity, common practices and norms, and shared decision making that transcends individual communities, but which is more structured than a movement.¹² The concept of denomination is undoubtedly more neutral, but from the sociological point of view represents another “development stage” following a sect.¹³ Unlike a sect, the denomination is a more stable part of the pluralistic religious environment, where it is generally accepted by the social milieu and is itself less exclusivistic.¹⁴ This characteristic does not correspond to the situation of the Anabaptist communities in Moravia.

It is possible to trace frequent movements of preachers and ordinary members among groups, e.g. the Swiss Brethren preachers continued, after a trial period, to practice after joining the Hutterite communities,¹⁵ or the Hutterites adopted Philippite songs and hymns,¹⁶ which could be a sign of not only a pluralistic environment, but also of a less exclusivistic approach. On the other hand, there are isolated reports that newcomers were re-baptized after joining a new group,¹⁷ which does not indicate mutual denominational inclusion. In addition, it would be misleading to assume that individual Anabaptist groups at different times were

11 Jiří Pajer, “Sekty moravských novokřtěnců,” in *Jižní Morava: Vlastivědný Sborník*, 36 (Muzejní a vlastivědná společnost v Brně, 2000), 73–89; Claus-Peter Clasen, “Anabaptist Sects in the Sixteenth Century. A Research Report,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 45 (1972): 256–79.

12 Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck,” 10.

13 Malcolm Hamilton, *The Sociology of Religion. Theoretical and comparative perspectives* (Routledge, 2001), 232.

14 David Václavík, *Sociologie nových náboženských hnutí* (Masarykova univerzita; Malvern, 2007), 46.

15 Hutterian Brethren, ed., *The Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren* (Plough Publishing House, 1987), 469, 483–84, 516 etc.

16 Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings*, 89.

17 Such a practice, as performed in Slavkov in 1567, is reported by an Italian merchant Marcantonio Varotta (see below). Domenico Caccamo, *Eretici italiani in Moravia, Polonia, Transilvania (1558–1611)* (Le Lettere, 1970), 212.

static and included only one type of religious organization; in fact, high variability and diversity connected to different forms of sociality are more likely. Rothkegel himself presents the example of the followers of Hans Hut and other “Anabaptist spiritualists”, who were hardly part of a distinctive and clearly delineated religious organization.¹⁸ The development and formation of the Anabaptist sociality in connection with the environment must be subjected to more detailed research, and in this study, we lean towards the neutral term “religious group” without assuming a simple link to a specific supra-local Anabaptist confession or movement. As opposed to that, the confessional identity and allegiance of individual groups are problematized here.

To analyze the complexity of Anabaptist classifications and their relationships we will firstly discuss the terminology related to the Anabaptists used by the Moravian environment – local institutions and the nobility. We will then consider the classifications formed from the perspectives of the Anabaptists themselves, close observers, officials who at that time came into contact with the Anabaptists both in Moravia and in the area of Württemberg, which Moravia was in a close connection with, and finally the supporters of the Counter-Reformation at the end of 16th century. Each of these groups had a specific approach to looking at the diversity of Anabaptism and they pursued different goals. For a convenient overview of the terminology used in different sources, we include a comparative table of terms. By comparing those perspectives, it will be possible to understand not only scope of the diversity of contemporary views on Anabaptism, but also the extent to which their discourses were interrelated. Therefore, we can ask to what extent the emic terminologies and classifications of the Anabaptists spread beyond the boundaries of their communities, whether they were reflected by their environment, and to what extent they may have formed public discourse in retrospect. Finally, comparing the Hutterite perspective with other co-eval non-Hutterian sources reflecting Anabaptist diversity, we may also learn more about the variability of Anabaptist groups in particular locations and well as about inter-group relations.

The Diversity of Anabaptists through the Optics of Pre-White Mountain Moravia

Pre-White Mountain Moravia¹⁹ offered a completely different environment and living conditions than, for example, the Austrian or imperial regions. The fact that Moravia became an incubator of European Anabaptism is the result of various factors – reli-

18 Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck,” 9.

19 After the Battle at White Mountain in 1620 the religious policy in Moravia changed significantly, as the only legal confession became Catholicism. In 1622 the patent was issued expelling the Anabaptists from the country.

gious, political, and economic.²⁰ From 1526, the Anabaptists were allowed to settle in South Moravian domains, live there for a long time, and create a relatively stable community which did not have to face continuous persecution. Therefore, it could develop differently from the underground Anabaptist communities in the surrounding regions.²¹ For that reason, the Moravian Anabaptists were viewed differently by both the governing authorities and their surroundings as they became part of Moravian society – either accepted by it, or born within it – and interacted with its everyday life. Thus, the hundred years of Anabaptist existence constituted a period of searching for ways to navigate the challenges arising from the coexistence of marginalized and formally illegal religious groups with the majority society.

As a result, the Anabaptists in Moravia appeared in completely different kinds of sources than in the surrounding regions, e.g. in governmental sources (urbaria, land registrations, contracts, official correspondence) and tax-related sources (tax return sheets, tax registers), but also in sources of a personal nature (personal correspondence). The aim of the following section will be to deal with the terminology used in such sources, and to see to what extent they reflected the diversity of the Anabaptist movement and the names of the individual Anabaptist groups. This can give us an idea of how able (or willing) pre-White Mountain Moravia was to distinguish between the Anabaptist groups and how it perceived, or ignored, the diversity of the Anabaptist movement.

To illustrate the perception of Anabaptists by Moravian society, we first mention an episode from a source of Anabaptist origin – the Hutterian chronicle produced by the most prominent group of Moravian Anabaptists.²² In 1533, the Hutterites tried to distinguish themselves from another Anabaptist group – the Philippites – not only for doctrinal reasons, but also because, according to the Hutterite chronicles, the Philippites damaged the reputation of Anabaptists due to their alleged arrogant and disdainful behavior. The Philippites allegedly “refused to greet anyone [non-Anabaptists]

20 Jaroslav Pánek, “Religious Liberty and Intolerance in Early Modern Europe. The Wiedertäufer in Moravia, the Predecessors of North American Anabaptists,” *Historica. Historical Sciences in the Czech Republic. Series Nova* 32, no. 2 (1995): 101–21.

21 Although there were areas where the Anabaptists managed to operate despite being persecuted, their existence rarely exceeded the limit of 10 years. During the time from the first baptism in Zurich in 1525 to the outbreak of the Thirty Years’ War in 1618, the Anabaptists appeared in about 1821 cities, towns and villages, but only a minimal number of them (4 %) exceeded the existential limit of 10 years. The only exception was Augsburg, where the Anabaptists lived and functioned almost continuously for nearly 50 years. Claus-Peter Clasen, *Anabaptism. A Social History, 1525–1618. Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany* (Cornell University Press, 1972), 27.

22 On the beginnings of the Hutterites, see Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings*, 161–282. Emese Bálint, “Anabaptist Migration to Moravia and the Hutterite Brethren,” in *Religious Diaspora in Early Modern Europe: Strategies of Exile*, ed. By Timothy G. Fehler, Greta Grace Kroeker, Charles H. Parker, and Jonathan Ray (Pickering and Chatto, 2014), 137–52.

on the street” and they “neither gave any good wishes” by which, according to the Hutterites, they only aggravated the hostile mood towards the Anabaptists.²³

Even this seemingly inconspicuous mention in the Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren suggests that pre-White Mountain Moravia made little distinction between the individual Anabaptist groups. The identification of the Hutterites with the Philippites almost certainly did not refer only to the “general public”. The entire legal system of pre-White Mountain Moravia viewed the Anabaptists as a homogeneous group and defined its legal status on the basis of this perception. For almost the entire first half of 16th century, the provincial assemblies, where the monarch unsuccessfully tried to convince the Moravian estates not to support the Anabaptists in their domains and to expel them from the country, dealt with the question of the Anabaptist presence in Moravia, and they referred to the group as the Anabaptists with no further distinction.²⁴ Although there was a certain aspiration of the Moravian nobility to divide the homogeneous group of the Anabaptists into such ones “who live together” and the ones “who are particularly settled”,²⁵ it was not based entirely on doctrinal differences between the individual Anabaptist groups, but rather on an attempt to obscure the process of expelling the Anabaptists from Moravia. In both cases, it was probably the Hutterites, and the nobility was willing to expel them from their common dwellings, but at the same time, wanted to keep them in their service. Ferdinand I was rather skeptical about this distinction, as he considered all Anabaptists to be members of one “sect” which was dangerous due to its heretical faith, and which represented the possibility of social upheaval. Thus, he did not understand how “one can be different from another”.²⁶

The administrative apparatus of individual domains only exceptionally distinguished between the different Anabaptist groups. The vast majority of records in urbaria and land registers give the terms “novokřtění” (Anabaptists), “toufaři” (derived from the German term *Täufer*), “křtění” (the baptized ones), “bratři novokřtění” (Anabaptist Brethren) or just “bratři” (Brethren); similarly in German equivalents: *Täufer*, *Wiedertäufer*, *Brüder*.²⁷ The term “the Hutterian Brethren” (*Hutterische Brüder*) is rarely used as well as “houfníci” (probably referring to

23 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 128.

24 On the proceedings of provincial assemblies on the Anabaptists, see František Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer in Mähren* (Verlag M. Hensius Nachfolger, 1935), 7–23; Andrea Štěpánková, “Novokřtění, šlechta, panovník: Vzájemné kontakty, role a strategie pohledem zemských pramenů předbělohorské Moravy,” *Časopis Matice moravské* 139, no. 1 (2020), 3–25.

25 Sněmovní kopiář I. (1526–1546), fond A 3, book 10, f. 142, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia.

26 Sněmovní kopiář I. (1526–1546), A 3, book 10, f. 145–46, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia.

27 Selected excerpts on the Anabaptists from South Moravian urbaria and land registrations printed in Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*, 197–234.

their way of life in common dwellings) and “dům pilgramský” (the House of Pilgrimites).²⁸ Even individual noblemen refer to the Anabaptists exclusively as Anabaptists or *Täufer*,²⁹ and in their correspondence with them they talk about them and address them as brethren.³⁰ Last but not least, castle and bourgeois household inventories contain examples of Anabaptist faience, the pieces of which are called “toufarský” (derived from German term *Täufer*)³¹, “novokřtěnecký” (Anabaptist)³², and “bratrský” (referring to being made by brethren)³³.

What is also interesting is the attitude of the tax system of pre-White Mountain Moravia. Taxes, in various forms, were imposed on the Anabaptists in general (the tax sources do not use any other terminology) – there was the property tax, poll tax, mill tax, beer tax, spirit tax, wool tax, etc.,³⁴ and they could theoretically be collected from all Anabaptist groups. However, the predominant tax in the case of the Anabaptists was the property tax on houses and mills “with a kitchen”, which meant the common dwellings (*haushaben, Bruderhof*) of the Hutterites. Therefore, the question is whether the taxes assessed for the Anabaptists applied only to the Hutterites or all of the Anabaptist groups living in Moravia at that time.

28 These exceptions in terminology can be found in administrative sources of two demesnes – Mikulov and Slavkov u Brna. Cf. Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*, 203, 212.

29 For example, František of Dietrichstein in his letter to Erasmus of Landau (1619) mentions “*verhaften Wiedertäufer*”. Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer*, 135.

Jan Jetřich of Zierotin in his letter to Lev Burian Berka of Dubá (1623) demands for his mill an “*Anabaptist miller*”. František Hrubý ed., *Moravské korespondence a akta z let 1620–1636. Díl I: 1620–1624* (Kramérius, 1934), 366–67.

Karel of Zierotin in his letter to Jan Bejček of Nespěčovice (1635) reports on “*Anabaptist barber-surgeons*”. František Hrubý ed., *Moravské korespondence a akta z let 1620–1636. Díl II: 1625–1636 (Listy Jana Karla st. ze Žerotína 1628–1636)* (Melantrich 1937), 511–12.

30 For example, a letter from Albrecht Černohorský of Boskovice to the Anabaptists in Vlastatice from 1569 starts with “*Brueder Bastl, gueter Freund!*” Hausarchiv der regierenden Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, Ms. 118, f. 141 (printed in fulltext by Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer*, 122). Jan Diviš of Zierotin also addresses his letters to the Brethren or Elder Brethren (“*an Bruedern*”, “*an Brüeder eltisten*”) between 1608 and 1614. Zemský archiv v Opavě, pobočka Olomouc, inventory no. 392 (selected letters edited by Marta Březíková ed., “Listy Jana Diviše ze Žerotína novokřtěncům. Kritická edice listů z kopiářů německé korespondence Jana Diviše ze Žerotína” (MA thesis, Masaryk University, 2009).

31 František Hrubý, “Selské a panské inventáře v době předbělohorské. II. inventáře zámecké,” *Český časopis historický* 33, no. 2 (1927): 278–79, 295; František Hrubý, “Nové příspěvky k dějinám moravských novokřtěnců,” in *Českou minulostí. Sborník k šedesátinám prof. Václava Novotného*, ed. Otokar Odložilík, Jaroslav Prokeš and Rudolf Urbánek (J. Laichter, 1929), 220.

32 Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer*, 112–13; Hrubý, “Nové příspěvky,” 219–20.

33 Hrubý, “Nové příspěvky,” 220–21. It should be noted that also the members of Unitas Fratrum, the so-called Czech Brethren were also referred to as “brethren”, therefore, for each case the particular context is important.

34 Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer*, 52–63.

The tendency not to distinguish between individual Anabaptist groups did not necessarily result from the fact that Moravian society was not able to do so or that the internal diversification of the Anabaptists was not clear. On the contrary, in sources of an administrative nature from some domains (Slavkov, Mikulov),³⁵ where there were more Anabaptist groups, they were able to distinguish between them (if it was considered necessary).

As we can see, there was some general awareness of the fact that the Anabaptists were not a homogeneous group; however, this was not given great importance until it was necessary to distinguish between, e.g. the taxpayers from one area inhabited by several Anabaptist groups (see the abovementioned urbaria from the Slavkov and Mikulov domains).

The Anabaptist catechesis was not given any special importance. The monarch's instructions from 1528 on how the interrogations of Anabaptists should be conducted suggest that their main purpose was to identify the Anabaptist network and to suppress it rather than to start an extensive doctrinal debate.³⁶ Only 6 of the 15 questions concerned the doctrinal content of the Anabaptist movement; the rest focused mainly on the internal organization of the movement and other practical matters, such as the attitude to the government.³⁷ The interrogation of two Anabaptists detained in Brno in 1535 was conducted in a similar way. The questions which were supposed to be the subject of the interrogation were focused almost exclusively on the Anabaptists' attitudes towards the government and the monarch.³⁸ The only truly doctrinal debate between a detained Anabaptist and the authorities, represented in this case by the Prague consistory (which is exceptional, as we do not have evidence of any other interrogation conducted by a church

35 Slavkov = Austerlitz, Mikulov = Nikolsburg. Excerpts and copies of these documents in Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*, 203, 212, 232.

36 A similar procedure is evidenced by the records of interrogations from Württemberg. The decree of the Prince of Württemberg from 1536 concerning negotiations with the Anabaptists poses questions, such as whether the Anabaptist participated in an uprising, where, when and who baptized them, how many other people they were baptized with, and where those people were at that time. Only after that did they proceed to questions about doctrinal attitudes, the Eucharist, and the Lord's supper. And then there were questions about the attitudes to the government. Gustav Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer I. Herzogtum Württemberg* (M. Heinsius 1930. Reprint, Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971), 57–8. Similar questions were also part of the interrogations in 1570. Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 269–75.

37 List of interrogation questions printed in František Mareš, "Novokřtění," *Český časopis historický* 13, no. 1 (1907): 27.

38 List of interrogation questions printed in the Beck's edition of the Chronicles of the Hutterian Brethren. Josef Beck, ed., *Die Geschichts-Bücher der Hutterischen Brüder* (Historische Kommission der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, 1883), 119, n. 1.

representative), took place in Prague in 1528.³⁹ In Moravia, it was always the city council of a royal town which conducted the interrogation.⁴⁰

If we focus in more detail on the anti-Anabaptist argumentation of the secular authorities (namely the monarch) aimed at the Moravian Anabaptists, we find that arguments of a religious nature stand rather to one side. In the provincial assemblies, Ferdinand sought to expel the Anabaptists who “neither the Lutherans nor Zwingli followers and other sects wanted among them”⁴¹ (Znojmo, 1535), and who he called “people confused in faith”, that “dissuade others from the Christian faith”⁴² (Olomouc, 1540), a heretical and delusional sect that “is against the Lord, his holy word, and all the good Christian orders”⁴³ (Brno, 1545); however, the threat to public order and the fear of rebellion were much more important to him, all of which was heightened by the events in Münster between 1533 and 1535.⁴⁴ However, the monarch’s emphasizing of the threat of social disruption also had a pragmatic dimension – if he tried to force the Moravian nobility, who considered the principle of religious plurality part of provincial freedoms, to expel the Anabaptists, he needed other than religious arguments. In 1622, the first mandate expelling the Anabaptists from Moravia was issued, and the primary reason was their episodic work for the main Moravian insurgent Ladislav Velen of Zierotin. According to the mandate, they were accused of delivering correspondence between him and his allies abroad, even though it would have been sufficient

39 Klement Borový ed., *Jednání a dopisy konsistoře katolické a utravvistické. 1. díl. Akta konsistoře utravvistické* (I. L. Kober, 1868), 43–4; Martin Rothkegel, “Anabaptism in Moravia and Silesia,” in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. James Stayer, and John Roth (Brill, 2011), 175.

40 Not even here is it possible to completely exclude the presence of spiritual persons. From the instructions of the monarch to the Brno City Council (1535), it is clear that a selected cleric was supposed to supervise the public repentance of the condemned Anabaptist, Loy Salztrager. Národní archiv, Registra, book 14, f. 151–152.

41 Moravský zemský archiv v Brně, A 3, book 1, f. 186 (Dalibor Janiš, ed., *Moravský zemský sněm na prahu novověku. Edice Památek sněmovních z let 1518–1570 I. Památky sněmovní I.* (Prameny k českým dějinám 16.–18. století. Řada A. Svazek I–1.) (Historický ústav AV ČR, 2010), 280.

42 Sněmovní kopiář I. (1526–1546), fond A 3, book 10, f. 145–146, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia.

43 Sněmovní kopiář I. (1526–1546), fond A 3, book 10, f. 252–253, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia.

44 In 1534, Ferdinand I was convinced that the Anabaptists were preparing a coup in Moravia (following the example of the Anabaptists in Münster), because he heard that they were building houses and forts and buying weapons. Therefore, he asked the Moravian provincial governor to examine the whole situation and find out how many Anabaptists there were in Moravia, where they were located, and what their intentions were. Missiven – Listy poseláci (1534–1536), fond Registra, book 13, 78–79, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague, Prague, Czechia).

to rely on the religious arguments and expel the Anabaptists as heretics.⁴⁵ It is also important to note that the correspondence was allegedly delivered to the enemy only by the Hutterites, but the mandate from 1622 applied to all of the Anabaptists without exception. Again, this tells us that the secular authorities did not take into account the internal diversification of the Moravian Anabaptists, or they deliberately ignored it.

On the contrary, it seems that representatives of non-Catholic confessions and groups, which were active in Moravia in the given period, took Anabaptist diversity into account and considered it an important aspect of the Anabaptist movement – sometimes in a negative sense, as we can see from the attitude of Jan Dubčanský ze Zdenína, a representative of the Habrovany Brethren, towards the Anabaptists. Dubčanský was deterred from deeper cooperation with the Anabaptists precisely by the disunity and hostility between the individual Anabaptist groups. In his work *Ukázání v dvojí stránce* (1533), he expressed “a great wonder why the Lord Almighty has allowed so small a handful of brethren baptized for the second time to have such a rupture, and in the midst of it quarreling and affronting one another, for in the smallest thing one does not want to give way to the other, and they only prick like thorns and drive away others with derogatory words”.⁴⁶ “The Minor Party” of Jan Kalenec was also critical of the Anabaptists. On the one hand, Kalenec appreciated the introduction of adult baptism, but on the other, he criticized individual groups – the Hutterites for their “spiritual pride” in which they looked down on everyone who did not join their community of property; the Sabbatarians for their distorted interpretation of Scripture on the question of the celebration of Saturday; and the Austerlitz Brethren for their fondness for drinking and luxury.⁴⁷ The Unity of the Brethren also distinguished between the Anabaptist groups. In 1559, talks took place between the Unity of the Brethren and an Anabaptist group which

45 František z Ditrichštejna – správa Moravy – císařův a kardinálův patent proti novokřtěncům (František of Dietrichstein - administration of Moravia - the emperor's and cardinal's patent against the Anabaptists) (1622), fond G 140, kart. 139, inventory no. 413, sg. 210/a, f. 113, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia.

46 Jan Dubčanský of Zdenín, *Ukázání v dvojí stránce*, fond G 21, inventory number 542, sg. III/176, f. 119–124 (p. 62–64), Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia; cf. Zikmund Winter, *Život církevní v Čechách. Kulturně-historický obraz z XV. A XVI. století. Svazek první* (Česká akademie věd císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění, 1895), 306.

47 Fond AUF IV, f. 215a–228a, here f. 221a–221b, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia; cf. Joachim Bahlcke, Jiří Just, and Martin Rothkegel, eds., *Regesty textů dochovaných v rukopisných svazcích Acta Unitatis Fratrum I–IV*. (Acta Unitatis Fratrum. Prameny k dějinám jednoty bratrské v 15. a 16. století. Svazek 1) (Historický ústav AV ČR, 2021), 373–80; Winter, *Život církevní*, 306.

the Unity in its sources refers to as “the Anabaptists of the name Austerlitz”⁴⁸ (the Austerlitz Brethren). However, at the same time, a handwritten note beside one of the two versions of the transcript says that they were “the Gabrielites, not the ‘Cohabitors’ [“společníci”, derived from their life in communities]”.⁴⁹ And since the results of the research so far suggest that they were followers of Pilgram Marpeck,⁵⁰ it can be argued that the Unity of the Brethren was aware of Anabaptist diversity, but was probably not able to accurately identify the individual groups. During those talks, the representatives of the Unity asked how many Anabaptist groups there were in Moravia, and how the Anabaptists there differed from other groups. The answer was that they were different from all Anabaptist groups, but they explicitly distanced themselves from the Sabbatarians and “Cohabitors”. The Sabbatarians, in their opinion, were half-Jews, and the Cohabitors had in common not only property, but also women.⁵¹

As for the abilities of the representatives of the Moravian Catholic church to distinguish between groups, we observe two different tendencies. On the one hand, in the anti-Anabaptists polemics of Christoph Erhard and Christoph Andreas Fischer, we can see a common confusion between the terms Anabaptist and Hutterite.⁵² On the other hand, there is an effort to take over the stereotypical lists of Anabaptist groups, which we will talk about below. In addition, these two perspectives were complemented by those church leaders who allowed the Anabaptists to settle in their domains which put them in the position of government – typically František of Dietrichstein (the Bishop of Olomouc and at the same time the owner of the Mikulov domain),⁵³ and Barbora of Sovinec (the Abbess of St. Thomas’s Abbey in Brno and at the same time the owner of the Hustopeče domain).⁵⁴ Neither their terminology nor that of the administration apparatus in

48 Fond AUF X, f. 134b, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia; Fond AUF IX, f. 255a, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia; Zeman, *The Anabaptists*, 253.

49 Fond AUF IX, f. 255a, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia; Zeman, *The Anabaptists*, 253.

50 Zeman, *The Anabaptists*, 253–55. Martin Rothkegel draws attention to the close ties between “the Austerlitz Brethren” and Pilgram Marpeck; therefore, the substitution or possible overlap of the two groups in the mid-16th century is possible. Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck,” 26.

51 Fond AUF X, f. 139b–140a, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia. Zeman, *The Anabaptists*, 253. The idea of sharing not only property but also women was later reflected in the anti-Anabaptist classifications by Eder and Erhard, who use the term *Concubitores* (*Beyschlaffer*), see the attached table of terms. Nevertheless, that was undoubtedly an unsubstantiated accusation.

52 For an analysis of the anti-Anabaptist polemics of the two abovementioned authors, see Adam W. Darlage, “Priests under Pressure in southern Moravia: History and Identity in Roman Catholic Polemics (1575–1615),” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009).

53 See Dietrichstein’s letters in matters of authority printed in Hrubý, *Die Wiedertäufer*, 133–36.

54 Barbora of Sovinec, who had to explain to the monarch in 1535 why she did not expel the Anabaptists from her demesnes by the appointed date, in her correspondence repeatedly used the simple designation “the Anabaptists”. Missiven – Listy poseláci (1534–1536), fond Registra, book 13, 248–249, Národní archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague), Prague, Czechia.

their domains differed from the terminology of the secular governments, and it seems that their ecclesiastical rank did not affect their perception of Anabaptist diversity in governmental matters.⁵⁵

To sum up, it appears that the authorities in 16th and early 17th century Moravia made no legal distinctions among the different Anabaptist groups despite having a vague awareness of their diversity.

Emic Anabaptist Terminologies and Classifications

The most comprehensive source of information about Moravian Anabaptists and their own classifications and terminologies is the Chronicles of the Hutterian Brethren, as the followers of the Tyrolean preacher Jakob Hutter, who in 1533 became the head of the new, re-organized community, called themselves.⁵⁶ These Chronicles record events from the arrival of the first Anabaptists in Moravia, through the formation of the Hutterian group at the turn of the 1530s, to their other life stories interwoven with negotiations with other Anabaptist groups full of conflict, or, on the contrary, leading to unification. They represent an emic, carefully-curated source reflecting the process of identity building, specifically in contrast to other rival Anabaptist groups. Other groups, such as the Gabrielites,⁵⁷ the Philippites,⁵⁸ the Swiss Brethren,⁵⁹ and the Sabbatarians,⁶⁰ for example, are thus largely seen through the Hutterite lens, and thus regarded as doctrinally-related groups, but still rivals. In research on Moravian Anabaptists, the most

55 The administration at Dietrichstein's Mikulov demesne is one of the exceptions as described above, since in rare cases they used the term the Hutterites or Hutterian Brethren; however, that was for pragmatic reasons rather than the need to draw attention to doctrinal differences between the individual groups.

56 There are several editions: Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*; Josef Beck ed., *Die Geschichts-Bücher der Wiedertäufer in Österreich-Ungarn betreffend deren Schicksale in der Schweiz, Salzburg, Ober- und Nieder-Oesterreich, Mähren, Tirol, Böhmen, Süd-Deutschland, Ungarn, Siebenbürgen und Süd-Russland* (Kommission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1883); Rudolf Wolkan (ed.), *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder* (MacLeod, 1923); A. J. F. Zieglschmid (ed.), *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder* (Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, 1943).

57 Russell S. Woodbridge, Sigrid Looss, and Martin Rothkegel, *Gerhard Westerbürg, Valentin Ickelshamer, Gabriel Ascherham* (Verlag Valentin Koerner, 2012); Wilhelm Wiswedel, "Gabriel Ascherham und die nach ihm benannte Bewegung I," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 34, no. 1/2 (1937): 1–35; Wilhelm Wiswedel, "Gabriel Ascherham und die nach ihm benannte Bewegung II," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 34, no. 3/4 (1937): 235–62.

58 Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings*, 77–98; Robert Friedmann, "The Philippite Brethren: Chapter in Anabaptist History," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 32 (1958): 270–97.

59 Martin Rothkegel, *The Swiss Brethren: A Story in Fragments: The Trans-Territorial Expansion of a Clandestine Anabaptist Church, 1538–1618*, Bibliotheca dissidentium. Scripta et studia 9, (Éditions Valentin Koerner, 2021); James M. Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren: An Exercise in Historical Definition," *Church History* 47, no. 2 (1978): 174–95.

60 Martin Rothkegel, "Anabaptist Sabbatarianism in the Sixteenth-Century Moravia," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 87 (2014): 519–73.

systematic attention is paid to the Hutterites,⁶¹ due to the nature of the sources, which, in the case of other groups, are fragmentary and allow us to create only a partial mosaic of their activity.⁶² No other Anabaptist group produced a comparable volume of literature in which they systematically built an awareness of their own identity and history.⁶³

However, it should be noted that the Hutterite view of events in Moravia is distorting,⁶⁴ and often presents rival groups and their preachers in a negative light,⁶⁵ or alternatively, as will be seen below, they are completely silent about them.

From the environments of non-Hutterite groups, we have mainly letters and doctrinal works devoted to theological questions rather than to their own history. In contrast, some important polemical works against the Hutterites have unfortunately not been preserved.⁶⁶ This is also the case of a work by Gabriel Ascherham (†1545), one of the most prominent opponents of Jakob Hutter at the turn of the 1530s in Moravia.⁶⁷ Another preserved treatise by Ascherham shows that the names of other Anabaptist groups, as we know them mainly from Hutterite sources, were used also by Anabaptists from different groups. Ascherham identifies himself here as a “servant of the Christian community, excluded by the brethren who are referred to as the Schwertler, Austertlitz, Swiss and Hutterites”,⁶⁸ his own followers labelled as “Gabrielite Anabaptists”.⁶⁹ The tendency of preachers in different groups to portray themselves

61 Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*; Jiří Pajer, *Nové studie o novokřtěncích* (Etnos, 2018) and other works of the same author.

62 As the title of Rothkegel’s work on the Swiss Brethren suggests, there are only partial sources available to us. Rothkegel, *The Swiss Brethren*.

Similarly, about the “fragments” as the source base to understand the work of Pilgram Marpeck, see Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck.”

63 Only a short part of Gabriel’s chronicle describing his relationship to Jakob Hutter is preserved in quotation by Christoph Andrea Fischer, *Der Hutterischen Wiedertaufer Taubenkobel* (Ingolstadt: 1607), 55–7; printed also with English translation in James M. Stayer, *German Peasants’ War and Anabaptist Community of Goods* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991), 168–71.

64 Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck”, 21.

65 For example, the founder of the Gabrielites, Gabriel Ascherham is described as “sly and supple” (*verschlagen und geschmeidig*). Wilhelm Wiswedel, “Gabriel Ascherham und die nach ihm benannte Bewegung I,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 34, no. 1/2 (1937): 1–35: 2.

66 The work of Ascherham from 1542 is known only from the reactions of the Hutterites. Wiswedel, “Gabriel Ascherham... I,” 9.

67 As the researchers believe, this work of Ascherham’s from 1542, known through Hutterite reactions, paradoxically became the basis for the later work of Christoph Andreas Fischer aimed against the Anabaptists like *Von der Wiedertaufer verfluchtem Ursprung, gottlosen Lehre* (1603). Wiswedel, “Gabriel Ascherham... I,” 9.

68 Wiswedel, “Gabriel Ascherham... I,” 10.

69 Stayer, *German Peasants’ War*, 168.

as representatives of “the true Christian community” is a common feature in contemporary sources and is echoed by external observers.⁷⁰

The exact identification of each group, despite the existence of a number of terms, may have been ambiguous sometimes, as evidenced by the example of the doctrinal debate between the Anabaptists and the Unity of the Brethren in 1559.⁷¹ The specific features of individual groups may have changed according to changes in the doctrinal attitudes of their preachers, as shown by Rothkegel in the case of the Austerlitz Brethren and their relations with the followers of Pilgram Marpeck.⁷² Thus, period classifications must be understood as attempts to capture a changing reality.⁷³ From the Hutterian Chronicles, it is clear that the mutual differences between the groups were reflected and discussed by the Hutterites, especially in attempts to achieve unification;⁷⁴ however, the Hutterian perspective cannot be regarded as a reflection of the contemporary situation. The oldest parts of the Chronicles were created only from the mid-1560s;⁷⁵ therefore, their view of the early years of Moravian Anabaptism and its group diversity is necessarily retrospective. This is evident, for example, in the 1528 record of the Schwertler (“Sword-bearers”), the followers of Balthasar Hubmaier, who are characterized as “having the Münster spirit”.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the Münster commune revolt, as a violent attempt by Anabaptists to take control of the city of Münster, took place between 1533–1535. The reference to the “Münster spirit” with regards to the Schwertler as supporters of the “sword” reflects Hutterite efforts to distance themselves from groups which were not explicitly pacifist. This is a strategy that lasted essentially throughout the whole stay of the Anabaptists in Moravia. Even decades after the events of Münster, the Anabaptists were still associated with them, which shows how strong a mark this case of religiously-motivated rebellion left in the minds of the social elites of the time. The Hutterites still had to

70 An Italian merchant Marcantonio Varotta (see below) mentions that among the Anabaptists in 1567 Slavkov “all want to be the true Chruch” (*e tutte vogliono esser la vera Chiesa*). Caccamo, *Eretici italiani*, 207.

71 Similarly, in the case of the Swiss Brethren, it is necessary to reckon with the transformation of their identity, as Rothkegel pointed out. Rothkegel, *The Swiss Brethren*.

72 Rothkegel, “Pilgram Marpeck,” 23–8.

73 The sources document numerous cases of the fluctuation of individuals between groups; however, this is a topic which needs to be dealt with in a separate study.

74 For example, the Chronicle mentions a case when a group of Gabrielites joined the Hutterites in 1545, which was preceded by the clarification of certain doctrinal points. Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 233–34.

75 Martin Rothkegel, “Die Chroniken der Gemeinde Gottes in Mähren: Historiographie und Martyrologie bei den Hutterischen Brüdern im 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert,” in *Konfessionelle Geschichtsschreibung im Umfeld der Böhmisches Brüder (1500–1800): Traditionen – Akteure – Praktiken*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Jiří Just, and Martin Rothkegel (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2022), 397–451: 401–2.

76 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 80.

respond to the fears raised by the specter of Münster in the 1580s. In the Chronicle from 1581, in connection with the expulsion of the Hutterites from Vlasatice, they defended themselves, among other things, against accusations of sharing “Münster” opinions.⁷⁷

It is clear from the Hutterian Chronicles that the Hutterites identified themselves as the followers of Jakob Hutter, who became the head of the Moravian community in 1533⁷⁸, and this identification is especially proudly remembered in the context of Hutter’s arrest in 1535.⁷⁹ However, it was not the only name given to them in their surroundings. In sources of an official nature at the end of the 16th century, we can find other terms referring to the Hutterites. The land register of Slavkov speaks of “houfníci”⁸⁰, the records from Württemberg mention Hoferische Brüder when enumerating various groups.⁸¹ Meanwhile, the Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren mentions a case from 1573 when the Hutterites were referred to by the government as “the Stäblers” (i.e. Staff-bearers), which the brethren reacted to with the words: “We have to bear that name patiently, but what people say about us is not true.”⁸²

This attitude towards the Stäblers may seem surprising, given the fact that they, just as the Hutterites, were against the use of violence. However, the term belongs to the period preceding the independent establishment of the Hutterites. It was associated with the preacher Jakob Wiedemann, who was active among the Anabaptists even before the arrival of Jakob Hutter in Moravia,⁸³ and from 1531 his followers are referred to in the Chronicle as the Austerlitz Brethren (Austerlitzer).⁸⁴ This case of Hutterites being mistaken for Stäblers shows that in the Chronicles the carefully-constructed identity associated with the unambiguous name “the Hutterites” did not always spread beyond Anabaptist circles, where they were referred to by various other terms.

If the Anabaptists were aware of mutual differences, which the authorities largely ignored, how was the diversity of Moravian Anabaptists perceived by other external observers, and to what extent were they familiar with the terminology established in the Anabaptist environment?

77 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 486.

78 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 110.

79 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 146.

80 Cf. Pajer, *Sidla novokřtěnců*, 203, 212, 232.

81 Bossert ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte I*, 276.

82 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 437.

83 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 86–7.

84 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 89.

Moravian Anabaptist Groups through the Eyes of Contemporary Observers

There are two important sources, coincidentally both coming from 1567, which bring a noteworthy contrast with the Hutterite perspective, and which are based, at least partially, on the authors' personal experience. The first is the testimony of the Italian weaver Marcantonio Varotta, originally from Venice, who traveled the north of Italy with the aim of learning about the reformation movement. In addition, he also visited Geneva, the Kingdom of Hungary, and the Moravian town of Slavkov, where he stayed for two months among his compatriots. After returning to Italy, he was interrogated, and in 1568 convicted of heresy and executed.⁸⁵ His testimony about the situation in Moravia contains both the description of his compatriots' lives, and also an enumeration of the local "heretical" groups. Although we may ascribe his explicit outrage over the diversity of the groups, each of which claimed to be the only right one and rejected all others, to the situation of inquisitorial interrogation, his report brings unique testimony. It is interesting that Varotta lists and classifies not only Anabaptist movements, but also other non-Catholic movements in Moravia, where, in his opinion, the Taborites (the Utraquists), the Lutherans, the Calvinists, the Austerlitz Brethren, the Corneli-ans, the Hutterites (whom he refers to as *cappelarii*, according to the occupation of their founder), the Josephites,⁸⁶ the Sabbatarians, the Arians, the followers of Paul of Samosata⁸⁷, and the Swiss Brethren lived.⁸⁸ Then, he classifies the named groups on the basis of whether they baptized their children, which, according to him, was done by the Utraquists, the Calvinists, and surprisingly also by the Austerlitz Brethren. In contrast, the rest baptized only adults.⁸⁹ He focuses more in detail on the followers of Paul of Samosata, i.e. the anti-Trinitarians, as some of his compatriots in Slavkov were members of this group, but he also notices the prominent position of the Hutterites. According to Varotta, the Hutterites were numerous and rich, compared to the other groups, since a lot of wealthy people

85 Daniele Santarelli, "Varotta, Marcantonio", in *Dizionario di eretici, dissidenti e inquisitori nel mondo mediterraneo*, Daniele Santarelli ed., 2013. <https://www.eticopedia.org/marcantonio-varotta>.

86 They believed that Christ is the son of Joseph.

87 Named after Paul of Samosata (3rd century) who rejected the Trinity. The name refers to a group of anti-Trinitarians. More about Italian anti-Trinitarians in Moravia see Emese Bálint, "Heterogeneous Religion: Imperfect or Braided? Antitrinitarian Anabaptism in Italy, Transylvania and Poland in the 1560s," *Quellen Und Forschungen Aus Italienischen Archiven Und Bibliotheken* 102, no. 1 (2022): 56–68: 64–7.

88 "Picardi, Luterani, Calviniani, Austerlici, Corneli, Cappelari, Giosepitti, Sabbateri, Arriani, Samozateni, Squizari." Caccamo, *Eretici italiani*, 211.

89 Caccamo, *Eretici italiani*, 212. To what extent one can rely on the accuracy of Varotto's description is a question to be asked, as in this claim he would attribute the refusal of infant baptism to the Lutherans as well, which seems unlikely.

had invested their possessions in the communities. Any country they came to, it was customary for them to live in one house as if they were in a monastery, both the rich and the poor ate, drank and dressed alike, and their leaders lived “an abundant life and hold in their hands management of everything, on travels where others go by foot with walking sticks, they travel by horse and coach. Among them it is customary that if the members of the sect are wronged by being stuck or robbed or having their wives carried off or any other, they offer no resistance; should they put up any resistance, they are driven away or excommunicated by their ministers.”⁹⁰

A similar description of local religious diversity, this time about the situation in Mikulov, is given in the same year by the Lutheran nobleman Christoph Kereczényi, whose family acquired Mikulov from the Liechtensteins in the 1560s. In his letter from 10 August 1567 to his Wittenberg teacher Paul Eber, he states that the churches in the town and in the domain were devastated and misappropriated, and that his Liechtenstein predecessors allowed the parishes to be unoccupied by priests, because 4000 of the citizens of the town and the domain belonged to various Anabaptist groups, and another portion of the citizens “remained at home outside their flock, they were not baptized nor did they ever want to be baptized”.⁹¹ Among those groups, Kereczényi mentions the Sabbatarians, the Libertines, the followers of Hut,⁹² the Enthusiasts, the Cornelians⁹³ and the Gabrielites.⁹⁴ Neither the Libertines, nor the followers of Hut or the Enthusiasts are mentioned extensively in Moravian sources; however, we can find them in later lists emerging outside Anabaptist circles.⁹⁵

Although it is not necessary to rely on the accuracy of specific enumerations of the Anabaptist groups by both observers, who may have made mistakes, it is important to point out the considerable contrast between their testimonies and the description the Chronicles of the Hutterian Brethren provide. While Varotta and Kereczényi depict numerous and outrageous Anabaptist groups, in the Chronicles, Slavkov and Mikulov of the mid-1560s give the impression of sleepy estates

90 DeWind, “A Sixteenth Century Description”, 46.

91 “*Vero cum tota familia extra gregem illorum domi manentes non-baptisarentur nec unquam baptisari velent.*” Theodor Wotschke, “Urkunden zur Reformationsgeschichte Böhmens and Mahrens,” *Jahrbuch des Vereines für die Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen*, no. 2 (1929): 117–66: 135.

92 The followers of Hans Hut (died 1527) are not labelled as “Huttites” in the chronicles, but there is mention of the existence of such a group of the followers of Hans Hut. Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 48.

93 A group named after the preacher Cornelius Veh, who kept in close contact with Pilgram Marpeck. Heinhold Fast, “Pilgram Marbeck und das oberdeutsche Taufertum,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* (1956): 212–42.

94 Wotschke, “Urkunden zur Reformationsgeschichte,” 135–36.

95 See table 1.

which are mentioned only when some important representative of the Hutterites died there.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the presence of non-Hutterian groups, namely the Pilgramites, in Mikulov as late as in 1582 and in Slavkov even in the early 17th century is independently recorded in land registers.⁹⁷ The silence of the Chronicles of the Hutterian Brethren about rival groups at that time in both Slavkov and Mikulov necessarily raises the question of how many other communities and groups were affected by a similar approach, and how many other cases there are in which the Chronicle does not mention the presence of rival groups. With regards to the findings concerning the official discourse on the Anabaptists in Moravia, it is necessary to consider further consequences that this has. In previous research, official records related to the “Anabaptists” were associated with the records of the Hutterian Chronicle. However, if the official records do not explicitly indicate that a given place belonged to the Hutterites, it is necessary to reconsider the possibility that several Anabaptist groups could have coexisted there just as in Slavkov and Mikulov in 1567. Comparing the external observers’ accounts of Anabaptist groups therefore suggests that the diversity of Moravian Anabaptism might have endured much longer than previously considered, i.e., when considering only the records of the Hutterian chronicles. This hypothesis nevertheless requires further research.

“Anabaptist Sects” in the Anti-Anabaptist Discourse

It is not only in Varotta and Kereczényi’s reports that Moravia appears like a paradise for various Anabaptist groups, even at the end of the 16th century. Even though they are anti-Anabaptist works, which came into existence in the context of the developing Counter-Reformation in the last third of the 16th century, their depiction of the diversity of Anabaptism contrasts with the Hutterian description of the apparent homogeneity of the movement, which was only occasionally diluted by the arrival of some forgotten group of other Anabaptists.

The oldest work that attempts a certain classification of the Anabaptists is considered to be the Chronicle of Sebastian Franck (1499–1543), originally a Lutheran, who over the years inclined towards spiritualism and paid considerable attention to

96 Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 392, 436. As for the situation in Mikulov, according to the Hutterian Chronicles, the Jesuits began to operate here from 1579. Hutterian Brethren (ed.), *The Chronicle*, 469.

97 Urbarial record for the year 1611, Slavkov, fond G 436, no. 382, Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Regional Archive in Brno), Brno, Czechia. Quoted according to Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*, 212–13. Pilgramites are also mentioned in the urbarial record of Mikulov (Nikolsburg) from 1582. Pajer, *Sídla novokřtěnců*, 203.

the Anabaptists.⁹⁸ Franck is said to have been the founder of the whole genre of the “history of heresies”.⁹⁹ Franck characterizes individual Anabaptist groups according to their lifestyle and relationships with the surrounding society. Sometimes, he uses specific designations, such as the “Apostolic Baptists” (*Apostolish Teuffer*),¹⁰⁰ who want to live like the apostles. For others, he only uses an adjective that he thinks characterizes them, for example, “the hypocritical Anabaptists” (*heuchlerisch*).¹⁰¹ In some of these characteristics, we can see a prototype of the later classification of the Anabaptists as elaborated by authors of the Counter-Reformation. However, Franck mentions the Anabaptists in Moravia and specifically in Slavkov; therefore, it is obvious that he was informed about the events in Moravia. In his work we find the topos of “innumerable Anabaptist sects” and the differences in their faith and ceremonies, which would later become an often-repeated theme.¹⁰²

There is a certain similarity between Franck’s description of Anabaptist groups and the one we can find in a much later work called *Evangelische Inquisition Wahrer und Falscher Religion* (1573). The author was Georg Eder (1523–1583), the rector of the University of Vienna and a vocal supporter of the Counter-Reformation,¹⁰³ who counted thirty-eight Anabaptist groups, including four nameless ones, which were only characterized by their strange opinions on the resurrection. Eder’s list contains a combination of fictitious and reality-based items, such as the Sabbatarians, the Stäblers, and the followers of Johannes Hut, who otherwise appear in Christoph Kereczényi’s list and Erhard’s lists, but are not referred to in Hutterite chronicles. In addition, he lists items which are completely fictitious, like “priest murderers” and “bloodthirsty Anabaptists” (see the table 1 below). Some groups characterized by their unusual behavior might have their origins in rare accounts relating to such groups which allegedly occurred on a regional scale in German countries.¹⁰⁴

98 Christian Neff, Cornelius Krahn and Nanne van der Zijpp, “Franck, Sebastian (1499–1543),” *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, last modified March 10, 2025, [https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Franck,_Sebastian_\(1499-1543\)&oldid=171998](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Franck,_Sebastian_(1499-1543)&oldid=171998); Christoph Dejung, “A New Look at How Sebastian Franck Found Himself,” *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 80, no. 1 (2006): 95–100.

99 Robert Friedmann, “Chronica, ‘Zeytbuch vnd geschychtbibel,’” *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1953, last modified March 10, 2025, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Chronica,_Zeytbuch_vnd_geschychtbibel&oldid=120958.

100 Sebastian Franck, *Chronica, Zeytbuch und geschichtbibel*, fol. 458, Balthasar Beck, 1531. Digitized at <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb10141642?page=1056,1057>.

101 Franck, *Chronica, Zeytbuch*, fol. 457r.

102 Franck, *Chronica, Zeytbuch*, fol. 463.

103 Georg Eder, *Evangelische Inquisition wahrer und falscher Religion* (Dillingen, 1573). About Eder see Elaine Fulton, *Catholic Belief and Survival in Sixteenth-Century Vienna. A Case of Georg Eder (1523–1587)* (Routledge, 2007).

104 Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *The Anabaptists. Christianity and Society in the Modern World* (Routledge, 1996), 19–22.

A similar idea appears in the context of the arrival of the Jesuits, who were invited by the Dietrichsteins, and who were supposed to re-Catholicize the domain, which was referred to as “the center of bloodthirsty heretics”.¹⁰⁵ The list of alleged Anabaptist groups in Eder’s work includes a number of fictitious items which showed the Anabaptists in a bad light; however, many other groups, which really existed in Moravia, primarily the Hutterites, are missing. The explanation might be his dependence on an older work, presumably Franck’s. When Franck’s Chronicle was created in 1531, the name “the Hutterites” was not yet established in Moravia, and that is probably why we cannot find it either in Franck’s or in Eder’s work. The lack of references to Anabaptist groups existing in Moravia at the time of Eder’s agency—in particular, the Hutterites—demonstrates the academic nature of his work and shows his scant interest in acquiring knowledge about them.

Eder was directly followed by Christoph Erhard, who in 1581 became a priest and dean in Mikulov.¹⁰⁶ He is the author of four pamphlets and treatises, which culminated in the work *Gründliche kurtz verfaste Historia von Münsterischen Widertauffern: Und wie die Hutterischen Brüder so auch billich Widertauffergent werden*,¹⁰⁷ in which Erhard employed several strategies to discredit the Anabaptists. Erhard’s intention was to disrupt the relationship between the Anabaptists and the government, which supported them or was indifferent to them.¹⁰⁸ He did so by connecting the Hutterites from Mikulov with the tragic case of Münster, and claiming that Anabaptist groups were a threat to the existing social order. Another strategy of his was to draw attention to the moral depravity and hypocrisy of the Anabaptists. To do this, he used alleged reports from Anabaptist apostates. Erhard gives the example of Hans Jedelhauser, who came with his family from Ulm to Mikulov to settle in “a community of chosen Christians, separated from the evil world and abstaining from sin”.¹⁰⁹ But, instead, he found quarrels and fights, fornication and drunkenness, double moral standards for ordinary believers, and superiors living in sin, eating meat during Lent, playing games, drinking excessive amounts of wine, while ordinary members lived on

105 When the bishop of Olomouc, Stanislav Pavlovský, visited Mikulov demesne in 1582, he said that he was heading to the center of bloodthirsty heretics (*inter medios haereticos sicarios incidentem*), which leaves little doubt that an important proportion of these “bloodthirsty heretics” was formed by the Anabaptists. Darlage, “The Feast of Corpus Christi,” 664.

106 D. Jonathan Grieser, “Confessionalization and Polemic: Catholics and Anabaptists in Moravia,” in *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John W. O’Malley, S.J.*, ed. Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pabel (University of Toronto Press, 2001), 137.

107 Adam Berg, 1589. Digitized print available at: <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb10201423?page=2,3>.

108 Grieser, “Confessionalization and Polemic,” 137.

109 Grieser, “Confessionalization and Polemic,” 139.

bread and vegetables.¹¹⁰ The last strategy to discredit Anabaptists was confessional. He tried to prove that the Anabaptists, who refused to submit to Rome, opposed the Nicene Creed.¹¹¹

Erhard's innovation was to add names of groups which he had probably met in practice, or had at least heard about. Thus, he uses the names of the Gabrielites, the Austerlitz and Swiss Brethren, the Pilgramites, and the Hutterites. Despite the fact that Erhard focused primarily on the Hutterites, the mention of the other groups suggests that the non-Hutterite groups were not forgotten either. According to the urbarial record from 1582 relating to Mikulov, it is obvious that some non-Hutterite groups were still active in Mikulov in Erhard's time. That he was not particularly well-informed about them, however, becomes evident from his record of the Pilgramites (*Pilgramische Brüder*). While this group's name was derived from the name of its founder, Pilgram Marbeck, Erhard provides its translation into Latin as "Peregrinantes", i. e. pilgrims, which is a misleading interpretation of their name.

Yet, neither Eder's nor Erhard's lists of Anabaptist groups lack value for our research, as they reflect the trajectories of knowledge transmission. In addition to that, Erhard's list provides important testimony concerning those groups whose reputations were most known beyond Anabaptist circles.

The Hutterite Chronicle itself hints that some groups may not have disappeared as early as researchers have believed so far. For example, it is thought that the last members of the Gabrielites joined the Hutterites in Podivín in 1565.¹¹² However, the Chronicle mentions one member of the Hutterites joining the Gabrielites in Tavíkovice in 1571.¹¹³ Although this is just a fragmentary piece of information, which is difficult to verify at this point, in the context of the Hutterite discourse about rival groups, it can suggest that the diversity of the Anabaptists in Moravia in the second half of the 16th century was greater than the Hutterite Chronicles were willing to admit. That would also explain the loud campaign of Catholic authors against "many Anabaptist sects" which developed at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries, when, according to the Hutterian chronicles, there remained only a few groups of non-Hutterite Anabaptists.

Among these authors we should also mention Christoph Andreas Fischer (1560–after 1610), the priest of Valtice and a vocal critic of the Anabaptists. At first, he used only Eder's list of Anabaptist groups, but later focused on the fight against the Hutterites. Interestingly, he made use of Anabaptist inter-group ten-

110 Grieser, "Confessionalization and Polemic," 137.

111 Grieser, "Confessionalization and Polemic," 138.

112 Hutterian Brethren, ed., *The Chronicle*, 391, 238, note 1. Compare Christian Hege and Christian Neff, eds., *Mennonitisches Lexikon* II (Selbstverlag der Herausgeber, 1937), 25 etc.

113 Hutterian Brethren, ed., *The Chronicle*, 433.

sions reflected in the work of Gabriel Ascherham, the founder of the Gabrielites, to collect arguments against the Anabaptists as a whole.¹¹⁴

The anti-Anabaptist works of the Counter-Reformation, which enumerate different Anabaptist groups, some even fictitious, may also indicate that the diversity of Moravian Anabaptism endured long into the second half of the 16th century. Even if we do not consider these treatises as reliable documents of the historical reality of Moravian Anabaptist groups, their very existence provides us with important evidence. The strong voices of Eder, Erhard and Fisher turned against the “many sects” of Anabaptists suggest that some contemporaneous level of diversity (even if not exactly the one they describe) existed. Otherwise, it would hardly be meaningful to fight against it.

Moravian Anabaptist Groups in Official Sources from Württemberg

To counterbalance the somewhat academic discourse of anti-Anabaptist treatises, which served primarily the goals of the Counter-Reformation, we include also sources which reflect the lived practice of authorities and parishes in dealing with the Anabaptists—however, outside the territory of Moravia. These include documents related to the persecution of Anabaptists, interrogations, and records from the meetings of city and parish councils, which were collectively published in the edition *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer/Täufer*,¹¹⁵ the sub-volumes of which are related to individual German states. Although these sources mostly originated outside Moravia, they are very relevant for understanding the classifications of the Anabaptists at that time, as they relate directly to Moravia. As a result of frequent migrations of Anabaptists between Moravia and their countries of origin,¹¹⁶ the awareness of Anabaptists in Moravia and their diversity spread far beyond its borders. In the case of interrogations and negotiations with persons suspected of Anabaptism, the fact that they stayed in Moravia even for a short time itself aroused suspicion.¹¹⁷ We find recommendations that during interrogations the Anabaptist’s affiliation to a certain “sect” should also be investigated,¹¹⁸ which is probably related to the fear of possible uprisings, as seen in Münster.

114 Wiswedel, “Gabriel Ascherham... I,” 9.

115 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*; Grete Mecenseffy, ed., *Österreich I (= Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer XI)* (Gerd Mohn, 1964); Grete Mecenseffy, ed., *Österreich II (= Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer XIII)* (Gerd Mohn, 1972); Grete Mecenseffy, ed., *Österreich III (= Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer XIV)* (Gerd Mohn, 1983); etc.

116 Both Anabaptist and non-Anabaptist sources show that some individuals actively traveled between Moravia and their homeland. The reason could have been a mission, but also personal matters, such as settling an inheritance and other family matters. Compare e.g. Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 754–5, 864, etc.

117 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 528.

118 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 59.



These sources are especially important because they can show whether the terminology and classification applied in the anti-Anabaptist works of Eder and Erhard were known to the officials who personally dealt with the Anabaptists, and at the same time reveal the practical knowledge of officials.

The total number of documents concerning Anabaptists, such as interrogations and testimonies of priests, exceeds the possibilities of processing them through the usual method of close reading. Therefore, from this extensive corpus of documents, we only use the first volume of the edition *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*, which refers to the Württemberg region and includes a whole range of official sources created during the 16th and in the first decade of the 17th centuries.¹¹⁹ They include records of Anabaptist interrogations before city councils, namely in Stuttgart, and reports from priests documenting the migration of Anabaptists to Moravia and back (in some cases even specific municipalities in Moravia), but also letters that the Anabaptists wrote to each other. In this part, we refer only to sources of an official nature which relate to the contact of Anabaptists with their surroundings, not only with other Anabaptists.

In the early years of the development of Anabaptism, official records captured the terminology and classification directly from interrogated Anabaptists, who by providing it show their negative attitude towards other groups. There is an interrogation of an Anabaptist from 1536, who distanced himself from the Schwertlers, the Sabbatarians, and the Anabaptists of Münster.¹²⁰ We can see the efforts of the interrogated man to distance himself from “rebellious” Anabaptists, shortly after the fall of Münster (1535), and, thus, to probably achieve more lenient treatment from the authorities.

The name “the Schwertlers”, from the German word for “a sword”, i.e. *Schwert*, was used for the followers of Balthasar Hubmaier, a proponent of the use of force. In the Hutterian Chronicles, the Schwertlers are equated with the Sabbatarians,¹²¹ although this identification is not very clear, as the two groups did not fully overlap. The name “Münsterians” was also a warning sign. Mentioning the three groups in one context clearly responded to the government’s fear of a rebellion.

Surprisingly, the term “the Hutterites” does not explicitly appear in official sources from Württemberg, although a number of records seem to refer to this group. The sources record the active migration of inhabitants from Württemberg to Moravia and back, and specifically to the settlements mentioned in the Hutterian

119 The edition includes some letters of the Anabaptists; their terminologies and classifications are taken into account in the part on emic classifications.

120 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 52.

121 Hutterian Brethren, ed., *The Chronicle*, 80.

Chronicles.¹²² However, as we indicated above, it is not always necessary to consider such settlements to be exclusively Hutterian. There is also a record of the unusual case of the Swiss Brethren in Uherčice near Hustopeče in 1569,¹²³ which again expands our awareness of the diversity of Moravian Anabaptists beyond the scope provided by the Hutterian perspective. Although the Hutterian Chronicle mentions occasional contacts with the Swiss Brethren in different Moravian towns, it certainly does not provide a complete picture of their communities.

As for the name “the Hutterites”, the question is to what extent this name was used in Württemberg. In 1570, at a meeting of the city council in Stuttgart, a group of Anabaptists was referred to as “Hoferische”, which apparently refers to the Hutterian way of life in haushabens.¹²⁴ Their founder, Jakob Hutter, does not appear in these documents at all. In the same record, other terms appear in another context. One of them was *Huttischen*, meaning the followers of Hans Hut.¹²⁵ Hut was a preacher who died in 1527. In addition, we can also find the Sacramentarians (*Sacramentierer*), the Moserites (*Moserischen*), and the followers of David Joris (*David Georger*) “and others”.¹²⁶ It is noteworthy that the records still mention the Schwertlers and the followers of Hans Hut even at the end of the 16th century, despite the fact that from the perspective of the Hutterian Chronicles we would assume that they disappeared not long after the death of their founders (1528, or in fact 1527).¹²⁷ In the case of the followers of Hans Hut, it can be noted that they appear also in a letter written by Christoph Kereczényi in 1567; therefore, there was still some awareness of them in the second half of the 16th century.

As for the authorities, their awareness of Anabaptists was first based on Anabaptist testimonies, the terminology of which they gradually adopted and applied to a small extent. From the 1530s to the 1550s, we observe quite understandable interest in the Anabaptists “of Münster”. However, in 1556, they are clearly distinguished from the Anabaptists “in Moravia”, whose further internal diversity is no longer of interest in this case.¹²⁸

122 There are many Anabaptist settlements in Moravia mentioned in the sources. Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 518–21, 528, 755–56, 769, 790, 864 etc.

123 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 520.

124 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 276.

125 Herbert C. Klassen, “The Life and Teachings of Hans Hut,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 32 (1958): 171–205, 267–304; Werner Packull, *Mysticism and the Early South German-Austrian Anabaptist Movement, 1525–1531*, (Herald Press, 1977). About Hut’s activities in Moravia see Packull, *Hutterite Beginnings*, 55–61.

126 Bossert, ed. *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 279.

127 In the case of the Schwertlers, it was the interrogation of the Anabaptist Hans Schmidt before the city council of Stuttgart in 1590, during which the interrogated subject was supposed to answer the question of whether he belonged to the Schwertlers, the Gabrielites, or the Austerlitz Brethren. Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 657.

128 Bossert, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 193.

Several observations follow from the comparison of the typologies of the Anabaptists presented in the works of Eder and Erhard with the terms used by the officials and priests in Württemberg, as can also be seen in the overview table. Neither in live contacts with Anabaptists during interrogations, nor in any official records are there any references to fictitious Anabaptist groups, which are characterized by deplorable activities such as murdering priests, exhibiting bloodlust, and polygamy. We simply do not find such records outside of the strongly Counter-Reformation discourse presented by the Catholic church and its members. It is also rather rare to think about the Anabaptists in the broader context of Christian heresies – specifically, those of antiquity.¹²⁹ The authorities continued to show little interest in distinguishing between Anabaptists. When such interest *was* shown, there were only references to groups known from the Anabaptist environment. The occurrence of terms associated with Anabaptists in the 1520s and 1530s, such as the Hutterites, the Schwertlers, or the Stäblers, in records from 60 years later is surprising. From the perspective of the Hutterian Chronicles, these groups seem to have already disappeared or transformed themselves into Hutterites in some way (such as in the case of the Stäblers). The question is whether in these cases the officials only used terms recorded in older documents without understanding their meaning, or whether it was possible to find these groups of Anabaptists even so late. Kereczényi and Varotta's reports from 1567 are valuable sources in this regard; we may also consider the fact that Erhard also referred to several otherwise testified Anabaptist groups.

For better orientation in the period terminology related to Anabaptist groups primarily in Moravia, we provide the table below.

Table 1. Anabaptist Group Labels as Listed in Selected Sources

Source: Authors' own research

No.	Hutterite Chronicle	Varotta 1567	Kereczényi 1567	Georg Eder 1573	Christoph Erhard 1589	Quellen zur Geschichte I
1	-	-	-	Abgesünderten / Spirituales vel Separati <i>Spiritualists or Separatists</i>	Abgesünderten / Spirituales vel Separati	-
2	-	-	-	Adamité <i>Adamites</i>	Adamitae / Adamiter	-
3	-	-	-	Adamischen / Adamaei ab Adamo Pastore <i>Adamers</i>	Adamischen / Adamaei ab Adamo Pastore	-
4	-	-	-	Ambrosianer / Ambrosiani sive Pneumatici <i>Ambrosians</i>	Ambrosianer / Ambrosiani sive Pneumatici	-

No.	Hutterite Chronicle	Varotta 1567	Kerec- zényi 1567	Georg Eder 1573	Christoph Erhard 1589	Quellen zur Geschichte I
5	-	-	-	Antichristischen / Antichristiani <i>Antichristians</i>	Antichristischen / Antichristiani	-
6	-	-	-	Apostolischen / Apostolici <i>Apostolics</i>	Apostolischen / Apostolici	-
7	-	ariani	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	Augustiniani / Augustini a quodam Bohemo Aug. <i>Augustinians</i>	Augustiniani / Augustini a quodam Bohemo Aug.	-
9	Austerlitz Brethren, 1560's	auster- lici	-	-	Austerliche Brüder / Austerlici <i>Austerlitzians</i>	Austerlitzer, 1590
10	-	-	-	Better / Euchitae vel Orantes <i>Praying Brothers</i>	Better / Euchitae vel Orantes	-
11	-	-	-	Beyschlaffer / Concubitores <i>Cohabitors</i>	Beyschlaffer / Concubitores	-
12	-	-	-	Blossfüßigen / Nudipedes <i>Barefooted Brothers</i>	Blossfüßigen / Nudipedes	-
13	-	-	-	Blutdürstigen / Sanguinari <i>Bloodthirsty Ones</i>	Blutdürstigen / Sanguinari	-
14	-	-	-	Cathari / Sanctuli / Puri / Rainheiligen <i>Purists</i>	Cathari / Sanctuli / Puri / Rainheiligen	-
15	-	cappe- larii	-	-	-	-
16	-	cornelii	corne- litae	-	-	-
17	-	-	-	David Georgianer / David Georgiani <i>David Georgians</i>	David Georgiani / David Georgianer	David Georgiani, 1570
18	-	-	enthu- siastae	Fallenden oder Stummenden / Ecstatici / Enthusiasti <i>Visionaries or Enthusiasts</i>	Fallenden oder Stummenden / Ecstatici / Enthu- siasti	-
19	-	-	-	Epicuraei <i>Epicureans</i>	Epicuraei / Epicu- rischen Brüder	Reference to Epicu- res, 1581
20	Gabrielites, 1571	-	<i>chabri- elitae</i>	-	Gabrieliten /Gabi- rieli <i>Gabrielites</i>	Gabrieliter, 1590
21	-	-	-	Gemeiner / Liberi <i>Free-livers</i>	Gemeiner / Liberi	Gemeiner wie- dertäufer 1571

No.	Hutterite Chronicle	Varotta 1567	Kereczenyi 1567	Georg Eder 1573	Christoph Erhard 1589	Quellen zur Geschichte I
22	-	-	-	Grubenheimer / Grubenhameri <i>Grubenheimers</i>	Grubenheimer / Grubenhameri	Not in QG I but included in other volumes of the edition.
23	-	-	-	Haimlichen / Garten Brüder / Clancularii <i>Secretive, also called Garden Brothers</i>	Clancularii / Haimblichen und Gartenbrüder	-
24	-	-	-	Heuchlerischen / Adiaphoristae <i>Hypocritical Ones</i>	Heuchlerischen / Adiaphoristae	-
25	-	-	-	Hoffmanischen / Melchioritae <i>Hofmanites</i>	Hoffmanischen / Melchioritae	-
26	-	-	-	-	-	Hofferischen, 1570 Probably the Hutterites
27	-	-	hutten- ses	Hutten / Hutiten <i>Huttites</i>	Huetten, Huettiten / Hutitae ab Ioanne Hutto	Huttischen, 1570
28	-	See cappe- larii	-	-	Hutterischen Brüder / Hueterici a Iacobo Huettero	-
29	-	jose- phini	-	-	-	-
30	-	-	-	Negantes Christum esse Mesiam <i>Judaizers</i>	Judlerischen Brüder / Negantes Christum esse Mesiam	-
31	-	-	-	Kesselgest / Ollarii <i>Kesselgeist</i> ¹³⁰	Kesselgest / Ollarii	-
32	-	-	liber- tini	Libertiner / Libertini / Quintinistae <i>Libertines</i>	Libertiner / Libertini	-
33	Not in Moravia	-	-	Mennoniter / Mennonitae <i>Mennonites</i>	Mennonitae / Mennoniter	-
34	-	-	-	Müntzerischen <i>Müntzerites</i>	Muntzseriani / Müntzerischen	-
35	1528, Münsterites (spirit of)	-	-	Münsterischen / Monasteriens <i>Münsterite Brothers</i>	Münsterischen / Monasteriens	Münsterischen, 1535
36	-	-	-	Offenlichen / Manifestarii <i>Open Witnesses</i>	Manifestarii / Offenlichen	Offentlichen Wiedertäufer, 1573

130 The name probably refers to the German word Kessel, meaning “a pot”. The name possibly reflects the common preoccupation of the Anabaptists, namely in Moravia.

No.	Hutterite Chronicle	Varotta 1567	Kerec- zényi 1567	Georg Eder 1573	Christoph Erhard 1589	Quellen zur Geschichte I
37	Pilgram Marbeck, not Pil- gramites	-	-	-	Pilgramische Brüder / Peregrinantes	-
38	-	-	-	Priestermörder / Pastoricidae <i>Priest Murderers</i>	Priestermörder / Pastoricidae	-
39	Philippi- tes	-	-	-	-	-
40	Sabbata- rians	Sabata- riani	sabba- tari	Sabbatharii / Sabbather <i>Sabbatarians</i>	Sabbatharii/Sa- bbather	Sabbather, 1536
41	-	Samoza- teni	-	Schriffer und Pauliner / Scripturarii vel Paulini <i>Scripturists and Paulinists</i>	Schriffer und Pauli- ner / Scripturarii vel Paulini	-
42	Swiss Brethren	squizari	-	-	Schweizerische Brüder / Helvetiani <i>Swiss Brethren</i>	Schweizer Bruder, 1615
43	Schwert- ler (Sword- bearers), now called Sabbata- rians	-	-	-	-	Schwerter, 1590
44	Stäbler	-	-	Stäbler / Stäbleri <i>Staff-bearers</i>	Stableri / Stäbler	-
45	-	-	-	Stillschweigenden / Tacentes <i>Silent Ones</i>	Stillschweigenden / Tacentes	-
46	-	-	-	Teuffler / Daemoniaci <i>Devilers</i>	Daemoniaci / Teuffler	-
47	-	-	-	Wainer / Eiulanterii <i>Weeping Brothers</i>	Eiulantes / Wainer	-
48	-	-	-	Without a name I. Interpreters of the Resurec- tion too spiritually	-	-
49	-	-	-	Without a name II. Interpreters of the Resu- rection too bodily	-	-
50	-	-	-	III. Universalists – all will be saved eventually	-	-

Note: The groups provided in the original editions of the anti-Anabaptist treatises of Eder and Erhard are listed in a different order; we have chosen alphabetical order for clarity and comparability.¹³¹ For the terms used in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer I*, we always provide the year of their occurrence. As for the terms from the *Hutterian Chronicle*, where many of the names are used repeatedly, we provide the latest occurrence to indicate that those groups presumably still existed in Moravia as a separate group. English translations of Eder's and Erhard's labels are listed in italics according to Henry DeWind (1958).

Conclusion

Comparing the classifications of Anabaptist groups reveals how each author viewed these groups – specifically, whether they distinguished among them – and also shows that some sources ignored the diversity of such groups for various reasons.

Generally, the sources agree on the great internal diversity of Anabaptism in Moravia, which was seen as a sign of religious decline not only in the context of the Counter-Reformation, but also among Czech evangelicals. Evidently, only Moravian official records do not distinguish between Anabaptists groups, deliberately or not. The Anabaptists themselves were apparently aware of the potential for possible unification, so we can find records of several attempts by various preachers to create a network of individual groups. At the same time, however, there were efforts in the Hutterian community to distance themselves from any Anabaptists who had not given up “the sword”, which in general discourse meant the possibility of fomenting a rebellion. This stigma, which resulted from the uprisings in the 1520s and mainly from the events in Münster from 1533 to 1535, persisted until the end of the 16th century, and it affected also the self-determination of Moravian Anabaptists in relation to the government.

The *Hutterian Chronicles* sought to clearly define and promote the name of the Hutterites, although we know that they may have been known to their environment under various names. Observers' reports from the mid-16th century document the continuing diversity of Anabaptist groups, despite the fact that the *Hutterian Chronicles* at the same time do not mention their rivals on a large scale. The predominance of the Hutterites among the Anabaptists in Moravia must be viewed as having resulted from a gradual process, which did not end with the

131 The order of the groups in Georg Eder is as follows: Muntzerischen, Adamiter, Stäbler, Sabbather, Haimlichen also called Gartenbrüder, Offenlichen, Teuffler, Gemainer, Bey-schlaffer, Grubenhaimer, Wainer, David Georgianer, Mennoniter, Cathari, Stillscheigenden, Apostolischen, Blossfüsigen, Abgesünderten, Better, Fallenden, Adameischen, Adiaphoristen, Hutten, Ambrosianer, Augustinianer, Hofmanischen, Münsterischen, Schrifftler, Kesselgest, Priester-mörder, Blutdurstigen, Libertiner, four other nameless groups, Antichristischen, those who deny that Christ was the Messiah.

disputes with the Gabritelites or Austerlitz Brethren in the 1540s. Although the sources are few, the persistence of the names of some groups in official, observers' and Anabaptist sources suggest that the situation was probably more complicated than the Hutterites described in their chronicle.

The awareness of the internal diversity of Anabaptism long outlived their actual presence in central Europe. The Swiss Brethren of Ivančice are mentioned by Martin Zeiller in 1650 in his *Topographia Bohemiae, Moraviae et Silensiae*.¹³² Lists of Anabaptist groups can be found even in the work of Pierre Annat from 1744 called *Apparatus ad positivam theologiam methodicus*, where thirteen groups are mentioned and their designations and order correspond to significantly shortened versions of Eder and Erhard lists.¹³³ Ironically, despite their efforts to shape an awareness of themselves, the Hutterites, who became the only group of Moravian Anabaptism to survive to the present day, are not mentioned there.

The notion of discrepancies in past classifications and systems of knowledge about Anabaptist groups opens new avenues for research, which might – within the limits of the extant sources – enable us to learn more about non-Hutterite groups and their settlements, which possibly—and probably—survived at different locations much longer than previously considered.

132 Martin Zeiller, *Topographia Bohemiae, Moraviae et Silesiae*, ed. M. Merian (Frankfurt am Main, 1650), unpaginated, s.v. „Eywenschitz.“

133 Pierre Annat, *Apparatus ad positivam theologiam methodicus* (Venezia, 1744), 369–70.