

Amana Colonies:
GerMania in the American Midwest



Amana Colonies: GerMania in the American Midwest

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Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

-Psalm 119:111

Abstract

German immigrants to the United States are nowadays hardly distinguishable from other immigrant groups. The Amana people of Iowa are an exception to this rule and have kept their Amana German heritage alive for the last 150 years. From their beginnings as Pietists in eighteenth-century Germany to a communal lifestyle in nineteenth-century America, the community has always been able to keep its community alive within a larger society. After the Change out of communal living in 1932, the community's face has begun to change and adapt into a more Americanized community, that is however still strongly rooted in its German heritage. This thesis presents a careful examination of the evolution of Amana identity and seeks to establish how the experiences of persecution, migration, religious worship, and community structure have affected the current preservation of their distinctive culture. A literary analysis combined with fieldwork and personal interviews shows the evolution of Amana identity from a strongly community-oriented group to a community in search of direction today. At this crossroads, the Amana people might have to make a choice between preserving their heritage and the survival of the church.

Keywords: *identity, migration, religion, Amana, heritage, German, American, preservation, community, utopian, society, Germanness, communal, Pietism*

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Introduction

In Eastern Iowa about half an hour northwest of Iowa City lie the seven villages that make up the Amana Colonies today. With their origins in eighteenth century Germany, the Amana people (also known as the Community of True Inspiration) left their mother country due to persecution and a wish to live freely in the New World. Even today with their location just off of interstate 80 on the Iowa prairie the colonies are secluded enough from the hustle to maintain their Old World charm, yet they are close enough to the bustle to make them Iowa's number one tourist attraction (Webber, 3). In 1965, the Colonies became a National Historic Landmark ("Amana Colonies"). For the last 150 years the people of Amana have called Iowa their home and until 1932 they lived a communal lifestyle, mostly shielded from the outside world. After this so called "Change" of 1932, the community has become open to outsiders and has adapted tourism as a form of income. Nowadays, the Amana festival calendar is packed with events celebrating their German heritage. Fall is rung in with the obligatory celebration of *Oktoberfest*, but also the *Maifest*, *Winterfest*, and *Wurst Festival* are popular events throughout the year and attract large crowds of locals as well as outside guests. Unlike most German immigrants who came to the United States, the Amana are unique in that they have not completely dissolved into American culture, and they have kept strong ties to their German heritage. This thesis presents a careful examination of the evolution of Amana identity. It seeks to establish how the experiences of persecution, migration, religious worship, and community structure have affected the current preservation of their distinctive culture.

The body of academic work discussing the Amana people is quite small and mainly focuses on the time leading up to the Change of 1932. For the purpose of this thesis, many primary sources have been studied and analyzed. Several sources are available that give an overview of the history of the Community of True Inspiration. The most substantial one is the *Inspirations-Historie*, a collection of books, which describe in detail the history of the community from its beginnings in Germany until their life in Iowa. Gottlieb Scheuner, a member of the community, functioned as the compiler of the editions and published them on the basis that earlier compilations of the history had been made in a time in which not as many sources were available (Scheuner, 4). Scheuner's accounts give an abundance of details, often including citations of the inspired testimonies, which are so important to the community. Since this edition

is a retelling of the history of the community by one of its members, it is not critical and accepts statements made by the community leaders at face value. Throughout the book, the piety of the author is apparent and references to the Bible are not only frequent, but the style of writing follows a biblical tone.

Bertha Shambaugh's *Amana That Was and Amana That Is* published in 1908 (Part I) and 1932 (Part II) respectively is another important source. Shambaugh, while not a member of the community, was familiar with the community and its history as well as its members. Shambaugh was even allowed to portray some of the members on film, a practice that was generally rejected within the community as being too worldly and vain. A selection of her pictures can be found in Abigail Foerstner's book *Picturing Utopia*. Part I of Shambaugh's book "Amana That Was" discusses the communities' history in Germany and in America until the early nineteenth century. Shambaugh's friendship with the community members allowed her deep insights into honest community life, but they may also have clouded her judgments; her recollection of history is not always an objective one. Like Scheuner, Shambaugh also accepts a lot of Amana beliefs at face value without critically questioning them. Nevertheless, her book is the most substantial history of Amana culture and heritage written by a non-member, and it gives valuable accounts of Amana history.

Another main source on historical background of the colonies is Frank J. Lankes' *The Ebenezer Community of True Inspiration*. Lankes' motivation for publishing the book was to give an historical account of the village of West Seneca, NY, the current name of the villages of Ebenezer, which had been settled by the Inspirationists. The book was published in 1949 by the author and intended for distribution at the pharmacy in Gardenville, NY, the neighboring town of West Seneca. In his accounts, Lankes relies on Scheuner's *Inspirations-Historie* as well as other sources from the Amana archives, which are not mentioned in detail. Lankes' account takes on a more critical analysis of the facts than the previously described sources. Nevertheless, these critical interjections are inserted only sparsely into an objective historical account. Lankes' main focus of his book lies on the early days of the community in the United States and their settlement of Ebenezer.

F. Alan DuVal's *Christian Metz – German-American Religious Leader & Pioneer*, first released in 1947 as his dissertation and published in 2005 in a version edited by Amana historian and former church administrator Peter Hoehnle, focuses on the life of Christian Metz as the

spiritual leader of the community. It also gives background information through an historical perspective. Throughout the book, a certain level of piety is present, however, it is unclear if the author or the editor were the influence of that. DuVal was married to Metz' Great-great-granddaughter Louise, and therefore has a specific admiring view on the historical figure of Metz. With the editor being a lifelong member of the community, it is obvious that his beliefs tint the accounts as well.

By incorporating these sources, a substantial and diverse history of The Community of True Inspiration can be given for their time in Germany and America until about 1932. However, these historical accounts are merely descriptive and do not look at factors that played a role in forming a group with an identity so strong, that it held the community together for almost two centuries after settling in the New World. Another absence in the body of academic work is the fact that after the Change, historical narratives and academic studies become sparse altogether. This thesis strives to fill this gap and report on Amana culture today in relation to their history and shed light on factors that made Amana culture stand the test of time within American culture without dissolving in it beyond recognition. In order to acquire more current sources as well as uncover sources that had not been used extensively, the author of this thesis has undertaken a four-month research trip to the Amana colonies and especially their archives. Through personal interviews with community and church members, a better picture of contemporary Amana will be given as well as an outlook of what the future of Amana might hold.

The Amana people and their culture are unique among German immigrants to the United States because they have – unlike most others– not completely dissolved into US culture and held on to a distinctive form of identity that is closely tied to their German origin. The Amana community still identifies as *German-American* even after more than 170 years in the “new” country, and it actively preserves their traditions with the help of the Amana Heritage Society and the Amana Heritage Museum. Older generations still speak a form of German, their last names are mainly of German origin, their building style is Southern German, and a lot of their traditional food has its roots in German cuisine. The question arises what keeps this community together? How were they able to preserve an identity beyond just sharing an ethnic origin? What sets this community apart from other immigrant groups who have come to the states? In how far is the persistence of “German-ness” a factor in the survival of the group as a social construct? How is Germanness performed in the colonies? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary

to look at theories on identity formation and preservation as a framework of reference that give an insight into the academic debate this thesis fits into. In the case of the Amana, formation of identity is closely tied to migration and religion, so these elements will also be examined further.

Academic research offers an abundance of models about identity in general and identity and migration as well as identity and religion in particular. Individual and group identity have been identified as the two main forms of identity in human development. Individual identity has been defined differently by various disciplines but most commonly as the “relatively stable elements of an individual’s sense of self” (Seul, 554). These elements consist of “one’s values, motives, emotions, feelings, attitudes, thoughts, goals, aspirations, and the like” as well as “one’s group memberships, social influence, [and] social interaction patterns” (Seul, 555). Group identity will, for the purpose of this thesis, be defined as “the members’ shared ‘conception of its enduring characteristics and basic values, its strengths and weaknesses, its hopes and fears, its reputation and conditions of existence, its institutions and traditions, its past history, current purposes, and future prospects’” (Seul, 556).

The influence of religion on identity has been frequently researched in the past and Jeffrey R. Seul’s article “‘Ours Is the Way of God’: Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict” provides a helpful basis for this thesis. When looking at individual as well as group identity, Seul argues that religion “contribute[s] to the construction and maintenance” of both, as “[r]eligions frequently supply cosmologies, moral frameworks, institutions, rituals, traditions, and other identity-supporting content that answers to individuals’ need for psychological stability in the form of a predictable world, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization” (553). Seul argues that “[k]ey elements of one’s identity are likely to be retained over long periods of time” even if “new elements are added and existing ones abandoned or devalued” (555). Identity therefore contains both, elements of fluidity and stability, with new attitudes being added to core elements. Stability of group identity is maintained through “[t]he group’s institutions, traditions, and history” which “often find embodiment in writing or other material forms which communicate and preserve the group’s identity independently of the individuals that presently comprise the group” (556). The Christian Bible or Jewish Tanakh are both examples of this ‘embodiment in writing’ of traditions and history, as it has guided members of the faiths for millennia, surpassing ideals of just a single generation and even encompassing parts of the entire world. When faced with antagonism and a subsequent “inadequate social identity,” a group can

meet this with different responses (557). These responses can range from “efforts to assimilate itself into the relevant out-group identity” or “a direct challenge to the out-group” which “involves an effort to enhance and strengthen group identity” (557). Hostility towards a group with a shared identity can therefore lead to either a “dilution of group identity” or a strengthening of the same (557). Seul writes that “[a]ttempts to enhance group status are likely when exit from a group is very difficult or impossible” (557), as it would be in circumstances in which a person’s individual identity is strongly entangled with the group’s like in a religious community. “Group identity tends to intensify during periods of crisis” (558), so a group being attacked from the outside will lead to a closing of ranks within the group.

Migration and identity are also closely interlinked and have sparked the interest of scholars around the globe. Dinesh Burgha writes about the impact of migration on identity in his article “Migration, distress and cultural identity.” Though the main topic of his paper deals with migration and its consequences on mental health, Burgha gives a good overview of the effects of migration on cultural identity in general. Migration is defined as “a process of social change where an individual, alone or accompanied by others, because of one or more reasons of economic betterment, political upheaval, education or other purposes, leaves one geographical area for prolonged stay or permanent settlement in another geographical area” (129). Commenting on the effects of migration he writes, “[w]hen people migrate from one nation or culture to another they carry their knowledge and expressions of distress with them” (129). As a consequence a migrant’s culture “is likely to change and that encourages a degree of belonging; they also attempt to settle down by either assimilation or biculturalism” (129.) According to Bhugra the process of migration always involves “not only leaving social networks behind [...] but also includes experiencing at first a sense of loss, dislocation, alienation and isolation, which will lead to a process of acculturation” (129). Acculturation is defined as: “a ‘phenomenon’ which results when groups of individuals from different cultures come into continuous first hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either one or both groups” (134). When acculturation happens, “two cultures come into contact and both cultures may experience some change” (134). According to the author “six domains have been identified which can be linked with acculturation [...] at an individual level” (134). Here the link is laid to the marker, discussed in the previous paragraph, as the six domains include religion – along with language, entertainment, food, and shopping habits (134).

Another factor that influences the reaction to migration is the kind of culture one leaves behind and moves into. The two main examples are individualistic versus collective societies. While “individualistic societies emphasize ‘I’ consciousness: autonomy, emotional independence, individual initiative, the right to privacy, pleasure seeking, financial security and the need for specific friendship and universalism” collective societies lay their focus on “‘we’ consciousness: collective identity, emotional inter-dependence, group solidarity, sharing duties and obligations, the need for stable and predetermined friendships, group decisions and particularism” (136). In the case of the Amana, a micro collective society moved in its entirety from one individualistic society to the next. One could argue that the American society of the mid-nineteenth century however, was more individualistic than mid-nineteenth century German society, which was not as individualistic and slightly more collective with an emphasis on small communities like townships or families. American society was individualistic, if not the individualistic society par excellence. “Individualistic societies support basic tenets of liberalism whereas those of collectivist societies support traditionalism. [...] Collectivist societies [...] prioritize common good and social harmony over individual interests. Individuals are bound by relationships, which emphasize a common fate” (136; 137). These statements also apply to the Community of True Inspiration.

The Amana society has been described as “one of many utopian colonies established on American soil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.” (“Utopian Societies”) A utopian society was defined by Edward W. Gondolf in his article “Teaching About Utopian Societies” as

a social invention established intentionally with explicit design, in contrast to the organic emergence of neighborhood based propinquity. The utopian society is any historical or contemporary community established with a definite physical boundary and explicit set of ideological principles and common practices, including a self-reliant economy and shared living arrangements. It’s organizational structure, however variable in form, requires subjugation of individual wants and desires to the well-being of the group and its professed purpose. (230)

It has long been tradition in the historiography of Germany to exclude so called “Auslandsdeutsche,” meaning German expatriates (Penny, Rinke 173). However, Penny and

Rinke in “Germans Abroad – Respatializing Historical Narrative” argue, that “a German history that [...] integrates these communities of German-speakers [...] offers us the chance to create a dialog between German national history and the histories of the nations and regions in which German cultures took hold” (173). Therefore, including the history of the Amana into a German historiography builds a bridge to and connects them with American history, underscoring their Germanness in an American context. Penny and Rinke also emphasize that “the very discourse about what constituted German and Germanness was brought to a head when it was extended outside the borders of the German nation-state” (175, 176) so by looking at expression of tradition and heritage, conclusions about Germanness can be drawn. According to the authors ““Germanness”, promoted as a unitary concept that could accommodate a great deal of difference, informed a broad and fluid notion of the German nation for centuries” (177). To analyze Germanness within the Amana culture thus means not only integrating them into German historiography, but also gives another aspect of what Germanness is, when it is not confined to the borders of its mother country. Amana culture can therefore help us understand the German culture in general as part of it as well as being influenced by it. In this thesis interviews with members of the Amana culture will be discussed, which try and answer questions that arise from rooting Amana culture in German culture. How important is Germanness to Amana people? How much do they identify with it? What is different? Three generations of women from one family have been interviewed and their answers as well as an analysis will be presented in Part III of this thesis.

With an original amount of approximately 800 immigrants hailing from German-speaking countries who came to the US between 1843 and 1846, today the colonies count about 1700 inhabitants (Hoppe, e-mail) though the number of church members is significantly lower at currently 370 (Hoppe, e-mail). So far, the influence of German heritage specifically on stabilizing the group’s identity has not been researched. In this thesis, the importance that is put on the Amana German heritage will be discussed with a focus on present-day church members as the current status quo on academic publications and research on the Amana colonies mainly focuses on the past and here mainly on communal times until 1932 and current main sources have only covered material until 1993 at the latest.

A literature analysis will shed light on the development of German heritage throughout the years and also give an overview on Amana history. With the help of oral interviews of

women of three generations from one church-attending family, patterns will be established and compared with each other. A questionnaire from the Amana church distributed among its members concerning the churches future will also be a topic in this critical analysis. Little research has been conducted in modern Amana and with the community at a crossroads with the last German native speakers passing and church attendance dwindling this paper will paint a picture of modern Amana and give an outlook on possible changes in the future of the community. The primary research question will be answered with the help of a literature analysis as well as oral interviews and the outcome of a questionnaire recently distributed among Amana church members. Participants in the research interviews are all members of the Amana church and can trace their lineage back to Germany.

This thesis will be the first substantial research conducted on Amana culture in over four decades. Through an interdisciplinary approach this research will study the Amanas, a former utopian society embracing a communal lifestyle, which has preserved, reshaped and adapted its Germanness and has been successful in doing so for over 170 years in the USA. Now as the last native speakers are passing, this historical research is essential in documenting the fate of the Amana colonies as they are approaching a crossroads. At this crucial time in which we still have access to native speakers who also remember communal times from their parents' narrations it is imperative to make use of this opportunity of collecting historical data. With the loss of active knowledge of German, will they be as successful in retaining their community or will their Germanness undergo yet another change or even dissolve completely? This thesis is part of the effort to integrate "interconnected German spaces into our narratives of German history" as "a pointed effort to elucidate the ways in which global interconnectedness between Germans who lived abroad, their host societies, and Germans who lived within the nation-state helped to channel and shape conceptions of Germany and Germanness during the modern era" (Penny, Rinke 176). In part I a summary of the history of The Community of True Inspiration during their assemblage in Germany until their move to the United States in 1842 will be given. Part II describes the establishing of the settlement that came to be known as Ebenezer, NY. Part III will deviate from the commonly used caesura of the Change and encompass the entire development of the community in Amana, Iowa until today.

Part I: The Community of True Inspiration in Germany

First Beginnings in Hesse – Founding the Community of True Inspiration

The Community of True Inspiration (today commonly known as the Amana Society) has its roots in eighteenth century Southern Germany. This chapter is going to give an overview of the community's early beginnings in Germany up until their departure to America in the 1840s. Part I explains how the community's history has been essential in their evolution as a group with a unitary identity and how their special circumstances of persecution and strong religious guidance forged an array of individual identities into a solid basis for a group identity that has enabled the community to survive until today.

The literature that will be discussed in this chapter stems from Amana writers as well as historians from outside of the community. The most substantial historical account on the history of the community that has been published to date is given by Bertha M. H. Shambaugh in her book *Amana That Was and Amana That Is*. No text written on Amana Church history can be complete without referencing Shambaugh's opus, which was first published in 1932, as her description is the most complete and most cited. F. Alan DuVal's *Christian Metz, German-American Religious Leader & Pioneer* together with Frank J. Lankes' *The Ebenezer Community of True Inspiration* and Gottlieb Scheuner's *Inspirations-Historie* provide in-depth historical descriptions of community life and will be analyzed combined with Peter Assion's book *Von Hessen in die Neue Welt*, which provides historical context for Germany and emigration from there. The Inspirationists' migration to America will be compared to an earlier wave of German immigrants at the beginning of the eighteenth century with the help of Philip Otterness' book *Becoming German – The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York*.

In 1714 Eberhard Ludwig Gruber, a Lutheran minister, and Johann Friedrich Rock, son of a Lutheran clergyman, laid the foundation of the religious community “with their writings and teachings” and are therefore “regarded as its real founders” (Shambaugh, “Amana That Was” 23). The community's theological origin lies in the teachings of German Pietists and Mystics of the sixteenth and seventeenth century (23). Pietism is defined in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church as a “movement within (primarily German) Protestantism which sought to

supplement the emphasis on institutions and dogma in orthodox Protestant circles by concentrating on the ‘practice of piety’, rooted in inner experience and expressing itself in a life of religious commitment” (Cross). During the time of Gruber and Rock a lot of smaller religious communities were established as a way of protesting “against the dogmatism and formality” (Shambaugh, “Amana That Was” 23) in the Lutheran Church. During Gruber’s and Rock’s study of Pietistic literature they particularly focused on texts by a small group which had formed during the last quarter of the seventeenth century – the so called Inspirationists (23). This group was different from others as its followers “prophesied like the prophets of old” (23), which means that they produced new texts which they believed to be inspired directly by God. Rock and Gruber believed those inspirations to be truly divine and Gruber argued “[d]oes not the same God live to-day? [A]nd is it not reasonable to believe that He will inspire His followers now as then?” (qtd. in Shambaugh, “Amana That Was” 24). The newly founded faith group – called “New Spiritual Economy” in early accounts – found their divine guidance through so called “Werkzeuge” (instruments); regular members, not clerics, who were able to proclaim the word of God through the “miraculous gift of Inspiration” (24). To this day the Amana Church refers to inspired texts as the foundation of their belief, and present-day inspiration would technically be possible, however, the last instrument to-date was Barbara Heinemann who died in 1883 (24). The divine testimonies were usually recorded by a “Schreiber” (scribe) who accompanied the “Werkzeug” (24). Divine testimonies are also one of the major factors that set the Inspirationists apart today from other mainline Protestants. These inspired testimonies “are regarded as of equal authority and of almost equal importance with the Bible” (24) and excerpts are read out aloud in every Sunday service still today. Shambaugh further cites a translation of E. L. Gruber’s *Kennzeichen der Göttlichkeit der Wahren Inspiration* (Signs of the Divinity of True Inspiration), a quote that underscores the importance of the testimonies further:

Its truths are in common with the written word of the prophets and the apostles... It aspires for no preference; on the contrary it gives the preference to the word of the witnesses first chosen [prophets and apostles] just after the likeness of two sons and brothers, in which case the oldest son as the first-born has the preference before the younger son who was born after him, though they are both equal and children begotten of one and the same father.

Thus according to Gruber Bible and inspired texts hold equal value and the texts incorporated in Holy Scripture are only part of it because they were received earlier than those by the inspired “Werkzeuge”. Gruber further says that both “old and new revelations [...] are of divine origin” (25) and the sole difference between them is a temporal one since the God talking through mortals is the same Biblical God.

Another issue important to Gruber and Rock was the case of false testimonies and instruments. The founders believed that “many persons who considered themselves inspired instruments were not such in fact” (25). Even in the early days of the community inspired testimonies were carefully examined and there are many instances recorded in which false instruments have been exposed (26). These uncovered false prophets then had to endure humiliation in the community (26). There were two possibilities of a false testimony: either a false spirit was talking through a community member or a member itself was altogether insincere, claiming to be possessed by the divine Lord. Gruber describes in his *Bericht von der Inspirations-Sache* (translation qtd. in Shambaugh, “Amana That Was 26) how he was able to detect those false testimonies and “was befallen by an extraordinary shaking of the head and shivering of the mouth” whenever one of them would speak up in the community.

In the early eighteenth century Gruber, Rock, and those who were proven to be true “Werkzeuge” traveled through Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and other countries in Europe (27) spreading their teachings and founding small congregations along the way. Even though these assemblies were rather small in numbers, conflict with the established church and government arose. The Inspirationists heavily criticized the church and clergy for their “godless and immoral lives” (28) and came into quarrels with the government due to their refusal to take oaths or perform military service (28). They based their refusal to perform military duty on the fact that Christians could murder neither enemy nor friend (28). Matthew 5:44 was quoted as the reason to refuse oath taking: “[b]ut I say unto you, Swear not at all.” In some of the smaller German states the Inspirationists were further singled out as they did not agree to send their children to public schools, where Lutheran clergy taught the classes (29). They did however pay school fees and fines to the government as punishment for non-obedience, while teaching their children at home (29). As a result of their resistance the Inspirationists were “persecuted and prosecuted; they were fined, pilloried, flogged, imprisoned, legislated against, and stripped of

their possessions” (29). An especially drastic description of an Inspirationist persecution is quoted by Shambaugh (originally from *Leiden zu Zürich*) when in Zurich “their members [were] pilloried, then flogged through the principal streets [...] while the clergy of the established church followed and joined with the mob in yelling its approval when the streets were colored with their blood” (29). When persecution became worse all around the Inspirationists gathered in Hesse, where the government was the most liberal during the eighteenth century (30). Through the threat of persecution, the group’s identity was forged stronger together as the common peril created a more intense “us” versus “them” sentiment. This assumption is supported by Jeffrey R. Seul’s argument in his article “Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict” that “group identity tends to intensify during periods of crisis” (557, 558) and the author explains further that “each new threat intensifies and agitates the identities of the target group and its members, widening the gulf between the groups” (558). In this case, the threatening through the government establishes the “us” experience of the Inspirationists being menaced by “them”.

After the deaths of Gruber in 1728 and Rock in 1749 the community began to dwindle (31). With the charismatic leaders gone inspiration also ended and the community ultimately declined. Shambaugh cites three main reasons: first, members had not experienced the deep divinity the founding members had and had become comfortable with a less strict way of life, second, worldliness and materialism took over as the threat of persecution was less severe and third, the wars and destruction of the time led to a constant monitoring of all communication so no new texts were produced (32-33). The group’s identity suffered during this time as threats against them were removed and the “us” versus “them” feeling subsequently disappeared. With no strong leadership another factor with strong influence on group identity went away. As Jeffrey R. Seul writes in his article: “The group’s identity consists of the members shared conception of its enduring characteristics and basic values” (556). Because “[t]he group’s institutions, traditions, and history often find embodiment in writing or other material forms, which communicate and preserve the group’s identity independently of the individuals that presently comprise the group” (556). The gate-keepers of these institutions, traditions, and history had been the leaders, and with them gone there was no reminder for the average inspirationist to rely on the teachings and the community fell apart.

About a century after the initial founding of the community, the decline came to a halt in the year 1817, when Michael Krausert, “a tailor journey-man of Strassburg” became inspired and

gave his first testimony on September 11th at the Ronneburg (34). Later that year Barbara Heinemann, a servant maid from Leitersweiler, became a “Werkzeug” as well (35). Krausert however, struggled with the elders as there was a lot of suspicion of his testimonies being false (DuVal, 15). Over time the constant harassment by the state authorities also took a toll on the “Werkzeug” (18). Krausert was a polarizing figure during that time, a lot of the younger Inspirationists being drawn to his testimonies while the elders in the end decided it best to exclude him from the community (15). Krausert’s spiritual convictions had become less clear and he himself admitted that he was unsure of his testimonies (19). Later Krausert lost his gift of inspiration entirely (16). Barbara Heinemann together with Christian Metz, who delivered his first testimony in 1819 (“History”), took over as the spiritual leaders of the newly revived community (Shambaugh, “Amana That Was” 36).

Barbara Heinemann was born into ordinary circumstances and grew up to be a servant maid (37). Even early on she had dreams and visions and on a quest to interpret those, she came into contact with the Inspirationists (37). The elders at first resisted allowing her to attend meetings, but Krausert – still part of the community at the time – proclaimed it the will of the Lord that Heinemann be “released from [her] worldly service [...] and take[n] into His service” (38). Barbara, an illiterate, learned to read and write; her testimonies reflecting the language of the Old Testament (38). However, the conflict with the elders was not over and she was at one point declared a false spirit and exiled from the community (39). Heinemann was able to join the community again later, but was “tempted” to marry (40), a fact frowned upon in the community which regarded celibacy as the greatest good. She later ‘gave in’ to this temptation and married George Landmann, subsequently losing her gift of inspiration (40). However, after twenty-six years Heinemann’s gift resurfaced and she stayed a “Werkzeug” until her death in 1883 in Iowa (40).

Christian Metz, the second influential leader of the revived community, and sole spiritual leader during the time of Heinemann’s spiritual silence, was born in 1794 in Neuwied (41). Metz is often regarded as the most influential and “most remarkable personage ever connected with the Community of True Inspiration.” (41). Metz, as opposed to Heinemann, grew up in an Inspirationist environment, stemming from a line of members of the community leading back to the days of Gruber and Rock (DuVal, 13). In 1801 the Metz family moved to the Ronneburg, an estate leased by the community at the time (13). Here Metz was further influenced by the

Inspirationists and was brought up to be a carpenter (13). Metz became actively involved in the faith and joined a youth group at the Ronneburg whose focus was on re-establishing a less secular lifestyle (14). Through a period of trials and tribulations to Metz's faith he became an inspired "Werkzeug" himself (15, 19).

Through the faction building that had happened with "old-line elders" (20) opposing the younger generations yearning to remember the community's roots, the group was looking to unify (20). After some of the elders had stepped down, it was agreed upon to establish the community "according to a definite religious plan based on the twenty-four rules of Johann Adam Gruber [son to Eberhard Ludwig] in 1716" (20). January 1820 thereby marks the first "Bundesschließung" (Covenant service) of the Inspirationists (20). This is in line with Jeffrey Seul's statements, that it "is powerfully true with respect to most religious groups" that "[t]he group's institutions, traditions, and history often find embodiment in writing" in order to "preserve the group's identity" (556). On January 20th in 1823 Christian Metz had a divine revelation which reads as follows: "I have set the time, and this time is very near, when those of My sheep who hear My voice and open their hearts to Me, will be gathered into a flock" (22). This "Einsprache" (a written form of inspiration) would later be interpreted as a prophecy of the community's relocation to the United States. But even after this spiritual unification the community was unable to come to rest as commotion within the group went on (24). Another factor endangering the group's peace was the fact that persecution and chicane from the government did not cease (24). Here, again a concept of "them" becomes enforced through the threat of persecution, which strengthens group identity faced with a common enemy. The Inspirations-Historie (Inspiration History) gives an account of measures taken by the Prussian Ministry against the Inspirationists located in Schwarzenau in 1825:

- 1) The community is not granted the rights of a tolerated religious community and therefore cannot provide their own teachers to instruct their children.
- 2) In case of disobedience regarding civic duties prosecution by law will follow.
- 3) Members of the community have to pay the same dues and fees as other citizens in order to keep up churches and schools.
- 4) If parents refuse to have their children baptized, a baptism will be

mandated by law. 5) Children of school age are required to participate in state schools as well as religious instruction by the pastor.¹

The community's reaction to these edicts was to stress the freedom of conscience that was generally permitted by the state government and to spiritually rely on the Lord, who would in time send guidance, and not follow the rules made by mankind (in this case the members of the government) (63). This behavior of the Inspirationists can be seen as a focus on "us" and thereby, again, strengthening group identity. In 1826 this same group of Schwarzenau was held up by a policeman, who brought them to the courthouse (66). Here the Inspirationists were banished from the region and the group was issued to leave within six months by government decree (66, 67). The option to be welcomed back into the Lutheran church was given to prevent the Inspirationists from having to leave (67) however, around the same time the group received a testimony that said: "My children, the end has come. Now is the end from everything which I have promulgated before. They have discarded My testimony and Me with it and those who belong with Me..."² This testimony encouraged "the growing congregation of Inspirationists [to] repeat[...] the history of their forefathers a century before, [and they] flocked to the more tolerant province of Hessen" (Shambaugh, "Amana That Was 45). This shift towards living together in close proximity, is another factor that built group identity. Now the Inspirationists were not only holding a common set of beliefs, but they were together in one place even physically, which forged their group identity further, strengthening the sense of unity.

In Hesse Christian Metz formed the idea to lease one estate to bring together all Inspirationists under one roof (47). Cloister Marienborn was partially leased, located only a short

¹ Unless otherwise indicated: all translations are made by the author

"1.) Daß ihnen die Rechte einer geduldeten Religions-Gesellschaft nicht eingeräumt werden könnten, und sie also keinen eigenen Lehrer für den Unterricht ihrer Kinder halten dürfen. 2.) Daß, im Fall sie sich weigern würden, den allgemeinen, staatsbürgerlichen Pflichten nachzukommen, nach dem Gesetz gegen sie verfahren werden solle. 3.) Daß sie die üblichen Beiträge und Leistungen zur Erhaltung der Kirchen- und Schulanstalt gleich den übrigen Einwohnern zu entrichten hätten. 4.) Daß, wenn Eltern sich weigern würden ihre Kinder taufen zu lassen, solches gerichtlich dennoch vollzogen werden solle. 5.) Daß ihre unterrichtsfähigen Kinder zum Besuch der öffentlichen Schulen und zur Theilnahme an dem Religions-Unterricht des Pfarrers angehalten werden sollen." (Scheuner, 62-63)

² "Meine Kinder, das Ende ist gekommen. Nun ist das Ende gekommen von allem Dem, was Ich euch zuvor verkündigt habe. Sie haben Mein Zeugnis verworfen und Mich damit zugleich und die Mir angehören..." (Scheuner, 66-67)

way from the Ronneburg “the home of the principal Elders” (47). Soon Marienborn became too small due to the continuous influx of members, and the community leased Herrnhaag and its estate (47-48). When “the growing hostility of the government toward the Community at Ronneburg” (48-49) became too much, another estate was leased: Arnsburg, later renamed “die Armenburg” (the castle of the poor) (50). Since the group kept growing continuously, another building was rented: Engelthal in September of 1834 (50). The four estates (Marienborn, Herrnhaag, Armenburg and Engelthal) were in close proximity to each other and all managed by the same people (50). Now a common leadership was set in place and this aided the group in following a common set of rules and beliefs, making clear what was part of the community’s group cohesiveness. Shambaugh tells that “it is here that we discover the beginnings of the communistic life which the Inspirationists afterwards adopted as a community system” (50). Communal possessions and working together provided bread and butter for the community and the brethren began to flourish (51). It also provided another part in consolidating a community identity, taking away the very individualistic aspect of proprietary possession. This relatively peaceful period for the community however did not last long, as Europe was in upheaval due to its revolutions (51). Subsequently the community had their liberties taken away, which included freedom from military duty, civic rights, the legal oath and compulsory education. (51). After a constant increase of rents together with crop failure, the community was again on the brink of depression (52). Faced with common hardships, the community again closed ranks.

During these desperate times the community received a testimony that they could no longer stay in the country, since they were not wanted, which inhibited the Lord’s work (Scheuner, 288). They were instructed to leave for a land that was free and to settle there (289). Testimonies are a very influential means of forging Inspirationist identity. The inspired testimonies constituted a strong unifying factor as their content referred directly to their daily life and was given by the highest authority. Challenging testimonies was therefore not done, as it would be equal to questioning the word of God. This in turn leads to a strong sense of general direction for the group. When on July 27th in 1842 a testimony was received that their “goal and way shall lead in direction of the night [westwards] to the land which is still free and open to you and your faith. I am with you and will guide you through the sea. Hold Me and awaken Me through your prayer if the wind rises or a challenge appears. – Four shall then prepare

themselves...”³ this common goal became quite real and gave direction quite literally, namely westward. The four men chosen for this endeavor were Christian Metz, Wilhelm Noé, Dr. George Weber and Gottlieb Ackermann (Noé), who were said goodbye to with a “Liebesmahl” which is regarded as the “most solemn and important religious ceremony of the Inspirationists (Shambaugh, “Amana That Was” 54). The fact that the Inspirationists were not the only one setting sail for a better life in the New World can be seen when looking at accounts from that time. The following paragraph will give a general overview adapted from Philip Otterness’ book *Becoming German – The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* combined with Peter Assion’s work *Von Hessen in die Neue Welt* (From Hesse to the New World) of the time of the first and second emigration wave, which was particularly well fed with emigrants from the Hesse area.

Hesse to America – German Emigration to the New World

According to a census conducted in 1979 almost one third of all American citizens (51.6 million) claim to have German roots (Assion, 7). A large wave of emigration in the nineteenth century led particularly large numbers out of Hesse and to the United States (7). During an earlier emigration wave in the seventeenth and eighteenth century a significant number of Hessians had already left for the United States (7). That set of Germans helped to establish steady communication between the continents as well as family networks long before the big wave of the nineteenth century. As early as the seventeenth century, Quaker leader William Penn successfully recruited among Pietistic religious communities in Frankfurt (Main) (11). His idea of establishing a free state for those suffering from religious persecution and oppression on American soil found great appeal, especially among Southern German Pietists (11). The “Teutsche Compagnie” (German Company) was founded by Pietists from Frankfurt whose senior pastor was Phillipp Jakob Spener (11). The “Teutsche Compagnie” supported William Penn in his endeavor and bought land in Pennsylvania, the forestland Penn had received from the British King in 1681 (11). The first wave of those Pietists brought people from the Palatine region via London to New York. Their hope was fed by the promise of the so called “Golden

³ “Euer Ziel und Weg gehe abendwärts nach dem Lande, das da noch offen ist vor euch und euren Glauben. Ich bin mit euch und will durchs Meer geleiten. Haltet Mich und wecket Mich durch euer Gebet, wann sich der Wind oder eine Anfechtung erhebet. – Es könnten also Vier sich dazu bereit Machen...” (Scheuner, 291)

Book” that Queen Anne gave away land on the newly settled continent and even reimbursed travel expenses.

Their fate will be compared to that of those belonging to The Community of True Inspiration. Both stem from approximately the same region in Germany, and both left for America in the hope for a better future. Thus this comparison illuminates many of the ways in which emigrating Inspirationists were and were not different from other Germans who left the country about 130 years earlier. It also underscores the different aspects of a German identity or “Germanness.”

In *Becoming German – The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* author Philip Otterness gives an historical account of migrants from the Palatine to America. Otterness focuses on how German identity has developed over time throughout the journey to the New World and after settling. He states: “these people were the first substantial group of immigrants to become “German” in America” (Otterness, introduction). “Migration was not new to the German southwest” however, as “the region had suffered constant destruction from war and a plague” which made “[p]eople move[...] from village to village within the region to escape advancing armies and disease” (Otterness, ch 1). However, leaving the continent to go west was a new development within the German regions. Reasons to migrate had to be given to the government in order to for emigration to be approved. Most migrants, who came from rural communities, stated poverty as their motivation to leave. The Palatine and Hesse regions were fairly liberal towards religions, besides Catholics and Lutherans, Mennonites and Jews were tolerated, and “[b]y the early eighteenth century, the Palatine had become one of the most religiously diverse regions of western Europe” and “[a]fter the Thirty Year’s War the Palatine electors, whether Lutheran or Reformed, tolerated people of all religions in order to repopulate the region” (Otterness, ch 1). Otterness mentions the Pietistic movement, to which the Inspirationists belong and says that “the creation of pietist conventicles further split the already fractured religious communities of the German southwest.” His account is in line with what can be found in other narratives pertaining to the Inspirationists like Shambaugh and Scheuner, as Otterness explains that Philipp Jacob Spener, a pietistic thinker, whom the Amana religion also refers to, criticized “[t]he corruption and disorder of seventeenth century Europe and the resulting spiritual decline of the German people.” While causing division on the one hand, the Pietists on the other hand

were responsible for an increase in literacy with their “emphasis on daily Bible reading” (Otterness, ch 1).

What is interesting regarding this wave of Palatine migrants is the fact that they previously did not share a common German identity, but developed one after settling in New York also by defining themselves “in contrast to the other peoples of British North America” (Otterness, introduction). In this case their group identity developed after they had left their mother country, which is in contrast to the Amana people, whose identity had been forged through the hardships they had had to endure as a group. The number of immigrants coming to America was quite significant for the time and “just over three thousand” set out to New York (Otterness, introduction). “Immigrant groups, in particular, are often forced to adopt then adapt to, an identity imposed on them by the more powerful host society the immigrants enter” (Otterness, introduction). This statement does not apply entirely to the Inspirationists whose identity did not change significantly due to influences from American society. Instead their group identity was defined by influences while in Germany, persecution bringing them closer together. In America strong leaders from within the group gave direction and thereby shaped a shared identity. Their secluded way of living did not force them to interact much with outsiders except for trade until the Change of 1932. Since American society was still young and developing, it was “fluid” and “unstable” and therefore the Palatine migrants were able to “not only shape[...] their communal identity but also set the terms under which they would interact with their more powerful British colonial counterparts” (Otterness, introduction). When the first wave of immigrants came, they left a country where there was no nation of Germany, “only a loose collection of hundreds of principalities and city-states” (Otterness, introduction). Even though the migrants were called “Palatines” they came from other places of the Holy Roman Empire. Since the Inspirationists did have little interaction with the outside world after settling at first, it is difficult to determine if they actively determined how they would interact with outsiders and already established Americans. One could however, argue that by choosing not to network with others, the Inspirationists in that way did dictate how they would interact with others: namely not at all unless involved in trade. The social and economic structures of those coming from the Palatine in 1709 were quite similar to those of the Inspirationists. “Most were farmers or rural artisans. They emigrated from small villages, not cities. They came as families. And they were drawn to America by dreams of prosperity on abundant and inexpensive land free

from feudal encumbrance” (Otterness, introduction). This applies to the Inspirationists, too, as well as to other migrants that came to what they believed to be the promised land. A big difference when comparing the first wave of migrants to the Inspirationists lies in sheer numbers. The mere 800 that came to the New World to Ebenezer were a drop in the bucket of inhabitants compared to the “three thousand immigrants [who] threatened to overwhelm a city [meaning New York City] with fewer than six thousand inhabitants” (Otterness, introduction). Another factor which is distinctive is the fact that when the Palatines arrived, they were almost completely without means to support themselves while the Inspirationists had money to purchase land and did not rely on the existing society to support them in exchange for work like the Palatines had. “Dependence meant limited power, and limited power usually means limited possibilities” (Otterness, introduction).

Of the Palatine migrants, who left southwest Germany in droves, many settled in Britain. While many Catholics were sent to Ireland, Protestants camped out near London hoping to be able to make it across the ocean (Otterness, introduction). When “[s]ettling them in Great Britain had become untenable,” the British government decided to provide funds to re-settle about three thousand of them in their new colonies abroad (Otterness, ch 3). The Board of Trade decided that the Germans would produce tar and pitch for the British naval industry, which had up until then relied on Swedish import. Since many adults perished on the journey to America, many orphans were left to fend for themselves. The British in the colonies apprenticed them, thereby infuriating the German settlers, who essentially saw themselves being stripped of the next generation. The Germans in general are described as fairly unruly by Otterness, rebelling against having to work for naval stores and having their children taken away, constantly insisting on their original plan to receive farmland in the New World. The initially diverse group from all over the German southwest got steadily more homogenous, which enabled them to strengthen a group identity. Because the immigrants disliked their “treatment at the hands of petty rulers and stingy landlords” (Otterness, ch 5) as it reminded them of their life in the Palatine, they started to rebel against the way they were treated. “The immigrants’ opposition to the naval stores scheme increased their sense of unity and common cause, but that opposition also led to splits in the newly formed community“ and they “soon discovered that a common goal did not ensure a common means to that goal” (Otterness, ch 5). Unlike for the Inspirationists no leader unified the

efforts to freedom for the Palatine migrants and provided community guidelines to behavior like the Inspirationists had.

“Remarriage”, after losing a spouse on the journey over, “affected the community in another important way by breaking down regional and religious differences among the emigrants” (Otterness, ch 4). According to the author “[p]lace of origin remained a part of each immigrant’s identity, but as the settlers remarried, questions of dialect and territorial origin were far less important than survival of the family.” Here similar factors played a role in forging a German group identity than those that influenced Amana identity. A common “enemy”, here the British, enabled to create an experience of “us” versus “them” and “German-speaking immigrants could define themselves as Germans rather than as Palatines, Hessians, Swiss, or Nassauers” (Otterness, ch 4). However, when the Palatine migrants “realized their faith in the queen’s generosity was misplaced, they split over what to do next. In the process, the group’s coherence and its sense of common identity ... began to fade” (Otterness, ch 7). Eventually many migrants moved away and gave up resistance to the British crown.

According to Peter Assion’s account in his book *Von Hessen in die Neue Welt*, in which he describes the migration of Hessians to America, one of the reasons for leaving Germany was departure from the feudal system and turning away from secular lords and toward the divine Lord (Assion, 12). Economic hardships were not the reason Hessians left for the New World during the early eighteenth century, (12) this factor came into play after the catastrophic years following 1817 in which a devastating famine plagued the German people (Jütte). The so called “Abzugsseuche” (departure plague) became “Amerikafieber” (America fever) (Assion, 13) which already shows a change in attitude towards the emigrating Germans. For the first time craftsmen and less wealthy farmers were among those leaving in order to escape the encumbrances of the feudal system (13). Taxes and duties, corvée and authoritarian despotism had subjugated them for years and America became the overly powerful savior (13) for the Germans stemming from patriarchic circumstances. Rumor had it Queen Anne gave away land and reimbursed travel expenses (13). Germans ready to leave for America gathered in London, England – however not all of them made it to the New World in 1709 (13). Among those who made it were Hessians from the Darmstadt area who settled on the middle Hudson near New York City (13).

Back home in Germany the emigration wave was not received positively during the eighteenth century and the government saw an impairment of the public weal (14). The mercantilists and cameralists also saw a threat to the economy, since its success strongly depended on a growing population and production as well as a threat to the fiscal revenue and an army expansion (14). However, these were not only consequences due to transatlantic migration but also due to inner-European migration to Southeast and Eastern Europe (i.e. to Hungary, Russia) (14).

Hesse-Kassel adopted a law in 1723 to persecute illegal Emigration and a complete ban on emigration was enforced starting in 1765 (14). Another approach to keep Germans from leaving was to indicate possible ramifications of an emigration: enormous costs as well as a long standing dependence on the ship's captain in order to pay back debts (14-15). However, letters from America sent by successful emigrants put those claims into perspective (15).

The emigration movement came to a temporary halt during the Napoleonic Wars and the political upheaval during the transition into the nineteenth century (31). The Hessian realm now consisted of petty states which were part of the German Confederation (between 1815 and 1866) (31). The prevalent picture of America changed, since America had successfully rid itself of a royal domain and given itself a liberal-republican constitution (31) while an anti-feudal conflict for union and democratic civic rights was predominant in the German realm (31). America became the paragon for liberals (31). From letters from America as well as from tales of homecoming mercenaries who had fought in the American Revolutionary War Germans heard about fertile land, attractive possibilities for settlements, active trade and mode of life in flourishing cities (31). The notion of heaven on earth became projected onto the continent across the sea (31). With this image in mind people were hopeful to get to paradise on earth and even a more realistic assessment at least promised that America rewarded the diligent (32). In the nineteenth century domestic living conditions worsened dramatically, partly due to a sudden population increase during the second half of the eighteenth century (32). The German petty state system was unable to keep up economically with this jump in citizen numbers (32). Land for small farms was often not profit-yielding enough to be able to feed all mouths, while craftsmen also struggled to make ends meet since too many offered their services to a small clientele (32). As a consequence of the sudden growth in population a large social class of day laborers developed in the rural areas (32). Weaving mills were lucrative for a while, but the less-

expensive competition from England ousted German weavers until the linen industry collapsed around 1850 (32). This collapse in particular explains the huge wave of migration between 1852 and 1857 from Hesse (32) and it is during this time that economic hardship becomes the main reason to emigrate (33). A universal desperation developed and people were hopeless that things would ever change for the better, some even afraid the worst was yet to come (34). The working class, which made up the biggest part of the population, was not self-employed but worked for the court, the army, and the state (34). Further crop failures in 1845 due to weather conditions and potato blight lead to the biggest agrarian crisis of the nineteenth century (35). Starting in the mid-nineteenth century the number of inhabitants in small towns began to decrease continually and in 1854 the number of emigrants peaked: 230,400 Germans (under which 20,000 Hessians) left for America (mostly to the USA, but small groups went to South America as well) (36). The founding of the German Empire in 1871 marks the end of the second immigration wave, which is dated between 1817 and 1871 (36). The Inspirationists who later came to be the Amana people were part of this second wave. Industrialization further stabilizes the nation (36), which makes leaving less necessary to ensure good living circumstances.

Hesse-Darmstadt and Hesse-Kassel established a right to emigrate into the entire world in the years 1820 and 1831 respectively (47). Draftees could not exercise this right neither could indebted citizens and people who would otherwise leave behind wards were also exempt (47). Emigration had to be approved by the state, which usually took four weeks to be granted (47). The liberalization of the right to emigrate was seen as a countermeasure to a possible revolution (47). Emigrating to America also meant ridding oneself of social burdens and setting out for a world previously only known from hearsay (197). The sea voyage proved to be difficult time and time again and travelers were often exploited and relieved of their monetary possessions (197) on their way to a better life. To the ship-owners they were nothing more than cargo, making the merchant ship's journey profitable (197). Previously the journey to America was made without freight and it was only in American harbors that import goods were loaded on the vessels (197). The journey to the seaports often took several days for the migrants (198) and on the ships passengers were mostly placed on the steerage deck in between top deck and stowage, a place which was often only furnished provisionally in order to house travelers (198). Often the deck was overcrowded and hundreds of emigrants were kept in a small space (198-199). Only in 1847 an American passage law was adopted, which made a minimum of fourteen square feet per

passenger mandatory (199). With this law, prices for the sea voyage doubled (201). Travelers not only had to pay for their transportation, but also had to bring mattresses, pillows and blankets and in earlier times even had to supply traveling fare, dishes and cookware (199). Drinking water and firewood was provided by the ship's owner (199). Starting in 1832 ships from Bremen offered catering from the galley, later other Atlantic lines followed (199). The food that was offered however was often very bad: tough zwieback, undercooked potatoes and spoiled salt meat were not uncommon (199). Additionally, seasickness and heavy storms keeping the passengers under deck for days made the journey even less enjoyable and fatalities were daily fare (199). Between 1854 and 1858 approximately 1.8% died on ships hailing from Hamburg, this number increased during an epidemic as it was the case in the winter of 1867/68 in which 544 died, 108 of those from cholera (199). A shipwreck or fire would kill all people on board, as for example the "Cimbria" which sunk off Borkum (200). Usually the journey to New York would take five to eight weeks, depending on wind conditions (201). Initially only sailing ships were used and were still occasionally until 1880 (209).

Between 1776 and 1881 was the so called "open door era" (245). The federation left it to the individual states, cities or private initiatives to determine immigration matters - only prostitutes and criminals were prohibited by law from entering the United States (245). Two million immigrants came between 1850 and 1880 alone with German-speakers as the second largest group after English-speakers (245). Fraud and profiteering were a part of everyday life, even after arriving in New York's harbor and immigrants were taken advantage of frequently due to their lack of knowledge of the English language (246). In 1855 "Castle Garden" was established and protected the new arrivals from scammers (246). At Castle Garden immigrants were registered and examined in order to maintain immigration statistics (247). Twelve booths handled the stream of newcomers and examinations were lax even in case of illness (247). Immigrants were mostly able to leave Castle Garden after a couple of hours (248). Starting in 1892 Ellis Island was established as the main immigration point to the East Coast and Castle Garden was closed. By 1860 "Little Germany" made up 15% of the entire population of Manhattan (248). A common route for the newly immigrated was taking steamboats in New York City, up the Hudson to Albany, where they got onto the train to Buffalo (249) a route the German Inspirationists also took when they first arrived. Becoming an American citizen was possible after five years of continuous residency and a clean criminal record (249).

Bystanders commonly noted and at times even criticized that Germans in America assimilated exceptionally quickly (379). The German language as well as German traditions were quickly abandoned and German-rooted immigrants were said to Americanize their first and last names in an attempt to blend in, which is significantly different from the behavior of the Amana people. However, among German-Americans the German language kept being spoken until World War I (379) when speaking German was prohibited by law in 26 states (Seewald).

The Inspirationists' Sea Voyage

In 1842 on October 26th, the four chosen men of the Community of True inspiration arrived in New York after almost forty days of travel (Shambaugh, "Amana That Was" 54). From this time William Noé's *Journal of a Sea Voyage* has survived, a diary, which gives detailed accounts of their passage across the ocean. In Noé's narrations he describes the journey and can be summarized as follows:

Christian Metz, Wilhelm Noé, Dr. George Weber and Gottlieb Ackermann traveled to Bremerhaven accompanied by Wilhelm Moerschel, a friend of Metz's. The ship they boarded was called New York and sailed under the Black Ball Line. During the first eight days on water the passengers became rather seasick. Noé writes, that the captain of the ship was very accommodating towards the four Inspirationists and let them use the cabin, even though they had only purchased steerage tickets. They traveled over the river Weser onto the open sea and on the first night everyone on board was in good spirits singing and making music. Sea sickness took over once they reached the open sea, but lifted after the first day. (Noé's accounts are contradictory as he wrote earlier sea sickness lasted for eight days.) Noé remarks that younger passengers were able to handle the motion of the ship much better. One incident is mentioned in which a passenger is described to 'go insane' and jump overboard. He was rescued and sent back to Hamburg on another passing ship. A couple of days of calm inhibited a quick journey. They traveled out of the North Sea and through the English Channel, passing Calais and Dover. Noé comments that this passage was regarded as the most dangerous part of the voyage. When they reached the Atlantic Ocean the passengers were in high spirits, even though a heavy storm with rain distressed them right before crossing over into the Atlantic. Christian Metz wrote an inspired testimony about their arrival in the US, which reassured the traveling Inspirationists.

The men handled the journey well, except Ackermann, who was confined to his bed throughout the entire travel. Noé's account is rather positive, even when he described part of their provisions for the journey being stolen, he emphasizes that they had plenty of food since they were able to eat in the cabin. Wind conditions changed a lot, but were mostly decent. Noé further notes that in order to leave from Bremen, one needed either a passport or a travel book, but once in America, no passport is needed. Other advice Noé gave to the Inspirationists at home regarded packing lightly and not bringing furniture, but tools, shoes and boots, which are light but expensive. Noé described that cabin passengers received a varied assortment of food, steerage passengers less so, but still decent. He remarks that passengers traveling out of Hamburg or Rotterdam will pay more and be treated not as well as those leaving from Bremen. Noé's accounts end with a description of the ship being caught in fog very close to the New York harbor. When the sight cleared, they were guided into the Bay of New York by a pilot boat on October 26th, 1842 (summary of Noé's Journal of a Sea Voyage; full text available upon request).

Another account of the journey of a large group of the brethren, who followed the four men two years later, has survived as well; the so called Ruedy Diary, which can still be found in its original manuscript in the Amana Heritage Museum's archive. At this point the first settlements at Ebenezer, New York (which will be discussed in Part II) have already been established.

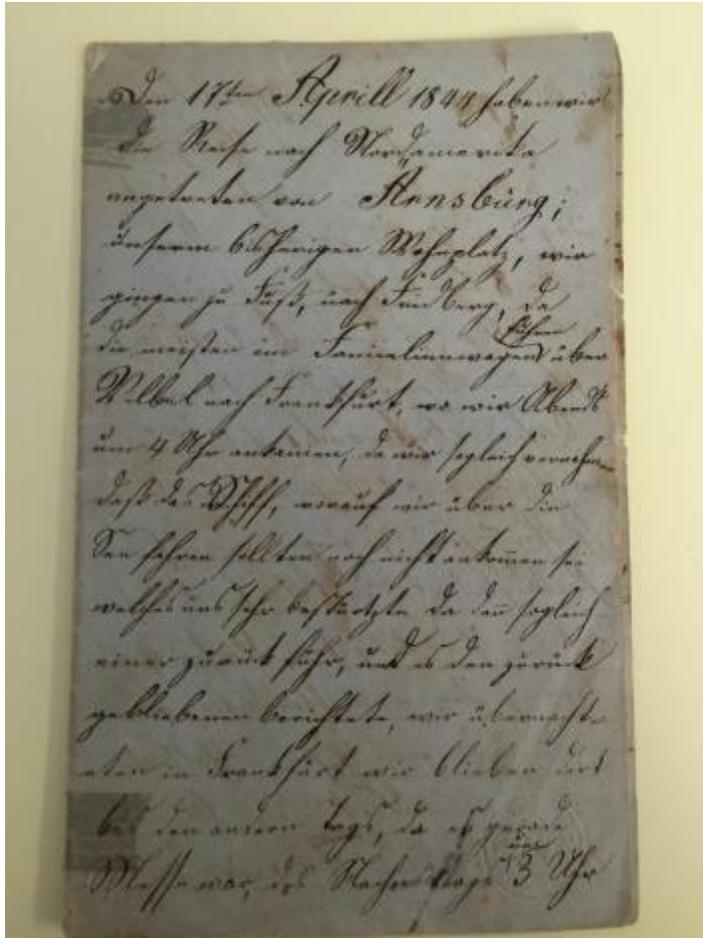


Fig. 1. Synofzick, Marie. "Photo of the Ruedy Diary Manuscript." 2016. JPEG file.

Summary:

On April 17th, 1844 the group left from Arnshurg on foot via Friedberg to Frankfurt. There they learned that their ship, which would bring them to Mainz had not yet arrived, so they stayed the night in Frankfurt. The next day they boarded the steamship "Delphin" and stayed in Mainz for eight days. They then boarded a Dutch steamship and went down the Rhine via Bingen and Bonn to Cologne. The next day they left for Nijmegen, where they spent the night. From Nijmegen the journey went to Rotterdam where they boarded the steamboat "Laurens Rosters" to Antwerp.

After another good week they boarded the ship that would take them to America (the "Florida" according to records in the Amana archive). One last time they anchored in Flushing before entering the North Sea. The passengers were stricken with sea sickness occasionally throughout their entire journey. On June 16th 1844 they saw land for the first

time and a router guided them close to New York where they stayed in quarantine for one day. The next day they boarded two small towboats in order reach the harbor, but a calm would have prevented them from reaching it, had not Gottlieb Ackermann and F. Heinemann (who were waiting for them in New York City) come on a steamboat to get to their fellow Inspirationists. Two days later the group boarded a steamboat to Albany. They took the railroad in Albany, via Utica to Rochester. On June 20th, they reached Buffalo and from there Middle Ebenezer the same day. (see appendix for full literal translation of German original)

The distinctive history of The Community of True Inspiration has helped in building a solid foundation for their group identity early on. With the Bible combined with divine testimonies as their written formal basis, communal living, a sense of “us” and “them” as well as a common goal to emigrate as a group has aided the community in forging an identity that has lasted throughout the decades. When comparing them to earlier groups of migrants hailing from similar regions in Germany, it becomes clear that the Inspirationists had a different starting position when moving to America. While other groups had to find a common identity after settling in America, the Inspirationists came equipped with a shared sense of self. The Palatine migrants eventually “integrate[d] themselves into the new American, but still distinctly British-American, public culture” through their “involvement in colonial politics and their support of independence” (Otterness, conclusion). This integration however, happened mostly in public life, for “German remained their primary language” and marriages were mostly entered into between two Germans (Otterness, conclusion). In that aspect the Palatine migrants have markers in common with the Inspirationists, who also held on to their language and married within their group.

With these accounts of the Inspirationists crossing over to the new continent, Part I will conclude and Part II will describe the life of the Community of True Inspiration in America, namely Ebenezer, NY until their move to Iowa.

Part II: The Community of True Inspiration in America (Ebenezer, NY)

Establishing Ebenezer, NY

The vanguard that traveled to America in 1842 arrived in New York on October 26th of the same year (DuVal, 45). There are several sources describing the events that led up to the building of the Ebenezer colony, with Frank J. Lankes' *The Ebenezer Community of True Inspiration* being the most descriptive. F. Alan DuVal's biography *Christian Metz – German-American Leader & Pioneer* gives further details of the matter, which augment Lankes' account. These sources will be further supported by quotes from the original *Inspirations-Historie – 1817-1867* as published by Gottlieb Scheuner in 1891 as well as Shambaugh's *Amana That Was and Amana That Is*. In Part II the establishing of the community will be discussed and what its influence was on building a group identity.

The four men went to see Mr. Paulsen, an agent for the 'Deutsche Gesellschaft' the next day in order to discuss the purchase of land in Ohio or Wisconsin (46). Paulsen however, offered land to the Inspirationists that was situated in Chautauqua County, New York (Lankes, 7). Paulsen further suggested that the tract could be shown to them by a business partner of his, Mr. Patterson, and so the Inspirationists left for Buffalo on an inland vessel on November 3rd (7). The journey took another nine days, with uncomfortable weather conditions keeping them off the deck (7). On November 12th they had reached their destination and stayed at the "Mansion House" where they met with Patterson and discussed their opportunities with the help of an interpreter (7). Their conversations were overheard by Philip Dorsheimer, the owner of the "Mansion House," (DuVal, 47) "one of Buffalo's early hotels that stood on the south side of Exchange Street near Main" (Lankes, 7). Dorsheimer informed Metz that another part of land would soon be opened for white settlement (7). This tract was situated on the Seneca Indian Reservation near Buffalo and currently owned by the Ogden Company (DuVal, 47). The natives inhabiting the land had been bought out and were to leave the premises within two years (47). While Metz heard about this land from Dorsheimer, Noé and Ackermann had been visiting acquaintances from Germany, who had also told them about the reservation and recommended it (Lankes, 7). DuVal reports that the men did not immediately agree to inspect the land, but an inspired revelation on November 14th overcame Metz, which told them to "accept advice and

keep it in your minds, but present it to the Lord and stay uncommitted until a true confirmation is given through the Spirit”⁴ (Scheuner, 299). So on November 15th the Inspirationists accompanied Dorsheimer to see the land of the Seneca Reservation (Lankes, 7). Lankes gives a detailed description of the scenery that presented itself to the Inspirationists.

The reservation contained one of the last extensive stands of virgin timber on the Niagara Frontier. They were privileged to enjoy a sight that we of today can picture only through the power of imagination. It was a primeval forest standing upon pleasantly rolling ground, a dim and solemn place drained by small watercourses which flowed through leafy hollows into the Buffalo Creek. Huge moss-covered boulders lay embedded in the earth where they had been dropped by the glaciers unnumbered centuries before. There were trees here of majestic size, and some were of a species unknown to them (8).

Metz and the others immediately took a liking to the tract, admiring the primeval forest and even finding the huts the natives lived in “small but inhabitable”⁵ (Scheuner, 299). The *Inspirations-Historie* further reports that even though it had rained the whole day, the four men felt an inner happiness and a sense of home while inspecting the reservation, hoping that they would soon receive a sign that this would indeed be the place to establish their settlement (299). However, the men were unsure of their destiny due to an earlier testimonial which had indicated the land owned by the Chatauque Company as their new place of residence, which led to concern among the Inspirationists (299). Soon they were relieved of their anxiety through a new revelation which told them to inspect that tract as well (299).

Behold, the place which I have picked for you is not far. [...] If you wish to inspect the other place as well, so do it [...]. But keep this place in mind and do not be alarmed by the wondrous ways of the Lord your God, who will shine a light on everything that is still in the dark.⁶ (300)

⁴ ”Thut also Rath annehmen und achter darauf, legt ihn aber dem Herrn dar und bleibet frei, bis eine wahre Bestätigung des gewissen Geistes gegeben wird.” (Scheuner, 299)

⁵ “klein und gering, doch bewohnbar” (299)

⁶ “Sehet, es ist nicht ferne euer Theil, das Ich euch zugedacht habe. [...] Wollet ihr den anderen Ort auch besehen, so thuts [...]. Doch behaltet dieses anjetzo im Auge, und stoßet euch nicht an

Christian Metz and Wilhelm Noé left to inspect the land and met up with Mr. Patterson, the agent representing the company, in Westfield (300). There they had to wait for three days due to stormy weather conditions and on the 21st went out to see the tract accompanied by a translator (300). Metz and Noé however, did not feel as at home as they had on the Seneca property and Noé wrote “Even though we engaged physically, our minds were not in it. But we were always at the other place, which we had seen before: the Indian Reservation near Buffalo”⁷ (301). When they returned to Buffalo, now reassured the Seneca tract was the right choice, they met up with Ackermann and Weber. The four men then went back to the Seneca property, accompanied by Joseph Fellows (Lankes, 9), a representative of the Ogden Company which owned the land, in order to see parts, they had not seen on their first visit (Scheuner, 301). On November 26th the Inspirationists entered into negotiations with Fellows and agreed on the purchase of 10,000 acres of land at the price of ten dollars and fifty cents an acre (301). This was much higher than they had initially anticipated, as they had expected to buy land from the government, which would have cost a dollar and twenty-five cents an acre (DuVal, 49). Because they had to invest such a large sum, Metz and the others became pensive and again were haunted by doubts about their endeavor (Scheuner, 302; DuVal, 49). These misgivings were soon eliminated however, when Metz was overcome by yet another revelation that told the men to be patient and trust the Lord (Scheuner, 302). Metz’ inspiration also contained a call to action to the communities at home to get ready for their departure to America (302).

I call together, and they (namely the four men in America) shall not return to you, but you will come to them. There is no time to lose here. I have witnessed many things at that place, now it is time: Come, those who belong to My word and testimony. See, this word I speak prior, when it is still obscured.⁸ (303, 304)

der wunderbaren Leitung des Herrn eures Gottes, der Alles zuletzt klar und deutlich machete, was anjetzo noch dunkel ist.” (300)

⁷ “Ogleich wir unsere Leiber dazu hergaben, so war doch unser Geist nicht dabei, sondern wir waren in unserm Sinn immer an dem Orte, den wir zuerst gesehen hatten, nämlich in der Indianer-Reservation bei Buffalo.“ (301)

⁸ “Ich rufe zusammen, und sie (Nämlich die vier Brüder in Amerika) sollen nicht mehr zu euch, ihr aber zu ihnen kommen. Es ist keine Zeit zu verlieren allhier. Ich habe Viel bezeugt in jenem Lande, nun heißet es: Kommet, welche Meinem Wort und Zeugnis angehören. – Sehet, dieses

The Inspirationists in America were relieved as they thought this meant that the purchase would soon be cut and dried, but were soon disillusioned when a letter from the Ogden Company arrived telling them the purchase would not go through, but would be a topic of discussion in a meeting, which was to be held on December 2nd (DuVal, 49; Scheuner, 303). This was another blow to the brethren and their mood plummeted – also also facing the fact that they had to uphold expensive quarters at the “Mansion House” in Buffalo (303). They were able to receive a discount on their rent from Dorsheimer, their host, made the situation a little easier (303). However, their somberness soon resulted in a reprimanding testimony, which reminded them to be patient and trust in the Lord and warned them not to stand in their own way (303). Metz received a testimony in the form of a hymn, letting them know how to name their new home even before the purchase went through (303). It reads as follows:

You shall call it Ebenezer,
 Hitherto our Lord has helped us!
 He helped us on our journeys,
 And saved us from many hardships;
 His path and way are wondrous,
 The end sheds light on the beginning.⁹ (304)

This affirmation gave hope to the Inspirationists on both sides of the sea. Finally, on December 10th, the brethren received a message, that the meeting at the Ogden Company had agreed to the terms of the purchase (304). Another revelation on December 13th told the community in Germany to leave the country promptly (304). It was then decided, that Christian Metz and Wilhelm Noé were to travel to Geneva in order to complete the purchase (305). After their arrival in Geneva, they were bitterly disappointed again, as their translator Dorsheimer had made a mistake in his interpretation of the letter they had received (305). What they had received was not a confirmation for the land they had

Wort rede Ich zuvor, ehe ihr die Bestätigung habet, und da es noch im Dunkeln liegt.” (Scheuner, 302, 303)

⁹ “Ihr sollt ihn Ebenezer heißen, Bis hieher half uns unser Gott! Er half uns durch auf unsern Reisen, Und rettete aus mancher Noth; Sein Pfad und Weg ist wunderbar, Das Ende macht den Anfang klar.“ (Scheuner, 304)

previously scouted, but for another part a little further away from Buffalo (305). The Inspirationists would then be situated fifteen miles away from the city instead of the four they had anticipated (305). The Ogden Company suggested that they go out and see the tract that was offered for purchase again and if they agreed they would be sold that part of the land (305). The Inspirationists decided not to agree to this offer and sent out a letter to Mr. Wadsworth, who was named the member of the committee most opposed to the sale of the land the Inspirationists so desired (305). They were granted a meeting with Wadsworth, who initially said he found the price to be too low, but later changed his mind and sent a letter stating the same to the Ogden Company (DuVal, 50, 51). Metz and Noé returned to Buffalo, hopeful that the sale would now go through (Lankes, 10). The four men there were eagerly awaiting a response from the Ogden Company in New York, but by the time the new year had come there still was no news (Scheuner, 306). In the *Inspirations-Historie* it reads “Just like Israel was promised Canaan as an inheritance and had to conquer and occupy the same through trials of faith and tribulations, so they [the Israelites] here, too, had to endure bitter hardships, darkness and trials of faith till final victory”¹⁰ (Scheuner, 306). The text is hereby comparing the fate of the Inspirationists to that of the Israelites who had been promised Canaan as their home, but had to endure centuries before they were able to settle the land after the exodus from Egypt. Meanwhile in Germany, the brethren were eagerly awaiting report from Amerika, and when the first letters arrived, the news spread quickly among the community (Scheuner, 307, 308). When the Inspirationists in the Old Country learned that their brothers would not come back, but instead the Lord had called them to soon set sail themselves, it came as a surprise (308). The *Inspirations-Historie* reports that the brethren in Germany began to ready themselves, appealing to each other’s commitment to God and the cause (309). Another factor that burdened the Germans was, that P. Mook, who had been their leader during Metz’s absence, belied expectations and so the community felt their faith was once again brought to a test (309). This also burdened the four who had traveled to America, since this uncertainty could potentially endanger their entire undertaking of relocating to America (309). Finally, on January 19th

¹⁰ “Eben so wie Israel, dem das Land Canaan zum Erbtheil verheißen was, dasselbe durch schwere Kämpfe und Glaubensproben erobern und einnehmen mußte, also ging es auch hier durch große Nöthen, Dunkelheiten und Glaubensprüfungen zum endlichen Sieg.“ (Scheuner, 306)

1943 the Inspirationists in Buffalo received a letter from Fellows, telling them that Mr. Ogden of the Ogden Company did not find it necessary to have a meeting with his associates since none of them agreed with the proposed portion of the land the Inspirationists were wanting to buy (310, 311). Metz and Noé decided to travel to New York, accompanied by Mr. Dorsheimer and try to talk to Mr. Ogden directly, since communications via mail did appear to be futile and another offer from Ohio had come in, which they wanted to investigate in case of the Buffalo Creek tract were to fall through irrevocably (311). Through all this time, Metz repeatedly received inspired testimonies telling the group to hold on to the land on the Seneca reservation, which He had promised them (311). When they arrived in New York, Ogden at first was not sympathetic toward the matter, but later agreed to call for a meeting and discuss the issue on January 30th (312). During the meeting the brethren decided to purchase of only 5,000 acres at \$10 an acre, half of their initial plan, and a contract was concluded (312). A letter was sent to Germany to send bills of exchange and ready the group for the move (313). However, the hardships did not end with the conclusion of the purchase agreement as the contract included a sentence that read that “they (the Ogden Co.) were to transfer property to them (the buyers) as far as their rights allowed it”¹¹ (313). Only after the contract had been entered into, it became apparent that the Ogden Company had a contract with the natives that they could inhabit the land two additional years since they had not yet received money from the company and even if they were paid fully, they were allowed to stay on the premises until June 1944 (Scheuner, 313; DuVal52). Since the company had not paid the natives, they did not have the legal rights to even sell part of the land and therefore no deed could be given to the Inspirationists who had planned on settling the land as early as spring (Scheuner, 313). A solution to this was offered by the Ogden Company: the natives were to leave the premises by March 15th and would be given a compensation and after a successful move off the property the contract with the Inspirationists would become legal (313). The Inspirationists then would have a month – until April 15th – to decide if they wanted to enter into the contract under these circumstances (313). Metz and Noé traveled back to Buffalo, awaiting a transactor to negotiate with the natives (314). But again, the

¹¹ “daß sie (die Comp.) ihnen (den Käufern) Besitz von dem Land geben, so weit es ihre Rechte erlaubten.“ (Scheuner, 313)

Ogden Company did not act fast and so the brethren were hanging in the balance, awaiting a final decision on the validity of their purchase (314).

During this time of wait the four men began to make plans for a time after their fellow brethren had come to America and which rules and regulations would have to be installed (314). They then laid down a preliminary constitution for the group, with its foundation in communal ownership of everything (except clothes and household items) (315). The idea of communal property had come up earlier and Metz had written a letter on August 8th, 1842 in which he said that “communalism was viewed only as a temporary arrangement that would be discarded as soon as the group was fully established” (DuVal, 53). Thirty-five articles were to regulate the beginnings of the new community after the move to Ebenezer and on February 20th these ideas were approved through divine inspiration (315). DuVal speculates in his book about the origins of these communal ideas, since in Germany the community was “essentially capitalistic” (55). According to DuVal there are three possible ways Metz might have come into contact with the idea: First, “[i]t may have been that Metz had heard of utopian states while still in Germany, for new concepts of the function of a state were prevalent in the early nineteenth century” (55). Second, “[t]he communal life of the early Christians as described in the Book of Acts may also have influenced him,” and third, “the theory did not originate with Metz, but was suggested by someone else” (55). Which one of these theories is more probable than the other can of course not be determined and DuVal suggests that Metz had pondered on the concept quite some time so that by the time they needed a concept to base their community on it had become thought out sufficiently enough that he could share it with the other members (55).

On February 26th, Wadsworth and Fellows arrived in Buffalo and set out for negotiations with the natives, but after a week had not made progress (315). During these grim times, the brothers received another testimony, which urged them to stay faithful and told them they would be rewarded if they did (316). After some time, they were able to convince one of the Chiefs to agree to leave provided the other natives would do, too but again, the Seneca people were not willing to (DuVal, 55), It was then reported back to the Inspirationists that the Ogden Company would be unable to sell to them after all (55). In an attempt to find a different location to settle Metz and Ackermann traveled to Ohio and

inspected property there (57). Their negotiations went as far as price negotiations, but in the end they did not opt to purchase land (55). During their visit, a new member named Carl Ludwig Mayer joined the community, who was valuable to the Inspirationists due to his English language skills and experience in business (59).

When the men returned to Buffalo, they encountered fifty Inspirationists who had come from Germany by boat (60). Another big change during their absence was that one of the Seneca chiefs had agreed to move and had been paid handsomely by the Germans to do so in order to motivate others to follow his lead (60). On this part of the tract “Nieder Ebenezer” (Lower Ebenezer) was to be established (60). Another part that was left by the Seneca people was established as “Mittel Ebenezer” (Middle Ebenezer) (60). While the now decently sized group of Inspirationists was ready to move into the houses vacated by the natives, those were not moving out quickly enough to give each Inspirationist family their own home, so people had to move in together at first (60). Several groups from Germany arrived, with the people inhabiting the five main buildings being among the first and members from “outlying congregations in Hessen, Saxony, Switzerland, Baden, and Alsace” coming in to Ebenezer “long after the main body was firmly established” (65). Metz repeatedly demanded that those who were artisanally equipped be sent first and also those who possessed a strong faith, as he was aware that many tried to join the Inspirationists in Germany as a means of getting to America (69). Metz was further enraged by the fact that the fourth group coming to Buffalo, consisting of sixty-seven people, had brought so much furniture and other worldly possessions, that “six wagons had to make two trips a day to Buffalo for three days to bring all the furniture and equipment to Ebenezer, where there no facilities for storage” (70). This was contrary to Metz’ idea of a humble, self-sufficient life that he had planned for the community. The last group to come from Germany arrived on June 21st, 1844 and consisted of 217 people (71).

The issue of land ownership had also not been solved by the time more members were coming from Germany, as many of the Seneca believed they were to get back their land after two years with all improvements made by the Inspirationists and even went as far as taking legal matters, in which it was found that the Ogden Company had had no right to sell the land to the Inspirationists (65). After the Inspirationists had given more money to the Ogden Company (about \$50,000 by this time), the company was able to pay the

Seneca (67). The War Department subsequently sent a letter to the natives, stating that the Ogden Company now owned the land and therefore was able to sell it (67). The natives however did not accept this and a legal battle ensued, which was ultimately settled in favor of the Inspirationists (67). DuVal describes that the natives were however not accepting this and did not leave the land, instead still cutting wood on premises they no longer owned (68). It became clear that this was not a legal matter, but a matter of religion. The Seneca believed that the Great Spirit had given them the land which they were not to abandon, while the Inspirationists were convinced that God had promised them the tract as their new home in America (68). Even after the deed had been legally signed over to the Ogden Company, who was then able to sell to the Germany, the Seneca tribe took legal actions against the new settlers and hired lawyers advising them on the matter (Lankes, 24). The lawyers advised the natives “to organize and drive the Germans from the reservation, after which they would defend them in court” (24). The Inspirationists tried to resolve the matter peacefully, reminding the natives that they “had lived together peacefully for a year and the colonists appealed to them now to continue peacefully with them for the balance of the time they remained on the reservation” (24). Further the Germans referred to the letter from the War Department, which had ruled that the Ogden Company had acquired the land and was therefore able to sell it (24). The Seneca natives however, decided to make a “move for the eviction of the colonists. They applied to the district attorney for a warrant for the removal of Charles L. Mayer from the reservation” (27). This was a significant attempt, because if successful, it could have a ripple effect with the natives subsequently having all Germans evicted. But “[t]he application for a warrant of removal [was] denied” on June 18th of 1844 (29). After this decision, some members of the Seneca sold their homes to the colonists and left, but others remained and continued to cut timber on the premises (30). According to Lankes “[t]he elders were distressed” when they had to have some of the trespassing natives arrested as they “really had no desire to resort to such extreme measures, it was contrary to their teachings” (30). The Inspirationists attempted to explain to the natives in a council meeting on August 6th, 1844, how they had been persecuted in Germany and how leaving the Ebenezer settlements now would leave them with a greater loss than the Seneca, since the Inspirationists had put everything they owned into the land (30). “On the other hand the Indians still had the possessory right of the two

nearby reservations [...] to which they could remove” as well as “the national fund, in the hands of the Secretary of War, which was awarded them for the forest land; and they had also the personal right to money received for their improvements when they chose to sell” (31). The natives responded with an argument that they had purchased this land, too, which had been given to them by the Great Spirit, and they would do anything “to hold it as long as they were able” (31). However, they did underscore that their trouble was not with the colonists personally, but with the question of whom the land belonged to. Lankes notes, that some of the natives had been given “life-time leases free of rent, etc., to the land they occupied” in 1983 and “[i]t is quite possible that some of these lease holders were residing within the 5,000 acres sold to the Germans” (31).

The historic descriptions recounting the events on the Buffalo Creek property give different accounts on the final settlement of the cases. Lankes reports that the native claims to the land were given up by the Seneca on July 9th, 1845 when a treaty was made between the natives and the Germans (32). “On their part the Indians promise to make no further trespass for the duration of their period of grace on the Ebenezer tract. In consideration of this promise the colonists forgave them the trespass, withdrew the complaint, and entered no claim for damages” (32). In DuVal’s account the Seneca had again taken actions against the settlers in order to remove them from the property and “[i]n April, 1846, C. L. Mayer took the document” containing “a detailed account of the land purchase and the accompanying affair with the Seneca” “to Washington to present to the proper authority and to defend the interests of the Germans” (74). The Inspirationists then “read in the newspapers that the case had been dropped” (74) and they officially held ownership of the land, which settled the case. Gottlieb Scheuner’s *Inspirations-Historie* confirms DuVal’s account and explains that the “Indian-case had finally been decided and settled”¹² (380). The organization of the Ebenezer society will be the topic of the next part of the chapter.

¹² “diese Indianer-Sache endgiltig entschieden und erledigt war“ (Scheuner, 380)

Organizing the Ebenezer Society

According to Lankes, “[m]ore than 800 Inspirationists came to Ebenezer from Germany” (33). Seven larger groups “emigrated during favorable summer sailing weather” with sizes varying from 18 (on October 16th, 1845) to 217 (on June 21st, 1844) (33) and made it to America and Ebenezer. “Individuals and small family groups came in at frequent intervals” (33) as well. However, “many remained in Germany” (Shambaugh, 63). The group making up the Inspirationists was very diverse in age, wealth and skills they brought to the new community (Lankes, 33). At first a plan was made that wealthier members were to give money to the community and receive interest for their loan (33). This however could lead the poorer members becoming servants of the wealthy and subsequently leaving for better paying jobs which were available everywhere in the booming economy of America (34). While in Germany “there was no alternative” to living within the community in order to escape the oppressing government and stay true to their faith, in America however, people were free to “seek [their] place without let or hindrance from anyone” (34). A craftsman “could find employment anywhere” (34) and was therefore not bound to stay in the community and be regulated by their strict rules. Therefore, the community tried to establish an order for their communal life, even while legal quarrels were still ongoing. The community had set a trial period of two years to see whether communal living would be of use and after those two years they were to decide whether to continue or return to individual possessions (DuVal, 71). In 1846 the community was incorporated by a two-third vote by senate and assembly as the “Village of Ebenezer” (38). Even though there was discord among the brethren, communal living was also approved in 1846, supported by several inspired testimonies, and, was subsequently established in a legally documented constitution (72). The organization of the ecclesiastical part of the community was as follows:

“The prophets can be regarded as the head of the church [...]. The elders were the pastors of the congregation and the spiritual fathers of the communities. They conducted the religious services and officiated in the rites that were observed on special holy days. The congregation (excepting the elders) was divided into three spiritual groups of “orders”. The classification of members was made on the basis of piety. The higher order was known as the first, the lesser as the middle, and the lower (of which the children were a part) as the

third. Each of these groups attended its own separate religious services from which the others were excluded. [...] Service was held simultaneously but each group had its own room in the meeting house.” (Lankes, 44)

Service was held every day (62) and the meeting house was barren and furnished only with simple pews (44), one row on each side of the room dividing men and women during service. When praying the congregation knelt on the ground with their forearms on the pews (44). Members took turn reading the passage of the day from the Bible (44). According to Lankes holidays were observed, but neither on Easter nor Christmas, gifts were exchanged (44). There were “no Christmas trees, no Easter baskets, no fashion parades” (44) at this time in the Ebenezer villages. The highest celebration was the “Liebesmahl” (love meal), its date determined through inspiration by the instruments (45). Members serving as elders held regular professions outside of service and were appointed through testimony (46).

By 1846 three settlements had been built: Nieder, Mittel and Ober Ebenezer (Lower, Middle and High Ebenezer) (72). Another settlement – Neu Ebenezer – (New Ebenezer) was established later in 1852 (81). The constitution consisted of twenty-one rules, laying emphasis on the Bible, inspired testimony as well as twenty-four rules that E. L. Gruber had established (73). Members were to give all property (monetary and other) to the community and would be given “a yearly allowance for clothing and necessities” (73). The sixteen elders (called the *Bruderrath*) were the deed holders for legal purposes only, and were able to expel and accept members into the community (73). In case anyone wanted to leave the community, they would be given their share of the possession to take with them and heirs could claim shares even if they were not members (73). According to Shambaugh “it [was], moreover, evident that the subject of absolute communism caused considerable dissension among the Brethren” (60) since wealth had been spread so unequally before entering into the communal lifestyle. On October 23rd in 1850 the Inspirationists received an inspired testimony urging them to pursue and fully commit to communal living and scolding those who were against it (Scheuner, 457). Furthermore, the testimony which was received, gave instructions on marriage and declared that “being unwed

and celibate, if done the right way, would at all times well please the Lord and He held a special promise and steadfast love”¹³ (Scheuner, 457) for those abiding by this way of life.

Farming in the Ebenezer villages was done differently than in other parts of America. The settlers had brought their way of tilling from the old world where they lived “in villages rather than on land they cultivated” (Lankes, 61). This was due to the fact that in Germany farmers could not buy enough land in one piece to support their living (61) and instead acquired several small fields to cultivate. Since no such restrictions applied in America where land was available aplenty, Lankes surmises that village housing was maintained in order for the elders to be able to “maintain a better quality of discipline than would have been possible by adopting the American idea of scattered rural homes” (61). Houses, too, in Ebenezer were different than those of other people living in America at the time, as they did not have kitchens (61). Instead people would receive their meals in communal kitchens, which were assigned based on location of living. Furthermore, did the elders assign living quarters based on need and family size as well as closeness to a member’s work place (61, 62).

“By the early 1850s Metz and the other elders worried increasingly about a perceived decline in spirituality of the membership” and “[t]he growth of Buffalo, with its worldly temptations, disputes with neighboring landowners, and the rising cost of land in the Ebenezer area, were further causes for concern” (DuVal, 81). According to Shambaugh, the community was needing “greater seclusion and cheaper and more abundant lands” (67) as the community was growing at a steady rate. On August 29th in 1854 the community was given a testimony that reinforced earlier inspirations of an upcoming change (Scheuner, 520). The testimony included “that it was now His holy will and decision, that the community was to leave this place and was to trek further West”¹⁴ (520). Subsequently on September 4th the “große Bruderrath” (large council of brethren) came together to discuss the relocation of the community (520, 521). During the meeting another testimony was given through Metz which declared that the decision to move ultimately lay with the elders (521). The Bruderrath then decided to give up Ebenezer and look for a new home further west (521, 522). Metz, together with C. Winzenried, E. L. Mayer, and

¹³ “wie aber der ledige und freie Stand, wenn er auf rechte Weise gehalten werde, dem Herrn allezeit ein Wohlgefallen sei und Er eine besondere Verheißung ung eine hohe Gnade darauf gesetzt habe“ (Scheuner 457)

¹⁴ “daß es nun doch Sein heiliger Wille und Rathschluß sei, daß die Gemeinde diese Stätte verlassen und weiter nach dem Westen ziehen solle“ (Scheuner, 520)

Ferd. Weber were chosen to explore options out west and initially scouted areas in Kansas (Shambaugh, 67; Scheuner 523; DuVal, 83). In early December in 1854 two men, Johann Beyer and Jacob Wittmer, were sent to Iowa to investigate possible sites for the new settlement (DuVal, 90). When the two returned on December 23rd with descriptions of the “beautiful location about twenty miles west of Iowa City on the Iowa River (90). A second committee was sent to Iowa and Shambaugh also describes that “[t]he present location of the Community in Iowa was described in such glowing terms by this committee that immediately a third committee of four members was dispatched to make the purchase” (67). In January 1855 a fund was set to be used for the purchase of land in Iowa (DuVal, 91). The departing for Iowa happened relatively quickly on May 31st, 1855 when at the Bruderrath’s behest Carl Winzenried, Friedrich Heinemann, Jacob Wittmer, and Johann Beyer went to Iowa to purchase the land previously chosen (91). They had purchased more than four and a half thousand acres of land by June 13th (92). The men made sure to buy out farmers in the immediate vicinity of the 3,300 acres of government land (92) in order to ensure no worldly neighbors as had been the case in Buffalo. The Ebenezer land was, after some difficulties, broken up and sold in smaller pieces, which enabled the Inspirationists to make the move to Iowa in groups (95). The name of the new community, was revealed in a poem written by Metz on August 8th in 1855, the first stanza reading: “Remain faithful shall be the name There in Iowa the community”¹⁵ (Scheuner, 556). The new name therefore was to be “Bleibtreu” (remain faithful), but the members found it difficult to express the new name in the English language and therefore it was decided to use the Biblical name “Amana,” which means “believe true”; this name was later approved through a testimony on September 23rd (Scheuner, 556).

Founding the new settlement in Iowa was not without hardships and Part III of this thesis will give a description of the establishment of the new villages including communal living and its abolishment in the Change [sic] of 1932. Furthermore, will accounts of the time after the Change be given when the community settled into capitalism and became more worldly. Oral interviews conducted in the winter of 2015/2016 of community members will help understand contemporary Amana identity.

¹⁵ “Bleibtreu soll der Name sein Dort in Iowa der Gemein“ (Scheuner, 556)

Part III: Establishing Amana, Iowa

Building Amana

The Amana colonies, which exist in Eastern Iowa until today, consist of seven villages settled by The Community of True Inspiration in the 1850s. Settling Amana was not without hardships. The first groups who moved there experienced a winter that was “unusually severe with great snow storms early in the season and intense cold” (DuVal, 97). The Iowa members also had difficulties deciding which additional acres to purchase and were depending on advice of Christian Metz, who was still residing in Ebenezer, to send letters helping with their decisions (97, 98). Finally, Metz decided to move to Amana and left for Iowa on April 17th in 1856 together with his siblings, who were also part of the Inspirationists (99). When seeing the Amana property, Metz was as much impressed as the groups before him and his reaction is described as follows: “[w]e turned off towards the right and traveled through some poor land, rather hilly. Then, all at once, there opened before our eyes the beautiful valley of Amana which is fairly wide and more or less hidden” (99). Metz “marveled at God’s kindness to provide this land” while on a stroll through the tract (99). Slowly more and more people made the move to Iowa and in 1858 Canada Ebenezer (the only settlement not in the United States) had completely been dissolved (101). Because not all pieces in Ebenezer had been sold at this point, Amana struggled financially (102). However, financial hardships were not the only thing battering the community. The youth in Amana is described as yearning for more worldly things and indulging in “frivolity and idle love affairs” (102). The fact that no oppressive government was containing the community might have played a role in this behavior and the younger generation was experiencing freedom for the first time in their lives. Metz however, partially blamed himself for this rebellion, as he described himself as “being so hard and stern and unfriendly” (102).

Five more villages were added to the community by 1862 named “West Amana, South Amana, High Amana, East Amana, and Middle Amana.” (Shambaugh, “Amana: The Community” chapter XIII). In December of 1859 the community had established itself as a legal corporation – the “Amana Society”. With the purchase of Homestead the Amana Society also acquired Homestead’s rail station – an important hub for transporting goods to and from the community.

By the time all seven villages had been settled the community had significantly grown in size. About eight hundred members had had set sail from the Old World to New York, and twelve hundred had made the move to Iowa. In 1908 Bertha Shambaugh remarks in her book “Amana: The Community of True Inspiration” that the congregation consisted of about eighteen hundred members – and the Society was worth \$1,843,720.00 – an impressive sum for the early twentieth century.

Communal Living

An integral part of the theocratic lifestyle practiced in the Amana colonies was communal living. This form of living had been practiced in earlier settlements of the community in Germany as well as Ebenezer, but was more sophisticated in Iowa. Colonists did not own property or gain wages. Jobs were assigned to those able to work and were usually in the kitchens, gardens or the communally owned factories. The members of The Community of True Inspiration – nowadays more commonly known as the Amana people, named after their place of residence, believed that an “extreme democracy” should not be encouraged, but a “strong central authority” should guide the fate of the community (Shambaugh, *Amana: The Community, “Government”*). In the colonies a Board of Trustees handled community business, which consisted of thirteen members, who were elected annually. All of the members were also Elders in the church and well respected. Their task included keeping community members informed on topics discussed on the board – however, not everything was shared with the general public as it was thought that some decisions would only cause uproar among members (Shambaugh). Each of the seven villages was overseen individually by a group of Elders, called the Bruderrath (Council of Brethren) (Shambaugh). Even though, according to Shambaugh, most members of the community agreed with this form of government it was not completely unopposed since there were individuals who “criticized [it] as an aristocracy of Elders.”

In order to make communal living possible and pool monetary means, “each member [was] in duty bound to give his or her personal and real property to the Trustees for the common fund” (Shambaugh, “Membership”) when joining the community. This meant that upon becoming a member of The Community of True Inspiration one had to give up all assets and sign them over to the community. No heirs could lay claim to property after this. In exchange each

member had “free board, dwelling, support, and care secured to him in old age, sickness and infirmity” and an annual allowance “in the form of a credit at the village store and guarded by a pass-book” was given to all (Shambaugh). Later coupon books of \$5 and \$10 were handed out in order to simplify the process of smaller purchases at the village general stores. Shambaugh reports that even though this idea of living together communally might sound idyllic, there was in fact envy and some members felt entitled to a larger sum. Shambaugh describes how one of these situations is resolved as the member desiring a larger allowance is asked to take a look at another member taking care of a herd of sheep. He is then asked if this man was not doing his job to the best of his abilities and when he agreed, was told to be thankful that the Lord gave him a different set of skills and that he should also complete his work to the best of his abilities.



Fig. 2. Synofzick, Marie. "High Amana General Store." 2016. JPEG file.

If a member decided to leave the community, he or she would also not be left without means. Upon departure, a person would receive the money they put into the communal fund back with interest (Shambaugh, “Membership”). This custom ensured that members did not have to

stay in the community because there was no other option, but stayed because they wanted to be a part of it. This practice in turn meant also, that only willing members formed the community, which supported their common identity. Joining the community was possible for those born outside of the colonies, although they had to enter a period of probation where at the end both parties (the community as well as the willing member) would decide whether the willing member would be allowed to stay (Shambaugh). Shambaugh describes that sometimes people without means or even in debt had been allowed to join the community, which usually happened if a *Werkzeuge* deemed them worthy. The community's main growth however came from within. An observation Shambaugh makes is that the community was marked by "homogeneity" among the 1800 members (at the time) and she credits this to a "common origin, a common religion, and a common tongue" from which "perpetuity" and "solidarity" build a common identity. Another reason why communal identity was perpetuated in Amana was the fact that "the *me* spirit [...was] subordinated to the *we* spirit" which meant that all signs of individuality were unwelcome. Shambaugh writes that "five generations of precept and practice in self-denial and brotherly love [...] ha[d] not completely annihilated suspicion, jealousy, and envy."

Even though communal living seemed to suggest that interpersonal relationships were important to keep spirits up and community bonds strong, the ideal relationship in Amana was a monogamous relationship with God and therefore the community's guidelines favored celibacy (Shambaugh, "Celibacy and Marriage"). For as long as there were *Werkzeuge* in the community, they had to approve of a union between a man and a woman and "it became customary to separate [the couple] for a year" and if after that period both still wanted to enter into marriage, it was usually granted. The Amana did not allow members to marry young, men had to be twenty-four in order to be allowed to marry. Second marriage – even after the death of a spouse was not looked upon favorably.

The Change

By 1932 the winds in Amana changed. Lawrence L. Rettig gives an account of the reorganization known as the Change and the time after until 1975 in his book "Amana Today." Rettig names three main reasons for the reorganization. First, the "loss of charismatic leadership," second, a "gradual abandonment of the philosophy of isolation" and third, "financial

problems aggravated by social unrest locally and a deepening economic depression nationally” (4). Rettig states that “the central force in the Community of True Inspiration, the Ebenezer Society, and the Amana Society was the *Werkzeug* or prophet” (4). After Barbara Heinemann died in 1883, no new *Werkzeug* had been called. With the loss of this strong guidance, the community was not heading in one direction and became less stable. A strong leader also provided guidelines for a common identity and without one the community became oriented more outwardly and thereby more aware of worldly things. Rettig writes further that in Europe the community was “forced to isolate themselves from the culture into which they were born because of continuing persecution for their unpopular beliefs” and with that “isolation amplifies a singleness of purpose and keeps at a controllable minimum disturbing influences” (5). This reason therefore had a similar influence on communal identity as the first one. With the opening of the colonies and its people to the world, boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ became softened leaving room for explorations of the temptations of the outside world. The author says that “the erection of hotels in several communities before the Change underscores the drift towards accommodation and encouragement of visitors” (5). So not only did the Amana people turn to the outside, they invited visitors to join them by visiting the colonies. One of the reasons for the building of hotels and with that the start of tourism as a basis of income, was the fact that the community had financial problems. One major reason for this was the fact that “families with great numbers of young children joined the community by feigning religious belief, so that the cost of support would be borne by the Society” (7). When the children had grown up, these families would leave, thereby not putting money back into the society’s resources. This combined with the Great Depression that was distressing the country, left the Amana Society in dire need of new sources of monetary income. Another factor that influenced the crumbling of community identity from the inside was what Rettig calls “a full-blown youth rebellion from the late 1920’s until the time of reorganization in 1932” (7) which bore “similarity to the complaints of the national youth rebellion of the 1960’s” (9). Indeed, it was mainly the younger generation that wanted the Change; “elderly men and women, oppose[d] any change, and want[ed] to go along in the old way” (11). When in 1932 the question of reorganization had become pressing, a questionnaire was distributed among the members of the community. “The questionnaire contained only two questions” which were posed in German and Rettig translates them as follows:

1. Is it, in your opinion, possible to go back to the old lifestyle of denial wholly and completely, as it is prescribed, and are you and your family willing to tread this path without reservation?

Answer: “yes” or “no”

2. Is it, in your opinion, possible that by reorganization (which is described as fully as can be at this time in the accompanying letter), the building-up of our community can be effected according to Article V of our present Constitution, and are you and your family willing to present your plans and views before the Committee and then to assist in carrying out the plan approved by the Trustees and the majority of brothers and sisters?

Answer: “yes” or “no” (13; 14)

On June 10, 1931 900 of the 917 questionnaires are returned and the community approves the Change with 75% in favor and 12% wanting to keep the old system (14).

After the Change is determined, the community moves to reorganize. The Amana Society created two new societies, namely the Amana Church Society and the (new) Amana Society. The communal assets were incorporated into the Amana Society and “each member was to receive one share of non-transferable Class A Common Stock” (18). Additionally, members received shares according to their duration of working for the community. After the Change all colonists were formally let go from their positions and “then reassigned [to] all available jobs” (22) if members had applied. However, there were not enough jobs to employ every member and colonists were encouraged to start their own businesses. Another group of people who faced heavy adjustments were women, who now had to learn how to cook for a single family. Used to having communal kitchens that provided all meals for the community, houses were initially not equipped with kitchens and during reorganization members could purchase fixtures and supplies that were no longer needed as the communal kitchens were abandoned (25). One thing of the outside world that did not take long for the Amana people to acquire were cars. Rettig reports that “by the end of the transition period on January 1, 1933, there were already over 100 proud owners of new cars” (33).



Fig. 3. Synofzick, Marie. "Former Communal Kitchen in High Amana." 2016. JPEG file.

The German language which had always influenced everyday life in Amana and which had survived so long, began to deteriorate among members slowly after the Change, but especially quickly during the years of the Second World War. Amana members “discouraged the speaking of the German language” in order to show their loyalty to their homeland: America (69). However, German was still the prevalent language at home in the colonies and everyday life was regulated in the language of the old homeland. One might argue that migration and acculturation did not happen until 1932 and the following years altogether, since the community did not change shape from its origins in Germany. Communal living had been established in European living quarters, long before the group left for America. In this light, only after disembarking from this lifestyle were the Amana people forced to interact with and adapt to American society. Before their community shielded itself from external influences, and was not penetrated by American culture. It is therefore especially interesting to look at more recent developments in peoples’ identities, which will be done through personal interviews.

Personal Interviews

For the purpose of establishing a more contemporary development of Amana identity three women from three generations of one family have been interviewed on their views of Amana, its past, present, and future. The three interviewees were Janet Zuber, her daughter Emilie Hoppe and her granddaughter Anna Schumacher. The questions which were posed can be found in the appendix, but were sometimes amended depending on the person's answers or the development of the interview.

Janet Zuber was born in High Amana in 1935. Her life's work has been the translation of six books and several hundred testimonies from German to English that are very important to the Amana community. Growing up, she describes, she was not aware that she was of German heritage, because she was not aware of the colonies' history. Her consciousness for her legacy arose during college, when she found herself in a different surrounding than Amana. Janet's native language is German, or rather Amana-German, derived from the Hessian dialect her ancestors brought with them from Germany in the 1840s. When asked about the difference about speaking German versus English Janet reports that German was spoken at home and in kindergarten, where the children primarily knew German and gradually learned English while in class. In high school German was not offered as the Second World War had brought an anti-German sentiment to the United States and speaking German was discouraged. In the Amana colonies however, Sunday school was even then taught in German. When in her thirties, Janet started to read German books at home and thereby educated herself on the written form of the language. Today, Janet speaks German when with her husband and reports that she sometimes "doubles up," meaning she will repeat a sentence in both languages which seems "more forceful" to her when uttered in two languages. However, Janet says that now she is more comfortable in English than in German, which was not the case as a child. Pets and especially dogs are still spoken to in German, she remarks. Often an amalgamation of both languages will happen when speaking with her husband in which they unconsciously mix Amana German and English elements.

The second question asks about Janet's first visit to Germany and whether it felt familiar or not. Her first visit to Germany was in 1975 and Janet states that "their German" (meaning

Amana German) is a different kind of German, namely that of their grandmothers. Therefore, when in Germany she experienced frustration because others would hear her speak German and therefore assume she was a native but then when she missed very specific words (she gives the example of names of car parts) others would not understand that she was in fact not a High German native speaker. Areas in which her Amana German is not as sufficient as her English are according to Janet politics as well as medical, and technical topics. One example of experiencing that her form of German was dated Janet gives is that of asking for a “Abtritt” in Germany when looking for a bathroom. This word is very dated in High German, so she was not understood. Nonetheless Janet was surprised at how comfortable she was with her German in Germany. When visiting she was engrossed with everything being in German but adjusted right away and says that there were certain things that struck a note. She did not experience any form of culture shock. Overall she experienced Germans as less spontaneous than Amana people with more regulations. An example that her husband, who is present during the interview, gives is that of wanting to order Knödel (potato dumplings) with his Schnitzel, but since this was not a common combination in Germany, the waiter would not substitute the side dish. According to both, this would not have happened in the US.

When asked to say what Germanness meant to her, Janet states that Germanness is present in her life but maybe not consciously so. She regrets not having spoken more German with her children. Overall there was little German influx in the community except for the war brides of World War II.

Pertaining to the importance of the church Janet says it is the most important thing to her. This is however, according to her, not the case for everyone and there is a decline in membership of the church. Janet was brought up in a house where “going to church was just what you did.”

The last question posed in the interview asks what the future of Amana will be according to the interviewee. To Janet it is very important to maintain Amana and she chose to be an active part of the community, but she is very concerned about it. She contemplates that maybe the time has come where it is no longer relevant to have. She describes how things have changed and that she used to be able to state who lived in which house but not anymore. She is at peace with this change and trusts in God. She believes that everybody is responsible for their own salvation. To her Amana has become a tourist destination, but she sees this as a positive development. The Amana Heritage Museum can exist because of the tourists that visit the colonies and spend their

money there. She believes the community will go on, but the church might not be able to function forever. There are a lot of expenses to be paid to keep up two church buildings and seven cemeteries. Janet finds it remarkable that the Amana church has been able to survive this long, without a national affiliation with another church. To her the German language is not what held the community together, it is the people. She tries to rely on the Holy Spirit and tries to listen. Translating the testimonies changed her life and she is very glad that is grabbed her.



Fig. 4. Synofzick, Marie. "Amana Colonies Visitor Center." 2016. JPEG file.



Fig. 5. Synofzick, Marie. "Amana Heritage Museum." 2016. JPEG file.

Emilie Hoppe (née Zuber) was born in 1959 and currently serves as an Elder in the Amana church. Emilie is the editor and publisher of "Willkommen," a newspaper with five seasonal issues per year and is the special projects administrator of the Amana Society. Emilie speaks German only during the German church service on Sundays, but not outside of church. She conducts the service opening in German, the Lord's prayer as well as some readings and songs. At home she does not speak German with her husband, except for phrases like "Guten Tag" (hello) or "Guten Appetit" (Enjoy your meal). Her mother (Janet) will sometimes talk to her in German, but Emilie answers in English. When speaking German, Emilie reports that she feels more connected to previous generations. She will use German as a 'code' when she does not want others to understand what she is saying and she gives an example that she would speak German while on vacation in an English speaking country. Speaking German makes her feel more "Amana," but she claims to only have a basic command of German. Emilie has been to Germany four times and it felt different than America or even other European countries. Germany feels more comfortable to her not just because of the language but also the food and the way houses are decorated (especially furniture). She recognizes things that were the same in Amana as in Germany, but different in the rest of the US. An example for these similarities is the "Haussegen" (house blessing) which reminded her of her mother's and grandmother's house.

Being in Germany was no culture shock, but Emilie missed things that were normal in America and she gives the example of having ice cubes in a drink, which is not common in Europe.

When asked what Germanness means to her, Emilie gives her associations as language, folk culture, food, setup of the household (furniture), and an attitude that “there is a right way and a wrong way.” Germanness entails not wanting to fail and especially not wanting anyone to see oneself fail. Typical of Germans is to her that they care about what others think of them whereas Americans pay less attention to that. Germanness is connected to being orderly, clean, tidy, well organized and the aesthetic is more old fashioned than in America.

German traditions that are still practiced today that Emilie names are Maifest and Oktoberfest which are celebrated in the colonies every year. She adds that Oktoberfest started as an American celebration with a Czech band and no knowledge of how to make bun-sized bratwurst. Emilie reports that Oktoberfest became more Germanized because of the people that came to the colonies, especially the war brides and their visiting relatives. In the 1960s and 1970s there was also for the first time enough wealth in Amana for people to travel to Germany and they brought back German items, which started a trend in Amana.



Fig. 6. Synofzick, Marie. "Maifest Poster." 2016. JPEG file.

Fig. 7. Synofzick, Marie. "Oktoberfest Poster." 2016. JPEG file.

German traditions, for Emilie, are mostly connected to the holidays. German songs and folk stories have been part of Amana culture and an example is the German nursery rhyme "Hoppe hoppe Reiter" (A rhyme in which the adult sings to the child on their lap pretending the child is riding a horse). Another tradition that is an integral part of Amana culture is education. Emilie believes this attitude towards learning came from Germany and gives as evidence the anecdote of the establishing of a printing press, a book bindery, and an archive as one of the first things in the colonies. She remembers that everyone always had books and newspapers in their homes. She is convinced that the Change also came about because parents wanted to send their children to college, but there was not enough communal money to do so. Only a select few were sent in order to supply the community with doctors, dentists and chiropractors.

Emilie reads German about once a week on average when picking up a German recipe book. Over the course of the last twenty years her speaking of German has increased as she uses it as an Elder in the church.

Amana evokes associations with community, church, family, tradition, connection but is also a stressful topic since she feels a responsibility to preserve Amana culture (buildings, songs) but is failing because there is too much to save. To her, the church is very important and will always be at the core of the community.

The question of Amana's future is perceived as difficult. Economically Amana is in a tough place since farming has become less lucrative, but tourism brings in income. Some members of the younger generation have to move away in order to find jobs that can support a family, but the situation has become better since Iowa City and Cedar Rapids offer more possibilities. People from outside are interested in Amana, but only when it is "fun for them." People from families with a long Amana heritage are getting older and they were the ones holding up the standard, according to Emilie. In the future Emilie sees a less German Amana, that is less connected to its history and which has to reinvent and reinvigorate itself from within. New people are moving to the villages who find Amana a good place to live. The future of Amana is to make it a better place to live and raise children. More affordable housing is needed and it is important to encourage people to maintain their houses. The future Amana will be less

German, but more Amana. The brand of Amana is going to step into the foreground. Potentially the setup of the church will change and it might follow the trend of other Christian churches that offer more social gatherings and lessen the focus on worship. Emilie says maybe the Amana church needs that to survive, but it makes her sad. There are also people that move to Amana, who are interested in it even without it being their legacy and who join the church.

Anna Schumacher (née Hoppe) was born in 1987 and is a graduate student in engineering at the University of Iowa. She is a member of the church's steering committee that thinks about the church's future and possible changes to the current canon.

Anna took German in high school, but never spoke it at home. Her grandparents would sometimes speak German to her but she could not hold a conversation. The only times she does utilize German words is when referring to relatives as Tante (aunt), Oma (Grandma), or Opa (Grandpa). She has no specific associations with either German or English and has never been to Germany. Germanness to her is the degree to which a person is German. She self-identifies as being of German heritage.

German traditions that she upholds are putting up a Christmas pyramid on Christmas and eating German food. She also names Maifest and Oktoberfest, but since they were adapted later and she would not consider them Amana, only German.



Fig. 8. Synofzick, Marie. "Christmas Pyramid I." 2016. JPEG file.

Fig. 9. Synofzick, Marie. "Christmas Pyramid II." 2016. JPEG file.

To Anna Amana means her home. It is also associated with the idea of building the community through hardships and she has respect and admiration for those who sacrificed everything for their belief. Amana therefore also evokes associations of loss of previous generations. She feels that her generation needs to be more aware of this past and tap into the empowerment it brings them. Anna is proud of the equality women have held in Amana.

The church is very important to Anna as it is the very reason why the Amana colonies exist. Without the church the villages would not be Amana, since to her there is a direct link between the church and the concept of Amana. The inspired testimonies are fundamental and are what separates them from other Christian churches.

The future of Amana is scary to Anna. A lot of members of her generation are moving away to find jobs and she feels that potentially the responsibility to hold up the church and its traditions lies on her, but she also might have to move to find employment. She poses the question of how much does she need the community and how much does the community need her? Anna can see the church change to a more mainstream approach. She says that especially her generation lacks a deep understanding of what Amana means. There is an appreciation but no

true understanding of the sacrifices earlier generations have made. Young people want churches to be more social, but Anna does not agree and thinks church is for the Lord and not for socializing. She can see the church change into something completely different from what it is today and struggles with the future since there are not many left to keep Amana what it is about.

These interviews give a more contemporary understanding of Amana today, as they mirror concepts of three generations. The basic principles are the same for all three women. Amana and the church are intertwined and represent home and a sense of community. All three women are concerned about the future of Amana and see possible changes on the horizon. The main difference here is that Janet, the oldest, states to be at peace with it. Emilie and Anna both struggle more with a perceived responsibility to preserve Amana culture and the church the way it is. Though open to the idea of changes, they both are not in favor of changing the canon of the church. In the following paragraph a church questionnaire will be discussed that has been issued in 2016 and which might provide answers to what these possible changes could be.

Church Questionnaire

In 2016 a steering committee was formed at the Amana church in order to investigate if members wanted to see change in the structure and canon of the church. The committee put together a questionnaire which was distributed among church members in the spring of 2016. The questions included can be found in the appendix. The fact that this committee was formed, shows that the Amana church is progressive and attuned to the wishes and concerns of its members. However, the questionnaire was met with mixed responses as many of the questions suggest that it would be an option to do away with some of the very integral parts of the church as for example the inspired testimonies, or men and women sitting on different sides of the church during service. So far no outcome of the questionnaire has been published. The future will show if and how the Amana church and with it the Amana colonies will change and adapt to the challenges that come with being a small community in the American globalized landscape.

Conclusion

In the previous chapters, this thesis has provided an outline and interpretation of the evolution of Amana identity and its connection to Germanness. An overview of how Amana history has affected the current preservation efforts has been given and a strong emphasis on group identity as a means to ensure the community's survival has been laid.

Theories of identity formation and preservation have placed the casus Amana into a broader academic debate. Religion and migration have been explored as factors which influence identity and in the case of Amana have forged the bonds among its members to preserve their group. Similarities and differences between community members and other German migrants have been shown to underscore that Amana fate is unique, but not without resemblances to other groups which left Germany at earlier times. Migration of entire groups has so far seldomly been looked at in relocation scholarship, in which the group also takes with it its social structures, family bonds, and a common heritage. Another factor that sets the Amana community apart from other migrating groups is its relocation to a secluded area and the subsequent building and maintaining of a utopian society. It can be argued that until the Change of 1932 the community had not been substantially exposed to external influences, and the process of migration and subsequent acculturation had not started until after the Change.

The main limitation of this research is the sparsity of secondary sources and their reliance on the same primary sources. To avoid bias, in this paper many primary sources have been used to build a strong foundation in original document analysis.

Considering all findings of the previous chapters it can be stated that the history of the Community of True Inspiration is unique as a whole, but certain factors and events are recurring. One of these factors, and the most influential one is crisis. While in Germany the existence of the community was in crisis and the community decided, under guidance from its spiritual leader Christian Metz, to make the move to the United States. Another crisis arose when in the 1930s the community's existence was endangered again, this time not solely by outside factors, but also from within. A combination of the Great Depression and a general crisis of faith in the communal system forced the Amana people to make yet another drastic change and move from communal living into a capitalistic society. Now the community faces another crisis, this time mainly in matters of the church and the community is again actively looking to change in order

to preserve its heritage. Seeing as the two former crises have been overcome and enabled the community to sustain, it is likely that this time the community will adjust once again, even drastically, in order to preserve Amana for future generations. What held the community together was more than their shared Germanness. A strong belief in God and the Werkzeuge guided the community through rough waters and gave them direction.

Identifying patterns in Amana history not only allows historians to draw conclusions about the group itself, but also about a German historiography outside of the German realm. The Amana people bridge two continents and thereby entangle German and American historiography, enabling the understanding of both cultures through their reaction and interaction with Amana culture.

Our task as scholars is to observe this redefinition of what Amana means in order to be a part of the German-American historiographical discourse. The future of Amana lies in the hands of its people. At this time of a crossroads they have to decide whether the effort to preserve the old ways is desirable or if the time has come for Amana to untie itself from its German roots and stand on its own American feet by reshaping the structure of the community. For scholars it is hereby critical to document and analyze the steps that are being taken by the community and observe the reactions of the community itself but also from the outside. Will Amana move away from its rigid structures and become mainly a tourist attraction? Or is a revival of the old ways on the horizon? Time will tell how the tenacious people of Amana manage to reshape and redefine their community in new ways and old.

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Appendix

Translation of the Ruedy Diary by the Author

- 1) On April 17, 1844 we embarked on our journey to North America from Arnsburg, our home up until then. We walked to Fridberg (today: Friedberg), where most were riding on the "Familienwagen" (either an autobus or a horse-drawn wagon), via Wilbel (today: Bad Vilbel) to Frankfurt, where we arrived at 4 o'clock at night, where we immediately saw that the ship we were supposed to go on over the sea had not yet arrived, to our dismay, so that one person immediately drove back to tell those left behind (meaning: those still at Arnsburg). We spent the night in Frankfurt. We stayed until the next day, because the fair was going on. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon,
- 2) We went with the steamship "Delphin" down the river Main to Mainz, where we arrived at 5 o'clock and stayed at the inn "Zur alten Krone" where we stayed eight days, because everything was less expensive there than in Antwerp. The next day – the 19th – it was Kaiser Ferdinand I's birthday and already at 4 o'clock in the morning we heard gunshots (from canons). At about 8 o'clock we went to the parade grounds where Austrian soldiers held a military parade in honor of their Kaiser's birthday, where there was a terrible commotion and the whole area was shaken due to the many shotgun and canon shots where it was like fog from the
- 3) Paper and gun smoke. Sunday morning the 21st we held a gathering in our inn upstairs on the 3rd floor (4th floor for Americans). The 24th we went to the museum where we could see almost all animals, birds, fish, snakes etc. And so we went for a walk every day because the weather was nice, in the city and outside, so that the time would move quicker. The 27th we drove at 11 o'clock at midday on the steamship of the Dutch from Mainz down the Rhine to Bingen. There it used to be a very dangerous pass, known under the name "das Binger Loch" (the Binger hole). But now due to
- 4) The blasting of the rocks rendered pretty harmless, but for the alert a consistently present Palatine sentinel gives for every approaching ship three shotgun shots to indicate (where the Binger hole is). There the Rhine runs at twelve hours through the high mountains, on which with great effort vineyards have been planted, which provide the famous Rheinwein (Rhine wine). There are also many ruins, old castles on both sides which have been built in the middle ages and have been destroyed in the Thirty Years' War. We also passed the so called Läubsturm (Läus tower) that sits in the middle of the Rhine on a sandbank.
- 5) Especially prominent through its size was the Drachenfels near Bonn. There we saw the first windmills. We arrived in Cölln (Cologne) at 10 o'clock at night. The next day we went further and came to the Dutch border to Nimwegen (Nijmegen) a fortress where we spent the night. The 28th we left Nijmegen, arrived at the harbor of Rotterdam at 2 o'clock midday. This city has a beautiful view with lots of ships that are at the harbor. The 31st we left with the
- 6) Steamboat (Laurens Rosters) at 4 o'clock in the morning and arrived at Antwerp at 7 o'clock in the afternoon. There we had to wait, because the ship was not ready for departure, until Mai 8th. Then we went from the harbor into the stream where the anchors were dropped. The 9th the

anchors were pulled, the sails hoisted and because we did not have wind we had to cruise which went very slow. We stranded on a sandbank until high tide came back, because it (the ship) tilted to the side, so that one would think it was going to fall.

7) Saturday we came until Flüßingen (today Vlissingen (Flushing)), the last European city where we were anchored the last time. Sunday morning the 12th we came to the North Sea. There we had very good winds, but were heavily hit by sea sickness. But I was entirely spared from it. The first days I was a little nauseous, but the rest of the time I was as healthy as on the land. At night the weather became mild and the sickness lifted off most. The 13th we had warm weather until the 16th, where together with heavy wind seasickness returned. It was like this until the 18th, where most were getting better. But many have stayed sick the whole voyage.

8) The 19th it stayed completely still. The 20th mediocre. The 21st fast. There we saw very big fish in flocks together. The 22nd and 23rd slow. The 24th it was stormy and rained the whole day. The 25th slow. The 26th, which was the first day of Pentecost, it was very nice until 8 o'clock before noon. Then the horizon draped itself in a dark gray color, which translated to the disposition on the ship, and a heavy wind and rain followed. The 28th pretty fast. The 29th very fast and smooth. The 30th slow again. The 31st it was very cold but in the very far distance we saw two big icebergs. June 1st it went pretty fast.

9) The 2nd very cold weather. The 3rd warm and heavy wind from the East. The 4th rainy. The 5th warm but dead calm. The 6th fast and smooth. There we saw again many big fish. The 7th dead calm. The 8th pretty cold and boisterous. The 9th slow. The 10th headwind with rain and foggy weather. In the night on the 9th there were heavy thunderstorms, with heavy thunder and lightning. The 11th pretty cold, also headwind. The 12th pretty fast and nice weather. The 13th warm and dead wind. In the morning we saw a fisher boat, which led us to believe that land was close, which caused great delight.

10) The 14th good wind and rain. Here the lead was cast and 15 Klafter deep (a depth gauge; 1 Klafter: ca 180cm or six feet) sea bottom was found. Sunday morning the 15th we saw to everyone's delight and refreshment land on the right side. In the afternoon a router came our way, who led our way close to New York, called Neuland (new land), where we anchored, because we had to be in quarantine for one day. The 17th it was unloaded on two small towboats, which docked at a pontoon bridge hovering on the water. From there we went to New York on a boat. But because we had no wind the boat went

11) very slow and we would not have reached New York that same night anymore, if the dear brothers Gottlieb Ackermann and F. Heinemann, who were waiting for us in New York, had not come toward us on a steamboat [to all our delight...]. The 18th the boxes were loaded in a big towboat, which left the same night before 5 o'clock. At 7 o'clock on the 18th we went on the big steamboat [Albany] from New York and arrived at 7 o'clock in the morning in Albany. From there we left at 1 o'clock midday with the railroad and arrived at 8 o'clock at night in Utica (Utica), 110 miles. At 2 o'clock in the morning we left there and arrived in Rochester, 187 miles.

12) Friday the 20th at 8 o'clock in the morning we left there and arrived in Buffalo at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, where several loads of dear ours were already waiting for us at the station and

arrived on the same night of June 20th 1844 happy and healthy and cheerful after this long and dangerous journey in Middle Eben-Ezer, to the delight and refreshment of the dear ours.

And because this journey has now been completed,

So be this diario finished with this.

() brackets indicate translator commentary

*[] brackets indicate brackets in the original text
translated as close as possible to the German original transcript*

Church Questionnaire

We would appreciate your replies to the following questions. In the interest of keeping our church viable and meeting the needs of our congregation, please respond. Thank you!

1) Times for church services and Sunday school could be changed. Please check which times would work best for you?

The options for Sunday school are:

- Sunday school before any services
 Sunday school during services
 Sunday school after services
 I do not have children who attend Sunday school

If a church service and Sunday school were held at the same time and in the same building, would you attend the service and send your children to Sunday school?

- Yes
 No
 I do not have children who would attend Sunday school.

What is your preference for church service times? (check all that apply)

- Leave times as are
 8:30 am on Sunday
 10:00 am on Sunday
 7:00pm on Wednesday
 Other times on Sunday
 List times: _____
 Other days or times
 List days and times: _____

2) The tradition of having men and women sit on separate sides of the church

- I would prefer that this remain as is.
 I would prefer that there be no separation.
 It does not matter to me.

3) The German church service (Scripture and hymns in German)

- Should continue unchanged.
 Should be eliminated as need declines.
 Should be discontinued now.
 Does not matter to me.

4) Regarding the testimonies read in church services

- The testimonies should continue unchanged.
 I appreciate when testimonies are paraphrased or clarified by elders.

- I do not think the testimonies are relevant.
- It does not matter to me.

5) If the church would have a contemporary service, I would attend if the following were included (please check all that apply):

- Men and women sitting together
- More modern music
- Testimonies with no changes
- Testimonies with language more like how we speak today
- No testimonies
- No kneeling
- I would NOT attend a contemporary church service

We would like to know your ideas on the following questions

6) How could the Amana Church make current members feel more welcome?

7) How could the Amana Church make visitors feel more welcome?

We would like to know your ideas on the following questions:

8) What do you think are the strengths of the Amana Church?

9) What do you think are the weaknesses of the Amana Church?

Please let us know how old you are. _____

We are looking for people to take part in a focus group about the future of the church. A focus group is a guided discussion where people share their opinions and views. If you would like to participate in the focus groups please return this form to the Administrator's mailbox at the church or mail it to: **Amana Church Society, P.O. Box 103 Middle Amana, IA 52307**. You can also e-mail the church at mchurch@southslope.net and just say you are interested in participating in the focus group and give us your contact information. Thank you for your help!

Name _____

Contact information: phone: _____; email

Please return this survey by May 16th. You can use a self-addressed, stamped envelope or return the survey to the Administrator's mailbox at church.

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Name _____

Contact information: phone: _____; email

Please return this survey by May 16th. You can use a self-addressed, stamped envelope or return the survey to the Administrator's mailbox at church.

Personal Interview Questions

1. What is the difference between speaking English and German to you?
2. When you visited Germany for the first time – did it feel familiar?
3. What is “Germanness” to you?
4. Are there any traditions that you think are German that you have?
5. How often do you speak/read German in a regular week? Has this changed over time?
6. What does “Amana” mean to you?
7. How important is the church for the community?
8. What do you think the future of Amana will be?