

**JOHANN BAPTIST ANZER:  
SVD BISHOP BETWEEN MISSION AND POLITICS (1851-1903)\***

After over a century, Bishop Johann Baptist Anzer SVD (1851-1903) has finally found a biographer who spared no pains in giving a truthful account about his remarkable life and work. It was worth waiting until December 2010, when the first full-length biography of Anzer appeared, presented by the Professor Emeritus of Church History at the SVD faculty of theology at Sankt Augustin. Fr. Karl Josef Rivinius' volume about the Bishop of Southern Shandong and the vast and complex historical context in the Society of the Divine Word and its mission in China is, in fact, quite impressive.

The 971-page historical monograph is published in the series "Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD" of the Steyler Missionswissenschaftliches Institut at Sankt Augustin as well as in the SVD-internal series "Analecta SVD" of the Generalate at Rome. This work delivers a comprehensive view of Bishop Anzer's accomplishments based on a great variety of sources that previously have not been known or used. "The author attempted to portray his historical subject within the moving forces of his time and to appreciate the time-bound circumstances as well as the interactions between an individual and transpersonal factors" (Rivinius, XIII). The voluminous biography is composed of a preface, prologue, sixteen chapters, an epilogue, documentation, a list of abbreviations, bibliography, an index of proper names, a glossary of Chinese place names, an index of geographical names, a subject index and a map of Southern Shandong.

***1. About the Author***

The author was well prepared to deal with his confrere's life and work, which was historically outstanding and at the same time controversial. Rivinius had intended to write a complete biography for many years. The first significant fruit of his research was published in 2003 (*Johann Baptist Anzer und Johann Baptist Mehler. Ein Mosaikstein zur Biographie des ersten Bischofs der Gesellschaft des Göttlichen Wortes* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD, 83], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 2003, 214 pp.). Johann Baptist Anzer, a pioneer of the

\* KARL JOSEF RIVINIUS SVD, *Im Spannungsfeld von Mission und Politik: Johann Baptist Anzer (1851-1903), Bischof von Süd-Shandong* (Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD, 93), Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 2010, XIV + 971 pp. ISBN 978-3-8050-0569-2

nineteenth-century Chinese mission, fully merits this eminent contribution.

Karl Josef Rivinius was born in Bous, Saarland, on 2 September, 1936. After finishing philosophical studies at St. Gabriel's, near Vienna, and theological studies at St. Augustin's, near Bonn, he received the priestly ordination in 1969. Right away, he began studying history, church history and pedagogy at the University of Münster where in 1974 he graduated with a dissertation titled *Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler and the Infallibility of the Pope: A Contribution to the Debate about the Infallibility at the First Vatican Council*. In the summer semester of 1976, he took over lectures in medieval and modern church history as well as patristics at the Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule SVD St. Augustin, at Sankt Augustin.

On 9 July, 1986, he attained habilitation at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University at Bonn with the habilitation thesis: *Secular Protection and Mission: The German Protectorate over the Catholic Mission of Southern Shandong*. Consequently, "Venia Legendi" was granted to him in the field of medieval and modern church history, including mission history.

Besides academic activity, Rivinius held the office of Rector at the Phil.-Theol. Hochschule SVD St. Augustin for three terms (1980-1983; 1992-1998). In the latter period, he significantly contributed to elevating the school to the status of an independent university with the ability to grant degrees (2000).

The main topics of his research, which has produced over 200 scientific publications, encompass: the modernism debate; the actions of the Catholic Church in dealing with the sociopolitical situation in Germany in the 19th and 20th centuries; heretical movements of reformers and reform movements in the Church; a history of the SVD in Europe as well as socio-theological topics of contemporary relevance. His publications about the SVD mission history with a focus on China occupy a very significant place with some books and about thirty articles and a habilitation thesis.

## **2. A Word of Introduction**

Rivinius boldly undertook the task to write the biography about the most controversial figure in the Society of the Divine Word. The hero – Bishop Anzer – was, so to speak, the crucial figure of the founding generation; the first ordained priest, first missionary and first Bishop of the Society. His person stirred up numerous polemics

and debates, which remained for a great deal of time after. As a pioneer of the SVD mission in China and originator of a resilient Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong, he was at the same time the most prolific and recognizable champion of the dynamically developing Society of the Divine Word at that time. On the other hand, for many in the SVD, Anzer became the “black sheep” of the Society. From the historical perspective, the opinions of his contemporaries were emotionally tempered and resulted from personal grudge and prejudice. That’s why the new Rivinius biography about Anzer arouses interest. The research and the information contained in this biography are composed of many previously unused or primary source data.

Surprisingly, it seems that Rivinius is rather moderate in naming the specific reasons for his outstanding biographical monograph the point that it conveys an impression that the author tried to recompense for the injustice done to Anzer’s relatives who complained about the deafening silence on the Bishop by the Society of the Divine Word. This reason seems insufficient and unconvincing. What’s more is that we are dealing with a biography with a largely outlined background, which significantly influenced its size. Hopefully, it would be advantageous to put some guiding question to help the reader to penetrate this “opus historicum” at more levels. It is a significant milestone in approaching the truth about Anzer and shedding light on the most debatable questions:

Firstly, the difficult relation of Bishop Anzer to the Superior General Arnold Janssen implies a long controversy about the model of the newly founded Society. This results from the tension experienced between religious and missionary life and triggers a debate about how to relate the two dimensions.

Secondly, the relation between Bishop Johann Baptist Anzer and Fr. Joseph Freinademetz was fraught with complications. Though Anzer was accepted by some in the missionary community, the general consensus was otherwise. Anzer and Freinademetz were, in essence, a metaphor for the differing approaches towards a missionary vocation. Whereas Anzer was cavalier and unyielding in his drive to bear the fruits of Christianizing China, even if his methods bordered on being morally ambiguous and politically tempered, Freinademetz more congruently embodied the ever-important concept of kenosis or knowing when to die in order to make room for new life.

Thirdly, another basic question is coupled with Anzer’s view of China and its culture, which overlapped with his nationalistic and colonial spirit, common to many missionaries at that time. Anzer, as a child of his time, shared the mentality of his contemporaries and

seemed not to be troubled by using the German Protectorate for the sake of the mission. To what degree was he aware of the consequences of the unfortunate entanglement that brought disastrous consequences for the mission?

Finally, the controversy around the personal integrity and moral ambiguity of Bishop Anzer goes through the whole book in connection with the attempts to depose him from office.

Hopefully, these questions help the reader along the challenging and profitable adventure in order to unveil the true face of Bishop Anzer.

### ***3. Factual Summary of the Content***

Rivinius precedes his biographical monograph about Bishop Anzer with a prologue that gives an insightful look at the hindrances that lay in writing his biography. Considering the fact that Anzer was one of the first followers of the founder, Fr. Arnold Janssen, and also the first bishop in the Society of the Divine Word, it is surprising that no complete biography had been written about Anzer in the SVD historiography. This prologue allows us to understand the main reasons for that: his political engagement in Germany's colonial venture in China and his moral ambiguity.

Despite some biases, Andreas Haberl (1885-1970), his compatriot, intended to gather sources and information over many years to write a biography about Bishop Anzer. Some of the SVD gradually recognized the merits of Anzer as a providential man for the Southern Shandong Mission and a kind of God's whip for some of God's great servants. Although Haberl didn't accomplish his project, he made available his extensive archive to the Generalate in connection with the inauguration of the beatification process of Fr. Arnold Janssen and Fr. Joseph Freinademetz.

**I.** The first chapter discusses Anzer's early life and family circumstances. He was born in Weinrieth, Oberpfalz, Bavaria (Germany) on 16 May, 1851 and was baptized the same day in St. Jacobus Church in Döllnitz (parish Leuchtenberg). He was the third child of a married couple, Johann Anzer (1817-1872) and Barbara, nee Betz (1825-1898), that lived in modest material circumstances. Out of eight siblings, he was the only male. Out of gratitude for his birth, his father built a chapel across from his house. Actually, his father offered Anzer to the service of God before he was born because of a fire, which burnt down the family house and

threatened his pregnant mother. Throughout childhood and adolescence, Johann Baptist had to help his father on the farm. He and his siblings were raised strictly in a devout atmosphere. Two of his sisters became contemplative Benedictines. After elementary school in Döllnitz and private lessons from one of his relatives in Nabburg he entered the Minor Seminary in Metten in the diocese Regensburg. He then pursued his education at the Regensburg Seminary, from which he joined the newly founded mission house at Steyl, Holland in 1875 and was ordained a priest the following year.

**II.** The second chapter explains the missionary awakening in the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century, especially by pointing to the religious and political situation of the Catholics in Germany. A growing interest and grass-roots movement among Catholics towards missionizing overseas was noticeable. A particular interest was placed on Christianizing the over 400 million inhabitants of China. Although missionizing the Far East was an attractive concept, the reality of the matter was that there wasn't any mission house in German-speaking countries preparing Catholic missionaries for this task. Politically the time wasn't favorable; Germany became very hostile towards the Catholic Church under the first chancellor of the German Empire, Otto von Bismarck (1871-1890). The *Kulturkampf* introduced and rigorously enforced laws against German Catholics, which significantly restricted the actions of the Catholic Church and also led the German priest Arnold Janssen to founding the first mission house in neighboring church-friendly Holland, in 1875. Anzer travelled there from Regensburg, and became the third consecutive member of the Mission House in Steyl after the priest Peter Bill from Luxembourg and seminarian Franz-Xaver Reichart from the Brixen diocese.

**III.** The third chapter analyzes, in detail, all of the motives and circumstances that led Anzer to Steyl and introduces his relationship with Janssen. Anzer's interest in the mission was present throughout his formation period and had marked his desire to become a missionary since his sixth year at Metten. His missionary vocation began to take distinct shape when he started reading mission magazines and looking around for a suitable mission seminary: first in Rome, then in Paris at the Society of Foreign Missions – MEP. Political instability in Rome and a refusal from Paris, where only French candidates could be accepted, turned his attention to Arnold Janssen's plan of founding an Austro-

German mission institute, which he had learned about from the *Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus* at the beginning of 1874. He went through several trials and tribulations, but after some months had passed, the 24-year-old seminarian arrived in Steyl on the afternoon of 29 October, 1875.

In some ways, Arnold Janssen had already prepared his transfer to Steyl. Previously, on 3 May, 1875, he visited the Bishop of Regensburg, to whom he presented his plan of founding a mission house. While there, he spoke with Anzer who was interested, and together they resolved to pray to God intensely for a light of discernment. Despite an initial denial, the Bishop of Regensburg, Ignatius von Senestréy, allowed Anzer to leave the seminary and join Arnold Janssen.

Furthermore, Anzer personally became touched by his mother's surprisingly positive reaction to his desire to become a missionary, although she was very ill and had to care for his four small sisters. After arriving in Steyl, Arnold Janssen wrote of Anzer: "He is a genuine and robust Bavarian and seems to have a very resolute mission vocation."

Rivinius goes on to discuss the first of many conflicts which arose between Anzer and Janssen from then on. A disparity arose over the direction of the new mission institute and its binding rule. Anzer, along with his confreres, Bill and Reichart, believed that the mission should be exclusively focused on missionizing pagans while Janssen's viewpoint was much more flexible and less exclusive to other options. Eventually, Bill and Reichart left the mission house because they were not able to compromise with Janssen on this point. Anzer remained because of his more flexible approach and profound desire to be a missionary. Moreover, he contributed to a compromised version of the statutes of the mission house.

Anzer went to Utrecht with Arnold Janssen, where he was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Andreas Ignatius Schaepman in his private chapel, on 13 August, 1876. Two days later, he received the priestly ordination in the cathedral along with the other deacons of the archdiocese. He was the first priest from Steyl to be ordained for the mission. On 17 August, he celebrated the First Holy Mass in the small chapel of the mission house. He visited his hometown for six weeks, where he celebrated the First Mass, and then on 10 September the High Mass in the parish church in Pleystein.

After Anzer's ordination, Arnold Janssen expected him to help with teaching the mission candidates, which had to be accomplished strictly according to the handbooks. Janssen noticed that Anzer

wasn't well-suited to the monotony of teaching because he was a man of action.

**IV.** The fourth chapter focuses on the beginnings of the first SVD mission in China. After shadowing Janssen in the many tasks necessary to prepare for the creation of the Chinese mission, Anzer was appointed to take over the first overseas mission with Joseph Freinademetz. Their destiny was linked for the rest of Anzer's life. Freinademetz was convinced that Anzer as a young, energetic and courageous priest would be a wonderful life companion.

Both left the harbor in Ancona for Hong Kong on 15 March, 1879 and arrived there after a thirty-six day journey. They placed themselves at the disposal of the Apostolic Vicar, Giovanni Timoleone Raimondi. There Anzer became a prefect and confessor of seminarians as well as a teacher in the minor and major seminary. He also used the time to study Mandarin Chinese. From the very beginning, Anzer impatiently pressed Arnold Janssen to try to gain a mission territory from other congregations, mainly in Southern Shandong.

Rivinius describes the whole process of taking the first mission territory over from the Franciscans who had seven mission territories (apostolic vicariates) in China. The German consul in Hong Kong saw an agile, sane, sly man and an excellent linguist in Anzer. The two missionaries arrived in Jinan, the capital of Shandong. Arnold Janssen had proposed Anzer as the candidate to become the pro-vicar of the new SVD mission. The Franciscan Bishop Cosi had reservations about him, though, due to his boisterous and demanding behavior and insensitive tactics. Janssen mediated the conflict with some success and finally on 2 January, 1882, Anzer was nominated the pro-vicar of the three Franciscan prefectures assigned to the SVD. On 18 January, 1882, Anzer arrived at his mission in Poli, where he met a friendly welcome from some of the total of 158 Christians in the area. The non-Christians seemed well-disposed towards missionaries as well. He wanted to take advantage of these positive circumstances.

**V.** The fifth chapter discusses the beginning of Anzer's mission activity in Southern Shandong. Rivinius convincingly portrays the vastly different conditions (geographic, climatic, demographic and cultural) of mission work in the SVD mission territory.

Anzer decided to act quickly, disclosing his organizational talent, ability to judge, efficiency, competence, constitutive strength, political sensibility, intelligent far-sightedness as well as his decisiveness in the field of construction. Soon thereafter, he built the new SVD residence in Poli and developed an initiative to get new personnel so that as many souls as possible could be wrested from hell. He sought finances from Europe and attempted to efficiently use Joseph Freinademetz' charismatic personality and ability to unite others in missionary effort. He restlessly worked until exhaustion, surveying all the construction work and organizing the mission deployments.

At the very beginning, Anzer encountered a lot of adversity in his mission work and was sometimes called a "foreign devil." Despite the strong opposition of the Chinese officials, Bishop Anzer demanded the entry of the Bishop into Caozhou and the permanent settlement of the Catholic German mission in the city. In order to reach his goals, he used the influence of the German envoy in Peking at the central Chinese government. His overzealous attitude and imprudent action in the Caozhou affair raised tensions between the mission and the Chinese civil authorities. Moreover, it was felt so much in the Franciscan territory that complaints were made about Anzer in Rome. The prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith wrote to Arnold Janssen, asking him to restrain Anzer and to invite him to seek advice from elder missionaries. Some of these accusations were dictated by jealousy and the spirit of competition, while others were based on current actions.

In September 1885, for the first time Anzer left China and arrived in Rome via Marseille, on 26 November. After a private audience with Pope Leo XIII, he reached Steyl to take part in the general chapter, on 7 December. At that time, he struck up a close relationship with Magdalene Leitner, the "spiritual Mother," giving in to her influence. In Germany, he delivered a lecture about the German mission in Southern Shandong at the Catholic Congress in Münster. On 13 December, 1885, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to create an Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong and appointed Anzer with episcopal dignity. The Archbishop of Cologne, Philip Krementz, ordained him in Steyl as the first SVD bishop on 14 January, 1886. In July 1886, Anzer arrived back in China along with his secretary Augustinus Henninghaus.

**VI.** The sixth, very extensive chapter deals with the political situation of Catholic missionaries in China within the confines of the French Protectorate (initiated by the Treaty of Tientsin 1858). The protectorate obliged France to



protect all missionaries working in China. The treaties allowed them to freely travel within the country's borders and proclaim the Christian faith. They were also permitted to purchase land for houses and churches. The protectorate guaranteed privileges and concessions so that missionaries got into the habit of requesting a French missionary passport as a document of protection.

The protectorate, conversely, offered many opportunities for steady conflicts between the Chinese authorities and France. Furthermore, it put the missionaries in an ambivalent light as representatives of colonial France. To avoid this embarrassing situation, Pope Leo XIII asked for imperial protection over the Catholic missionaries, which was granted by China, but the project failed because of massive French protest. First, in 1888, Germany maintained that German missionary passports should ensure the same advantages to missionaries as those secured by the French Legation. At the same time, the German Catholic missionaries of Shandong, who had much to endure from the pagan population, were, on several occasions, offered the powerful protection of the German Empire. Bishop Anzer found himself in a very tricky situation because both French and German envoys were seeking his positive decision. Anzer seems to have, in a short time, changed his mind to the irritation of Fr. Janssen and welcomed the protection and passports of the German Protectorate.

**VII.** The 100 pages of the seventh chapter give us a very meticulous report about the acceptance of the German protection by Southern Shandong. Rivinius shows, in a very balanced way, how difficult the position was for Bishop Anzer who was placed in a very complex situation between different authorities with whom he had to negotiate: Rome, Peking, Paris, Berlin and Steyl. There was a visible rift between the nationalist powers France and Germany and the religious goal of the Catholic mission, about which Arnold Janssen cared deeply. Maybe a more synthetic approach to this issue, at the cost of a very detailed report, would have better helped to grasp the general picture of the complex problem. Eventually, Anzer opted for his mission to assume German protection. His choice was influenced by nationalistic feelings.

Accepting the German protectorate in the face of the hesitant attitude of the Vatican, on 23 November, 1890, earned Anzer a splendid reception at the imperial court in Berlin. Nevertheless, this fact had far-reaching repercussions. He was attacked publicly in Germany in the years that followed, mainly in connection with the occupation of

Jiaozhou Bay and the Boxer Uprising. His activity was seen basically as a political issue because of his dishonorable striving for financial and material profit. He intentionally collaborated with the Reich's government to get active support for his mission.

**VIII.** The eighth chapter tells us about the foundation of the mission station in the city of Yanzhou – the religious and spiritual fortress of traditional confucianism. Being that Yanzhou was the prefecture capital of South Shandong, and residence of the highest civil authorities, it would give the mission a foot-hold and stability and ensure its success. Rivinius discusses Anzer's efforts to get permission for the construction of the mission station through the German envoy in Peking. The author leads us behind the scenes in an effort to help the reader comprehend the Chinese opposition to Christianity. In 1887, two educated Mandarins formed an association with the goal of completely destroying the church. Anzer assembled and then led missionaries to Jining for a retreat. Jining, the commercial center of the province, seemed to be a better place to construct the new mission residence, which was to become the center of the Southern Shandong Mission.

As time passed, the situation of the SVD mission in Jining started to normalize; people became friendlier, which allowed the missionaries to move forward on the construction of the cathedral and Anzer's episcopal residence that encompassed the house of the bishop, the seminary, a school, two orphanages, and a printing house. Bishop Anzer was convinced of the need for an indigenous priesthood and established his own seminary. Joseph Freinademetz was entrusted with the training of the oldest students. The seminary was soon moved from Poli to Jining. The first two Chinese students were ordained in 1896. A retreat house was acquired, and an annual retreat for all missionaries was introduced.

Rivinius also lets us realize that the very intense lifestyle of Bishop Anzer, due to his travels and lack of hesitation to confront difficult situations, exposed him to a lot of tension, which led him towards alcohol problems. The German legation's secretary, Hermann Freiherr Speck von Sternburg, was active with indignation and was quite vocal about the bishop's drinking problems. In 1895, missionaries of the Southern Shandong province found themselves in a very difficult situation. Overwhelmed by depression, resignation and the feeling of being estranged from their fatherland, their morale plummeted.

**IX.** The ninth chapter focuses on the efforts of Bishop Anzer to integrate more “old Christians” into his mission than existed in his diocese. Having accepted the faith generations ago, they preserved the old prayers and songs, which were adjusted to the local culture. Anzer regarded them as an important element in his mission work because old Christian families were the best source of vocations for catechists and the priesthood. Supported by Arnold Janssen, he asked the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome for additional areas to be separated from the primarily Franciscan region in Northern Shandong. But the Franciscans put up vehement resistance. The efforts of Anzer to expand his mission territory remained unsuccessful until the assassination of two SVD missionaries, Richard Henle and Franz Xaver Nies on 1 November, 1897, followed by the seizure of Jiaozhou Bay on the south-east coast of Shandong. The Germans exploited the murders as a pretext for the establishment of a German mandate.

**X.** The tenth chapter deals with two events: the diocesan synod and the provincial chapter, which were crucial to the development of the SVD Mission in the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong. The diocesan synod in Poli, presided by Anzer in the presence of twenty SVD Fathers, began at the end of July 1892 and was crowned by the approbation of the “*Manuale Missionariorum*.” This document was binding for missionaries as “Norma normans” and replaced Anzer’s previous principles for the mission, called “*Monita*” (1886).

The resolutions of the synod were approved in Rome on 25 July, 1894. The synod concentrated mainly on the work of the lay-catechists, which was regarded as the basic condition for missionary fruitfulness. In every respect, the work of catechists, due to their knowledge of language, customs and the psychology of the people, was fundamental for reaching the Chinese population. “A good church warden (catechist) is a real treasure and a pillar of the community” (363). The task of missionaries consisted in surveying the preparation and work of catechists. Under the influence of Fr. Joseph Freinademetz, the synod paid great attention to the community prayers, also an important factor of identity among local Christians. The acts of the synod reflected the trouble spots of mission work such as the consumption of opium, conduct with respect to the local women and marriage issues.

At the same time, in August 1892, Anzer (as Provincial) called the confreres together for the Second Provincial Chapter, which discussed the need to loosen the rules of the Society due to the different cir-

cumstances of culture and work in China. For instance, they voted in favor of building up their own brewery; Anzer voted against this. This postulate was withdrawn by the Superior General. With another vote, they deemed it worthy printing a mission periodical. Another postulate concerned itself with the election of a confrere from China to the General Council and the use of Chinese clothing by missionaries working in China. The resolutions of the provincial chapter were submitted to the Superior General who was tenacious in regard to maximizing prayer and religious life. At the end of 1892, the Mission of Southern Shandong, despite many obstacles, could boast of some significant achievements. Missionaries had won over numerous communities and catechumens and created a solid material base for their mission activities.

**XI.** In the eleventh chapter, Rivinius describes the organizational and financial state of the Apostolic Vicariate, as well as the ecclesiastical life of local Christians. In 1893, Anzer generally gave a positive picture of the situation in the vicariate. Fr. Freinademetz delivered a different report after his visit. He underlined the cold, indifferent attitude of the people toward the Catholic mission. His visitation report pointed out the visible shortcomings of the mission, especially related to the lack of a sufficient religious formation of the new Christians and a lack of supernatural nourishment due to the weak sacramental praxis. It resulted from this that the missionaries were to become more active in the transmission of the faith without relying only on the work of catechists, of whom only ten percent were well-prepared for their task. Anzer, seriously considering the suggestions presented in Freinademetz' visitation report, acknowledged that the unmethodical work of prior times needed to be changed.

To remedy these shortcomings he suggested the reorganization of pastoral work according to districts, which were presided over by a dean who was supposed to animate the pastoral work in the district by setting a good example and watching over the implementation of pastoral rules. He had to visit all the district communities once a year to get a complete picture of the situation. An archive was to be installed in his headquarters to store important documentation. Rivinius is sensitive to show the Chinese reception of missionary work. He also presents the missionary self-awareness, which was dominated by a spirit of sacrifice and dedication to the missionary work, which required, if necessary, readiness for martyrdom: "Per crucem ad lucem – through the cross to the light." The missionaries saw in the pagan culture of China a presence of Satan as the main barrier

for evangelization. China was called “the Realm of Hell,” and the pagan cult was considered idolatrous.

Nevertheless Rivinus challenges the general thesis of Klaus Mühlhahn who lumps together all SVD China missionaries as fundamentalist Catholics in terms of ultramontaniam without differentiation. His statements include a number of contradictions. Rivinius quotes some of Anzer’s statements that show his evolving view of the Chinese people. The statement: “They are merely Chinese,” he countered with: “But the yellow man is yet also a man with a feeling heart and an immortal soul.” With the passage of time and the experiences he had, he gained a deeper personal relationship with the Chinese people. “Anyone who associates with these people every day, as we missionaries do, is bound to develop quite a different image of this nation. They will find that the Chinese have amiable and estimable traits that distinguish them from people of other races and that assign them an outstanding position within a cultural life in the future, in the first place a relatively large number of people of this nation show a special inclination to Christianity” (400).

Theoretically the formation of catechists occupied priority in the missionary work of Bishop Anzer; however, it was not easy to implement this ideal in practice. Missionaries in China had to care for as many as 50 to 100 far-spread villages; therefore, the presence of catechists was crucial and they helped mediate between Christians and non-Christians. One of the first official acts of the Bishop in 1886 was the issuance of the catechist regulation. Bishop Anzer opened the first catechist school in Poli. Later it was moved to Liangshan. The training of catechists had a clearly outlined structure and, after 1886, was conducted systematically for at least two years. The training included three sections: presentation of Christianity for pagans, introduction into the Christian life for new converts and asceticism. The Vicariate ran its own collective catechism school which was attended in winter. The transition to the catechists’ school proceeded through judicious testing in order to choose suitable candidates. A zealous and well-prepared catechist was a blessing and the most effective method of evangelization.

Bishop Anzer decisively supported the training of a native clergy because that would guarantee the rooting of the Church among the Chinese population. Already on 23 February, 1884, Anzer opened a Minor Seminary with five young men in Poli. The beginnings were very difficult; the teachers scarcely knew Chinese and the seminarians learnt Latin with many troubles, although Latin was an indispensable foundation for further theological studies. On 8 December, 1889, Bishop Anzer ordained the first two Chinese seminarians

formed in Jinan, Josef Xia (1861-1939) and Matthias Chao (1856-1920), as priests. The next ordination of Petrus Po-Lu (1862-1934) took place in Poli on 29 July, 1892. In the same year, Johann Weig along with the Major Seminary was transferred to Wangzhuang in the mountains (region Yishui). Three years later (1895), the Seminary was moved to the episcopal residence at Jining, where Fr. Freinademetz took over its leadership, emphasizing the practical and priestly spirit in formation. On All Saints Day 1898, Bishop Anzer was able to ordain the first seven Chinese priests who had completed their studies in his seminary; after that, until 1906, there were no priestly ordinations. Rivinius tells us that the newly-ordained Chinese were treated as equals with the European priests. They were good and trustworthy co-workers. Several of them held important offices of responsibility.

Rivinius discusses the financing of the Apostolic Vicariate. Anzer was dependent on help from Europe. Arnold Janssen didn't spare efforts to help him but at the same time he reminded him of the needs in other missions. Anzer looked for other sources of financial support. For instance, he got to know a priest named Johann Baptist Mehler (1860-1930) from the diocese of Regensburg who continually supported his mission financially after 1891. In 1892, he sent Eberhard Limbrock to Europe in order to collect money and find benefactors. He was able to collect 50,000 Marks.

**XII.** The twelfth chapter arouses special interest because it treats Anzer's relationship with Arnold Janssen and with his missionaries. Arnold Janssen, out of gratitude to Anzer for his faithfulness in the critical time at the beginning of Steyl, proposed his name for the office of Bishop in Southern Shandong. Moreover, he allowed Anzer, after his return to China in 1886, to retain his post as provincial for two terms – altogether fourteen years. In correspondence with Anzer, Arnold Janssen tried to sensitize him to the weaknesses resulting from his fiery character, which needed to be tempered. "The superior must possess real humility and love if he wants to win hearts" (430). Janssen rebuked Anzer in order to help him to improve the tense relationship with many of the confreres. He prescribed spiritual medicine for him: humility, patience and mildness, as well as the absolute avoidance of anything that can offend. Anzer was to offer confreres an opportunity to express everything that disturbs them.

Sadly their relationship deteriorated before the second general chapter (1890). We learn that students in Steyl didn't want to choose China for mission work because they were afraid of Bishop Anzer.

The Superior General told Anzer that if he kept making unilateral decisions in matters that he ought to discuss with him, he would halt the supply of missionaries.

Rivinius also describes a spectacular event at the second general chapter when Anzer surprisingly declared that he was going to leave the Society and he also publicly called Janssen a tyrant. Unfortunately, it is impossible to reconstruct the specific circumstances due to the destruction of all records about that event. One of the contentious issues between Anzer and the General Council was the insufficient support for the mission from Steyl. On the other hand, reconciliation became difficult when the Superior General learned that Anzer had criticized the Society in Rome on the way to the general chapter. The emotional tension was eventually relieved although the situation still remained difficult in 1891. This explains why Anzer left Steyl without an official farewell.

Another aspect of Anzer's life was his relationship with the missionaries. It was influenced by his sanguine temperament and choleric character. Sometimes, Anzer lost his composure and offended his co-workers without any intention of doing so. His authoritarian and rigorous leadership frequently provoked displeasure and criticism. Fr. Eberhard Limbrock, who was his secretary for many years, got a unique insight into his life. He often emphasized that Anzer slept too little and was overworked. He claimed, in fact, that he was very much a man of action. Limbrock strove to defend Anzer, drawing attention to his extraordinary qualities as a bishop, especially his total dedication to the vicariate. When tension between the bishop and many confreres arose, Limbrock suggested to split the vicariate into two parts, thus the dissatisfied would have the opportunity to move to the newly-created part.

Surprisingly, things completely changed after Limbrock's collection journey to Europe, during which he heard a lot about Anzer. Their friendly relationship turned into the opposite. Now, he openly spoke about the negative characteristics of his bishop, like his lack of spiritual leadership in the Apostolic Vicariate, his lack of encouragement towards co-workers, an absence of the proper attitude towards the Society, his acting like a prince of the Church and his high self-satisfaction. But the main concern was related to his uncontrolled consumption of alcohol, which clearly marked the dark side of his life. The attraction to drinking with all of its side effects made it difficult for the missionaries to remain loyal.

Still, Rivinius draws our attention to Limbrock's idealistic, moralistic and arrogant evaluation which unfairly opposed the atmosphere at the mission house in Steyl to that in Southern Shandong. The au-

thor speaks about Limbrock's destructive and sometimes contradicting verdict about Anzer. He also questions Limbrock's one-sided understanding of the episcopal task. In fact, the Vicariate under Anzer was internally divided and he himself had a few enemies; he confided his problems only to Magdalene Leitner, a visionary who was closely tied to the work of the Society of the Divine Word.

To defuse the unbearable situation and reconcile both parties, Fr. Theodor Bückler, missionary in Southern Shandong, turned to Fr. Freinademetz and asked him to mediate. He asked Bishop Anzer to give full trust to Fr. Freinademetz, who had previously sent him a reminder to change his improper behavior. This intervention seems to have induced Anzer to invite Freinademetz to his residence in Jining. On 19 November, 1894, a lengthy meeting took place there: Fr. Freinademetz recapitulated controversial subjects that made the mission suffer. Anzer acknowledged his errors and fell to his knees, asking for forgiveness because of his misdemeanors. Meanwhile, the implacable critic Limbrock sent hundreds of pages of passionate accusations against Anzer to Steyl. This inflamed the situation, and Anzer's frame of mind reached its nadir. Seemingly Anzer's declarations to mend his ways were based on tactical and pragmatic reasons. He knew well that the direct confrontation with his closest opponents could have easily backfired and induced the General Council to address his issue to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome with the intention of his resignation.

Limbrock's unbearable pressure on Anzer affected his frame of mind substantially, so much so that Anzer was thinking of removing him from the vicariate. Anzer asked Magdalene Leitner to write to the Superior General in order to effect Limbrock's transfer. Besides that, he wrote that the Superior General shouldn't believe everything written about him or listen to Fr. Wegener too much. But in 1895, the General Council decided to pass Anzer's case to Rome. However, the Superior General wanted to desist when he got the letter from Fr. Freinademetz, who wrote about visible change in Anzer's conduct.

The members of the General Council, Fathers Wegener, Holthausen and Blume were of another opinion. Consequently, Cardinal Prefect Ledóchowski reprimanded Anzer and exhorted him to change his lifestyle. Anzer felt very disappointed and, continually citing the Holy Spirit, turned again to Magdalene Leitner in an effort to remove Limbrock from his mission. Anzer did everything possible to soften reprisals against him and change the tide to his favor. He tried to pinpoint Limbrock, who had allied himself with Fr. Freinademetz, as the main problem which led to the division in the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong. While Freinademetz, in his eyes, was a good,



pious, zealous man, he was also a little bit too autonomous and didn't understand things well enough. Meanwhile, Freinademetz and five other missionaries sent a letter to Cardinal Ledóchowski in Rome in which they defended Anzer.

After an inordinate amount of time, Anzer finally responded to the Cardinal Prefect but didn't include any justification for his behavior. He portrayed his own issue in a totally different light and declared to be ready to bear the injustice in humility and in surrender. In December 1895, Cardinal Prefect Ledóchowski once more clearly admonished Anzer to change for the better. The reminder from Rome frightened Anzer and left an indelible impression on him. Eventually Limbrock was nominated by Leo XIII as Apostolic Prefect of German New Guinea on 21 February, 1896, after the Society of the Divine Word had accepted the request of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to take over the new Vicariate. But that didn't stop him from writing more about the bad situation in Southern Shandong.

All in all, Rivinius critically assesses Limbrock's general criticism of Anzer as petty, subjective, one-sided and undifferentiated. Besides that, not all missionaries under Anzer were affected by the situation as it was presented by Limbrock. After his departure, the situation in Southern Shandong became more relaxed.

**XIII.** The thirteenth chapter deals with the political situation of the Catholic mission during a time of political turmoil in China, which was marked by the German occupation of the Bay of Jiaozhou and the aftermath of the murder of two German missionaries in 1897. Rivinius gives a broad backdrop of these tumultuous events. He lets the reader get to know the entangled political context of the mission work and the relationship between the mission and the civil authorities of the German Protectorate.

Japan's ascendancy to the rank of a great power, resulting from the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), led to a weakened China. Initially missionary work continued, but anti-Christian sentiment grew and riots occurred more frequently. In this restless situation, Anzer intensified his efforts to guarantee safety for the mission by raising funds and responding to accusations. He pointed out Japan as the aggressor and Germany as a Chinese ally. Even though the Christians were presented as agents of imperialism, they were, in fact, loyal to the Chinese government. Their picture, though, was presented in a distorted light; the more so because they sought safety at

their respective consulates. But this did not stop numerous uprisings against missionaries in China.

In 1896, the German ambassador in Peking received the command from Berlin to support the claims of the Catholic missionaries decisively. The German Empire declared that it would defend the mission of Shandong against all unjust oppression. It guaranteed them the freedom to spread the gospel as it had been formerly guaranteed by the French Protectorate. The murder of two SVD missionaries provided a long-awaited pretext for the occupation of the Bay of Jiaozhou. Qingdao was added to Anzer's territory.

Rivinius delivers a detailed description of the political events that led up to the occupation of the Bay of Jiaozhou. From the facts presented, it can be inferred that the murder of German missionaries was used by Germany to implement its political ambitions and establish a military outpost in China. At that time, the Chinese weren't ready for a military confrontation because of many internal and structural problems. Therefore, after careful consideration, they decided to deal with this situation through diplomacy.

On the list of German demands to the Chinese as reparation for the murders were the following: an obligation that the Chinese cover all expenses related to the construction of the cathedral in Jining, which had already been started by Bishop Anzer. Later on, two more churches were added to the list. Furthermore, a stone plaque was to be placed at the cathedral to ensure the safety of the missionaries and the church itself. On top of that, the assassins who had killed the SVD missionaries were to be apprehended and punished and China was to guarantee that such a case would never happen again. The German-Chinese negotiations ended in an accord, signed in Berlin on 9 May, 1898. The acquired territory, the Bay of Jiaozhou, around 55 km<sup>2</sup> with about 100,000 Chinese inhabitants, was leased to Germany for ninety-nine years. Thus, Germany had ensured a very important strategic base for its navy in East Asia.

Although the prolonged deadly drought of 1898-1900 caused widespread unrest in North China, the German occupation of Jiaozhou and the humiliating treaty undoubtedly contributed to the Boxer Uprising. In the face of this crisis, the Chinese felt that behind this upheaval stood the looming power of Christianity in China. Unfortunately, the SVD mission symbolized the legitimization of the German occupation and concealed the real purposes of the German Government. Rivinius shows the critical reaction of the German press to the occupation of Jiaozhou. He notes in light of many sources that, although Anzer asked the German government for the protection of his mission, he didn't influence the decision in Berlin to occupy the Bay

of Jiaozhou; that decision was taken by the Emperor himself. Anzer even warned that the occupation would cause complications with Russia.

The Chinese government eventually paid the enormous sum of 225,000 Tael to the Apostolic Vicariate, even though many of the other demands were not fulfilled. Germany coming out so strongly in support of reparation for the murder of two missionaries was received in French and Vatican circles with mixed feelings. In the face of the German occupation, Anzer planned a new perspective for his mission work. He asked Cardinal Prefect Ledóchowski to include this territory into the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong, warning against the fast progress of the Protestant mission there.

Anzer's plans met strong resistance from the Italian Franciscans in Western Shandong and the French Protectorate. Rivinius unveils the very anti-German attitude of the Franciscans: "Better no missionaries than a German." At the turn of 1898, Anzer was in Europe and able to attend the funeral of his mother, who died on 10 January, 1898. After this, he visited St. Gabriel in Mödling near Vienna, the Holy Cross Seminary in Neisse and St. Michael in Steyl. On the way, he hurt his leg while boarding a train. Instead of coming back to China as planned at the end of January, he arrived in China in April 1898, visiting the United States along the way. When he learned that Rome might create a separate Apostolic Prefecture in Jiaozhou, he immediately sent a letter to Cardinal Ledóchowski in which he argued that this step would be a financial disaster for his mission. Meanwhile, he visited Qingdao with the intention of acquiring land. In July 1898, Rome decided that the mostly German Apostolic Vicariate of Western Shandong should be united with the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Shandong. Rivinius shows us Anzer's diplomatic skills while striving for land for the construction of the bishop's cathedral, residence and administrative buildings as well as houses to let for income. Anzer ruthlessly used all possible arguments and means to reach his goal. He managed to obtain 30,000 square meters of land, free of charge. This area was equivalent to the property of all of the Protestants in Qingdao. SVD missionaries took over caring for the 600 Catholic soldiers who accounted for half of the military force stationed there. In 1910, out of 1,621 European civilians, only 241 were Catholics. Germany wanted to build a model colony in China.

Between the years 1898 and 1899, the anti-Christian campaign grew in strength, moving from Southern Shandong to Western Shandong. A severe famine triggered by flooding caused assaults on mission stations. Fr. Stenz who coming from Qingdao arrived in Rizhao on 2 November 1898, ran into a massive demonstration. He and six

Christians were imprisoned for three days, severely maltreated and injured. Afterwards, they returned to Qingdao. Fr. Freinademetz arrived in Rizhao in order to negotiate the conditions of a peace accord and to have the culprits punished. Meanwhile, Anzer undertook decisive steps to settle the issue with the Chinese local authorities, who were compelled to give satisfaction.

When Anzer got insight into the accord signed by Freinademetz with the district's officials, he judged it insufficient. Therefore, he cancelled the accord which had been signed without his knowledge. The new accord was much more favorable for the missionaries and contained the construction of a chapel in Houjietou, a donation of land for the construction of a mission station in Rizhao, a 25,000 Tael settlement due to the injured missionary Fr. Stenz and harsh punishment for the initiators of the assault.

The German occupation agitated the Chinese and increased the opposition against the missionaries. The German colonial government acted decisively against anti-German riots. It made the Chinese understand that each assault on Germans would be punished. In fact, the governor used military force by sending soldiers with Fr. Stenz. They burned the two villages in which the anti-German riots had taken place. An escalation of violence followed. The case of Fr. Stenz was used as a political factor to demonstrate the German authority over the Chinese subjects. Anzer, with the collaboration of the German authorities, was unyielding in regard to the settlements with the Chinese.

Anzer bitterly stated: "The only reason why Christians are persecuted everywhere, expelled from their houses and land is Jiaozhou." The Chinese took revenge on the mission and the Christians. On the other hand, Anzer's triumphant attitude, based on confrontation, shows little sensitivity for the mentality of the Chinese and very little understanding for their concerns. The introduction of Christianity inevitably caused discontent, disagreement, rivalry and divisions in the traditional village communities and led to conflicts. Not infrequently, the adoption of the Christian faith by family members sowed discord and burdened family relations. The initial harmony between mission and secular state changed. Accusations and hostilities turned up because of the derogatory treatment of the Chinese people and the uncivilized conduct of the Germans.

**XIV.** The fourteenth chapter is centered on the missionary situation during the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901). The Boxer Rebellion was directed against the foreign political, religious and commercial influences in China. Although the Rebellion was anti-Christian, it was not focused on the areas within Anzer's territory. In the fighting, the Boxers killed thousands of Chinese Christians. This book, focused on the tension between mission and politics, offers us a wide panorama of the interconnection between the two overlapping dimensions. The very dense presentation of facts doesn't always make the understanding of the complex situation very easy. But Rivinius, who previously has dealt with this problem (*The Boxer Movement and Christian Missions in China: Mission Studies 7* [1990] 189-217), professionally delivers us broad analyses of causes, actors and the character of the Boxer Uprising because of its crucial role in shaping modern Chinese history.

The Boxer movement adopted an anti-foreign attitude in general and was anti-Christian specifically. The Boxers designated the main source of numerous disasters in China to be foreigners and the missionaries who had created many new Christian communities in China. The Boxer movement grew in strength in 1899 and transformed itself into a massive and violent uprising against foreigners. The hatred of Christians was visible in numerous attacks on mission stations and places of worship. The Boxers, many of them desperately poor and starving, looted the mission properties, destroyed churches, chapels and houses, while missionaries, despite steady appeals to the local authorities, remained defenseless and exposed to the persecution which spread fear and resignation among them. At the tumultuous time of the Boxer Uprising, many Christians fled to main mission centers like Jining and Poli that were well-protected by walls and had rifles to defend themselves. Around-the-clock sentries watched over the compounds. Everywhere, Christians were robbed and persecuted while looking for shelter at the mission stations. In the province of Hebei, seventy Christians were massacred, several villages were set on fire and looted on 12 May, 1900. The petitions for safety, sent by the missionaries to the Chinese local authorities, remained unanswered. So they turned to the German.

Meanwhile in Germany a very vivid public controversy took place about the mission of Southern Shandong and Anzer found himself in the spotlight of that fierce polemic. His closeness to the political authorities served as an argument against the Catholic missions. He won Emperor Wilhelm II's favor and personally discussed the East-Asian issues with him. The Emperor awarded him the Order of the

Crown, Second Class with a Star, for his services in favor of the German fatherland. Also Prince Luitpold of Bavaria – Anzer was a Bavarian citizen – decorated him and elevated him to the rank of nobility. Even in China, he received several outstanding awards and the title of Mandarin from the Imperial Court.

In German public opinion, many voices were convinced that the escalation of the Boxer Uprising was primarily triggered by the resentment and animosity against the Christian proclamation of the Gospel. Nowadays, historians assess the failure of diplomatic contact and negotiations between the Chinese government and the Western powers as the essential cause of the Boxer Uprising. In Peking, the foreign delegations were besieged by Boxers and had to wait for multinational military help. Finally, in 1900, Peking was conquered and the Boxer army was defeated by multinational forces.

The attitude of Germany as a protective force to the Christian mission and the native Christians in China was another heated point of the vivid debate within the German public. A polemic developed between the Protestants and Catholics organized in the Center Party (*Zentrum*). The Center Party defended the basic interests of the Catholic mission in Southern Shandong against unjust attacks, whereas the Social Democratic Party called Bishop Anzer the obvious culprit for the Boxer Uprising.

Rivinius sheds light on the internal developments of the Center Party to better understand its position towards German colonial politics. Anzer was often cited in the polemic because of his Christmas address in 1900: “The first and most important reason for persecution was the occupation of Jiaozhou. The seizure of Jiaozhou was a deeply painful wound for Chinese national pride.”

In the parliamentary debate, August Bebel, the speaker of the Social Democratic Party, subjected the Catholic missionaries and Bishop Anzer to a pitiless critique. He pretended to be amazed because the Imperial Chancellor had defended the mission, since the missionaries, he claimed, through their conduct, provocations and inconsiderate involvement, had evoked discontent and wrath. In a certain way, these directly contributed to the Chinese hatred for representatives of the Christian religion and teachings. He decisively objected to the state’s protection of the German missionaries as a private matter. Mainly he accused Bishop Anzer of having played a fateful role through his interference and lawsuits. By misusing power, he had drawn down hatred on the mission and Germany.

Three days later, Karl Bachem took the floor on behalf of the Center Party. He rebuked the strong criticism as if Anzer had caused the

leasing of Jiaozhou. He spoke about the possibility of separation of church and state. He pointed to the commitment of the Chinese government to protect German citizens and defended the loftiness of the missionary activity. Still the positions of the parties which had attempted to distinguish between missionaries and Chinese Christians who didn't have the right to German protection remained irreconcilable. The missionary congregations were blamed for standing in the service of German imperialistic politics and for provoking hostility towards the foreigners by their disregard of Chinese feelings and arrogant appearance, thus contributing significantly to the uprising in China. This was true also for American and English Protestant missionaries.

The combination of mission and politics caused suspicion. The Protestants attempted to make Anzer responsible for all problems. The open criticism focused on Bishop Anzer and pointed to his ambiguous utterances, especially his role in the occupation of Jiaozhou. Anzer stated that the assignment of Jiaozhou was a matter of life and death for the survival of his mission. The well-known Protestant missiologist, Gustav Warneck, called Anzer a political agent who didn't adequately understand the changes that had recently occurred in China. Anzer and his mission were drawn into some difficulty because of his ambitious and enterprising behavior and also his symbiotic bond with the German government. In Warneck's view, Anzer drew the hatred upon the Catholic mission with his provocative conduct, misuse of consular justice and autocratic intrusion into the Chinese system of justice.

If one wants to stick to the sources, the generic accusation against Anzer is unsustainable. According to Rivinius, this undifferentiated and destructive judgment is unacceptable and too simplistic. Anzer personally answered the accusations of his main opponent, the Protestant pastor Philip Horbach, on 20 November, 1900. Anzer defended the appeal to the protectorate, the use of weapons in dangerous situations and the wearing of the Mandarin dress, to which he was entitled because of the awards received and which it was proper to wear during the ceremonial visits in accordance with the Chinese customs. In this respect, the Protestants did the same. In an open letter, he admitted not having properly weighed his words.

**XV.** The fifteenth chapter is dedicated to the educational initiatives of Bishop Anzer after the downfall of the Boxer Uprising. Many Westerners blamed the Christians for the disaster of the Boxer Rebellion, whereas most of the Chinese rejected them and some regarded missionaries

as spies of western powers. In this context, Rivinius points to an educational and political reform movement with the intention of changing the negative image of mission activities up to that point. There were Chinese who were interested in Christianity and even attempted to work out new conceptions of missionary work. For instance, two Chinese provincial governors proposed reforms in missionary work. One had asked Daotai Ma, a Catholic, suggest building a seminary for preparing native priests in China during his audience with Pope Leo XIII, because they would better understand the Chinese culture. Also, their missionary work would be more efficient. Another governor, Zhong Zhidong, suggested working out a common program for all mission activities in China, the regulations to be watched over by appointed commissioners.

In this situation, Germany adopted a wait-and-see attitude. After the Boxer Rebellion, there was a notable amelioration of the climate versus the mission. It was caused partially by the moderation of the diplomats and an attempt to respect the religious and national feelings of the Chinese. The missionaries also, thanks to self-critical insight into their own mistakes, changed their attitude and made better contact with the Chinese authorities, which perceived different contributions in favor of the country and its population. Moreover, the Chinese state went through a process of modernization and secularization. Some Chinese officials spotted the backwardness of their country compared to western countries and Japan. Rivinius shows the social-political situation of China and carefully analyzes the important factors of change in different domains of the state after the suppression of the Boxer Uprising; the most innumerable consequences of structural and quantitative improvements were to be seen in the education system. The modernization was based on the openness to the world and education of the Chinese elites abroad.

Anzer's initiative in favor of education in his missions is placed in this context. He attempted to establish a high school. Encouraged by the Holy See, he was initially considering the proposition of governor Yuan Shikai to build a high school with foreign languages and sciences in the capital of the province. In the end, he turned down this option because the place was situated in the Franciscan Apostolic Vicariate. Nevertheless, he got permission to build a similar school in Yanzhou, where his residence was located along with the catechists' school and seminary. Yuan Shikai promised to support this school with an annual contribution of 2,000 Kuping Tael. On 10 March, 1902, the first purely German-Chinese High School in China's inland was officially opened in the presence of Chinese officials. The Chinese government recognized it as a private school without reli-



gious education and supported it materially. Moreover, a similar private school was opened in Jining, the commercial center, in October of the same year. Another professional school had started with forty young Chinese. The involvement of missionaries in the educational sector gradually improved the relationship between the Chinese and the Europeans. The Chinese started to observe the work of the Missionaries of the Divine Word with greater admiration.

Rivinius also touches on the very sensitive issue of Confucian rites. The SVD mission in Southern Shandong was located in the sacred land and stronghold of the veneration of Confucius. In September 1886, Anzer acquired a house in Yanzhou. From the very beginning, the local council and Confucian *literati* tried to prevent the establishment of a mission in their city. For Christians, worshipping a human being rated as morally objectionable and idolatrous. Thus, Anzer felt confronted with a real dilemma. For Anzer, the worship of Confucius was unacceptable. However, he reached a successful compromise. An accord was signed on 31 May, 1903, according to which the high school in Yanzhou was merged with the imperial secondary school. Christian students were exempt from worshipping Confucius and after graduation were able to become Chinese officials. This was a privilege and major success for the bishop. Generally, the cult of Confucius was obligatory in all schools to keep away the influence of the missionaries in Chinese education.

**XVI.** The sixteenth and final chapter revolves around the attempts to dislodge Bishop Anzer from China. Initially, it seemed that Anzer took a turn for the better after the situation in China calmed down and his main opponent, Fr. Limbrock, left for New Guinea.

However, the point remained that Anzer's power was spread across the two offices of bishop and provincial. As a provincial he was obliged to be subordinate to the Superior General and to set a good example as a religious, abiding by the rules of the Society. As this often wasn't the case, many confreres wanted to change the situation and wished to elect a new provincial. New complaints against Anzer appeared. Arnold Janssen wasn't reluctant to speak to his conscience because, as a bishop, he had to be a "flawless man and his erroneous behavior gave offence, more than that of other people."

The difficult situation in Southern Shandong was one of the main issues on the third General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word in Steyl from 29 September, 1897, to 4 May, 1898. The relation between ecclesiastical and religious superior of the mission was especially debated. The Superior General wished to appoint a new provin-

cial in place of Anzer due to the difficult circumstances there. Anzer shortly participated in the chapter but later Southern Shandong was represented by his secretary, Fr. Rudolf Pieper. Anzer proposed Fathers Heinrich Erlemann and Theodor Vilsterman as possible candidates for the office of the provincial on the request of the Superior General. He excluded the candidacy of Fr. Freinademetz whom he disliked.

The motion of the majority of the General Council to have Anzer discharged from his office as Vicar Apostolic was presented to Cardinal Ledóchowski, who opposed it. In order to inform Rome exactly about the situation in Southern Shandong, Arnold Jansen had Fr. Limbrock prepare an exhaustive report. This document was presented to Cardinal Ledóchowski and other prelates in Rome. Meanwhile Janssen decided to appoint Fr. Freinademetz as provincial in place of Anzer and make Fr. Vilsterman his assistant. In order to defuse the very unpleasant situation, Fr. Bernhard Eikenbrock, the rector of St. Gabriel, independently advised Anzer by mail to abdicate from his office and become a consultor in Rome. He quoted the following reasons for his abdication: his weakened health, the disturbed relationship with the German government and the discontent with his person on the part of a number of missionaries in Southern Shandong.

The last couple of years of Anzer's life were marked by new actions against him with the intention of forcing him out of office. The accusations against the bishop intensified. Based on the sources, Rivinius juxtaposes the different opinions about Anzer which can be generally outlined in two leading positions. The first one represented mainly by his confreres was decidedly negative. The second one represented by "outsiders," mainly German and Chinese officials, was more positive, stressing his merits and standing up for him.

Some of Anzer's confreres like Fathers Franz Bartels, Theodor Bückler and Anton Volpert were in this latter group. The opinions of the other confreres contained a scathing criticism of the bishop's person, administration and lifestyle. At the request of the Founder, Fr. Freinademetz prepared a dossier for Rome, which along with the opinions of other missionaries expressed a firm conviction that Anzer was guided by human and political, not spiritual and supernatural motives in his many undertakings; that he was looking for glory by his rare, but sumptuous pastoral visits, which contributed more to his triumph than the spiritual health of his faithful; that he had constructed a huge building that was underused. Furthermore, some missionaries didn't want to return to China because of him.

The Superior General and the General Council intended to collect extensive evidence for Rome in order to remove Anzer from his office. In December 1899, Janssen sent Fr. Stenz to Rome with Freinademetz' dossier to press the case against Anzer. Stenz met with Cardinal Steinhuber, who after being acquainted with the facts, told him that one tenth of the complaints would suffice to remove the bishop from office. The incriminatory evidence from 20 August, 1901 was also considered by the Propaganda Fide, which decided to inquire further to clarify the case. Finally, Cardinal Ledóchowski declared that the accusations against Anzer didn't have any basis. On top of that, Arnold Janssen, as the Superior of a religious congregation, did not have any right to interfere in the affairs of the Vicar Apostolic. The Superior General was very dismayed and angry after that communication. But Cardinal Steinhuber pressed him to demand the revision of Anzer's case. While Janssen, himself, adopted an expectant approach, Cardinal Steinhuber again discussed Anzer's case with Pope Leo XIII in the middle of July 1902.

Shortly afterwards, on 22 July, 1902, the news of the demise of Cardinal Ledóchowski arrived. Two weeks later, Arnold Janssen, seeing a providential sign in this, asked the Propaganda to examine Anzer's case again. The Congregation started a new inquiry immediately. This time, it asked the opinion of Bishop Prospero Paris, the Apostolic Vicar of Nanjing, who simply recapitulated the accusations of his adversaries without adding any new complaints or making inquiries with the other missionaries. On the basis of the judgment of Bishop Paris which was presented in the Propaganda on 28 February, 1903, the Congregation drew up a new bill of indictment against Anzer and urged him to appear in Rome.

Before setting out for Europe, Anzer invited his missionaries to Yanzhou to bid them farewell. He left for Europe along with his secretary Fr. Ludwig Klapheck on 10 October, 1903. Over two months had passed since he had received the letter from Rome, which in turn had been mailed from Rome three months earlier. To shorten the journey to Rome, Anzer decided to use the recently opened Trans-Siberian railway. He was seen off by numerous mandarins and officials, some of whom had given him gifts for the Pope. He arrived in Rome on 11 November, 1903 and found accommodation in the Pontificio Collegio Teutonico di S. Maria dell'Anima at the Piazza Navona in the vicinity of the SVD College of Saint Raphael, where there was no vacancy.

In connection with the forthcoming negotiations at the Roman Curia, in the face of the depressing uncertainty about its outcome, Anzer found himself under huge psychological strain. In one letter from

Rome, Anzer wrote to Magdalene Leitner: "I arrived in Rome yesterday. I ask you to pray for me that all goes well here; I mean that everything happens according to the will of God. Especially pray that Protestants stop attacking me, for the glory of the Church. I trust in your prayers and your suffering."

Arnold Janssen took advantage of the bishop's arrival in Rome and his forthcoming meeting with Cardinal Gotti, the new Prefect of the Propaganda, to present the register of complaints about Anzer's vanity, domineering personality, alcoholic addiction, mendacity and violence again in the hope that he would be a better judge in regard to him. The Superior General expressed a hopeful wish that the adversities would open the bishop's eyes and serve him for the best. After his arrival in Rome, Anzer was very busy with many different affairs, visits and meetings. He felt content with the different interlocations. He also celebrated Holy Masses at different altars of the saints he particularly venerated. On the morning of the twenty-third of November 1903, the audience of Anzer and his confreres in Rome with Pope Pius X took place. The Pope spoke with Anzer privately for fifteen minutes and implied a favorable decision in his case at the Propaganda. After the audience, Anzer met Cardinal Prefect Gotti.

In the afternoon, Anzer visited the Prussian envoy Freiherr von Rotenhan, who found him to be a little bit nervous. He informed the diplomat about the course of the audience and his intention of leaving for Berlin two days later. In the evening, he visited his confreres at St. Raphael's College and spoke with them cheerfully. On the morning of the next day, 24 November, he celebrated Mass in the convent of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, who had accepted his invitation to work in Qingdao. At about 10 am, he came back to the Anima, spoke shortly with Fr. Klapheck and went into his room. He didn't show up for lunch. Afterwards, a messenger of the Cardinal Prefect intended to hand him a letter, which induced Fr. Klapheck to look for the bishop.

However, all searches remained in vain until a loud sound of wheezing was heard in a locked restroom. After opening the door by force, the Bishop was found lying on the ground breathing stertorously with a reddened face. Distraught, they put him to bed; Josef Lohninger, rector of the Anima, administered the last rites, during which he passed away at about 5 pm. The Italian physician stated cerebral apoplexy and hemiplegia. Monsignor Lohninger informed the Pope and Cardinals Merry del Val and Gotti about Anzer's death.

Everyone was shocked about the unexpected death of Bishop Anzer which had far-reaching repercussions and triggered profound mourning in the Society of the Divine Word worldwide. News about

Anzer's death reached Steyl in time for evening prayers. The Superior General and the General Council felt deeply shocked, but there was also a certain relief because it promised an amelioration of the difficult situation in Southern Shandong. The German press underlined a big loss for the missions. It pictured Bishop Anzer as an outstanding figure in nineteenth century mission history. Many underlined his unrelenting energy, which was not deterred by any difficulty because of his endurance, wisdom, strength and perseverance. This pioneer and founder of the SVD mission in China knew how to attract people. He contributed to the awakening of the mission idea in Germany and in the United States. He was praised for his lasting merits for the German missions in China and for his patriotic spirit.

Anzer was fifty-two when he died. The next day, his corpse was clothed in the black SVD cassock with the episcopal insignia. He was laid out in a simple wooden coffin in the Anima. On the morning of the 27 November, Rector Anton de Waal celebrated a well-attended solemn requiem. The funeral itself at the German cemetery Campo Santo Teutonico took place privately in the afternoon. Thus, Anzer found his final resting place in the shadow of St. Peter's.

The funeral was deferred because of the circulating rumors that his sudden death was suicide or else caused by emotional excitation and grief after receiving the letter from the Cardinal Prefect, in which he was supposed to have been informed that he could not return to China. In order to show that these rumors were unfounded, an autopsy was undertaken by two Italian physicians under the pretext that the Chinese wanted to have the bishop's heart in their midst. They stated that the reason for the bishop's demise was a massive cerebral hemorrhage. The SVD Fathers studying in Rome eventually took the bishop's preserved heart to Saint Gabriel's at Mödling in June 1904.

At this point, Rivinius faces the difficult question of whether Anzer was removed from office or not during his stay in Rome. The answer is not clear. Rivinius concludes that the accessible evidence supports the opinion that Anzer wasn't dismissed from office. The favorable hint from the Pope and Anzer's own remarks about his imminent departure from Rome to Germany and then back to China support this conclusion. Rome arguably gave Anzer a chance for a new start; a kind of probation.

The question of the succession after the death of Bishop Anzer became strategic. For the Superior General and his councillors, Fr. Freinademetz was the favored candidate because of his respected personality, age and rich missionary experience in China. Janssen was afraid that the government of the German Reich would press the

Vatican to nominate a bishop able and willing to uphold German interests, which it did. Freinademetz was considered unsuitable. He was Austrian and described as wily, fanatical, without political tact. When Freinademetz learned about it through the Superior General, he was visibly dejected.

The Propaganda had asked the Superior General to propose the names of three men. In April, Janssen got the results of the vote of the Southern Shandong missionaries who proposed their candidates: first was Fr. Freinademetz, who got more than half of the votes, then Fr. Henninghaus, finally Frs. Vilsterman and Pieper. Meanwhile, the imperial government had already decided on Fr. Henninghaus after determining that he was competent, respected by the Chinese and a patriotic missionary. On 2 June, 1904, the Superior General sent his list of the three candidates Freinademetz, Henninghaus and Vilsterman with detailed explanations. On 25 July, 1904, the nine cardinals present at the plenary session of the Propaganda voted for Fr. Henninghaus as the successor of Anzer. He was consecrated in Yanzhou on 13 October, 1904.

#### *4. Conclusion*

Karl Josef Rivinius delivers an invaluable reference map to get to know the first SVD mission in China and a penetrating analysis of the life of Bishop Anzer in the historical context of his time. He showed how to deal successfully with a large base of sources, which he quotes properly to support his arguments. This book is the result of many years of ongoing research, mainly focused on the entanglement of mission and politics in the time of colonialism.

The author maintains consistency with his sources and does not posit spurious conclusions. First of all, he tries to do justice to the sources without forcing them or giving easy answers. He gives an account of the complexity of historical reality. Rivinius sheds a new and more objective light on the life of Bishop Anzer, but this doesn't mean at all that we receive an exhaustive picture of the bishop. Some questions remain unanswered, others are debatable or not fully convincing.

The book follows the life and work of Bishop Anzer according to the chronological order with a strong preference for the political backdrop of Anzer's life. The language of the book is comprehensible and the historical discourse is logical and fluent. Undoubtedly, the size of the book and the abundance of footnotes may not appeal to the average reader. The structure of the chapters, despite an intrinsic

cohesion, shows disparity. The author, maybe due to understandable reasons, is very economical in the use of other aids like photographs. Therefore, this aspect of the book as well as its size don't take the taste of contemporary readers into consideration.

According to the obituaries, Anzer was a prominent personality. He left a deep impression on the Chinese population. In the epilogue, Rivinius focuses on Anzer's diverse activities: his proclamation of the Word of God, his visit to the Christian communities and sacramental ministry as well as his printing activity, education and construction work. His Christian community increased from 158 to 26,000 baptized and 40,000 catechumens. He was a man of firm confidence in God, distinct self-confidence, bold fearlessness, constructive creativity, organizational far-sightedness, tactical skill and untiring commitment. He used to get up at three o'clock in the morning and took care of his sizeable correspondence by himself. He dedicated time to heed the problems and worries of his Christians. He found approving recognition and benevolent support in the public, both of his country and abroad. At the same time, he met malicious hostility and accusations related in part to his authoritarian, impulsive and overly ambitious character as well as his contradictory conduct, in part stemming from denominational narrow-mindedness, envy, ideological and stereotyped thinking or political calculations and chauvinism.

His imposing lifework was overshadowed by a certain tragedy, particularly because of his relationship to the founder of the Society of the Divine Word. Indeed, they didn't get along, because of their difference in character and temperament no less than differences of opinion in reference to difficult issues. They both were autocrats. Arnold Janssen wasn't disposed to tolerate the smallest hint of attempted independent act or minor deviation of his subjects, including Bishop Anzer. The Superior General exercised strict control in order to avoid any deviation. In the face of the concrete reality of life in the mission, which differed significantly from the ordered lifestyle in the Mission House, Anzer demanded more independence and space for his freedom of choice. These differences between them led to misunderstandings and controversies. Anzer felt it was impossible to keep every detail of the rule in the missions, because that would impede missionary activity. For this reason Arnold Janssen accused him of arousing opposition against him and the Society. A basic difference of interests existed between Janssen and Anzer. An open and constructive attempt at overcoming these differences could have spared everyone involved the distressing attempt to remove Anzer from office.

As founder of the mission of Southern Shandong, he was a man of providence. The resplendent progress of the mission must be contri-

buted to a great extent to Bishop Anzer's unstinting commitment. He has unquestionably made a singular contribution not only to the German interests in China but also to the propagation of the Christian faith.

*Andrzej Miotk SVD\**

\* Born 1963 in Sierakowice, Poland. Ordained 1989. Licentiate in Church History at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome 1990-1993, then doctorate at the Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule SVD St. Augustin, Germany 1995-1999. Since 1999 lecturer in Church History at the SVD Mission Seminary in Pieniężno, Poland, and at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Warmia-Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland (2002-2009). Currently historical referent in the SVD historical archives in Rome.