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The "Missions-ethnographische Museum" of St Gabriel as an Example for European Mission Museums

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Abstract. – Using the example of the "Missions-ethnographische Museum" in St Gabriel (Mödling, today Maria Enzersdorf, near Vienna) as a case study, this article looks at the phenomenon of European mission museums and argues that the museum in St Gabriel was seen dominantly from a scholarly perspective. This was itself a part of the scholarly orientation of the SVD (Societas Verbi Divini) congregation (Frs. Schmidt, Koppers, Schebesta, etc.). The article thus places its main focus on the network that included the mission museum, the Museum of Ethnology Vienna, and the University of Vienna. [*St Gabriel, mission museum, Father Wilhelm Schmidt SVD, ethnology, Anthropos*]

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Introduction

European mission museums can be described as museums that have been founded by missionary congregations or societies and were (and some still are) situated within their motherhouses (principal house, location of religious superior) or other branches in Europe. These museums show objects from non-European mission fields and deal – explicitly or not – with the topic of Christian mission. They boast a broad variety of characteristics, but most predominantly offer ethnographical exhibits. Mission museums are characterised by their stable locality over years, differing from temporarily installed exhibitions or travelling exhibitions, like, for example, the "Congo busses" (Gustafsson Reinius 2011). Mission museums can also be found in the typical former mission fields, like in Malawi or Mexico. However, this article focuses on mission museums in Europe that are characterised, like the ethnographical museums, by portraying the "Other," the non-European, for a European audience.

European mission museums differ from what are seen as "proper" museums according to common definitions of museums. The most recognised definition for a "proper" museum is constituted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM 2006: 15):

> A museum is a non-profit making permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, the tangible and intangible evidence of people and their environment.

In this article, I will present one of these mission museums, the "Missions-ethnologische Museum" (missing S) in St Gabriel, founded by the Society of the Divine Word (Societas Verbi Divini, abbreviated SVD, est. 1875). This case study is of high interest because – as I will argue – the museum itself is interwoven into the scholarly orientation of the congregation. It was, as was the case with other mission museums, not a place where randomly "exotic" objects from "far away" countries were presented. St Gabriel was not meant to entertain a

public audience; it was not a place for meditation and recreation. Rather, the scholarly aspect was crucial in St Gabriel, as the aspect of research is mentioned in the ICOM criteria above. This orientation can already be found in the exhibition design: in one of the museum's rooms, a wall is completely dedicated to the scholars/SVD fathers W. Schmidt, P. Schebesta, and M. Gusinde. When visiting, the tripartite showcase reminds the viewers of a triptych. In additional to exhibits (bows and arrows) and pictures of the three scholars, a whole collection of the *Anthropos* volumes are on display. To me, this is clearly a unique self-representation as a museum with a scholarly approach. It stresses the importance of scholars like Gusinde, Schebesta, and Schmidt for the museum and for the Society of the Divine Word as a whole.

Taking one step further, this article will also analyse the role the museum played in the network that surrounded St Gabriel. This network included the University of Vienna, the Museum of Ethnology Vienna, and other European mission museums (in Rome, Switzerland, today Poland, etc.). This network was also an expression of the scholarly character of the Societas Verbi Divini. The main personalities in this regard were the SVD fathers Wilhelm Schmidt, Wilhelm Koppers, Johannes Thauren, Martin Gusinde, Paul Schebesta, Georg Höltker, Theodor Bröring, and Fridolin Zimmermann.

Due to the space constraint, this article does not cover the entire history of the museum beginning from its founding around the turn of the century to the closure in 2005. Rather, it offers a glimpse on the phenomenon of European mission museums by focussing on some elements out of around 100 years of the museum's existence.

The Mission House of St Gabriel in Maria Enzersdorf

Arnold Janssen, the founder of the SVD, had early plans to establish a mission seminary within the borders of the Austrian empire. In 1888, the first construction work on the grounds started. The location was outside of Vienna but well located with regard to the train connections to Vienna. St Gabriel grew into a very large building complex, with an impressive church, agriculture, and different workshops. The ongoing enlargement of the house was due to the growing number of inhabitants. At its peak in 1925, it had 650 inhabitants. St Gabriel was very active in promoting the mission idea in Austria. Garden parties (*Missionsfeste*) for the general public, pilgrimages and popular missions, academic mission congresses, and spiritual retreats were offered for this goal.

Whilst the First World War resulted in a great loss of students, the Second World War was even more disastrous. After the so-called "*Anschluss*" of Austria in 1938, foreign members and students were in danger; two priests were immediately arrested. In 1941, when St Gabriel was confiscated by the *Gestapo* (Secret State Police) the majority of the SVD members were forced to leave their home. Finally, in 1945, St Gabriel was freed by the Russian army. The post-war years seemed to bring a second prime to St Gabriel, which ended with a decline in the numbers of new members from the 1960s onwards (Jochum 1989c: 17–33). Today, a small group of international SVD members is living in St Gabriel.

General Focus on Higher Education and Science in St Gabriel

As Louis Luzbetak, another SVD anthropologist and disciple of Schmidt writes, this missionary society is specialised in scholarly research:

> … Arnold Janssen's missionaries, early in the history, began to react against this common attitude in a rather novel manner: they introduced a somewhat revolutionary dimension into the meaning of mission – *the scientific study of humankind as an integral part of the missionary task itself* (Luzbetak 1994: 475; emphasis original).

St. Gabriel was part of this broad scholarly interest. The mission house was planned to train young members in craftsmanship (brothers) and others in higher theological education (fathers) at the theological academy (Theologische Hochschule St. Gabriel). The fathers were introduced to the subject of Missiology. Fr. Johannes Thauren SVD (1892–1954) was a disciple of Joseph Schmidlin, who held the first chair of Catholic Missiology in Germany (in Münster) (for more see Vanoni 1989). Thauren taught Missiology in St Gabriel from 1926 onwards. After his habilitation, he became a lecturer for Missiology at the Faculty of Catholic Theology in Vienna. With the "*Anschluss*" in 1938, Thauren was expelled from the university, but he returned after the war. In 1947, he achieved professorship for Missiology, two years later for Religious Studies as well (Jochum 1989b; Müller 1998). The education in St Gabriel was on a high level, because in some cases – Thauren is only one example – the same profes-

sors taught in St Gabriel and at the University of Vienna.

Apart from the instructors, the academy for theology in St Gabriel was well-equipped in terms of learning material. From its beginning, the complex in Maria Enzersdorf included a library, covering not only theological issues but arts, natural history, and technology as well. The biggest sections were Missiology and the library of the *Anthropos* institute, specialised in Linguistics and Ethnology.[1] With this reference, we leave behind the general history of this mission house and turn our attention towards the subject – and Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954) – that St Gabriel was famous for.

Father Wilhelm Schmidt and the Scholarly Orientation of the SVD

Here I will not present a general overview of the life of this ambivalent personality. A number of studies, ranging from works idealising Schmidt to very critical studies, are available.[2] This article also does not deal with Schmidt's work on the so called "Urmonotheismus" and "Kulturkreislehre," which became a principle reference text for many others in the history of anthropology (e. g., Petermann 2004). What is of interest for this article is his responsibility for the scholarly orientation of the SVD and his connection to the mission museum in St Gabriel.

Schmidt, who was trained as a SVD-"intern" in Steyl, later studied Linguistics and Islamic Theology at the Oriental Institute of the University of Berlin between 1893 and 1895 (Luzbetak 1998).[3] In his *curriculum vitae*, Schmidt not only mentions the time in Berlin but also university studies in Vienna (Henninger 1956: 30). Having finished his studies, he was ordered to teach at St Gabriel, offering courses in ancient Greek, Hebrew, and Rhetorics. His scholarly success was shaped by developments he did not have any influence over: New Guinea, then in parts belonging to Germany, was allocated to the congregation as a mission field (Alt 1996; Steffen 1995: 173–265) and this awakened Schmidt's interest. His studies on (for Western scholars) "new" languages did not linger on this mission field, but spread to Polynesian, Melanesian, and African languages as well. Soon his comparative studies were recognised in the academic communities in Vienna, in the Royal Academy of Sciences, and the Viennese Anthropological Society (Waldenfels 1997: 187). The opinion that Schmidt became an ethnologist via the "detour" of linguistics is shared by many authors. Luzbetak calls this "a steadily widening interest from purely linguistic issues to cultural and religio-historical problems" (1994: 476).

From 1902 onwards, Schmidt pursued the idea to found a journal that would eradicate a deficiency. He detected this deficiency in the ignorance by the academic communities. According to Schmidt, the missionaries' ethnological and linguistic studies and articles about "their" peoples' culture and language were mostly ignored.

> They [European scholars], along with the missionaries' language recordings, did not know what to do with these treasures. They ignored them entirely or misused them for something that Bastian called rightly a sort of "alchemy" (Schmidt 1906: 154; my translation).[4]

When missionaries' studies were acknowledged by secular scholars, some accepted them, whereas other scholars

> … certainly also took all the credit and acknowledgment for themselves, without even mentioning the humble

1 For more on this library see Andreas Bsteh (1989a). Although Bsteh presents this library in a very optimistic manner ("on its way into the second century of its existence"), it turned out to be the opposite. With the shrinking numbers of students, the library was finally transferred to St Augustin in Germany. While I was doing research in St Gabriel, I was allowed to work in the former reading room for journals. Sitting there, surrounded by empty bookshelves, was a rather depressing experience.

2 For more see Conte (1987, 2004); Robertson (1993); Marchand (2003); Mischek (2008); and Mende (2011).

3 Some authors differ in their interpretation on the "academic" side of his education. Waldenfels (1997: 187) calls Schmidt an autodidact, Luzbetak calls him a "self-taught scholar … rather than the product of formal and systematic university training in a well-defined discipline." (1994: 476). But both mention not only his training in Steyl but also his university time in Berlin, which in my opinion characterises Schmidt as far from being an autodidact. What is correct though is the fact that he did not gain himself an academic title. According to Brandewie, it was part of Janssen's tactics to withdraw SVD members shortly before they would have gained academic titles in order to not let them become too prideful of themselves (1990: 37). Autodidact or not, Schmidt made indeed a career as an academic and earned several honorary doctorates later on.

4 Original text: "Sie [die europäische Gelehrtenwelt] wußte, gerade wie auch mit den sprachlichen Aufnahmen der Missionare, so auch mit diesen Schätzen nichts anzufangen; sie ließ sie entweder ganz unbeachtet oder trieb mit ihnen das, was Bastian allerdings mit Recht eine Art 'Alchemie' nennen kann."

missionary, to whom they owe much, maybe all" (Schmidt 1981: 182; my translation).[5]

According to Karl Rivinius, members of the SVD who were in contact with Schmidt via letters and were reporting about their situation in Togo, China, or New Guinea, triggered Schmidt's idea for the journal. He planned a journal with high academic standards, with co-workers and contributors from Catholic missionary orders, who worked *in situ*. The journal was planned to encourage and support these missionaries in their scholarly work, make the publication of articles possible and use their expertise and knowledge and transfer it back to Europe (Rivinius 1981: 43–48). It was not only meant to support the missionaries in their research, but reading the contributions of other missionaries was also seen as being helpful to them in their efforts to evangelise (Piepke 2011: 422). This journal would bear the name *Anthropos* and is still active; otherwise, you would not be able to read this very article.

The first volume of *Anthropos – International Review of Ethnology and Linguistics* was finally printed in 1906. Today, *Anthropology* replaces *Ethnology*. The success of this journal – there were positive reviews even by anticlerical scientists – lead to the founding of the Anthropos Institute in 1931. The institute was considered necessary to support and strengthen the structures for publishing this journal (Piepke 2011: 427f.).

With regard to the discussion about the complexity and intensity of collaboration between early anthropologists or linguists and missionaries of diverse denominations,[6] it should be stressed here that, as Tomalin says, "the dividing line between missionaries and anthropologists during the late nineteenth century was extremely indistinct" (2009: 836). The SVD order with its university trained scholars, its university professors, and last but not least the *Anthropos* journal and Institute, shows that the dividing line was in some cases not just indistinct, but rather, non-existing, especially when some historians of the field of anthropology, like Douglas Cole, define scholars, the counterpart of missionaries, as "those who held university positions" (Cole 1973 cited in Higham 2003: 532).

Father Schmidt's style of work was not what could be expected from a typical anthropologist. He never did fieldwork, instead he was a perfect example of an "armchair ethnographer at the top of the missionary feeding chain" (Marchand 2003: 302). His CV lists several academic lectures in Europe and the USA (including Princeton, Philadelphia, Berkeley, Chicago, and Boston). Apart from that, he made one trip to Asia where he gave lectures in Tokyo, Seoul, Peking, Tianjin, Nanking, Shanghai, and Manila (Henninger 1956: 30ff.). So, he had been to countries where European missionaries including the SVD had been active, but the reason for the trips was giving lectures and not conducting field studies and collecting data. Instead, he ordered missionaries to send him material back to St Gabriel, where he would work with it. Through his own teaching at St Gabriel and, as mentioned above through *Anthropos*, he tried to encourage missionaries in the field to do anthropological and linguistic research (Luzbetak 1994: 477). Additionally, he organised field trips for some of his students, who he sent abroad strategically according to his own scholarly interests. For these expeditions, including the famous expeditions to Tierra del Fuego by another important SVD anthropologist, Fr. Martin Gusinde, he used all his enthusiasm and influence (Bornemann 1982: 165–177). In his CV, Schmidt mentioned the expeditions he had organised, which makes it plausible that he saw them as an excuse for the lack of own fieldwork. Marchand stresses that Schmidt was criticised for this deficiency, but "he worked hard to acquire funding for his students to go to the field" (2003: 304).

Schmidt's reputation made Pope Pius XI ask him to arrange a huge exhibition about the Catholic missions worldwide in Rome for the Holy Year 1925 (Alt 1990: 320). The idea behind this plan was simple. Because missionaries were located all over the world, they could equip a marvellous exhibition by just sending objects from their mission fields to Rome. The project occupied much of Schmidt's time from 1923 onwards. To represent the SVD congregation Schmidt chose objects from the already established mission museums in Europe: St Gabriel of course, Steyl in the Netherlands, St Wendel in Germany, and Heiligkreuz/Holy Cross in present-day Poland (Bornemann 1982: 184). Out of this temporary exhibition grew the Pontificio Museo Missionario-Etnologico Lateranense. Its foundation was again handed over to Schmidt and he was named its director in 1927 (Henninger 1956: 31).

Schmidt's life changed dramatically with the "*Anschluss*" of Austria to Germany on March 12, 1938. Already on the following day, SA-troops

5 Original text: "…freilich auch ruhig für sich einsteckten, was sie an Ehre und Anerkennung ernteten, ohne des [sic] bescheidenen Missionars [sic] auch nur zu erwähnen, dem sie so viel, vielleicht alles verdankten."

6 For more see Tomalin (2009); Burton and Burton (2007); Higham (2003).

(*Sturmabteilung*) raided his office and placed him "only" under house arrest, although some sources (e. g., Petermann 2004: 599) claim that he was one of the SVD-members from St Gabriel who were arrested. Pope Pius XI intervened and Schmidt fled to Rome and later to Switzerland. He settled down in the Catholic stronghold of Fribourg. With him and his close colleague Fr. Wilhelm Koppers SVD, he brought the precious library of the Anthropos Institute to Switzerland. The institute took up its work in their new location near Fribourg (Jochum 1989a: 55). At seventy years of age, he established the Chair for Ethnology at the University of Fribourg and taught as a professor there. Until recently this chair has been held continuously by a member of the SVD; Gingrich calls it an "important academic outpost" by the SVD until the 1980s (Gingrich 2005: 139; Université de Fribourg 2014). Schmidt also established a small ethnographical museum at this university, equipped with objects which Fr. Koppers had brought from India and Fr. Höltker from New Guinea (Bornemann 1982: 296). His colleague Fr. Koppers returned to Vienna right after the Second World War to resume teaching at the university, while Schmidt stayed in Fribourg. Because of his age, he could not be called back by the University of Vienna. Still, in 1948 he gave guest lectures in Vienna, but the same year, at the age of eighty years, he finally laid down all his university duties (Henninger 1956: 30ff.). Father Schmidt died in 1954 and his final resting place became St Gabriel (Jochum 1989a: 55).

The "Missions-ethnographische Museum" in St Gabriel

Foundation

We now turn to the history of St Gabriel's mission museum, reconstructing it based on primary sources and official publications. The starting point is the founding year of the museum, but surprisingly it is not possible for a precise year to be identified. In general, primary sources about the whole complex of St Gabriel, the earliest mention of a museum is in the chronicles of 1900 and 1901 (StG 1900, 1901). In 1910/12 a "Festschrift" (commemorative publication) mentions mission museums (in the plural) "in which various strange and interesting collections of objects from the peoples among whom the St Gabriel missionaries work are stored and can be visited" (StG 1910/1912; my translation).[7] Also a precise founding date cannot be tracked down in primary sources that deal explicitly with the museum. Here we find dates ranging from 1898 (StG 1935), to "around 1906" (StG 1999), to "around 1910" (StG 2000). The last two sources are both clearly given under the affirmation of Andreas Bsteh SVD, then director of the museum. The same is true for the current website of the SVD community. A part of a portrait of the museum in the "Festschrift" celebrating 100 years of St Gabriel's existence can be found there. Bsteh states there that "around 1900 the first objects, coming especially from China and Oceania, were assembled" (1989b: 111; 2014; my translation).[8] However, a later source speaks of a notebook with the title "Register of Deliveries to and from the Ethnographical Museum in St Gabriel since 14.11.1902" (StG 1940a; my translation).[9] At least from 1902 onwards, the incoming and outgoing objects on St Gabriel were documented.

In the published literature, no precise date can be found either. In a book series about Austrian museums, Bsteh states that the beginning of the museum was the establishing of an ethnological collection, starting around 1909 (1980: 23). Another SVD historian, Josef Alt, writes that the rector of St Gabriel mentions in his report to the general superior a museum as early as 1901, discussing how much space this museum should receive in future (Alt 1990: 94).

It is far from unusual that there is uncertainty regarding the founding date of the mission museum in St Gabriel. Another example is the mission museum of the Franciscans in Werl (Germany), today the "Forum der Völker – Völkerkundliches Museum der Franziskaner in Werl," that was founded between 1909 and 1913 (Kellerhoff 1989: 7). Moreover, the fact of not having an exact founding date, rather a period of time, is not exclusive to mission museums, which were founded at the beginning of the 20th century. Mission museums founded in the last 20 to 30 years also did not keep detailed records of these processes. An example is the new mission museum in the mis-

7 Original text: "… in denen die verschiedensten merkwürdigen und interessanten Sammlungen von Gegenständen von jenen Völkern, bei denen St. Gabrieler Missionäre wirken, untergebracht sind und besichtigt werden können."

8 Original text: "Um 1900 stellte man die ersten Gegenstände, die vor allem aus China und Ozeanien gekommen waren, zusammen."

9 Original text: "Verzeichnis der auf [sic] das ethnogr. Museum in St. Gabriel angekommene und aus demselben abgegangenen Sendungen seit 14.11.1902."

sion house "Maria Sorg," near Salzburg, founded by the Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver (museum visited on April 24, 2014, conversation with Sister Paula). It is important to stress that this is under no circumstances to be understood as a deficit. Quite the contrary, it can be seen as a characteristic of mission museums. In general, mission museums were not seen by their congregations as very important institutions. They were appreciated as a kind of an additional feature, not as a necessity for the greater goal, the mission. So having accurate documentation about events in the museums, about their founding and maintenance was not regarded as absolutely necessary. This explains why in retrospect it is not possible, even for insiders like Andreas Bsteh, to establish the exact date of the founding.

Intention and Scholarly Orientation

Although it is not possible to set a precise date for the founding of the mission museum in St Gabriel, rather than establishing a period from between 1898 and 1910, we can look at these early years in order to answer further questions, such as what was the reason for the establishment of the museum? Even if the sources and literature differ on the foundation date, some give reason for the establishment itself. As a first step, we can look at the official reasons. At this point here, the threads of Fr. Schmidt's work and the museum in St Gabriel come together. The above-mentioned report from 1901 not only tells about the growth of the museum, but also states that "things" (*Sachen*) have been sent from the mission fields at Schmidt's instigation (Alt 1990: 94). His call must have been very effective because two years later, the rector of St Gabriel notes that Fr. Schmidt is very busy with "moving the museum" (Alt 1990: 113). Alt sees Schmidt as the person behind the initiative for the museum and so do all the other reports (described above) about the museum, which mention a single person as the founding figure. Also Jochum (1989a: 54) takes it for granted that Schmidt founded the "Missions-ethnographische Museum." In one of the museum histories, Andreas Bsteh even starts with Schmidt as the most important person in the course of the museum's existence (1980: 1). However, there are also divergent voices. Fritz Bornemann SVD not only specifies an alternative date for the establishment of the museum – 1899 – in his portrait about Fr. Schmidt, he also contradicts the whole narration about Schmidt as the founder of the mission museum. He states that Schmidt took over the already existing museum of St Gabriel and re-arranged it (Bornemann 1982: 164).

It is impossible to solve the question whether Schmidt was or was not the founder of the museum by consulting an easily accessible source by Schmidt himself. Fr. Schmidt does not mention the mission museum in his CV (Henninger 1956: 14–16), which might imply that either he did not see himself as the founder of the museum or, and this is more likely to be the case, he did not see the museum in St Gabriel as important enough to be mentioned in this context. However, exhibition and museum about the same topic in the Lateran was prominent enough for him to be mentioned in his CV. He also published about this – more famous – museum in Rome (Schmidt 1926).

Of course, it would have been interesting to find a conclusive solution concerning the position of the museum's founding figure, but even without this certainty we can approach the question of the motives behind the founding of the museum. Fr. Schmidt was the prominent figure in this process anyway, his retrospective naming as the founding person is more important for our analysis than the question of whether he would have claimed the museum in St Gabriel as his *opus*. It seems natural that authors who name Schmidt as the founder want to attribute prestige to the museum. Having a famous scholar as a founding person simply seems to be more attractive.

Bsteh names the founding of this "ethnological collections" by Schmidt because he urged his confrères first to send reports and observations from the mission fields and, in a second step, to send objects which were particularly interesting and representative for the culture and religion where these missionaries had been stationed (1980: 1f.).

> The collection should, on the one hand, serve the scientific interest about the diverse cultural values of human kind as well as a historical documentation of the [mission] fields around the globe where members of the mission house work. But, on the other hand, it should primarily present the worldwide activity of St Gabriel missionaries to the numerous visitors of the mission house and awaken public interest in the world's differentiated concerns and problems, especially in the countries of the so-called third world (Bsteh 1980: 2; my translation).[10]

10 Original text: "Die Sammlung sollte einerseits dem wissenschaftlichen Interesse an den so verschiedenartigen Kulturwerten der Menschheit ebenso dienen wie einer historischen Dokumentation des Aufgabebereiches der Mitglieder des Missionshauses in aller Welt. Auf der anderen Seite sollte sie aber vor allem auch den zahlreichen Besuchern

Here Bsteh gives important evidence for my claim of a particularly scholarly orientation of this mission museum when he names the first function of the museum as "the scholarly interest," secondly, the documentation of where the SVD members are active, and, lastly, the public presentation of the missionary activities and raising awareness for problems and needs of the global South. So, according to Bsteh, the mission museum was a clear result of developments that had their beginnings in St Gabriel, not in the mission fields. Second, it was a development from written reports to material objects. Third, the sending of objects was a planned action, not a shipping of randomly collected objects; not a gathering of objects returning missionaries brought anyway, as other examples of mission museums could be described. As the above-cited report of the rector of St Gabriel might suggest, contrary to this planned actions for a non-expert, this indeed could have provoked the impression of random "things" being sent. However, Bsteh and other authors do not allow us to believe that the beginning of the museum followed anything other than a strict scholarly plan. With a first step consisting of reports about the new cultures they encountered, it would only be logical that, as a second step, the objects missionaries sent to St Gabriel would have been in connection to these ethnological observations in the various mission fields.

Despite Rivinius' reference to Bsteh's description of the museum, in his characterisation he goes several steps further than his confrère Bsteh. He portrays the museum in St Gabriel as proof of Schmidt's interest in ethnology and writes about a

> collection of ethnological objects for demonstration and research in St Gabriel, which he [Schmidt] established around the turn of the century. It was primarily intended to serve as illustrative material for teaching. Over time, the collection developed to an ethnological museum with professionally arranged exhibits, … (Rivinius 1981: 44; my translation).[11]

Here the intention for the museum is portrayed as a purely scholarly one: it was a collection of objects for the sole purpose of studying (the scholars within the congregation) and teaching (the students in St Gabriel). Only later, a museum, which was open to the public evolved from this collection, used for scholarly purposes.

Despite Bsteh's and Rivinius' strong underlining of a scholarly interest, Bornemann again presents another view. According to him, missionaries sent objects from China, Togo, and New Guinea out of thankfulness for financial support (1982: 164). How does this fit together? Bornemann argues that Schmidt only took over an existing (though small) museum whose objects were sent as a material symbol for the missionaries' thankfulness. As he presents no further argument for his version, we have to remain sceptical. However, it appears likely that such a gathering of objects sent from the missionaries existed even before Schmidt's interest in linguistic and ethnographic studies arose and that he simply wanted to combine these existing objects with his scholarly interests. This combination and rearrangement could have ended in the request to missionaries to send more objects. This, of course, remains speculative, but the presence of objects before the "official" founding by Schmidt is of less concern. The important fact for my argument is the scholarly orientation of the mission museum when it was *properly* arranged by university-trained missionaries. That there was a small collection before that (which sounds, according to Bornemann, like a collection of uncoordinated gifts from missionaries), or that the request to send objects (next to raw data) was the beginning of the museum, does not have much bearing on the primary arguments of this article. In any case, it was Fr. Schmidt who was (and is) presented as the defining person, and it was his scholarly interest and an educational aim too that built the background of the founding period.

We must not forget that this period is parallel to Schmidt's engagement to found the *Anthropos* journal. Research has been done on this topic, and as detailed sources for the early period of the museum are rare, it is necessary to search for perceptions towards the *Anthropos* journal. In my view, there must have been similar approaches towards the museum and the journal. In a letter to Georg von Hertling, co-founder and first president of the Görres-Society, Schmidt writes about the *Katholische Mission*, a journal by Jesuit missionaries, in which "missionaries write, often quickly and hastily, with the sole intention of arousing

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des Missionshaues anschaulich die weltweite Tätigkeit der Missionare von St. Gabriel vor Augen führen und das Interesse der Öffentlichkeit an den differenzierten Anliegen und Problemen der Welt, insbesondere der Länder der sogenannte Dritten Welt, wecken."

11 Original text: "… Sammlung ethnologischer Demonstrations- und Studienobjekte in St. Gabriel, die er [Schmidt] um die Jahrhundertwende einrichtete. Sie sollte hauptsächlich als geeignetes Anschauungsmaterial für den Unterricht dienen. Mit der Zeit entwickelte sich die Kollektion zu einem ethnologischen Museum mit fachkundig aufgestellten Exponaten, …"

interest and support for their missionary work" (Rivinius 1981: 88; my translation).[12] This is the clear opposite of Schmidt's intentions with *Anthropos* and it can be argued that in a similar way he would have liked the mission museum in St Gabriel to be intended for an educational, scholarly goal, not for raising interest and support for missionary activities in the field. The *Anthropos* journal and the museum can be seen as parallel media, both supporting each other in a way depending on each other and sharing a common goal. They both had to share the criticism. As Joachim Piepke SVD clearly expresses, Schmidt's passionate work for the journal was highly controversial within the congregation: the significance and purpose of a scholarly journal by the SVD was not apparent to all members of the congregation. Criticism increased after the death of founder Arnold Janssen in 1909. Missionaries should, it was expressed, evangelise (be "souls saving apostles") and not collect data for linguistic and ethnological studies (Piepke 2011: 420f.). Contrary to the statement by Luzbetak above, the cases of the journal – and the mission museum – show that the scholarly engagement by the SVD members was not universally accepted as an integral part of the congregation. Not only the immediate aspects of their work were disputed – like external visitors to the *Anthropos* library in St Gabriel, the need for financial means and for space inside the mission house for their employees – it was also the more cosmopolitan and unbounded lifestyle of the so-called "*Anthropos* fathers," that evoked criticism (Alt 1990: 267).

As *Anthropos* had struggled to be respected, the museum seemed to do so too: letters from the 1960s onwards show that those who were responsible (or made themselves responsible) for the museum also struggled to get the necessary means to renovate and maintain it. Anton Vorbichler SVD, for example, writes in 1962 that the mission museum in St Gabriel is in possession of precious collections,

> that great museums around the globe are jealous of. Sadly, these objects are at the moment displayed like in a depot. This results, on the one hand, in ongoing damage to the partly irretrievable cultural products, on the other hand, it prevents the [objects'] full educational and pedagogical appeal (StG 1962: 1; my translation).[13]

Another request to the principals, four years later, states:

> After the move of the mission museum to neighbouring rooms and in the absence of plans for a new building, it would be appropriate that the precious collections owned by this [mission] house (but that are known only to a few) are accessible to the visitors and confrères (StG 1966: 1; my translation).[14]

Both authors stress the high value of the objects in the museum and express their disapproval about a missing appreciation within the congregation. In the 1970s, requests to the principals of St Gabriel show that the museum was in need of costly renovation work, mainly due to high humidity within the museum (StG n. d.; StG 1971). These requests and letters clearly show how much persuasion on behalf of the collections and the museum was necessary.

After this close view on the intentions and motivations around the founding period of the museum and later, we now take a look at the networks that were built around St Gabriel, first, with the University of Vienna, and then with the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna. This network shows further aspects of the scholarly orientation of the museum.

Networking with the University of Vienna and Museum of Ethnology, Vienna

The Connection to the University of Vienna

As already mentioned, Fr. Johannes Thauren was the the link between St Gabriel and the Faculty of Catholic Theology in Vienna. Most descriptions of Thauren and obituaries on him stress his academic teaching and his work for Missiology in Austria (Beckmann 1954; Müller 1998). In addition, Alfons Jochum SVD mentions his organisation of an exhibition in 1932 by "all missionary orders" (probably all active Catholic missionary orders in Austria) in Mariazell, a famous site of pilgrimage in Austria. This exhibition is said to have been

12 Original text: "[…] Missionare aber auch nur zu dem Zweck schreiben, oft schnell und flüchtig, um Interesse und Unterstützung für ihre Missionstätigkeit zu erwecken."

13 Original text: "… um die uns die grossen [sic] Museen der Welt beneiden. Leider sind dies Gegenstände augenblicklich in einer Weise magazinsmässig aufgestellt, welche einerseits ein fortschreitendes Beschädigen dieser zum Teil unwiederbringlichen Kulturzeugen notwendigerweise zur Folge hat, andererseits aber die volle bildende und erzieherische Wirkung auf den Beschauer verhindert."

14 Original text: "Nachdem das Missionsmuseum in den angrenzenden Räumlichkeiten untergebracht wurde und ein Neubau nicht geplant ist, wäre es angebracht, die wertvollen Sammlungen, die das Haus besitzt (um die leider die wenigsten wissen), hier Besuchern und Mitbrüdern zugänglich zu machen."

visited by 22,000 people (1989b: 50). Additionally, and despite the lack of other museological involvements mentioned in his biographies, Fr. Thauren was one of the main figures for the "Missions-ethnographische Museum" in St Gabriel. Bsteh refers to him as the museum's principal in the 1930s (1980: 2). His name comes up in several sources I found, beginning from the early 1930s onwards. For example, in a letter from the SVD mission house Heiligkreuz, Neisse (today Poland), Thauren was asked, which exhibits – the bigger the better! – the mission museum St Gabriel could deliver to their mission museum in Heiligkreuz (StG 1933). Multiple examples in the primary sources indicate that Thauren – during his teaching as university professor – was at the same time involved in the work in the mission museum.

Next to Thauren as someone who was working in parallel at the Faculty for Theology, Vienna, and the museum in St Gabriel, it was Schmidt who linked the SVD to the field of Anthropology at the University of Vienna, and the circle of scholars in Vienna interested in Anthropology, including, Schmidt joined this society in 1898, gave lectures, and published in their journal. As Fatouretchi states, he used this society as a platform for his own (scholarly) goals (2009: 107–109; for the greater Viennese context of this society, see Feest 1995 and Ranzmaier 2013).

In 1909, Schmidt encouraged the establishment of a chair in Ethnology, as he wrote an article about this subject (Schmidt 1909 cited in Brandewie 1990: 170). The Chair for Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of Vienna was founded in 1912 (Institut für Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie 2014). In 1920, Schmidt applied for the position of a *Privatdozent* (almost equivalent to an Assistant Professor), although having no doctorate as discussed earlier. In 1921, the responsible committee accepted and Fr. Schmidt started teaching at the Faculty of Philosophy (Brandewie 1990: 169f). Brandewie asks why Schmidt set great value upon this position at the university. The reason is likely to be found in the great prestige that came with academic titles – especially in Austria: "A position at the University would also give him, and, therefore, his work and the *Anthropos* journal, recognition and stature" (Brandewie 1990: 170). After this step in his career, he seems to have become more influential. It was Schmidt who pushed for the separation of Anthropology and Ethnology – and he was successful. In 1929, the chair for Anthropology and Ethnology was split and two institutes were founded: one for (Physical) Anthropology and one for Ethnography. The first scholar to chair the latter was not himself though, but his closest co-worker Fr. Wilhelm Koppers SVD (Institut für Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie 2014), who had already been a *Dozent* for General Ethnology (*Allgemeine Völkerkunde*) from 1924 on (Alt 1990: 393).

The situation of the close connection between St Gabriel and the university – in terms of professors and students – changed in 1938. As Linimayr writes, the National Socialists searched for supporters of Schmidt's *Kulturkreislehre* and its representatives at the University of Vienna, because being in favour of this school was seen as a synonym for antagonism against National Socialism. So in the course of the purge at the universities by the new regime, that mainly targeted Jewish (or those categorised as Jewish) and/or socialist and communist employees and students, the fathers Koppers and Schmidt lost their *venia legendi* (1994: 51). Koppers never hid his rejection of the National Socialist movement before 1938 and, therefore, was seen as "anti-German" and that was intolerable after the "*Anschluss*" (Linimayr 1994: 54f.).

The expulsion of Koppers and Schmidt from the university is of special interest: it is remarkable that a SVD member was chairperson of an institute at a philosophical faculty, but even more so, it is noteworthy to stress the fact that Koppers himself – that is, the congregation – furnished his office at the university. Koppers' expulsion, therefore, caused an empty office, when Viktor Christian (a then illegal party member of the National Socialists since 1933) succeeded Koppers in office. A missionary society that furnishes an office at a state university has to be seen as more than just a marginal note; also when keeping in mind that from 1933/34 onwards a Catholic authoritarian dictatorship (*Ständestaat* or Austro-fascism) was ruling in Austria.[15]

Furthermore, after being expelled, Koppers took with him his own literature and the whole Anthropos library. Therefore, the new "strong men" in the institute, and with them also the remaining students, were left with only a tenth of the former literature. Yet, for several years, the university professors and the *Gestapo* argued about the possession of the meagre remaining literature from the former Anthropos library. Whereas Linimayr provides archival documents for these events at the

15 The relation between St Gabriel (above all the monarchist Schmidt) and the *Ständestaat* still needs further research. For more about the situation during these years at the University of Vienna see Taschwer (2015).

university, sources are missing for solving the question on how the new state enemies Schmidt and Koppers managed to bring this number of books out of the country and into Switzerland when they left (1994: 148f.). Brandewie proposes that "not all of the officials in Austria were Nazis" and that therefore some customs officials who knew St Gabriel helped to bring these books abroad (Brandewie 1990: 272).

This short sequence shows how dominant the SVD was in the Institute of Anthropology in Vienna, even enabling it to study this subject in the first place, with the offering of nine tenth of the library stock. The period between the "*Anschluss*" and the downfall of the Nazi regime did not lead to an immediate end of this connection between St Gabriel and the Ethnology in Vienna. After the war, Koppers was called back and restarted teaching in late 1945. As already mentioned, Schmidt did not return to Austria, but despite his age, he gave guest lectures in Vienna (Linimayr 1994: 179). However, the period between 1945 and around 1960 is seen as the final stage of the *Wiener Schule* (Institut für Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie 2014) and the end of the close connection between St Gabriel and this institute at the University of Vienna.

The Connection to the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna

"Loans from the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna, are located in this display case"[16] was still written on a sign in the mission museum when I visited it after its closure in 2005. However, at this time, there were no longer any exhibits from the Museum of Ethnology. I was informed by the secretary that after the closure the exhibits were naturally given back to Vienna. These missing objects point to the close connection between St Gabriel and the Museum of Ethnology which is mainly, but not exclusively, based on the exchange of objects. Interestingly, this exchange can be dated to November 14, 1902 (StG 1940b), a time when the Museum of Ethnology did not even exist as independently as it was much later. So it is necessary to have a look at this museum as well: its origin trace back to the Habsburg family's interest in science. In 1748, Emperor Franz I had founded the *königliche Hofnaturalienkabinett*, which was transformed in 1876 by Emperor Franz Joseph I into the *k.k. Naturhistorische Hof-Museum* (Imperial Royal Museum of Natural History). In this context of natural history, an independent department was dedicated to Anthropology and Ethnology (Feest 1978: 4; Mylius 1959: 2). Of importance for the development of the collections was – besides the objects from Franz Ferdinand, which he collected during his round-the-world trip in 1892/3 – the acquisition of parts of the Cook Collection (210 accession numbers) (Weltmuseum Wien 2015). Here it should be remembered that Austria – with the short exception of a colonial attempt on the Nicobar Islands in the Gulf of Bengal (Feest 1995: 118) – did not, neither as a monarchy nor after 1918, possess stable overseas colonies, a fact that was very relevant for the development of ethnographical museums (and other forms of academic Ethnology) in colonial nations like France, Belgium, or Germany (Marchand 2003: 284f.). However, in Vienna, precious ethnographic objects from different collectors and collections were gathered and presented in a natural history context. This was the situation when Fr. Schmidt began his involvement with St Gabriel and the museum in Vienna. In 1910, Schmidt delivered a speech in the Austrian *Leo-Gesellschaft*, a society that, like the *Görres-Gesellschaft* in Germany, was fostering science grounded in Catholic tradition and principles and had already helped Schmidt with financing the *Anthropos* journal (Rivinius 2005: 10f.). In this speech, he called for the establishment of a "Museum of Cultural History" in Vienna, next to the prominent Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Fine Arts; the ethnographical collections in the Museum of Natural History should have had a more suitable and more appreciative display (Bornemann 1982: 164). Similar to the founding process of the ethnological institute at the University of Vienna, Schmidt takes a stand on this matter in public. However, Schmidt was far from being a pioneer on this issue. Already in 1899, the then Natural History Museum's director considered a separation of the ethnographic department from the natural history context (Feest 1980: 25; cited in Plankensteiner 2003: 3). Also, Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria-Este, is said to have been working in favour of an independent *Anthroplogisches Hof-Museum* before his assassination in 1914, as was the museum's own head of the ethnographical department, Franz Heger. However, everything was delayed after World War I. In the new-born Austrian Republic after the war, the ministry for education decided finally in favour of an independent Museum of Ethnology in the so-called *Neuen Hofburg*, which is located within a stone's throw of the Museum of

16 Original text: "In dieser Vitrine befinden sich Leihgaben des Völkerkundemuseums in Wien."

Natural History. The first moves towards this new premise were undertaken in 1925. In the course of the founding of this new museum, a special "moving-committee" was established where Fr. Schmidt was called in – alongside the museum's upper management (Plankensteiner 2003: 3–6). This underlines the prominent role Schmidt had in the scholarly circles in Vienna at this time. In the course of the museum's planning and opening (in 1928,) there was a debate about "art or ethnology," a topic I cannot go into in more depth in this article. However, I note that the fathers Schmidt and Koppers were also players in this debate, and the correspondence between the Viennese museum's director and Schmidt builds an important source for research about this debate (see, for example, the article by Plankensteiner 2003).

Additionally, at least three fathers from St Gabriel were involved in the practical moving of the museum's collection to the new building before 1928: Fr. Höltker, Fr. Zimmermann, and Fr. Bröring (Plankensteiner 2003: 6). The first, Georg Höltker SVD (1895–1976), studied Anthropology at the universities in Berlin and Vienna, and got a PhD from the university in Vienna, where he also was giving lectures from 1935 onwards. He was also the Editor-in-Chief of the *Anthropos* journal and also worked in the mission museum in the Lateran, Rome, for a short period of time (today, the Vatican Ethnological Museum). So working at the Ethnographical Museum Vienna, teaching at the Institute of Ethnology in Vienna and working for the *Anthropos* journal was obviously all intertwined. In addition to his affiliation with the museum in Vienna, Fr. Höltker can be characterised as a good example of a scholar from the SVD (like Schmidt, of course). He not only had the necessary education but also did fieldwork, for example, in the Philippines and in New Guinea, and his career included teaching at the universities of Fribourg and Basel when he followed Schmidt and the Anthropos Institute to Switzerland (Kokot 2012). Höltker is also a good example when it comes to deconstructing the group of SVD anthropologists as a homogenous group of scholars that followed Schmidt in blind obedience. Bornemann stresses in his short portrait of Fr. Höltker the troubles that characterised the relationship between Schmidt and Höltker, especially during their time together in Fribourg (1982: 301f.).

Theodor Bröring SVD (1883–1960), also part of the moving-committee as well as being entrusted with the exhibition design for the new museum in Vienna, was in these years also highly involved in the mission museum in St. Gabriel. Between 1926 and 1930 (and beyond), he is recorded in connection with the expansion and new decorating of the mission museum (Alt 1990: 374). Bröring is also mentioned in primary sources. He had ordered porcelain from the prefect Joseph Reiners SVD in Nagoya, Japan, but was late in paying the purchase and the shipping to Europe (StG 1932). Fr. Bröring worked at both museums in the same period of time. Therefore, we can assume: cooperation is visible not only on a level of "famous" and scholarly men – Schmidt, Koppers, and the museum's director – but also on the level of practical work.

Finally, in 1928 the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna, was opened and the network that intertwined this museum, the university institute, and the mission museum in St Gabriel developed. The exchange of objects continued, as documented, for example, for 1929 (StG 1940c; StG 1940b).

The next important events in this network were due to the Nazi regime. The mission museum has a special folder containing only correspondence with the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna, from May 25, 1940 to January 18, 1943. For this article, it is not possible to go in depth into this debate about the ethnographical objects between the two parties. But their highly unbalanced power relation is visible: on the one hand, we have the Museum of Ethnology that was taken over by the *Nazizelle*, the (former illegal) National Socialist Party members within the museum, two days after the "*Anschluss*" (Linimayr 1994: 48–77). On the other hand, we have the mission house St Gabriel with its threatened situation because of its political involvement during the monarchy and interwar years. One statement clearly expresses the imbalance that followed March 1938:

> In the museum for natural history, the director general *Hermann Michel* was removed from office by the *Nazizelle* because of his collaboration with "political Catholicism", especially with "St Gabriel" (synonym for the proponents of the Kulturkreislehre) (Linimayr 1994: 51; my translation, emphasis original).[17]

Despite the debate about the exchange of objects that were loaned to each other since 1902, with the year 1941 and the expropriation of the museum's inventory as a whole, the loans to the Viennese museum were at stake. For that reason all ethno-

17 Original text: "Im Naturhistorischen Museum wird der Generaldirektor *Hermann Michel* wegen seiner Kollaboration mit dem 'politischen Katholizismus', insbesondere mit 'St. Gabriel' (Synonym für die Vertreter der Kulturkreislehre), von der *Nazizelle* abgesetzt."

graphical collections from St Gabriel were packed into boxes and brought to the Ethnological Museum in Vienna; the same happened to the library of St Gabriel. The library stock was brought to Vienna's National Library. Since both receiving institutions apparently left the boxes untouched, the museum's possessions and the library stock could easily be returned to St Gabriel after the war. However, the return of the museum's objects was only carried out in 1950, because the museum's property needed renovation before setting up a new exhibition (Alt 1990: 202).

In 1939, Fr. Paul Schebesta SVD (1887–1967) became the new head of the mission museum. He apparently could not stand living in Fribourg with the other *Anthropos* fathers and so he returned after a field trip to St Gabriel (Bornemann 1982: 300). After the missiologist Fr. Thauren, with Fr. Schebesta again an anthropologist – this time with experience in the field – served as director of the mission museum. Schebesta is another link to the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna: besides the above discussed exchange of single objects between the two museums, there are also whole collections by SVD missionaries at the Viennese museum. The "Schebesta Collection" is the most important one. It has more than 1,500 inventory numbers and was bought by the Viennese museum (Plankensteiner 2005: 33f.). Some objects were only a loan to the museum and negotiations between the museum and Schebesta can be traced to the years from 1929 until 1934. Interestingly, these negotiations about Schebesta's collection also included former exchanges of goods between the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna, and the already mentioned Lateran mission exhibition and later museum – *in persona* of Pater Schmidt, as its director (VKM 1934).

The close cooperation and involvement between the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna, and St Gabriel – and above all with the Lateran mission museum in Rome – was not seen positively by everyone. In one short history of the museum, the collections and loans by Professors Schebesta, Gusinde, and Koppers are mentioned (Mylius 1959: 5f.). However, it is not even hinted that these "professors," as they were presented, were members of a missionary congregation and that the excursions and fieldwork were to a certain extent in connection to missionary goals and, therefore, were also financed by the Catholic Church. Of course, there can be other reasons for not mentioning this connection, but it shows one possible way of dealing with the entanglement between missionaries and "secular" actors – here the Museum of Ethnology, Vienna – within the network around St Gabriel.

Not only Catholic missionaries contributed to the museum in Vienna, the Lutheran missionary Günther Säuberlich bequeathed his collection of East African objects to the museum, consisting of 1,450 inventory numbers (Plankensteiner 2002: 266). It is therefore necessary that in the future connections to religious affiliated collectors/collections/museums should be approached more openly, not only with regard to the mission museum of St Gabriel but also in general.

Conclusion

In this article, the main objective has been to show how tight the mission museum was interwoven within the strong scholarly impetus of the Society of the Divine Word. This has been done by looking at the establishment phase of the museum, between 1898 and 1910, where a growing scholarly interest of Fr. Schmidt into linguistic and ethnographical questions could be verified. Parallels between the museum and the *Anthropos* journal (founded in 1906) can be drawn as well. Except for Bornemann, Schmidt is generally named in the sources as the founding person, a designation that, however, cannot been verified with certainty. Of equal importance, references to the scholar Wilhelm Schmidt were clearly to give the museum greater prestige. All authors state a scholarly purpose (education for future missionaries) as the motivation for and function of the museum (the exception is again Bornemann). Schmidt and Koppers also established a small ethnographical museum (it also can be seen as a small exhibition) at the University of Fribourg, another hint that they saw the very first function of a gathering of objects for their educational aspect, not for aesthetical appreciation. Additionally, the dynamics in St Gabriel were always clear: it was not a museum founded by missionaries who *returned* to St Gabriel and *brought* objects *with them*; the centre was St Gabriel, from where the objects were systematically demanded. A similar dynamic can be seen for the *Anthropos* journal: starting from St Gabriel, missionaries were asked to send back articles – and instructed on how to do it (see Schmidt's instructions in his invitation to cooperate in the *Anthropos* in Rivinius 1981: 174–215).

A strong argument for the scholarly orientation of this museum is the academic network with which it was interwoven. Several of St Gabriel's missionaries (Schmidt, Thauren, Koppers, Hölt-

ker, Zimmermann, Bröring, Schebesta, and Gusinde) had parallel engagements with the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Vienna and/or with the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna. Some worked at the same time at the museum in St Gabriel and the Viennese institutions or – as in the case of Schebesta – their ethnographical collections ended up in the stock of the Museum of Ethnology. As the case of the Lutheran missionary Säuberlich shows, it is not limited to the Catholic mission activities, though these dominated as a consequence of the larger Catholic presence in Austria.

That the Museum of Ethnology and the university institute in Vienna were closely connected – even temporarily sharing the same location (Mandorff 1978: 11) – is no surprise. But the third actor in this network – the ethnographers/missionaries and with them the mission museum of St Gabriel – is not always as visible as it should be. A clear dividing line between "profane" and "biased" – as done by SVD missionaries – Ethnology cannot be found for this milieu in and around Vienna, as has been shown for other regions as well (for example, for North American Protestant missionaries, Higham 2003). Therefore, the history and inventory of the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna is highly entangled with the Christian mission history of Europe.

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