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Waiting for the End of the World at the End of the World: Millenarianism Miles from Nowhere. St. Nazianz (Wisconsin)

Introduction

In 1854 – at the height of the first wave of German emigration to America[1] in the 19th century, Anbros Oschwald, a Catholic priest born in 1801 left the grand duchy of Baden and set off for the New World via Le Havre[2]. He was accompanied by a group of followers – 113 women, men and children, mainly drawn from the lower classes of the rural areas of the Oden and Black Forest. In the "Wilderness" between Milwaukee and Green Bay Ambros Oschwald founded a colony, whose very name, St. Nazians gives us a key to the ideas that lay behind it. One of the early fathers of the church, Gregor von Nazians (329/30-390) was convinced to the injustice of private property (Mühlmann, 1961, 394). There had been no private property in paradise and the coming millennium would restore things to their original condition.

The colony was organised along the lines of a monastery. A rather severe version of the early Christian "loving community" where everything belongs to everybody became the spiritual message of the colony. Everything went more or less smoothly until the death of the founder in 1873. Despite having named a successor, Oschwald was able to do nothing to avoid the crisis that occurs when people flock round a person whom they endow with extraordinary qualities and are then faced with the death of this charismatic figure[3]. The countless miracle cures attributed to Oschwald and the fact that miraculous experiences were associated with his death[4] testify to the fact that Oschwald was indeed looked upon by his followers as a leading figure with quite extraordinary qualities. The crises caused by problems of who was to succeed Oschwald did not prove insuperable, and the colony continued in its original form until 1896, when it was taken over by the Salvatorians. The village settlement of St. Nazianz still exists today.

The idea of the community run by Catholic laymen under the leadership of a religious leader is fascinating and unusual (see Schempp, 1969) but the period prior to 1854 – the year Oschwald emigrated – is far more interesting from our point of view.

1840 saw the beginning of the formation of a chiliastic movement around Ambros Oschwald. It evolved through several phases and led to Oschwald's frequent transfer from one post to another, and on several occasions to his suspension from duty. There are several classic historical and ethnological studies (e. g. Cohn, 1961; Mühlmann, 1961) which provide useful approaches for the study of chiliastic movements. Ethnology lends us some valuable insights, (cf. Land 1984) into the workings of our own society. What we previously considered as self-evident suddenly appears in a new light, and there are "suddenly many new things to see" (M.

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[1] Bade 1984, 264 (diagram 4); Marschalck 1973, 40. Of the many studies, see Adams 1980 (esp. Ehmer, Hippel); Bade 1984, vol. 1 (esp. Hoerder, Marschalck) Fenske 1973; von Hippel 1984 (von Württemberg); Marchalck 1984a, 45ff; Noltmann 1976 (esp. Hansen); von Philippovich 1892. See also Bade's review article, 1986.

[2] Bade 1984, 273f.

[3] On the crises surrounding the succession see Weber 1964, 182f, esp. 183c.

[4] Chronicles of St. Nazianz 1867, 18ff (for example, the fact that there were no signs of decomposition etc.). Norman Douglas provides unexpected confirmation for this. In the paragraph on "southern saints" (Douglas 1983, 345ff) he mentions the striking "uniformity in the life and death" of saints (loc. Cit. 356).

Sahlins). Ethnological methodology – "detailed description" and "empirical sensibility and love of detail" (Medick, 1984) also has a valuable contribution to make to the present study. Ambros Oschwald's notoriety does not merely stem from the fact that he allegedly performed miraculous cures. He came to the notice of the religious and secular authorities because he was the author of "mystical writings". The prophecies contained in these "mystical writings" make them an important document of the chiliastic movement. It is not merely the eschatological themes of these writings that attract our attention. They are also of particular importance because they present contemporary social reality as a period of trials which heralds the millennium. Messianic lament is the accompanying theme. It is these sections of the mystical writings which are most accessible and make it possible to grasp and fully describe "the essential duality of historical circumstances, the complex dialectical relationship between the overall structure and the actual experience of the 'subjects', between the conditions of life, production and power and the experience and behaviour patterns of those affected" (Medick, 1984, 295). Arriving at a deep understanding of the way of seeing embodied in Oschwald's mystical writings cannot be equated with identification with that world view. We run no risk of romanticising the past.

The real conditions prevailing at the time are reflected in the messianic laments. In these passages a whole serious of religious, political and social events which both annoyed and threatened traditional man is made vivid. There was a profound suspicion of revolutionary ideas, and the societies, associations and clubs that were their perceived breeding grounds. These "molehills" of history, which attack the established order from "below" are just one example of prevailing social concerns. The heated exchanges between Church and State, and the conflict between the Catholic Church and those sections of the bourgeoisie who had joined the ranks of German Catholicism, spurred on by the figure of Johannes Ronge, who spoke out against the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier (1844) are further examples. In the space of a few weeks an unknown chaplain from Silesia came to be considered the great Reformer of the 19th century. As we might expect Ronge appears as the embodiment of the antichrist in Ambros Oschwald's mystical writings. By adopting this comparative perspective we may come to a deeper understanding of the significant social movements of the bourgeoisie, German Catholics, Friends of the Light, and "Free Communes" (Brederlow, 1976; Graf, 1978) and the chiliastic movement that had its humble origins in the group round Ambros Oschwald and also examine the ways in which the forces of order, the state and the church, reacted.

The combination of emigration and millenianism, so rare in the 19th century (Lehmann 1980) highlights the eschatological dimension of the colonisation of America, which has left its mark on the American way of life. The first colonists and the wave of emigrants that surrounded Ambros Oschwald certainly have one thing in common, the unwavering belief of the religious elect that they belong to the ranks of the Chosen.

2. Why the Key to the Present is Buried in the Past.

There have been several studies[5] on the St. Nazianz colony in Wisconsin. Most of these Studies have adopted more or less the same approach and have focused on a few unusual features of the monastic or communal life of the early days, without ever really getting to the core of the religious ideas which lay behind the project. The few remaining buildings bear

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[5] Beck 1959; The History of St. Nazianz, in: Manitowoc County Historical Society. Newsletter, vol. 5, No. 2 March 1971 and vol. 5 Nr. 3 March 1971; Johnson 1984; Längin 1985.

silent witness to the past and can tell us very little. We have to look to the period preceding the foundation of the colony, to the years immediately preceding the emigration, to have any insight into the religious ideas which influenced its founder and to have any conception of the true nature of the colony.

There are only very scant references to the period predating the foundation of the colony, and where they exist at all they tend to present a rather romanticised picture. The references to the chronicles of St. Nazianz, written by the then administrator of the colony, Anton Stoll, a close associate of Ambros Oschwald, are clear examples of this. These chronicles represent one source of historical data – they are a system of signs that must be decoded. However we must not overlook the fact that these chronicles serve principally to ensure the hegemony of the past over the present. The chronicles ascribe the founder of the colony Ambros Oschwald (1801-1873) the role of a saint, using the whole gamut of motifs that have been available to hagiographers. Here we have a splendid example of the essential "inner dialectic between virtue and miracle" (Bausinger). These chronicles can, however, provide us with valuable insights, - if we read them correctly. Just as the heretic and the inquisitor speak the same language to a large extent (Erikson, 1978, 29), so there is a startling affinity between saint and heretic. They appear to be polar opposites, and yet viewed in a subtly different light the saint and the heretic can appear one and the same. It will be one of the major concerns of this paper to demonstrate just how close the despised heretic and the honoured member of the official church are. The personal records in the archiepiscopal archives in Freiburg clearly show that there is no doubt that it was not merely otherworldly, religious concerns that lead to the now universally esteemed founder of St. Nazianz' emigration to America. Although Oschwald's original motives for "turning over a new leaf" in the New World and preparing for the Last Judgement in a safe refuge were religious, they were overlaid by considerations firmly rooted in contemporary reality. In fact from time to time these considerations were the dominant ones. Oschwald had to put himself beyond the reach of the religious and secular institutions which attempted to attribute various unpleasant characteristics to him and thus to typecast him, and pronounce on his role in society. The expressions used in official documents on the Oschwald case – 'religious quack remedy', 'simpleton', 'religious maniac', 'lunatic' – make it quite clear that this was indeed happening. It was clearly in Oschwald's direct interest to start a "new life" – in the original sense of the word. He clearly hoped that he could leave these labels and their far-reaching consequences behind him when he left for the New World. In the end he was to be proved right.

There are some astonishing similarities – not normally found between Puritans and Catholics – between the first colonists who settled in the Massachusetts bay and the group of Catholics emigrants centered round Ambros Oschwald which concerns us here. Both groups share the firm conviction that they belong to a religious elect – and in both cases the social consequences are the same. Although separated by a gulf of centuries, and by enormous differences in religious beliefs, both groups earnestly awaited the coming millennium. Such a vehement belief in the millennium has the effect of bringing the early Christian community back to life. This "yearning for the beginning of time" (Eliade) in the sense of an attempt to recapture paradise lost is often associated with escapist elements. For both groups the emigration to America meant an abandoning of civilisation. For those who believed that they were entering the final phase of history the New World certainly did appear a "wilderness" (Williams, 1962, Tiryakian 1975/76, 19ff.).

In escaping from the world the founders of St. Nazianz not only entered a spiritual wilderness, but a geographical one as well. By deliberately cutting themselves off from the world the

colonists created the minimal conditions for the establishment and maintenance of an independent counter-existence. The monastic way of life that this implied was indeed strange and new for Catholic laymen. The St. Nazianz experience provides a dramatic confirmation of Troeltsch' thesis[6] that monasticism is a sect within the established Church, in which both deviationists and the strictly orthodox can find a spiritual home. There is a strong elective affinity between the organisational principles governing the St. Nazianz colony and those found in the communities set up by puritan sects. Both claim to belong to a spiritual elect and thus feel compelled to behave accordingly. To this extent the history of St. Nazianz colony is also the history of its incorporation into the American way of life, the origins of which are unmistakably religious (Eliade, 1981, 137ff.).

The colonist's withdrawal from the world under Ambros Oschwald's leadership also represents a refusal to adapt to the way of life imposed by the developing demands of an industrial society and an urban existence. The religious community of brothers and sisters in faith was a "natural" form of group solidarity, both a working model and a blueprint for a society firmly opposed to the impersonal "reified" social relations typical of urban society. The colonist's desire to return to a "natural", traditional way of life[7] centered around natural production factors (earth) and traditional sources of energy (water, horses) corresponds to the "longing for the early church" (Bacht), and the return to the simplicity of the church at the time of the apostles. The affinity between a model of society based on the example of the early Christian church and a pre-industrial (artisanal-peasant) way of life rests on these points. The inherent simplicity of pre-industrial society, associated with poverty, makes it possible to make a religious virtue out of a social necessity. Poverty thus becomes a reliable indicator of the state of grace (Mühlmann, 1961, 350).

3. The Heretic who got away

> 'For me heretics are excitable, lively,
> courageous, upright, unselfish, decisive,
> sometimes bizarre, eccentric and obstinate
> know-alls who do not take what's real any more
> seriously than what's possible' (Adolf Holl)

3.1. Performing Miracles in an Age of Miracles

The story surrounding the foundation of St. Nazianz shows the extent to which two radically different dimensions, one strictly of this world, the other vague and spiritual are intertwined. Millennianism clearly marks the spiritual dimension – emigration however spans both domains. It represented the chance for secular and religious authorities to get rid of a disturbing influence. For Oschwald and his followers however it meant a new beginning. In

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[6] Berger 1958/59, 41ff, quoted in Bergmann 1985, 48. E. Troeltsch (1865-1923), protestant theologian, philosopher and historian. From 1894 to 1914 he was professor in Heidelberg, where for a time h shared a house with Max Weber (1864-1920). On Troeltsch see Wehler 1973, 325. On Troeltsch and Weber see Tödt 1985 and Graf 1987.

[7] The 'blessed simplicity of the rural life' and the enthusiasm for the ‚virtues of the field' (Eliade) became increasingly attractive in the 19th century Germany because of the general criticism directed against the city and urban life. In this respect 'hostility towards the city' and 'agrarian romanticism' (Bergmann 1970) are closely related, as are the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation. On the situation in Germany see Reulecke 1983.

the "wilderness" quite different laws are valid from those in world governed by bureaucratic responsibilities.

Ambros Oschwald was one of the first "victims" of modern medicine. The appearance of a large number of scientific publications in the 1840's shows the extent to which medicine was becoming increasingly professionalized (Nipperdey, 1983, 490). On the 11th of October 1842 Ambros Oschwald, at that time chief curate in Hammereisenbach, was accused of "meddling in medical affairs" by the authorities of the grand duchy (Großherzogtum Baden). Because of this affair Oschwald came to the notice of secular and religious authorities, who were embroiled in conflict over their respective responsibilities. The accusation of "meddling in medical affairs" meant that a personal file was opened on Oschwald which was to pursue him until he emigrated. His emigration provided the authorities with a welcome excuse to close his case. In the eyes of the medical profession "meddling in medical affairs" meant taking it upon oneself to diagnose illness and to prescribe an appropriate cure without being in possession of the necessary qualifications. For Ambros Oschwald however, healing was part of his priestly duties. "Natural" illnesses could be cured by prayer and the laying on of hands. Illnesses caused by "supernatural" factors entailed exorcism[8], which Oschwald practised without his superiors' permission.

The authorities could have come to terms with this state of affairs had Oschwald and some of his followers whom he had allegedly cured not claimed to have experienced miraculous cures themselves. These claims naturally hat the effects of increasing Oschwald's support still further. This massive rush of support attracted the attention of the press on several occasions. And as the press continued to report of the Oschwald affair, concern within the church grew that "action taken by the police against a catholic cleric would endanger the reputation of the church's legitimate disciplinary powers"[9]. Whether this statement indicates an increasingly tense relationship between religious and secular authorities, which Oschwald was then able to exploit to good effect, remains to be seen. We will touch on this briefly later. The key word here is ultramontanism.

It was no coincidence that Oschwald was driven into the marginal position of an outsider. It was partly the result of a unique concatenation of circumstances which is set in motion when certain modes of conduct become officially known and recognised. However it must also be stressed that the type of healing favoured and practised by Oschwald had a certain affinity with the main trends in medical science, which was at that time heavily influenced by developments in natural philosophy. Oschwald's theories were particularly akin to the romantic medical theories which were widespread in the first half of the 19th century, especially to practices which were a "curious mixture of exorcism and hypnotism/ magnetism" (Ellenberger, 1985, 233f.). The fact that diagnosticians who attempted to arrive at the psychic (and emotional) causes of illness had recourse to the familiar and accepted categories of the doctrine on sin was one reason why contemporary diagnostic techniques were so close to Oschwald's conception of the cause of illness and the chance of a cure. For several respected catholic philosophers, the medical practitioners Windischmann (1775-1839)

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[8] Mystical writings 1849, 524f. On exorcism see Theologische Realenzyklopädie 1982, vol. 10, 747-761, under exorcism. J. J. Gassner (1727-1779), the priest mentioned on page 756 of this contribution, had ideas on the causes of illness and on the methods of healing (including exorcism) that were astoundingly similar to Oschwald's (Ellenberger 1985, 89ff.). Franz Anton Mesmer (see ftn 10) 1774/75 was called in as an expert advisor to Gassner.

[9] Quoted from chaplain A. Oschwald's personal reords, stored in the archives of the archiepiscopal authorities in Freiburg. Henceforth quoted as PR.

in Bonn and Ringseis (1785-1880) in Munich and other representatives of this "Christian art of healing", influenced by Mesmerism[10], it was the priest who had the necessary qualifications for the practice of medicine[11]. "Ultimately the seat of any illness was the soul, which becomes enflamed through the dual passions of lust and greed and profoundly disordered through illicit relations. The natural healing powers of the sick person, hypnotism, exorcism and the means of grace of the church were offered as panacea against these ills. Healing eas closely related to the state of grace. The doctor himself was a priest, whose task it was to direct the divine powers". (Nipperdey, 1983, 487).

However the report of examining commission *(commissarius)* set up by the archiepiscopal diocesan authorities in Freiburg to investigate the matter makes it clear that Oschwald's theories and mode of behaviour were severely frowned upon. The report of the 20th October 1843, which refers back to a police investigation ordered by the ministerial authorities in Karlsruhe goes on to say:

"… Chaplain Oschwald asserted quite freely and modestly that he was equipped with higher powers and that he could if necessary use these powers in the name of the Almighty to cure all ills, chronic and acute, even those previously considered incurable. He would use exorcism, consecrated oil, the laying on of hands and prayer and would shun all forms of medical assistance that were contrary to his way of healing. According to his own records his patients number 3.160 and he claims in good faith to have healed most of these. An ignoramus would take this Oschwald for a miracle worker. However a closer look makes us think otherwise. Chaplain Oschwald is of meagre stature, scrofulous, and is permanently in a state of high excitement, which he attempts to disguise by adopting sober habits. His early education is most deficient. His university education was cut short as he pursued his healing activities (…). Oschwald's profoundly disordered imagination appears to be deceiving him and we would advise him to work his healing powers on his own person so that he would no longer have to practise them on others. However this man is still causing the

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[10] Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815). Founder of mesmerism, or the theory of animal magnetism. Generally viewed as a pioneer of hypnotherapy. On Mesmer see for example Blankenburg in: Darnton 1986, 191-228; Darnton 1986; Ellenberger 1985, Schott 1986; also Benz 1976; Bittel 1940.

[11] This practice refers to the type of pastoral care widely favoured by the pietists. These "still souls in the country" can be regarded as the forerunners of psychosomatic medicine because of the way in which they combined consolation and medical advice when visiting the sick. See Moser 1984, 320.

> diocesan and secular authorities great
> inconvenience. Only firm intervention can rid
> us of this inconvenience. Oschwald enjoys the
> reputation of a religious and moral man and yet
> bring out the contrast between
> irreligiousness and immorality in people – even
> in clerics themselves, even more when grasping
> landlords, roguish schoolmasters and others
> determined to follow the path of self-deception
> stand to gain by his nefarious activities. (…)
> Oschwald will pay scant heed to the orders of
> the archiepiscopal authorities. Feeling
> aggrieved that his supposed right to heal is
> challenged, he assuages his conscience with the
> thought that he owes greater allegiance to God
> than to man …" (PR)

We have quoted this extract at great length because it highlights the difficult position the church authorities found themselves in when it came to deciding on Oschwald's case. On the one hand the church authorities were being urged by secular institutions to take rapid and radical action[12]. However they were also being confronted with petitions expressing official support for Oschwald[13].

It is not possible to trace in detail Oschwald's difficult passage between acceptance and rejection, between the great esteem in which he is held today and the odium of that preceded his emigration to America. We can only give a very crude outline of the disputes that led to the establishment of his identity, and will focus on the significant moments of this process. We will concentrate on the period immediately preceding the emigration – 1842-1854 – when the Oschwald affair really came to a head.

The church authorities adopted a strategy of patience and consideration until about 1848, as the following extract from an early statement on the Oschwald affair from the archiepiscopal general vicariate shows:

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[12] Some secular memoranda provide us with good examples. The archducal authorities of Constance made the following comment on the Oschwald affair: "It is a matter of some astonishment that the archiepiscopal authorities have not yet taken any severe measures against Oschwald. He is being encouraged in his foolish and pernicious activities and is openly flouting the authority of those to whom he is responsible. (…). He is a religious charlatan who must be got out of the way and not allowed to do further harm to the weak and gullible" (PR, 1844).
The local authorities in Stühlingen also pressed the archbishopric for firm action against Oschwald: "He is either suffering from the delusions of a disordered mind or he is a lier. We must not put up with the inexcusable disobedience of this half mad priest for any longer. We have only strengthened him in his illusions by treating him so lightly in the past". (PR, 1844)

[13] The mayors of the parishes of Hammereisenbach and Bregenbach expressed their views in the following way: "We are astonished that our chaplain Oschwald was instructed to take up his new post in Stühlingen after Candlemas. We have found an excellent curate in Oschwald and would like to keep him as long as possible. The decision to transfer him away from us must be changed (…). With few exceptions the entire church community is satisfied with him and he is a zealous curate, quite exemplary in his teachings and in his way of life (…) and in addition to this he deserves to be described as a friend and benefactor to all men. (…). He has accepted our poor church with great generosity of spirit. For all these reasons, and because our church cannot do without such curates, we would at least like to know the reason why the authorities want to take such a benevolent and useful man away from us …" (PR; 14.1.1844)

> "We had hoped that chaplain Oschwald would see
> the error of his ways of his own accord as it
> is clear that grim warnings cannot cure those
> afflicted by a disordered mind. If we were to
> adopt firmer measures against him he would
> take it as an honour to be unjustly persecuted
> for the merciful powers granted him by God and
> the number of his followers among the *country
> people* would increase still further. His
> tendency to stray from the right path betrays
> a hidden arrogance which he is not willing to
> admit even to himself. He claims not to use
> any medicaments and that he effects everything
> through the power of prayer. We had hoped
> that his reputation as a miracle worker would
> gradually diminish and finally disappear
> altogether. We think it inadvisable to make
> any far-reaching decisions against him at the
> present time" (PR; my emphasis).

The church authorities tried to speed up the process whereby Oschwald's "reputation as a miracle worker would gradually diminish and finally disappear alltogether" by several times transferring him to a "remote district"[14].

It was the practise of the "healing of the sick", "miracles cures" and "miracles" that gradually led Oschwald into a deviant career. Oschwald himself recognised that forms of deviant behaviour often seem to feed on the very agencies created to help prevent such irregular behaviour.

> "The enemies that surrounded me, the doctors who
> are full of gall and fear that they will have
> one less victim of their art to bury, and their
> minions in the bureaucracy used every available
> means, including the press, to make my name
> known through their mendacious accusations.
> Even if I'm only in Ballenberg (where he was
> being sent next, H.T.) for a few weeks I'll be a
> talking point, just as I am here in Stühlingen
> (the place to which he had just been
> transferred , H.T.). My support will increase and
> they will follow me to the ends of the
> earth (…). I will be driven from one place to
> the next like a vagrant. It will be no fault
> of mine that my continual transfers will have

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[14] The matter is put more explicitly in a letter from the archiepiscopal authorities:
"We want him (Oschwald) to be transferred to a remote district because our arrangements for his supervision have proved insufficient" (PR, end of March 1844) These measures had been recommended by the catholic grand ducal advisory committee in Karlsruhe at the beginning of March 1844.

the opposite effect from the one intended.
Whether they leave me here or send me back to
my benefice in Hammerseisenbach[15] the blind
storm and fury of the doctors and officials
will abate and I will once again be able to
continue my good work" (PR; late 1844)

The massive increase in followers who flocked to the places where Oschwald practised his activities had made him eminently newsworthy, and the church authorities now understandably feared that this large increase in support would have the effect of "fuelling this zealotry further". The authorities feared that the Oschwald affair would become an accepted part of everyday life. They were concerned that a hard core of supporters would be formed from the hordes of believers who sought consolation, advice and the restoration of health from Oschwald, and that it would develop further into a sect like community. For these reasons the church attempted to block access to Oschwald, and to rob him of his support by continually transferring him to remote parishes. Charismatic movements are dependent on a mass following, as it is the followers themselves to make the ordinary extraordinary. If there are no followers there are no miracles. Charismatic figures, "miracle workers", are as dependent on their following as fish are on water. Consequently drastic measures were not adopted as they would only have led to an increase in sympathy and support[16].

Oschwald seems to sense that there is not necessarily a large gulf between those who are regarded as deviant and those who are left to get on with their own affairs. It is often hard to distinguish between conformist and deviant behaviour. A subtle change in the context can make "deviant" appear "normal". The fact that Oschwald was aware of this can be seen from his application of a transfer to a place of pilgrimage (1846):

"It is generally known that many people (…)
come to look for me wherever I happen to be.
They are prepared to travel for 50 or 60 hours
for my services. My daily experience teaches
me this and I believe that it is in God's will
that it be so. If I were to go to Siberia
today, in less than a month things would be
like they are here because it is my duty to
serve my neighbour and win as many souls as
possible for my Lord. As this is the way
things stand, and I can foresee no change, I
would like to be transferred to a place of
pilgrimage where the arrival of my followers
would attract no notice and I could continue in
peace to work for the benefit of many people"

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[15] Ambros Oschwald had been ordained as a priest on the 16th of August, 1833 and had been engaged as a curate in Hammereisenbach since 1838. Source: *Statist. Handbuch der Erzdiöcese Freiburg* section 1, which contains the personal details of all clerics employed in the diocese. Freiburg 1847, 79 (situation July 1847).

[16] Despite the fact that in Oschwald's case the church sought to stem the flow of support, there are sufficient examples to show that it was in its direct interest to encourage it, particularly when it was a question of enlarging the ‚*communio santorum'*. See Assion 1973.

The ideas and modes of conduct of which the church authorities so strongly disapproved of in Oschwald's case were part of the religious inheritance that the official church administered, at least since it had become ultramontane. The pious practices encouraged by the official church, among them the rediscovery of the cult figure of the mass pilgrimage, did not differ in the slightest from the cults that Oschwald esteemed and practised. Indeed both religious orientations and behavioural prescriptions, the ones preached by the official church and those spread by Oschwald ultimately result from the same dramatic events that we describe nowadays as "modernisation" or "industrialisation" (van Dülmen, 1980, 48, 51f.). And both address themselves to the same audience, the ordinary people. We shall pursue our investigation along these lines in the next section.

Ultramontanism, that is loyalty to the papal orthodoxy, had become established in Baden since the 1840's. This new orientation was principally reflected in the religious observances[17] fostered by the official church. These moves in turn reflected the official catholic church's reaction to the perceived threat posed by the faithful, evoked by the "change from agrarian to industrial forms of existence" (Brepohl, quoted according to Korff, 1977, 354). This "piety formation" (Korff) came from "above" and originated from moves within the church itself against the catholic enlightenment. It also voiced secular dissent and was mobilized against the state, so that there was a "latent Kulturkampf atmosphere" (Nipperdey, 1983, 420) in Baden from the 1840's on. The tension between religious and secular authorities also became apparent in various decisions concerning spheres of responsibility. In 1843 the Catholic Church Council (*Katholischer Oberkirchenrat)* was set up. It played an important role as the secular opposition to the diocesan authorities in the Oschwald affair. The "sections of the church which had hitherto functioned as ministerial departments were dissolved and replaced by a protestant and a catholic consistory, which were both under the power of the ministry (of the interior, H.T.)". The consequence of this was that "direct contact between the archbishop and the ministry was severed" (Lauer, 1908, 192f.). On the one hand these organisational refinements heightened the debate about what measures to take against Oschwald. On the other hand Oschwald benefitted from moves by the diocesan authorities in Freiburg towards greater independence of church policy – at least for a while. The ultramontane "redefinition of the church and religiousness" made clear that the catholic church had become completely at odds with the modern world. The encyclica "Quanta cura" of 1864 and the appended "Syllabus errorum" shows just to what extent this was the case. "Antagonism towards all that was modern had become the criterion of orthodoxy" (Nipperdey, 1983, 413). In this respect too there is very little difference between the views of the official church and its wayward member Ambros Oschwald.

The "anti-modern" church used the same religious-magical cult elements (Korff, 1973; Ebertz, 1979) that Oschwald held in such high esteem and had discovered for himself and his followers in the various places to which he had been "banished". The increasingly common veneration of saints, pilgrimages with the concomitant enthusiastic belief in miracles are two examples of such practices. Despite its rejection of the modern world the anti-modern church used every "modern" means at its disposal to draw the faithful. It mobilised the masses through organised pilgrimages, set up a religious press and founded church associations which were organised along strictly hierarchical lines and according to the will of the office

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[17] Apart from the literature mentioned in the text, see also the following studies: Blessing 1982; Brückner 1958, 1959; Ebertz 1979; Korff 1976.

bearers. In certain respects these associations were very similar to clubs and associations set up in the period prior to the 1848 revolution. The official church had done everything in its power to combat these organisations. The pilgrimage organised by the official church to the so-called Holy Coat of Trier in 1844 (Schieder, 1974; Korff, 1977) is an instructive example of the church's attempts to increase its support. The pilgrimage to the Holy Coat had a political as well as a religious significance. It served to absorb some of the political and social dissatisfaction unleashed in a period of structural change, and to lead it down a "sideline of religious introspection" (Korff). German Catholicism (Deutsch-Katholizismus), the counter-movement triggered by the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier of 1844 and lead by a former catholic priest Johannes Ronge also had a pronounced political dimension (Graf, 1978; Brederlow, 1976, 34f). However in this case it was the "religious declaration of the right to autonomy" which "made the opposition more effective against the restoration state. The opposition would have been far less effective if it had expressed the legitimacy of its criticisms of the *status quo* in 'purely political' terms" (Graf, 1978, 165f.).

The pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier in 1844 is a particularly good example of the "blossoming of religious and magical cults" (van Dülmen, 1980, 51). The renewed respect for miracles is typical of the way in which religion and piety were becoming increasingly emotional and sentimental in response to the "naïve" pilgrim (who was generally female and lower class (Schieder, 1974, 427)). The ultramontane church leadership and the intractable village chaplain Oschwald shared this respect for miracles. For both of them miracles represented an alternative form of knowledge which was far superior to anything previously put forward by the scientific community. In then "age of steam and electricity" miracles assured "quite extraordinarily keen vision" (Korff, 1977, 381). Like catastrophes, miracles break through the predictable regularity of a world that has lost its enchantment and provide it with one last insoluble puzzle. Faith in the power of miracles makes the believer who has had his faith shaken by the course of events feel "safe and secure in the arms of divine providence" (Assion, 1973, 59). God, whom all believed dead, made his presence felt again and once more became the guarantor of order, who demands obedience in faith. Thus it comes as no surprise that obedience to the church and the Pope came to be considered the main virtue of a catholic at the time when the ultramontanists had control. Against this background we must again ask a naïve, but very basic question. Why did Ambros Oschwald become a thorn in the flesh of the official church despite the fact that he shared their views to such a large extent?

The pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier in 1844 provides us with some of the answers to this important question. Wolfgang Schieder has remarked that the pilgrimage became a "'political metaphor' for 'peace and quiet'"[18]. Church leaders and officials got together in the early stages of planning of the pilgrimage and carried it out despite their political and religious differences. Both sides viewed the pilgrimage as upholding the power of the state. Bishop Arnoldi of Trier, who played a leading role in setting up the pilgrimage, expressed this very concisely in a pastoral letter of 6.1.1845: "… as long as a catholic remains a loyal child of the church, so he will remain a loyal subject" (Schieder, 1974, 439). The pilgrimage to the Holy Coat Trier reveals an "anti-revolutionary mentality of safety" (Schieder) which helps to explain the reciprocal interest in a long-term alliance between church and state. And all this despite the differences between the ultramontane church leadership and the state with

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[18] Of the many studies, see particularly Lüdtke 1981, 1982, 1984a.

reference to the age old problems of the "state's supremacy in church matters"[19] and the traditional clashes over marriage and education. In Baden the church had seen to it that these differences came to a head in the 1850's. "In 1852 Archbishop Vicari of Freiburg prohibited requiem masses for the protestant grand duke and locked up any priests who refused to cooperate. He made public appointments without state permission, refused to accept government instructions and forbad state cooperation in examinations in theology and preparation for the priesthood. The state appointed a church commissionar. The bishop excommunicated the officials involved and the state had clergymen arrested. The mainly catholic Freiburg town council made their town clerk, who had been 'banished' by the archbishop, an honorary citizen. They also told the Jesuits to leave. Contrary to the archbishop's expectations the people remained calm. German public opinion was however strongly aroused. Prussia became a kind of protectorate for Protestantism and the modern state. The bishop was arrested in 1854, but his arrest was swiftly followed in …1855 by a concordat between the curia and the government …" (Nipperdey, 1983, 422)[20].

After the revolution of 1848 the fear of an uprising and of general unrest grew considerably. These fears had the effect of bringing the two powers together. The declared "enemies of the church" are quite frequently also sworn "enemies of the state". The reactions of the church and the state were in accordance with their perceived role – the state clung to its monopoly of power and the church claimed its sole right to practise healing. As the politicians reacted principally to "insubordination, excesses, riots and scandals" (Wirtz, 1981), the religious leaders became particularly sensitive to "pietistic sanctimoniousness and visionary devotion". They feared an increase in "religious fanaticism" and "sectarianism".

We must bear these factors in mind when considering why the church authorities finally resorted to tougher measures against Oschwald after having turned a blind eye to the affair for so long. Oschwald's decision to emigrate to America meant that a further escalation of tension was voided. The church authorities welcomed his decision – simply exporting the problem seemed by far the most "elegant" solution.

3. The "Common Search" for an "Acceptable Solution" – Emigration to America.

It was Oschwald himself who very early on (from the beginning of 1848) pointed out to his superiors what was later to be described as a "shared" solution. During his frequent transfers, six or seven in all, he came to the predictable conclusion that his basic situation would remain unchanged, and that the problems he was causing the church authorities would not simply disappear. Oschwald's support continued to increase despite the numerous transfers and he sought to escape his followers in order to re-establish for himself the ordered peace so earnestly desired by the religious authorities.

"I have now asked for leave and confessed that

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[19] For example, typical areas of conflict were the influence of the state on episcopal elections and on other church appointments; state participation in theological examinations and examinations for the priesthood; the possibility of clerics to call upon secular courts to dispute decisions made by the official church. See Brück 1868.

[20] On the „Kulturkampf" in Baden see Bäumer 1977; Becker 1979, 91ff.; Becker 1973 (fort the period after 1860); Buchheim 1963; Burger 1927, 38ff. (for a view favourable to the church); the archdiocese of Freiburg 1827-1977, 1977, 78ff. (another view favourable to the church); Gall 1965, 1968; Lauer 1908, 176 ff. (favourable to the church); Ottnad 1979, 68f.; Sheedan 1983.

I do not know of any other means to stem the
flow of my support, which is depriving me of
the peace I so earnestly desire. Were I to be
granted leave then I could spend some time out
of the country. For experience has shown that
my transfers round the country merely serve to
increase the throng to an almost unbearable
extent (…). I would rather simply get out of
the way, so that things might calm down again."
(PR; 31.1.1848, Herrenwies)

Oschwald's application for leave was rejected on the grounds that there was a shortage of priests in the archbishopric.

The archiepiscopal authorities previously indulgent attitude towards Oschwald was severely put to the test when Oschwald's "mystical writings" brought him into the public eye. The church authorities were put under pressure. There was considerable pressure 'from above', exerted by the grand ducal catholic church council in Karlsruhe (on the 29.9. and the 24.11.1848) for the religious authorities to make a drastic intervention in the Oschwald affair. The lower ranks, represented by the deanery of Ottersweier in Sasbach, put in a request for Oschwald's immediate suspension. It became more difficult to reach a final decision because individual deaneries were at odds and the various neighbouring parishes were not able to reach a unanimous decision. In addition to this the parishes in which Oschwald had been curate in charge for a considerable period came out against the impending transfer and gave him 'excellent references'[21]. However as Oschwald began to write about the impending end of the world in the "mystical writings" of 1848 and it was becoming obvious that this was the focal point of a chiliastic movement – a "spiritual-magnetic union" 1850 – the competent church authorities (from the deanery upwards) began to adopt a more unanimous and distinctly negative attitude towards him. The archiepiscopal deanery Ottersweier in Sasbach expressed a damning judgement in the following terms:

"… (Oschwald) is not content to carry on his
miracle cures completely unhindered. It does

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[21] For example the mayors of the parishes of Hammereisenbach and Bregenbach spoke out in this vein at the beginning of 1844 (see ftn. 13). In the summer of 1844 the inhabitants of the parish of Stühlingen also added their support and they were joined in the autumn of 1850 by the parish council of Hofsgrund, which went as far as to publish a public vote of thanks in the *Neue Freiburger Zeitung'* (11.11.1851, No. 267). The tenor of these statements is roughly similar. Oschwald was "a zealous curate, quite exemplary in his teachings and in his way of life" (Hammereisenbach). "Through his healings (he) laid the foundations for the highest good of mankind, health. As well as healing the body he also healed the soul. For these reasons people flocked to him every day, people whom he could lead from wayward paths to a healthy spiritual life. It is beyond doubt that these activities stirred up hatred, calumny, false accusation and in the end also lead to the persecution of this zealous priest" (representatives of the municipality of Stühlingen, who wanted to have the whole affair investigated by a legal authority "so that the issue of the healing of the sick, which has been discussed so often, can be cleared up"). "Oschwald, the curate in charge, is a cleric who fully merits being described as such" (Hofsgrund, Oschwald's last posting before his emigration).The parish councillor of Hofsgrund expressed his thanks publically as follows: "In the period from the 11th of January 1850, when he assumed office as a curate in this parish, Oschwald has acquired considerable renown. His memory will remain sacred in this parish for hundreds of years. Although there are enough people all too ready to speak ill of this worthy cleric and to cast aspersions on him, we see it as our duty to openly refute this and to assert that Oschwald is a worthy priest. Every right-thinking man who values the truth, and who knows Oschwald personally, will testify to this".

not suffice that hordes of people from far and wide flock to wherever he is settled. He bewitches them with the nonsense he preaches, and they believe it more than than the Holy Gospel. He goes even further than that. He has recently appeared as the author of a piece entitled 'Miscellaneous Mystical Writings by father A. Oschwald, at present resident in Herrenwies' … (…). This wretched composition (is) a hotchpotch of nonsense, reverie and idle fantasy and is completely devoid of content. (…). It is clear that the shrewd author chose the apocalypse as the basis for his fanatical ramblings and took the opportunity of filling this already grim book with prophecies which are well received by the people. This book is attracting considerable attention and has made a great impression on the common people, who are always eager for prophecies which are well received by the people. This book is attracting considerable attention and has made a great impression on the common people, who are always eager for prophecies and are more inclined to believe in miracles than in what is true and good. It would be very difficult indeed to deprive Oschwald of his support as this miracle worker enjoys their considerable esteem. For the common people believe that he is in close contact through God through everyday occurrences." (PR; December, 1848)

A few months later (on the 26th of February, 1849), the same deanery made a further statement on the Oschwald affair – and this time a far more drastic one. Even at this stage there are some indications of the future solution to this difficult problem – a solution much favoured by the church. For without their having to lift a finger the cause of the unrest would disappear, and with it, they hoped, the sects they so despised. America was not only a land of opportunity for those who had come off badly in life. This is put the following way in the letter we have already quoted:

"We have given the simple minded fanatic Oschwald a hearing and it is quite clear that he has not been telling the truth. (…) Pilgrims dazzled by his powers, mostly *women* (…) flock to Herrenwies. This simpleton wants to *emigrate to America*, and some of the women want to go with him (…). We beseech the worthy

diocesan authorities to put no obstacles in
this lunatic miracle worker's way if he wants
to leave our country. We should be very lucky
indeed were we to be rid of such a madman. It
is very doubtful that he will be able to
continue his lunatic ravings on that continent".
(PR; my emphasis)

This letter must be read against the background of the confused situation that surrounded Oschwald – the alleged miracle cures, prophecies, rumours, calumny and praise. The public reaction to this confusion was one of uncertainty, of agitation, which expressed itself in vague insinuations that were rapidly passed on and diffused. One day one of these vague rumours reached the church authorities. In no time it was subject to official confirmation, and what had started as a rumour took on the lasting form of an official communication, prepared by the clergy in Kappel Windeck and preserved in Ambros Oschwald's personal records up to today:

"The following prophecy of Ambros Oschwald is
being passed round by word of mouth, and is
greatly agitating the people. 'This year all the
clergy in the district will die, except me and
the priest in Neusatz. In the parish of
Bühlerthal too only two people will escape, and
in Kappel only one'" (PR)[22]

The publication of the "mystical writings" marks a turning point in the reaction of the archiepiscopal diocesan authorities. The previous strategies – simply turning a blind eye to the affair, and continually transferring the offender – were broadened to include the classic device of condemning the potentially subversive writings. The potential readership was also warned against reading Oschwald's work. From here it was only a short step to the next sanction – suspension from duty. As early as the 9th of March 1849 all deaneries were instructed to warn the faithful from the pulpit against reading Oschwald's works "as they contain invented visions which are full of errors which the catholic church has long since condemned as heresies. They are full of dreamy imaginings of future events which the church considers abominable and which could also confuse simple hearts and minds" (PR). Getting in touch with the deaneries was a way of producing a great effect with relatively little effort. In this respect they resembled the regional authorities (*Bezirksregierungen/Regierungspräsidien*). It is also clear form the records that 55 parishes certified the receipt of the decision of the diocese. In March 1849 Oschwald was threatened with suspension. If he did not "retract the errors, prophecies and the abominable visions which were the products of a diseased imagination" he would as a result of his persistent disobedience have to reckon with his suspension *'ab omni officio parochiali et sacerdotali'*. He was also instructed to report to St. Peter for a four week period of "spiritual recollection": "this inveterate sinner belongs in St. Peter where, if at all possible, he should be brought to his senses and learn how to obey the higher authorities of the church" (PR).

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[22] After Oschwald's death Anton Stoll added some events from the life of the deceased to his Chronicles of St. Nazianz. One of these events explicitly refers to this prophecy in the sense of a "proof of the truth". See Chronicles of St.Nazianz 1867, 28.

St. Peter was the seminary which was transferred from Freiburg to St. Peter in the Black Forrest in 1842. Spiritual exercises were regularly conducted there from October 1846 on (Lauer, 1908, 192). St. Peter was a type of institution which sought to bring about a "change of heart" in those who found themselves there. Its "inner logic" (Barthes, 1974, 49ff.) demanded "a profound change of heart, a religious conversion or a clinical cure" (Erikson, 1978, 178; Hahn, 1982) in order to get rid of any obstacles to "becoming a person for a second time" and to the change of heart that accompanied this process. In order to achieve this conversion the principle of isolation was applied. The subject was cut off from the outside world and overwhelmed by minutely detailed prescriptions which had to be followed to the letter. The guiding principle behind this close observation of rules was "moral accountancy", which enabled the prospective convert and his mentors to assess their goals and the progress made towards them by means of a mathematical accounting system. Barthes (1974, 80) described this as a "counting mania". There are thus several trial periods and differentiated levels of tests to be gone through. It is a precondition for passing into the next phase that the candidate succeed in the tests set at the previous level. In order that the final stage of perfection was in theory open to everyone, and not merely the privilege of the religious virtuosi, there was great emphasis put on "practice" and "repetition" embedded in a variety of "organisational structures" (see Treiber/Steinert, 1980, 100ff.).

Oschwald was not immediately able to recant as was required of him and considered resignation. On the 19th of April 1849 Oschwald personally presented the church leadership with a printed forword to his mystical writings, which was to serve to clear up any uncertainties arising from them. He repeated his willingness to resign "from all appointments in this archdiocese" – under certain conditions. The "unworldly" priest himself made a suggestion as to the way things should proceed which betrays a considerable degree of skill and cunning of the type typical of the self-taught. This suggestion is remarkable because not only societies and associations but also the press and the freedom of the press are seen in his mystical writings as negative "signs of the times":

> "I am giving up my latest appointment as
> chaplain in Hammereisenbach. I will not seek a
> further appointment until my affairs are
> regulated. In the meantime my writings should
> be subject to the laws that generally govern
> the press until such times as they meet with
> the church's approval." (PR)

The archiepiscopal authorities were unimpressed. On the 21st of April they passed a resolution forbidding the dissemination of the mystical writing (including the new foreword). They also demanded that Oschwald make a declaration retracting the errors contained in the writings (to help him do this they provided him with a list of nine points, with precise page references).

On the 25th of April 1849 Oschwald made the declaration that had been demanded of him and the *'suspensio a sacerdotali officio'* imposed on him by the archiepiscopal authorities was consequently lifted. Oschwald was also granted six months leave, which he spent in Urach in the Black Forrest and not in Kempten as originally intended. From there he put in an application on the 21st of September 1849 for an extension of the leave, originally granted until July 1850. His reasons were that he wanted "possibly to travel to England next spring" and that he wanted to dedicate himself "to scientific and literary studies this winter". He

intended to help the priest in Urach in his ministry during this time – as often as he was there and if this met the approval of the archiepiscopal authorities. However on the 5th of October 1849 Oschwald was instructed to act as curate in charge in Hofsgrund, a remote village near Freiburg. The official appointment was made on the 11th of January 1850.

This latest transfer to a remote area did not in fact bring the situation back to normal as the church Leadership had hoped. Stories of prophecies, and miraculous deeds[23] and the support among the rural population they at once attracted and generated once again conspired to keep the Oschwald affair alive. There were renewed complaints from various deans, although Oschwald did have the occasional supporter, like the dean of Breisach/Munzingen who described him as an "innocent dreamer". In the early stages the Oschwald affair was not treated as a theological matter: terms such as "medical bungling" were used to describe Oschwald's actions. However it soon became an issue within the church as the accusation of "medical bungling" also had a strictly theological dimension, namely the urgent necessity to test the validity of Oschwald's "miracle cures". The arguments used against Oschwald's eschatological mystical writings were framed exclusively in theological language. We should not however overlook the fact that the affair also had a political dimension that closely involved the secular guardians of authority. The unprecedented large number of followers flocking to wherever Oschwald was posed a continual threat to 'law and order'. "The term 'law and order' in the 19th century must be viewed as one of the standard catch phrases of the dominant conservative ideology. One could even view it as being directly counter to the revolutionary triad of 'liberty, equality and fraternity'". (Schieder, 1974, 443).

It is easy to list the principal difficulties that Oschwald "caused" his superiors. Once again it is the remarkable flood of support that attracts the attention of both the church authorities and the press, and the following two extracts make clear:

> "The number of these pilgrims has been
> increasing to such an extent in the last few
> weeks that already in some places more than
> 100 people have made the long journey to

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[23] Among other things Oschwald is alleged to have that "a building of a similar construction to a mosque, with three circular walls, should be built in Kempten. His prophecy should be kept in this building because all the scriptures, and even the Holy Scriptures, would be destroyed like during Omar's incursion into Egypt when the Turkish hordes invaded Germany. The building in Kempten would however remain intact and then according to his prophecy a new pope would be elected after the Turks had been decimated on the lower Rhine. According to some of his supporters, Ambros Oschwald would be chosen for this office" (PR, March 1850).

In a long letter Oschwald made his own view on the subject clear: "I intend to answer the questions put to me in the writ issued by the archiepiscopal authorities. They ask me whether we really intended to construct a mosque like building in Kempten and whether I have any aspirations to be elected pope. Any sensible person must see that the first point is not true. My friend is an antiquarian and lives in Kempten; he is a quiet, knowledgeable, good man, certainly not a charlatan, and would have nothing to do with plans of this type. He has lived there long before I put pen to paper. Like anyone else he hopes that his house and library will be spared by the Turkish hordes (…). Of course I do not want to be elected pope, for I do not aspire to honour nor wish to be weighed down by the burden of office, especially nowadays". (PR, April 1850)

The name Lauterer (or Läuterer), the friend in Kempten whom Oschwald mentioned in his letter, crops up frequently in the personal records after Oschwald's emigration in 1854. For example, his name appears in the priest of Waldstätten's report of 20.5.1870. He is ascribed an active role in the meetings of Oschwald's supporters, now called Oschwaldians. In this report the old reproaches were repeated and some new ones added. It was claimed that Lauterer had married a certain Johanna, who already had a child, but this was a great secret. It was said that the child was the long awaited prince of peace … (Report of parish office in Gerlachsheim, January 1856).

In the "mystical writings" Oschwald described "J. M. L." as "my dear friend and helper in my work", to whom he owes a prophecy quoted in the "Mystical Writings" themselves (loc. cit., 466).

Hofsgrund. As a rule they return half mad. Apart from the fact that travelling costs so much in these hard times it means that these people also do not want to work any more. They spend all their time praying under the illusion that everything will be thrown into confusion and the world will end next April as predicated by the curate in charge, Oschwald". (PR; Deanery of Walldürn in Limbach, 23rd of March, 1850)

"The priest in Hofsgrund, a little village on the slopes of the Feldberg, is attracting considerable attention as a prophet and miracle worker. He is stirring up the local people, who are in any case inclined to believe in the miraculous, with tales of imminent war and the overthrow of the state. The people flock in great throngs to the miracle worker, who is mostly to be found in the local inn. They come from far and near, some have even from a parish 40 hours journey away" (*Badische Landeszeitung, no. 128, 2.6.1850*)

Reports coming in from several deans brought to light further charges, which were fairly serious, given the ultramontane orientation the church leadership in Baden. For "that was what was new at the time: the church was firmly oriented towards Rome and therefore 'ultramontane'. More than that – it looked towards the absolute and supreme authority of the Pope." (Nipperdey, 1983, 410). It must have annoyed the church leadership in Freiburg more than somewhat to have to read in the deans' reports that the influence of Oschwald and his supporters would spread, that a new pope would be chosen and, as some of Oschwalds's supporters claimed, that it would be Oschwald himself. All this was going to take place after the destruction of the Turks on the lower Rhine. There were also concerned reports from individual priests who had already noted the sect-like organisations formed by Oschwald's supporters in their own and in numerous other parishes.

It was the archbishop himself who decided that drastic action had to be taken against Oschwald, as following note dated March 1850 makes clear:

"There is an enormous flow of support from all sides; Oschwald is taking on the robe of a prophet; he predicts terrible events and the people elevate him the rank of future pope; we simply must get him out of the way." (PR)

The minus points continued to accumulate on the record that the archiepiscopal authorities kept of Oschwald's behaviour. These minus points touched upon the dogmatic self-image of the official catholic church and were thus likely to bring about a change in the present state of

affairs. Developments in this direction were hastened by an event in the summer of 1850. Oschwald made a direct application to the archbishop for permission to found an association. At first it seemed a harmless enough request, especially as catholic federations were very much part of the development of the ultramontane movement. At the time when the Oschwald affair was causing such a stir the ultramontanists were beginning to set up numerous church associations. Oschwald's association was simply a collection of laymen under his leadership and had a recognisable model in existing church associations. He advertised the association in a small tract with an unusual title: 'Spiritual-magnetic association, the blast of an angel's trumpet throughout the whole world. Beside him is the gentle dove, gathering the olive branches into the ark of God's New Jerusalem'. (St. Gallen, February 1850)

In a handwritten note (22nd August 1850) Archbishop v. Vicari made his feelings on the matter clear. He also gave reasons for his reactions, pinpointing the "formation of sects" as the factor which had ultimately swayed him:

> "Oschwald's vain aspirations could result in
> the formation of a new sect. It is thus
> imperative that he be officially got out of the
> way, as people are flocking to him in ever
> increasing numbers (…). On many occasions in
> the past Oschwald applied for permission to
> emigrate. It would be best to grant him
> permission and suspend him from duties in our
> bishopric. It is very dangerous to let him
> continue his present activities" (PR)

The decisive tone of this note also marks the course of action adopted by the archiepiscopal authorities. As early as the 23rd of August 1850 the church leadership requested the Breisach deanery in Munzingen to inform Oschwald that he was suspended *'ab omni officio pasternali et sacerdotali'* principally because "according to reports reaching us he disregarded the prescriptions of the Council of Trent in the administration of the sacrament of penance". It is significant that Oschwald was not accused of founding a sect but of misconduct in the administration of penance. In this way it was easier to sanction him. It was easy to establish the facts surrounding misconduct in the exercise of a priestly duty. Reactions to such a misdeed were also cleary defined with the result that the measures taken appeared routine. And everything that is apparently routine can be carried out with less fuss and saves complicated and time-consuming justifications. However the archbishop's dogmatics and the legal experts had overlooked the fact that the accusations made against Oschwald were not based on official investigations but merely on rumours. It was thus easy for the accused to prove before the archiepiscopal deanery that he had never gone against the catholic catechism nor the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, nor had he urged others to do so. Denunciations of this kind were untrue and based on false reports (PR). He had already (on the 24th of August 1850) let his superiors know "that he would in the meantime fully comply with orders regarding the founding of a spiritual-magnetic association" (PR). The archiepiscopal authorities retreated from their original position. On the 6th of September they announced that "the matter is somewhat different from what it first appeared" (PR). It was then decided that on the 24th of September Oschwald should go to St. Peter where he would participate in

spiritual exercises and thus be "moved to perfect obedience". He was to stop writing and disseminating "his thoughts and fantasies". As the controversy reached its height the parish of Hofsgrund intervened on its curate in charge's behalf and requested that Oschwald be allowed to remain in the parish (18th of September 1850). The office bearers of the parish were full of praise for their priest and certified that Oschwald, in contrast to his predecessors, had carried out his official duties in an exemplary manner which was totally in keeping with his exemplary life.

However the conflicts surrounding the spiritual-magnetic association seemed to be leading increasingly towards a crisis. Oschwald had not become the bane of the church authorities simply because of the massive rush of support "from the lower classes" as was claimed by the archiepiscopal authorities in a communication dated 7th of January 1853. The unusually large increase in support was and remained the fact which could be "objectively" established. However the church leadership only got wind of this indirectly through official notifications from secular authorities responsible for the maintenance of 'law and order'. Yet it is precisely these ideas and modes of conduct that were considered so reprehensible in Oschwald that cannot be viewed objectively. It is enough merely to count heads to come to an objective conclusion as to the extent of his "support". In their handling of the Oschwald affair the archiepiscopal authorities also discovered that the nature of an action is dictated by the circumstances in which it is committed and by those present at the time as well as by the various institutions which collect, filter and evaluate information "for official purposes". They were capable of learning from their mistakes and were mistrustful of the rumours circulating about Oschwald which were in some instances couched in terms that suggested the seriousness and reliability of an official report. It was for these reasons that on the 21st of March 1851 the archiepiscopal authorities directed the six neighbouring parishes of Hofsgrund to check the truth of the rumours about Oschwald by reference to a list of questions which they provided. This investigation came out in favour of Oschwald, who had found the rumours concerning him increasingly intolerable and wanted to escape them by going abroad for a long period. He wanted to leave Baden and the archdiocese of Freiburg. Immediately after the spiritual exercises prescribed him and which had been set for the week of the 23rd to the 28th September, he wanted "to go away, to Munich, to live the life of a recluse there and to be able to pursue some scholarly work" (PR). To make this possible he had requested leave of absence as early as the 20th of September, 1850. He repeated this request on the 5th of February, 1851 and justified his application as follows:

> "Continued slander and misinterpretation, and
> distortion on the truth which is often
> malicious and often plain foolish, suspicion
> and the general mistrust it arouses as well as
> a host of other troubles and inconveniences –
> all these added to my rather poor health have
> induced me to repeat my previous request". (PR)

Although Ambros Oschwald had declared on the 4th of October 1850 that he no longer intended to distribute the tract on the 'spiritual-magnetic association', and although the report of the six neighbouring parishes had exonerated him – 'Oschwald the curate in charge does not intend to found sects and need not be feared' – archbishop Hermann v. Vicari came to a different conclusion in a note dated 28th of May, 1851:

> "According to numerous reports the so-called
> Magnetic Association is spreading rapidly
> through the influence of the curate in charge
> in Hofsgrund, Ambros Oschwald. (…). I judge it
> necessary that this association be prohibited
> (…). The aim (of the association) is to
> return to the early church. These aims are
> vague and cannot be fulfilled. What form would
> such a church take and how would it be brought
> about? Unfortunately that is left to each
> individual to decide, and that can only lead to
> visionary fantasies. I think it would be very
> dangerous to ignore what is going on, as it
> could lead to the formation of a new sect".
> (PR)

The 'spiritual-magnetic association' was proscribed on the 6th of June 1851. The decision was preached from the pulpit.

In a lengthy pastoral letter of the 4th August archbishop Hermann v. Vicari expressed the official views on the 'spiritual-magnetic association'. The main part of the text is worth quoted in full:

> "We consider ourselves repeatedly obliged to
> warn you most emphatically about the writings
> of the priest Ambros Oschwald. Although they
> have already been proscribed by the church
> authorities, these texts are unfortunately still
> viewed by the people as a rich source of faith,
> devotion and piety. This is not so, indeed
> they contain erroneous ideas the church has
> long since discarded. These writings abound
> with imaginary visions, fantastic reveries and
> prophecies and serve to foment fanatic
> tendencies. We are firmly against the so-
> called 'spiritual-magnetic association' which
> under Oschwald's leadership is spreading to
> some places in our diocese. It is true that
> this association has already been proscribed by
> the leading church authorities: however many
> people pay no heed to this and therefore once
> again we earnestly enjoin the faithful in all
> conscience to refrain from joining any of these
> proscribed associations. (…). They have their
> origins in the diseased imagination of a poor

man, and have no clear purpose … [24]. (…)
Associations like these, which start up without
the church's permission easily lead to a
renunciation of the church. As we have good
reason to fear this we can already predict that
some members are even now reluctant to submit
to the judgements of the church. They no
longer humbly accept the word of the legitimate
church authorities, they themselves pose as
judges and speak of a higher inner inspiration …" (PR)

The archbishop warned the faithful against the "sweet poison of pietism" against "sham pietism and frenzied devotion". It was basically these movements that the official church feared would result from Oschwald's activities. The particular emphasis on individual religious experience, which was the protestant sects form of withdrawal into the "unassailable incommunicability" of subjective religious "experience" which bypassed the priest and served as a direct link between God and man could, the church feared, result in separatist tendencies. Logically enough in a later internal church communication (7th January 1853) it was described as a union "of a pietistic, separatist kind". This was diametrically opposed to tendencies within the church during is ultramontane phase. For according to the representatives of the ultramontane movement "the catholic church must be extremely unified and closed to outside influences; there should be no pluralism of individual divergence. In order for this to be possible this church has to be ordered on strictly hierarchical line and be a priests' church in the full sense of the world, a hierarchically disciplined clergy and its authority are of prime importance". (Nipperdey 1983, 410).

Despite the general clericalisation of the church the pious practices actively encouraged 'from above' in certain respects raised the status of laymen through the formation of associations that oddly enough resembled liberal and democratic models in the way they organised themselves without external influence. The anti-modern church imitated the up-to-date model of associations and clubs which it did not exempt from criticism. It encouraged congregations to join associations, which in certain respects continued the tradition of the brotherhoods, with one significant difference. These associations had a clear structure of authority and were firmly in the control of the local clergy. Thus they must be viewed as organisations which shored up the authority of a strictly hierarchical and well-disciplined church. Against this background it was inevitable that the archbishop attempted to make clear to the faithful in a pastoral letter we have already quoted that there were associations and associations. Oschwald is not to blame for insisting that all associations were fundamentally the same. It is surprising how important small signs and symbols can become when it is a question of pinpointing deviant behaviour. Thus Oschwald could claim "in all innocence":

"If the so-called "spiritual- magnetic
association' is to be officially proscribed we
will accept this without further ado because it
has never been our intention to go against the
church's wishes. I only hope that we will be

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[24]   See also section 4.1, which also refers to Oschwald's medium.

> permitted to found a new catholic association
> in order to promote piety, harmony, active love
> of one's neighbour and steadfastness in the
> faith. For today more than ever we are
> entitled to come together as well-meaning
> people and work together. Missions everywhere
> have strongly encouraged the zealous to form
> associations together in order to strengthen
> and support each other as much as possible in
> their faith" (PR; 20.6.1851)

Apart from the first sentence we would have no way of knowing that this extract was in fact composed by a priest accused of engaging in separatist intrigues, and who was being threatened with immediate suspension. These words could have been taken from the archbishop's pastoral letter. There is however a criterion by which it can be judged whether such a lay association "guides the faithful towards a devout and pious existence" or exudes the "sweet poison of pietism". The archbishop clearly defined this criterion in his pastoral letter:

> "If you want to join associations in order to
> achieve something really worthwhile with your
> joint efforts, go ahead! There are many many
> worthy and blessed associations, brotherhoods
> and sodalaties in the catholic church which
> *meet with the full approval and receive the*
> *blessing* of the church itself. They offer you
> effective means to foster a religious and moral
> way of life. Associations like these which are
> *approved by the church* do not lead you away
> from the main tenets of Christianity …" (PR; my
> emphasis)

The division between 'good' and 'evil' is thus a question of definition. It is the church authorities themselves who establish the terms and give their approval to certain "external" associations after subjecting them to close scrutiny.

The conflicts surrounding the 'spiritual-magnetic' association mark a turning point in the Oschwald affair. Ambros Oschwald was finally suspended 'ab omni officio parochiali' according to a decree issued on the 14th of December. He was finally informed on the 19th December. The reason given was compliance with Oschwald's request for leave, which he had put before the authorities on February 5th 1851, although he asked to retain his right to free

board *(Tischtitel)*[25]. Oschwald remained in Hofsgrund until the 18th of March 1852. He was away in Munich from June 1st 1852. At the beginning of the year he had informed his superiors that he would resign from his ministry for as long as God willed and until such times as conditions were more favourable. By saying this he was comparing himself with saint Gregor of Nazians[26]. The reference to this saint worked because of the assumed parallel development in their lives. It was a relatively sophisticated attempt to make it appear to himself as well as to the church authorities that his suspension hat not been legitimate. And yet this notional affinity with the life of the saint has an intensely realistic dimension: it reflects how a saint can become to heretic and a heretic a saint[27]. The conflict surrounding the 'spiritual-magnetic association' is significant in that it again shows where Oschwald was really considered to have gone wrong. He was obviously one of those people who "do not mean to go against norms but do so in their over-eagerness to follow them" (Erikson, 1978, 29; referring to Merton). To a certain extent Oschwald was only repeating, albeit in an exaggerated (and thus distorted) form what was being preached from the pulpits at the time. Many of his actions were exaggerated versions of the pious practices put forward by the ultramontane movement which had its own religious-magical cults.

Oschwald was in Munich form the 1st of July 1852 until the middle of March 1854. He was registered as a medical student there for four semesters[28]. He fled his supporters. By distancing himself physically and engaging in studies he erected a double "cordon sanitaire" around himself. However his past caught up with him very quickly. In Ubstadt (Baden) as

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[25] The right to free board (*titulus mensae*). A form of entitlement bestowed through ordination; according to catholic ecclesiastical law the *titulus mensae* was a subsistence allowance for those who had taken holy orders. The responsibility for providing the subsistence allowance was assumed by a third person, either by a private individual of by a corporate body. This practise had been going since the 15th century, and was particularly widespread in Germany and Austria (the ordination of priests depended on the granting of this subsistence allowance). According to the law of the time a cleric who had been suspended from duty retained his right to *titulus mensae*. However Oschwald's request for the maintenance of his, which was supported by the archiepiscopal authorities in Freiburg, unleashed considerable controversy between these authorities and the grand ducal consistory in Karlsruhe (between 16.9.1851 and 30.12.1851). Oschwald's request was rejected three times, but the consistory finally agreed to it. See Wetzer and Welte's Kirchenlexikon, Freiburg 1899 (second ed.), vol. 11, col. 1728-1798, esp. col. 1794ff.; Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche 1965, vol. 10, col. 983f.

[26] The following publications give some information about Gregor von Nazianz: Enciclopedia delle religioni 1971, col. 667-671; Hamman 1976; Patrologie 1978, 298-303; Theologische Realenzyklopädie 1985, vol. XIV, 164-173.

[27] Altering things slightly we could say that the saint is reflected in the fool just as the fool is in the saint. Zijderveld (1976, 1982) provides some useful insights into the fool can function in this way.

[28] According to Mrs. Laetitia Boehm (director of the archives in the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich) A. Oschwald was enrolled as a medical student at Munich University from 1852-1854. As there is no documentary evidence available for this period, we have no way of knowing whose lectures Oschwald attended. However there is good reason to believe that Oschwald attended the lectures of the physician Johann Nepomuk Ringseis (1785-1880). Ringseis was King Ludwig I's personal physician. He became professor of medicine in 1826 and retired in 1870. He opposed scientific trends in medicine and attempted to develop a type of medicine based on philosophical and religious principles, using Christian revelation as a starting off point. His most important work was 'System der Medizin" (1841). He was a representative of the romantic school of medicine, which held that the prime cause of all illness was sin. His theological ideas were influenced by Johann Michael Sailer (1751-1832). Sailer, a catholic theologian and pedagogue, was appointed suffragan in 1822 and became bishop of Regensburg in 1829. Although he continually came under attack from the church, he played an important role in the defeat of the Enlightenment in Bavaria. See Blessing 1982, 84, 87, 302, 304.

elsewhere[29] Oschwald's supporters had formed relatively independent groups with locally recruited leaders. In official church reports there was already talk of so-called "Oschwaldians" – which makes the extent to which the associations had disengaged itself from official bodies quite clear. The "Oschwaldians" displayed a "unhealthy tendency towards pietism". The parish priest in Ubstadt made his feelings about the activities of the local Oschwaldians clear in a report dated 10th January 1854. They had aroused the attention of both the state and the religious authorities – an exorcism had been forcefully terminated by the police. The report claimed significantly that Oschwald's followers "regard themselves as chosen vessels of grace"[30]. As there had been open meetings between the members of the Ubstadt group and Oschwald in Munich, he was once again confronted with familiar reproaches. It seemed that he refused to listen to reason. The purpose of the meeting(s) was controversial. In his report the priest in Ubstadt insisted that Oschwald played a leading role:

"It came out that from time to time some prominent members visited him in Munich on behalf of the others. They were well received by him, and it is clear from their later statements and actions that he pressed his views upon them and they came away deeply inspired by him."
The priest implicated Oschwald by establishing a particular temporal and causal order between the two events (the meeting(s) in Munich and what happened in Ubstadt). Oschwald objected strongly to this causal imputation and interpreted the meeting (in the singular!) quite differently. "On the 19th December of last year I had requested my account for board for the period 19th September to 19th December of last year. As I did not receive it I suspected that there had been some difficulty (…). I learned from the cleryman's office S. that my application had not been successful because of certain events in Ubstadt. (…) I must add that I did not know that I have followers in Ubstadt … . I only learned of this *after* the events in question. It was only *after* that that some people came to me from there and I believe that I have played some part in bringing people rapidly to their senses …" (PR; 16.3.1854; my emphasis).

As statement follows statement and assertion follows assertion the "hierarchy of reliability" (H. S. Becker) becomes obvious. The definition of reality made by a responsible official acting in an official capacity is generally preferred. In the meantime Oschwald tried to make a virtue out of (financial) necessity; he appeared anxious to prolong his student existence and to make sure he could earn his living by it in future. His vocation to heal the

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[29] The parish of Mudau is mentioned several times in Oschwald's personal records. The report of 10.1.1854 quoted in the text also mentions Mudau. To a certain extend Mudau can be regarded as an Oschwaldian stronghold. Wirtz (1981, 173f.) also mentions Mudau in connection with the failed harvest and potato blight of 1847, which hit this part of the Oden Forest, a traditionally poor region, particularly hard. There was no great social unrest in the Oden Forest at this time, although the population was continually being called upon to take up arms. One of the instigators of these revolutionary currents was Adam Stoll, who was condemned to two years imprisonment by the court in Mannheim on the 13th of July 1847. Adam Stoll was a soap boiler and was allegedly the son of a former headmaster in Mosbach. An examination of the archives in Karlsruhe was not able to throw any light on whether the former weaver and later administrator of the St. Nazianz colony, Anton Stoll, was related to the Stolls of Mudau/Mosbach. The fact that there were Oschwaldians in Mudau, and that the world views of both Stolls are closely related, seems to indicate that further research on this detail is necessary. In Adam Stoll's proclamation there was a general call for a chiliastic type of freedom and for a state without Jews, aristocrats and officials. There were also marked anti-institutional tendencies in Oschwald's thinking – for example, his call for the dismantlement of the bureaucracy and for a general decrease in the number of secular officials. Adam Stoll wanted Germany to be run on republican lines like America. America seemed to be the promised land. However the presence of chiliastic movements there too indicated that the underlying social conditions which prompted the formation of the movement were similar to in Germany. See Wirtz 1979a.

[30] A similar definition occurs in Weber (1964, 424). The mystic is a divine „vessel", which imposes a contemplative method of healing.

sick was to become a profession. He sought to legitimise this practise by providing evidence of study:

"As my circumstances do not permit me to hope for a proper appointment and I have no wish to get involved in the old difficulties I have decided in the meantime to dedicate myself to the study of homeopathy. I have long been interested in the healing of the sick and I believe it is also my true profession. In order to be able to continue these studies this summer I am giving up my right to board and my benefice in Hammereisenbach. I reserve the right to take it up again should God so will …" (PR; 16.3.1854).

Ambros Oschwald began to withdraw from the world. He became a student again, and when he discontinued his studies (April 1854) he lost the chance to rise in the world again and to find acceptance. He left Munich and went back to his supporters in Urach (in the Black Forrest). He who had previously run away from his supporters now returned to them. With their support he was able to turn his back on the archbishop: he expressed the desire to emigrate to America with his supporters. On April the 4th he wrote to the archiepiscopal authorities from Urach[31]:

"I have now come to the decision to travel to
America sometime this year, as soon as my
circumstances permit. I have already received
instructions from the reverend archiepiscopal
authorities which stated: 'if I was not prepared
to abandon my following then we would go
somewhere where we would be out of touch with
the world'. As I could not comply with the
first request I take it as the will of God that
I follow the latter course (…). God knows
that we have nothing to do with separatist
tendencies in matters of faith. Our separatist
tendencies are restricted to the affairs of
this world and with our present living conditions." (PR)

Ambros Oschwald fled a world which had become unbearable for him. In this respect Oschwald "opted out" and founded the colony of St. Nazianz in the "wilderness" of

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[31] Archbishop Hermann von Vicari (1773-1868) gave Oschwald an accompanying letter written in Latin: "Hermann von Vicari, by the grace of God and the Holy See of Rome archbishop of Freiburg, capital of the province of the upper Rhine. Appointed prelate (Hausprälat) to the Holy Father and to the papal throne, Comes romanus etc. The honourable Ambros Oschwald, priest of our archdiocese, born on the 14th of March 1801 in Mundelfingen, ordained on the 16th of August 1833 and until now chaplain in Hammereisenbach, has given notice because he intends to emigrate to America. We accept his resignation and dismiss the forementioned priest from our archdiocese. We testify that he adhered to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church in matters of faith, discipline and rite, although he did display separatist tendencies and wrote a book full of false visions. He lead a pure life in every respect and followed our commandments with dignity and to the best of his ability. We would also like to make clear in this document that as far as we are concerned the case against Ambros Oschwald is closed. We do not intend to impose further prohibitions on him, subject him to further censure or remove him from office, so that he can fulfil all his priestly duties when my Lord bishop accepts him into his diocese in America. We commend the priest who is about to leave us to your favour, and trust that you will watch over him and protect him in the name of the Lord, Freiburg im Breisgau, 2nd of June 1854." (PR).

Wisconsin on the world's margins[32]. This colony was not only a place of "flee" to (in the literal sense – Oschwald escaped from conflicts with secular and religious authorities). It was also a refuge which opened up the possibility of a new way of looking at the world because of its geographical and social isolation. Above all through the ascetic life-style practised there it guaranteed a "regal passage" to the next life.

St. Nazianz became a place of rescue and refuge for the eschatological community. This idea of refuge belongs to the world of ideas of the millenary movements, whose origins are of a social nature. The "spiritual-magnetic association" founded by Oschwald, and the foundation document (a pamphlet and the association's constitution), are the keys to the understanding of the chiliastic movement that formed round him. Oschwald's 'Mystical Writings' also help us understand this movement, and must be decoded. In the following section we will examine these writings in detail.

4. Millenarianism and Emigration

1. News from the Provinces as News from another World. The "Spiritual-Magnetic Association"

The "foundation document" of the "spiritual-magnetic association" was published in 1850 and gives some information about its origins and constitution (rules and regulations) and about its main purpose. The association's constitution does not only provide the spiritual and organisational framework that kept the group of emigrants around Oschwald together in the recruitment phase and at the time of the Atlantic crossing, it also fully explains the foundation

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[32] Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) had visited the district, including Green Bay, some 20 years before Oschwald, in 1831. At that time it was a typical "frontier parish". Significantly enough Tocqueville used the "safe" waterway, which is an indication that at the time the region could still be described as a "wilderness". Tocquevills's route is described in a book by Richard Reeves (1984), who made the same journey a few years ago.

of the St. Nazianz colony[33]. In this respect the term "foundation document" is not far-fetched. This document helps prove the existence of an elective affinity between the ancient practise of exorcism and animal magnetism (Ellenberger, 1985, 95ff.), an affinity which, as Ellenberger has shown (1985, 89 ff.) corresponds to actual historical developments. Oschwald's interest in "animal magnetism" (animalischer Magnetismus)[34] seemed to start at a time when scientific interest in mesmerism had already abated (see Blankenburg's afterword in Darnon, 1986, 191 ff.). Whatever the reasons for this – "its occasional indiscriminate contacts with homeopathy and spiritualism[35] and various forms of natural healing and occultism" (Blankenburg, 1986, 191) – were also the preconditions for its continuation in a debased popular form. One important indicator of this is the "growing (…) eclecticism of the literature on mesmerism after 1850" (Blankenburg, 1986, 224, ftn. 15). The "spiritual-magnetic association's" brochure is also an example of this.

A medium endowed with a 'sixth sense' is an essential feature of this literature which had consigned "the outworn elements of mesmerism to the spirits" (Blankenburg, 1986, 217)

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[33] The constitution of the „spiritual-magnetic organisation" was drawn up in 1850. On the 16th of April 1854, in Urach in the Black Forest, Oschwald produced a new collection of rules, shortly before his departure for America. The volume was entitled *Statuten für die Gründung der Kolonie in St. Nazianz* (Supreme Court, Aug. Term 1879, Moerchen v. Stoll, 38ff.). The prime concern of this publication was to settle the financial questions associated with the untertaking (particularly the crossing). The statutes also laid down the basic conditions for communal life in the projected colony. They were much more detailed that the original "constitution" of 1850. In theory the colony rested on two "pillars" – a secular and a religious. The head of the "Council of the Elders" (senate) played the role of the mayor within the colony. Oschwald himself was the head of those responsible for maintaining public morals (this section was called the euphorat). They dealt with issuing warnings and initiating exclusion proceedings. On paper members of the colony were entitled to elect the incumbents of some posts (for example, the members of the senate). In practice, the colony was governed by Oschwald along patriarchal lines, like a large household. The statutes propagated a communist way of life (communism of love), and provided for the setting up of institutions for both men and women run along monastic lines.

On the 1st of September 1855, a year after the colony was founded, Oschwald issued a second book of statutes entitled *Organization. Living for the Future – St. Nazianz. Wages and Food.* These rules maintain the egalitarian spirit of the early years. However, bearing in mind the purpose for which they were intended, they are phrased very simply and pragmatically and are thus more reminiscent of 19th century factory regulations, which, despite the occasional solemn attempt to instil certain values, nevertheless set down work times and wage levels in a completely impersonal way.

In 1867 Oschwald wrote his will, which was intended to secure the future of the colony after his death. He began the process of institutionalisation by introducing measures aimed at making power relationships within the colony increasingly depersonalised and formalised (Popitz 1986, 38ff.). The government of the colony was put into the hands of a commission, the members of which Oschwald himself elected. He also made provisions in his will for turning the colony into a corporation (as defined by American law) (see ftn. 58). Oschwald had his will witnessed by two selected witnesses. Given the fact that he took such pains to regulate his affairs, it comes as a surprise that two of the Oschwald's trustees, Conrad Moerchen and Anna Selberer, demanded "their rights" – a share of the property and proper reward for work done – before a court of law after his death. The legal documents make clear that Oschwald was warned by the administrator of the colony, Stoll, that Moerchen was always causing "difficulties". This makes it likely that Moerchen was chosen as a trustee in order to bind him more closely to the colony. (See Supreme Court, August Term 1879, Moerchen vs. Stoll, Apellant's Brief and Argument, 14ff.).

[34] According to the theory of animal magnetism the body emitted a mysterious energy, called *fluidum*, which had therapeutic effects. The level of this energy could be increased by specific procedures, such as putting it in contact with charged objects. Unlike Gassner, Mesmer used physics in an attempt to provide a rational explanation for this phenomenon. Since Mesmer made use of controversial contemporary discoveries in the field of electricity which had since gained wide acceptance, his theory of animal magnetism became enormously influential. Within no time Mesmer and his theory became talking points in the academies, salons and cafes in France. See Schott 1986 (esp. the articles by Blankenburg, Geyer-Kordesch and Kupsch).

[35] It was Marx who observed that the rise in spiritualism at the end of the 1840's was directly related to the failure of the 1848 revolution: "we must keep in mind that the tables began to dance when the rest of the world seemed to stand still" (Capital, vol. 1 (MEW 23), Berlin 1974, 85, note 25).

whilst "the ghostly bridge into the realm of the spirit had already been erected by somnambulism"[36]. A medium was able to perceive things that lay hidden in the past, future or at a distance. Of course there had to be visionary descriptions of the elysian fields as well. The medium can perform extraordinary feats, not only because his utterances are to be regarded as tidings (revelations) from another world but also because when he is in an "ecstatic state" he is obviously able to perform feats that go far beyond what could be expected of him in his normal (waking) state.

Oschwald also had a medium ready who differed in no respects from the archetypes in the literature. He was "called Alois Heitzmann, from Urach … a boy of little education, one of nature's simpletons who could neither read nor write properly"[37]. The charismatic quality of "pure foolishness" shines through here (Mühlmann, 1961, 259). However this was a special kind of simplicity: it contained an element of arrogance which came from the certain knowledge that one belonged to the elect (Mühlmann, 1961, 342). This sense of belonging to an elect both reinforces the sense of community and marks the boundary with the rest of the world. The fact that this knowledge is shrouded in secrecy (Simmel, 1958, 257ff.) further underlines this aspect. Thus the boy requires "caution and extreme reticence towards people who do not belong to the association" (p. 22).

Oschwald's medium[38] lived "on a lonely farm, far away from the road, and almost inaccessible in winter". This statement was supposed to imply that he was not open to "suggestions" and that his knowledge was based on supernatural abilities. The schoolteacher who was called as a reliable witness was of the same opinion: "the boy is quite harmless … he speaks a rural dialect although he usually speaks fairly correctly (…). In short he comes out with things – parables and descriptions – that could not possible have been in him to start with" (p. IVf.). The fact that the boy is described as "simple" ("in the true sense of the word") guarantees that he does not get his knowledge from Satan (p. 26). It is far more the case that "the angel (speaks) through this child" (p. VI.). Still in the blessed age of innocence, the boy behaved "according to the book" in all respects (p. VIII). He got into a "state in which he began to preach …., without being aware of it or believing it … he trembles visibly before his sermon when there is no clergyman present, when there is one there it is hardly noticeable" (p. IIIf.). And the things he proclaimed!

First of all he awoke a "yearning for the beginning" (Eliade) and encouraged a "longing for the early church" (Bacht): "A small community will come together, just like 1.800 years ago, in the times of the Apostles (p. 2). The early church is equated with an egalitarian collective which practises a strict form of "love communism" (Liebeskommunismus)(Max Weber). "Have everything in common, pray and keep watch with and for one another so that love keeps growing in your heart" (p. 2f.). There was a predominance of more open, personal relationships which in themselves could be elevated into ethical values; an early Christian

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[36] The poet-doctor Justinus Kerner (1786-1862) plays an important role here. His book '*Seherin von Prevorst*' (1829, two volumes) played a significant part in drawing attention to somnambulism (Ellenberger 1985, 127ff.; Kerner 1969; Straumann 1927). The role of Romanticism in the critical reception of these ideas is dealt with in Ramming 1948. See also G. Müller and W. Müller-Funk in Schott 1986.

[37] In the following section the numbers of the pages referring to the pamphlet about the 'spiritual-magnetic association' are given in brackets. We are referring to page III here.

[38] Streichenbachhof at that time belonged to the parish of Urach in the Black Forest. Hammereisenbach, the parish in which Oschwald had worked as a chaplain since 1838 was in the same district. See *Das Grossherzogthum Baden* 1857, 657 and 659; also the *"Schwarzwälder Bote"* of 12./13.9.1964: 'From Urach to America. 110 years ago the Oschwaldian community caused a great stir in the Black Forest'.

spiritual brotherhood once again prevailed. In this way the religious community guaranteed group solidarity once again, and at a time when the traditional guarantors of personal relations, – family and kinship relations – were weakened by the institutions of the developing capitalist culture with its predilection for impersonal, objective relations.

Then the boy announced the catastrophe that was so familiar to chiliastic movements and prophesied the certain appearance of the "antichrist" which made the foundation of "New Jerusalem"[39] a certainty (p. 24). On the one hand "New Jerusalem" came into existence of its own accord, on the other hand only the chosen were called upon to help build "New Jerusalem", so that it was not enough merely to wait passively. People had to be vigilant and in a constant state of being prepared. To this end true Christians were to join together in a community, in an association (pp. 17, 20ff.) and submit themselves to a strict regime. As the medium himself said: "Mortify the flesh and make live the spirit … . By mortification of the flesh I mean that you must renounce everything that smacks of luxury and sensual pleasure" (p. 13). This rigour was reinforced by a series of rules – nine in all – which were the basic tenets of the "true brotherhood association, … which has its members and its leader(s)" (p. 22). However the association differed from the genuine sect in one important respect: it was organised along hierarchical lines – as every "community has to have a leader" (p. 17). It was arranged that the omniscient boy would suggest one. In an ecstatic state he made the following prophecy: "… Ambros Oschwald should be your leader and you should obey him as you do the Pope. He will guide you and give you instructions which you must observe. Anyone who does not live by these rules or does not heed them will be punished for his guilt and cut off from the community. He has sought the children of god and has found them, he should hold sway over them and lay down the rules" (p. 17f.). With a few minor alterations these rules were to form the future "constitution" of the St. Nazianz colony.

This "brotherhood association" obviously borrows a lot from several different models. First of all it imitates church associations which had been established by *Verbandskatholizismus* in conscious opposition to the widespread network of associations and clubs that had sprung up in bourgeois society. These church institutions share the same hierarchical orientation towards an (omnipotent) leader. It is in precisely this respect that the "brotherhood association" differs from the true sect, which is an 'association' of religious people of equal rank (Troeltsch/ Weber) who has anti-authoritarian and anti-hierarchical tendencies. On the other hand there is a whole series of characteristics which display a marked similarity to the sect-type. The emphasis the "brotherhood association" put on the "practical" side is particular important in this respect. It indicates that it was not based on mere 'whims' or aspiration to (provide) 'emotional values' (Weber, 1964, 394). Those who were selected as members, indeed the chosen themselves were obliged to 'prove their worth'. This obligation distinguishes the group of emigrants around Oschwald from other emigrants of the 1850's. Oschwald's supporters had "not to come to America (…) to get rich but to save their souls" (Längin, 1985,

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[39] In the Mystical Writings (loc. sit. 468ff.) Oschwald gives a detailed description of New Jerusalem. This description is accompanied by an accurate, "regular and at the same time harmonious" ground-plan. There were no concrete models of this type of symmetrical planning. The "planned" towns of Karlsruhe and Mannheim, typical creations of late absolutism, which expressed its will for discipline in the way it laid out cities. (Mannheim is mentioned at one point in the Mystical Writings (loc. sit. 422)).
The basic design principle is order, and the detailed description of New Jerusalem emphasises the fact that there is a place for everything and everything in its place. The geometry of the site itself is reminiscent of the complex ordered utopias and of blueprints for utopian societies. It is interesting to note that in all such blueprints "the plan of the town itself serves as a model for the future society" (Jeggle *et al.* 1973, 225). The striking "love of detail" in the description of New Jerusalem is discussed in Mühlmann 1961, 301. See also Müller 1961.

18)[40]. There are further similarities with sects in the exclusion procedures outlined in the rules (admonishments, warnings, exclusion), which, apart from the specific internal justifications for the banishment (Weber, 1964, 390) have their equivalents in institutions other than sects. The "brotherhood association" shares the same resolute sense of mission. The eighth rule of the association brings this out clearly: "the association should also do its utmost to try to save other good souls who do not belong to it" (p. 22). Finally the very name of the association is a direct reference to the popular model of the mesmeric societies whose "meetings, initiation rites and courses of instruction (are) a combination of occultism and free-masonry ritual". (Darnton, 1986, 73).

The fact that there was talk of the "great and murderous battle" on the Walser field (p. 28), one of the classic versions of chiliastic prophecy (Kronfeld, 1919, 50ff.)[41] should clear any doubts that the pamphlet about the 'spiritual-magnetic association' was thoroughly imbued with chiliastic thought. The classic chiliastic prophecy had sunk to the level of a mere story. The recurrent topoi which were the hallmarks of its linguistic form were not the only evidence of this. Successive retelling had deprived it of its original power and transformed it into a harmless myth which had become an established part of popular tradition (the Grimm brothers are a good example or Chamisso's poem of 1830 "The Pear Tree on the Walserfield").

2.   The "Mystical Writings". Apocalypse Now

As a report addressed to the church leadership aptly put it: (one needs) "the patience of a saint to read the ('mystical writings') from cover to cover" (PR). This is because one "insight" follows hard upon another with the result that all together they form an overwhelming mass of evidence. "This type of knowledge is inevitably constitued by an interminable accumulation of assertions that contradict each other. Knowledge construed in this way does not rest on sound foundations. The only way of connecting the various building blocks of knowledge is by laying them together" (Foucault, 1971, 61).

We must now attempt to decode the 'mystical writings' in order to demonstrate that the genesis and ultimate goals of the religious movement around Oschwald bear some reference to the contemporary social situation. We can achieve this by decoding the ciphers most commonly used by Oschwald in the 'Mystical Writings' to portray the age he lived in. Oschwald used the topoi of "messianic woes" (Mühlmann) which were a particular characteristic of many chiliastic movements. "The historical present" is presented as a time of "trials and tribulations leading up to the millennium" (Mühlmann, 1961, 282f.). However the longing for the "suspension of history" as reflected in the vision of millennial peace makes

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[40] These thoughts are not only stressed in the foreword to the Chronicles of St. Nazianz. During his trial A. Stoll gave the following account of the situation:
"When Father Oschwald explained the rules on December 5th and on New Year's to the society, he said we did not come here to earn money or to get rich. I have nothing (…). Anyone who is looking for interest will have to go somewhere else for it, or looking to accumulate property must look somewhere else". (Supreme Court, August Term 1879, Moerchen vs. Stoll, Apellant's Brief and Argument, 8).

[41] In his pamphlet published in 1848, *Blicke auf Gegenwart und Zukunft'* ,Glimpses of the Present and the Future' (Baden-Baden 1848, 16 pages), Oschwald mentions Lazarus Gitschner von Reichenhall (loc. cit. 9f.) whose 16th century writings are always quoted in connection with the Pear Tree on the Walser Field and the prophecy associated with it. See Kronfeld 1919, 52f.

the relation to the historical present clear: this vision is the counter-image of a present which is experienced as a time of suffering.

In the following section we use the topoi of "messianic woes" which occurs frequently in the 'mystical writings' to compile an inventory of the various difficulties that Oschwald and his supporters obviously found themselves confronted with.

I.   Revolution/Political Upheavel

"It is not going to far to see the origins of the abominable devastation or the beginning of this period of purification in the French Revolution that started with the storming of the Bastille in Paris 1787 (!) (…). The movement against Christianity will … go through several main phases. The last of those is apostasy. This period started with Voltaire and the first French revolution and will end in Rongeanism. In this age every animal that St. John saw will become visible (Rev. 8:11). Unfortunately this is the age we live in"[42].

Revolution/Prophecy

"Blood flowed in Turkey, in the Greek war of liberation, the blood of the people flowed in Spain and Italy, in the French revolutions of 1830 and 1848 and I still feel that we will see more of this (…). The great river of blood will only cease to flow when the army of Turks comes from the south east, devastating Italy, Germany and the Rhine and finally reaches Cologne. There the Turks and Asiatics will meet with resistance and be wiped out near Cologne and on the Walser field near Salzburg (!), where that ancient pear tree stands as a marker". (p. 138f.).

Prophecy

"It began with the French Revolution in 1787 (!) and will in all probability be accomplished before 1887". (p. 357).

Oschwald wrote an explanatory note to this passage which he submitted to the church authorities in June 1850:

"I used only the gifts and knowledge I believe was bestowed on me by God and the fruits of my own labours to write. I believe I have written the truth (…). Time itself will reveal what is true, and we can only stand and wait. Many of the things that I have prophesied will have come to pass in the next 38 years. The things I write today have been foreseen for many centuries by prophets and other clairvoyants. I have only said that the time is ripe. The catastrophe will take more than two or three years to develop. It began as early as 1845 and will last until 1887 after which the war will end and the kingdom of peace will come. I do not claim to be a prophet, but this is my opinion". (PR).

II.   Hunger/Poverty/Disease

"The jaws of hell have opened and spewed out steam engines, factories, railways gunpowder and deadly weapons as St. John told us. The abyss has opened up before us and the laws which govern it have spread far and wide (…). All the signs are there, the last trumpeters need only appear and all hell will break loose, entire countries will be laid waste and their people put to the sword. Then plague and a host of other diseases and illnesses will break out (…).

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[42]   The following page numbers (in brackets) refer to the Mystical Writings (1848, 2nd edition).

Their harbingers have already been sent forth. ... In Ireland and Silesia in 1846 and 1847 the people were dying in their thousands, starving, naked, exposed to the direst poverty and prey to disease. (…) As well as suffering the pangs of hunger and direst need the people in these lands were carried off by virulent fevers (…). These early warnings made their presence felt in these countries in 1846 and 1847 and this will gradually happen everywhere because the people in other lands are no better than in Ireland and Silesia and have not repented after this warning …" (p. 396f).

III. Moral decay

"The terrible spirit of Babylon holds sway now more than at any other time in the world's history. Religion is thus exposed to mockery and held in little regard. Hate, conflict, discord, disunity and hedonism are hastening the advent of final judgement". (p. 407).
There is an explanatory footnote to this passage:
"According to a statistical account one third of children are born to single mothers. In Munich and Vienna at the present time there are more or less as many illegitimate children born as there are legitimate. The number of illegitimate children is somewhat lower in Paris, London and Berlin. The numbers are lowest in Stockholm, Petersburg and in Spain".

IV. Economic Crises

"It is easy to see that the prophecies which reflect the inscrutable ways of the Lord are about to be fulfilled. For there is great sorrow because business is coming to a standstill, trade and traffic are stagnating and it is difficult to make a living. Taking risks is part of the business of trade, of buying and selling. Then there is a great shortage of money, which is once again a cause of sorrow. We are all aware of how much deprivation and poverty there is in the world. More people have debts now than ever before. Then there is talk that terrible things will happen to the corn, and to the amount that is produced (…). If we look at what is happening in the world we see that this prophecy is about to be fulfilled too. Take the general increase in prices in 1846 and 1847, when hunger and want, extreme deprivation and poverty cost the lives of many people. We need not look far for examples of this suffering – think of the people of Ireland or the people of the Erz mountains in Silesia (…). The potatoes are often black or otherwise affected by blight. And there was a particularly good yield in 1847 …" (p. 294f.).

Increase in social tensions

"I observed that during this period of hardship people became increasingly violent and hostile towards one another, which led to terrible bloody conflicts between them …; for their straitened circumstances and general poverty and the fact that fulfil their basic needs makes them prey to wild outbursts and rage. I saw all this in a vision I described above, which gives a picture of the world as it is today and how it is for people of all classes. You have to look closely at all the figures in this picture – for example there are also a dog and cat that are standing opposite one another. People are living on top of each other like cats and dogs, inspite of the great deprivation and poverty and are plagued by preciously unknown illnesses (…). All this goes to show that the time is at hand for these mysteries to be revealed". (p. 295).

V.   Progress/Apostasy

"Who remains unaware of the various miracles that characterise our age? The world's children have used their art and skill, and with the help of their knowledge and its application in engineering, mathematics, industry, the development of the power of steam and gas have wrought many great and splendid things, also in the field of nature. By using their innate skills and by harnessing the power of nature people achieve things in our age that were not dreamt of or understood in earlier ages (…). These are also signs of the times that tell us something about the age we live in; for Jesus says: 'When you see this you know that salvation is nigh'. However this must be preceded by suffering, for the greater the wonders of art that men create the less their faith, and the more they sink into sin and iniquity". (p. 100).

VI.   "Modernisation"

"The railway, which St. John referred to in Revelations 9.9, is the visible sign that these plagues are about to befall us. For there is a clear comparison to be drawn between railway trains and the whirring and rustling of wings …" (p. 354).

Factories and Railways

"The signs are there. Apart from those we have already mentioned there are: 1). A thick smoke, like the smoke from a huge furnace – Rev. 8.2. (…). This smoke only appeared after steam engines were invented (…). We see the smoke described in Revelations pouring out of the funnels of steam engines, steam ships, factories and steam powered railway engines as if it were quite natural. It is also well known that mankind has become increasingly immoral and corrupt in religious and moral spheres since this smoke became visible, that is since we have had factories, steam ships and railways. Indeed factories are nothing but the workshops of hell in which men become thoroughly debased …". (p. 388).

2) The railways, Rev. 9.9. I have already said that there is nothing on earth that can be compared with the swiftness of flight and the rattling of many fast moving carriages better than railway trains (…). As a consequence the plagues described in Revelations will befall us and cause havoc (…). These kinds of people, mainly factory workers as I have said before, and other poor and unemployed people will experience a time of even greater deprivation. As well as depriving the people of material support these things will only increase their desperation. (…). They will not stop at robbing and plundering; they will break into castles and palaces and commit murder and other foul deeds so long as they have it in their power to lash out at the noble and the rich (…). But their days are numbered too (…). I said that they (the rich, the nobility and the lawmakers) sowed the seeds that sprouted the mob and saw to it that it grew in strength. The rich did it by setting up factories, the nobility by their bad example, by seducing the commoners by whoremongering and adultery and by giving them a poor grounding in religion thus leading them to apostasy and teaching them to be cunning. The lawmakers also helped to feed and nurture them by punishing their sins leniently. Even prisons mostly served to educate people in evil ways …". (p. 390f.).

There is an explanatory footnote to this passage: "Many of the things predicted came to pass in Ireland, in Silesia among the factory workers in 1847 and even among the factory workers in Italy and France this year, 1848". (p. 390).

VII: The Press

"One of the prime means through which Satan pours out evil over the world is the press (…). The press, which is harmless in itself and can serve noble purposes may be used to a variety of ends (…). Those who are profoundly against the church communicate with each other and help each other out through various leaflets, pamphlets, journalistic writings and other printed material which goes against the teachings of the church". (p. 96f.).

Association, Clubs and Sects
"We find some more signs of our times in Rev. 9 which help us recognise how what was foreseen has indeed come to pass and help us understand what times we live in. These signs are political associations and assemblies, and also sects in the religious sphere. There are also art and singing clubs and citizens' associations and the like. There are also secret associations, freemasons' lodges and revolutionary associations which disseminate propaganda and are called clubs. These associations aim to foment revolution. Many other associations have close links with these and they are to be found all over Europe (…). Their main aim or purpose is to undermine faith in Jesus and to overthrow the monarchy and bring down government. In short nowadays the place is swarming with large and small associations and societies, – they are like locusts on a newly mown summer meadow". (p. 392f.)

If we look at this selection of extracts closely as if we were "(reading) them over the shoulders of those for whom they were actually intended" (Geertz, quoted according to Medick, 1984, 307) then the "interpretative (…) power of cultural forms of expression" (Medick) that these texts represent is clearly thrown into relief. Oschwald made his position quite clear in these texts and explained why his "flight" to America was also a reaction to the "objectionableness" of his time. To make this apparent Oschwald used the theme of "messianic woes", the stock of clichéd formulas that *every* chiliastic movement has at its disposal. These can be compared to a worn coin that nevertheless retains its value. The mystical writings are not simply a catalogue of a certain type of disaster designed to make the time preceding the coming of the saviour appear particularly dreadful. Because the events of the present are interpreted as "signs of the times" the whole spectrum of minor vexations and catastrophic events of the contemporary world is also represented. Even if the final balance of the great and small catastrophes preceding the end of the world is fairly matter-of-fact and realistic we cannot overlook the fact that there was a distinct feeling that the end of the world was nigh. It was this general malaise that strengthened the decision to emigrate.
The problems brought about by the "hungry forties" (T. S. Hamerow) are of considerable importance. The term "hungry forties" refers to the bad harvests of 1845 and 1846 and the potato blight of 1845/1846 (Nipperdey, 1983, 147, 153) and the concomitant lack of food and rise in prices. The more serious consequences were widespread famine and disease – especially in Ireland and Silesia (on Baden compare Fleischmann, 1902). These catastrophes typical of the "preindustrial crisis" appeared to Oschwald as a punishment from God. The bad harvest caused by the weather which provoked the crisis highlighted the whims of nature "to which mankind was still completely exposed, as to the biblical plagues of Egypt". (Siemann, 1985, 45). Thus it is not surprising that the "people in the Oden forest (and in other regions as

well) looked upon the famines of the early 19th century as the 'end of the world'". (Medick, 1985, 99). Oschwald also seemed to register the industrial-economic depression of 1847 (II). However he obviously agreed with Conze's (1983, 34) general assertions on the "unique meaning" of the situation in 1845-48. Two types of economic crises, an ancient and a modern, had occurred one upon the other "independently of each other and not contemporaneously, buth with some temporal overlap". According to Conze this event had had "less far impact on the consciousness of those involved at the time than the slump in sales of foodstuffs, luxury goods and textiles caused by the old type of economic crisis – failed harvests (1845, 1846) and the concomitant rise in price of bread and potatoes". (Conze, 1983, 34; see also Abel, 1974, 369ff., 387; Bergmann, 1976, 264f.). However even the "exceptionally good harvest of the summer for 1847" (Siemann, 1985, 47) had not escaped Oschwald's notice.

Previous research has demonstrated that here is a relationship between social unrest and price rises[43]. This was particular the case in the years 1819 and 1847-8 and also occurred during Oschwald's time (IV). However in his case the social unrest evolves a series of increasingly dramatic stages (I), beginning with the great French Revolution and culminating in the "final battle" which was to take place a hundred years later, in 1887 (I). The view of the catastrophe gained a momentum of its own as can be seen from the fact that the legend of the bloody battle on the Walser field became part of the common narrative stock. It also fulfilled the function of increasing the dramatic tension.

The bad harvest caused by the weather is one natural cause which offers a partial explanation of the famines and the attendant phenomena, which can in turn be interpreted as a modern manifestation of the biblical plagues sent by God. The vision of the unprecedented "river of blood and revolution" is also an indication that the ways of the world have since become very mysterious. It is in this context (II) that we come across "references to the 'unconquered world'" (Mühlmann, 1961, 364). And in fact the 'miracles' of technology that seemed "incomprehensible" at the time, such as steam engines and the railway, were woven into the eschatological literature as signs of immanent doom (II). In Oschwald's writings it is above all the 'railway' that functions as a herald of doom (VI) – there had been a railway line from Mannheim to Basel since 1838. The 'railway' also became an extremely vivid "summary

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[43] In the last few years (written in 1988) there has been a great increase in the number of studies in this field. The following overview does not claim to be complete, it merely presents the literature relevant to this study. See the classic studies of Abel (1972; 1974). On poverty and hunger see Lipp/Kaschuba 1984; Matz 1980; Medick 1985; Militzer-Schwenger 1979 (on the situation in the *Schwarzwaldkreis of Württemberg*); Blasius 1978. The circumstances described in this context are as a rule discussed under the general heading of 'social protest'. Studies on this subject can be divided into two distinct types of "schools". The first of these is so-called 'historical social science', which was the first to adopt this line of approach towards this subject. See Wirtz 1975. The other type of approach calls itself 'new historical anthropology' and proceeds on the assumption that "social reality is constructed by the members of a particular environment in a process of symbolically mediated interaction" (Fuchs/Wingens 1986, 479). This approach can be understood as a counter-movement to 'historical social science'. It came into its own by taking issue with Bourdieu and Thompson. One of the first studies of the rise of this branch of social science is the reader edited by Puls (1979).
Some of the important representatives of the 'historical social scientific' approach are: C.L. Tilly and R. Tilly 1975; Tilly/Hohorst 1976; Tilly 1977; on early criticism: Haupt 1977; Hildermeier 1979; Mommsen/ Hirschfeld 1982. Some examples of the 'new historical anthropological' approach are: Gailus 1984; Lüdtke 1984; Wirtz 1981, 1984; Volkmann/Bergmann 1984; Volkmann 1977.
On the revolution of 1848 and its economic preconditions see Bergmann 1976; 1986. Spree focuses on the economic developments and also assimilates earlier literature on the subject; Spree/Bergmann 1974; Spree 1977, 1978. On the situation in Baden see Fleischmann 1902; Griesmeier 1954; Kistler 1954; Locher 1950; Schmerbeck 1954.

symbol" for the rise of the modern, and it was in fact "the most powerful and emotive symbol of the modern age" (Nipperdey, 1983, 192)[44].

The 'old world' in which Oschwald felt at home was agrarian in character. Not only was the entire economy dependent on agriculture[45] but the way life was ordered and governed was oriented towards this agrarian world. Thus it was only a matter of time before that novel institution, the *factory* (VI) driven by steam engines became the subject of eschatological literature. The rise of the factory was the epoch making "event" of the century and became the very symbol of the industrial revolution. However we must be cautious. Oschwald was completely unaware that the factory would be the focal point of the social and psychological consequences of the industrial revolution. He certainly did not appreciate that the division of labour and the advent of mechanised production in factories would radically alter the traditional relationship of man to time[46]. Nevertheless he was beginning to consider the factory at a time when there were very few factories or factory workers in Baden[47]. His deliberations were framed in the widespread and accepted categories of the time (Nipperdey, 1983, 242). For Oschwald the factory was a den of iniquity and thus also the cause of the general decay of morals. He took into consideration the rebellious tendencies of many factory workers. According to Oschwald this readiness to rebel constituted a threat to the state and to the existing social order (VI). This danger is always present, given the clear link between social protest and privation and suffering (VI), especially as any deterioration in social conditions is bound to lead to an increase in social tensions. Oschwald makes this clear to his readers by using the simple yet effective image of the irreconcilable antagonism between dog and cat. And yet Oschwald's "explanation" of these phenomena is extraordinary in certain respects. By laying the blame of the prevailing social conditions fairly and squarely on "the rich, the noble and the lawgivers" Oschwald made it clear that social events were no longer considered as exclusively "God given natural occurrences". The placing of responsibility on particular social actors, especially the powerful, is also the first step towards the articulation of dissatisfaction with the prevailing social order. Usually this sets in motion a desire totally to reverse the situation, "to stand the world on its head" (Mühlmann, 1961, 342, 335ff.) and this is justified by the principle of retribution (Vergeltung). However Oschwald is not radical when it comes to changing social conditions. His radicalism is restricted to exhorting people (himself and his followers) to change the way they live. Nevertheless the assignment of "responsibility" to the powerful makes it more likely that Oschwald's message will find willing listeners in those who have "got the thin end of the wedge". It is also obvious for whom it is intended. The very language in which the message is couched betrays Oschwald's origins as well as those of his potential followers. The metaphors he uses are tailor made for simple country people who were in any case highly susceptible to magic. We need only think

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[44] See Fremdling 1973 (for a more objective study); Mahr 1982; Schivelbusch 1979. In the Mystical Writings the steam engine is presented as a apocalyptic 'sign of the times', a harbinger of terrible events. About twenty years later, however, nothing stopped Ochwald from having the colony's saw- and grist-mill driven by steam (see Supreme Court, August Term 1879, Moerchen vs. Stoll, Case, 6). According to Beck (1959, 132) this happened in 1870.

[45] See Nipperdey 1983, 145ff.; Henning 1978, 1979; Hohorst 1984; Conze 1983. With special reference to Baden: *Das Grossherzogthum Baden,* 1857; Ott 1979.

[46] See Nipperdey 1983, 227ff.; Machtan 1981; Treiber/Steinert 1980, Thompson 1973 (1967).

[47] With particular reference to Baden: Fischer 1972 (esp. pp. 358-391); Gothein 1889; Kaiser 1933, esp. pp. 622ff. and 627ff.; Ott 1979 113, 144; *Das Grossherzogthum Baden,* 1857.

of the image of the swarm of locusts over the mown meadow or the way the warring cat and dog are used as a metaphor to convey the social contradictions between the "classes".

Oschwald was certainly aware of the fact that simple people were also beginning to read and to engage in politics despite the high rate of illiteracy and that the absolute power of the church to determine what was preached and how it should be interpreted was being severely challenged (VII). There was a considerable increase in the number of newspapers and journals and a marked rise in circulation in Oschwald's time – so much so that the term "reading explosion" can generally be applied to this period. Pamphlets, pictorial broadsheets and caricatures, the means of expression favoured by "grub street journalism" and designed to be particularly accessible to the lower classes also fall into this category. Oschwald was aware that these instruments could be used to serve good as well as "evil" purposes. The pamphlets and brochures he critised had much in common with the tracts that had been produced by the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier for example (Schieder, 1974, 449ff.). Oschwald can also not have failed to notice that in Baden a church press had been established whose origins were closely linked with the name of Franz Joseph Buss (Dorneich, 1979). It was Buss who used his own publication, the "*Süddeutsche Zeitung für Kirche und Staat*" (1845-1848) as an effective weapon in the struggle against German Catholism (Deutsch Katholizismus) in Baden and thus gave fresh impetus to the ultramontane movement there (Beck, 1973, 21; Ganser, 1936). It was thus inevitable that the rise of the press would lead to virulent controversy about the function of the press and the way it could be used to serve a variety of ends. Oschwald turned to the press because it seemed a way of rapidly severing ties with the traditional world. Previously the combined resources of an accessible and generally reliable oral tradition and the interpretative schemes laid down exclusively by the church had helped to constitute an image of self and held the key to the meaning of life. "The growth of the newspaper reinforces the weakening of the traditional mentality by confronting the reader with new and different things". (Nipperdey, 1983, 589). As the "Syllabus errorum" of 1864 shows, Oschwald did not diverge from the official church line in his rejection of freedom of religion or opinion (speech) (Mystical Writings, loc. cit., 96) or in his rejection of freemasonry (VII). Like the official church he is opposed to the "modern" and for him too "this opposition (becomes) … the criterion for the true faith" (Nipperdey, 1983, 413).

By naming the political associations and clubs which were the heir to the associations of the 18th century and within which "the breakthrough of bourgeois thought and bourgeois culture had been achieved". (v. Dülmen, 1977, 251)[48]. Oschwald was addressing the question of the process of self discovery in which the rising bourgeoisie was engaged (VII). However for him this was merely one of the developments that irritate "traditional man" and are perceived by him as a threat. This manifests itself particularly in the fear of revolutionary aspirations ascribed to political associations and clubs. These appear to Oschwald as the "molehills" of history, which undermine the traditional established order "from below" and help bring about its downfall. Nevertheless his broad generalisations have a ring of truth about them in that associations played a significant part in the revolutions of 1848 and 1849 (Wirtz, 1979, 87), even although it must also be borne in mind that the revolutions of 1848 appears as an interweaving of several independent social movements[49]. In mentioning political associations in the same breath as sects Oschwald was perhaps unaware that there is a fundamental

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[48] See Eder 1985; van Dülmen 1986; Hardtwig 1984; Koselleck 1973 (1959); Langewiesche 1978; Nipperdey 1972. On Baden: Dreher 1952.

[49] See Dorpalen 1973; Langewiesche 1983; Siemann 1985; Wirtz 1979. On Baden: Hess 1922; Lautenschläger 1915; Vollmer 1979.

similarity between them which is characteristic of the modern world. One is accepted into an association of the basis of a voluntary decision, just as one is accepted into a sect. It is by making this free choice that the alliance is forged which guarantees the coherence of the association and its members (Weber, 1964, 390). It is in this respect that both these organisations can be distinguished from the familiar modes of organisation of the traditional world, guilds and church organisation. The inclusion of political associations and clubs in the body of eschatological literature also indicates that Oschwald's potential supporters were not be found in the ranks of the enlightened bourgeoisie. Oschwald dissociated himself from them entirely.

Oschwald shared with many of his conservative contemporaries the assumption that the world was undoubtedly getting worse. It was thus inevitable that he criticised contemporary society in that light. His demonstration of the world's depravity is, as we shall see later, complemented by the challenge of an ethical rigour which he addresses to the "chosen" and is thoroughly in keeping with the prevailing moral categories of the time. Like Oschwald (III), the public opinion put forward at the time interpreted the number of illegitimate births which had been increasing since the 1840's as a sign of moral decay (Marschalck, 1984, 37f., 172; Nipperdey, 1983, 127). According to this version, technical progress and "vulgar materialism" had a reciprocal effect on one another. Oschwald was also aware of the dialectical relationship between the two and this insight set the tone of his prophecies of doom as well as bringing him into line with official church thought. For the official church technological progress, rational science and the vulgar materialism it unleashed were "enemies" of the faith. The church was thus faced with the task of maintaining and strengthening the people's faith. However there was also a political dimension to this religious campaign; a Catholic who has been strengthened in his faith is also a reliable subject (Schieder, 1974, 439). In this too Oschwald was at one with the official church, whose office bearers found it increasingly difficult to accept that he was on the same side since he had been accused of "fomenting sects". For Oschwald the world had really been turned on its head so that he told his superiors with an undertone of reproach "I wish that we were the worst Catholics in the archdiocese; that way there would be nothing to fear for the faith and for the good of the state". (PR, 16.3.1854). The world must have seemed unbearable to Oschwald!

As is clear from the records Oschwald's "Mystical Writings" were well received. There are also frequent references to a great rush of support for Oschwald, principally among the lower classes[50], particularly women. We can take from this that the events sketched out by the themes in the "messianic woes" must have corresponded closely to the existential situation of individuals as well as to entire groups. Oschwald's explanations were obviously "understood" by many people because they could easily be viewed in terms of concrete personal experiences. This can happen very simply; the message of the "salvation" is taken literally, so that the destitute agrarian classes, laden with debts could count on being freed of them (Mühlmann, 1961, 359; 302). Oschwald was able to make himself understood because he used familiar theological language which for many people "laid down the conceptual framework within which cataclysmic social changes could be considered". (Wirtz, 1981, 152). Oschwald used vivid, pictorial topoi with a wide range of connotations which allowed his

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[50] A letter dated 12.1.1849 from the parish office in Kappel-Windeck makes it quite clear that there was a demand for Oschwald's miracle cures. In the letter, which was addressed to the archiepiscopal authorities, Oschwald was contemptuously described as a "ham-prophet". By way of explanation the letter adds: "It is said that when he left Hammereisenbach 100 hams which he had earned by performing miracle cures were auctioned off" (PR). Even as late as the 1950's and 60's it was still common practise in country districts to show one's gratitude for services rendered by "paying" in kind.

readers or listeners to accommodate their own personal experiences[51]. He did not only have such a large number of followers because he was alleged to possess extraordinary healing powers. People (especially those from the country) flocked to him because he obviously knew how to make sense of the demands associated with "the change from an agrarian to an industrial way of life". (Brepohl, quoted according to Korff, 1977, 354). An ordered pattern began to emerge from behind the confusion of appearances and people were able to orient themselves accordingly. Oschwald was predestined to recognise the signs of the times and to make them comprehensible. He was a priest, and like many of his fellows priests of peasant origins, from a family of modest circumstances. As a chaplain he belonged to the lower ranks of the clergy, and according to the available sources his level of education was relatively modest. He thus belongs to that section of unprivileged literates amongst whose ranks the "intellectualism of those who teach the fundamentals" (Adolf Holl) flourishes. This type of intellectualism is often associated with the kind of intelligence of the self-taught which is typically considered to be a characteristic of certain occupations (weavers, peasants). There is a kind of elective affinity between these two types of intelligence. The symbiotic relationship between Ambros Oschwald and Anton Stoll, a former weaver whom Oschwald had known since 1851 and whom he made administrator of the St. Nazianz colony in 1854[52] is an excellent example. This elective affinity shows itself principally in the tendency to dogmatise "what one has read (…) and in considerable skill and cunning" in discussion (Mühlmann, 1961, 286). These characteristics are also evident in Oschwald's correspondence with the archiepiscopal authorities. However the part that Oschwald is said to have played in the formation of the chiliastic movement[53] should not obscure the fact that his supporters were also driven to him by a series of political, social and economic crises. As far as we can tell from the available sources[54] the hard core of Oschwald's support was recruited from the peasant and artisanal classes. Support for the chiliastic movement around Oschwald was drawn from the rural areas of the then Grand Duchy of Baden, areas that were obviously poor (Oden Forest/Black Forest) and thus rank among the districts from which there is likely to be mass emigration. There is an interesting parallel between the social composition and the economic situation of Oschwald's supporters and the "protest movements" against any form of innovation organised 'from above' by the official church – the mass pilgrimages of the 19th century. The participants in both the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier 1844 and the one in 1891, about which we have extensive information (Schieder, 1974, 426ff.; Korff, 1977, 370ff.), were drawn from exactly the same social groups as Oschwald's supporters and like them had a large number of women among the following. We must also not overlook the fact

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[51] Like some other of Oschwald's publications, the Mystical Writings are strongly reminiscent of Catholic tracts, which aim to convey a message and can thus be compared with advertising spots (Korff 1970, 59). These tracts have much in common with books of meditation. The language of both is highly ritualised, and appeals to values and convictions which have been accepted and established within the community of the faithful. These values are established to such an extend that they have worn off on the linguistic forms which reflect them and are "rattled off" without much thought. It thus comes as no surprise that the final chapter of the Mystical Writings contains invocations reminiscent of the litany and cannot be distinguished from a book of meditation. Anyone who writes in this way is making a confession and making clear where he belongs.

[52] See Supreme Court, August term 1879, Moerchen vs. Stoll, Case 13. On A. Stoll see ftn. 29.

[53] For a long time Oschwald was employed as a curate in one of the centres of the artisanal clock industry in the Black Forest. It thus seems very probable that there is a connection between intinerant artisans (Gothein 1892, 831ff. and 834) and the spread of the ideas of the chiliastic movement formed by Oschwald.

[54] The little information available on occupations in the legal documents (Supreme Court, Wisconsin) supports this view. The information provided by Ott (1979, 100f.) also fits this interpretation.

that the bulk of the pilgrims to the Holy Coat of Trier came from obviously poor districts (Eifel, the Mosel district). A topography of the best known places of pilgrimage would show that most of them are to be found in districts which are traditionally poor. This brings us back to the fact that[55] "the crises of the early phase of industrialism (were) … an ideal breeding ground for chiliastic hopes" (Mühlmann, 1961, 360). Accordingly millenary movements emerge in situations where the basic conditions of social upheaval (may) lead to social disorientation. This applies to individuals as well as to groups. Movements like these "without exception arose in traditional groups and societies whose 'natural' state was exposed to a direct and unexpected threat from outside. In Europe this took the form of territorialisation or industrialisation and in other countries of the collapse of colonialism and the Christian mission. The change from personal and direct family or kinship bonds to the impersonal and indirect system of relations of the new capitalist culture which took place everywhere brought about a crisis of culture. The people who found themselves at a loss and threatened by the new circumstances tried to preserve their social identity by actively reviving traditional cults. Depending on the circumstances these cults either led to conformity to the new society, to rejection of all innovation by withdrawing from it completely, or even to open rebellion …" (v. Dülmen, 1980, 55f.).

4.3. The Special World of the Religious-Ascetic Colony. The Everyday Life of the 'Last People' and how the Hereafter becomes the Here and Now.

As we have seen already the group around Oschwald rejected the new age and chose to withdraw completely. In this case withdrawal meant emigration to America. This is put quite clearly in the "Mystical Writings" (1847/1848):

> "The church will have two great wings, like the wings of
> an eagle (Rev. 12,14) in order to fly across the seas to
> America. Catholic priests, and anyone else who adheres to
> the catholic faith … will have to emigrate to America –
> this is what we must understand by the two great wings.
> God will reserve them there and he will not punish them
> in the New World until such times as the Old World has
> been punished". (Mystical Writings, loc. cit., 120f.)[56].

America is a kind of latter day Noah's ark. St. Nazianz, which was originally conceived as somewhere to escape to, also became a place of refuge. However withdrawal also implies physical isolation. The remoteness of the colony makes social contact with the world at large difficult, and indeed is intended to do so. The group of emigrants was in the "wilderness" and had well and truly arrived at the "end of the world". This radical segregation from the social environment – reinforced by making access difficult (Beck, 1959, 98f.) – makes it possible to construct and maintain a counterworld. Everything was in its place in this counterworld, people could see where they stood and felt secure. This order could only be disturbed by

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[55] Many writers have drawn attention to this. See for example Cohn 1961; van Dülmen 1977, 1980; Grundmann 1961; Köbben 1960; Lehmann 1980; Mühlmann 1961; Talmon 1962; Worsley 1973.

[56] This idea was widespread. See Delumeau 1985, 322ff.

natural occurrences, such as bad harvests or cold winters, events which are reported at length in the chronicles of St. Nazianz, composed by Anton Stoll. As we shall see later, the colony copied familiar structures from the old world. This borrowing from tradition makes it clear why the colony was governed by Oschwald as a patriarchal household (*oikos*)[57] even when the founding statutes stressed egalitarian forms of organisation and propagated a "love communism" which derived from the early church. This is made quite clear by the evidence produced at the administrator of colony, Anton Stoll's trial. An action was raised against Stoll by Conrad Moerchen, a former member of St. Nazianz after Ambros Oschwald's death. The evidence reads:

> "All of the personal property, such as horses, cattle,
> machinery and other things necessary for use in running
> the business were the property of the deceased. Instead
> of organizing an association as stated in the rules made
> in Germany in 1854, after their arrival here Father
> Oschwald assumed the control and did the business (…).
> The testimony[58] as a whole discloses the fact that
> there was not even a voluntary association because
> Oschwald owned all the property and ruled all of the
> members. He was an uncommon man and his power was in
> the love of his subjects for him. It is said that he was
> generous to a fault, and those who were dependant upon
> him were always provided for. Their faith in him was as
> that of a little child in its parent, so that during his
> life there was hardly a thought given by his people for
> the future". (State of Wisconsin, Supreme Court, August
> Term, 1879, Appeal from Circuit Court/Manitowoc County,
> Apellant's Brief, 31).

The social system of the colony thus reflects the traditional patriarchal structures of the old world. The old structures of authority, as instantiated in family and kinship circles, were revived. Even the artisanal and agricultural activities were conducted along small-scale, patriarchal lines.

Under the "bell-jar" of physical isolation the colony preserved the familiar patriarchal system of communal life. The housefather presides over a household in the dual sense of a tangible property and of an association of individuals. In St. Nazianz there was no distinction made between the social and the productive elements of the community, and the members of the community were ensured in case of illness and provided for in their old age. The housefather possessed a "natural" authority and was owed respect. This type of communal association

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[57] Weber (1964, 839) stressed that charisma and the traditional patriarchal household both played a key role in upholding the communist way of life. He also emphasised that the external forms "often (resembled) each other to the point of being identical", so that it had to be decided in each individual case "what spirit" "inspired" the people who shared this way of life (loc. cit., 842). In many cases there was no clear division between the two.

[58] Oschwald's "last will", that is for the colony to become a corporation under American law, could not be realised because of legal restrictions. "The Society of St. Nazianz had never been incorporated, and because it did not exist legally, it was unable to accept the property willed by Oschwald" (Johnson 1984, 83f.). See also Weisbrod 1980.

rests on personal relations and is the complete reverse of the "market sociation" of rising capitalism, with its emphasis on objective, impersonal relations. Oschwald is the father of all men, and he looked upon all the members of the colony as his children.

This was the basic structure of the St. Nazianz colony. It handed down the established structures of the old world, the gradual destruction of which had been one of the prime motives for the decision to emigrate. In this respect the basic form of organisation of the colony reflects its relation to the concerns of this world. However certain structural elements clearly exhibit the fact that the colony was also concerned with the hereafter; the preface to the chronicles of St. Nazianz explicitly states that the colony "is a place where one is prepared to enter heaven". It was this type of view which determined the ethical lines along which the colony was to develop. An excellent model already existed: the monastery. The "Mystical Writings" give some information about this:

> "Nothing is more useful and necessary than these various institutions in which people of both sexes are looked after, receive some religious education and are usefully occupied under judicious supervision. Those who would otherwise tend to do nothing or to behave in an unrestrained manner are made *useful*, as are the crippled and ailing (…). This type of institution would most probably be run along the lines of a monastery". (p. 220; my emphasis).

Or to put it even more clearly:

> "There is a whole host of people of both sexes who long for the type of community life possible in a monastery, in order to prepare themselves suitably for the eternal life. Monasteries will be created for these people, and they will be able to satisfy their religious needs. The monastery will also provide education according to their needs (…). It should be one of the organisational tenets of the monastery that unsatisfactory and unworthy members can be excluded …". (p. 222f.).

This programmatic statement in the "Mystical Writings" and the realisation of the idea in the founding of the colony provide us with a fascinating example of the ways in which ideas are put into practice. They are not ideas of earth shattering importance, but insinuate themselves gradually, and are the forces that shape the world of simple people who have long since been forgotten. The more Oschwald felt thwarted by the "normality" of the everyday work routine imposed on him by the official catholic church, the greater his success in the realisation of his experiment. This goes to show that it is the principles and ways of conduct rejected by the official church that constitute a pious life. Oschwald was able to create a little kingdom on earth because he translated chiliastic ideas into specific demands as to how to behave which were addressed to a particular group. It was easy for Oschwald, and for sociologists of culture today, to check to what extent these prescriptions were recognised within a clearly defined group of subjects (Lepsius, 1986, 23f.). It was also important for the success of this enterprise

that Oschwald was able to find more favourable conditions in the New World, or if they did not exist he was able to invent them. Secular and religious authorities had developed differently on the new continent and thus had a very different conception of their role. They had also not become as bureaucratic as their European counterparts. Both these factors meant that they had less effective control over the areas for which they held themselves responsible. Oschwald's decision to locate the colony in a very remote place meant that he was able to take full advantage of this situation[59].

The social effectiveness of the ideas spread by Oschwald can be clearly seen from the fact that the behaviour and attitudes it advocated were instilled and practised in monastery like institutions set up for the purpose. In 1857, three years after the founding of the colony, these institutions began to be set up. In 1858 the first part of the "Monastery of the Holy Spirit" (Rosa Monastry), intended to house the female members of the colony, was completed. In 1863 about 50 women, called sisters, took the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis, after the building was completed in 1860[60]. In 1865 the "Brothers' Monastery" (Loretto Monastery) was opened to male members of the colony, replacing the provisional accommodation they had since 1858.

The original "spiritual-magnetic association", which was closely akin to the organisational structure of the sect, had become a patriarchal household. The social structure of the colony was organised along the lines of two distinct models which complemented each other: (1) the patriarch model of communal sociation based on a type of filial bond with a particular individual, and (2) the monastery model of communal sociation which, in contrast to the patriarchal model above, is based on impersonal rules which help to guarantee the smooth functioning of day to day life. The first model explains the stability of the colony during the lifetime of its founder. After Oschwald's death the order of the colony was guaranteed by a system of impersonal rules[61].

The extend to which the social and productive spheres of the colony were derived from the traditional structures of the past is demonstrated by the fact that preindustrial modes of production, such as agriculture, trade and cottage industry, predominated and were accompanied by the traditional division of labour between the sexes. Women helped in the fields and were responsible for the work in the house and in the vegetable garden (Beck, 1959, 129f.) and men were engaged in one of the traditional artisanal occupations which are often closely connected to agricultural activity. The "sisters" living in the women's part of the community buildings produced straw shoes and hats (Längin, 1985, 19). This had been a common occupation in the old world, especially in the areas in the Black Forest from which the emigrants originally came. For many poorer women straw weaving had been an important source of extra income and with local authority support it had developed into a cottage

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[59] The records on Oschwald housed in the archiepiscopal archives in Freiburg show that the Oschwaldians who stated in Baden after their religious head's emigration remained in conflict with the official Catholic church until the 1880's.

[60] See also A. Stoll's comments on the matter: "There were no cloister women with us from Germany. They became nuns after they came to this country. There may be fifty of sixty nuns at St. Nazianz now". (Supreme Court, August Term 1879, Moerchen vs. Stoll Case, 15).

[61] The colony was not directly threatened with extinction because of the celibate way of life as there were married couples with children among its members. However in a postscript to the Chronicles of St. Nazianz (1867, 54), written when the colony was take over by the Salvatorians in 1896, the situation appeared rather different: "125 members have died since our reverend father departed from this life, others have left us for one reason or another and the old, which make up the majority, have not been replaced by young members. For these reasons some people believed that the whole colony was gradually disintegrating". (1896).

industry in many regions[62]. The straw goods produced in the convent were given away free inside the colony but sold outside. This practice, which highlights the separation of morality within and outside the intimate social group (Binnen- und Außenmoral), is also typical of traditional societies.

However even this island of traditional modes of life and work was not left untouched by the spirit of the times. Here the spirit of the times means the discipline of time in the sense that life in the colony ran like clockwork, in an environment that closely resembled a monastery. This sense of discipline pervaded every aspect of life in the colony (Beck, 1959, 113f.), so much so that early visitors compared it to a prison or penal institution (Längin, 1985, 19). This methodical way of life (Treiber/Steinert, 1980, 121ff.) demands a rational relation with time. This was one of the essential preconditions for the economic prosperity of the colony[63] which in turn contributed to its overall stability. It is also the essential precondition for the advance of the new rational concept of time which was to gradually replace the natural sense of time as something lived and not measured which characterised the preindustrial age. In this way the new era announced itself even in this remote oasis of tradition and the first signs of the rise of the "professional man" become visible in the rational organisation of every aspect of life in the colony. This had to a certain extent already happened in the old world, in the social form of the factory. The existence of machinery demanded division and synchronisation of labour and the logic of factory organisations brought about an entirely new levels of precision and consistency of production. These changes in turn demanded new levels of social discipline. It is the social reality produced by the organisation of factory work that is responsible for the social disorientation of Oschwald's supporters and which gave the final impulse for the emigration to America. We must also bear in mind that the steam rising from the factory chimneys and the locomotives is not only a symbol of nascent industrialisation and modernisation but is also a sign that the time has come and the apocalypse is nigh.

The colony was founded in 1854 with these signs constantly in view. It was a place of refuge and preparation where a rigorous ethical regime would be quite natural. The return to the virtues of the early church followed naturally from this. The simple way of life forced upon them by circumstances corresponded to the christian virtue of simplicity. These were ideal conditions to make a virtue out of necessity. The "holy simplicity" of a simple agrarian life makes the expectation of a happy future almost a certainty. This also explains the enthusiasm for the monastic life. Strengthened in this was "the holy people at the end of the world" could enter the last phase of history secure. However the end of the world did not come at its appointed time in 1887 and Oschwald did not live to see the failure of the prophecy. As the final inheritors of the world were succeeded other by generations, it became harder and harder to maintain the eschatological enthusiasm. This was especially the case as, after Oschwald's death, life in the colony became increasingly routine. The "monastic" way of life which characterised life in the colony, played a not inconsiderable part in this.

The religious enthusiasms and eschatological expectations which inspired Ambros Oschwald and his followers have disappeared. All that remains are some of the original buildings, stone

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[62] See Gothein 1892, 821; straw weaving was common in the districts of Neustadt, Triberg und Schönau (*Das Grossherzogthum Baden,* 1857, 384). Urach, the place from which the group of emigrants around Oschwald set out for America in 1854, at that time belonged to the parish of Neustadt (loc. cit., 659).

[63] See Kathleen Neils Conzen's remarks on Wisconsin: "There is a German-American wise old peasant saying that Max Weber could have used to illustrate his thesis of connections between early modern religiosity, the work ethic and capitalism more clearly. It goes like this: 'where there's muck there's Christ'." ('Wo Mistus ist, da ist auch Christus'). (Neils Conzen 1984, 359)

memorials, which, as silent witnesses to the past, invite us to an open air museum. And this is the path that Johnson (1984, 167ff.) invites us to tread. But this well meaning journey into the past, inspired by a passion to collect rare moments in history, does not take us very far. Our view down that path is blocked by the awesome reality of the American way of life. Its grandiose splendour dazzles and the buildings become insignificant. And this is ironic; for isn't modern America the result of messianic hopes? And as Eliade (1981, 126, 139) puts it, "(of) the faith that paradise can be reached here on earth, (of) the belief in youth and in the sincerity of mind and soul".

Acknowledgements.

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