

*Andrzej Miotk, SVD\**

### CHINA OF THEIR DREAMS

*Bishop Theodor Schu, SVD, was a missionary to China from 1921 until his expulsion in 1952, but his heart and engagement for the mission in China and the Chinese people never ended. In exile both in Germany and in the Philippines, he tried to find ways of promoting the evangelisation of the Chinese.*

*Part of this dramatic history becomes visible in the correspondence with “his” missionaries, particularly the priests who had worked in his diocese in China. The letters have been published recently in German in the Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini series (Vol. 117, Siegburg: Franz Schmitt Verlag 2020) and the SVD internal publication Analecta SVD – 61/VII (Rome).*

*To present an overview of the anguishes and hopes, dreams and visions of these missionaries, we publish here the English version of the Introduction to this volume, as it portrays Theodor Schu, SVD, and the SVD mission in China and the decades after briefly. This introduction—as well as the edition of Hartwich’s work on the correspondence and the footnotes there—originally was written by Andrzej Miotk, SVD.*

Fr. Richard Hartwich SVD (1912–2000), former missionary to China, since 1988 had started to research in the SVD Archives in Rome. Thus, this first and “beloved” mission of our Society founded in Steyl has found its dedicated historian who did not spare efforts to collect and preserve records of its past.<sup>1</sup> Fr. Hartwich was born in Lichtenfeld (today Lelkowo in Poland’s Warmia). He committed him-

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<sup>1</sup> China was the first and the greatest mission of the Society of the Divine Word.

self totally to the China Mission just after his ordination in 1938. There, he worked as a teacher, prefect and rector at the minor seminary in Yanzhoufu for 14 years (1939–1953). Then, in 1953, like many other missionaries, he was expelled from China and arrived in Neuenkirchen/Germany on December 30 of the same year. After a short stop-over in his home country, he was called to Hong Kong to do translation work into Chinese (since September 1954). Then, in 1956, he took over the administration of the Chinese Parish in Dagupan in the Philippines. But the new Superior General, Fr. Johannes Schütte, saw him as a Spiritual Director at St. Peter's College in Rome. Thus, in September 1958, he was already in Rome. At the age of 54 he graduated with a doctorate in Theology at the Gregorian University (Rome) in 1966.

As mentioned above, in 1988 he embarked on an assiduous research in the SVD Historical Archives at the Generalate which has fructified with the six-volume work “*Steyley Missionare in China*” (Divine World Missionaries in China). Using almost exclusively archival sources (quotations), he delivered in it a chronicle of the most important events and stages of the progress of the SVD's China mission from the mid-eighties of the nineteenth century to the end of the twenties of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The six volumes are written mostly in German. The first three volumes cover the years 1879–1919: Richard Hartwich SVD, *Steyley Missionare in China. I. Missionarische Erschließung Südshantungs 1879–1903. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* (Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 32), St. Augustin: Steyler Verlag 1983. The second describes the arrival of the SSPS Sisters in China in 1905 and their successive fortunes and misfortunes there (id., *Steyley Missionare in China. II. Bischof A. Henninghaus ruft Steyley Schwestern 1904–1910. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 36], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1985). The third volume includes the missionary work of SVDs in the years of the Chinese Revolution and the First World War (1911–1919) (id., *Steyley Missionare in China. III. Republik China und Erster Weltkrieg 1911–1919. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 40], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1987). The slimmer fourth volume of 100 pages is a collection of letters of Superior General Wilhelm Gier (1920–1932). The letters are a sort of a spiritual guide, addressed to the China missionaries after the Superior General's six-month visitation in China (August 27, 1922, to February 20, 1923), until 1929 (id. [ed.], *Steyley Missionare in China. IV. Geistlicher Führer seiner Chinamissionare. Rev. mus P. Wilhelm Gier SVD 1922. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 42], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1988). The fifth volume describes the further development of the South Shandong mission until 1923 and the beginnings of the SVD's new missions in Gansu, Xining and Xinjiang (1922) as well as in South Henan (1923) (id., *Steyley Missionare in China. V. Aus Kriegsrüinen zu neuen Grenzen 1920–1923. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 48], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1989). The last vol-

Nevertheless, the 6<sup>th</sup> volume wasn't his last word: After his death in 2000, an additional volume to be published was discovered, which contained a collection of correspondence of the former bishop of Yanzhoufu/China, Theodor Schu, SVD (1892–1965) from most of the time of his exile in the Philippines (1952–1959).<sup>3</sup> The almost 320 letters give us an interesting insight into the bishop's laborious activity in exile in favour of the China mission. They witness his involvement in maintaining alive the cause of this mission during the worst years of the ruthless persecution in China. They reveal also hopes of returning to China in the future. In view of such a perspective, in exile he engaged in many initiatives and efforts to stimulate a development of the China mission abroad. Bishop Schu stayed in steady touch with missionaries, religious sisters, friends, priests and seminarians who were forced to leave his diocese of Yanzhoufu and to flee to the Philippines or elsewhere. He focused on the formation of seminarians from his diocese who continued their studies for the priesthood in the Philippines and those who did specialist studies in Europe and the USA. An important part of his letters deals with bishops and superiors of the Society to promote the interest of the China mission. Thus, this correspondence constitutes an invaluable historical source of a particular period which is an integral part of the overall history of the SVD China mission.

### *The Development of the SVD China Mission*

The SVD mission in China<sup>4</sup> was the first mission of the newly founded Society of the Divine Word (1875). Its founder, Arnold Jans-

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ume discusses the SVD mission during the Chinese civil war 1924–1926 (id., *Steyler Missionare in China. VI. Auf den Wogen des Chinesischen Bürgerkrieges 1924–1926. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte* [Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 53], Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1991).

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Theodor Schu stayed in the Philippines for nine years (1952–1961) until the Second Vatican Council. – Hartwich indicates in his manuscript “Suitcase at St. Wendel’s” (“Koffer in St. Wendel”) as the place where the letters were found. These letters are deposited now at the SVD Historical Archives at the Generalate in Rome (AG SVD: Varia, P. Richard Hartwich. Documenti della diocesi de Yenchoufu, Cina Originali 2). There may be other letters by Theodor Schu in other archives; in this publication, the “suitcase at St. Wendel” collection is published.

<sup>4</sup> For a first insight into this mission see: F. Bornemann (ed.), *A History of Our Society* (Analecta SVD 54/1), Romae 1981, 271-315; H. Emmerich, *Die Steyler Missionare in China. Chronik eines Jahrhunderts: 1879–1979: StMChr* [Steyler Missionschronik] 1978, 41-48; H. Kroes, *Missionen der Gesellschaft des Göttlichen Wortes in China: StMChr* 1975, 35-43; J.

sen, considered the missionary work in the Far East, mainly in China, as a priority.<sup>5</sup> In April 1879, the first two missionaries, Johann Baptist Anzer and Joseph Freinademetz, were sent to China.

The Franciscans gave part of their territory to the SVD. After two years in Hong Kong, Anzer followed by Freinademetz arrived in Southern Shandong to start the first SVD mission in Puoli. On January 18, 1882, he met a friendly welcome from 158 Christians. Then, on December 22, 1885, Leo XIII created the first SVD Vicariate Apostolic of Southern Shandong and Fr. Anzer was consecrated its first Vicar Apostolic (on 24.01.1886) during the First General Chapter of the Society. The Vicariate counted 634 Christians, 3000 catechumens, seven priests and two brothers. Despite the turmoil of the Boxer Rebellion and other troubles the mission made visible progress. At the moment of the abrupt death of Bishop Anzer in Rome (1903), Southern Shandong numbered 23,000 Catholics, 36,000 catechumens as well as 36 priests, including 11 Chinese.

At the time the name of the Vicariate Apostolic of Southern Shandong was converted into that of Yenchowfu [Yanzhoufu] (1924), the number of Catholics had risen to 106,000. Overall, the Vicariate had 156 elementary or catechist schools and two high schools for boys and girls, several orphanages and rest-homes. Among the 90 priests of the Vicariate 27 were Chinese.

Gradually, the Society of the Divine Word took over further missions in China. In 1922, the Vicariate Apostolic of Lanzhou of 2,700,000 km<sup>2</sup> was created in North-West China. It encompassed the provinces of Gansu, Xinjiang and Qinghai and numbered nine million inhabitants, out of whom 6,231 were Catholics. Qinghai in 1937, Xinjiang in 1938 became separate Prefectures Apostolic, while Lanzhou was elevated to the rank of an Archdiocese in 1946. In 1923, the Holy See ceded to the SVD two mission territories in the province of Henan in Central China: Sinyang in the south (since 1934 Vicariate Apostolic) and Xinyang in the north (since 1936 Prefecture Apostolic).<sup>6</sup> The importance of the China mission can be measured in terms of the 542 missionaries who worked there in the course of 70 years (1879–1949),

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Kuepers, *Działalność apostolska werbistów w Chinach: Nurt SVD* 30:2 (1996) 17-28.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Statuten des Missionshauses zum hl. Erzengel Michael in Steyl [1876], no. 2, in: *Fontes Historici Societatis Verbi Divini*, vol. 1, Romae apud Curiam Generalitiam 1964, 25; *Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote*, 1879, no. 6, 26; J. Alt, *Journey in Faith. The Missionary Life of Arnold Janssen* (Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 78), Nettetal 2002, ch. XIII, 177-187.

<sup>6</sup> P. Han, *The Word in War and Suffering. The SVD Mission History in Henan Province of China: 1923–1953* (Thesis at CTU), Chicago 2003.

including 15 SVD bishops,<sup>7</sup> one cardinal, Thomas Tien, and one Superior General, Johannes Schütte (1958–1967). Some of the experienced China missionaries became founders of new missions of the Society: Eberhard Limbrock (New Guinea, 1896), Johann Weig (Japan, 1907), Ludwig Beckert (Philippines, 1909) and Peter Noyen (Indonesia, 1912/1913). On top of that, in 1934, at the request of the Holy See, our Society took over the management of the Catholic University Fu Jen of Peking [Beijing], founded by the American Benedictines in 1923. In 1949 the University numbered 16 departments and over 16.000 students.<sup>8</sup>

### *The China Mission in a Time of Change and Struggle*

The earlier development of the Catholic Church in China was promising. The church enrooted itself in a Chinese way. It begins with the recognition of the Chinese rites by the Vatican in 1939, the elevation of the first Chinese cardinal in the person of the Archbishop of Peking, Thomas Tien SVD, and the establishment of the Chinese hierarchy in 1946.

Pius XII upgraded the vicariates apostolic to dioceses, which adopted the names of Chinese cities, so that all SVD vicariates apostolic became dioceses. Altogether, the territorial Catholic Church in

<sup>7</sup> Prefecture Apostolic (PA) Southern Shandong (1886, since 1924: Yenchowfu): Johann Baptist Anzer (1886–1903), Augustin Henninghaus (1904–1936), Theodor Schu (1936–1965); Vicariate Apostolic (VA) Lanzhou (1922 Lanzhou): Theodor Buddenbrock (1924–1959); PA Tsingtao (1925: Qingdao): Georg Weig (1925–1941), Thomas Tien (1942–1947, since 1946 elevated to the College of Cardinals), August Olbert (1948–1964); PA Sinyang (1927: Xinyang, Sinyangchow, 1933 VA): Georg Fröwis (1927–1933), Hermann Schoppelrey (1933–1940), Vitus Chang (1941–1949); VA Tsaowchowfu (1934: Caozhou/Heze): Franz Hoowaarts (1934–1954); PA Sinsiang (1936: Xinxiang): Thomas Megan (1936–1951); VA Ichowfu (1937: Linyi): Karl Weber (1937–1970); PA Sining (1937: Xining): Hieronymus Haberstroh (1937–1961); PA Sinkiang (1938: Xinjiang): Ferdinand Loy (1938–1969).

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the Fu Jen University see Jac Kuepers SVD, The Re-establishment of Fu Jen University in Taiwan and the Role of the SVD, in particular of Fr. Richard Arens: *Verbum SVD* 54:4 (2013) 395-423; Karl Josef Rivinius SVD, *Collegium Sinicum. Eine Bildungsanstalt für chinesische Priester in Peking* (Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 103), Siegburg: Franz Schmitt Verlag 2015; ders., *Bildungsoffensive. P. Wilhelm Schmidt SVD in Ostasien (1935)* (Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD 106), Siegburg: Franz Schmitt Verlag 2016; Cindy Yik-yi Chu, Furen University: A Catholic University in Turbulent Times (1930s and 1940s): *Verbum SVD* 58:2 (2017) 249-267.

China was divided into 20 ecclesiastical provinces and archdioceses. Within the provinces, 79 dioceses and 35 prefectures apostolic were created. Two years later, in July 1948, China had 139 functioning ecclesiastical units and at the helm of 26 of them stood already Chinese clergy. Out of the 5,788 priests, 2,698 were Chinese and among 7,463 consecrated persons 5,112 were already Chinese. The Major Seminaries numbered 924 seminarians, and the Minor Seminaries 2,705. About 200 Chinese priests continued their higher education, both in China and abroad. When in 1949 the communists took over the power in China, the number of Catholics in China was 3.5 million, including 280,000 Catholics in the areas of the SVD mission—one Catholic out of every 140 Chinese. This dynamic period of development ends with the change of power. Communism implied also persecution and the virtual elimination of the Catholic Church in the early 1950s,<sup>9</sup> and the establishment of a Patriotic Chinese Church, independent of Rome in 1957.<sup>10</sup>

In 1951, the Internuncio Riberi was expelled from China, along with nine foreign bishops. 19 foreign and indigenous bishops were

<sup>9</sup> Anti-religious policy was initiated by claiming that all religions are the product of ignorance of the masses deprived of education. Officially, the Chinese government declared religious freedom, but in practice it was conditional and subjected to strict control. In the name of patriotism, the authorities broke off all relations with Western countries, including the Vatican. They made every effort to detach Chinese Catholics from the Universal Church. Efforts were made to remove all mission institutions and missionaries from abroad. Many were imprisoned and subjected to moral torture and brainwashing. At the end of 1950, they began to speak of the *three-self* patriotic movement: self-supporting (rejection of any aid from abroad), self-propagating (proclamation of the Gospel without any help by foreign missionaries), and self-governing (management of the church independent of the Holy See). Cf. E. L. Davis (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*, London and New York 2004, 594.

<sup>10</sup> Chinese bishops were treated less cruelly in the hope of attracting them to the idea of an independent Chinese Church. Talented and educated, the Archbishop of Nanchang, Joseph Chow Chi-shih, received a proposal to become the “Pope of China.” Unfortunately, he had to atone for the witty rejoinder, “If they deem him worthy of such a position—he would prefer to be the Pope of the whole world.” In 1957, the Patriotic Association of Chinese Catholics was established to replace the banned Catholic Church. In the spring of 1958, the Association organized a conference on the pressing problems faced by the church in China. These have been critical years for the Catholic Church. In 1958, 24 bishops were consecrated without the consent of the Holy See, and between 1959 and 1963 a further 26 bishops. A number of selected candidates refused to accept the episcopal consecration. Chinese bishops broke relations with the Vatican. Pius XII spoke of a schism. Cf. J. Meyers, *Enemies without Guns. The Catholic Church in the People’s Republic of China*, New York 1991.

arrested and locked up in prisons, five remained under house arrest. About 300 priests were held in prisons or labour camps. More than 1,000 priests, brothers and nuns were expelled from China. Out of the 5,500 missionaries in China in 1949, about 20 remained in 1955. The Religious Affairs Bureau of the state exerted control over all religious communities. The worst was on the way with the advent of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) when it became clear that the Communists sought to complete the destruction of the Catholic Church.

### *The Collapse of the SVD Missions in China*

The last “normal” year of missionary activity in China was the year 1947, with 279 SVD priests and 40 brothers as well as 199 SSps missionary sisters working there. Due to the political changes as early as the end of 1951 the number of SVD missionaries had dropped to one-half of that of 1948: 155 priests (including bishops) and 27 brothers, out of whom 50 were detained or in house arrest. On 19 May 1952, the Fu Jen University ceased to exist in Beijing. At the end of the period we are interested in—that is in 1958—only one foreign SVD, Fr. Peter Hüngsborg, was still in Beijing. In 1959 the Chinese in the Society counted: one cardinal, one titular bishop, 25 priests and 10 brothers, out of whom 15 priests and 10 brothers stayed in China.<sup>11</sup> In 1958, out of all expelled SVD China missionaries 34 had died, 109 worked in other missions in Asia (half of them in the Philippines).<sup>12</sup> In the changed situation, the Generalate of the Society on

<sup>11</sup> J. Bettray, *Priesterbildung seit 1884: StMChr* 1978, 70; *Arnoldus Nota* 1958, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Many missionaries expelled from China “either returned to their home countries or were sent to other SVD mission countries like the Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, Africa, and South America etc. The idea to consider Formosa, as Taiwan was called at that time, as a possible mission area for the Divine Word Missionaries, had already come up. In 1948 the Generalate had made inquiries about the situation in Taiwan and was thinking of sending some of the expelled missionaries to Taiwan. At a conference in Shanghai, which was attended by Fr. General Grosse Kappenberg and his secretary, Fr. Spreti, concrete plans were made for an involvement in Taiwan and potential superiors were taken into consideration. However, the plan was suddenly dropped by the new Superior General, Fr. Schütte, who himself had been a China missionary. He thought that sooner or later the communists would conquer Taiwan too. The one who had been tentatively sent to the island, Fr. Kolanczyk on the instruction of Fr. General, was transferred to the Philippines in 1951. An unexpected change came in 1954 when Bishop Thomas Niu of the newly erected Apostolic Prefecture of Chiayi invited Fr. Leo Kade, SVD, to be his vicar general. The SVD agreed and sent two other China missionaries, Fr. Al. Krieffewirth and Fr. Al. Tauch, with him. The final breakthrough

February 18, 1959, created the China Region which included Taikia, Kaomi, Wuwei, South Henan, North Henan, Hong Kong and Taiwan (Formosa).

### *Theodor Schu's Life for the Mission*

Against the background of the general situation in China emerges Bishop Theodor Schu whose letters cast a valuable light on the situation of many missionaries who like he himself had had to leave China. His figure is in the centre of the Hartwich correspondence.

Theodor Schu was born in Tholey on April 3, 1892. Tholey was a small town 10 kilometres west of Sankt Wendel in the Saar Region in Germany. At the age of 14 he entered the nearby SVD Minor Seminary in Sankt Wendel where he finished his secondary studies in 1912. On September 6 of the same year, he was invested with the habit of the Society at St. Gabriel's (Austria) where he completed his philosophical-theological studies in 1917. Before that, he was ordained at the same seminary on September 23, 1916. He received his assignment for the South Shandong Region and set out for his mission on February 12, 1921. He worked initially as a missionary priest in the country until the Society opened a clerical noviciate for Chinese candidates in Taikia, on February 28, 1924. He was appointed the first novice master in Taikia and held this post until 1933. A large part of the novices were already priests. One of them was the future cardinal Thomas Tien (from 1929 to 1931). Among the first novices were Vitus Chang, Johannes Fu and Petrus Sun.<sup>13</sup> From 1924 to 1950 40 candidates were accepted, out of whom 11 became priests. In 1934 a noviciate for Chinese Brothers was opened also and began with three novices. In 1949, fourteen Brothers took perpetual vows. At that time, there were 100 local candidates to the Society; unfortu-

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came in 1958 at the General Chapter, when it was decided to start an SVD mission in Taiwan." Cf. *SVD China Province*, //www.svdchina.org/eng\_svd%20Historytaiwanintroduction.htm [accessed November 18, 2012].

<sup>13</sup> Fr. Peter Sun was born in 1903, Caoxian; entered noviciate 1924; ordained 1930. Studied Canon Law in Rome at the Gregorian University; doctorate in 1934. He worked for ten years in Tsaichowfu. 1945–1948 Rector of the Minor Seminary in Yenchowfu. 1948 to Beijing as a teacher at Fu Jen; 1951 he became Rector of Fu Jen University. Arrested a year later and sent to labour camp; released in 1958? Had no place to stay; taught German at a school, was "criticized" again. Died 14.01.1976 after 23 years in prison camp. Cf. L. Leeb, *Material about SVD Missionaries in China (1879–1979)*, 4 (unpublished manuscript, in: AG/SVD).



nately, the political turmoil coupled with the takeover by the Communists spoiled all hopes.<sup>14</sup>

Then, on February 10, 1933, Fr. Schu was nominated as the regional of Southern Shandong, a post which he held for almost four years. During this time, the Holy See erected the Prefecture Apostolic of Yangku (Dec. 13, 1933) and later (Nov. 12, 1934) the Vicariate Apostolic of Tsaochowfu, both split off from the Vicariate Apostolic of Yenchowfu. On May 9, 1933, the community at the SVD's new Beijing project, the Fu Jen University, was incorporated into the South Shandong Region, which was divided into the two Regions of Taikia and Kaomi (Nov. 21, 1936). On November 19, 1936, Fr. Regional Schu was chosen as the successor of Bishop Augustin Henninghaus, who had resigned as Vicar Apostolic of Yanzhoufu (1904–1936) because of his advanced age. The new Vicar Apostolic of Yanzhoufu chose as his official motto “In omnibus Christus” and was consecrated by his predecessor in the Yanzhoufu Cathedral on April 4, 1937.<sup>15</sup> That same year the Sino-Japanese War broke out, which initiated a painful trial in his life. But the troubles didn't end when the Japanese withdrew in 1945; conditions became even worse under the Chinese Communists, who had entrenched themselves deeply everywhere during the confusion of the war years. Despite the difficult situation, the number of Catholics rose from 47,400 to 58,500 between 1937 and 1948. When, in 1949, the Communists took over Shanghai, Bishop Schu was there yet for medical care. The authorities did not allow him to return to his diocese Yanzhoufu. Therefore, in January 1952, after receiving a permit, he left China and escaped to the Philippines via Hong Kong, where he had been preceded by 32 of his seminarians, together with their professors. While in exile, he continued his work on behalf of the Chinese until 1961. He spent much time in the Philippines looking after his priests and seminarians at San Vicente near Vigan. He gave conferences for his seminarians and lectures on ascetic and pastoral theology for priests. He gave spiritual and material care to the 36 missionaries from his diocese Yanzhoufu (20 foreigners and 16 Chinese, in addition to 70 sisters), who remained in China. He maintained a steady correspondence with the foreign mis-

<sup>14</sup> The first Chinese from the SVD seminary was ordained in 1889. Afterwards, another 41 seminarians became priests until 1926, and 110 until 1950. In total, 148 priests were educated in the seventy-year history of the seminary and five of them became bishops.

<sup>15</sup> The well-known Fr. Vincent Lebbe, CM (1877–1940), who became a Chinese citizen and was a great promoter of the local church (founded four congregations of religious), delivered the sermon at the episcopal consecration ceremony.

sionaries and with those from his home diocese. In Hong Kong, he saw to the publication of Catholic books in Chinese. He also founded St. Theresa's Chinese Academy at Dagupan (Philippines). In Taiwan, he promoted the revival of the Oblate Sisters of the Holy Family, who were founded by Bishop Henninghaus in Yanzhoufu in 1910. He took part in the Vatican II Council sessions of 1962, 1963, and 1964 and afterwards remained in Europe. During the second session he suffered from a chronic cold and had to spend several weeks in the Roman SSpS clinic on "Monte Mario." Having returned to Germany, he visited Spain and could still preside over Confirmation in the diocese of Regensburg (Germany). But he was unable to attend the final Council sessions in 1965. The Lord called him home on August 24, 1965, on the feast of St. Bartholomew. He died in Sankt Wendel's hospital and was the first bishop to be buried in the cemetery of the Mission House there. The funeral on August 28 was presided over by Johann Wiesen, SVD, titular bishop of Telmissus, together with Matthias Wehr, Bishop of Trier, Karl Weber, SVD, Bishop of Ichowfu, Vitus Chang, SVD, Bishop of Sinyangchow and Petrus Borne, OSB, Abbot of Tholey.

### *The Fate of the Seminarians from Yanzhoufu*

In 1948, part of the seminarians of the Major Seminary of the diocese of Yanzhoufu escaped to the Philippines. Their exile started from the central mission house in Taikia, in 1945. The house was besieged by a gang of 1000 communists and looted. The regional, Fr. Friedrich Hüttermann, was shot dead, while one brother was injured. In these uncertain circumstances, the seminary resumed its activity in Yanzhoufu, sharing accommodations with the local minor seminary.

In the night of 13 to 14 July 1949, Yanzhoufu was besieged and occupied by the communists. 55 seminarians escaped from the city and after a long march, they arrived by train from the first functioning station they encountered at Xüzhow in Jiangsu, where the SVD had recently opened a Mission Office. The Canadian Jesuits took them in. After some days, they continued their journey to Shanghai along with Fr. Ernest Böhm, where they found a place with the French Jesuits in unused rooms of the former seminary. However, this place turned out to be inconvenient due to the lack of clean water; many seminarians got seriously sick. It was decided to transfer the seminary to another place. The accelerated departure proved to be providential because it allowed them to escape the onslaught of the communists.

The next stop was in Lokiahshing in the diocese of Funing, in the south Chinese Province of Fujian, where the administrator was a bishop of a northern diocese, Thomas Niu, who had earlier fled the communists. He had studied with the Divine Word Missionaries. There, the seminary functioned for three months, until May 1949. On 10 April 1949, Bishop Niu ordained ten local deacons in the local parish church. However, Shanghai was in danger and it was necessary to flee from Lokiahshing. The seminarians eventually sailed to Hong Kong on May 16, finding shelter in the hallways of a large Dominican convent. Due to the overflow of seminarians in the local seminary, it was decided to move to the Philippines, where many SVD missionaries were working.

Having arrived in the Philippines, 35 seminarians moved to the old rectory of San Vicente, near Vigan, where, after the necessary repairs, a new seminary was opened. Thus, many young vocations were saved. Those who remained in China were dispersed and the seminary was dissolved.<sup>16</sup> Bishop Schu could meet his seminarians again after three years. Shortly after his arrival, in June 1952, Bishop Schu preached a retreat for them and conferred priestly ordination in the local parish. By 1954, from the entire group 31 had received ordination. Some of them were sent to study in Rome; others remained in the Philippines, where they were needed in pastoral care among the Chinese Catholics.

### *Ministry among Chinese in the Philippines*

According to the data of Bishop Schu, the Chinese population in the Philippines numbered 500,000, a large part of whom—200,000—lived in the capital Manila. Data from 1966 indicate that of 358,488 Chinese, 80,838 were Catholics. They were under the care of 90 priests. Many of them came from China. The Chinese occupied an important place in business and industry. They distinguished them-

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<sup>16</sup> The number of foreign missionaries in the diocese of Bishop Schu—Yanzhoufu—decreased from 25 to 5 during the next few years, while the number of local priests increased from 14 to 16. The attitude of the Communists was unpredictable and changed frequently. In 1954, for example, it was possible to officiate services in the cathedral of Yanzhoufu, likewise in the church of the main mission station in Taikia. For Christmas, the priest Thomas Chao heard the confessions of 1,000 believers. The foreign priests could not leave their residences without a permit, though.

selves by intelligence, diligence, a spirit of initiative and simplicity of life.<sup>17</sup>

In 1954 the SVD started working among the Chinese in one of the four Chinese parishes in Manila. The other three parishes were run by Jesuits, Dehonians and Scheut Fathers. The latter conducted a fruitful apostolate among the Chinese. Fr. Bernard Doyle, SVD, was elected as the president of Chinese Catholic Youth. The SVD parish dedicated to St. Jude Thaddeus was the largest of the four Chinese parishes in Manila. There were around 28,000 Chinese in the district, of whom only a quarter were practising Catholics.

Such parishes were established also in other parts of the Philippines. One of them—the SVD parish in Dagupan—was run by priests from the diocese of Yanzhoufu. According to the statistics of July 1955, about 3,000 Chinese, including 70 Catholics, lived in the parish. 100 persons were baptised, about 50 participated in the catechesis and 40 children went to the kindergarten.

In 1958, there were 130 primary schools for the Chinese population, out of which five were Catholic. Bishop Schu, with a view to carrying out an apostolate among the Chinese, had a vision of spreading the Word of God through the establishment of parishes and schools. Eduardo Kang, an influential Chinese Catholic from Dagupan, persuaded him to do so. In 1955, the parish dedicated to St. Theresa was officially opened and Fr. Josef Guo (Kwo) became its first pastor. A Chinese Academy of St. Theresa for children from pre-school to the first grade of secondary school was also opened. It was one of the few private Catholic schools that offered education in the Chinese culture. 130 candidates signed up. Fr. Richard Hartwich became its first director, supported by eight teachers.<sup>18</sup> In 1960, the

<sup>17</sup> The first immigrants from China—almost all from the southern province of Fujian—came to the Philippines several centuries ago and up to today have preserved their Amoy dialect and customs. The first Chinese bishop, Gregory Luo, who lived in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1616–1691), had studied in Manila and the Chinese Catholics in the Philippines maintained friendly relations with China. Many of them had been baptized on the occasion of Sino-Filipino marriages.

<sup>18</sup> “In 1961, Fr. Henry Schmitz, SVD, became the School Director, a position he was to hold for 15 years. The year also saw the High School Department holding its first Commencement exercise with eight graduates. In 1976, Fr. Matthias Ning, SVD, became the School Director, a position he held for 11 years. In 1988, Fr. Jess P. del Rosario, SVD, was at the helm as the Director of the school. In 1995, Fr. Ambrose L. Ponce, SVD, became the Campus Minister, and then in 1996, he became the School Director.” *The Divine Word Academy of Dagupan (DWAD)*, in: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine\\_Word\\_Academy\\_of\\_Dagupan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_Word_Academy_of_Dagupan) [accessed July 2, 2012].

Society of the Divine Word took over the ownership of the school under the name of Divine Word Academy of Dagupan.

Five Chinese priests from the seminary at San Vicente were in Europe, helping in different parishes, although the bishop wanted them to work for China. Bishop Schu's reports tell us that the less numerous Protestants were a nuisance to the Catholic missions, showing high activity in getting children to their schools.

### *Other Initiatives for the China Mission*

The correspondence reveals initiatives in favour of the China mission in Europe. The missionaries expelled from China stayed in touch with each other. They even organised meetings, for instance, at the end of July 1953, 80 former China missionaries met with their bishops, Buddenbrock, Hoowaarts and Olbert, in Sankt Augustin near Bonn. A meeting of a working committee of missionaries (1-3 February 1954) also took place there, which developed proposals and resolutions for the Superior General in Rome, in hopes that the China question would find more support in the General Council of the Society. The key proposal of the committee was the further formation of missionaries expelled from China, making possible the advancement of knowledge about the methods of missionary work used so far in education, social work, economic and scientific cooperation. The further training was to serve to prepare missionaries for their return to the missionary work in China, even if only to a limited extent. Studies could include such areas as sociology, biology, anthropology, journalism, media studies, agriculture, medicine, languages and natural sciences with a view to working in secondary schools and colleges (after a master's, doctorate or other recognized diploma).

The growing importance of a new theological discipline—missiology—had become an incentive for some China missionaries in exile to undertake missiological or related studies with a view to returning to China. They saw that as a missiologist, they would be able to work out a cohesive mission method which would be appropriate in China. Due to the lack of such methodical evangelisation in the past, the efforts of many missionaries in China went down the drain. Promising initiatives in the field of education, training of teachers, catechists and catechumens ended in failures. It would be all the more urgent, as the missionaries returning to China would find a completely different situation there. Only well-trained missionaries would be able to look at the new situation from a higher perspective and assess it accordingly in order to find appropriate solutions.

Münster [with its outstanding missiological chair] was proposed as a place for studies and the candidates for studies should have five years' missionary experience so that this would guarantee a genuinely missionary focus of their studies. These studies would include a two-year course of missiology, to obtain a diploma. Some missionaries should also have the opportunity to obtain a doctorate. Names of specific missionaries were proposed as candidates for such studies. After graduation, they could become members of the missiological section of the Research Institute in Tokyo, engaging in the evangelisation of China. Temporarily, they could also serve other SVD missions. After returning to China, they should be aware that the development of proper methods for China should be pursued in a spirit of openness and cooperation with all the missionaries to better get in touch with the local reality and enrich each other. It was felt to be necessary to make use of the scholarly works of former missionaries and search them for sources of scientific inspiration, especially magazines from the thirties that had published many works of missionaries.

A very important segment of work for China was publishing. The Research Institute in Tokyo made a considerable contribution by publishing *Monumenta Serica* and *Folklore Studies*. The previous publications from the printing press in Yanzhoufu must also be mentioned here. A big achievement was the *Sino-Latin Dictionary* (about 1500 pages), edited by Frs. Mittler and Böhm in Hong Kong (1957). A mission centre ought to be created which would take up scientific, catechetical, and sinological studies in cooperation with the Research Institute in Tokyo, publishing dictionaries, textbooks, translations of literature, the SVD constitutions, the history of our congregation. Fr. Richard Hartwich translated many of these books from German into Chinese.

The collapse of the China mission and the breakdown of missionary work forced to reflect on the existing missionary commitment in China, mainly with a view to preserving the valuable and vital legacy and missionary traditions for posterity. It was necessary to preserve the memory of pioneering missionary initiatives, which set the directions of the development of our mission. For this reason, all the painstakingly gathered resources and materials about the SVD mission history in China had to be investigated academically. Subsequently, the results should be published in the form of monographs and biographies that include such issues as the missionary tradition, missionary methods and figures of missionaries. Practically, the best solution proposed was to appoint a missionary for each SVD mission, who would conduct this work in touch with others, especially the elderly missionaries. An accurate and scholarly way to conduct re-

search and the uniform orientation of the work could be achieved by a special 14-day training and consultation. In the first stage, it would be necessary to collect and examine relevant material from each mission, including also the archival materials, and then to encourage older confreres to record past experiences and memories. The material collected in this way would serve to prepare scholarly publications. Again, missionaries from individual missions in China were proposed who could undertake such a task.

In addition, the creation of a forum was proposed, in which missionaries could voice their opinions and publish important and practical materials on missionary methodology, liturgy, catechetics, mission history and ascetics, especially since the journals/magazines then published, *Arnoldus* and *SVD-Missionsdienst*, did not deal purely with missionary work and its dynamics. A new magazine, called *Missionarius Verbi Divini*, was to include all missions of the Society of the Divine Word. It could be a supplement to *Arnoldus*, issued twice or three times a year. As a supplement it would be maintained thus by the whole Society. St. Augustin's near Bonn was suggested as a convenient venue for the editorial board. The articles were supposed to be in German and English.

### **Conclusion**

After leaving China, Bishop Schu's mission life was that of an exile, mainly in the Philippines, where he spent nine years. Bishop Schu's correspondence gives us a picture of the activities he undertook with a view to the rebirth of the ruined Chinese mission. In light of these letters, Theodor Schu appears as a "good shepherd," worried about the fate of his diocese of Yanzhoufu. He undertook activities to support other missionaries in China materially and planned for publications and other pastoral aids. First of all, he was in contact with the missionaries who worked there. Like a father he cared for the spiritual welfare of the missionaries. He gave lectures and retreats for priests, and especially for students who had escaped from China and settled in San Vicente in the Philippines. Particularly, he was anxious about the formation of the seminarians of his Major Seminary in San Vicente, because of the lack of academic staff, despite the fact that more and more priests earned degrees at universities in the United States and in Western Europe. His letters show that the missionaries lived with the hope of returning to China and made efforts to prepare for this as best they could.

Today, it is being reported that 12 to 15 million Catholics live in China, while in 1949 there were only 3.5 million. The Chinese

Church, although plagued with problems of personnel and finances, maintains an intense pastoral activity.

#### ABSTRACTS

Bischof Theodor Schu SVD war von 1921 bis zu seiner Ausweisung 1952 Missionar in China, seine Liebe zu und sein Engagement für die Mission in China und die Chinesen hörte jedoch nie auf. Im Exil in Deutschland und auf den Philippinen versuchte er Wege zu finden, die Evangelisierung der Chinesen zu fördern. – Ein Teil dieser dramatischen Geschichte wird sichtbar in der Korrespondenz mit „seinen“ Missionaren, speziell den Priestern, die in seiner Diözese in China gearbeitet hatten. Seine Briefe werden auf Deutsch in der Reihe *Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini* (Vol. 117, Siegburg: Franz Schmitt Verlag 2020) und der SVD-internen Publikation *Analecta SVD–61/VII* (Rom) veröffentlicht. – Um einen Einblick in die Ängste und Hoffnungen, Träume und Visionen dieser Missionare zu geben, publizieren wir hier die englische Fassung der Einleitung des genannten Buches, da sie Theodor Schu SVD und die Mission der Steyler Missionare in China und in der nachfolgenden Zeit kurz nachzeichnet. Diese Einleitung hat P. Andrzej Miotk SVD verfasst – er ist auch verantwortlich für Herausgabe der Korrespondenz sowie die hinzugefügten Fußnoten.

El obispo Theodor Schu SVD fue misionero en China desde 1921 hasta su expulsión en 1952, pero su corazón y su compromiso por la misión en China y con los chinos nunca terminaron. Desde su exilio tanto en Alemania como en las Filipinas buscaba caminos para promover la evangelización de los chinos. – Parte de esta historia dramática se deja entrever en la correspondencia con “sus” misioneros, particularmente con los sacerdotes que trabajaban en su diócesis en China. Las cartas se acaban de publicar recientemente en alemán en los *Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini* (Vol. 117, Siegburg, Franz Schmitt Verlag 2020) así como en la publicación al interior del Verbo Divino *Analecta SVD–61/VII* (Roma). – Para presentar un resumen de las angustias y esperanzas, de los sueños y visiones de estos misioneros publicamos aquí la introducción a este tomo, ya que en ella se retratan brevemente tanto a Theodor Schu SVD como a la misión verbalizada en China y las décadas después. Esta introducción así como la edición del trabajo original de Richard Hartwich SVD con la correspondencia y las notas editoriales fueron escritas por Andrzej Miotk SVD.

Monseigneur Theodor Schu, SVD, fut missionnaire en Chine de 1921 jusqu'à son expulsion en 1952, mais il y a laissé son cœur, et son engagement pour la mission en Chine et auprès des Chinois n'a jamais cessé. Exilé en Allemagne et aux Philippines, il a essayé de trouver des moyens de promouvoir l'évangélisation des Chinois. Une part de cette histoire dramatique transparaît dans la correspondance avec « ses » missionnaires, en particulier les prêtres qui avaient travaillé dans son diocèse en Chine. Les lettres sont sorties en allemand dans la série *Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini* (Vol. 117, Siegburg : Franz Schmitt Verlag 2020) et une publication interne d'*Analecta SVD 61/VII* (Rome). – Pour donner un aperçu des angoisses et des espoirs, des rêves et des visions de ces missionnaires, nous publions ici la version anglaise de l'Introduction à ce volume qui dresse le



portrait de Theodor Schu, SVD, et présente brièvement sa mission et la mission en Chine dans les décennies suivantes. L'Introduction, la présentation du travail de Hartwich sur la correspondance et les notes explicatives y sont d'Andrzej Miotk, SVD.