

## St. Oswald in Regensburg

### A Reconsideration

By

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A group of sculptured figures and reliefs dating from the Middle Ages and closely related to one of the most intriguing legends of Regensburg, that of the Dollinger Saga, has given rise to more than one unsolved mystery. The group portrays a king and a joust, both of them connected with the tale of a townsman who fought a pagan knight for his King; but it also includes an enigma, in the figure of an English saint, Holy Oswald, king and martyr, who died for his faith as early as the seventh century in Northumbria.

It has been claimed that the Oswald figure has little, if anything, to do with the group,<sup>1</sup> and the inscriptions under the statues do not provide much helpful information.<sup>2</sup> The thirteenth-century donor may simply have intended to honour his patron saint by adding him to the group, but this is mere conjecture. The suggestion that the legendary battle took place on the Saint's Feast Day, the fifth of August, is no better.<sup>3</sup> Both assumptions are equally unsatisfactory as an explanation of the inclusion of St. Oswald in the group. The solution is far more to be sought in the legend and attributes of the Saint himself; it is they which explain the central function of the Oswald statue and the interdependence of the figures in the ensemble.

The juxtaposition of a German king, a Bavarian hero, and an English saint is a striking example of the manifold cross-cultural ties between England and Bavaria, and of the intimate relationship between the two during the early Middle

Ages. That Regensburg played an important role in the relationship is apparent from King Alfred's translation of the *Compendious History of the World* from the Latin of Orosius. Augmenting the original with his own knowledge, Alfred describes the area between the Rhine and the Danube as the land of the East Franks, and the rest as Bavaria: *sindon Bægbware, se dæl þe mon Regnesburg hætt* 'there are the Bavarians, the part called Regensburg.'<sup>4</sup> Very nearly the same words were used in 1123 by Honorius Augustodunensis, a noted scholar who lived in the Scots' Monastery in Regensburg: *Est in ea Noricus que et Bavaria, in qua est civitas Ratis-pone* 'Here are also Noricum and Bavaria, in which the city of Regensburg is located.'<sup>5</sup> In both cases Regensburg is the only city mentioned, for its ascendancy as the most important and most populous political centre in Germany during the early Middle Ages was practically uncontested.<sup>6</sup>

Andreas Kraus points out that Regensburg was the undisputed capital of the realm of the East Franks after 888<sup>7</sup> - a fact which casts light on Aelfric's use, in his version of Bede's hagiography, of the term *Franceland* in connection with St. Oswald: *Pa asprang his hlisa geond þa land wide and eac swilce to irlande and eac sup to francelande* 'His fame spread widely throughout those lands, and to Ireland, and also southward to the land of the Franks.'<sup>8</sup> Thus it is hardly surprising that the library of the Monastery of St. Emmeram in Regensburg should contain a twelfth-century manuscript consisting of a careful compilation of all those passages which form the earliest and most authentic account of St. Oswald - that of his landsman and near-contemporary, the Venerable Bede.<sup>9</sup> This author testifies as early as the seventh century to the spread of the cult of St. Oswald to the Continent:

*Nec solum inelyti fama uiri Britanniae fines lustrauit uniuersos, sed etiam trans oceanum longe radios salutiferae lucis spargens, Germaniae simul et Hiberniae partes attigit.*<sup>10</sup>

(The fame of this renowned man illuminated not only all the reaches of Britain, but also included Germany as well as Ireland, enlightening them with the radiance of its rays of salvation, even far across the ocean.)

The fact that the manuscript contains only those passages which deal directly with the life of the Saint is a clear indication that the writer was exclusively interested in St. Oswald. Perhaps Regensburg was, even at that time, the centre of a flourishing popular cult.<sup>11</sup> How and when the latter was brought there, however, remains a matter for conjecture. Several suggestions have been made in this respect:

1. That the cult was brought to Echternach by Willibrord, whence it spread via the Rhine area to Franconia and Bavaria;<sup>12</sup>
2. That the cult was brought to Regensburg by way of Fulda, possibly during the time of Boniface, and that the Benedictines were instrumental in its dissemination;<sup>13</sup>
3. That the cult was brought to Westphalia by the Guelph nobility in the twelfth century and moved from there to Regensburg and Southern Bavaria;<sup>14</sup>
4. That the cult was propagated by Scottish monks, more than likely by those of the Monastery of St. James in Regensburg.<sup>15</sup>

While many possible solutions to this problem have been taken into consideration, the far more important question of the underlying principle behind the dissemination of the cult of St. Oswald to the Continent, and of the reason for its early popularity, has heretofore been overlooked. From the seventh to the tenth century, England and the Continent were swept by a wave of veneration for the Holy Cross. Ignited, no doubt, by the restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem by Heraclius in the seventh century, and the discovery of a fragment of the Cross in St. Peter's in Rome at the beginning of the eighth,<sup>16</sup> the cult of the Cross no doubt did much to aid the growth of the legend of St. Oswald.

In early England he was best known as the Northumbrian champion of the cross, for with his bare hands he erected a wooden cross on the site of an approaching battle and then knelt to pray with his army, before going on to defeat the

pagan host. According to legend, that was the first of thousands of wooden and stone crosses to be erected in Northumbria, and the deed was connected thematically with the legends of Constantine (who likewise carried the sign of the cross as his battle standard) and of his mother Helen (who was thought to have discovered the remains of the True Cross in Jerusalem). The subject gave rise to an abundance of poetry and prose, particularly in Anglo-Saxon, and the Feast of the Invention of the Cross was elevated to one of the highest in the early church.<sup>17</sup> Alcuin, who did much to shape the liturgy of the Frankish Church, including the institution of Feast Days and their ritual, was probably given a fragment of the True Cross in compliance with his request of 796. But it is little known that he also composed a hymn in praise of Oswald,<sup>18</sup> and that Adalwin, the Bishop of Regensburg, spent several months with him in the spring of 801.<sup>19</sup> This could, of course, be one of the first instances of direct contact between Regensburg and the cult of St. Oswald, and the earliest Regensburg church calendar does contain the Feast Day of the Saint.<sup>20</sup> But it suffices to say that the cultural and religious ties between early England and the Continent were so manifold that they resulted in a widespread and intensive veneration of the Saint in Bavaria, the Alps, and even as far as Vienna.<sup>21</sup>

According to the original legend, Oswald was the king of the Northumbrians. Due to adverse circumstances he was forced to flee, for a time, to Ireland, where he was converted to Christianity. He became a follower of St. Columba and opened the way for Irish missionary activity in northern England, where he is credited with having converted his entire realm to the faith. The cross he erected gained a reputation for its miraculous healing properties, and fragments were revered as relics. Oswald became a symbol of the Christian king, and of the vanquishment of pagans through the *Crux invicta*, the victorious sign of the Cross. Later Oswald lived a model

life, becoming famous for his self-abnegation and generosity to the poor. He founded the famous Lindisfarne Monastery and entrusted his friend Aidan with its direction. One of the major legends is that of the Easter Dinner, when Oswald was approached by beggars and commanded his servants to give them not only the food from his table, but the silver dish on which it was served as well.<sup>22</sup> The first known *vita* of St. Oswald's is found in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, but there are later English versions as well.<sup>23</sup> That of the monk Reginald (1165) has embroidered the legend to include elements that play an important part in German popular versions of the later Middle Ages (a royal bride, a wily raven).<sup>24</sup> Continental versions of the legend tend to neglect the role of the cross in the Oswald cult, and concentrate on other elements instead.

Far more intriguing is the way in which the figure of the Saint is portrayed in Regensburg, and the transformation which literary treatment and the changing attitudes of a new age bring about. The earliest iconographic representations of St. Oswald in Bavaria - more than one of them in Regensburg - have provided valuable clues as to the popularization of the legend, the metamorphosis of the king and martyr into a Bavarianized guardian saint of townspeople and farmers, and the rise of a completely new version in the form of the Minstrel's Tale (*Spielmannsepos*).

Several monuments testify to the popularity of the Oswald cult in Regensburg during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Among others, there are the large stained-glass window in the southern nave of the Cathedral, dated 1365, in which Oswald and sixteen other saints are pictured together with the Virgin Mary;<sup>25</sup> the badly damaged frescoes in the Gothic churches of the Dominicans (*Dominikanerkirche*) and Minor Friars (*Minoritenkirche*);<sup>26</sup> a statue which once adorned the third and last tower of the Old Stone

Bridge and is now mounted above the South Portal;<sup>27</sup> and, finally, there is the little Church of St. Oswald further along the bank of the Danube, originally a foundation (*Stift*) for twelve impoverished young women who were to lead holy lives of prayer for their benefactors.<sup>28</sup>

Various facets of the original legend are preserved in the iconography of the Saint as seen in Regensburg. In England, the Oswald figure generally held a sceptre in the one hand, symbolizing his status as saintly king; and a cross in the other, symbolizing his role as proponent of the cross in England and victor over the heathen in the Sign of the Cross. Sometimes, however, a high, covered dish, often referred to as a ciborium or pyxis-like container, was substituted for the cross to symbolize the silver dish he had cut up and distributed to the poor.<sup>29</sup> In Regensburg and elsewhere in Germany, mediaeval portrayals seldom, if ever, feature the cross. In a fresco in the Convent Church of Nonnberg in Salzburg - one of the earliest representations, dating from 1150 - the Saint is shown with the martyr's palm; according to legend, palm-bearing angels appeared to him in a dream to foretell the manner of his death.<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere, however, he carries the dish and the sceptre. Later German legend in the form of the Minstrel's Tale has equipped the figure of the Saint with the further iconographic attributes of the raven bearing a ring in its beak and often seated upon the dish or royal orb. And it is in this form that we find the statue associated with the others forming the so-called Dollinger group.<sup>31</sup>

The artistic and literary manifestations of the Oswald legend are very closely related. Curschmann has confirmed that the Minstrel's Tale of St. Oswald may well have originated in Regensburg during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,<sup>32</sup> while Dünninger, who is well known for his research on the folk-lore of Regensburg, was the first to

point out the significance of a passage in the poem which reads:

*Oswalt daz sage ich dir vürwâr, sô solt du der vierzehen nôthelfære einer sîn / das solt du haben von den genâden mîn.*

(Oswald, I tell you [now] in truth, you shall be one of the fourteen Holy Helpers, and you shall have it through my grace.)

This passage he saw in connection with the stained-glass Cathedral window, which shows Oswald and two other local (and largely Bavarian) saints, St. Leonhard and St. Blasius, often counted among the other fourteen known as the *Nothelfer*.<sup>33</sup> Dünninger goes on to conclude that not only the secular tale of Oswald, but also the sacral cult of the Fourteen Holy Helpers had their origin here in Regensburg, and that Oswald was integral to both.<sup>34</sup> This is no less true of the Dollinger group, of which Oswald once formed the centre, but here both the artistic and the literary manifestations are closely bound up with the history and tradition of Regensburg.

Today only a reproduction of the original group is to be seen in the so-called *Dollingersaal*, in the reconstructed patrician house which once belonged to the family of that name.<sup>35</sup> Most striking is the large bas-relief (4.90 metres long and 2.20 metres high) which depicts a joust between two armed knights, one of whom has been pierced under the ear by his opponent's lance. On one side stands the mounted statue of King Henry I, but the reproduction lacks an important feature of the original. Old woodcuts and engravings indicate that the king once held a cross in his right hand - an aspect which figures significantly in the ballad. Both reproduction and the engravings, however, show the king with a falcon on his gloved left hand, a symbol of his nickname, "The Fowler."<sup>36</sup> On the other side stands the monumental figure of St. Oswald, over 2.20 metres high. Although in this case the original statue has been preserved (it can be seen in the Municipal Museum),

it, too, lacks an important feature. The usual attributes of sceptre and (covered) dish are evident, but the raven and the ring mentioned by Wiguläus Hundt in his description have since disappeared.<sup>37</sup> The base of the statue bears the miniature figures of three male beggars, who may possibly represent the three ages of man, Youth, Maturity, and Old Age.<sup>38</sup>

The meaning of the group and the story behind it can hardly be misinterpreted. It is evidently intended to portray an episode commemorated by the Dollinger Ballad, a popular tale with a tradition that might extend back several hundred years and was well-enough known to find its way into Clemens Brentano's early collection of folk-songs entitled *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (1805-08).<sup>39</sup> There is little need to discuss the problem of priority; credible arguments have been offered for the precedence of both the statues and the ballad. A knowledge of the ballad and the story behind it is, however, essential to an understanding of the role of St. Oswald and the reason for his inclusion in the statue group.

The best-known version is that contained in a parchment dated 1552 and displayed, together with miscellany and a *laudatio* on King Henry I, in a diptych in the Dollinger Hall (where it caused a small sensation by its recent disappearance and mysterious return). Although the ballad and its historical background have been discussed in full elsewhere,<sup>40</sup> the text, together with a free English translation, is offered in conclusion to this article for convenience. Of particular interest is a second version of the ballad, preserved through Johannes Prechtel von Sittenbach in 1639, one which may derive from an even older version of the legend. Here the king has a golden cross erected on the site of the tournament:

*Das ersah der Keiser und seine Frau, bald ließ er bringen*



*ein güldenes Kreuz, solches stekt er mitten auf den Plan  
Der teufel der mußß weichen.*

(Did King and Queen the need behold,  
He had them bring a cross of gold;  
He set it up upon the field -  
The Devil had to yield.)

The role of the cross provides the key to the presence of the Oswald statue in the group and to the relation of the Saint to the other main figures in the Dollinger Ballad. It is the legend of the Saint as told by Bede that determines the principal features of the Dollinger story: in both cases the king himself erects a cross on the site of the battle, thus ensuring victory for the Christian side over a pagan adversary. The cross has the same function in all the versions of the ballad: it lends the Christian hero strength by virtue of its miraculous power - just as it did in Northumbria in 638.

Even today, we find signs reminiscent of the importance attached to the role of the cross in the legendary battle which is said to have taken place between Dollinger and his opponent, Craco, upon a heath outside the town walls, now known as *Haidplatz*, 'Heath Square.' Although many local historians have attempted to derive the name of the field where the battle took place from the word 'heathen' (from OHG *heidan*), instead of 'heath' (OHG *heida*),<sup>41</sup> specialized works on the growth and development of Regensburg in the Middle Ages show that the name of the square is very old, and only designates what was once a very large and open space of empty wasteland.<sup>42</sup> The old Imperial inn, which came to be the best in town, and sheltered the Emperor whenever he visited the Diet, was built directly next to the supposed site of the famous tournament. Since 1456 it has been called *Zum Goldenen Kreuz*, 'At the Sign of the Golden Cross,' and the name may well have been chosen in commemoration of the event celebrated by the ballad and of the miraculous aid which Dollinger received through the sign of the Cross.<sup>43</sup>

The earliest historical account of the legend, printed at a time when the story was probably still popular, adds a number of details not directly contained in the ballad. Dollinger is said to have been advised by a monk of Niedermünster Abbey to have a cross set up near the site of the battle, and to give thanks at the Tomb of St. Erhard afterwards.<sup>44</sup> In a similar manner, the armour and helmet of the slain knight Craco were said to have been displayed there until the time of King Charles V, when they were removed to Vienna.<sup>45</sup> In spite of the tendency of such chronicles to indulge in fable, there are some remarkable historical corroborations of the early integration of Niedermünster Abbey into the legend. St. Erhard, the patron saint and possible founder of the original abbey was said to be a native of Ireland, or at the very least to have received his education in Irish monasteries; hence, it is not altogether impossible that he should have been one of those who helped to spread Oswald's fame.<sup>46</sup>

Moreover, King Henry I had a special relationship to the same Abbey, for he contributed a newer, larger church, and was later buried there in 955. At the same time, his widow Judith was regarded as the foundress of the religious congregation which supplanted the older one and which continued to flourish until the secularization in 1803. In the light of such continuity it seems most probable that the nuns of Niedermünster Abbey were instrumental in preserving not only the memory of their St. Erhard, but also that of the Dollinger legend and St. Oswald. The armour, as well as the story behind it, were do doubt a source of pride for the convent, as shown by the paintings in the church sometime during the seventeenth century.<sup>47</sup> This seems all the more likely in view of the fact that the Oswald Window in the Cathedral was donated in 1365 by a canon of the Cathedral, Conrad von Heimburg, who was probably connected with

Niedermünster and with the efforts of his fellow canon, Conrad von Megenburg, to propagate the cult of St. Erhard and to publicize a miracle - Megenburg was healed of paralysis - attributed to the saint. When Heimburg became Bishop of Regensburg only two years later, he made the Foundation attached to the old Church of St. Oswald on the Danube possible.<sup>48</sup> And, finally, Johann Prechtel von Sittenbach, who preserved one version of the Dollinger Ballad, is on record for his attachment to Niedermünster in 1600.<sup>49</sup>

But the legend and the process of its growth can be seen in a sociological as well as in a historical light. The Dollinger group of statues reflects the mentality of a time at which the Middle Class was rising in importance and wealth, and set the tone in Regensburg. The hero, himself, is a commoner who rises to the rank of knighthood - a case of vicarious wish-fulfilment typical of that found in later mediaeval German narratives. As has already been mentioned, the raven and the ring of the Oswald statue are derived from the Minstrel's Tale, in which we see a similar phenomenon. Here we find a completely new Oswald, one who has little in common with the original figure, as well as a radically different treatment of action, setting, and atmosphere. In the secular version, the Saint appears in realistic garb and has been degraded to a child of this world. Self-gain appears in place of self-sacrifice, wealth in place of poverty, individual happiness as opposed to the common welfare - in other words, the values of well-to-do mercantile citizens rather than the ascetic otherworldliness generally attributed to the Saint. Even his *character indelebilis* as a Priest King<sup>50</sup> is abandoned for worldly prowess and adventure.

But Oswald does not remain the patron saint of the noble and the well-to-do Middle Class alone. In a further stage of development he is seen as the guardian of farmers and

livestock,<sup>51</sup> and as such he has lived on in Bavarian harvest customs and folk tradition. At one time, the last sheaf of the last field was left standing when the grain was cut in autumn; later it was bound and braided to resemble the figure of a man, and decorated with wreaths and flowers. The figure was called *Oswald*, and the ceremony was seen as a tribute to him in order to ensure good weather and a rich harvest.<sup>52</sup> The custom has been connected by some with the ancient Germanic worship of the *Aasen* (OE *ōs* is the word for 'god'), and with *Wōtan* or *Donar*, a theory which is more than controversial.<sup>53</sup> At any rate, it appears that the custom continued to exist up to the last generation, and even in England similar observances in rural districts - the winding of wreaths, the twisting of reeds into emblems of St. Oswald, the mowing of hay - are connected with the Feast Day of the Saint.<sup>54</sup>

Thus the cult of St. Oswald evidences a transformation highly typical of saints' legends during the Middle Ages. With the rise of towns and a new mercantile Middle Class, the Christian king fades as a figure of importance, and a new concept of the Saint emerges, one more in keeping with the values of the social stratum in which the cult is embedded. With the rise of the peasant class, a further transformation is effected, and a rustic, Bavarianized local patron saint grows in importance. In the case of Oswald, we can say that these three facets of his character as an object of veneration reflect the values and successive importance of the Mediaeval Three Estates. Thus the saint's figure is revealed as a mirror of the mediaeval social context which led to its literary and popular metamorphosis here in Regensburg - a long way from England in more senses than one.

Das Dollingerlied

Es rait ein Türck aus Türckhen Lanndt,  
Er rait gen Regenspurg in die stat  
Da Stechen wardt, von Stechen war im wolbekhant.  
Da rait er fuer des Kayzers thuer.  
'Ist niemant hin, der kumb herfuer,  
Der stechen Well umb leib umb Seel  
umb guet umb Ehr,  
vnnnd das dem Teuffl die Seel wer?'  
Da warn die Stecher all verschwigen,  
kainer wolt dem Türckhen nit obligen,  
dem Laidigen man,  
der so frefflich Stechen khan.  
Da sprach der Kayser zornigklig:  
'Wie steht mein hoff so lästerlich!  
hab ich khain man der Stechen khan  
umb leib umb Seel umb guet umb ehr,  
vnd das vnserm herrn die see wer?'  
Da sprang der Dollinger herfuer:  
'wol umb wol umb ich mues hinfuer  
an den laidigen Man,  
der so frefflich Stechen khan!'  
Das erste reuten das sie da theten,  
Sie füerten gegen einander Zway scharffe Speer,  
Das ain gieng hin, das ander ging her.  
Da stach der Türck den Dollinger ab,  
das er an dem ruckhen lag.  
'O Jhesu Christ, steh mir ietz bey,  
Steck mir ein Zwey, sind Irer drey,  
Bin ich allain,  
vnnnd fuer mein Seel in das Ewig himelreiche!'  
Da reit der Kayser zum Dollinger so behendt,  
er füert ein kreutz in seiner herndt,  
Er strichs dem Dollinger über sein munt -  
Der Dollinger sprang auff, war frisch vnnnd gsundt.  
Das ander reiten das sie da theten,  
da stach der Dollinger denn Türckhen ab,  
Das er an dem ruckhenn lag.  
'Du verheuter Teuffl, nun Stehe im bey,  
sind irer drey, bin ich allain,  
Vnnnd fuer sein Seel  
in die bitter helle Beyn!'

### The Dollinger Ballad

A Turk rode out from the Turkish land  
Towards Regensburg; he rode into town  
That for the jousts, he knew, there had renown.  
He rode right up to the Kayser's door,  
'Is no one here? Let him step to the fore  
Who dares to joust for the highest stake,  
For body, soul, wealth, and honour's sake,  
That the Devil may take his soul?'  
But all the jousters silence kept,  
None would by the Turk be met,  
The cruel man,  
Who jousts much better than most who can.  
The Kayser spoke then scathingly,  
'Despicable my court doth seem to me!  
Have I no man to joust for the stake  
Of body, soul, wealth, and honour's sake,  
That the Lord preserve his soul?  
There sprang good Dollinger to the fore,  
'For good, for bad, I must restore  
Our honour against that cruel man,  
Who jousts much better than most who can!'  
The first time that they made the charge  
They both used lances, sharp and large,  
And it was so  
That one went to, the other fro.  
The Turk struck hard, he won that round  
and laid poor Dollinger on the ground.  
'O Jesus Christ, now hear my plea,  
Rid me of two, for there are three,  
And only one of me;  
And lead my soul to Heaven's goal - salvation!'  
The Kayser hastened to his knight,  
A cross in hand to ease his plight,  
And touched his lips with the sacred wood -  
His strength restored, good Dollinger stood.  
The next time that the charge was made  
'Twas the Turk that on the ground was laid.  
'O damned Devil, now hear his plea,  
There were three of them, and but one of me;  
So lead his soul to Hell's bitter goal - damnation!'

N o t e s

<sup>1</sup> An unlikely possibility in view of the fact that etchings by Merian from 1650 show that the statue of St. Oswald originally occupied a prominent position in the group; cp. Josef Dünninger, "St. Erhard und die Dollingersage: Zum Problem der geschichtlichen Sage," *Bayerisches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*: 1953, ed. J.M. Ritz (Regensburg: Josef Habbel, 1953), p. 13, and also Alfred Seyler, *Die mittelalterliche Plastik Regensburgs* ([dissertation] Munich, 1905), 78. Professor Dünninger, who is somewhat sceptical on the age of the Dollinger legend, prefers to see in it a pure fabrication on the part of later local historians. We are indebted to this well-known authority on the folklore of Regensburg for his helpful answers to our queries.

<sup>2</sup> The following inscriptions were, according to Carl W. Neumann, *Die Dollingersage* (Regensburg: J. Raitmayr'sche Offizin, 1862), p. 8, added at a later date: [1] Above the joust: *Barbarus Hic Solidis Certant Germanus Et Armis Germanus Vicit Barbarus Occubuit* 'Here a barbarian duels with a German with mighty weapons; the German conquers, the barbarian falls.' [2] Together with King Henry I: *Fertur equo Celeri Hic Henricus In Ordine Primus: Aucupio Celeber Nec Minus Imperio* 'Here sits Henry, the first in number, upon a swift horse; famed as The Fowler, but no less as Emperor.' [3] Together with the statue of Oswald: *Haec Statua Oswaldum, Si Nescis Scito Figurat, Qui Rex Officio Gente Britanus Erat* 'Should you not recognize it, know that this statue is of Oswald, who was king by rank and British by birth.'

<sup>3</sup> Cp., for example, Dünninger, *op. cit.*, p. 13; Hugo Graf von Walderdorff, *Regensburg in seiner Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1896; rpt. 1973), p. 229; Jacob Gratzmeier, "Das Dollingerhaus zu Regensburg," *Verhandlungen des historischen Vereins von Oberpfalz und Regensburg*, 43 (1889), 263-64; and the comments in Michael Curschmann, *Der Münchener Oswald und die deutsche spielmännische Epik* (Munich: Beck, 1964), p. 190, where the suggestion is made that Oswald appears in his role as a knightly opponent of heathenism.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Sweet, ed., *King Alfred's Orosius* ([Early English Text Society (EETS)] London: Oxford University Press, 1883; rpt. 1959), p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Cited in Andreas Kraus, *Civitas Regia: Das Bild Regensburgs in der deutschen Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters* (Kallmünz: Michael Lassleben, 1972), p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Hermann Menhardt, "Regensburg ein Mittelpunkt der deutschen Epik des 12. Jahrhunderts," *ZdFA*, 89 (1958), 271.

<sup>7</sup> Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Walter W. Skeat, *Aelfric's Lives of the Saints* ([EETS] London: Oxford University Press, 1890-1900; rpt. <sup>2</sup>1966), Vol. 2, p. 140.

<sup>9</sup> Notably Book III, Chapters 2-3, 5-7, 9-13; Dorothy Whitelock, *Eng-*

lish Historical Documents, I: c. 500-1042 (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1968), p. 691, includes a passage on St. Oswald from an Irish *Life of St. Columba*, written by a contemporary of Bede's called Adamnan; on the Regensburg manuscript, see Curschmann, *op. cit.*, 192.

<sup>10</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Charles Plummer (London: Oxford University Press, 1806), p. 152.

<sup>11</sup> Volker Kohlheim, "Regensburger Rufnamen des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik, Beihefte*, N.S. 19 (1977), pp. 307-08, points out that the chapel of St. Emmeram was consecrated to St. Oswald in the decade of 1120-30, and that the ratio of personal names to patrocinal churches indicates an early popularity of the cult. Karl Busch, *Regensburger Kirchenbaukunst: 1160-1280* (Kallmünz: Michael Lassleben, 1932), pp. 62-64, argues convincingly in favour of a Church of St. Oswald on the Danube as early as the tenth and eleventh centuries.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview and details, see Curschmann, *op. cit.*, 188. Bede, *op. cit.*, III, Chapter 13, relates the enthusiasm of Willibrord, the Archbishop of the Frisians, for St. Oswald. Camille Wampach, *Sankt Willibrord: Sein Leben und sein Lebenswerk* (Luxemburg: Sankt Paulus, 1953), pp. 61 and 67f., gives a detailed account of the revival of the cult in the twelfth century after a victory celebrated on 5 August. The reliquary kept there until 1534 may be identical with the one later found as part of the Cathedral treasure in Hildesheim; cp. Karl Künstle, *Ikono-graphie der Heiligen* (Freiburg, 1926), Vol. 1, p. 481. The calendar of Willibrord, which served as a model for most early German church calendars, contains the Feast of the Saint (Wampach, p. 61).

<sup>13</sup> Since Carolingian times Fulda had a strong influence on Bavaria, and on Regensburg in particular. Georg Baesecke, "Die altdeutsche Beichte," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprache und Literatur*, 49 (1925), 354, describes the manner in which the reform efforts of Charlemagne and Alcuin spread first to Fulda, and from Fulda to Mainz and even Regensburg. The Benedictines of St. Emmeram's had direct connections to Fulda, and, as previously mentioned, the Fulda Annals were continued in Regensburg after 888.

<sup>14</sup> Josef Dünninger, "St. Oswald und Regensburg: Zur Datierung des Münchener Oswald," *Gedächtnisschrift für Adalbert Hämel* (Würzburg: Konrad Triltsch, 1953), 20, points out that the pupils of Alcuin were responsible for the growth of the cult in Westphalia, and that members of the Guelph nobility were said to have brought new relics from England in 1094. The twelfth-century veneration of St. Oswald was particularly strong in this area, i.e. Weingarten and the entire district of Constance.

<sup>15</sup> On the role of the Scottish monks in Regensburg - both Ireland and the extreme north of England are covered by the term 'Scottish,' which seems less precise than the German, *iro-schottisch* - , see A.M. Stewart, "Regensburg and Scotland," *Aberdeen University Review*, 43 (1969), 48-52.



<sup>16</sup> Cp. William O. Stevens, *The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons*, New York, 1904, as well as Michael Swanton, *The Dream of the Rood* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), Introduction, pp. 42-51.

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Deansley, *A History of the Medieval Church: 590-1000* (London, n.p., 1925; <sup>9</sup>1969), pp. 69-71; cp. the discussion and some new conclusions on the literary impact of the cult in Jean Ritzke-Rutherford, *The Literary Motif of Light and Darkness in Anglo-Saxon Poetry* ([dissertation] Regensburg, 1978), pp. 140-44.

<sup>18</sup> Cp. A. Berger, "Die Oswaldlegende in der deutschen Literatur: Ihre Entwicklung und ihre Verbreitung," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 11 (1886), 420; and Siegm. Schultze, *Die Entwicklung der deutschen Oswaldlegende* ([dissertation] Halle, 1888), p. 42.

<sup>19</sup> Georg Swarzenski, *Die Regensburger Buchmalerei: Studien zur Geschichte der deutschen Malerei des frühen Mittelalters* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1969 [<sup>1</sup>1901]), pp. 3-4.

<sup>20</sup> Swarzenski, p. 202, lists the Feast Day of the Saint in an early Regensburg Church calendar, identifying it with those of St. Erhard, St. Emmeram, and St. Wolfgang; thus there is a strong possibility that Oswald was venerated in Regensburg even during this early period. The existence of an early Chapel of St. Oswald attached to St. Emmeram's Monastery as early as 1120 or 1130 has been neatly proven by Max Piendl, *Fontes monasterii S. Emmerami Ratisbonensis - Bau- und kunstgeschichtliche Quellen: Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des ehemaligen Reichstiftes St. Emmeram in Regensburg* ([Thurn und Taxis Studien, Vol. 1] Kallmünz: Michael Lassleben, 1961), pp. 1-183.

<sup>21</sup> Although most of the major monographs on the cult of St. Oswald or the Minstrel's Tale which arose from it trace the various paths by which it spread, the most recent and certainly the most thorough treatment is that of Curschmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-87.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Bede, *op. cit.*, Book III, Chapter 6.

<sup>23</sup> Cp. George Herzfeld, ed., *An Old English Martyrology* ([EETS] London: Oxford University Press, 1900), p. 136; Skeat, *Aelfric's Lives*, Vol. 2, pp. 125ff.; C. D'Evelyn and A.J. Mill, *The South English Legendary* ([EETS] London: Oxford University Press, 1956; rpt. 1967), Vol. 2, p. 367; C. Horstmann, "Die Evangeliengeschichten der Homiliensammlung des Ms. Vernon," *Archiv*, 57 (1877), 241-316.

<sup>24</sup> Cp. Reginald, *Vita S. Oswaldi Regis et Martyris*, ed. Thomas Arnold (London: n.p., 1882), pp. 326-85. On p. 356, Reginald relates that an unusually large bird, probably a raven ('*corvini generis*'), seizes the year-old, but perfectly preserved severed hand of the Saint and flies away with it when Oswy, Oswald's brother, comes to fetch the remains. The bird perches in a dead ash tree, which immediately begins to bloom; and when the bird finally lets the hand drop, a spring wells up

on the spot. At this point the raven had already become the emblem of English kings, but the motif may go back as well to the Old English image of the carrion 'beast of battle.'

<sup>25</sup> Cp. Alois Elsen, *Der Dom zu Regensburg: Die Bildfenster* (Berlin, 1940), for an excellent monograph on the subject; as well as Johannes Schinnerer, "Zur Datierung der Glasmalerei im Regensburger Dom," *Reper-torium für Kunstwissenschaft*, 37 (1915), 197-210. On the frescoes, see Dünninger, "St. Oswald," 25-26.

<sup>26</sup> Cp. Dünninger, "St. Oswald," 25-26. Prof. Dünninger was the first to note the frescoes in the Church of the Minor Friars, and he dates them at 1320.

<sup>27</sup> Johannes Schinnerer, *Die gotische Plastik in Regensburg* (Strass-burg: Heiz und Müller, 1918), p. 30, says that the figure is similar to the general style of the Dollinger group, but that no direct connection is apparent; on the former location, see Karl Bauer, *Regensburg: Aus Kunst-, Kultur- und Sittengeschichte*,<sup>2</sup> (Regensburg: Mittelbayerische Druckerei- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1970 [<sup>1</sup>1962]), p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> Busch, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-64, assumes a Church of St. Oswald as early as the tenth and eleventh centuries. The location directly on the Danube next to the old ferry, the second-most important crossing before the Stone Bridge was built, is typical: Oswald is the patron saint of crusaders, and his statues and churches are often to be found on main thoroughfares.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Leslie Milburn, *Saints and their Emblems in English Churches* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), p. 196.

<sup>30</sup> This incident occurs both in the English legend and in the minstrel's tale; cp. Wolfgang Braunfels, ed., *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1976), Vol. 7, p. 102.

<sup>31</sup> In the minstrel's tale Oswald is an English king in search of a fitting bride. He learns of a suitable princess, and he conducts his courtship through a raven which is as clever as it is voluble. The raven returns with a letter and a golden ring from the lady. Oswald sets off to win her with 72 ships and 72,000 small golden crosses, which he has used to gain volunteers for the trip. Disguised as a merchant or goldsmith, he uses a ruse to abduct the princess; the pursuing heathens are converted in the end. Oswald, who has taken a vow, spends the rest of his married life in chastity and in generosity to the poor after an encounter with Christ, who promises that he shall become a saint and one of the fourteen Holy Helpers. Cp. George Baesecke, *Der Münchener Oswald*, Breslau, 1907, and *Der Wiener Oswald*, Heidelberg, 1912.

<sup>32</sup> *Münchener Oswald*, lines 3501-03; cp. Curschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>33</sup> On the fourteen Holy Helpers, see Braunfels, *op. cit.*, pp. 456 and 547. The saints included are Dionysius, Erasmus, Blasius, Barbara,

Margaretha, Katharina, Georg, Achatius, Eustachius, Ägidius, Cyriacus, Vitus, and Christophorus. Leonhard was generally substituted for Cyriacus, but in Regensburg it was Oswald, whose Feast Day comes directly after that of Cyriacus in the calendar. For two major viewpoints on the cult, see Georg Schreiber, *Die Vierzehn Nothelfer in Volksfrömmigkeit und Sakralkultur: Symbolkraft und Herrschaftsbereich der Wallfahrtskapellen, vorab in Franken und Tirol*, Innsbruck: Wagner, 1959; and Josef Dünninger, "Die Wallfahrtslegende von Vierzehneiligen," *Festschrift für Wolfgang Stammeler* (Berlin: Biederfeld, 1953), pp. 192-205.

<sup>34</sup> Dünninger, "St. Oswald," 26.

<sup>35</sup> Seyler, *op. cit.*, p. 77; Schinnerer, *Gotische Plastik*, p. 23, confirms Seyler's date of about 1300 and points out that the Oswald statue shows the influence of northern French cathedral sculpture.

<sup>36</sup> For a thorough description of the statues and the room in which they are found, see Lotte Hahn, "Die Dollingerplastik in Regensburg," *Oberrheinische Kunst: Vierteljahrsberichte der oberrheinischen Museen*, 3 (1928), 19-44.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26fn; a number of nineteenth-century corroborations are also named, but an etching of 1849 does not contain the raven and the ring, leading Hahn to conclude that they were lost sometime between 1842 and 1846.

<sup>38</sup> Such miniature figures with allegorical overtones were popular in medieval sculpture. Thus, if the statue now mounted above the South Portal of the Old Stone Bridge should actually represent Oswald - a theory which seems doubtful in view of the missing attributes of the sceptre, dish, or orb - , it is not unlikely that the grimacing mask which supports the console at the foot of the statue represents paganism vanquished; for similar interpretations in another context, see Joseph Braun, *Tracht und Attribute der Heiligen in der deutschen Kunst* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1943), cols. 569-70.

<sup>39</sup> Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, eds., *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* {[*Alte deutsche Lieder. Erster Theil*] Heidelberg: Mohr und Winter, 1819; rpt., Berlin: Haude & Spener, 1968), pp. 36-37, 'Der Dollinger.'

<sup>40</sup> Karl Heinz Göller, "Das Regensburger Dollingerlied," in publication.

<sup>41</sup> Among those who have attempted to derive the name from 'heathen' are: Walderdorff, *op. cit.*, p. 228; and Carl W. Neumann, *Die Kaiser- und Fürstenherberge zum 'goldenen Kreuz' in Regensburg: Eine historische Skizze* (Regensburg: J. Georg Bössenecker, 1886 [1868]), p. 42. Dünninger, "St. Erhard," p. 14, points out that such interpretative etymologies are typical of the sixteenth century, which gave rise to the parchment copy of the ballad.

<sup>42</sup> Albert von Hofmann, *Die Stadt Regensburg* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1922), p. 105, gives a detailed account of the growth of the mediaeval town. Cp. also Bauer, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-56. The name is documented from the twelfth century onwards.

<sup>43</sup> Neumann, *Die Kaiser- und Fürstenherberge*, pp. 42 and 58, points out the importance of the cross for the Dollinger Legend, but fails to bring it into connection with St. Oswald.

<sup>44</sup> Jo. Ludovici Gottfridi, *Historische Chronica, oder Beschreibung der Fürnemsten Geschichten so sich von Angang der Welt biß auff das Jahr Christi 1619 zugetragen etc.* (Frankfurt, 1657 [1630]), p. 481, for the year 929.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. The statement has been repeated by all subsequent historians, e.g. Christian G. Gumpelzhaimer, *Regensburg's Geschichte, Sagen und Sehenswürdigkeiten* (Regensburg: Montag und Weiß, Pustet, 1830-1838), pp. 121-22, and Walderdorff, *op. cit.*, p. 210; cp., however, the discussion in Dünninger, "St. Erhard," p. 10.

<sup>46</sup> Cp. Max Piendl, "Fragen zur frühen Regensburger Stadtopographie," *Veröffentlichungen des historischen Vereins von Regensburg und der Oberpfalz*, 106 (1966), p. 75; Paul May, "Der Heilige Bischof Erhard," *Bavaria Sancta*, ed. Georg Schwaiger (Regensburg: Pustet, 1971), p. 34; and Gisela Koschwitz, "Der heilige Bischof Erhard von Regensburg: Legende, Kult und Ikonographie," *Studien und Mitteilungen des Benediktiner-Ordens und seiner Klöster*, 86 (1975), 486-90. Such specialized studies reject the idea that the origins of Niedermünster go back further than the first half of the ninth century.

<sup>47</sup> Bauer, *op. cit.*, p. 25. It seems noteworthy that the paintings were hung in Niedermünster at about the same time as the first historical account of the Dollingersage appeared.

<sup>48</sup> Cp. Franz Heidingsfelder, "Die vorgotischen Kirchen Regensburgs," *Das Bayerland*, 36 (1925), 595; Schinnerer, *Glasmalerei*, p. 202; and Ferdinand Janner, *Geschichte der Bischöfe von Regensburg* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1886), Vol. III, pp. 257ff. In 1367 Bishop Conrad forced the Carmelites to vacate the premises (they had apparently antagonized him in sermons), and made the church available to the Auer and Prager Families for a foundation for the poor in honour of St. Oswald.

<sup>49</sup> Neumann, *Die Dollingersage*, p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> On this early mediaeval concept of kingship, particularly in England, see William A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970.

<sup>51</sup> Thus later paintings of the Saint, in the eighteenth century, show him as a healer of ailing farm animals; cp. Berger, "Die Oswald-legende," 433, and Karl A. Bernoulli, *Die Heiligen der Merowinger*

(Tübingen: Mohr, 1900), p. 203.

<sup>52</sup> For a picturesque description of the ceremony, see Bernoulli, *op. cit.*, p. 201-02; cp. also Hans Bleibrunner, *Niederbayerische Heilmat* (Landshut: n.p., 1967), p. 300.

<sup>53</sup> Berger, "Die Oswaldlegende," 413 and 435, rejects the etymology, but supports the pagan origin of the custom; cp. also Ignaz v. Zingerle, *Die Oswaldlegende und ihre Beziehung zur deutschen Mythologie* (Stuttgart: Scheitlein, 1856), pp. 77-86, and Romuald Bauerreiss, *Kirchengeschichte Bayerns* (St. Ottilien: Eos, 1949), Vol. 2, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> Herr Reinhard Gleißner relates that an old farmer's wife of his acquaintance near Deggendorf, Lower Bavaria, was horrified to hear that the *Oswald* (also called *Manndl*, 'little man,' or *Zoll*, 'tribute') was pagan in origin; thereupon she swore to crop the custom forever. See also Christina Hole, *Saints in Folklore* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1966 [1965]), Chapter 8, "St. Oswald of Northumbria," esp. pp. 112-13.