

MISSIONARIES AND THEIR ETHNOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTIONS

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ABSTRACT: When in the 1880s and 1890s German Lutheran missionaries were sent to Australia from their colleges in Hermannsburg in Lower Saxony and Neuendettelsau in Bavaria to work among the Australian indigenous peoples of the Northern Territory, they had no ethnological education to speak of. This was particularly true for Carl Strehlow who, born in 1871 and educated from 1888 to 1891 at the Lutheran Missionary College in Neuendettelsau, arrived in Adelaide in 1892 and went straight to work with Pastor Reuther among the Diari in Killalpaninna, south of Lake Eyre. From there, in 1894, he was sent to Hermannsburg to resurrect the abandoned Lutheran Mission Station of the Finke River Mission, owned by the South Australian Immanuel Synod. The records of the curriculum in Neuendettelsau show no subjects teaching the theory and practice of ethnology. However, his ethnographic work among the local tribes of the Arrernte and Loritja is today still considered a classic in the field. As a contribution to the history of research methodology in the field of ethnology, I intend to give a brief outline of 1) the early development of scientific research instructions in general, and 2) as a special case, Carl Strehlow's learning process in form of letters with questions and answers between himself in Hermannsburg and his editors in Frankfurt.

Keywords: Research instructions, Australian Aboriginal anthropology, German missionary ethnography, Carl Strehlow

For Silke and Hartmann Lehmann

Hat der Missionar das Charisma für wissenschaftliche Studien, z.B. geographische, ethnographische, comparative Sprachstudien empfangen, so wird er dem heiligen Missionswerk wesentliche Dienste leisten, wenn er sich tief in sie eintaucht und im Verhältniß zu den zum Theil recht oberflächlichen Tastungen der Reisenden in ihnen etwas Gründliches leistet. Durch solche Arbeiten wächst das Ansehen der Heidenmission dem äußerlich gebildeten, aber innerlich verarmten Culturmenschen des 19. Jahrhunderts gegenüber.

(F.W. Kölling-Pless, *Motive*, 45)

When the first volume of Carl Strehlow's *Die Aranda- und Loritja-Stämme in Zentral-Australien* was published by the Städtische Völker-Museum in Frankfurt in 1907, its reception was rather mixed. In a letter thanking the author for a copy, Strehlow's superior at the Finke River Mission in Adelaide wrote:

My heartfelt thanks for sending me your work on the Aranda. It is a wonderful document of German diligence. However, the material which you have put into written form is the most

worthless imaginable. Almost everything is chaff, with hardly a grain of moral value here and there. In truth, it must have cost not a little self-denial on your part to write down these insipid legends which can be of interest only to an ethnographer. I do not doubt the historical value of your collection as the sole monuments of a tribe which will vanish from this earth. (Veit 2005: 38)

While this response seems strange, even lamentable, coming from a theologian, it also indicates the general attitude to, and the destruction of, Aboriginal culture of the age, although trenchant criticism was voiced by missionaries and scientists early on. We only have to remember the assessment and critique of the situation in Australia by Theodor Waitz, a German armchair ethnologist, which he laid squarely at the feet of the British colonial government. However, the response of the Australian anthropological fraternity to Strehlow's work was an altogether different matter.

Apart from the suspicion that the book was the work of the editor, Walter Baldwin Spencer (Mulvaney & Calaby 1985: 379, 392–393), at the time Professor of Biology at the University of Melbourne and celebrated author of a path-blazing volume on the anthropology of Aborigines in Northern Australia, wrote in an inappropriate *ad hominem* way, in a letter to Sir James Frazer: 'I don't know what to do in regard to Strehlow. He is so uneducated that he can't write publishable German' (Penniman 1932: 109).

In spite of this, he and his friend, collaborator and co-author, Francis Gillen, knew how to obtain and use the expertise of the Lutheran pastor at Hermannsburg for their own research, while never acknowledging it (Mulvaney et al. 1997: 118, 130; J. Strehlow 2011, 828 ff.). Although Spencer did not bother to contact Strehlow in spite of several visits to Hermannsburg on his research trips while Strehlow was absent, he never forgave Strehlow for a footnote which seemed to call his knowledge of Aboriginal languages into question, when Strehlow pointed out that Spencer's translation of the term *altjira* as *dreaming* was outright questionable. Unfortunately, Andrew Lang, the doyen of mythology in England, had picked it up and informed the other great authority in anthropology, E.B. Tylor, that 'a German has just sent me a lot of recent (1901) German missionary notes (MS) on Arunta religion. It does not suit Spencer and Gillen and puts a very different face on matters ...' (Veit 1994: 90–91; J. Strehlow 2011, 835). John Strehlow describes brilliantly the ensuing commotion which could have destroyed Spencer's reputation as a researcher. However, Spencer and Gillen's *Dreamtime* is still current (Wolfe 1991).

On the other hand, judging by the way the book was, and still is, quoted by European cultural anthropologists and sociologists, particularly Emil Durkheim, who quotes from Strehlow's works as frequently as from Spencer's (Durkheim 1912), but also James Frazer and others, the book was an instant success in Europe. Not so in the Antipodes, where the work and its author have been ignored for nearly seventy years (Veit 1991). Only recently has Nicholas Peterson launched a rescue mission in the form of a research project entitled 'Rescuing Carl Strehlow's Indigenous cultural heritage legacy: the neglected German tradition of Arandic ethnography' (Peterson 2013).

Considering then that, between 1907 and 1920, Carl Strehlow produced one of the most important works on the ethnology or cultural anthropology of Central Australian Aboriginal tribes in his charge at the Lutheran Mission Station at Hermannsburg, 120 kilometres south-west of Alice Springs, it must come as a surprise that he had no formal, or even informal, training in ethnographic research.

Born on 23 December 1871 in Fredersdorf, a small village in the Uckermark/Brandenburg, he obtained his early education at his father's Free Lutheran School. Against the latter's wishes, he tried, but failed, to enter the Leipzig Missionary College, but in 1888 was accepted into the Lutheran Missionary Seminary in Neuendettelsau (Bavaria), where he graduated in 1891. Although expecting to serve as a pastor to German immigrant communities in the United States, he accepted a commission as Lutheran missionary to the Aborigines in Central Australia. Departing for Australia on 24 April 1892, he was ordained

as preacher and missionary in July 1892, to serve the Diari tribe at the Bethesda/Killalpaninna Mission Station as assistant to Pastor Johann Georg Reuther (1861–1914), another Neuendettelsau graduate. Here his ministry began and also his ethnographic apprenticeship, learning the local language and translating the New Testament with Reuther. In 1894, he accepted a posting to revive Hermannsburg, a Lutheran mission station in Aranda territory, founded in 1877 by the Lutheran Mission House in Hermannsburg, Lower Saxony, but abandoned in 1891 after a prolonged drought (Harms 2003: 145). For the next twenty-eight years, except for one year of sabbatical leave spent with his family in Germany, Carl Strehlow served his flock until 20 October 1922, when he died at Horseshoe Bend on the Finke River, trying to get to Adelaide for medical treatment (T.G.H. Strehlow 1969: 1 ff.; Leske 1977: 33; Veit 1990: 121–2).

We do now know much more directly about the Neuendettelsau curriculum for the years 1888 to 1891 when Carl studied at the college. A model curriculum in the first edition of Gustav Warneck's 1894 *Evangelical Mission Theory* prescribes only few subject outside of mission theology for the six years of studies, namely 'World History and Geography', without any content specifications, and a medical course (Warneck 1894, 2: 207). But, in addition to archival material, Wilhelm Koller's *History of Neuendettelsau*, published in 1924, offers some details which allow us to broadly reconstruct a curriculum. In addition to the foundation study of Lutheran theology and church history, the study of Latin, Greek and Hebrew was mandatory. English was added with a view to ministries in English-speaking countries, particularly North America and the British colonies. It is uncertain when exactly non-theological subjects were introduced, but in 1889 'World History' was added, 'Mission History' for the first time in 1893, and more specifically 'The Mission in Japan' and 'Prehistory and History of the Oldest Peoples' in 1909. It is uncertain but possible that, through these subjects, basic aspects and knowledge of ethnology were absorbed.

However, we have to assume that a special category of writings with titles such as *Instructions* ... (Anweisungen ...), which were published in other mission colleges, must have been discussed in the context of the establishment of 'Mission Studies' (Missionswissenschaft). This was a new academic discipline, founded by Karl Graul in Erlangen (1864) and Gustav Warneck in Halle (1896). In 1874 the latter also founded the first and most influential *General Journal of Mission Studies* (MZ: *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*). Since both men had been principals of mission houses themselves before, they started to build bridges between the mission houses which were fiercely independent of any interference by the state and the official

church as well as of the academic world of science and scholarship. Sooner or later, crossovers in both directions would happen.

Some such instructions were already issued by the founder of the Moravian Brethren (Brüdergemeinde), Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf: *An Instruction for Messengers to the Heathens of the Orient* (1736), *Instructions to All Messengers to the Heathens* (1738) and *The Method of Converting Savages*, which preceded by a hundred years the first instructions issued by the Berlin Mission Society, founded in 1824. Their *Instructions for missionaries who are sent out by the Society for the Advancement of Evangelical Mission among the Heathens* were published in 1837 (Veit 2005: 17–30). These are concerned mainly with missionary practice; there is, at this stage, no mention of ethnological knowledge. Significantly, these early instructions – and all subsequent ones – emphasise the importance of a good knowledge of indigenous languages in order to spread effectively the message of the Gospels. Cultural specificities are noted when ‘cultural accommodation’ becomes an issue, as in the case of missionaries working in ‘high cultures’ such as India or China, or when European cultural superiority is stressed during the time of emerging colonialism which attempts to enlist missionaries into its service. Drawing a connection between missionary education and colonial politics remains only speculation when we have so little information about the content of college curricula.

However, already very early, mission colleges accumulated ‘Kunst- und Natursachen’, human artefacts and natural specimens collected by missionaries in the field. Following the example of famous collectors in the service of the great trading companies (Beekman 1999) and among the ruling aristocracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in 1757 the Herrenhut Society started to exhibit and publish its collection in a ‘curiosity cabinet’ (*Naturalienkabinett*) in its Theological College in Barby (Saxe-Anhalt) and issued in 1774 a *Short Instruction to Collect Natural Specimens* (*Kurze Anweisung Naturalien zu sammeln*) (Nippa 2003: 15). There can be little doubt that these pieces were used to demonstrate the nature and culture of foreign countries.

But with European colonial aspirations – beginning at, and ongoing during, the time of Carl Strehlow’s formative years (Hammer 1981: 156 ff.) – we also see European science taking an increasing interest in the extracurricular activities of missionaries. In 1876 Pastor Ernst Buss of the Swiss Reformed Church (BDCM 1999:103) published a critique of the missionary enterprise entitled *The Christian Mission: Its Principal Justification and Practice* (Buss 1876). In his review, Gustav Warneck (AMZ 1874 3: 371–374, 416–434) rejected Buss’s contention that missionary

activities should first and foremost be directed towards people of high culture (Kulturvölker) but, significantly, agreeing when Buss writes that the Christian mission of the ‘primitive races’ (Naturvölker) is beneficial also for one’s own culture and science.

Christian mission has succeeded in supporting colonization through the formation and enrichment of foreign literatures, through the introduction of book printing, through the encouragement of trade and commercial traffic. Furthermore, especially through the establishment of schools and rescue institutions of all kinds, it has achieved really great things in the civilisation of intellectually inferior peoples. Finally, it has also rendered science a most important service by supplying to geography, ethnology, archaeology, linguistics and ethnopsychology (Völkerpsychologie), to ethnology and the study of religion (Religionswissenschaft), anthropology, zoology and botany, an abundance of most diverse and interesting material. (AMZ 1874 3: 372–373)

At this point, we have to acknowledge the existence and growing reputation of anthropology (social and physical anthropology), ethnology (cultural anthropology) and ethnography (the ethnological fieldwork) as academic disciplines in their early stages when incumbent professors – later called ‘armchair anthropologists’ in English-speaking countries – did not yet engage in fieldwork themselves, but relied instead on the reports of travellers, collectors, explorers and missionaries for observations and materials. Sir James Frazer is a famous case, a classical philologist, relying primarily on literary sources and later on the fieldwork of Baldwin Spencer, Carl Strehlow and others in Australia for his celebrated *Golden Bough*. Similarly Max Müller, the celebrated orientalist and scholar of comparative religion, became involved in a controversy over the origin of myth with Andrew Lang (Nicholls 2007: passim), another armchair anthropologist, and acknowledged the role of the largely anonymous labourers in the vineyard.

Yet, whatever is known of the dialects of savage tribes is chiefly or entirely due to missionaries; and it is much to be desired that their attention again and again be directed to this interesting (pg 062) problem of the life of language in its dialects, which they alone have the means of elucidating. (Müller 1862: 62; Kneebone 2001: 145 ff.)

While the theologian Carl Strehlow, upon arrival at Killalpaninna, had the benefit of a strong aptitude for and training in languages, mainly Hebrew, Greek and Latin, but hardly any education in ethnography, Walter Baldwin Spencer (1860–1929), ten years his senior and later competitor in the field of Aboriginal studies, had a solid training first in biology and then an apprenticeship in anthropology under Edward Burnett Tylor at the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford University. This laid the foundation for his biological and anthropological research as Professor of Biology at the University of Melbourne, to which he was appointed in 1887 (Mulvaney & Calaby 1985: 54 ff.), one year before Strehlow entered the Mission House in Neuendettelsau.

Although fieldwork was slowly entering academic research – we have only to think of Charles Darwin's voyage on the *Beagle*, or E.B. Tylor's travel to Mexico (primarily for health reasons) – the collection of ethnographic and anthropological material, including human skeletons (Luschan 1906: 6)¹, remained the domain of professional or opportunistic collectors for some time to come. It appears that, gradually, the missionary was becoming qualified as the original fieldworker with, at first, specific training in the recording and learning of languages. This, in turn, gave rise to ethnolinguistics as a serious academic discipline. It was Carl Meinhoff, himself a missionary in Africa, who first developed and, in 1906, published guidelines for missionaries studying local languages. These could have benefited Strehlow while he was in Hermannsburg from 1894 (Meinhof 1905, 1906: 144–161). Furthermore, I draw attention, as one example among many less comprehensive ones, to Felix von Luschan's entry, 'Anthropology, Ethnography and Prehistory', in the third edition of Georg von Neumayer's compendium published in 1906, which enlarged upon Emil Schmidt's *Methods in Anthropology* published first in 1888. Here, the traveller found incisive methodological instructions and highly detailed lists of questions relating to basic topics in physical anthropology, such as measurements of the human body, particularly of the head, a study which was at the centre of nineteenth-century anthropological interest and research; and, in addition, twenty-five ethnographic topics which would probably be of greater relevance to missionaries, ranging from dwellings to religion, medicine and totemism. While they were meant to aid every collecting traveller, they were also directed at missionaries, whose collaboration was fundamental to Luschan's perception of ethnography.

Mission and ethnography appear to be dependent on each other for support and help, as we have already long understood that also political success in the protectorates can always be

expected and achieved only on the basis of ethnographic experiences, and that ignorance of the ethnographic situation was followed all too often by political failure and great losses of money and human life. (Luschan 1906: 89)

But we have no evidence that the book was on the shelves in the Neuendettelsau library or that Carl Strehlow had read it later.

Similarly, other academic researchers started publishing guidelines for travellers and amateur collectors. As Barbara Murray (Murray 1995) has shown, a whole new literary genre had been developed over a considerable time. The earliest example in her list are two pages of 'Certain[e] Directions given by M. Richard Hackluit of the Middle Temple to M. Morgan Hubblethorne, Dier [sic] sent into Persia' of 1579. The last in her bibliography is Marcel Cohen's book-long questionnaire on language: *Instructions pour les voyageurs*, published in Paris in 1950 (Murray 1995: Appendix). Obviously, the list includes all those instructions issued to state-sponsored explorers such as Bougainville and Cook. But the directives were continually amended and refined, not only as to *what* to observe, investigate, record and collect, but also *how* to do it, as demonstrated eventually in the celebrated *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, first published in 1874 '... for the use of travellers and residents in uncivilised lands', of which the sixth edition of 1951 was again reprinted in 1964 (Notes 1964) in which the distinction between 'Physical Anthropology' and 'Social Anthropology' is introduced; and in Georg von Neumayer's *Anleitung zu wissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen auf Reisen*, also first published in 1874, but finally in two volumes in 1906 (Neumayer 1906). This is no longer the work of a committee but a collection of essays by thirty-five scientists covering all disciplines involved, including useful research equipment. Physical anthropology, ethnography and prehistory are treated by Felix von Luschan, and linguistics by Carl Meinhof, the only missionary among the contributors.

These instructions, issued by professionals, must be seen against the background of, and in conjunction with, an increasing number of voluminous compilations which sought to inform a wider public about the world beyond the narrow national confines. This general information comes in two forms: either as surveys offering detailed 'portraits' of the geography, geology and population of distinct areas of the world, called 'Länderkunde' (knowledge of other countries); or as primarily theoretical and historical introductions to ethnology called 'Völkerkunde' (ethnology/anthropology). They not only attempted to give a picture of the world in terms of the history of discoveries, the geography and geology, but also as a universal and comparative cultural history. For the purpose of this paper,

I shall name only a few German titles that include the term 'Australia', which, at that time, designated the whole Pacific area. These were certainly familiar to German-speaking professional ethnologists, and could also have come to the attention of teachers and students in mission colleges, slowly extending their theological and pastoral horizons.

In terms of 'Länderkunde', I refer to Gottlieb August Wimmer's *Latest Portrait of Australia*, which offers a comprehensive survey of the knowledge of Australia at the time, including English-language literature and some incisive criticism of European cultural theories and violence against indigenes in general, and New-Holland Aborigines in particular (Wimmer 1832: 31, 62, 72, 110); Carl Eduard Meinicke's *The Peoples of the Pacific and Christianity: An Ethnographic Investigation* (Meinicke 1844), who had already published a geographical monograph on the Australian continent in 1837; Theodor Waitz's *Anthropology of the Primitive Peoples*, published in 1859 (Waitz 1859), the later second volume of which describes the Australian indigenes and their fate at the hands of the colonialists; furthermore *Australien, Ozeanien und Polarländer* (Australia, Oceania and the Polar Regions) edited by Wilhelm Sievers and Willy Kükenthal (1902), A.W. Grube and Hans Stübler's *Geographische Charakterbilder* (Character Portraits of Geographic Regions), its twentieth edition published in 1909, which includes narratives of Australia and Oceania; and Leo Frobenius's *Geographische Kulturkunde* (Geography and Culture) of 1904 which includes Australia and Oceania.

At the time of Carl Strehlow's studies and Aboriginal research, the group of 'Völkerkunde' seems best represented by Thomas Achelis's *Die Entwicklung der modernen Ethnology* (The Development of Modern Ethnology) of 1889; his *Moderne Völkerkunde* (Modern Ethnology) was published in 1896; but particularly Friedrich Ratzel's celebrated multivolume *Völkerkunde* (Ethnology), whose second volume *Die Naturvölker Ozeaniens, Amerikas und Australiens* (The Native Peoples of Oceania, America and Australia) appeared in 1886. Clearly, there is a considerable body of knowledge originally collected by travellers of many kinds, initially motivated in an opportunistic way more by curiosity and serendipity, but later by systematic and research-guided approaches. But again, there is little evidence that these standard publications were part of the curriculum in the missionary colleges.

There can be little doubt that Baldwin Spencer, in preparation for his appointment in Melbourne, would have found and read the many English equivalents on the shelves of the Pitt-Rivers Museum. In addition, he had the benefit of personal relations with Australian researchers and their publications. We need think only of Edward M.

Curr, Lorimer Fison, Alfred Haddon, Robert R. Marett, Walter E. Roth and also Francis Gillen, who visited Carl Strehlow and became the mediator as well as the detractor between Strehlow and Spencer (J. Strehlow 2011: 560 ff.). There is no indication that the Neuendettelsau college was similarly equipped to give its students a chance to familiarise themselves with the methods and results in ethnology beyond the traditional emphasis on learning classical, that is, Biblical, languages.

On the other hand, while Strehlow was still in Germany and later in Australia, some small but significant earlier missionary research would have come to his attention. This would have included the studies of Aboriginal languages in South Australia by Christian Gottlieb Teichmann and Clamor Wilhelm Schürmann of the Dresden Mission House (Teichmann & Schürmann 1840). Closer to home, Adolf Hermann Kempe, Louis Schulze and Wilhelm Schwarz, from Hermannsburg in Lower Saxony, had been the missionaries at the original Hermannsburg Mission Station, collecting important language studies and ethnographic information about the local Aborigines. These studies were later published in 1880 in the *Hermannsburger Missions-Blatt*, which attracted the attention of anthropologists in Europe. They would have been known also in Neuendettelsau (Leske 1977: 22–23).

Although it seems that the Neuendettelsau curriculum remained focused on theological and language studies, other colleges, such as the Berlin Mission, founded in 1824 and working primarily in Africa, progressively took note of trends in the sciences. In his first directive, the *Memorandum regarding the task, work, blessings and needs of the Berlin Mission Society, directed to all friends of the Kingdom of God*, published in 1869 concerning the education of future missionaries, the mission director, Hermann Theodor Wangemann, remained firmly focused on theological studies (Wangemann 1869). However, his own travels as mission inspector in Africa seemed to have opened his mind to the importance of ethnographic studies. Thus, in 1863, Pastor Albert Petri, the second inspector of the Berlin Mission, included the study of 'heathen religions' (Petri 1873), apparently conforming to the deliberations of a conference on missions in Bremen. The meeting recommended that there should be a dual education of missionaries: 'a religious one and an intellectual one', taking some information from the curriculum of the Basel Missionary Seminary, established in 1815 (Petri 1873: 141 ff.). In 1882 Wangemann published a revised edition of his *Curriculum of the Berlin Mission Seminary*, in which the first signs of an intercultural hermeneutic become noticeable: it advocates a heightened awareness of the great variety of cultural specificities among the native peoples and the inherent beauty of native languages (Wangemann

1882: 31). In response to the growing importance of museums in Berlin, especially the ethnological, visits to exhibitions and collections are recommended. In the paragraphs on 'Motives/Motivations' in his *Commentary on the Mission Order of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Evangelical Mission among the Heathens*, also published in 1882, we recognise tensions between the traditional, theological motivations of missionary work and the increasing attention given to scientific work, indicating that scientific research by the missionary is no longer simply tolerated but expected. He writes:

The principal work of the missionary exists in the administration of the Word and the Sacrament. But his activities also comprise many other labours. In his service, the missionary will find himself obliged to become active now as discoverer, now as travelling preacher, now as linguist, now as writer, medico, nurse or arbitrator. (Wangemann 1882 Motives: 22)

A little further on, Wangemann seeks the agreement of church authority for such progressive moves by quoting from a letter from his friend and superintendent of the Evangelical Church in Pless, Upper Silesia, D.theol. Friedrich Wilhelm Kölling-Pless:

If the missionary has received the gift for scientific studies, e.g., geographical, ethnographical, comparative language studies, he will render service to the holy mission work. If he delves deeply into them, he will, compared with the partly rather superficial groups of travellers, achieve something substantial. Through such works, the reputation of the mission to the heathens will grow in the minds of externally educated, but internally impoverished, cultivated human beings of the 19th century. (Wangemann 1882 Motives: 45; Veit 2005: 26 ff.)

It is left to Carl Meinhof, after being a practising missionary in Africa, to discuss specific instructions *how* to go about such research by having, and making use of, one's own intimate knowledge of language. In his 1906 paper, 'The introduction of the missionary into the characteristics of the heathens through language', he suggests:

In addition to anthropology, which considers putting more emphasis on the somatic side of human beings, it is rather ethnology (Völkerkunde) which also treats the spiritual life of humanity and which is an excellent instructor regarding the understanding of national characteristics (Volkstum). Here we learn something about the way of life and the

occupations of an individual people ... We come to know what kind of handicraft is practised ... We study the alimentation of a people ... We learn something about customs regarding the birth of a human being, his development, death and burial ... We come to know eminent people ... We are introduced to custom and law. Without a knowledge of the native tongues, nothing can be found out with certainty ... If we want to inquire into the legal code or religious ideas of a people, we are completely dependent on the co-operation of a linguist (Sprachkenner) ... (Meinhof 1906: 146–147)

Here, Meinhof not only gives an outline of ethnographic topics the missionary is confronted with, but also offers elementary instructions in the use of the essential tool of language when investigating, describing and understanding the culture of the indigenes. It is this tool that Carl Strehlow had developed during his time with Pastor Reuther and then used brilliantly to build the bridge to an understanding of the native peoples of Central Australia. It is this intimate knowledge and use of native languages which, at the time, separated cultural from social anthropology, separated Carl Strehlow from Baldwin Spencer, and created all the fuss in Melbourne and Oxford.

The crossover of ethnography into missionary work – or is it the other way round? – comes to light in the guidance Strehlow receives from the armchair ethnographer at the Frankfurt Völker-Museum, Moritz von Leonhardi. We have little information about von Leonhardi's own education. He was born in 1856 and died suddenly in 1910 while in correspondence with Strehlow and editing his books for the Frankfurt Museum. Unfortunately, only little of the correspondence survived when the Frankfurt Museum was destroyed in March and September, 1944. What survived in both Germany and Australia, particularly in the archives of the (Theodor George Henry) Strehlow Research Centre in Alice Springs, has been exhaustively used by Harriet Völker (2001) and John Strehlow (2011) when piecing together the circumstances and development of the collaboration between Carl Strehlow in Hermannsburg and Moritz von Leonhardi in Frankfurt, resulting in the successive volumes of *Die Aranda und Loritja Stämme in Zentralaustralien*. There is little doubt that von Leonhardi had full cognisance of the relevant instructions at the time which were brought together, ultimately, in Georg von Neumayer's volumes. We could, therefore, say that in the early nineteenth century the scientific environment already existed for missionaries to be properly instructed about the conduct of ethnographic studies if the mission colleges had chosen to do so.

In Carl Strehlow's instructive collaboration with Moritz von Leonhardi, the method was essentially a personal exchange of questions and answers which, on the evidence, was the only way to get to the bottom of matters arising in the course of editing his work for publication. One pertinent example must suffice (Veit 1994: 90 ff.). For a much more detailed account of the events, I refer now to John Strehlow's brilliant narrative.

In the late 1800s, Moritz von Leonhardi had come across some reports on life and work in Central Australia, published in mission journals of the Hermannsburg and Neuendettelsau colleges. In the 'Kirchliche Mitteilungen', for example, a letter by Carl Strehlow dated 8 January 1901, on the Aboriginal notion of God, had been published. Von Leonhardi managed to obtain Strehlow's postal address and, on 10 September 1901, wrote a letter dealing with questions concerning Aboriginal ideas on religion, particularly those on a Supreme Being. Von Leonhardi's letter and Strehlow's response on 20 December 1901, are paradigmatic for the way in which, from then until von Leonhardi's sudden death on 27 October 1910, and until the publication of the final volume of *The Aranda and Loritja Tribes in Central Australia*, edited by Bernhard Hagen, the director of the Frankfurt Ethnographic Museum, who also died prematurely in 1919. Von Leonhardi had been intrigued by information in the Horn Report (Spencer 1896: vol. IV, 183) regarding spirit inhabitants of the sky. He takes the opportunity to ask :

1. What is the situation with the aforementioned pieces of information? Are they correct?
2. What more can you say about the spirit Twanyirika? Is he perhaps regarded as the founder or originator of the circumcision ceremony?
3. Do they believe in a Supreme Being at all? How is it conceived? Did it once live on earth? Was it the father and begetter of the human race? Does it now live in the sky or some other place? Or has this being always lived in the sky? Is it conceived of as a big, strong black man? Is it thought to be good? Or does the native primarily fear it?
4. What happens to the soul of the human being after death? What is the situation regarding the reincarnation of those who have died as asserted by Spencer and Gillen? (J. Strehlow 2011: 768 ff.)

As Strehlow has extrapolated, these questions arose out of the debate in London and Oxford about the correct understanding of the Aranda 'alcheringa'. Carl Strehlow's answer, on 20 December 1901, sent by von Leonhardi to

Andrew Land, who leaked it to E.B. Tylor, is the root cause of Spencer's chagrin when it was published in a footnote in the first volume of *The Aranda and Loritja Tribes*, and the basis of all his efforts at the destruction of Carl Strehlow's credibility. As we now know, Spencer had been very successful: a great silence descended upon Carl Strehlow in Australian anthropology (Veit 1994: 83 ff.).

In conclusion, the investigation into the non-theological education of missionaries and, for example, the education of Carl Strehlow, which made possible his ethnographic research among the Arrernte and Loritja tribes in Central Australia, and the subsequent publication of his masterpiece, has led to a better knowledge of the development of instructions by mission colleges and ethnographic professionals which, particularly during the nineteenth century but also later, were issued to travellers in order to obtain reliable information about foreign cultures. Among the travellers venturing abroad, missionaries are acknowledged as the first to initiate the discipline of the human sciences known today as Cultural Anthropology.

In his *Evangelical Theory and Practice of Missions*, Gustav Warneck, one of the first to introduce Mission Studies into German universities as a discipline, characterises the ethnographic work of missionaries well:

A private extracurricular scientific activity is a relaxation for missionaries, which we should grant them with pleasure, and their stay over many years in foreign countries makes them the most natural consuls in the realm of science; they are the born pioneers of science as they are the pioneers of culture. (Warneck 2nd 1905, 3.1: 209)

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Endnote

- 1 Felix von Luschan (1854–1924), from 1905 director of the Africa and Oceania Department of the Royal Ethnographic Museum (Völkerkundemuseum) in Berlin, and, from 1911, first Chair of Anthropology at the Friedrich Wilhelm University (Humboldt Universität), offers detailed instructions regarding the collection of skulls, which are as impressive as is his startling lack of awareness, like that of his contemporaries, of any associated moral issues:

But the layman should always turn his main attention to the procurement of the most extensive series of skulls as possible. As trophies, or for other reasons, they are often collected in great numbers in individual huts etc. It would be most deserving to take out completely such ‘nests’, as

far as this is possible, for love or money, without arousing irritation or discontent.

The layman should also always bear in mind that every single skull which he brings home is more important than any general description of the type. Every opportunity should be eagerly taken, without causing anger, to save a great number of skulls, possibly including the lower jaw, from destruction in the ground or by fire; similarly also, every opportunity to secure whole skeletons; and, circumstances permitting, a quite superficial cleaning, perhaps only removing the flesh and drying, is sufficient – all else can be arranged at home in Europe. (Luschan 1906: 6)