



100 Years of *Anthropos*

Anton Quack

The first issue of *Anthropos*, a hefty 163 pages, appeared in the middle of February 1906.¹ From all sides it was very well received. First of all, as might be expected, it received good marks from those German religious orders and congregations who were directly or indirectly involved with mission work and their publications. Praise and approval also came from professional anthropologists. One of these was the French anthropologist, Arnold van Gennep, who wrote in his first review that he did not think anybody would suspect him of standing on the side of religious and missionaries. He was well-known for being anticlerical and himself made no secret of the fact. Yet he hopes that *Anthropos* achieves what it promises. Indeed, he holds *Anthropos* up as a model for the various branches of anthropology to imitate and even, out of a sense of competition, to improve upon it as much as possible, all for the benefit of ethnography (van Gennep 1906: 317–319).

A year later in a review of issues 2–4 of the first volume of *Anthropos*, van Gennep returns to his first judgement: “Les fascicules suivants de l’*Anthropos* ont tenu ce que promettait le premier ... Il est certain, en tout cas, que les quatres fascicules parus placent dès à présent cette revue parmi les publications ethnographiques du premier rang” (van Gennep 1907: 186 f.).²

The first reviews praise the goal and intention of the new journal, which they welcome wholeheartedly, sometimes almost poetically, as in the case of Paul Staudinger in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, a time-honored, already well-established journal. The same was true of Johannes Ranke’s review

in *Archiv für Anthropologie*. Charlotte Burne was positive but somewhat more reserved in *Folk-Lore* as was Ferdinand Bork in the *Orientalische Litteratur-Zeitung*. It should come as no surprise that the *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* enthusiastically welcomed the new work of their enterprising and highly esteemed (“rührigen” und “hochgeschätzten”) member “Prof. P. W. Schmidt.”³

1 In a letter of February 11, 1906, W. Schmidt writes the following to Baron Georg von Hertling: “... because I wanted to send also the first issue of the ‘*Anthropos*’ immediately or shortly afterwards. The publication of it has taken longer than expected, but it should appear now on Tuesday or Wednesday” (cf. Rivinius 1981: 123). Baron Georg von Hertling was the president of the Görres-Gesellschaft from 1876 until his death in 1919. This society, together with the Leo-Gesellschaft in Vienna, gave substantial financial support to the new journal in the difficult early years (Rivinius 1981).

2 “The subsequent issues of the *Anthropos* have kept the standard promised by the first issue ... We take it, in any case, for granted that the four issues published have already assured this journal thus far a respectable place among the ethnographic publications of highest ranking.” Van Gennep’s review of the first issue of the *Anthropos* journal appeared in the *Revue des Traditions Populaires* (July 1906: 316–319). W. Schmidt (1908: 383) cites these encouraging words of van Gennep in a review of van Gennep’s own journal, *Revue des Etudes Ethnographiques et Sociologiques*, which appeared for the first time in 1908. Van Gennep’s review of the other three issues of the first volume of *Anthropos* quoted here appeared in the May 1907 issue of the same journal.

3 Cf. Staudinger 1906; Ranke 1906; Burne 1906; Bork 1908; *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 1906.

The beginnings of *Anthropos* were not as simple and uncomplicated as one might suspect, given the positive response to the first issue. These beginnings are difficult to reconstruct in detail even today. Nor did W. Schmidt himself leave us a very reliable, let alone detailed, account of these beginnings. He was not particularly concerned with how history would perceive him. In any case he did not make the task of his later biographers any easier.⁴

In the context of his own religious congregation, the Society of the Divine Word, it was the intention and enduring hope of Wilhelm Schmidt to support and foster what we now understand as multicultural exchange and interaction. Above all else, the journal was to help the missionaries in a twofold way, first as a forum or place where their inestimable and otherwise unavailable knowledge of other peoples and cultures could be published, and secondly where they, for their part, would have at their disposal a way of broadening their knowledge of anthropology. The very first article to appear in *Anthropos* pointed this out: "Le rôle scientifique des Missionnaires" (The Scientific Task of the Missionaries) (Le Roy 1906). As a result, the journal has always recognized that one of its noble duties is to publish the anthropological work of missionaries, even if this demands more editorial work.

At first, Wilhelm Schmidt wanted to call his journal *Omnes Gentes* or *Orbis Terrarum – Gentes et Linguae* ("All Peoples" or "The Whole World – Peoples and Languages"). After some discussion back and forth he finally hit upon the less grandiloquent title *Anthropos – Internationale Zeitschrift für Völker- und Sprachenkunde* ("International Review of Ethnology and Linguistics"). Two influential people encouraged and convinced him of this. They were Paul Huber, at the time the owner of Kösler publishing house, and the other, Karl Muth, the founder of the well-known and renowned journal *Hochland*. Augustinus Fischer-Colbrie, a Hungarian prelate and a good friend of the Society of the Divine Word at St. Gabriel's in Mödling near Vienna, had originally suggested the title. Wilhelm Schmidt had hit upon an excellent

choice. The name *Anthropos* stood and still stands today for the program of the journal. It concerns itself with people and their cultures, with people and the variety of cultures, and with people as they engage with cultures.⁵

The journal was supposed to be international. It should be open to contributions in all the major languages of the world; if at all possible, the contributions should be published in the native language of the authors. For example, in the very first issue of *Anthropos* can be found French, English, German, Spanish, Italian, and Latin. In later issues, Dutch, Polish, and Portuguese articles appear as well. The editors still place great value on the fact that articles and other contributions, whenever possible, be written in the language of the authors. As a consequence, today English predominates. In this respect, *Anthropos* stands alone when compared with similar journals, more so today perhaps than ever.

From the beginning, *Anthropos* was a journal that covered all regions of the earth and all fields of anthropology. Discussions regarding theory and methods have their place as well as broad ethnographic descriptions and documentation. It has maintained its character as a storehouse of anthropological materials for libraries and institutes. So, after 100 years it has become a veritable encyclopedia of anthropology. But just as the world has changed over these years, so naturally has anthropology changed also. Yet it remains the science of cultures, becoming truly pluralistic as far as its methods, contents, and objectives are concerned. *Anthropos* also shared in these developments. After a few years it had built up a solid reputation. So now it belongs to one of the ten largest and most important international reviews in the world. To quote Arnold van Gennep again, his early judgement still holds true: "Si cette Revue continue comme elle commence, elle sera une mine appréciable de documents de matériaux et même un moyen commode pour les savants d'obtenir . . . des renseignements complémentaires" (van Gennep 1906: 318).⁶

4 Cf. Schmidt 1940–41: 19 ff.; as regards the discussion of W. Schmidt's life and work, especially the founding of *Anthropos*, the following authors deal in some detail: Henninger 1956, 1979 a and 1979b; Rivinius 1981; Bornemann 1982; Brandewie 1982, 1983, 1990; Rivinius 2000 and most recently again Rivinius 2005. Some letters of Arnold Janssen related to the beginnings of *Anthropos* appeared in *Verbum* 1966.

5 W. Schmidt describes how *Anthropos* got its name in letters to Hertling dated December 5, 1904, and April 17 and 24, 1905 (Rivinius 1981: 91, 96, 98). The suggestion to call the journal "Anthropos" certainly came from A. Fischer-Colbrie (Schmidt 1940–41: 33); this title was originally W. Schmidt's third choice. It appeared to him to be too foreign.

6 "If this journal continues in the same way it began, it will become a formidable source of documentation and other materials, and for specialists a convenient way to continue their education."

Every year the journal consists of about 700 pages with some 140 authors and contributors; it contains roughly 45 articles and other contributions and 120 book reviews. Every year *Anthropos* is published in two issues, the first in January/February and the second in August/September. Looking back over 100 years, the output of *Anthropos* is remarkable and enough to command one's respect. Over these years there have appeared some 3,850 articles, 11,000 book reviews, plus miscellaneous items and brief reports, spread over roughly 84,000 pages. *Anthropos* has a circulation of about 800 copies, going to more than 60 countries.

Over the past several years the editorial staff and the publisher have been discussing the question how far *Anthropos* can, should, or must offer their readers and subscribers the possibilities or advantages of online communication. Up to now no positive decision has been reached. What worries us especially is the limited durability of materials stored digitally as compared with the proven 100 years of stability which a journal printed on paper offers.

The list of editors-in-chief over the past 100 years is comparatively short. In addition to Wilhelm Schmidt himself (1906–22, 1937–49) the following filled that position:

Wilhelm Koppers (1923–31),

who for many years was Ordinarius (tenured professor) for Ethnology at the University of Vienna;

Georg Höltker (1932–35),

Wilhelm Schmidt's successor as holder of the Chair (in Ethnology) at the University of Fribourg;

Fritz Bornemann (1950–54),

the immediate successor to Wilhelm Schmidt as editor. He did not see eye to eye with W. Schmidt as he said in his biography of Schmidt, all the while struggling himself to remain objective;

Rudolf Rahmann (1936, 1955–59),

who took over the editorship during the difficult years after W. Schmidt's death;

Arnold Burgmann (1960–68) and Günter Tiemann (1969);

Josef Franz Thiel (1970–77, 1983),

the Director of the Museum of Peoples and Cultures (Haus Völker und Kulturen) in Sankt Augustin and later of the Anthropological Museum (Museum der Weltkulturen) in Frankfurt;

Joseph Henninger (1978–79),

who very early on helped W. Schmidt with the editorial work and with various other tasks;

Louis Luzbetak (1980–82),

who died at Techny (USA) in the middle of March, 2005. His obituary, written by Ernest Brandewie, can be found in the latest issue of *Anthropos* (Brandewie 2005: 553–559);

Anton Quack (1984–93),

at present the book review editor, and finally Othmar Gächter, editor since 1994.

25 years after the founding of the journal, W. Schmidt tried to put the editorial staff on a firm footing, to institutionalize it. He set up the "Anthropos Institute" (cf. Schmidt 1932). The result was not particularly successful. Practically and juridically it did not have any meaningful consequence; the times simply did not allow it. Later efforts to give some structure to the editorial staff after the Institute moved to Sankt Augustin were more successful.⁷

For three decades *Anthropos* was located in St. Gabriel's. When Austria became part of the Greater German Reich in 1938, the editorial staff and the Anthropos Institute moved to Posieux near Fribourg in Switzerland.⁸ In 1962 *Anthropos* and the Institute made another move, this time to Sankt Augustin. Here the staff has at its disposal a library of over 90,000 titles and about 300 journals that are kept current. For more than 62 years the journal has continued to be printed

⁷ On March 12, 1962, the "Anthropos-Institut für völkerkundliche Forschung e.V." was founded and on June 27, 1962, was registered as such in the district court of Siegburg. This gives the editorial staff a legal structure. The "Statutes of the Anthropos Institute" of June 24, 1982, give a more detailed structure to guide the work of the editorial staff and their coworkers. A reworking of these "Statutes" to make them more pertinent to present-day conditions is now being prepared.

⁸ After the "Anschluss" (the incorporation of Austria into the Greater German Reich), W. Schmidt left Austria on April 4, 1938. For the *Anthropos* editorial staff to remain in the "German Reich" was not an option. The decision to move everything to Froideville/Posieux near Fribourg in Switzerland was taken already by November 1938. A good part of the *Anthropos* library could still be taken to Froideville; the rest was transferred to the University of Vienna. In 1938 and 1939 volumes 33 and 34 of the *Anthropos* were still published at St. Gabriel's, printed by the Mechitarists (Mechitarists) in Vienna. In July 1942, volumes 35 and 36, 1940–41/1–3 appeared, the first to be printed and published by the Paulus Printing Company (Paulusdruckerei und -verlag).

and published in Fribourg (Paulusdruckerei und -verlag).

Without question, *Anthropos* and the name of W. Schmidt are inseparable, something many of his close associates barely noticed or seriously thought about.⁹ Much of W. Schmidt's monumental output belongs to the distant past (for example, culture circle theories or the notion that the earliest people were monotheists) and remains well-protected and buried in libraries much like the twelve volumes of W. Schmidt's *opus magnum*, "Der Ursprung der Gottesidee" (1912–55) [The Origin of the Idea of God].¹⁰

If anything of W. Schmidt's work survives him, then surely *Anthropos* is that work. With this journal he is assured that his name will survive over time. Other people testify to this. Prof. Martin Heydrich from Cologne states: "If he [W. Schmidt] had done nothing else besides founding the *Anthropos* journal, which he made one of the most important anthropological journals, this alone would be a superb service for anthropology." Or as Raymond Firth comments: "His foundation of the *Journal Anthropos* was one of the milestones in the development of more systematic anthropological records from exotic cultures."¹¹

The judgement, which R. Rahmann, who was the editor-in-chief of the journal in the 1950s, made in "Fünfzig Jahre 'Anthropos'" is still valid today: "Anthropos is only a portion of Fr. W. Schmidt's lifetime work – but definitely the centerpiece ... *Anthropos* ... was the context which spans the entire life and work of Fr. W. Schmidt.

As long as the journal maintains its high scientific standard, which was one of its characteristics from the beginning, so long will the journal fulfill Fr. Schmidt's remarkable scientific mission beyond his death" (1956: 18).¹²

100 years ago, Fr. Arnold Janssen, the founder of the Society of the Divine Word, showed great courage and astonishing foresight. He supported *Anthropos* wholeheartedly. At the time *Anthropos* was a daring and remarkable undertaking. It was surely unusual that a priest, Fr. W. Schmidt, quite unknown in the scientific world, took it upon himself to start a journal, which wanted to join its voice to the international anthropological dialogue. In addition, W. Schmidt was a self-educated man as far as anthropology was concerned; he belonged to a quite young, relatively unknown Catholic missionary congregation, the Society of the Divine Word. It was this Society which supported this journal by supplying it with the financial means and with personnel for 100 years. In this it stands alone among all the other mission sending congregations. It belongs to its understanding of itself as missionary, to its charism, to foster a comprehensive understanding of cultures. For this it deserves thanks and recognition.

Anthropos has remained true to its name. From its beginning until the present it has been concerned with people and their cultures, with people and the variety of cultures, with people as they engage with cultures. A journal that has the science of cultures as its program also concerns itself with the exchange and encounter between cultures in the best way possible. This journal will be useful in the future; so we hope and believe that *Anthropos* has a future.¹³

9 The obituaries, for example, by M. Gusinde (1954), W. Koppers (1954 and 1956), and J. Maringer (1949–55) mention *Anthropos* only in passing in connection with W. Schmidt's lifetime of work; such evaluations would scarcely last beyond the day they were published. J. Henninger, for many years one of the closest collaborators of W. Schmidt, wrote many items about Schmidt's life and work, but very surprisingly says very little about the major role the *Anthropos* played for W. Schmidt and the lasting impact he has had (Henninger 1956, 1968, 1979a, 1979b, 1987).

10 The first volume, thoroughly reworked, appeared in a 2nd edition in 1926; volumes 2 to 10 appeared between 1929 and 1953; the last two volumes (11 and 12) appeared posthumously in 1954–55, prepared for publication by F. Bornemann. E. Brandewie (1983) wrote a lengthy commentary on volumes 1 to 6, which includes English translations of selected sections from these volumes.

11 Both of these quotations come from written expressions of sympathy (cf. Henninger 1956: 56). The original text of Heydrich's statement: "Hätte er nichts weiter getan, als den *Anthropos* gegründet, den er zu einer der wichtigsten völkerkundlichen Zeitschriften mache, so wäre sein Verdienst für die Ethnologie allein schon gewaltig gewesen."

12 "Der *Anthropos* ist nur ein Teil des Lebenswerkes von P. W. Schmidt – jedoch das Kernstück ... *Anthropos* war ... der Rahmen, der das gesamte Lebenswerk P. W. Schmidts umspannte. Solange die Zeitschrift die wissenschaftliche Höhe wahren wird, die ihr vom Beginn an eigen war, ... solange wird sie P. Schmidts einzigartige wissenschaftliche Sendung über seinen Tod hinaus erfüllen."

13 The reader's attention is called to two other contributions prepared by the editors on the occasion of the jubilee celebrating 100 years of continuous publication of the *Anthropos*: "The Encounter between Religions and Cultures. 100 Years of *Anthropos* – International Review of Anthropology and Linguistics" (Gächter 2005) and "Von Missionaren für Missionare – 100 Jahre *Anthropos*" (Quack 2006).

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