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The things in between: photographs from the Mariannhill Mission in KwaZulu-Natal and other objects in situations of intermediality

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thatch or shingles; it is a high-pitched gable, and does not rest on the walls, but on a central ridge-pole, supported by three vertical poles. One characteristic feature of the houses is that the timbers of the gable-ends continue upward beyond the ridge, and the projecting ends are carved or decorated by wooden figures. The length of the "house-horns" varies from about 1 foot up to 10 or 12 feet in some of the old palaces.

All the tribes are agriculturists, and most of them have cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry. The main food of the Eastern Malagasi is rice, which is grown by the aid of extensive irrigation. Amongst other points in which the Sakalava approach nearer to the East Africans than do the Hova is that the sweet potato and cassava replace rice as the national food.

The chief industries are weaving, especially grass mats, basket-making, and metal-working, which includes the manufacture of filigree ornaments. Bamboo is largely used for domestic vessels and appliances.

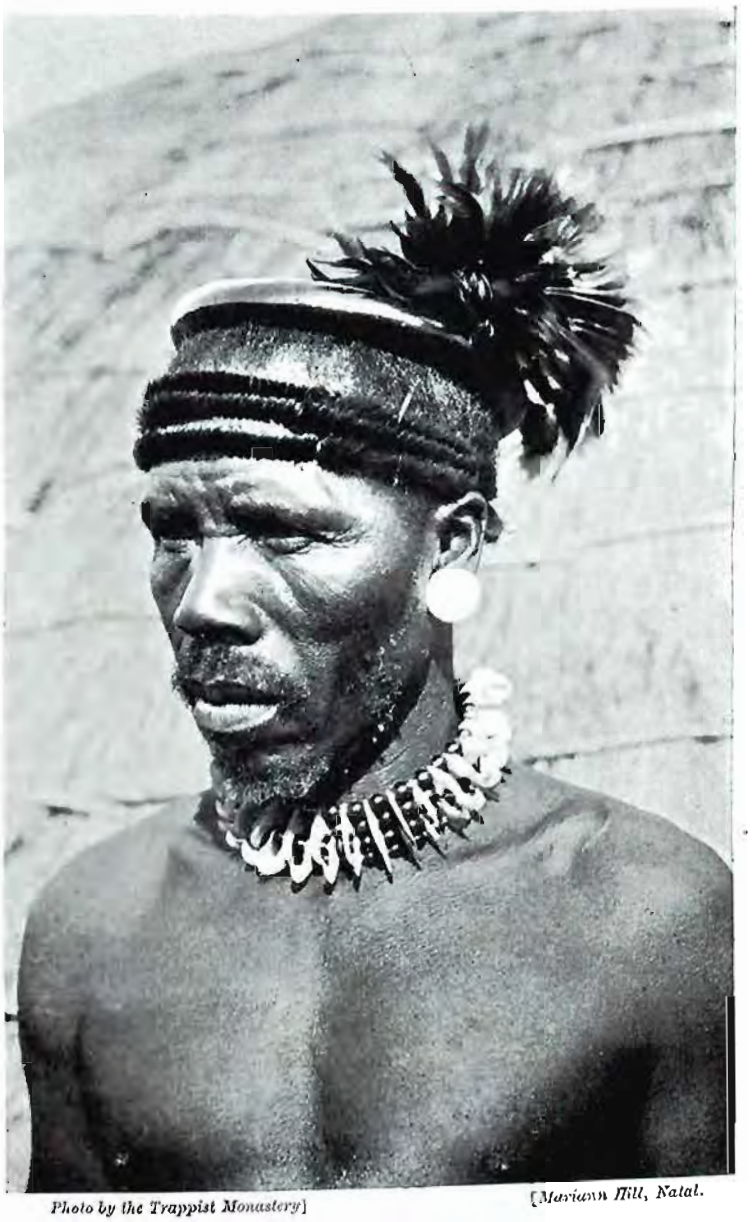


Photo by the Trappist Monastery, Mariannhill, Natal.

A KAFFIR INDUNA.

The system of internal communications is more organised than on the mainland. People of any importance travel in a palanquin, or *pilanjana*, borne by four porters, who, on level ground, trot at the rate of six miles an hour. Luggage is carried by porters, but not on the head, as is usual in East Africa, but on the ends of a pole resting on the shoulder, as in Abyssinia. The larger rivers are navigated by canoes made from hollowed tree trunks. On the coast the people use boats made of planks sewn together with palm fibre, or canoes which, as in Malaysia, are balanced by outriggers.

The original religion of Madagascar was idolatry and ancestor-worship. Traces of both remain, especially of the latter, in the elaborate funeral rites. The simplest type of burial is met with among the Tanala, who wrap the corpse in matting and throw it into a large pit. Coffins, made either from planks or from a section of a canoe, are used by some tribes, such as the Sakalava, whose customs are especially remarkable, owing to the direct worship of the former kings. The Sakalava funerals used to be accompanied by human sacrifices, the victims being buried in the grave with the corpse, some small relics of which, placed in the hollow tooth of a crocodile, are preserved in a sacred house at Mojanga, on the north-west coast.

The Things in Between

Photographs from the Mariannhill Mission in KwaZulu-Natal and other Objects in Situations of Intermediality

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A concise Orthography and Glossary.

In this study I use Zulu terms as they were spelled at the respective time. This relates, for example, to the inclusion of an “h” in more recent spelling conventions. For example, Bryant (1905) spells “*isi-tunzi*” without an “h”, which is introduced by later dictionaries as “*isi-thunzi*”. Also the proper name “Lokothwayo” was spelled “Lokotwayo” around 1900.

assegai	Spear.
Bantustan	African “homeland” as administrative territory to enforce segregation and apartheid.
i-dlozi (pl.: *ama-dlozi*)	Ancestor, ancestral spirit or soul.
um-fanekiso (pl.: *imi-fanekiso*)	Picture, photograph, painting, likeness (historically a two-dimensional image).
Ingcubhe	First-fruits ceremony (*isibhaca*) as celebrated on both sides of the historical Natal/Eastern Cape border.
kafir (also: kaffir, Ger.: *Kaffer*) Africans	Arabic for unbeliever or infidel. Even though it was commonly used for Black South in the 19. century, including Zulu-speakers, the name was already considered as offensive at the time, and even more so today.
Knobkerrie	A stick with a round knob at one end.
i-k(h)olwa (pl.: *ama-k[h]olwa*)	Member of an African Christian community (literally: “believer”). Also used historically as a administrative “tribal” denomination.
in-k(h)osi (pl.: *ama-k[h]osi*)	Chief (colonial title within the British system of indirect rule; Afrikaans equivalent: “*kaptein*”).
um-k(*h*)*osi* (pl.: *imi-k*[*h*]*osi*)	First-fruits ceremony in the historical Natal area.
um-khovu (*imi-khovu*)	Familiar of a wizard or *umthakathi*; A human corpse exhumed an reanimated by an *umthakathi* to be used for evil purposes.
i-nduna (pl.: *izi-nduna*)	Advisor and representative of a chief (also foreman at a workshop or mission).
isa-ngoma (pl.: *iza-ngoma*)	Diviner; witch doctor.
i-nyanga (pl.: *izi-nyanga*)	Commonly translated as healer, doctor (actually a “specialist” in any particular trade).
i-roma (pl.: *ama-roma*)	A Roman Catholic.
um-t[h]akathi (pl.: *aba-t[h]akathi*)	Evil witch or wizard, warlock (also an aching tooth).
isi-t(h)ombe (pl.: *izi-t[h]ombe*)	Image, statue, doll, picture, photograph (historically a three-dimensional image).
isi-t(h)unzi (pl.: *izi-t[h]unzi*)	Shadow, personality, soul, photograph.
umu-tsha (pl.: *imi-tsha*)	Loin cover as used by men or women.
ma-t(h)webula (also *madwebula*)	Photographer, or one who “conjures” a person’s *isithunzi* (“Madwebula” was in idiosyncratic use by Br. Aegidius Müller around 1905).
uku-t(h)webula	To spirit or conjure away etc.
i-shoba (pl.: *ama-shoba*)	Bushy tail, body ornament, fly whisk (in the Natal-context historically employed as paraphernalia by *izangoma*).

INTRODUCTION

Image Circuits

The cover of this study shows the photograph of a young man of unknown identity. The photograph was taken sometime between 1902 and 1909 in the photographic studio of the Trappist abbey and mission station Mariannhill, near Durban, South Africa. The man reclines on a roughly assembled bench of untreated wood, in front of an out-of-focus backdrop showing a painted lake scenario. Wearing a large-rimmed skimmer hat, a neat suit with club collar, and a silk cravat, he holds a cloth-bound and slightly worn book. The book, whose cover he consciously displays, bears the title *The Living Races of Mankind*, and can be identified as one volume of the second edition (1901b). First published in London in 1900 as a fortnightly series, it quickly became an immensely popular coffee-table book.

One reason it was used as a reoccurring prop in this particular photographic studio was the fact that it contains several photographs of Black South Africans, who had been living near Mariannhill Monastery, and whose photographs had been taken by personnel of the same studio more than ten years earlier. The portrait of an African man on the inside cover of the study you are reading is one of those photographs. As the sitter posed confidently with the book, it appears that he found that the imagery contained therein bore sufficient resemblance to the people he had encountered in Natal—or still hoped to encounter. While the White sitter remains unknown to us, the African man was indeed a well-known personality to the missionaries, a personality, as I will suggest, that changed alongside the biography of his portrait. *Induna* Umdamane Zungu, as he became known to me, will accompany us through several parts of this study.

This study is—next to photographs—about such things in between, like *The Living Races of Mankind* being held by the sitter: media that the mission's photographer Br. Aegidius Müller intentionally positioned in photographic space, but which concurrently transgress it and point to places and times beyond themselves. By positioning props on a stage, the missionaries revealed something about their own conditions of understanding the world around them, and the production of knowledge about it. As photographic props, such media invoke other images, places and times, different to the ones of which they are a part, always relative to the conditions of their viewing. Even though they are images, or contain images, such as the book depicted in the cover photograph, their terms are at the same time material. On account of this condition, they constituted important social links between the missionaries, both their subjects and audiences, as well as other contemporaries.

Over time, Mariannhill's photographs were employed as propaganda, entertainment, art, social catalysers, scientific evidence, and family photographs. As well as being social agents themselves, Mariannhill's photographs thus bore important evidential traces as sources for several interpretative communities and individuals. However, as historical sources, photographs generally provide an incredible "rawness" of historical presences, which are both "unprocessed and potentially painful" (Edwards 2001:5). Together with seemingly unresolvable "epistemic uncertainties" (Stoler 2009), this results in a "random inclusiveness" (Bell 2006, Edwards and

Morton 2009), and therefore an excess of meanings (Poole 2005). Interpretations of photographs are thus never fixed, and may often even be contradictory.

Next to ethnologists and government officials, the activities and representations produced by missionaries gathered an even greater reputation of stabilising narratives of transformation and conversion by crafting biased documents and by destroying their subjects' cultural artefacts (Harries 2005). The German historian Ulrich van der Heyden states that "[t]he role of missionaries during the process of European colonisation is still being debated in colonial historiography and mission work: were they 'pioneers of colonialism' or 'advocates of the natives'?" (2008:247). I hope to show in the course of this study that such a dualistic approach is insufficient and limiting. While individual Mariannhill Missionaries worked in both of these directions, they participated in many other projects at the same time.

Missionaries generally may have been less prone to essentialise their subjects ethnically and racially, because they were rather concerned with the conversion and registration of individuals (Pels 1994, 1997). Mariannhill Missionaries, however, were certainly amongst those who described their African contemporaries in generalising terms (also see Harries 2005:244-245). For example, in their propaganda periodicals they favoured terms like "kafir" for their future potential subjects, instead of using more diverse "tribal" categorisations like "Zulu", or personal names.[1] By scrutinising the grass-roots processes of photographic production and circulation in combination with various other media, we will gain a more nuanced insight into the intentions and lives of involved actors and objects on both sides of the camera.

This study is therefore concerned with the "social life"[2] of images and related objects in situations of intermediality, which will lead to a better understanding of the historical role of the photographic medium within the mission encounter.[3] This will also provide insights into how several of the photographs' stakeholders made claims to their authentication over time. In the process, the question will arise how missionary representations—despite their lesser reputation amongst scholars—complied with or varied from other contemporary photographic representations of colonial situations, or even those in the colonial centres. Deborah Poole describes such colonial "image worlds" as the "simultaneously material and social nature of both vision and representation" (1997:7). Susan Sontag had pointed out almost two decades earlier that such "image-worlds" are fitting images and the worlds they refer to into "schemes of

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1 The racist term "kafir" (also "kaffir") or "*Kaffer*" will appear repeatedly throughout this study in its historical form of employment. Derived from the Arabic term "*Kāfir*" for "infidel" (ie. a non-Muslim), White South Africans and foreigners used the term during the 19th and 20th century. It was both applied in popular colloquial use, as well as a scientific categorisation of the inhabitants of eastern South Africa. Today it is considered as derogatory and highly offensive.

2 The basic idea being that images (Pinney 1997)—just like other artefacts (Appadurai 1986, Thomas 1991)—change in value and meaning by circulating between different interpretative communities and discourses.

3 The term "intermediality" is derived from the concept of "intertextuality", foremost associated with the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, and Roland Barthes. It indicates that we always read and perceive documents in association with other documents. But "intermediality" often appears to be understood alternatively as "interpictoriality", where image content merely moves from one carrier to the other, and the focus is not so much on the perceiving subject as such. More on this on page 16.

classification". She also made the important observation that "the notion of image and reality are complementary", because they both change according to each other (Sontag 1979:153-180, also see Geary 2002). In order to understand the production of the South African "image world" we may study the respective "art worlds" that constituted them over time (Becker 2008 [1982]): by following photographers, artistic painters, their models, patrons, benefactors, and eventually the images evolving from their interactions, we not only learn about the logic of the image world itself, but also about its role in social interactions.

For only once we understand the practices that constituted the resulting image stocks, it is possible to adequately and effectively curate them. A part of this study will therefore trace Mariannhill's photographs as they became dispersed and have today accumulated worldwide in many repositories of archives and museums.[4] The recent exhibitions "Dutch Eyes" (2007) at the Dutch Photo Museum in Rotterdam and "Good Hope" (2017) at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam are only two examples where Mariannhill's photographs have been used without sufficient attention, if any, to their original intentions or production.[5] Placed on walls in wooden frames, partially covered by white *passepartouts*, the photographic objects were arranged and presented in an aesthetic format according to artistic convention that differs considerably from their original uses as either mission propaganda or scientific evidence. Even if there is no single correct way to deal with these situations, it nevertheless broadens our possibilities, as I shall soon propose, if we consider the lives of related images before and after the moment of a photograph's creation.

Currently, these very image stocks are also being dispersed once more digitally on the internet. European museums—formerly framed "ethnological"—have recently begun to reinvent themselves, as well as their purpose and relevance for a local and international public. Within this process of reinvention, it still appears to be difficult to deal with stockpiled historical images, because they have often been produced within a public, non-academic, and if not racist, at least strongly racially biased economy of colonial classifications and representations. Their release on the internet once more exposes them to potentially similar discourses of essentialisation. Even if such discourses are no longer outspokenly racist, they rely on and have the potential to

[4] As Vokes (2012) points out, the most recent approaches to "African photography" have been shaped by the overlapping disciplinary interests of anthropology and regional history, as well as art history and theory. However, as will become clear during my study, the interdisciplinarity must still be increased, especially regarding the history of photographic technology and aesthetics. This should shed more light on the mutual influence of social interaction in photographic production, aesthetics, and the possibilities and impossibilities that technology created in these regards. For overviews of the most recent interests see, for example, the introductions to the various special issues of journals and edited volumes in chronological order: Landau 2002, Morton and Edwards 2009, Banks and Vokes 2010, Pype 2010, Peffer 2010, Peffer 2013, Garb 2013, Haney and Schneider 2014, Gore 2015a, Morton and Newbury 2015.

[5] The former exhibition attempted to document the history of Dutch photography, and the latter Dutch historical relations to South Africa. Curators clearly did not choose Mariannhill's photographs for their relation to the Netherlands, but rather because they seemed to allow for more "humane" narratives than those photographs from/of South Africa found otherwise in "ethnographic" collections. Also the missionaries' intentional self-depiction was clearly a point of interest to the exhibition makers, however not in the way that I discuss it (Chapter One).

reinvigorate past discourses of classification and photographic production, which have been partially inscribed in the photographs' institutional biographies. Due to their openness to interpretations, photographs therefore still linger ambivalently and often uneasily in between written words and supposedly lived situations of the past and the present.

For these reasons, I consider this study not only a contribution to the anthropology of colonial photography, but also to the anthropology of colonialism, ethnology[6], and Christian missions (cf. Pels 1997, 2007). I aim to offer a critical understanding for limited periods in the biography of the photographs in question, as future interpretations and appropriations are unavoidable. To this end I will consider photographic practices and image (re)production practices more generally at Mariannhill Monastery and its filial station Centocow as a craftsmanship between performance, imaging, and writing (cf. Latour 1990:21, also see Clifford and Marcus 1986). This will first involve the images' production period roughly in between the 1880s and early 1930s, and secondly, my own involvement since 2006.

The photograph discussed above is not present in the mission's own photographic archive any longer. Instead, I discovered it in 2011 in the archive of the Linden Museum, the ethnological museum of Stuttgart, Germany. Since 2006, I have located Mariannhill's photographs in more than 20 major museum collections in central Europe, the USA, and South Africa. The cover photograph makes these image circuits most explicit, as it is evidence for the mission's reflection on the circulation process of their own image production, running parallel to multiple other kinds of circuits between colonial centres and their peripheries (cf. Stoler and Cooper 1997:28). The cover photograph is also an expression of the possible "refractions" of vision between Europe and South Africa, as it hints at the entanglement of publicly, institutionally, and privately held views on photographs (Strassler 2010:7).

I attempt to analyse the institutional networks evolving in the process through what can best be referred to as the "extended archive" of Mariannhill. Since the monastery and its archive in South Africa, but also the photographic studio and other material artefacts still exist today, there was the opportunity to study ethnographically, both the production of photographs and their "social lives" since then. This I could do partially by analysing how photographs have been used in publications and exhibitions. But only the fact that Mariannhill Monastery had its own professional photographic studio—unlike any other mission station studied so far—made an analysis of the production process of photographs possible.[7] As a result, the photographic oeuvre

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[6] I discuss the historical and regional differences in terminology regarding "anthropology", "ethnology", and "ethnography" in Chapter Six.

[7] However, as my discussion of the Trappist Abbey in Algeria further below shows, there were exceptions. Also see Poole (2003:198), who mentions that a "congregation of English evangelical missionaries" had founded a photographic studio in the Peruvian city of Cusco during the 1890s, which however they had to sell again before 1904 (also see Poole 1997:195). Furthermore, the German Moravian Missionaries (Herrenhuter Brüdergemeinde) at Genadendal near Cape Town (founded 1738, thus the oldest mission station in Southern Africa) produced photographs at least since the 1860s (see Kröger 2008). It is, however, still unclear how professional the situation was. When I visited Genadendal in 2011, a history of the photographic collection was in preparation.

of Mariannhill appears to be the earliest—or at least the only still existing—coherent archive of photographs taken by a single institution in colonial Natal, spanning almost six decades of production, interrupted only by the First World War.[8] Therefore it holds importance, not only for a local history, but even more so for exploring a transnational history of photographic production and circulation.

In 1880, almost two years before the Trappists settled in Natal, Mariannhill's founder, Fr. Franz Pfanner, would have hardly expected this future proliferation and wide circulation of Mariannhill's photographs, when he explained their initial role for his project:

> I have even the idea to forward twice a month a few sheets of light reading and interesting reports. We could add a few photos, done by our frater and this would keep awake the interest of our countrymen. This is necessary in order to obtain novices. If the novices don't come from the continent and especially from the Germans, we are lost. But "*Ignoti nulla cupido*" [What we don't know we never ask for]. How could novices desire to go to the Cape if they don't hear of it?[9]

Pfanner wrote these lines to an associate of Bishop Ricards of Grahamstown, who had called him to the Cape in 1879. The contemplative Trappist order held a reputation as laborious craftsmen, which led Ricards to believe they may instruct and train Africans "by silent example" (Ricards 1879). To this end—of first attracting novices, later benefactors, and ultimately funds—Pfanner became a great proponent of the press. Even before his arrival in Natal he had already published reports for an exclusively German-speaking audience, printed on a press brought from Europe together with a photographic camera. Against the opinion of his Trappist superiors (cf. Strunk 1892), Pfanner also believed performance and spectacle in rituals to be an inherent part of what it meant to be Catholic (eg. Pfanner 1889). To make this point, celebrations during feast days and baptisms were described at length early on in the mission's periodicals, and eventually by the late 1880s drawings and engravings after photographs were used in addition to mediate these experiences. The monastery likewise produced and inspired visual images and other media of various formats: ranging from commercially sold photographic cabinet cards, postcards, projections of lantern slides, paintings, statues, and theatre performances, to church murals, stained glass church windows, museum objects, saintly relics, and eventually propaganda films after the Second World War. At one point of their biographies all these images and objects were somehow connected to the photographic production at Mariannhill's studio.

In order to analyse these constellations and the circumstances as to how they (re-)surfaced over many decades, I follow the movement of images through three timeframes. First, I examine the production of photographs near Mariannhill Monastery and its filial station Centocow

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[8] Other extensive collections of photographs made locally and earlier than the 1880s can of course be found at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban, and the National Archives repository in Pietermaritzburg. However, these are indeed collections in the strict sense of the term, accumulated from different sources and photographers over several decades. For a brief overview of the Pietermaritzburg repository and its photographic collection see Dominy (1982).

[9] CMMA-GR: letter, Pfanner to Fraunhofer, 11.02.1880—Undated English translation by an unknown author. (AFPA-02053). Underscore, italics and Latin translation as they appear in the English translation.

between the 1880s and 1915, mainly carried out by the Trappist affiliate and professional photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller. His photographs and writings in particular, produced between 1898 and 1915, have been used extensively by the mission, and have been widely appropriated by local and international publishers and scientists ever since. As I will explain, this was partially due to the photographs' highly aestheticised standards, and the reliance on pre-existing imagery. Müller took inspiration from various specialised discourses with established image conventions, such as Catholic propaganda, artistic genre photography, tourism, and ethnology, while at the same time promoting his photographs as authentic representations within the very same fields (Chapters One to Six).

Secondly, I studied the period between 1926 and 1931, when the Black artistic painter Gerard Bhengu worked in close cooperation with his first patron, Dr. Max Kohler at Centocow Mission (Chapter Seven). Bhengu and Kohler not only relied on the work of Müller and others at Mariannhill, but their work also had impact on later practitioners and scholars of South African material and visual culture. Bhengu had achieved considerable fame by the 1960s, and was once more hailed by art historians after the end of Apartheid as one of South Africa's first successful Black figurative painters. Also Kohler achieved moderate recognition, both for his ethnographic writings and as Bhengu's patron. The co-production and formation years of both men at Centocow, however, have so far not been studied in any depth. Not only did Bhengu and Kohler —like Müller—attempt to represent their own communities, of German-speaking Catholic missionaries and Black South Africans respectively, but both also developed a practice of artistic image production and self-fashioning.

This study can only be a starting point of considering the oeuvres of Müller, Bhengu, and Kohler, as well as their full entanglement and impacts. By conjoining the two timeframes, my study nevertheless already reveals influences, similarities, and foremost developments in terms of how the authorship of Black South Africans regarding images was established, perceived, and represented in racially charged encounters. The analysis of appropriations, re-productions, and the circulation of images could not have been achieved by a study of both oeuvres in separation, as they are necessarily entangled within the same diachronic image world. This totality of possibilities of how images circulated internationally may be further distinguished for analytical purposes, and separated into localised sub-scenarios involving the institutions and actors of multiple art worlds.

Mariannhill's biographer, Br. Joseph Welzl, wrote about Br. Aegidius Müller in 1951: "His works enriched mission exhibitions in Europe, America and Rome, and still decorate private houses, as well as public localities in Africa" (Welzl 1951:480). Twenty years later, the German ethnologist Katesa Schlosser wrote of Gerard Bhengu: "Bhengu's pictures can be found in the homes and museums of South Africa" (1971:121). In many ways Müller, Bhengu, and his patron Kohler thus became "trans-disciplinary subjects" (Schneider 2011:132), who mediated between mission propaganda, contemporary art worlds, the anthropological discipline, as well as the popular imagination. Along the way, they of course interacted and cooperated with multiple other

actors, who eventually influenced where, when, and how particular images mattered. We will find these other actors not only in Mariannhill's own institutions, but also in South African museums, with the local government, as tourists, travelling ethnologists, as well as in European metropoles.

The third timeframe of this study is my own fieldwork in Europe and South Africa since 2006. The circumstances and experiences of moving between many field sites, as well as temporal spaces that are related to the two previous timeframes, conditioned my historical inquiries to a considerable extent (also see Marcus 1995:113). While moving around, I observed how people employed photographs and paintings. At the same time, my presence created occasions in which these images appeared to channel power from past to present: images depicting historical personalities, once combined under particular circumstances with particular powerful objects, turned out to develop agency and impact in the present (Chapters Three and Eight).

The social lives of photographs are erratic by virtue of their reproducibility. In the particular case of my study it was therefore necessary to study *images*, rather than merely *photographs*. For example, when the topic of a painting is replicated by staging the scenery for a photograph, we may consider this as the migration of an image between material manifestations. Accordingly, it is less sensible to think of research on photographs as simply following or retracing their supposedly pre-existing social biographies.[10] Instead, to *write* the biography of a photograph while being immersed in the research process, means to inscribe its trajectories along intersections with other images. At the same time, one should be mindful of those spaces, objects, and subjects the image contains, and in, or next to which the photograph existed physically. Therefore I consider the ontological status of photographs, as both object and image, in the moments I describe ethnographically and historically.

Eventually, groping one's way along such trajectories between image, archive, and field (cf. Marcus 1995:98), the result is a combination of several interlinked social biographies. The cover photograph bears several traces regarding the four coordinates (image, space, object, subject) to which the idea of "biography" may be applied. All are crucial dimensions in processes and experiences of intermediality, and can in so far be described through a biographic approach. They will thus be at the centre of this study's four parts in the given order. This order also resonates with Marcus' (1995) suggestion of conducting multi-sited research by following people, things, metaphors, and stories through multiple spaces.[11] In the process, the boundaries

[10] While Igor Kopytoff (1986) coined the term "cultural biography" for the study of objects, Elizabeth Edwards (2001) applied the term "social biography" to photographs (also see Wendl 2001:99). Edwards also makes the important observation that with biographies of photographs, we have to consider both the biography of the physical object, as well as the one of the reproducible image at the same time (2007:48). I follow the use of "social biography", in order to stress the interpersonal relationships at play. For highly condensed reviews on some aspects of recent approaches to photographs see Edwards (2012) for anthropology, and Tucker (2006) for science studies.

[11] More recently this approach has been adopted in transnational historical studies as "multi-sited historiography" (Zimmerman 2013).

between objects and subjects, images and objects, as well as between images and subjects become fluid, even ontological dilemmas, and therefore need to be reconsidered. As I hope to show in Parts One to Three, all these lines of investigation intersect in the photograph on the cover of this book, and to some extent also in the one to which we now turn.





Figures 1 and 2: front and verso of a postcard titled "*Mariannhill—Am Umhlatusaneriver*". The photograph was taken in approx. 1905. The postcard was sent from South Africa to Germany in 1912 (collection of the author).

It was in the summer of 2008 that I purchased this postcard (Figures 1 and 2) for a few Euros at a philatelic antique shop in Munich. It was one of several available postcards from southern Africa, all posted around 1900. The front of the card shows a picturesque scene of four women, who seem to tentatively shy away towards the left from an approaching man on the right. He carries a white cattle-hide shield, a stick, and a spear. The image's compositional main feature appears to be the well-defined reflection of the two women in the very stream they attempt to cross. The card bears a small caption in the lower left corner: "*Mariannhill—Am Umhlatusaneriver*".

In January 1912, the Mariannhill priest Fr. Ludwig Tremel sent this postcard from Natal in South Africa to his cousin, Marie Wieselberger in Landshut, near Munich. Tremel had joined the Catholic Congregation of the Reformed Cistercians (OCR) at Mariannhill three years earlier, and had obviously since then been in contact with his family in Germany. On the verso he wrote that—despite the heat of summer—he is quite well, but wonders why his mother has not written for such a long time. It is likely that Marie and her family had received similar postcards over the previous years, so that Fr. Ludwig saw no further need to waste a single word on the postcard's curious scenery.[12] As both image and object, this postcard serves as an example how we can approach photographs *as* sources for history, as well as traces, protagonists, and actors *in* history (cf. Edwards 2001).

A wide range of such photographic genre scenes were a staple of the production at Mariannhill's photographic studio, in particular since the arrival of Br. Aegidius Müller in 1897. Along with the studio, the production of postcards and the publication of Mariannhill's periodicals were increasingly professionalised between approximately 1894 and 1907. The missionaries at Mariannhill generally referred to these kinds of photographs as "mission life" in their periodicals. Similarly narrative as the one at the river, other photographs show pious black children praying before a cross, or religious sisters handing out food to Black families.

The repertoire of photographs at Mariannhill was thus generally much wider and more diverse than the images produced by any of the other surrounding missions, which mostly consisted of static single- or group portraits. The images produced at Mariannhill between the 1890s and 1915 were even reused after the war, and up to the 1960s. The missionaries still considered themes and aesthetics to sufficiently resemble an alleged reality on the ground, in order to promote the same photographs as truthful and thus effective propaganda. In 1922, it was once more Fr. Ludwig Tremel who edited the second edition of the propaganda booklet *Die Mariannhiller Mission*. This was an extended version of the 1907 booklet *Das Trappisten-Missionskloster Mariannhill, oder Bilder aus dem Afrikanischen Missionsleben*, edited by Fr. Dominikus Frey for the mission's 25th anniversary. Both publications, to which I will frequently refer in this study, recount the mission's history, and show a distilled and refined accumulation of

[12] Even if the owner of the shop in Munich where I bought the postcard did not remember details of the acquisition, it is possible that he purchased it from the clearance of an inheritance, which may have come from nearby Landshut, where the family of Fr. Ludwig lived.

themes and images describing the experience of the mission encounter.

However, this particular idea of an encounter between the photographer and the mission's African neighbours has to be further scrutinised. Considering the contemporary "image world" in which Br. Aegidius Müller took part, we may safely assume that the above photograph was carefully arranged, and did not come about because the photographer accidentally happened to be in the right spot with his bulky camera equipment, at the very moment when a man with spear and shield was chasing several women across a river. Indeed, various takes of very similar scenes with the very same set of people, from the very same vantage point do exist as prints and glass plate negatives in the mission's archive. They allow us to recognise the scene as a performance, or rather as the staging of a well-arranged *tableau vivant*. As I will explicate in Chapter One, *tableaux vivants* were popular modes of theatre performance at the time, often relying on previously existing genre images, and became increasingly popular in commercial photographic practice at the end of the 19th century. Elizabeth Edwards has sketched the relevance of re-enactment and the pose within "ethnographic" photographic practice between the 1880s and 1920s (2001:157-180), which, however relied on locally created "indigenous" histories. I hope to show that Mariannhill's photographs instead often relied on tropes of popular romantic and colonial print media. These photographs nevertheless found their way as illustrations through various chains of authentication into past (Chapter Six), but also more recent anthropological publications (Chapter Two).

Despite the obvious staging of many of Mariannhill's photographs, they still allow us to trace particular historical personas, such as *induna* Umdamane Zungu, whose pre-photographic relationship to the mission also regulated their role in the performance during the photographic occasion (Parts Two to Four). While many of the photographs discussed in this study are clearly relying on popular blueprints, they equally have the potential to "shine through" with their actors' historical agency. Descendants of the depicted thus often preferred to "look past" the colonial and artistic circumstances of photographic production for the sake of their ancestors' personhood (cf. Aird 2003:25, also see Parts Two to Four). We can thus go beyond simply asking whether a photograph is staged or not, and begin to scrutinise which part of the staging can be attributed to which participant, why it came about, and how these parts were inscribed into the image (cf. Weiss 2010:49).

In this way, we may better understand the constitution of visual "colonial ontologies", the essences ascribed to the colonised in a colonial common sense: "the categories of things that are thought to exist or can exist in any specific domain, and the specific attributes assigned to them" (Stoler 2009:4). Even though the exact source of the image on which the river scene relied is uncertain, its construction nevertheless appears to rely on the common, but ambivalent tropes of martial prowess and male chauvinism that colonial discourse applied to African gender relations. These tropes were widely circulated in popular fiction at the time, for example in Rider Haggard's *Nada the Lily* (1892). This novel in particular was not only read, but also translated into German and republished by Mariannhill's editors, first in 1907 as a serial in the periodical

Vergißmeinnicht, and in 1925 in the form of a book (Haggard 1925).[13]

According to the trajectories of the three photographs presented so far, questions about "origins", moments of creation and re-production are vexed and difficult to pin down, as their itineraries contain a host of intermittent certifications and resulting claims. Questions evolve that draw connections between far-apart places, but equally between distant timeframes. Therefore, the macro-histories of global circulation processes need to be brought in tune with the micro-histories of minute moments of appropriation. Various scholars have approached this conundrum. Deborah Poole (1997) hoped to replace the rather vague term "visual culture" and its apparent difficulties, by thinking of images as part of what she called a "visual economy". This involves the inter-continental chain of image production, circulation, and valuation. Poole's general theoretical approach, as presented in her introduction, is in itself methodologically highly relevant, in particular for global image circulation and the focus on the materiality of images. It has therefore found a wide reception. Her own execution, however, is in parts problematic, in particular regarding the photographs she discusses.[14] Even though Poole encourages the study of various circulating media, from theatre to photographs, and their mutual influence, she does not discuss any concrete forms of circulation, or the very moments of media-transfer or intermediality.[15] She tells us what to do, but not exactly how.

The question remains as to how we can effectively trace the global interconnectedness of image production and intentions of circulation, while staying close to the material image itself. Eventually, we must retrace the networks of people that exchanged images and information between centre and periphery through established routines, where supplies and demands were negotiated for particular reasons. Like the book *The Living Races of Mankind*, postcards, periodicals and writings by anthropologists, missionaries, and professional photographers, moved physically between continents. All of these publications contained photographs and ideas about them. Two recent projects on Africa, photographs, missionaries and objects, dealt with these ideas in advanced, however in temporally and topically restricted ways. In his studies on photographic practice in West Africa until 1880, Jürg Schneider (2010, 2011) suggests that we think about what he calls the "Atlantic visualscape", in order to analyse the production and circulation of photographs, for which he consulted popular journals. Chris Wingfield (2012a) instead traced networks by following objects exchanged between members of the London

[13] Only in 1980 Haggard's *Nada the Lily* was only officially translated into German in 1980.

[14] Poole hardly considers aesthetic conventions, modes of production, or local (Andean) audience-perceptions in their own contemporary and local right—or vice versa perceptions of Andean representations in Europe. In Chapter Five, for example, she discusses the nature of the photographic *carte de visite* in Europe and North America, without any relevance and connections to its reception in South America. Neither the reasons for selection and coherence of image examples from three centuries are made explicit, nor does she actually analyse more than a few of the images illustrating the book. The concept of a "visual economy" had been brought up already two years earlier by Broeckmann (1995). Also see the discussion of a "photographic economy" in Silvester, Hayes and Hartmann (1998) with equal attention to the material circulation of images between Germany and Namibia.

[15] But see Poole's very empirical and inspiring seventh chapter, which was republished in Pinney and Peterson (2003).

Missionary society.

While having great merit, both works only deal with one medium each, photographs in the first, and objects in the second case. These works can eventually be furthered by positioning my study in what Hevia (2009) has termed the "photography complex". Building on actor-network-theory (eg. Latour 2005) and Tony Bennet's "exhibitionary complex" (1995), Hevia suggests we expand our analysis beyond the image, to include the various technologies, subjects, objects, institutions, and circumstances that enable it, and analyse them equally as social actors. I will follow the involvement of objects particularly in Parts Two and Three, in order to think through their "entanglement" with images and people, and the evolving mutual dependence (Hodder 2011, 2016; Thomas 1991). Further narrowing down the macro-perspective of "image worlds" to "art worlds", I eventually hope to provide a diachronic micro-ethnography in Chapter Eight by employing Alfred Gell's "art nexus" (1998). Gell uses this term to describe the working of agency within the interactions between art producers, their art works, and those who are eventually impacted by both.

In order to achieve such detailed ethnographic descriptions, we need to move back and forth between photographs, as objects and images, as well as the spaces through which they circulate. In the case of the cover photograph, an enormous trajectory of imaginary spaces appears between what was once before the camera, and the photograph as object, including the photograph of Umdamane inside the depicted book. This suggests friction between the two photographs' temporal and spatial movements on the one hand, and the intimate presences of the two depicted subjects on the other hand. As Vilém Flusser (1983:9) suggested, a photograph never *represents* a situation. Instead, it stands in between an observer and its own alleged historical referent, and therefore rather obscures, or even distorts the latter. This seems to echo not only Barthes' "blocked memories" as "counter memories"[16] (1993 [1980]:91), Susan Sontag's description of an "image-world" (1979:165), but also Siegfried Kracauer's image of photography and history as sharing an "ante-room": a space where historical documents and photographic images can only show us "the last things before the last", but no ultimate truth (1995 [1969]). The cover image illustrates such a situation, where we can imagine a photograph's circulation and performance only through yet another photograph. While I do not neglect the value of the image itself, I strongly acknowledge the importance of studying photographs as fabricated physical objects in lived or imagined spaces, and the complications and questions this brings about (cf. Edwards and Hart 2005, Edwards 2012).

In order to promote their cause with various allies, the missionaries conditioned very specific spaces, in which they performed along their subjects, and displayed objects standing in for the latter. In order to maximise the impact of this effort, they often manifested these spaces photographically: we may here think of the mission's own museum, temporary exhibitions abroad, exhibition displays, the photographic studio, theatre stages, church interiors, as well as

[16] For other applications see Wright (2013:107), and Keenan (1998), discussing photography and memory also in relation to Sontag and Benjamin.

the interiors and exteriors of mission stations in a wider spatial sense. Furthermore, I will study how photographs and related media move in and out of such spaces, in order to understand how they accumulated as "mimetic capital", and were later released with very specific intentions and in particular circumstances, while in the process generating "reproductive power". Stephen Greenblatt describes "mimetic capital" as

> […] a stockpile of representations, a set of images and image-making devices that are accumulated, 'banked,' as it were, in books, archives, collections, cultural storehouses, until such time as these representations are called upon to generate new representations. The images that matter, that merit the term capital, are those that achieve reproductive power, maintaining and multiplying themselves by transforming cultural contacts into novel and often unexpected forms. (Greenblatt 1991:6)

We will see that the colonial and missionary encounter in Natal produced a very specific set of images, objects, and discourses on them, which certainly merit the term "mimetic capital". Mariannhill Missionaries not only invested substantially in this "mimetic capital", but they also helped to create and modify it, in order to draw an even better reward within the targeted visual economy. Yet, we will discover that they were never able to fully control it, and that the investment and entanglement in "mimetic capital" can entail a certain degree of entrapment (cf. Hodder 2016). When shifting our analysis between the various forms of mimetic capital as images and objects and through different time periods and spaces, we may encounter a series of pitfalls, which I now briefly discuss.

Apparently there is a divide as to how historical photographs are approached. Possibly due to a lack of information about the circumstances of production, mission-produced photographs have at times been studied in a deductive way (see Eckl 2006a:116). A deductive approach, perceived as a general law applied to specific circumstances, may be considered as inflicting "context" on photographs by positioning a social framework as *a priori* to the analysis of photographs (cf. Edwards 2001, 2014:172). As suggested by, among others, Latour (eg. 1990, 2005) and Marcus (1995), we cannot rely on a pre-existing social world or "ethnographic traditions" (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999), but need to "reassemble" it by following subjects, objects, and images in action. Due to the fact that, unlike any other studied mission station worldwide, Mariannhill had a photographic studio, as well as a museum, archive, and a library on site, institutional records indeed allow for such an inductive study. This not only applies to the photographic image itself, but also to photographic practice and production. As Christopher Morton and Darren Newbury argue, it is important to consider that "a preoccupation with context can drain images of their own energy as *images*" (2015:9), and we must therefore at times pay close attention to the details of how photographic content generates new meanings. The South African historian Jeff Guy instead argued that a focus on the visual in recent approaches of popular as well as academic South African history may have flattened and diminished the retrieval and reconstruction of historical social process (2002:52).

As much as a decade earlier, Christraud Geary (1990) had already suggested to bridge this

divide by combining a "reflexive mode" with a "documentary mode" of interpretation, thus focusing on the production of the photographs and the "picturing culture" of the producers on the one hand, and the content of the image on the other hand. In a similar way, Deborah Poole addressed these dimensions as a photograph's "exchange value" regarding the reflexive side, and "use value" concerning the image content (Poole 1997:10). While Geary and Poole at times had to deduce from ideas independent of the photograph's immediate biographies, we will see for the case of Mariannhill's photographs that their production, their "picturing culture", as well as their content can be analytically related to each other, in order to understand the "reproductive power" of images. A "forensic" analysis of content (Edwards 1992, Prins 1992 [1990]) can thus be combined with an analysis of the photographs' social lives as objects.[17]

In this study, I hope to achieve such balance and circumspection concerning deductive and inductive approaches by paying close attention to the processes of intermediality, which I described for the photographs above. In a general sense, intermediality is often vaguely presented as relations between different media (cf. Belting 2001, 2005:314). Such processes have so far not been explicitly considered in anthropological and historical approaches to photography (but see Förster 2013, Gore 2015, Wendl 2001). Therefore it is important to further define intermediality, by separating it in two specific modes: first, the attention to concrete occasions of what may better be referred to as "interpictoriality" (Von Rosen 2011), where an image is transferred or appropriated, for example by recreating a photograph in form of a painting, or *vice versa*; second, the attention to people's *experiences* of "intermediality", when they try to make sense of images by relating them to other images, as well as other past and present experiences and traces. Paraphrasing Stoler (2009), I attempt to study photographs "along the grain", following the social processes and technological conventions that allow us to describe how they were produced, used and ordered, archived, and brought into (social) relations (cf. Banks and Vokes 2010), and how they can be better used as historical sources by studying them in conjunction with other images (cf. Prins 1992:23) and objects.

In the course of Chapter One it will become clear that it is not a preference, but inevitable to follow images, instead of simply photographs. Scholars have recently suggested the study of ethnographic museum collections of objects as both archaeological, as well as social "assemblages", which constitute networks or meshworks (Harrison 2013). In the case of photographic collections, however, this is immeasurably more complex: not only are we confronted with photographs as objects, with the same photographs being present in multiple archives at the same time, but also with the occasion of the production as partially visible in the image itself. As yet another dimension, we have to consider that this photographic occasion may have been staged, and based on previously circulating images and tropes, as I described above. Therefore, applying the metaphor of an "archaeological assemblage" to photographs may not be as straightforward. Carrying out a Foucauldian "image archaeology" by following "a network of

[17] See more about interdisciplinary methodology regarding images in my discussion of archives and sources below.

relationships, an 'interdiscursive configuration' of practices" (Bate 2007:6) is tempting, but at the same time dangerous ground. While working across different media, images and their meanings are never stable entities, found "*in situ*", as it were. One reason is that they never maintain a truly "indexical" bond to their original circumstances of production and placement. Instead, indexicality must always be considered as a claim, an issue to which I turn shortly.

The difficulties of writing a photograph's coherent social biography, as well as possible solutions, may be further clarified through the art historical notion of "provenance", and the archaeological notion of "provenience" (Joyce 2012, 2013; also see Barker 2012). Both concepts are used by the respective science communities to describe an object's authentication through its past material and social involvements. "Provenance" is used in art history to describe the work of re-tracing an art work's itinerary along the line of its owners, collectors, and dealers, to the maker. "Provenience" instead denotes the exact physical space where an archaeological object has been excavated. In both cases, which of course may intersect, one appears to trace "origins". This distinction turns out to be useful for thinking about, with, and through photographs, and for observing how social actors produced, circulated, and authenticated images.

Provenance can best be illustrated with what I already said about the cover photograph. Provenience will become important when discussing an aspect of Figure 1 in the last section of this introduction. Due to their specific production and circulation histories as images and objects, both photographs (cover and Figure 1) are excellent examples to explain this approach. In both cases, we may consider the occasion of the photograph's production at a concrete point in space and time as the "excavation" of an *image*, thus its archaeological provenience. Therefore it is possible to re-trace the provenance of the image theme of the river scene above even further back in time, beyond the occasion of the photograph's production. As I just described, this does not only involve the experience of intermediality for the photographic models by forming a *tableau vivant* according to a preexisting idea. Furthermore, other individuals consuming the photograph at later points in time may recognise particularly well-known *tableaux* and likewise have an experience of intermediality. The movements of images in both cases may also be rendered as an interpictorial migration of an image or an allegory.

The resemblance between photograph and referent is generally ambivalent and unclear. This is also the case with the physical relationship between a photograph and its actual place and circumstances of attempted "excavations". Scholars of photography often use Charles Peirce's semiotic theory of "iconic" and "indexical" relationships from the 1890s as a staple to define these two aspects of a photograph's ontological nature. However, according to what I just explained, iconicity and indexicality are not objective constituents of photographs, but, like the very idea of "objectivity" itself (Daston and Galison 2007), they do have a history: under particular circumstances and at particular moments in time, iconicity and indexicality are merely claimed as constituting characteristics of photographic meaning (cf. Dubois 1998, Günzel 2014, also see Tagg 1993, as well as Chapters One and Eight of this study). As Peirce himself argued, such claims to resemblance or physical connection depend on contemporarily available

"collateral knowledge" in particular moments (Lefebvre 2007, Brunet 2008). Such moments, when social actors point out relationships with photographs in situations of crisis or controversy (Latour 2005), produce particular traces. Such traces may later be reassembled in particular ways around photographs, in the process making visible related networks of people and objects. I will describe such moments throughout this study in relation to practices of interpretation, imitation, and appropriation (cf. Schneider 2003, 2006, 2011; Thomas 1991).

When I introduce the photographic work of Br. Aegidius Müller in Chapter One, and the painterly work of Gerard Bhengu in Chapter Seven, it will become clear that "appropriation" must be understood as a continuous two-way process in the production of representations (cf. Schneider 2006:34). It is impossible to define two "cultures" as distinct entities, which therefore may be mutually appropriated. As there are no pre-existing pure forms of culture, there can also be no hybrids, as Bhabha would have it (Schneider 2003:217). A common "image world" and its "visual economy" instead may allow us to think the active transformations of images, spaces, objects, and subjects, for example in the form of imitation or plagiarism. Understanding photography as a complex visual practice between several interlocutors also allows for the study of metaphysical constructions regarding the technology of the photographic process, for example as "magical" (Chapter Eight).

When I started to engage with Mariannhill's photographs historically, as well as during fieldwork in South Africa, the notion of "resemblance" played a central role in their authentication. Like with indexicality, we are not concerned with a strictly semiotic iconicity here. In both cases photographic authenticity is a claim as to why or why not a photograph truthfully represents an alleged (historical) reality. Photographic "resemblance", however, is often highly ambivalent and creates a "rawness" and multivocality of possible historical meanings. As Edwards concludes her book, the generally "raw histories" presented by photographs have to be "articulated, digested, and made active" (2001:237). Depending on how resemblance is either established or questioned by social actors, this ambivalence challenges photographs as historical sources in terms of possibilities to read their content as historical fact (cf. Burke 2001, Tucker and Campt 2009). Concerning the ambivalence of resemblance, we must also consider the possibility that a photograph becomes easily detached from its origin as "mission-made", as in the cases above, and circulates through discourses constituted within and between various other interpretative communities. This again stresses the importance of oscillating between perspectives, such as perceiving a photograph at the same time as object and as image, in the past that we study, but also in the present in which we perform as researchers.

I therefore argue that if we want to understand the production and relevance of photographs within, and especially beyond mission projects, we need to scrutinise the various things in between: how social actors intentionally constituted them between the physical mission encounter on the one hand, and the medium of the photographic image on the other. The first form of intermediality, which I will discuss in Chapter One, comprises concrete performances before the camera in the form of the before-mentioned *tableaux vivants*, mimicking preexisting

images. As I will explain, these *tableaux* constitute a medium in its own right. However, particular objects, bodies, exhibition formats, as well as imaginations of image transfer as "magical", may be considered as media within processes of intermediality. The book displayed in the cover image, as well as the *tableau*-like pose of the group in the river scene, can both be considered as relying on such processes of intermediality. They reference particular preexisting imagery, while at the same time constituting concrete entities in photographic space.

I further argue that Mariannhill Missionaries intentionally created and strategically positioned such media within the photographic mission encounter in order to summon and motivate allies, such as novices, benefactors, and government officials. I will deal with these media consecutively over the eight chapters of this study. As I have explained above, an analysis of the "image world" of colonial Natal demands the inclusion of both circulating photographs, as well as other objects as "mimetic capital". Among such other objects are those commonly framed as "ethnographic". Due to the existence of a studio and a museum at the monastery, the case of Mariannhill allows exactly this for a fairly circumscribed and coherent social field and timeframe.

My approach to photographs thus resonates in the following lines by Alfred Gell:

> In other words, it is frequently the case that works of art form 'moments' of temporal series, not just because they are datable objects (originating at certain space-time coordinates) but because they form *lineages*; they are ancestral to, and descended from, other works in the *oeuvre*. Taken together, they form a macro-object, or temporal object, which evolves over time. (Gell 1998:233)

Not only will we see that there was an internal development over time in both Müller's and Bhengu's oeuvres of photographs and paintings respectively, but that they also stood in a relationship to each other, as well as to the oeuvres of other artists. Both oeuvres may therefore be considered a complex "distributed object in time" (ibid.:234).

Accordingly, this study is not a historical ethnography of either Trappist life or endeavour in South Africa, and neither is it an ethnography of African people through photographs or paintings. Instead, I believe it to be a combined ethnography of the intermediary spaces *inhabited* by image-objects, the spaces that images *represent*, and the scapes[18] that image practices *constitute*. Photographs and paintings can therefore be conceptualised as working *as*, but also *in* "contact zones" (Rippe 2007), as theorised by Pratt (1992) for the case of colonial contacts, and by Clifford (1997) for the case of museums.[19] These various kinds of spaces, ranging from image space to space in moments of production, exhibition, and consumption, are intermediary. First, because they were communally occupied and negotiated by the photographer, the painter, and their sitters, and second because once photographs or paintings are engaged in social relations such as communal viewing, they mediate interests and ideas between groups and

[18] Appadurai's (1996) various kinds of "scapes" may be considered here: identity-, technology-, ideology-, image- and financial scapes constitute the social role of photographs in global relationships.

[19] The term "contact zone" proliferates, and has been likewise applied to archives (Burton 2005), and various activities of missionaries (Becker 2015, Cox 2005).

individuals. Over the following pages I wish to introduce the main group of interest, the Missionaries of Mariannhill, some of the eminent members, and their relationships to photography.

Missionaries and Photographs between Europe and Natal

The first Catholics to arrive in the Colony of Natal were the French Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) in 1852.[20] Even though this congregation provided the Vicar Apostolic[21] for the newly established vicariate, they never engaged in any extensive mission work. Instead, OMI concentrated on the local White population in the major cities. The community of 43 Reformed Cistercians, who would found Mariannhill Monastery, arrived in Natal thirty years later on 27 November 1882 (Biegner 1911:218). They encountered an already established presence of various Lutheran Protestant mission societies,[22] as well as Anglicans, Methodists and Wesleyans (Brain 1975, Brown 1960). The Colony of Natal, even before British annexation in 1843, through responsible government in 1893, until the South African Union in 1910, had thus become one of the most intensely missionised places worldwide (Elphick and Davenport 1997).

Also in 1843, the contemplative Catholic order of the Reformed Cistercians (OCR), commonly known as Trappists, founded their first satellite outside Europe with the Algerian Monastery Staouëli. Today known as the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (OCSO), the congregation was born out of a reformation group within the Order of Cistercians in the 17th century. They attempted to realign with the original rule for monastic conduct drawn up by St. Benedict of Nursia in about 540 (cf. Benedict and White 2008). The more colloquial name, Trappists, was derived from the French monastery La Trappe under the Abbot Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé (1626-1700). In the eyes of this split group, the adherence to the original rule had declined with the Cistercians. Since yet another separation in the 1830s and 40s, three distinct observances of different degrees of austerity had established themselves with different abbeys and abbots as their ideals. Between 1892 and 1902, these were eventually reunited and separated entirely from the Cistercians by the Papacy (Gildas 1908). Since the 1870s, the Reformed Cistercians continued to install monasteries outside of Europe, such as in the Congo, Japan, China, and Australia.

In 1879, the Irish-born Bishop of Grahamstown, James Ricards (1828-1893), visited the Trappist annual chapter at the Abbey of Septfons, France, and asked for monks to be settled in his vicariate at the South African Cape. As the story is commonly told, it was Fr. Franz Pfanner who volunteered to take on the challenge.[23] This is considered the foundational moment in the historiography of Mariannhill, and is re-iterated as an act of virtue in Pfanner's hagiographies (eg. Balling 1981). A fact hardly explored in Mariannhill's histories (but see Balling 1981, Dahm 1949, Gütl 2005, Green 2008) is that Ricards carried with him a publication, originally written in English, but in the same year translated into French, German, and Italian (Ricards 1879): *The*

[20] Lat.: Oblati Mariae Immaculatae.

[21] Commonly also referred to as "bishop".

[22] The American Missionary Society, the (German) Berlin Mission, the Swedish Missionary Society and the Norwegian Missionary Society.

[23] At this point, Pfanner technically was still prior of the Monastery Mariastern in Bosnia, which he had founded in 1869 (cf. Gütl 2005, 2017).

Catholic Church and the Kaffir: A Brief Sketch of the Progress of Catholicity in South Africa, and the Prospects of Extensive Catholic Missions on the Point of Being Founded for the Natives of British Kaffraria. This publication can be regarded as a literal pre-text, or *Urtext* to Mariannhill's development in South Africa. Ricards not only portrayed the supposed problem, but also provided a brief ethnography of the frontier and the "Tamboo Kafirs", as he called them. Furthermore, he gave a description of his ideal missionary, and in conclusion explicitly proposed to bring Irish Trappists to a farm north of Port Elizabeth, which he eventually named after the derelict Irish Abbey of Dunbrody. The text can also be seen as a pre-text to Ricards' own journey to Europe, in an effort to prepare his request to the Trappist council, as well as to address as many potential European benefactors as possible for funding his plan to bring approximately thirty Trappists to the Cape.

> A community of this Order established amongst the Abatembu Kaffirs will, the Bishop believes, be attended with the most encouraging results. The material prosperity and ever-growing beauty of a large model farm like that which gladdens the eye of the traveller in Algeria, where, since 1843, the Trappists have been labouring with marvellous success, will exercise a powerful influence for good on the minds of the Tambookie Kaffirs, already, as we have seen, disposed to learn farming. […] Is there not every reason to believe that the sinewy Kaffir, who, when he is so inclined, takes to toilsome exercise as a positive pleasure and relief from listless ennui, may, by the patient care and encouragement of these masters in the art of agriculture, be formed into habits beneficial alike to himself and to the whole colony? […] Even humanly speaking, and putting aside for a moment the views of faith, the motive force of a body of men like the Trappist monks, would of itself seem the very best means of sweeping away those impediments of superstition and indolence and sensuality, which, up to the present, have deprived the colonists of the best labour in the world and, through the want of it, have paralysed the aims and projects of our most enterprising farmers. (Ricards 1879:50-52)

The success of the Algerian prime example being his main proof, Ricards argued for the economic benefits the involvement of Trappists would have. He then went on to describe the vast activities and accomplishments of the Algerian Trappists by extensively translating from Alfred Monbrun's *La Trappe de Staouëli* (1869), enumerating all essential workshops. Amongst them was also a photographic studio, which had already been present during the time of Monbrun's visit in 1865.[24] Mariannhill's founder Franz Pfanner certainly read Ricard's publication, and during one of his trips back to Europe during the 1880s, Pfanner eventually visited the Algerian monastery himself (Wendl 1998:54). There he may have been inspired by the studio, as well as the photographs and postcards produced at Staouëli. In the conclusion to his book, Ricards described the anticipated influence of the Trappists as follows:

> The monks, it is true, are not missionaries; but after a time the monastery will become the centre and the home whence missions will radiate throughout the whole Tembu population. The material prosperity of the model farm, its hospital, and its *hotellerie* cannot fail to exercise a salutary influence on the surrounding natives; and the young missionary priests, who are burning with ardour to throw themselves into the work of native missions, will, besides having a house of retreat and a home in illness, share in the prestige of the good monks. (Ricards 1879:124)

[24] According to an exhibition with the title "Primrose—Russian Colour Photography" (curated by Olga Sviblova and Elena Misalandi) held in 2013 at the Museum of Photography in Amsterdam (FOAM), it was also common for Russian Orthodox Monasteries during the second half of the 19th century to have adjacent photographic studios.

In 1882, it became obvious that due to misunderstandings, bad management, and the desolation of the land, the Trappists had to leave the property given to them by Bishop Ricards. However, negotiations had already begun with the Catholic Vicariate of Natal under Bishop Jolivet OMI, to receive them instead. On 27 December 1882, the community arrived at the place near Durban, which would become Mariannhill Monastery, and made the first photographs within a few weeks. The last remaining and by now very faded original prints from this time were used to illustrate the very first chronicle by Fr. Joseph Biegner (1898).



Figure 3: One of the first photographs ever taken in Natal of the Trappist community and the early structures they built on the farm *Seekoegat* near Pinetown, early 1883 (CMM Archives).

In 1892, the papacy decided that the three separate observances of the Reformed Cistercians must be reunited. This was the same year that the community at Mariannhill saw major changes, as Abbot Franz Pfanner was decommissioned from office for the many dispensations he had given from the strict monastic rule. This he had done in order to straddle the community's challenge of performing as contemplative monks and as missionaries at the same time. Such dispensations would also have been necessary to engage with photography, which, as we shall see, became an essential part of performing as missionaries. It is thus no surprise that several other Trappist foundations worldwide perished several years after their establishment, and were

taken over by other congregations, or, as in the case of Mariannhill, were transformed into individual mission congregations. Why some survived within the Trappist order, while others—such as in the Congo or at Mariannhill—were either exchanged or transformed, requires further study. Instead, I now turn to a brief description of Trappist life and conduct, in order to present some of the related limitations and advantages that influenced photographic production, as well as the production of knowledge more generally.

On entering the congregation of the Reformed Cistercians, the novices underwent a separation into several classes. In the congregation's own description, the Trappist typology (Figure 4) included choir monks ("*Chorreligiosen*", who are not necessarily priests), ordained priests, lay brothers ("*Konversbrüder*"), as well as novices. Affiliates, such as the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller, were not included in this display, as they were not actual members of the monastic community. I will explain this different status in relation to the biographies I present in Chapter One. The lay brothers usually came from the lower working class and had a practical training. Accordingly, they were in charge of the workshops, agriculture, and construction works.[25] The priests and choir monks instead carried out more intellectual work, with some exceptions, and also constituted the "*Kloster Rat* [monastery council]". The Abbot was always a priest, without exceptions.



Figure 4: original captions: "*Ein Trappisten-Pater; Ein Chornovize; Ein Konversnovize; Ein Konvers-Profeßbruder*" (as published in the *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1892).

In 1885, Pfanner also founded a community of missionary sisters at Mariannhill Monastery for the purpose of teaching at the local school. Pope Pius X. approbated the "Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood" (CPS) in 1906. In this study, I am only able to deal with them marginally, as

[25] See for example Gütl (2005) for several detailed biographies, as well as incentives to join Mariannhill Monastery. Also see Pels (1999) for a detailed study of motivations to join a Catholic mission congregation in the Netherlands several decades later.

they were not directly involved with photographic production.

Until 1909, while being Trappists, Mariannhill missionaries relied on the rule drawn up by St. Benedict in the 6th century.[26] The rule was supposed to regulate daily monastic life, and to keep the community focused on metaphysical concerns. On joining the congregation by entering one particular monastery, novices would gradually make different vows. "Simple vows" they made during their first profession, and after three more years "eternal vows" during the second profession. The main four vows included "poverty", "chastity", "obedience", and "stability" (cf. Bonaventura 1887:9ff). Poverty excluded a Trappist from all private economic forms of exchange: while he worked for the monastery free of charge, the monastery provided for all his material and spiritual needs; chastity excluded him from all sexual (inter-)actions; absolute obedience had to be shown to one's superior within the limits of the rule; and the vow of stability required the professed individual to remain with the one monastery where he had made his professions for the rest of his life. A more general rule within this contemplative congregation was the one of perpetual "silence" (ibid.:38ff).

This strict set of regulations could only be temporarily lifted or modified through dispensations granted by the abbot. Breaches of this rule were accordingly punished publicly before the assembled community. As became obvious in the case of Mariannhill, two of these restrictions caused problems for active mission work in South Africa. First, the rule of stability could not be guaranteed with members who had to travel far distances on a regular basis. Stability in a monastic setting means not only to remain with one single monastery for the rest of one's life, but also to spend every night within its enclosure, or in those of its filial stations. The second restricting rule was that of perpetual silence and the obligation to communicate only in a particular sign language, unless instructed otherwise by a superior. The monks at Mariannhill, however, were already studying Zulu by the mid-1880s. Those who had to deal and converse with the outside world—either for purposes of active mission, ministry, education, propaganda, or business—were given permission to do so by the abbot (also see Chapter One).

Due to these restrictions one would have hardly expected a monastic contemplative community to develop such a highly effective propaganda machinery and printing enterprise as Mariannhill. Nevertheless, by 1890—only ten years after Pfanner had explained his propaganda efforts in the quote above—he could conclude in the editorial of Mariannhill's periodical *Vergißmeinnicht*:

> […] that my calendars have brought me an exceptional, yes, even a scandalous number of novices; when I ask the arriving postulants what had made them aware of our monastery, almost every single one replies: 'I read the Calendar of Mariannhill.' This is sufficient for me. As poor as I am, and as much as I require the money, I always

[26] The rule was also referred to as "constitution [*Ordensregel*]" and "regulation [*Reglement*]". Until the moment of separation from OCR in 1909, the Trappists of Mariannhill Monastery and its mission stations would have relied either on the French *Reglement de la Trappe* (Le Bouthillier 1878), or its first German translation of 1887 (Bonaventura 1887, also see Gütl 2005:68). The translator, Fr. Bonaventura Baier, was Pfanner's successor as prior at the Bosnian Trappist Monastery Mariastern. In 1886, Baier became the first Abbot or Mariastern.

prefer the novices. (Pfanner 1890a:50)[27]

By the late 1890s, Mariannhill had eventually become the biggest Trappist Abbey in the world according to the sheer number of its members.[28] This superior manpower not only had consequences for the monastery's potential to excell neighbouring mission congregations in material terms, but also regarding the production of knowledge about the South African environment (cf. Part Three). As a result, at least one member at a time could be spared to engage with photography. Before the Trappists started photographing representatives of the local population more intensely, they focused on their immediate surroundings at the monastery and its development. The few remaining first photographs, which show encounters with Africans can be dated to the second half of the 1880s and are generally of poor quality.

Only by the early 1890s, photographs appeared in the form of engravings in the *Mariannhiller Kalender*. At the same time, deviations from the rule in terms of speaking and travelling became evident in many accounts, even after Pfanner had been replaced. Not only did the Trappists publish reports on mission tours in their propaganda periodicals, but they also established encounters between Trappists and Africans as one of the most popular photographic genres. This made the preference for mission over contemplation visually evident. Encounters with other White South Africans, tourists, and fellow missionaries, also became an important topic for Mariannhill in day-to-day life, as well as topics for the periodicals.

Despite the strong presence of missionaries in Natal, and the apparent competition between denominations, no study exists that discusses these, or other interactions in any depth. Another previously contemplative Catholic congregation, the German Mission Benedictines had already made the transformation towards a missionary structure by 1884. The community was expelled from the East African Catholic Vicariate due to Germany's defeat in the First World War. Like several other congregations from German colonies, they moved to South Africa in 1922, founded Inkamana Abbey near Vryheid, and occasionally cooperated with Mariannhill[29] (cf. Brain 1997:201). Various other existing histories of mission activity in Natal are either temporally, regionally, or confessionally restricted. Etherington (1978) only discusses the activities of Protestant communities up to 1880, and studies on various Protestant and other societies are limited denominationally and regionally (eg. Hovland 2012).

Even though interactions and rivalries between Mariannhill Missionaries and colleagues of other denominations in Natal existed, they only manifested themselves in few moments relating to the media I discuss. One may here think of communally held exhibitions, of which I explore

[27] My own translation from the German original.

[28] The size not only referred to the number of priests, brothers, and sisters at the monastery itself, but also at the outstations, which, as so-called "filial stations", technically belonged to the abbey as their motherhouse. This only refers to the congregation of the Reformed Cistercians, and not to Catholic monasteries in general, as some publications seem to suggest.

[29] For overviews of the Catholic mission expansion and involvement with German politics and colonialism at the end of the 19th century, see Faschingeder (2002), Gründer (1982), Habermas (2008, 2010), Habermas and Przyrembel (2013), Habermas and Hölzl (2014), Van der Heyden and Feldtkeller (2012), Keurs 2007.

one example in Chapter Five. Comprehensive studies of other mission congregations' use of photographs in Natal do not yet exist[30] (but see Godby 2009) and relating to wider South Africa, there are only brief accounts[31] (Bester 1997, Kirkaldy 2005, Kirkaldy and Wirz 2000, Krüger 2011). Mariannhill's photographs have so far only been studied in one case (Adler 2000), in relation to a set acquired by the Ethnological Museum of Berlin between 1898 and 1899.[32] I discuss the interactions of various missions with ethnological museums in more detail in Chapter Six.

A comprehensive analysis regarding the commonalities and differences of how Catholic and non-Catholics missionaries used photographs in their representative strategies has still to be written. One starting point may be the respective possibilities of self-representation. While Protestant couples could depict themselves as role models for what they perceived as the "ideal" nuclear family towards both their African subjects and their European benefactors, Catholic Trappists had to represent the missionary sisters and the monks in absolute separation. The relationship between denominations may also be scrutinised regarding the question of whether Catholic missionaries may have been more open to collecting material culture and photographing people, due to the said iconoclasm of Protestants (cf. Chapter Five). Of the more than 90 existing publications (excluding my own) that either deal with or touch on photographs produced by missionaries, only a minority discusses photographs originating from Catholic missions (Corbey 2007; Eckl 2006a, 2006b; Florescu 2014; Palma 2008; Pels 1989, 1999; Stornig 2013). This may have to do with the fact that non-Catholic historical archives are much more accessible, partially due to a longer history of transition towards indigenous churches. Therefore, these archives could be better accessioned, and also accessed by academic researchers unrelated to the respective confession. Catholics instead still maintain interpretative authority over their archives, due to ongoing stakes in the countries where photographs were produced. I will nevertheless contrast Mariannhill's attempts of representation against those of other missions throughout this work.

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[30] Archives of mission societies who had a presence in Natal, such as the Archive of the Lutheran Berliner Missionsgesellschaft, do contain photographs. My survey of their contemporary periodicals between the 1860s and 1914 showed that the use of photographs was (relatively) minimal and consisted mostly of repetitive group and single portraits, made by either commissioned photographers, or visiting missionaries. As my research in the genealogical files of Durban's Bergtheil Museum showed, families of Berlin Missionaries around 1900 were dependent on commercial studios and also visited the Mariannhill studio to have their portraits taken. The Lutheran Norwegian Missionaries recently initiated several "repatriation" projects of their photographic collections to Cameroon (Gullestad 2007) and Natal. The latter collection has been transferred in digital format to the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban in 2008, but has so far not been comprehensively evaluated. My survey showed that most images have been taken after 1914 and that even photographs by Mariannhill had been appropriated into the collection. I was not able to evaluate any data regarding Lutheran Swedish Missionaries or American Board Missionaries. Parts of the latter collection of photographs can be found on the International Missionary Photography Archive (see below).

[31] There are published image collections by some mission archives containing photographs from southern Africa, which, however, show no critical analytic engagement. Kröger (2008) contains early portrait photographs from the Moravian station Genadendal in the Western Cape. Vilhunen et al. (1995) contains photographs made by Finnish missionaries in Namibia around 1900. Also see Vilhunen (2004).

[32] Webb (1992) and Klopper (2010) have also touched on Mariannhill's photographic production, but are inaccurate regarding several details.

Photographs made by missionaries were first acknowledged for their potential as sources for the writing of colonial histories in the mid 1980s. Paul Jenkins and Christraud Geary (1985), and especially Jenkins as archivist of the Basel Mission's photographic holdings,[33] proposed to explore the collection through depicted material culture, or the methodology of photo-elicitation in countries of production (also see Geary and Njoyu 1985). However, at the same time, Jenkins and Geary addressed the problem of missionaries' generally biased selection and interpretation of what they encountered. Only once socio-cultural studies of colonial photographs became firmly established with the two edited volumes *Der Geraubte Schatten* in Germany (Theye 1989) and *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920* in the UK (Edwards 1992), as well as other anthropological studies of the mid- and late 1990s, did scholars start to pay more attention to the production and use of mission-produced photographs. Missionary publications, for example, attracted interest relating to their involvement in ethnography, information networks, the social biographies of mission albums (eg. Lübcke 2012), the photographic performance in mission encounters (eg. Gardner and Philps 2006), or the political involvement of mission photography (eg. Thompson 2012).

Compared to these previously studied cases, Mariannhill presents a particular constellation of presuppositions. The exceptional manpower of Mariannhill Monastery made it more effective than any other surrounding mission enterprise, a fact that was lamented repeatedly in the periodicals of the neighbouring understaffed Protestant Berlin Mission. The great number of highly skilled and specialised workers made it possible for Mariannhill to invest in several other stakes not immediately related to conversion or economic upkeep. To the best of my knowledge, no other mission at the same time had a museum, a printing press, and a fully equipped photographic studio with a professionally trained full-time photographer. Individual missionaries of other congregations and societies may well have compiled their private photographic collections, which, however, were often discontinued and dispersed when the respective missionary died (cf. Corbey 2000:61).

Instead, most mission societies and congregations had their media institutions attached to their European or American headquarters. The special situation at Mariannhill thus allows us to study very particular institutional spaces through their remaining traces, such as the photographic studio and the museum. To study the work of the mission's printing press turned out to be more difficult, as very few traces of the editorial correspondence survived. But unlike with the work of amateur photographers of other missions, the highly professional situation at Mariannhill, and the related sources it produced, also allows us to consider Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre from art historical viewpoints. This will show that aesthetic conventions—derived from both contemporary European art photography and ethnographic practice—conditioned the work of Mariannhill's photographers in a considerable way.

The fact that Mariannhill Monastery was able to establish filial stations all over Natal and East Griqualand, constituted an extensive and dynamic network. This national and international

[33] I am not listing all of Jenkins' publications, as the list would be too extensive.

network circulated people, goods, information, and photographs. To understand this missionary project between Europe and South Africa, it must be additionally analysed as a mediation of ideas. When missionary periodicals reported on problems in South Africa, these reports at the same time often addressed social issues in Europe (cf. Habermas 2008:665). Both locations were often implied, but not exactly pointed out as analogies. I will suggest that this is even more explicit with photographs. Mariannhill Missionaries tried to equalise their photographic production and themes with contemporary endeavours in social politics, entertainment, and related aesthetics, but also with conventions in emerging ethnological and anthropological studies in Germany. They produced photographs after, for, and against Europe's ongoing scientific, social, and commercial debates. In Chapter One I address the fact that the colonial appropriation of Euro-American photographic and aesthetic conventions has been rarely studied, especially not for the case of mission propaganda. Even though the African experience did provide content, I will argue that photographic aesthetics were provided by an intense engagement with European religious and worldly examples of images, as well as the contemporary photographic industry in both Germany and South Africa.

A Brief Historiography of Mariannhill, and the Changing Use of Photographs

In this section I present a concise account of how the general historiography and hagiography of Mariannhill as a community and congregation aligned with the visual economy at the monastery itself. Around 1905, when the photograph in the studio and the one at the river were made (cover and Figure 1), restrictions concerning the distribution of images were much stricter for members of the monastery than at the time when Fr. Ludwig Tremel sent his postcard seven years later. A circular letter from the year 1905,[34] issued by the temporary administrator of Mariannhill, Dom Edmund Obrecht OCR of Gethsemane (USA), states that every member of both the male and the female community may only send private picture postcards every second year, and have his or her photograph taken only every fifth year after the noviciate. The photographer Br. Aegidius Müller had to receive these postcards from his confreres, post them, and report back to his superior.

While the visual economy of the mission appears to have been highly transparent from and towards the outside, it was for several years highly restricted on the inside of the monastery. Despite being sent in 1912, the image of the postcard in question was taken in these very times of restriction. Mariannhill had just seen the resignation of its third abbot, Fr. Gerard Wolpert in 1904, and the subsequent installation of the administrator Dom Obrecht, whose reign lasted until 1907 (cf. Gütl 2005, Kempf 1984). The community indeed regarded it as a "reign", as Obrecht had been installed to set things straight again in the South African abbey, which had gone astray from contemplative conventions in the eyes of the Trappist Generalate in Rome. In particular around the missions Centocow and Lourdes, the active missionaries had put up resistance to restrictions applied to them. I will not be able to deal with this history adequately in this work, but will refer to it wherever necessary.[35] In 1907, Obrecht, too, eventually failed to realign the Abbey, and accordingly Mariannhill was separated from the Reformed Cistercians in 1909. The community was temporarily transformed into the mission institute "Religious Missionaries of Mariannhill" (RMM) in 1910, and was again renamed "Congregation of the Missionaries of Mariannhill" (CMM) for the first time in 1936 (cf. Dahm 1950).[36]

The historical study of Catholics in Natal, and Mariannhill's history in particular, has so far been dominated by insiders to the denomination, as well as to the congregation itself. After Brown's *The Catholic Church in South Africa from its Origins to the Present Day* (1960), Joy Brain (eg. 1975, 1982a, 1982b), professor emerita of history at the former University of Durban-Westville, produced the basic studies on Catholicism in Natal, which have been continued and expanded by Philippe Denis OP, Professor of History of Christianity at the School of Religion and Theology, UKZN. Since the 1940s, members of Mariannhill published academic studies on their history, generally as dissertations at a theological faculty (eg. Dahm 1949, Lautenschlager

[34] CMMA-GR: uncatalogued circular, 1905.

[35] For internal histories dealing with this complex and highly fraught period see Dahm (1949), Kempf (1984), and Roos (1961).

[36] RMM: r*eligiosi missionarii de mariannhill* (lat.); CMM: c*ongregatio missionariorum de mariannhill* (lat.).

1963, Mettler 1968, Wendl 1998), or as data-collections for the beatification of Abbot Franz Pfanner, the founder of Mariannhill (Kempf 1981-1984).[37] Other histories were written as general popular information and propaganda for a general public (cf. Balling 2011).[38] The latter accounts can be considered as straightforward hagiographies, not least with the idea in mind to further the process of Abbot Pfanner's beatification. As somewhat of a counter narrative to the mainstream history produced by Mariannhill's male community, the "Congregation of the Missionaries of Mariannhill" (CMM), one may consider the only exhaustive history of the "Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood" (CPS) by Sr. Anette Buschgerd (1990).[39] In her study *For A Great Price*, Buschgerd takes the perspective of the sisters and stresses the dependencies and eventually the emancipation from the male community. Nevertheless, for both the male and the female congregation, the separation from the Trappist order in 1909 became a cathartic time marker, after which the communities could freely evolve as mission congregations. The time prior to 1909, instead, is often addressed as a difficult, but nevertheless nostalgic period of origins.

The only exhaustive and truly critical academic work on the early period of Mariannhill has been written by an outsider.[40] In his dissertation, the Austrian Africanist Clemens Gütl (2005) analyses the social and economic interactions between Mariannhill Missionaries and Africans on and around the monastery's land between 1882 and 1909. In addition to this, he provides an account of the pre-history to the foundation. He sketches various biographies, not only of Pfanner, but also of the Zulu linguist and collector of ethnographica, Fr. Franz Myer, as well as several lesser-known members. Gütl emphasises that not only African converts, but likewise Europeans chose a career at the mission for reasons of social and economic pressure, and in search for stability. By creating so-called *Amakholwa* (Zulu: "believers") settlements, the missionaries attempted to disentangle the lives of some Africans from the colonial "native law". One of Gütl's many findings is that the experience of engaging with Mariannhill left many members of both groups, (ex-)missionaries, potential converts and land tenants, in a less-than-ideal situation, once they realised they could not comply with the religious, social, and economic demands put on them by the Missionaries of Mariannhill. As the monastery owned the extensive farms on which its filial stations were established all over Natal and parts of East Griqualand, the mission superiors could determine freely who was allowed to stay on the land, and who was not (cf. Chapter Three of this study).

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[37] Beatification is the first major step towards Canonisation, after which a person may be officially adored as a saint within the Catholic Church. I discuss this process in detail in Chapter Eight.

[38] The publications of Fr. Adalbert Balling CMM in particular are extensive and exist in many different variations, editions, and translations. See the bibliography for a selection.

[39] CPS: c*ongregatio pretiosi sanguinis* (lat.).

[40] More specific aspects of Mariannhill's activities have been dealt with by South African outsiders to the congregation, such as education (Khandlhela 1993, 1995), theatre (Peterson 2000), or the biographies of Mariannhill's first African priests since the late 1880s (Mukuka 2008). The development and motivations for entering the congregation of Mariannhill's female congregation, the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood (CPS) in later decades have been studied by Gugglberger (2014).

After only two years, in 1885, the monastery was raised to the status of an Abbey. Once the newly installed Abbot, Franz Pfanner, decided to engage in mission work in 1886 with the foundation of Mariannhill's first filial station Reichenau, he encountered ongoing problems with the Trappist authorities. The mission activities of these first years led to an extensive paper trail of archival and published documents, but were only scarcely recorded in photographs. Even if active mission work remained a contradiction in terms for the contemplative congregation, the photographers started documenting and constructing the encounter situation of Trappists and Africans in photographs from the early 1890s onwards.

Problems eventually developed with the White population of Natal, in particular through Mariannhill's competition with local businesses. On the one hand the monks provided free labour themselves, and on the other hand they trained Africans as expert labour in various trades. This was not appreciated by local White competitors, who instead preferred to control Africans as menial labour. The Natal government eventually granted school funds to Mariannhill, which was disapproved for the same reasons, and discussed widely in local newspapers. Soon, also African parents started to comprehend the nature of the boarding school system, as entailing long absences of their children, as well as monogamous marriage demanded by the missionaries. Once children, especially girls, continued on the path set by the mission, parents became concerned about the loss of work force on the one hand, and potential *lobola* payments on the other (Zulu: "bride price"). Quarrels between parents and the missionaries eventually brought further attention to Mariannhill in the local press (cf. Gütl 2005).

Mariannhill's two extensive farms held names of Dutch origin (*Klaarwater* and *Zeekoegat*), which were relics from before the British had taken over the farming communities of Dutch descent and annexed Natal in 1843. Once it had become "the most English of the states and colonies of South Africa" (Brookes and Webb 1979:42), the Afrikaans-speaking population was a minority before the South African Union in 1910.[41] Durban, and Pinetown near Mariannhill in particular, also had considerable German-speaking Protestant communities (Volker 2006). Because they were generally perceived as German (-speaking) Catholics, Mariannhill Missionaries had ongoing problems of positioning themselves next to these other communities, especially during the two World Wars.[42] As I will show in Chapters Three and Five, the resulting need to position the community socially, resulted in the production of particular narratives, involving texts, photographs, and particular objects.

Therefore most writers on Mariannhill were insiders to the community. Starting with the author of the mission's first history, A.T. Bryant in 1887, they had a certain bias towards the hagiographic. But also many outsiders considered Mariannhill a worthwhile literary topic, especially before 1914. It is therefore necessary to further explain the already mentioned

[41] Brookes and Webb state that even though the first census was only held in 1921, the percentage of the Afrikaans-speaking population of Natal was very small by 1910 (1979:250).

[42] The majority of Mariannhill's members where indeed German-speakers from either Austria or Germany, if not even mostly Southern-Germany and Bavaria. However, several members were also of Polish, Australian, and American origin.

distinction between "internal" and "external" views and descriptions of Mariannhill's endeavours. This refers not only to authors' points of view, but also to the sources they used: Mariannhill's own historians often relied selectively on their own archival material, while in turn outsiders had in most cases no (full) access to Mariannhill's archives. As a result, they depended on Mariannhill's published hagiographic secondary literature, as well as the publicly available writings on Catholics in South Africa. Governmental archival material, as available at the repositories of the South African National Archives, the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban, and in various European archives constitutes yet another group of sources for external histories. Despite the different nature of the sources used, both internal and external narratives mainly follow the biography of Mariannhill's founder and first Abbot, Franz Pfanner.

In the 1960s, Mariannhill Missionaries initiated Pfanner's beatification process for the first time (cf. Chapter Eight). Since then, the popular narrative on Mariannhill focussed on Pfanner and defined the congregation as a successful experiment concerning its mission efforts. It portrayed Mariannhill as a phenomenon, which had surpassed its own initial restrictions (eg. Schimlek 1953). This process, and the selection of documents it involved, effectually rearranged the entire topography and topology of Mariannhill's various archival repositories (see methodological section below). Pfanner's biography has thus constituted the backbone of Mariannhill's historiography ever since, but at the same time re-directed the selection, archival migration, and accumulation of historical documents, including photographs. Even though it will be impossible to escape the pervasiveness of this trajectory and the archival structures and traces it produced, I attempt to explore alternative histories in a more diversified periphery of the mission, in particular as they relate to photographs. Due to the excess of information necessarily contained in, and created between related photographs, details unintended by the photographer offer directions to do so. In the following section I will embed this situation in the wider contemporary discourse on photography in Natal.

The focus on Pfanner is further stressed by the fact that his death in 1909 also coincided with the beginning of Mariannhill's history as an independent mission congregation after its separation from the Trappist order. Following the same thread, the fictional novel *For the Sake of Silence* by the South African literary scholar Michael Green (2008) is currently the mission's most popular and widely read history. While highly acclaimed in literary circles (it was awarded the prestigious Olive Schreiner Prize), its reception within the CMM and CPS communities was ambivalent: some considered it as a distortion of history, while others even considered it as a potential contribution to Pfanner's beatification process. In particular due to the works of Mukuka (2008) and Green (2008) the CMM and CPS communities have grown increasingly sensitive towards the historical work by outsiders, which nevertheless sees a growing demand, especially in South African academic circles. The historian and anthropologist Carolyn Hamilton and the museologist and curator Nessa Leibhammer, have recently identified Mariannhill as a "collection hotspot in place and time" (2014:162). This is justified by the fact that the mission and its scholars accumulated a considerable amount of information on, as well as artefacts

produced by Africans. Hamilton had described this conceptual idea earlier as an "archival production hotspot":

> A relatively short period of time in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when key records pertinent to the pre-industrial history of the region were intensively laid down, by a relatively small cluster of highly active individuals—colonial officials, travelers and missionaries as well as local chiefs and counselors—operating within a fairly tightly circumscribed network. (Hamilton 2011:12)

I herewith add that this also relates to the mission's photographic record: as selective as the textual history of Mariannhill is, as limited is the region's general photographic record. At least for the period before the First World War, the rather remote areas where Mariannhill's mission stations are located, have, to my knowledge, only been photographed by the missionaries themselves. This also holds true for the case of the monastery and its surroundings: even though Mariannhill Monastery was frequented by many outsiders as a tourist destination early on, it appears that none of the visitors took photographs at or around the monastery. At least none of those photographs have been published or deposited in public archives. In Chapter Three I explore whether this may have been a restriction imposed on the visitors.

Mariannhill's photographs from before 1915 have always been tightly interwoven with the growing body of texts on the mission. But in particular the depictions of Black South Africans as distinctly "non-European" did less and less relate to the social reality of the time these texts were written in. Only as late as the 1960s, a point was reached when the temporal co-presence of image and text could no longer be presented as matching the respective social realities on the ground. The missionaries had nevertheless continued to utilise the photographs up to this point, to speak from and to a discourse between Europe and South Africa. It is foremost the mission station as a spatial and social arrangement that the photographs pointed to. Not all of them showed the stations, but instead depicted oppositions: on the one hand, the lifeworld of the African population as it supposedly existed before the missionaries arrived, and on the other hand, the lifeworld as it existed with the converted and materially transformed *Amakholwa*.

However, as I argue in Chapter One, they are not always presented in the common before/after dichotomy (eg. Rippe 2018, Thomas 1992). Building on these premises, I stress on the one hand how the missionaries presented themselves in their photographic accounts. On the other hand, it is important to acknowledge that in case the missionaries themselves were not visible in the image, the photographs could be easily detached from their relation to the mission and enter various other commercial circuits. To further specify these connections between Europe and South Africa I discuss such circuits in Chapters One and Six regarding photographic and ethnological economies. Mariannhill's photographer received such circulations and reintroduced them into the photographic production at Mariannhill itself. In the next section I briefly explore the visual economy prior to these developments.

Photography and "Zooluology"

> By passing through a few Kafir kraals, one might easily bring together a very passable photographic group of 'Papuans', while among the tribes of New-Guinea we might as easily collect a troupe of 'Zulus' more true to genuine appearance than perhaps some such who have, in years not long past, been placed 'on show' in Europe and America.
>
> Alfred T. Bryant, Introduction to *A Zulu-English Dictionary* (1905:16-17).

> The Trappists were keen students of life and customs of the Zulus, and the photos were certainly taken with the express purpose of having a collection which could be of value for the future. Many of the scenes, hair styles, dress etc. are no more in vogue. For any student of tribal life and customs an invaluable source of information!
>
> Sr. Adelgisa Hermann CPS, in a letter to Elizabeth Edwards, 05. April 1983.[43]

> Like other forms of evidence, images were not created, for the most part at any rate, with the future historian in mind. Their makers had their own concerns, their own messages.
>
> Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (2001: 34).

Read against the last quote, opinions on the alleged authenticity of photographs seem oddly reversed in the first two. One would rather expect the earlier statement to be less critical, and the later one more so of claims to photographic truth. The first statement is by Alfred T. Bryant, who was one of Mariannhill's earliest and best known members.[44] In the paragraph preceding the quote, Bryant claimed the general physiognomic familiarity of "Negroes" across the globe as a race, and then pointed to showmen imitating them on the stages of Europe. The second statement is by a member of Mariannhill's female community of religious sisters, Sr. Adelgisa Hermann CPS, who was the monastery's archivist until her death in 1995. The quote is part of a response to an inquiry by the British historian of anthropology and photography Elizabeth Edwards. Edwards started researching the photographic holdings of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in the early 1980s, as part of which the museum's curator Henry Balfour had purchased a pre-compiled "ethnographic" set of photographs at Mariannhill's studio during a trip to South Africa in 1899 (cf. Part Three).

In Chapter One I argue that photographs such as the ones from Mariannhill have, to date, not been adequately understood within the contemporary visual economy for which they were produced. In fact, to adequately understand mission propaganda, the focus of analysis must be drawn more widely to involve contemporary artistic, commercial, and even scientific production networks. Eventually, it must be understood as an attempt not only to inform, but in particular to entertain audiences. Nevertheless, even later members of the congregation, like Sr. Adelgisa, have often taken them in as "ethnographic" photographs, which according to her may supposedly still provide historical evidence through photographic realism. The two statements become more comprehensible as one considers that photographic resemblances weaken with greater temporal

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[43] PRM: letter, Hermann to Edwards, 05.04.1983. I am grateful to Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton for making this letter available to me.

[44] Bryant was a resident at Mariannhill Monastery between 1883 and 1893, when he left the Trappist order for good.

distance to the referent (Kracauer 1963). While Bryant was clearly aware of the fact that at the time photographs, material culture, and theatrical performances of a "Zulu" identity were part and parcel of Europe's biased perception of Black South Africans, Sr. Adelgisa had apparently accepted Mariannhill's photographs as truthful representations, which had been sedimenting in the congregation's historiography for many decades. Initially being ambivalent entertainment, the photographs later became prominent as historical evidence during and after Apartheid. While Bryant had been a contributor to Mariannhill's propagandistic enterprise since the early 1880s, Sr. Adelgisa became involved once Mariannhill's photographs and textual works had already been appropriated, circulated, and certified by various anthropologists, as well as Bryant himself. When replying to Elizabeth Edwards in 1984, Sr. Adelgisa Hermann still wrote in the spirit of Mariannhill's centenary of 1982. At the time, she herself was working on a new history of the congregation (Hermann 1984). As her own work focused on the mission's institutional history, she excluded old "ethnographic" depictions of Africans from before 1914 almost entirely. However, photographs showing encounters between missionaries and Africans are still used in Mariannhill's publications today, now clearly as illustrations of historical facts. In the following pages of this section I sketch essential developments of the process of photographic stereotyping, insofar as it is relevant for this study.

The first production of daguerreotypes in the South African Cape region is recorded for 1846, seven years after photographic technology had become commercially available (Bensusan 1966:9-12). Verbeek and Verbeek (1982), as well as Spencer (1982) state that even though photographs were already being made in Natal by itinerant photographers by the mid-1850s, and photographic studios were established by the later 1850s, few images taken before the early 1860s survive. As far as we know, the first photographs in the Durban area with an "anthropological" intention, were taken by the colonial administrator Robert J. Mann in the late 1850s and early 1860s (Guy 2014, also see Guy 2002). He preceded the physiognomic style of frontal and profile views, which the German anthropologist Gustav Fritsch produced during his journey through South Africa between 1863 and 1865. Only since 1872 did Fritsch propagate this convention with the scientific community of Germany (cf. Dietrich and Bank 2008, also see Chapter Six).

African identities began to solidify between Natal and Zululand with the ongoing representational process around the so-called *Mfecane*. This major violent expansion of the Zulu under Shaka Zulu affected most of Southern Africa during the 1820s and 1830s.[45] Further hostile encounters of the Zulu in the 1830s against the "Boers" of Dutch descent, and the so-called "Anglo-Zulu War" in 1879 against the British, manifested "Zuluness". The persona of Shaka Zulu—and with him the "Zulu" as a people—became ambivalently inscribed in word and image as both "terrific" and "terrifying" (Hamilton 1998). After the British government had annexed Natal as a colony in 1843, and started arranging so-called "native reserves" or "locations" for the

[45] For a discussion of the historiography and the popular and scholarly imaginations on the *Mfecane* see Wright (1989).

black population, they further essentialised ethnic belonging and identities in terms of space (eg. Guy 2013). The transformation and unification of identities was thus intricately bound to questions of colonial land distribution from the very beginning of the colonial encounter until today (cf. Part Two).

At least since David Livingstone's publications of the 1850s, narratives by missionaries in Southern Africa have relied on the visualisation of adventurous encounters with exotic Others in form of drawings, claiming both public appeal and scientific rigour at the same time. Photographs seem only to have become tools for missionaries by the 1860s (Jenkins 2006:140). Narratives related to such images not only presented an allegedly "objective" account, but usually involved the author as a crucial protagonist, who interacted with and influenced non-Europeans (cf. Kratz and Gordon 2002). Such encounters were eventually brought home through travelling showmen (Lindfors 1999), the post-card industry (Geary and Webb 1998, Geary 2013a), stereographs, and the mobilisation of their imagery for commercial produce, such as food adverts and labels. These media eventually made the "Zulu" and other "tribes" available to the (re-)imagination of Euro-American consumers (Sobania 2002). However, despite their historical popularity, very few authors have so far dealt explicitly with the early *photographic* construction of the ethnic identity "Zulu". Webb (1992) and Sobania (2002), and more recently Geary (2013) and Mokoena (2013) convey that the "Zulu" were made digestible for a European market by perpetuating the fact of their defeat during the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879. Due to the initial military success against the British, media reports at the same time stressed the Zulus' remaining savagery and ferocity. Recent authors further agree that historical realities were often adjusted, and that the resulting images were perpetuated in popular photographic formats, such as postcards and coffee-table books.

Between the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, Natal saw an exceptional influx of British military. This strong presence of White single males created an opportunity for the retrieval, as well as a market for memorabilia, souvenirs, trophies of war, "native curios", and of course photographs of the "Zulu"; the latter not only performing martial prowess, but also erotic inclinations (Stevenson 2005). Edwards and Hart (2004, also see Edwards 2002) analysed a series of photographs depicting bare-breasted Zulu women in the collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum[46] regarding their material history. One of these photographs was owned by a soldier of the Wessex Yeomanry during the Anglo-Boer War, and unlike many other archived photographs bears explicit traces of usage and tactile involvement: "dirty thumb marks, missing and torn corners, a central crease caused by constant folding and unfolding" (Edwards and Hart 2004:13). British soldiers, just like other travellers and tourists to South Africa who increased in numbers since the 1880s, not only had an apparent need for images of South Africans, but also for facilities to have their own photographs taken. In response to this evolving local and international market for images and objects of the Zulu, Mariannhill adjusted by professionalising its photographic business in 1894, as well as by expanding its museum in

[46] PRM: B1A.36.

the same year. British soldiers, in particular during the years 1899-1902, made extensive use of the studio's service. As I explain in Chapter Three, Mariannhill had already become a magnet for tourists and local visitors since the early 1890s, when South Africa began developing its tourism infrastructure.

For the time of photographic production under consideration we have to consider the fact that similar, but still nationally defined market interests were at play in German-speaking countries, which was the most relevant target market for Mariannhill. Since the time of the Berlin Congo Conference of the mid 1880s and Germany's occupation of colonies, reports and imagery on Cameroon, Togo, German South West Africa, and German East Africa had a strong presence in the popular press. Satirical magazines presented strongly racist, sexualised and stereotyping imagery of Africans. In their encounters with travellers, and especially with missionaries, Africans were often portrayed as greedy, clumsy, and in particular incapable of utilising "modern" European material culture "properly". This can amongst many other print- and performance-media be followed in the popular periodical *Fliegende Blätter*, or less explicitly in *Über Land und Meer* (Ciarlo 2011, Leonhardt 2007, Short 2012, Chapter One of this study, also see Corbey 1989, Nederveen-Pieterse 1990).

It was only a few years prior to the narrative of the British soldier's photograph housed at the Pitt Rivers Museum that the journal *National Geographic* had published a photograph of a Black man and woman shaking hands in its 1896 November edition. The photograph was titled "Zulu bride and bridegroom". As a matter of fact, it was the very first "naked" portrait in the magazine, which even initiated a tradition of aesthetics in this regard (Hawkins 2010, also see Lutz and Collins 1993). The (semi-) "nude native" became an ambivalent figure that easily transgressed the boundaries between science and entertainment (cf. Griffiths 2002, also see Edwards 2009), on the one hand appreciated by soldiers and tourists in form of photographs, on the other hand detested in the official policies and administrative practices of the Natalian Government. The latter opinion of course also applied to Catholic missionaries, who generally obliged their subjects to dress on approaching European settlements. The Catholic Steyler missionaries (SVD)[47] in New Guinea for example, never, or rarely depicted undressed people near their stations, in order to counter obscene secular photography (Stornig 2013:118). Mariannhill Missionaries instead attuned well to the humming local and international commercial market of images of Natal, and even dominated it for some years. But with the exception of photographs taken outside of the mission, inside Mariannhill's studio women were at all times portrayed with a covered torso. The exoticising image of the "Zulu" in Natal nevertheless became further encoded through the mechanism of supply and demand, which I will describe in Part Two.

Mariannhill's photographs in particular not only depended on, but contributed to racial categorisations and a stereotype of "Zuluness" through the fact that they were taken and circulated continuously over several decades. As I show in Chapter Four in accordance with a

[47] "*Societas Verbi Divini*" = "Society of the Divine Word".

growing scholarship (eg. Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016, Mahoney 2012), Mariannhill Missionaries identified Natal Africans as "Kafirs", rather than "Zulu". It was only through the process of circulation of related mimetic capital that this particular identity was eventually solidified, at least from the 1920s onwards. Also through the medium of film since the early 20th century, the international engagement with, and construction of this identity developed to such an extent that the film historian Peter Davis once referred to it—even if polemically—as "Zooluology" (1996:124).[48]

Mariannhill's involvement in this "visual economy" (Poole 1997) had repercussions in the recent past and also defined how Mariannhill is seen and represented today. The division of Black South Africans in terms of "tribes" is an ongoing renegotiation of social identities, not only by the colonial regime and missionaries, but also by Black South Africans themselves, who followed trends of labour migration, or changed patronage otherwise. At least since the 1920s until today, the notion of "Zuluness" has been employed by Black politicians to foster nationalistic identities and political consciousness (Harries 1993). Once again since the end of Apartheid, an ongoing discourse evolved in which African "traditional leaders" reclaim pre-colonial identities within (or against) state-provided political structures (Oomen 2008, 2011, Sithole 2009). In 2004, this development was institutionalised with the so-called Nhlapo Commission, to research cases of claims to chieftaincy, alternative to the one of the "Zulu Kingdom". This eventually led to an ongoing friction within the politics of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). As "traditional leaders" have to reposition themselves within this political field, historical sources in the colonial archive receive new meanings and functions (cf. Buthelezi 2015, McNulty 2013). In the case of the "traditional leader" *Inkhosi*[49] Shozi of the *Amanganga* near Mariannhill, this also involved the photographs I worked with. Due to their excess of meaning, photographs, more than texts and objects, today become easily involved in discourses on heritage, politics, land-claims, and tourism, which can at times promiscuously overlap.

To understand that such processes of image production and interpretation are indeed not new at all, we need to retrace the trajectories of images in the vicinity of Mariannhill's media production around 1900. As I already mentioned, popular culture and scientific German ethnological studies have gone hand-in-hand on an international level since the 19th century.[50] Accordingly, such overlapping discourses have since constituted the background for both the production and the reception of Mariannhill's images. Anthropologists carried out physiognomic studies, while ethnologists collected material culture, and to such endeavours bodies, objects, and their relationships were central interests in photographs. Scientists considered photographs and

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[48] Davis' own definition of the term: "Zooluology: "the white myth of the Zulu; the equation of the Zulus with the wild animals of Africa; the domestication of these creatures; the Zulus as the prototypical 'African tribe'; the political uses of the Zulu image".

[49] "*Inkhosi*" is the Zulu term for the political institution, which would have been labelled with the administrative terms "chief" in English, or "*kaptein"* in Afrikaans during colonial and Apartheid times.

[50] For the German case see for example Penny (2002) and Zimmerman (2001); For the British case Coombes (1994), Griffiths (2002) and Edwards (2009).

artefacts to be both "working objects" (Daston 2015) and illustrations providing reliable evidence of African subjects, if they fulfilled at least some criteria (Chapter Six). European ethnologists repeatedly demanded, at least since the early 1870s and into the first decades of the 20th century, that authentic "unspoiled" objects must be collected as soon as possible, before the respective cultures were "europeanised" entirely. Some ethnologists instead, such as the German Wilhelm Joest, already by 1884 claimed that moment to have passed in the Natal region. Joest lamented that it was already a profitable practice for Africans to "imitate" and even "forge" material culture as "Zulu curios" (Joest 1886:147). Nevertheless, a competition over supposedly "authentic" objects continued, apparently with increasing uncertainty what this actually meant. In Part Three I trace this situation for the case of Mariannhill, and explain how production, collection, and curation of such objects must be seen as essentially constituted within the extended social relations of the mission encounter, and how this constitution partially relied on photographs.

Even though the production of Mariannhill's photographs indeed relied on traceable encounters, I show that the missionaries often idealised their relationship with Africans in photographic *tableaux vivants*. In depictions of their efforts to convert, they involved the previously mentioned media (text, images, and objects) in conjunction and creative performance. This was mostly done to equip their periodicals and exhibitions with illustrative material. To do so they utilised photographs as "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991), which depended on, and at the same time referenced the *préterrain*, or social "fore-field" of its production (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999). In the case of Mariannhill's photographic production, the *préterrain* was constituted by the contemporary colonial and racialised situation in both Natal and Europe. These were connected by the German press economy, in which Mariannhill actively participated. In Chapters One and Six I explain this process by showing that photographic scenes depicting "daily life" around Mariannhill and its stations were inspired by German "genre photographs", which could later easily become "ethnographic photographs".

These photographs never explicitly depict problematic issues referred to in the mission's periodicals, such as the abuse of alcohol during feasts, or the resulting violence which colonial reports often observed as "native unrest". Related issues of how to "civilise" and whether to integrate Africans into society was generally framed as the "native question" or the "native problem". As a mirror, so to speak, this "problem" was often used rhetorically by Mariannhill Missionaries to point to the "social question" in Europe, the discourse on "moral decay" (eg. Pfanner 1890, also see Gütl 2005:314). By relating these two discourses, Mariannhill could employ European morally coded tropes. For example by photographing and framing situations around African marriages, they could construct them either as desirable orderly ceremony in a religious context at mission stations, or as undesirable feast in the setting of an African homestead. By codifying practices such as marriage or allegedly superstitious practices as either legal or illegal according to "native law", the Natal Government made the latter commensurable to European law (cf. Mitchell 1893). Ann Stoler describes such processes as the creation of

"colonial ontologies" (Stoler 2009). In this case, one might more precisely speak of ontologies of the mission encounter: categories and issues regarding the being of subjects that were not naturally in place, but that were identified, created, and curated during the encounter between missionaries, their subjects, state power, as well as contemporary scientists and the entertainment industry.

Eventually, such ontologies were manifested by selection and description of particular material, visual, and textualised culture and through these still remain active until today, by being drawn into the legal, academic, and private sphere. Debates relate to questions such as the previously mentioned land and Nhlapo claims, heritage, copyrights, ownership and access rights. Debates also relate to the question of whether (or better for whom) such "mimetic capital" can still be used as a neutral source for the writing of history today, despite its fraught historical racialising biography; and eventually, whether ethnic labels such as "Zulu" actually have meaning today for the descendants of the people they supposedly relate to, other than their political nationalistic use (cf. Sithole 2009).

Today's interpretations of various mimetic capital are thus still influenced by photographs following a particular iconography, as well as objects that started accumulating even more through the representational dynamics after the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879, and the intensification of a "salvage anthropology" at about the same time (Chapter Six). Robert Thornton's (1983) suggestion that wars were catalysers for attention to the textual inscription of Otherness in South Africa, may accordingly be extended to objects and photographs. The processes of selection and reproduction of mimetic capital over time, and through and in between various media, made some images more eminent than others. Part of the social biography of "Zulu" material culture thus exists as material, narrated, and photographed "trophies of war", such as re-collected by British soldiers, travellers, tourists, missionaries, and ethnologists (Stevenson 2005). This included particular, often clearly gendered, elaborate body decorations including colourful beadwork and male head rings, household utensils, and specific kinds of weaponry such as spears and shields, which became metonymic for "Zulu". As ethnical markers, they gloss over other established local self-identifications and material culture that had been evaluated as less interesting by White collectors.

Mariannhill Missionaries too collected and labelled people, objects, and images as either "Kafir", or less often, if at all, with denominations specific to their mission stations, for example as "*Amabhaca*" at Centocow and Lourdes. In the grassroots practice of inscription at Mariannhill Monastery before 1914, "Zulu" was only used for the language, and very rarely to identify Natalian subjects or objects. Being aware that "Zulu" was an identity related to Zululand, Mariannhill Missionaries only used the term more regularly for Natal Africans once it had spilled over into the popular and political discourse during the 1920s. Mariannhill Missionaries in fact recorded a much wider diversity of identities for people, who did not receive tribal labels in their baptism registers. I consider the latter as a more practical working-register, not intended to represent people to European audiences. Instead, it paid attention to a "religious ontology"

distinguishing "heathens" and "non-heathens", as well as peoples' origins, who came from places as far as Johannesburg or Zululand. As a result there existed a "backstage", as well as a "frontstage" in the sense of Goffman (1990 [1956]), where the Trappists presented the ongoing relationship with their subjects in different ways. By exploring these differences in Parts Two and Three, I hope to show that only the fusion and performance of local with foreign mimetic capital enabled images and objects to develop the essentialising "reproductive power" they still maintain today.

Popular ethnic and religious constructions of people were closely intertwined with studies of local languages, as these were carried out exclusively by missionaries, initially Protestants, Anglicans, and Wesleyans. Only by the 1890s, and eventually with A.T. Bryant's *Zulu Dictionary* in 1905, did Catholics catch up in scholarly contributions to the field. Ethnographic commentary by Mariannhill missionaries was, up to the foundation of the journal *Anthropos* in 1906, restricted to their own propaganda publications. But some members of the Mariannhill community published works on language, religion, material culture, and "art" in the form of Bushman paintings. The most prominent of these were Fr. "David" Alfred Thomas Bryant, Fr. Franz Mayr, Br. Aegidius Müller, Fr. Albert Schweiger, Fr. Willibald Wanger, Br. Otto Mäder, Fr. Paschalis Boneberg, and Fr. Bernard Huss. The number of active scholars at Mariannhill, in particular of the Zulu language, was far greater and they await additional studies.

Two ascriptions of (ethnic) identities other than "Zulu" dominate Mariannhill's archive: the *Amanganga* living close to Mariannhill Monastery, and the *Amabhaca*[51], living close to Mariannhill's mission stations Centocow and Lourdes. Both were distinctly not "Zulu", due to their history of flight in the aftermath of the *Mfecane* from the Zulu Kingdom. However, only the *Amabhaca* became iconic in this respect, and were distinguished by explicit captions on Mariannhill's photographs. The distinctive iconicity was partially based on dress, hairstyle, and the ongoing political and ethnographic inscription of their history in relation to the Zulu, ongoing since the 19th century (cf. Bryant 1929, Hammon-Tooke 1967). The *Amanganga* instead were a much smaller group under the Shozi Clan, whose lineage constitutes the *inkhosi* or "traditional leader" until today. They were generally glossed over with the most common and derogative denominator applied to Black people at the time, "Kafir". However, it is impossible to ascertain whether people photographed by Mariannhill indeed belonged to these groups, unless photographs can be clearly located, or respective historical individuals can be identified (Chapter Four).

Not only did Mariannhill missionaries write in often abstract and conventional ways about their subjects in correspondences with Europe, but they also corresponded about their subjects with governmental institutions. This could for example involve the exemption of African converts from "native law" to disentangle them from the "native" marriage system, or to bring problems with residents to the attention of a magistrate. In any case, they contributed to the creation of documents in the colonial archive, which can set yet another backstage to the stage

[51] Alternatively spelled *amaBaca* before orthological changes in Zulu.

presented in photographs. Mariannhill Missionaries thus had a considerable interpretative authority over the identities of Africans, on the ground, as well as in representations produced for Europe. Backstage and frontstage, in their capacities as ministers, landlords, museum curators, photographers, as well as press-owners, they determined what it meant to be either "Zulu", "Kafir", or "*Amanganga*", either "native" or "Christian", either "primitive" or "near-civilised".

As I hope to show, photographs played a considerable role in this process, and the images Mariannhill procured and conjured, were as much of European descent, as they claimed to show the true Africa. Even if some of these images obscure historical situations rather than clarifying them, the combination of various sources allows us to trace statements on and of several African and European historical personalities, who appeared as intermediaries in these processes.

The Limits of Creating Ethical Spaces for Photographs

Br. Aegidius Müller used the location shown in Figure 1 as a natural backdrop for his photographic compositions on multiple occasions, not only for arranged depictions of Africans, but likewise for a range of group portraits of the Trappist community. The photograph below can be found in an album of original prints at Mariannhill's Roman archive. It shows a group of students for the priesthood and is titled "*Studentenausflug* [student excursion]". It was taken in 1905, around the same time as the photograph of the postcard. Both images may have been sent to family members, as I explained above, but also appeared in the *Mariannhiller Kalender*. Seated in the front row with a hat and stick is Fr. Emanuel Hanisch, who will reappear several times throughout this study.

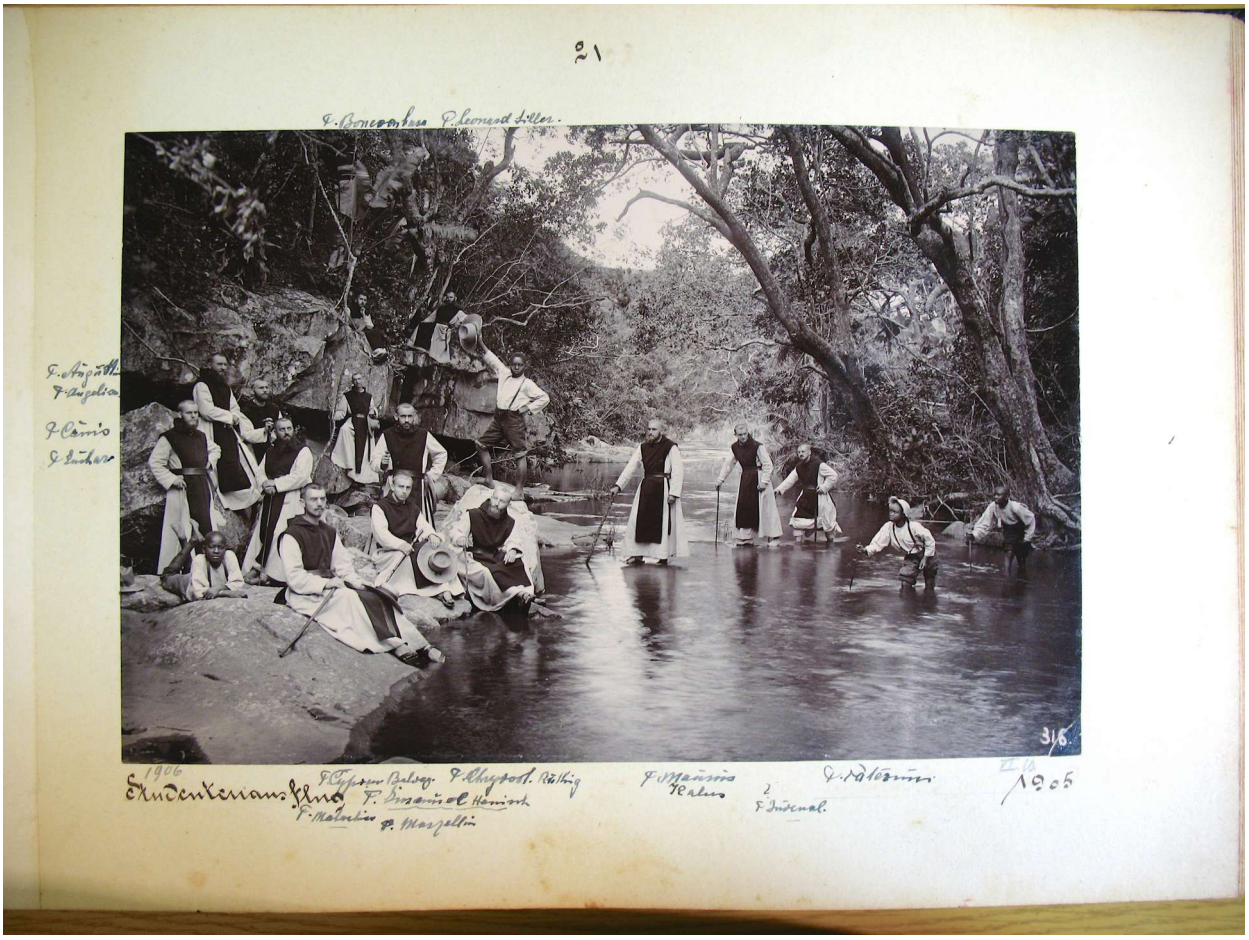


Figure 5: original caption: "*Studentenausflug*"—"Student excursion". Page from a photographic album (CMM Archives, approx. 1905, another version is published in *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1906:79).

Due to the repeated staging of Africans and monks alike, it is evident that Müller did not select the site secondary to the occasion, but chose it primarily for its picturesque scenery. From the

caption of yet another print, I gathered that the location was close to Mariannhill's old mill. The mill's machinery was water-powered and thus close to the Umhlatuzane River, about 30 minutes on foot from the monastery. I followed the textual clue and located the stream, heavily overgrown in some places, above the cliff adjacent to the mill's still existing buildings. Penetrating the thick vegetation and wading muddy waters for several hours, I eventually was able to identify the very site. The structure and texture of the cliff depicted in the old photographs still has sufficient resemblance with today's landscape, in order to match the location with the various photographs. After more than 105 years, even the tree to the right of the image still exists. The fact that the big boulders in the photographs of 1905 have been replaced by others, shows the immense force of the stream during the rainy season.



Figure 6: the location at the Umhlatuzane River from the same vantage point as in Figure 5 (photograph by the author, June 2011).

In early 2011, I used these photographs to make an attempt at a "repeat-photograph"[52] (Smith 2007), in order to socially re-engage and ground the historical photographs in the present. By locating the exact spot from which a photograph had been taken with the help of still existing landmarks and topographic formations, it is possible to create a matching photograph. This allows to show the physical changes and to implicate the social changes that have taken place since the original photographic occasion. After all, such an exercise and experience is the only possibility to establish any exact sense of photographic indexicality and iconicity. Otherwise, any claims to a physical relationship, as well as one of resemblance between photographs and what they represent, rely on the interpreting person's "collateral knowledge" (Brunet 2008, Lefebvre 2007). As I will show in several chapters, any photograph could have been easily manipulated by montage or retouching. It is therefore only by matching the historical photograph with still existing topographies that we can be sure that it at least in parts relates to a particular historical space and situation. I will return to this conundrum in Chapters One, Seven, and Eight.

The social anthropologist Haidy Geismar, for example, engaged with Malakula islanders by re-photographing historical locations while the descendants of the depicted were posing with the old photographs in hand (2009:58ff). This approach allows researchers and their interlocutors to connect to each other and with a photographic past through consciously engaging in social performances during the photographic occasion. In this way, both parties may express relationships and negotiate histories. Methodologies such as "re-photography" and "photo elicitation" (cf. Dudding 2005) should nevertheless not be equated with the ethically charged postcolonial project labelled "repatriation".[53] Respective "source communities" may after all be reluctant to engage with painful pasts, at least together with a yet uninvolved researcher (cf. Crane 2008). Despite the "seductiveness" of photographs in this regard (Geismar 2009:57), it is ethically questionable anyway whether one should engage in "repatriation" in the first place. In particular, this applies to cases where the researcher is not affiliated with an institution possessing objects in need of repatriation, or while there is no outspoken and direct claim by any "source community" to this very institution (cf. Peers and Brown 2003). While Mariannhill's photographic studio was functional until 1939, photographs were accessible to the general public. Furthermore, over the following decades outsiders with sufficient inquisitive rigour could negotiate access. Strictly speaking the photographs had never been "ex-patriated" in the sense that they had left the country, or left behind an awareness of loss. Moreover, unlike the examples above, many of Mariannhill's photographs can no longer be "patriated": often it is impossible to identify the exact place of production or a "homeland [*patria*]" more generally (cf. Bakker 2007). As a consequence, these photographs can no longer be related to any identifiable "source

[52] "Repeat-photography", or alternatively "re-photography" is mostly employed by natural scientists to track environmental changes. Other than Smith (2007) it has not yet been widely theorised as a methodology within sociocultural anthropology. For variations to this approach see Edwards (2001:211-233), Geismar (2009).

[53] The literature on "visual repatriation" is by now considerable, but the works of Peers and Brown (2003, 2006), Bell (2006) and Geismar (2009) are particularly good introductions. More recently the practice has also been simply referred to as "returns" (Edwards 2015:245), or in a more general sense regarding museum objects as "restitution" (Förster et al. 2018).

community".[54]

During fieldwork in 2007 and 2011, I engaged with established Black families near Mariannhill Monastery, and hoped to identify other families in the area, who may still have photographs of the timeframe I am dealing with. Contacts inside and outside the Black Catholic community around Mariannhill conveyed to me that indeed only very few people can still trace their families back to photographed subjects of the late 19th and early 20th century. This was due to extensive voluntary and involuntary relocations since the "Group Areas Act" of the 1950s and beyond, which restructured the entire social landscape according to the "racial" categories "Black", "Coloured", and "White". In 2011, I also tried to reconnect with the two families I had met during my fieldwork in 2007, and who could indeed trace their genealogies as far back as the 19th century. At the time, I had conveyed several prints of identified historical personalities to the family of the local *inkhosi*, E.B. Shozi, and to the family of his *induna*, Phewa, with the permission of the monastery's superior. However, by 2011 the *inkhosi's* interest in a cooperation was apparently satisfied, and further contacts did not materialise. Nevertheless, I will reconsider two crucial moments of these encounters in Chapters Four and Eight. These not only attest to the "porousness" between textual and oral sources towards each other (cf. Hamilton 2002)[55], but also show the necessity to include photographs and other material artefacts into this equation. The histories produced by traces of a colonial missionary-past are not to be approached lightly: the involved social actors are likely to situate topics, such as past cultural, religious, territorial, and economic negotiations within a colonial, apartheid, and essentially racialised history of confrontations, as they occurred between their biological ancestors on the one side, and their institutional predecessors on the other.

Even for the few cases where photographs can indeed be "patriated", "source communities" do not exist in the strict sense of the term. Due to the extensive forced relocations during Apartheid, only very few families with stakes in land and history remained near Mariannhill. The two families I engaged with traced their ancestors back to the local *inkhosi* and one of his *induna*, whom the Trappists encountered on arrival in the 1880s. Even though these two families made claims to represent a historical community, it is for the reason of historical migrations problematic to speak of a "source community" at large. Once the two families expressed claims to photographs in 2007, I redirected these to respective members of the Mariannhill Mission. Soon it became clear that the two parties would not engage in a productive relationship, due to previous frictions concerning land claims on Mariannhill's land. Black and White Mariannhill missionaries eventually expressed anxieties that photographs in their archives may be (mis-)read as historical evidence to bolster such claims. This occurred before and after my MA thesis on a limited portion of the photographic archive had circulated within and beyond

[54] This term of course bears some difficulties when understood as a bound and historically stable unity, which is never a given. In the special case of photographs made by missionaries, one may consider the religious community at large, comprising missionaries, converts, and other dependent subjects as co-producers and thus as the extended historical "source community" of photographs (Rippe 2007).

[55] Also see Hamilton (2002) for a historiography of postmodernist issues between textual and oral history.

the community.[56] At the time, this temporarily strained my relationship with the mission's generalate in Rome.

The ensuing negotiations led to the mutual agreement that I was given access to work on the collection, under the condition that I would not distribute any documents from CMM archives to third parties, without explicit permission by the mission's archivist. This entailed that I could not use the unpublished photographs from the CMM archives unrestrictedly to engage in something like "re-photography" or "photo elicitation" with outsiders to the congregation. It would have been ethically unsound to ask people for their engagement with the photographs during interviews, while refusing to share the easily reproducible photographs. As I already mentioned, no more possibilities appeared anyway to interview people around Mariannhill with photographs, due to the forced relocations. Only photographs related to the two before-mentioned families could therefore be connected to local oral histories. If other people addressed me regarding access to photographs, I either directed them to those photographs that had already been published, those that were freely accessible in ethnological museum collections and their websites, or alternatively to Mariannhill's archivist.

Eventually, I began thinking of what I was doing as a "re-connection" of histories (Rippe 2007, 2015). This may be a more appropriate term for an engagement with photographic archives, which have remained in the country of the photographs' origin (cf. Hayes et al. 1998:2), and for reconnecting identifiable photographs of historical personalities to the private histories of either biological descendants, or institutional successors in case of the missionaries. This eventually allowed me to include and address the very frictions I just described. Attempts to reconnect photographs through methodologies such as "photo elicitation" and "re-photography" may enable us to create new knowledge, but will not necessarily create historical evidence. In my own experience, they nevertheless allowed for the negotiation of relationships in the present, and to address important ethical issues accordingly.

During research in 2011, I approached Mariannhill's novice master, Fr. Lawrence Mota, with the photograph showing the Trappist students in 1905. I asked him whether he thought it to be a good idea to visit the same place with the monastery's current novices, as part of their educational programme. Joining a mission congregation or society in South Africa today promises financial and educational stability for young men and women. The same would have been the case for Europeans, such as Br. Aegidius Müller, in an economically and religiously unstable Germany at the end of the 19th century. Today, the novices educated at Mariannhill Monastery are exclusively Black. Some are from South Africa, but others are from several of the nearby countries where Mariannhill has houses, such as Zimbabwe, Kenya, or Zambia. Worldwide, Mariannhill currently has approximately 300 members, and by mid 2012—for the first time in the congregation's history—more than half of the congregation consisted of non-European members. The other half has an average age beyond 60, if not 70.

The novices' syllabus does include sections on history, including ideas such as "heritage".

[56] See Rippe (2007), and also parts of Chapters Four and Eight of this study, which reconsider one crucial episode.

I therefore suggested to the novice master that, just like in 1905, we could organise yet another "student excursion", discuss the respective old photographs with the novices "on site", speak about involved intentions of representation and propaganda, and see how the novices engage with the past of their future congregation. Additionally, I suggested that we may even re-stage a photograph in form of a *tableau vivant* or "living image" inspired by the old photographs, but now of the novices' own conception. I thought the historical location at the river could have literally provided "space" for the novices to re-embody a past. This space would have enabled them to think through time and photographs, inscribe their own presence, and engage with the congregation's history in a reflexive way; so I thought.

But the excursion and the new *tableau vivant* never took place. Therefore the scene, as I envisioned it to materialise, and as I had photographed it myself, remains unpopulated (Figure 6). Like several other approaches I had made since 2007 in regard to other photographs outside of the CMM community, I failed to receive responses, from the novices individually, as well as from the novice master. By avoiding my set-up, the novices resisted *becoming* "similar" to either one of the two historical photographs, the one showing Africans, and the one showing European monks. They even resisted positioning themselves anywhere in between. The two images were framed as a "chase" and as an "excursion" respectively. Especially in their opposition, the two photographs resonated within the novice's experience of historical tropes as an experience of intermediality. We shall return to the same motif of "becoming similar" to an image through photographic performance in Chapter One in more depth.

Who can blame the novices for avoiding the suggested performance? Why would they want to relate to photographs, which clearly refer to a colonial past dominated and paternalised by Whites, who often stereotyped Blacks? Why should they join my academic endeavours, which may easily appear as an extension of this practice? Individuals of the new generation of Black missionaries expressed an anxiety to me about repeated stereotyping, or even being photographed for purposes of propaganda in Europe. Due to this experience, I empathise with Marianne Gullestad (2007) when she described encounters during her research on Norwegian Missionaries in Cameroon. Africans, missionaries and academics alike, all had their issues with the photographs she researched, and the friction this produced. In Gullestad's and my experience, Africans criticised past and present practices of mis-representation, while White missionaries at the same time were anxious about and tired of still being accused of the same racist perceptions as their institutional predecessors.

As much as the cover photograph of the sitter with the book in Mariannhill's studio literally conjured its own itinerary, or *provenance*, so did the succession of the three photographs, all taken in the exact same place at the Umhlatuzane River, allude to their common *provenience*, the space where a photographic image was "excavated". Reconnecting the historical photographic space to present physical and social space, once again made me realise the difficulties involved in reactivating photographs in the South African context. A photographic image is thus constituted by various social discourses, but at the same time can influence them

drastically. Relating endeavours may be expressed in a highly politicised manner in public, but can at the same time be utterly subjective, private, and emotional. In this process I followed other people along these lines; people in the past, and in the present of my fieldwork; people who created, purchased, or reproduced photographs to produce and convey knowledge and arguments for various reasons. But as it appeared, this knowledge was often partially preconceived, rather than evolving only from the photographic occasion, as it was often claimed. At the same time, I had my own lasting engagements with particular photographs. Whether in the past or present, I consider social actors' engagements with photographic images as yet another kind of photographic occasion. As such it can be analysed next to the photographic occasion of the original production.

When writing up such experiences they are often difficult to disentangle. But eventually, this book is a text with photographic and painterly images at its centre; a text that speaks about and for images, as they cannot do it themselves; a text that describes my engagement with how others engaged with these images over time; a text that shows how photographs are implicitly and explicitly entangled with oral and textual narratives, but eventually establish their own narratives. As tactile practices and experiences of intermediality, they still impact people's lives today.

Under these conditions, the most feasible research design appeared to be a close cooperation with the mission's archivist, Fr. Ivo Burkhardt CMM, in order to accession and catalogue the photographic collection in its entirety, with the idea to make it accessible to a wider public, or at least academic researchers, in a structured and contextualised manner. This process is still ongoing, and ideally will involve the addition of my research data to a photographic database. The online platform International Missionary Photography Archive (IMPA) is the most likely host for the future presentation of Mariannhill's photographs.[57] While digital online archives certainly have advantages for the analysis of photographs, we must not forget about material past lives of photographs. In order to be able to make any convincing arguments about and with photographs, we need to "care about and for images" (Newbury 2011:651). In the next section I therefore draw attention to the particular situation of Mariannhill's photographs in their multiple archival situations as the "extended archive" of Mariannhill.

[57] The pioneering work of the Protestant Basel Mission (Mission 21), which began under Paul Jenkins, eventually became part of the online platform "International Mission Photography Archive" (IMPA). This presents one example how online presentation of photographic mission archives can take place, in order to stimulate an ongoing process of evaluation. See Miller (2007), and Stuehrenberg (2006) for overviews of the IMPA: http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll123.

APPROACHING SOURCES AND THEIR ARCHIVES

My Shadow Archive: Fieldwork in the Archive and the Archive of Fieldwork

I am not an archivist. Neither have I had training as an archivist, nor do I work as an archivist. Nevertheless, I have engaged with, and deeply cared for one particular photographic archive over the past ten years. As it is hard to locate this archive in a concrete spatial sense, I think of it as the "extended archive" of Mariannhill. I prefer this term above "dispersed" (Edwards 2011) or "distributed" (Gell 1998).[58] "Extended" appears to be more apt to the nature and practice of historical photography, which is about the reproduction of images and the multiplication of image-objects, not merely about fracturing. Following Gell (1998) nevertheless, we can perceive Mariannhill's photographic production as an oeuvre that eventually became "distributed" beyond the confines of one single institutional archive. With Latour (2005) we may then follow social actors engaging with these distributed parts, in order to reassemble the oeuvre to the approximate shape of an "extended archive". This "extended archive" is of course hypothetical in its full extent, just like the very oeuvre of Mariannhill's photographic production itself. The former consists of all physically and potentially remaining *copies* that have ever been produced and disseminated by Mariannhill's photographic studio. The latter consists of all *unique* photographs that have ever been made by the studio, including those which are no longer in existence. In order to define the body of images my study is actually based on, I need to introduce yet another form of archive in this section, which I will refer to as my "shadow archive".

Even before I visited the main archive at Mariannhill Monastery during my first fieldwork trip to South Africa in 2007, I had already collected digital images of historical photographs from South Africa and Mariannhill in particular. During the ensuing trips, together comprising some 18 months in South Africa, as well as many more additional trips throughout Europe, I added photographs of my own interactions with people, objects, and places. The resulting digital meta-collection, culled from various archives, institutions, and encounters, today consists of more than 12,000 images. These images became visual fieldnotes and often worked as mnemonic devices in conjunction with my textual fieldnotes, referring to encounters inside and outside of archives. At times, these photographs also helped to release buried headnotes.[59]

All these images represent encounters I had in particular situations: even the photographs I took of (archival) photographs still resonate with the particular atmosphere and my state of knowledge at that particular moment in an archive. Occasionally, the lighting in a closed room was not good enough, or I was in haste, so the image turned out oddly-coloured, blurred, or distorted; and sometimes there was no possibility to return to the particular archive or collection. However, in some cases it was exactly a distortion, like blurriness, which forced me to look closer, or differently, at an image. While the content and focus is indeed primary, understanding the archival spaces of photographic encounters, and the ways in which photographs could be

[58] Gell of course refers to oeuvres consisting of unique artworks. I will discuss reproducible photographs alongside unique paintings in Chapter Seven.

[59] See Sanjek (1990) for various accounts on the multiplicities of anthropological fieldnotes.

connected within and between archives, is another coordinate of how I tried to understand the photographs of Mariannhill. The resulting network of archives, where I discovered prints originating from Mariannhill's studio, makes up the "extended archive" of Mariannhill, so to speak. It is an artificial structure as perceived from the viewpoint and moment while I am writing these lines (cf. Latour 2005). The connections it makes between photographs, objects, and people, is not identical with any constellation that could ever have been traced or perceived by any of the historical actors. Instead of considering the subjective experience in one single archive (Mbembe 2002:23), we thus need to describe multiple experiences between various archives and moments of employment. Exactly for this reason of their reproducibilty do images allow us to consider them as mimetic capital: by distinguishing various spaces and temporal layers, in which social actors reconsidered the same images differently, we may follow how images established reproductive power over time.

Often we share archival spaces with people other than the archivists. One day in the Killie Campbell Africana Library of Durban, fellow researcher George Mahashe observed that by digitally copying archival photographs, I was building a "shadow archive". Even if George implied something else than originally intended by Alan Sekula, I have since then continued to think of it in George's terms. Sekula used this term to refer to the general and hypothetical accumulation of photographs representing society at the end of the nineteenth century. This accumulation contained "repressive" as well as "honorific" images, and thus constituted an abstract archive

> […] that encompasses an entire social terrain while positioning individuals within that terrain. This archive contains subordinate, territorialized archives: archives whose semantic interdependence is normally obscured by the 'coherence' and 'mutual exclusivity' of the social groups registered within each. (Sekula 1986:10)

The social realities at Mariannhill, and the processes how the mission's photographers reconsidered, selected, and photographed them for various audiences, such as tourists, benefactors, and ethnographers, do not make it a straightforward undertaking to relocate such "coherences" and "mutual exclusivities". This will only be possible for few individuals, with particular social relationships to the missionaries. My "shadow archive" is thus one of those "subordinate", however, not entirely "territorialized" archives within Sekula's "shadow archive".

As the historian Peter Burke (2001:13) suggests after Gustaaf Renier, it makes more sense to approach historical "sources" in their nature as "traces", which do not lead to an original truth, but have an unknown and potentially endless trajectory. Provided with a particular contemporary "collateral knowledge", and thus depending on the respective "evidential paradigm", these may alternatively lead to the establishment of either clues, symptoms, or signs (cf. Ginzburg 1989b). In the case of my research, the trajectory is determined by my accumulated shadow archive (cf. Müller 2011:286), partially allowing for iconographic and iconological analysis, as introduced by Warburg and Panofsky, however with caution where it seems appropriate.[60] I hope to balance

[60] I am not attempting to give an overview of the boundless literature on visual methodologies in the social

iconographic interpretation as much as possible by situating it in the circumstances of the photograph's production, as well as in the circumstances of later interpretations. Regarding these I will avoid attributing general beliefs to the "Zulu", the "Amanganga", or the "missionaries", and instead attempt to identify individual historical actors, in interaction with other actors and photographs. As far as iconography is concerned, Sekula also warned that

> [t]his archival promise was frustrated, however, both by the messy contingency of the photograph and by the sheer quantity of images. The photographic archive's components are not conventional lexical units, but rather are subject to the circumstantial character of all that is photographable. (Sekula 1986:17)

As it is my personal shadow archive, with particular and often adjusted and shifting selections, labels, and categorisations, I occasionally need to present my own itinerary next to the photographed individuals and objects, which this archive contains. As a White, European male, born in Germany, living in the Netherlands, agnostic but nevertheless baptised in a Lutheran Protestant Church, I was not only positioned by my interlocutors in the field, but the related socialisation had also conditioned my approach to the social field, as well as the cultural formations I encountered in archives.

The comparison and identification of reoccurring persona in Mariannhill's photographic archive, as well as in others, allowed me to constitute a database of more than 600 individuals. Out of these about 300 are religious (lay-brothers, priests, sisters, affiliates) in the social periphery of Mariannhill, who arrived in South Africa in between the 1880s and 1915. With some exceptions, the religious are the only subjects of Mariannhill's extended photographic archive who repeatedly occur, and are repeatedly identified in photographs; the majority of depicted individuals, including many members of other communities (also CPS) are often unnamed, other than maybe the most stereotypical of identifications, such as a "Kafir girl", or "a sister". Then there are other individuals, whom the photographer *named*, either with their first Christian or Zulu names, but who are still not *identifiable* as historical personalities with extended biographies.

As we will see, the exception proves the rule. In consequence, I deal foremost with photographs that are "portraits" and by definition show identifiable individuals (cf. Brilliant 1991), whom the photographer intentionally depicted as personalities rather than types. Such individuals turned out to be exclusively dignitaries of either the White or the Black communities around Mariannhill, or their relatives, and only in very few cases commoners of the Black communities. As the commoners are only registered with either first baptismal names or Zulu names, it is only the dignitaries with a public profile, who can be traced in the colonial archive. Their biographies can be written beyond their connection to Mariannhill, either through publications, through textual sources in the South African National Archives, or through oral histories. The named individuals that populate my photographic shadow archive are therefore

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sciences. Several critical overviews I used repeatedly are Burke (2001), Rose (2007), as well as Margolis and Pauwels (2011).

mainly male White colonial actors, European anthropologists, African dignitaries, diviners, healers, and Christian converts. The combination of name and photograph often provides an entry-point to the biography of an individual, as well as the biography of his or her photograph as a material object. In some cases, it is also possible to identify the approximate location where a photograph was taken: either through a caption, or a distinctive landmark, such as the cliff in the example above; the church of a mission station built in a specific year; or other topographical features. In other cases, it is known which missionary was working at which station in which year. Therefore I was able to limit the number of potential individuals and accordingly to compare and narrow down relevant images.

The producers of Mariannhill's remaining archival documents hardly wrote about photographs or photographic practice. Usually they merely captioned photographic content: either the photographer wrote directly on the image, or archivists later captioned the same photographs differently in multiple archives. In Mariannhill's propaganda periodicals photographs are generally clouded by conversion narratives, and rarely attended to explicitly. As the photographic studio was managed independently from the monastery, its correspondence archive no longer exists. The absence of a textual narrative on photographs in Mariannhill's remaining correspondence archive makes me believe that the purpose and function of photographs was too much of a commonplace to most of the other missionaries, so that they considered it unnecessary to reflect on the production process in a comprehensive way.

Even if Mariannhill's editors did not comment on photographs explicitly, some of them created their own "shadow archives", which I again absorbed into mine. The city of Cologne, for example, was a crucial organisational hub for Mariannhill, as well as for other colonial actors, media, politics, and activities more generally during the 19th century and beyond (cf. Chapter Three, also see Bechhaus-Gerst and Horstman 2013). In 2006, I visited Cologne myself for the first time. I had been working on a set of Mariannhill's photographs in the collection of the Ethnological Museum of Leiden during an internship, and was able to trace copies of the same collection to the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum (RJM), the Ethnological Museum of Cologne. Since the mid 1890s, Mariannhill has a house in Cologne, which was from 1910 onwards at the address Brandenburgerstrasse 8 (Wendl 1998:179). During my repeated visits since 2006, the now late Fr. Alexander Ultsch CMM was in his seventies. He had been the photo editor of the mission's periodical *Mariannhiller Missions Magazin* (MMM) until the late 1990s. During one of my visits he joined me to see the photographs at the ethnological museum.

While on the public transport he shared memories of how he had visited Africa. Even though he had never worked there for extended periods himself, his imagination was clearly inspired by the old photographs, with which he had been working for most of his career. Fr. Alexander was initially one of my main informants. At this point he was living together with his confrere, the earlier mentioned Fr. Adalbert Balling CMM, who used to be the main text editor of MMM. Neither of them had been an active missionary in South Africa. But like their confrere and age-mate Fr. Dietmar Seubert CMM, the two priests in Cologne had on retirement turned

their interests to historical matters of the congregation; especially since it became clear that "history" is one of the congregation's most important remaining propaganda assets, after much property had been sold off, both in South Africa and Europe. Even though the three priests had compiled much archival material and biographical data on influential historical confreres over the years, the photographers and their professional work had so far remained understudied. In particular Fr. Dietmar had already condensed the archival record considerably, by sorting out documents, compiling them in sub-collections, deciding what should be preserved, and selectively writing up some of his findings. Before I turn to this process of archival construction, I need to briefly introduce Mariannhill's periodicals, the initial purpose of photographic production. Despite their propagandistic nature, these periodicals also constituted one particular category of sources for Fr. Dietmar, others of Mariannhill's historians, and for myself.

"The Second Pulpit": An Overview of Mariannhill's Periodicals and Publications

Both German Catholics and Protestants introduced images in their main mission publications during the 1880s and 1890s, and thus adjusted to the common popular trend of illustrated magazines.[61] *Die Katholischen Missionen. Illustrierte Monatsschrift* had been published as early as 1873 by Herder in Freiburg, and *Die Evangelischen Missionen. Illustriertes Familienblatt* from 1895 in Gütersloh by the Bertelsmann Verlag.

Thus Mariannhill followed suit, as soon as the available printing technology allowed it. Immediately after arrival at the Cape in 1880, Pfanner released the propaganda periodical *Fliegende Blätter aus Maria-Dunbrody*. It served as a "second pulpit" (Kneipp 1981:43), as well as both "pulpit and collecting bag".[62] Not only were mission periodicals supposed to convince benefactors to donate money, but also to address potential novices and educate readers more generally, as indicated in Pfanner's quote above. Even though I will not be able to cover the entire spectrum and output of Mariannhill's press, it is necessary to address those periodicals that I approached for both photographs and text. Mariannhill Missionaries produced several histories of their press and accounts of the rationale behind the publications, which may be consulted for further details (Anon. 1919; Nolte 1928; Kneipp 1981, 1982; Wendl 1998). Despite its prominence among the missionary presses of colonial Natal, Mariannhill's press so far only received marginal attention by historians (cf. Etherington 2005, Woeber 2012, also see Switzer 1997, Tomaselli and Louw 1991).

The facilities of the press were initially located at the monastery, but after a few years moved to a building erected for that purpose several kilometres away at the monastery's mill. The monks used the Umhlatuzane River to power a turbine for both mill and press. In the 1950s, the press was once more relocated to the monastery. A Catholic-minded publisher using the name "Mariannhill Mission Press" still exists today in buildings adjacent to the monastery, but is no longer owned by it.

Mariannhill's first and standard monthly periodical—to which I will refer frequently throughout this study—was issued in chronological order under the following names: *Fliegende Blätter aus Maria-Dunbrody* (December 1880-September 1882), *Fliegende Blätter aus Süd-Africa* (only one issue, 20 January 1883) *Fliegende Blätter aus Mariannhill* (February 1883-December 1883), *Der Trappist unter den Kaffern* (April 1884-October 1884), *Ein Vergissmeinnicht aus Mariannhill* (January 1885-1889), and eventually the *Vergißmeinnicht* (with the addendum *St. Josephsblättchen*) from January 1890 onwards. The name *Vergißmeinnicht* was an imperative directed at the benefactors: "Forget-Me-Not". In 1938, the *Vergißmeinnicht* was discontinued. Between 1948 and 1966, the periodical reappeared under the name *Mariannhill*, and since 1967 the mission's main German periodical has been the

[61] For introductions to periodicals of various denominations, see the contributions in Jensz and Acke (2013) and Becker and Stornig (2018).

[62] A Dutch Spiritan missionary writing in the periodical *Africa Christo* in 1952, as quoted in Pels (1989:35).

Mariannhiller Missions Magazin (MMM).

The *Vergißmeinnicht* was issued in German, but also temporarily in Polish between 1885 and 1890. More Polish publications followed during the first half of the 20th century. This was due to the considerable presence of Polish-speaking Catholics in the Eastern part of the German Kaiserreich, and made possible by the high number of Polish members with both the monastery and the sister's convent. The only English periodical published at Mariannhill was the *Natal Record* (earlier *Monthly Record)*, of which only few copies survived in accessible archives. Edited by Bishop Jolivet in Durban between 1884 and 1888, it was the only English Catholic periodical in Southern Africa. Eventually, it was discontinued due to lack of subscriptions, but transformed by other editors into the *Catholic Magazine* in 1891, and again into the *Southern Cross* in 1924 (Kneipp 1981:46). The annual *Mariannhill(er) Kalender*[63] was first published in 1889 with an initial print run of 100,000 copies, a number which was lowered considerably in the years to come. According to Br. Thomas Nolte (1928:137), it was the only German Catholic publication in a calendar format at the time, apart from the one of the SVD missionaries.

Until the mid-1890s, both main organs, the *Kalender* and the *Vergißmeinnicht*, were printed at Mariannhill Monastery. While the *Kalender* was illustrated with engravings produced after photographs, the *Vergißmeinnicht* had only ornamental decorations. In order to avoid sending material back and forth, it then appeared to be more practical and cost-efficient to have the periodicals printed in Germany. Image cliches were for some time produced in Munich with the printer Brendamour (Anon. 1996a). The press at Mariannhill nevertheless continued printing for its own needs, as well as commercially for other congregations, such as the Jesuits, Dominicans and Oblates in more than 20 European and African languages. In 1895, the production of the *Mariannhiller Kalender* was handed over to the publisher Leo Russy in Burghausen (Bavaria), but the *Vergißmeinnicht* was still printed at Mariannhill and only reprinted in Germany as seen fit by the so-called "*Sammelbrüder*". These members had been sent to Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the USA, in order to recruit novices, collect alms, and to distribute the periodicals to benefactors.

The price of the *Kalender* was 50 Pfennige throughout,[64] while the *Vergißmeinnicht* was initially distributed free of charge. According to Fr. Paschalis Boneberg (1936), a great part of the readership was apparently amongst the middle class, as well as the farming and working classes.[65] The *Vergißmeinnicht* had a stable print run of about 1,100-2,300 per year. In 1906, the yearly print run was expanded to 6,000. Eventually in 1907—with the introduction of photographs—the entire printing work was redirected to Germany, this time to Würzburg. This may explain the very late introduction of photographs to the *Vergißmeinnicht*. It may have been difficult to process photographs in the publications at Mariannhill itself, with its limited

[63] Depending on the year, the title is either spelled "*Mariannhill-Kalender*" or "*Mariannhiller Kalender*".

[64] The same price as for a single photographic print at Mariannhill's studio around 1900 (cf. Chapter Three).

[65] While I will be able to give a fair picture of who the photographers and at least some of the photographed were, it is impossible at this moment to draw up a clear overview of the audiences due to the lack of evidence (but see my discussions in Chapters Three and Six).

technological possibilities, as compared to facilities available in Germany. The price for the *Vergißmeinnicht* from 1907 onwards was 1,50 Mark per monthly issue. Despite the introduction of a remuneration, and probably due to the introduction of photographs, the *Vergißmeinnicht* sold much better from 1907 onwards (Boneberg 1936).

Before the First World War, the periodicals had at least six different editors, who followed each other in close succession, particularly during the 1890s. Between 1880 and 1892, Abbot Franz Pfanner was the main driving force and author of most articles. Then followed between 1889 and 1894 Fr. Chrysostomos Meyer (1838-????), between 1894 and 1895 Fr. Cajetan Rechenmacher (1861-1895), between 1896 and 1898 Fr. Agritius Clüver (1843-1898), between 1898 and 1904 Fr. Theoderich Sonnen (1872-????), and eventually from 1906 onward Fr. Dominikus Frey (1859-1918). Of these it was only Fr. Chrysostomos Meyer, who had any previous experience with editing or publishing. Before joining Mariannhill, Meyer had been editor and "*Correktor*" in Steyl with the publication organs of the SVD mission. Despite this expertise, Meyer was transferred to the Trappist Abbey Oelenberg for unknown reasons in 1895 .[66]

With the release of the *Mariannhiller Kalender* in 1889, photographs served as alternative spectacle to the occasionally tedious text, and certainly after 1900 had an entertainment factor that heightened the attractiveness of the periodical in Europe. The *Kalender* (from the 1890s) and the *Vergißmeinnicht* (from 1907) ran adventure stories with African protagonists, which were interspersed with unrelated, but often thematically matching images.[67] These appeared mainly in the section titled "*Zur Unterhaltung und Belehrung* [for entertainment and instruction]". The German term "*Belehrung*" can be read as either intellectual or religious instruction, as the texts were supposed to be informative, but also spiced with sometimes paternalistic religious commentary.

In 1889, Fr. David (A.T.) Bryant issued the first Zulu periodical *Izwi Zabantu*[68] ("The Voice of the People", mostly secular content), which had to be discontinued in 1891 due to the high levels of illiteracy still found in the area. Another paper, *Ingelosi Yenkosi* ("The Lord's Angel", mostly religious content) was started in the same year, but also soon discontinued. From 1900, Fr. Theoderich Sonnen supervised the printshop, edited the *Vergißmeinnicht*, and between 1903 and 1904 also edited the Zulu periodical *Umhlobo Wesiminya* ("Friend of the Truth"), which was issued monthly and partially illustrated. Even though he was no longer a member of the community, the monastery once more hired Bryant between 1911 and 1914 as editor of *Izindaba Zabantu*[69] ("News of the People"). It was revived after the war by Fr. Cyprian Ballweg, and in 1928 renamed *Umafrika*. A newspaper of the same name still exists today, but is no longer

[66] I am grateful for the help of Mariannhill's archivist Fr. Ivo Burkhardt with compiling the limited available data on the earliest editors from sources such as the unpublished writings of Fr. Dietmar Seubert and Br. Joseph Welzl.

[67] Also see Pels (1999) for an analysis of the periodical of the Dutch Spiritans after the Second World War.

[68] Bryant (1947) himself called it *Izwi Labantu* (Bryant translated the title as "Voice of the Natives", or "Native Opinion").

[69] Bryant (1947) himself called it "*Ndabazabantu*" instead.

edited or printed at Mariannhill (Kneipp 1982:64). I have not evaluated the illustrated periodicals published in Zulu, due to their partial inaccessibility and my own limitations regarding the language.

Beyond the common propaganda periodicals, there were also several irregular internal publications since 1899: *Familiäre Mitteilungen; Pastor Bonus; Familia;* and *Mariannhill—Statistik und Chronik*. They served to improve the communication between Mariannhill Monastery and its outstations, and later between the different houses in Europe and elsewhere. This internal communication was considered necessary when Mariannhill's authorities realised the difficulties with upholding the Trappist rule with the peripheral situation of the filial stations under the second and third Abbots just before 1900. This directly relates to the schism created by the incompatibility of the mission ideal and the monastic ideal, which finally led to the breaking-away of Mariannhill from the Trappist order in 1909. These internal writings present interesting viewpoints by single members of the congregation. A bi-lingual periodical is still published for this purpose today under the name *Family News/Familiäre Nachrichten*. Even before Bryant's *Zulu-English Dictionary* (1905), Mariannhill published German-Zulu dictionaries and English-Zulu dictionaries, at least from 1891. Before this time, the local Bishop Jolivet OMI had to give the missionaries at Mariannhill dispensations, allowing them to consult the existing Zulu dictionaries compiled by their Protestants competitors. Mariannhill's linguists also published Zulu Grammars, partial translations of the Bible, catechisms, and song books.

In order to date photographs and to situate them within narratives intended either by the photographers or the editors, I relied on the *Mariannhiller Kalender* from 1889, and in particular the *Vergißmeinnicht*, which was only illustrated since 1907. Both periodicals contain not only images and photographs of the mission itself, but additionally various kinds of illustrations sourced from other European press agencies. Also, religious imagery, depicting the holy family, saints, and generic bible scenes constitute a great part of the illustrations (cf. Part One). The periodicals thus not only reported on "mission life", as it was referred to by the editors, but also on local, international, and foremost German contemporary public, political, and scientific concerns. The editors and photographers also occasionally plagiarised photographs from other publications and image stocks. In Chapter One, I present a limited statistical analysis of photographs appearing in the *Vergißmeinnicht*, according to the categories and labels applied by the editors. A total analysis including all imagery may be misleading through the presence of those images that were not produced by the mission itself, but can no longer be recognised as such.

The Condition of the Archive and the Archival Condition

> The first look into the room was not encouraging at all, and did not seem to promise much. One had the impression that there wasn't much to gain. There were only leftovers [*Reste*]. A series of old photographs was scattered about, which were—due to the humid condition in the room—totally spoiled.[70]
>
> Fr. Dietmar Seubert CMM on discovering a "strongroom" [Engl. in original] in the basement of Mariannhill Monastery, while reevaluating the archives in 1982 (Streicher and Seubert 2003: unpaginated introduction).

I have no doubt that Africans living near Mariannhill took an active part in the visual economy around the mission. They would not only consciously have posed for photographs at their homesteads or at the photographic studio, but also acquired photographs of themselves, either by purchase or as gifts. However, very few families of old remain in the area today, and of these none appear to possess original prints of the time with which we are concerned here. Imagine several photographic cabinet cards, carefully wrapped up into a bundle of cloth and stuck into the rafters of a dome-shaped homestead, as they were common near Mariannhill around 1900. Even if the photographs were safe from the curious hands of children, dampness would have seeped through the roof, alternating with intense sun penetrating the spaces between branches, and insects preferring the soft cardboard of the photographs over the nearby hard wood. Even under slightly improved conditions, photographs would not have fared any better. This is not surprising, as apparently even the missionaries themselves struggled to preserve photographic prints adequately. This was due to climatic conditions, but equally due to neglect. It is therefore not possible to reconstruct entirely what the original photographic oeuvre of Mariannhill once contained.

Even if the situation has improved since 1982, I, like Fr. Dietmar, often had the impression that I dealt with leftovers or debris in the archives of Mariannhill Monastery; leftovers that constituted only fragments of what was once there. Textual and photographic documents appeared to me as debris, not only in a structural sense of "scatteredness", but also in their individual physical state of decay. The humid climate of the South African East Coast has clearly taken its toll on most of the material, and a so far unidentified insect plague has complemented the destruction of paper documents. The gelatine surfaces of the photographic glass plate negatives instead have been affected to a much lesser degree, as they had been stacked without separation onto each other.[71]

The highly professionalised setting of Mariannhill's photographic studio within the institutional structure of a mission congregation, and its continuous commercial operation in a designated building from 1894 to 1939, had at least four preserving consequences: first, a great

[70] My own translation from the German original.

[71] In a few cases this made the emulsion of one plate stick to another plate, and thus peeled off partially when removed. But this condition had at least sealed most of the other negatives from the destructive influence of insects.

part of the glass plate negatives have been coated with a protective varnish, so that most of them are still in excellent condition today;[72] second, at least during the timeframe while the studio was active, the photographic material was preserved under appropriate conditions; third, photographs were produced with professional quality and in aesthetic formats, and could therefore be reproduced, reused, and widely circulated over a long period of time; fourth, the collection has been preserved physically as a relative unity until today.

This would have been different if the collection had been owned by a single photographer. For example, the photographic studio of Nikolaus Leyendecker, the father of one of Mariannhill's own photographers (cf. Chapter One), was dissolved by his widow upon his death in 1896, and the photographic archive dispersed at low prices. In a public announcement she also requested that customers collect their remaining negatives, which had been stored at the studio.[73] We may assume that photographic studios in Durban and Pietermaritzburg were dismantled in a similar manner once they stopped business. Due to its economic and institutional setup, the Mariannhill Mission instead was able to preserve its photographic collection in relative unity. The partial preservation of this situated photographic practice thus allows us to reassemble some occasions in which photographs have been taken, as well as how they have been processed, archived, and circulated. However, as Mariannhill's studio also dealt in studio portraiture, it may well be that former commercial customers eventually picked up their negatives on the studio's closure in 1939 (Chapter Three).

In a tone of nostalgic preservation my account up to this point seems to repeat other archival experiences as a reliving of colonial encounters. Liam Buckley described this in a very evocative account on the photographic collection at the Gambian National Archives:

> Decay, then, allows the researcher an aesthetic of discovery and the chance to evoke what it must have been like at the dawning of colonialism, a time of true discovery—a time when charm and innocence still existed because the discovery was stumbled on and unforeseen. (Buckley 2005:256)

He argues that this attitude is similar to a colonial "salvage anthropology" (cf. Chapter Six), and that as researchers we may instead consider ways of "letting go" of our intentions to control images. Archival situations in postcolonial scenarios are often tied up in dynamics, which are very different and may even counteract to the ideas and intentions of researchers. I have already described parts of such dynamics through my interactions with Mariannhill's novices. Other dynamics in this regard can manifest themselves exactly through processes of archival decay, at the moment once a researcher addresses it as a problem from the outside. The archivist has to make decisions, he has to react and deal with the decay, as well as the affected documents. In the case of Mariannhill this has initiated an ongoing process of restoration and re-accessioning of the congregation's photographic collection. In the section that follows I further elaborate on the condition of Mariannhill's archives today, according to some of the material they contain, as well

[72] I thank Sandra Petrillo for making me aware of this fact.
[73] Notification in *Bernkasteler Zeitung*, 10. March 1896.

as their preconditions.

Mariannhill's archival situation rests on three preconditions: since the monastery's foundation in 1882, the first abbot, Franz Pfanner, promoted the importance of the press, the crucial necessity of photographs, and stimulated the collection of "native curios", in order to attract benefactors' and future members' interests. Mariannhill's second abbot, Amandus Schölzig, expanded these efforts by installing a professional and commercial photographic studio at the mission in 1894. He did this even against the dictum of Trappist superiors to better control the press. In the same year, he dedicated an entire building to a museum, where South African biological, zoological, and geological specimens were collected, next to material culture from South Africa as well as Europe. Material culture had been employed to "objectify" the local population, at least since the first half of the 19th century. However, it needs to be acknowledged that this process was facilitated even more through the depiction of material culture in photographs (Part Three). The press, the photographic studio, and the museum at Mariannhill were thus three additional institutions that accumulated, selected, stored, actively preserved and eventually redistributed very specific forms of media. Once these institutions were no longer actively directed by the monastery, some of their contents and correspondences were fed into the monastery's main archive. In order to understand processes of knowledge production at Mariannhill, it is therefore essential to understand the mutual dependency of these institutions.

Throughout my work I uphold the idea that photographs in general are fragmentary impressions, remnants so to speak, of *a* past. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that texts are equally questionable sources for history, especially in the case of Catholic monks cum missionaries, who were often under pressure to write in anonymity (cf. Chapter One). If writings were kept at all, they often had to pass censorship, as we could see with the photographs under administrator Obrecht. It is crucial to emphasise that the situation of Mariannhill's several archives is not only fragmentary, but—as far as textual traces are concerned—spatially dispersed over various archival repositories, for reasons I explore in the following pages. Because of a photograph's nature as a medium which is supposed to be reproduced, the same images have been simultaneously put to different uses in many collections worldwide.

Some of these fragments from various archives may be reassembled into a particular constellation. Such a constellation can give us a glimpse of what the social situation during the production of a photograph, the writing of a text, or the creation or collection of an object may have been like. Let us now assume that the collection of an object was documented through a photograph, a text, as well as the preservation of the object itself. If we consider an object equally as a historical trace or even a medium, this triangulation allows for a much more detailed reconstruction of a historical moment. At the same time, texts, photographs and objects must be considered not only as sources, traces, and media, but as "mimetic capital" with a particular history of intentions. An analysis of this triangulation of media within the current archival circumstances and situations, allows us to better understand the historical engineering of representations and the creation of knowledge at Mariannhill. The missionaries utilised them in

conjunction to reinforce each other. Hamilton and Leibhammer (2016a:21-22, 2016b:423) suggest similar historical cross-medium investigations in the area. They argue that the material culture of Natal has so far been denied the status of "archive", and therefore related positionings as important historical sources. Instead, they argue, such objects have so far only been relegated to art history and ethnography. They then proceed to argue that a repositioning in this regard must take place by treating material culture objects within the logics and methodologies one usually applies to "archival" documents. This allows for connecting various media, which need to be studied in conjunction in order to provide more coherent historical analysis.

The following archival overview indicates what information conjoined extrapolations from these materials can provide, but also what their limitations in the particular situation of Mariannhill's individual archives are. The "condition of the archive" is then a momentary evaluation of the archive's material situation during my research experience, while the "archival condition" is the resulting potential that conditioned the readings I could apply through an interconnected analysis of photographs, texts, and objects. The state of the archive conditioned the stories that could be told through and about the archival collection (cf. Mbembe 2002:21).

The Archives of Mariannhill

In 1911, an anonymous member of the monastery inquired in the Q&A section of Mariannhill's house periodical *Familia* whether the monastery had an archive. The editor, Fr. Gerard Schweykart, denied it somewhat hesitantly. In his answer he recounted that "during the times of OCR [Trappists] no archive had been maintained, for reasons that cannot be discussed in the periodical". But from the time the monastery had been separated from the Trappist order in 1909, so he continued, everything that "[…] belongs into an archive was collected: bureaucratic documents of church-related, as well as secular office, important correspondences regarding purchases of land, and everything else which had ongoing value; documents regarding the mission and the development of the institute, important issues of single outstations and noteworthy deeds of single members, good ones, as well as bad ones; and much else" (Schweykart 1911:78).[74] Mariannhill was separated from the Trappist order in 1909, and one may speculate that an archive had indeed existed earlier, but was no longer in existence by 1911. In the article, Schweykart used the opportunity to call upon his confreres that they may contribute whatever they had salvaged from the old days, and which may still be of importance. Once the archive had been more firmly established in the 1920s, it was looked after by Fr. Alexander Hanisch, who had also been curator of the museum since 1894, and at the same time supervised the printing press between 1920 and 1926 (Kneipp 1982:83).

By "archive", Schweykart clearly referred to a repository and deposit for textual documents. As I already indicated, it does not suffice to understand the present archive merely as a textual repository, but rather as a matrix that asks the archivist and researcher to make connections between those textual documents, the subjects that produced them and are referred to within them, interwoven with photographs, as well as object-collections of various kinds. All of these documents are an outcome of an effort to produce what Ann Stoler described as "colonial ontologies" (2009:4). Stoler notes that archival processes are ongoing, as ascriptions between involved parties continue to change, alongside the dynamic interaction between archivists, the archive, and its users. The archive should therefore be considered not as a static entity, but rather as a flexible conglomerate of material objects, be they textual documents, photographs, or other artefacts. As objects, they all exist in space and are dealt with by people. In order to ground my reading of the archive in my experience during its most recent state, I will have to note a few more things regarding the condition and changes that took place since the early 1900s.

A variety of challenges complicated my research in Mariannhill's archives. As I already explained, the social interaction of research itself, digitisation, and physical movement of archival material, at times constituted counterproductive realities during my research (cf. Hamilton 2011:20). I had to take decisions of how to deal, or not to deal with these challenges; how to improve the situation of the photographic archive, while at the same time not to infringe

[74] My own translation from the German original.

on the territory, authority, and comfort zones of the mission community at large. In these regards, I will now give an overview of the main CMM Archives in South Africa, Italy, and Germany.

Mariannhill's extended archive has to be disentangled in relation to historical institutions, as well as current locations. The mission today still maintains four archives: one at Mariannhill Monastery itself, one at the CMM Generalate in Rome, and two smaller ones, at the German Provincialate in Würzburg and at the Dutch house St. Paul near Venlo. None of the four archives has either been accessioned or catalogued in a coherent way. Therefore, none of the information is accessible through a central database. At the Roman repository at least, a process of systematic accessioning was initiated by the new archivist Fr. Ivo Burkhardt CMM in 2007. Material in the four archives was either collected in Europe as correspondence with Mariannhill Monastery, or extracted from the archives at Mariannhill since the 1920s. In the following pages I deal only with the first three archives, as the Dutch archive mainly contains published material and documents on the Dutch province.

At the archives of Mariannhill Monastery itself, four institutions came to be fused after the Second World War, and are of interest to me to varying degrees: the historical archive proper; the museum; the press; and the photographic studio. The possibilities to create knowledge from the documents of these institutions have therefore changed, in a spatial and institutional sense. The first one is the original textual archive, founded in 1911. Various other textual assets have since then been added to the archive over the years from the monastery's various other workshops and affiliated mission stations, such as accounting books and chronicles. Second, the museum still exists, but had already been moved into its fourth installation on the premises of the monastery by the early 1980s. At the same time, documentation and some of its objects were rehoused into the present archive (Chapter Five). Third, a "Mariannhill Mission Press" still exists, but is no longer run by CMM. Therefore, the original "St. Thomas Aquinas" printing press does no longer exist, and remaining stocks of publications have accordingly been integrated into the archive. Fourth, the photographic business was closed down in 1939, and consequently its content of remaining glass plate negatives and prints in form of cabinet cards and albums, was dispersed in a way that can no longer be retraced. One part disappeared in the drawers of the museum, another part was stored in the archive, and yet another part was transferred along with many other things to the Roman Generalate. Further parts reappeared after many years at the houses in Arcen and Reimlingen. Many things may also have been lost during these migrations. After a space had been cleared for the installation of new archival rooms in the monastery's basement in 2015, yet another crate with several hundred pre-1914 glass plate negatives was re-discovered in the process. These could therefore not be fully evaluated for this study.

It is impossible to reconstruct the biographies of each of the four pre-archival institutions just mentioned, and all the practitioners that populated them, as the resulting network would be too extensive. Instead, I will describe pivotal moments involving reconstructions of available mimetic capital at Mariannhill. It should become evident that photographs have always been the binding glue between all four institutions. Their material and evidentiary state changed between

the photographic studio, where they were (re-)produced (and temporarily stored); the press, where they were reproduced, contextualised, and embedded in stories for the periodicals, and eventually disseminated; the museum, where they were, and still are exhibited in conjunction with objects, but at the same time used to show the arrangement of objects in displays; and finally, the archive, where they are now stored. An online archive, which is considered as a potential future format for Mariannhill's photographic collection would theoretically conflate the ontologies and functions proper to all four into one.

In 1969, three archival rooms were installed in the monastery's front wing (Vorspel et al. 1921-1989:449). What began as an act of salvaging, never made the transformation into an archive proper: although the textual archive of original documents is ordered spatially into particular sections, it is not accessioned in any way. There are currently no finding aids, overviews, or accessioning-lists whatsoever. Phrased differently, while I could familiarise myself with the archival *topology* in place, an archival *topography* is still missing entirely (cf. Vestberg 2008:57). Without catalogues and reference lists, even the monastery's last archivist, the late Fr. Henry Ratering, remained uncertain about what exactly the three rooms contained.

A second major challenge is that the condition of the archival material in the South African archive is bad due to high humidity, exposure to light, and the extreme changes in temperature. As a result, the already extremely delicate paper of old letter copy books became even more brittle over the years. When interacting with these documents by turning their pages, one is confronted with the decision to either salvage a bit of information, but to destroy the document in the process, or to let them be and decay even further. Additionally, the ink on most letters is blotted out to such an extent that more than 80 % are unreadable. Many documents are infested and consumed by mould and a thriving population of bookworms. By 2014, small steps had been taken to deal with the problem, and in 2016 new archival rooms with climate control were installed. Nevertheless, this situation is emblematic of the ambivalent attitude towards the congregation's repositories over the past decades: on the one hand the community was extremely protective of the archive, on the other hand it utterly neglected its content: objects have been moved randomly, newly assigned, re-labelled, stolen, merged, and re-appropriated by various people, who were not at all times members of the congregation.

Sr. Adelgisa Hermann CPS, the last archivist of the monastery before Fr. Henry, died in 1995. This was at a moment when the monastery was flooded with requests for access to their archives, just after the end of Apartheid. State-provided structures for re-claiming land made local historical archives sought-after assets. As Mariannhill had been involved in fraught cases regarding their own land, the monastery's superior decided to close the archive for public access. Since about 2006, Fr. Henry Ratering tended to the archives, as well as to the museum and the library, next to a multiplicity of other responsibilities. Due to this shortage of staff, as well as the separation of material over various locations, the overall archival responsibility has long been uncertain.



Figure 7: archive room No. 3, Mariannhill Monastery; photographic equipment on shelves to the left, letter copy books to the right (photograph by the author, 2007).

At Mariannhill Monastery I identified and relied on at least five different types of documents: (1) a fragmented chronology of letter copy books (approx. 1880s-1920s), of which most volumes are unreadable due to blotted ink on very fragile paper. The books were collected from the various workshops and the monastery's general administration; (2) 30 years of accounting books (1893-1923) enabled me to present a more detailed history of the photographic studio, the succession of photographers, as well as a development of transactions in relation to the museum; (3) visitor books recorded guests who signed up at the entrance portal, and still exist for the years from 1908 to the 1970s. Unfortunately, the earlier volumes, which most likely started in 1894, have disappeared; (4) benefactor lists in bound volumes give some impressions of how dependent Mariannhill was on external funding; (5) chronologically filed correspondences exist from the 1920s onward, and contain some valuable commentary on the pre-Second World War period. It was also possible to retrieve other important documents, which cannot be immediately classified, due to their random location in odd files scattered on shelves. In this regard, I collected various single letters on the historical situation of photographic and ethnographic production in the

archives in Mariannhill, such as shipping lists of objects. However, the sheer mass of material, as well as the fact that previous researchers, like Gütl and Green, had not been granted access to these archives, left me with an abundance of material that in many parts still awaits further study.

The situation of textual sources in the Roman archive is even more complex, and it was therefore not in the range of my possibilities to survey it, let alone analyse it in its entirety. First of all, the archive had been boxed for several years during renovation works. Since the new archivist, Fr. Ivo Burkhardt, began unpacking the collection in 2009 into the new archival rooms, things were only slowly being put into place. No other person with knowledge about the material was available, and so Fr. Ivo had to familiarise himself, while at the same time taking on the challenge of the digitisation of the photographic negative collection. Furthermore, the recently renewed beatification process of Mariannhill's founder not only accounted for much of the archival traffic between South Africa and Rome since the 1960s, but it also consumed most archival concerns since 2008. Several meters of archival documents concerning Abbot Franz Pfanner had been extracted, rearranged, and evaluated in order to prove his eligibility for beatification. As a consequence, other material deemed less important to the beatification cause remained boxed. These boxes contained, momg other things, documents and photographs collected and filed by the late Fr. Dietmar Seubert according to various topics, such as the museums, ethnography, architecture etc. Fr. Ivo and myself only discovered this collection in December 2012, which left us without sufficient time to evaluate it properly. In the Roman archive, I eventually relied on the access granted and help given by Fr. Ivo, but also on the work by Clemens Gütl, who had studied parts of the material before 2005.

In comparison, the much smaller archive in Würzburg contains above all material on the German CMM province and published texts. It also contains yet another part of Fr. Dietmar Seubert's research archive, which had been brought there after his death in 2007. It was packed away for several years and only became accessible in the course of 2012. Fr. Dietmar was the most ceaseless and thorough researcher of the community. Even if he had never published any of his findings in publications external to the congregation, he went to great efforts to compile and register material, of which he wrote several meticulously annotated accounts. Not only did Fr. Dietmar compile material about particular institutions, such as the museum or the press, but he also has to be given credit for biographical research on former members. Fr. Dietmar carried out extensive research, and left hand-written notes, as well as compilations of typed documents, in anticipation of future researchers, which he expected to come from within the congregation. I was able to use some of his compilations in several instances to identify particular occasions and personalities in photographs. However, his biographical research on the photographers remained very limited. I will present my own findings in this regard in Chapter One.

The (Im-)Possibilities of Reassembling a Photographic Oeuvre

By reassembling the photographic oeuvre, I mean to re-situate it within the time of its production through the archival collections surrounding it today. The nexus of this study is thus the remaining collection of photographs, mainly consisting of—and originally deriving from—glass plate negatives and fewer celluloid negatives, produced between the early 1880s and the late 1930s. Mariannhill's photographers depicted people and places near their stations in the former Colony of Natal and East Griqualand, which is the present KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the Eastern Cape respectively. Also, small numbers of photographs from Mariannhill's stations in present-day Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) and Tanzania (formerly German East Africa) do exist, but will not be dealt with in this study.

The production time of the central oeuvre I am dealing with only spans some 23 years, from about 1889 with the arrival of the first professional photographer, to approximately 1915; between the active portrayal of the world external to the monastery and its outstations, and the beginning of the First World War, when supplies for the photographic studio from Germany ran dry. The bulk of this collection can be related to the activity of Br. Aegidius Müller, and his active period as photographer between 1898 and approximately 1915. Some images, however, of the early 1890s and around 1930 will also be considered. This limited timeframe allows us to date several of the photographs even more exactly, and in a few instances even relate them to concrete events and people. In its entirety the collection portrays several aspects of a continuous relationship between the photographer, the mission congregation at large, and multiple Black South African communities. Particular members of both groups even occur repeatedly. After the First World War, photographic production was democratised to an extent that allowed easier acquisition of images for every member of the mission, often with their own cameras. Nevertheless, the mission's editors continued to recycle the much more aesthetic photographs taken before World War One.



Figure 8: the cupboard that contained glass plate negatives and prints between the 1980s and 2012 in the archive of Mariannhill Monastery (photograph by the author, 2011).

The collection of glass plate negatives produced before 1915 numbers 2.669.[75] It has been recently reassembled, restored and digitised at Mariannhill's Roman archive. The actual number of images either accidentally destroyed or willingly disposed of over the past 100 years is unknown. The older, but materially more stable glass plate negative collection and its derivates still exist as a relative unity, while the more recent, but materially more unstable celluloid films either deteriorated, or perished with the death of the respective photographer. After the 1950s, but most likely even before the studio was closed in 1939, a considerable number of glass plate negatives were shipped to Europe and stored at the congregation's Generalate, and may have been moved along the various sites the institution saw over the years: Mönchsdeggingen in Germany, Hatfield-Peverel in England, and finally Rome from the 1960s onwards. The other half of the negatives was instead integrated into the archive at Mariannhill in South Africa, and eventually assigned a cupboard, together with the remaining prints, albums, and later celluloid negatives in the early 1980s. In 2012, the congregation was able to attract funds to rehouse and restore the entire negative collection as one unit in Rome. The archivist, Fr. Ivo Burkhardt, initiated a process of restoration, digitisation, and accessioning, which is still ongoing. As fortunate as this development may have been, it has at the same time rendered the plates temporarily inaccessible for research. I only had the possibility to screen the negative collection once in its entirety in 2007, and again selectively in 2011. I can thus not evaluate the negative collection fully for analysis here. Therefore, I have to rely on the traces in my "shadow archive", created by my knowledge and selection during my first sightings. Integrated into my "shadow archive" are parts of what I earlier called Mariannhill's "extended archive", involving the archives of institutions who have acquired Mariannhill's photographs since the 1890s. These reproductions and movements will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Six.

Over the past decades, Mariannhill personell divided the textual archive amongst the before mentioned archives. Their movement between South Africa and Europe was considerable since the early days. Priests and lay-brothers went back and forth to attend to matters of acquiring material, expertise, and of course to engage in fundraising. With them they took documents, photographs, and collected objects, which would serve as illustrations and evidence of their actions in South Africa. Once in Europe, various mission artefacts and photographs were deposited in the various archives and later in museums, such as the one of the Pius Seminary in Würzburg. As with the glass plate negatives, the exact number of reproductions remaining in the form of individual photographic prints in Mariannhill's archives is still unclear. These exist either in the form of cabinet cards or are pasted into albums, at all four before-mentioned archives. I was not able to accession every single print, as some were only re-discovered at late stages of my research, and it is not entirely clear whether all existing prints indeed originate from Mariannhill's own studio.

The congregation's official plan does so far not include the restoration and digitisation of

[75] Excluding the plates rediscovered in May 2015. These may easily be more than 500 additional plates. Some 20 more plates have been recently rediscovered at Mariannhill's house in Arcen, near Nijmegen.

original cabinet cards and albums, even though this may pose the threat of losing unique objects and important information. One accumulation of photographic prints in the form of 15 albums, as well as cabinet cards, is kept in the CMM Archives of Mariannhill Monastery. An equally considerable collection, including 23 annotated albums of the same format, is stored at the CMM Archives in Rome. The albums have been compiled in the form of thematic series by the photographers before 1915, most likely as display albums for commercial customers at the photographic studio, and for guests of the monastery at large. Each album contains between 50 and 120 photographs, which are of two different sizes (cf. Chapter Three). The two series of albums, the one at Mariannhill and the one in Rome, contain about 2000 photographs each. However, many of the photographs at Mariannhill are identical to those in Rome. All of these albums only contain photographs taken approximately between the early 1890s and 1915. The titles of the albums include, among others, "the world of Black children", "heathen Kafirs", or "views from the Trappist-Mission Mariannhill in Natal, South Africa". The albums only show photographs relating to Mariannhill Monastery, the various mission stations, as well as of people living near to these stations. Smaller collections, also of copies from these original albums, exist in several other houses.

Single albums do not contain an internal narrative structure, other than the uniting topic. Therefore the numbering system in the image space does often not match up between the photographs following each other. Photographs in most of the albums are selected from different timeframes, while others are specifically arranged according to certain years or places. I will refer to single images from these albums throughout this study. Both collection, albums and cabinet cards, contain multiple doubles and variations. Some of these photographic prints no longer exist as negatives. Due to these circumstances the negative collection and the print collection are most valuable and unique in their own rights. Ideally, a future database of Mariannhill's photographs would contain a complete matching of both formats, which then cross-references the published forms in the mission's periodicals. As only the photographs in the periodicals are contextualised and dated by the year of publication, it is only here that we can analyse how the missionaries intended to use them within narratives directed at a European audience. I will provide such an analysis in Part One of this study.

The moments of reassembling to which I refer throughout this study, include a spectrum of conditions: from the archive's change in terms of architectural setting, social occurrences, or the destructive force of insect plagues. Relevant social occurrences were for example the monastery's centenary or the founder's beatification, which necessitated a reengagement with the archive as a source of and on the past. No single individual ever experienced the extended archive in its entirety, or perceived it as an entity. It only becomes visible in the form of single images or accumulations and collections of photographs, as recompiled in publications, or alternatively in series I compiled myself as part of my "shadow archive". My work thus necessarily presents a temporary construct, an arrangement and interplay, situated in my specific context of perception. I (re-)connected a particular constellation of individuals, objects, and

places as they occur in and around photographs, according to their greatest densities and social contingencies. I return to this point below.

During the time of my research, the photographs were divided over the previously-mentioned archives in their various formats. Over the past centur,y several archivists and editors applied multiple, and even in themselves incoherent numbering systems to the photographic glass negatives, as well as to the prints. As the system of order had been changed several times, and a contemporary equivalent reference catalogue for each of these systems is missing, it is impossible to make full sense of these numbers. Also, the numerical order is often incoherent, as explicated by my discussion of some series within their photographic occasions in Chapters Two and Eight. Some of the original boxes provided by the negative manufacturers did exist until 2012, and were then photographed, but unfortunately discarded during the restoration process. Before 1914, the photographer had mounted most boxes with a descriptive list of the exposed plates he stored in them. The actual content of plates however never matched the list, and even the photographs in the lists were not arranged in chronological order. This became clear once I was able to date certain photographs to particular years by matching people or places. The only coherent and datable list of photographs with substantial information was produced by the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller in 1899 for the Ethnological Museum of Berlin. I will analyse this compilation in more detail in Chapter Six.

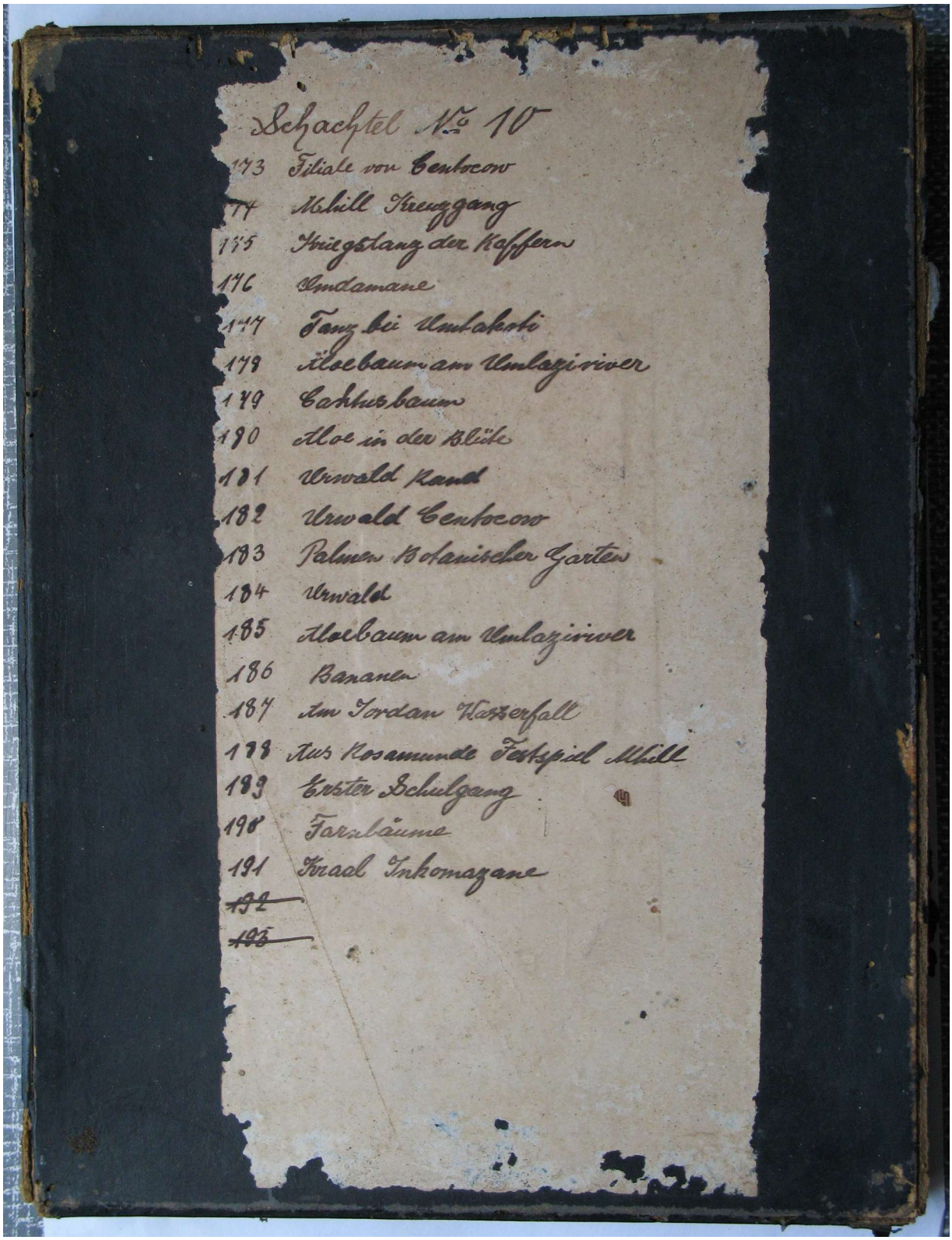


Figure 9: "*Schachtel No. 10*"—lid of original cardboard box holding photographic negatives, with list of the individual titles (photograph by the author, 2011).

This archival condition left me with three possibilities to structure my research. The first was to start the process of research from the image itself. To do so it was important to familiarise myself not only with the region's macro-history, the mission's general history, the inter-continental history between Europe and South Africa, but also with the micro-histories in relation to particular events, times, and places. This relates to the histories of various locations and the biographies of subjects, in particular those that repeatedly appear in photographs and thus in relation to particular photographic occasions. By engaging with Mariannhill's archive "along the grain" (Stoler 2009), thus according to the very practices how it was constituted by its makers, it became clear that photographs can provide genuine information and traces of a past, which are not available elsewhere.

A second focus of my work was to independently carve out the biographies of several individuals related to the relevant institutions. This involved not only the photographers and the photographed, but also individuals related to the museum and the editors of the press, as far as they could be identified. As I argue in Chapter One, photographic self-representation constitutes a particular element of missionary propaganda. Only this fact made biographical inquiries possible, as over the years the missionaries had compiled and annotated a fair number of portraits, which helped to identify individuals by comparison.

A third dimension of inquiry was the exploration of the earlier mentioned discourses that may be referred to as "colonial ontologies" (Stoler 2009), in so far as they relate to the photographic record. These are certain frequently reoccurring genres addressing the missionaries' main concerns in the form of photographs of schoolchildren, education in manual labour, charity, healing, mission and ministry, and ethnography. In more concrete cases it is even possible to study particular archetypal and stereotypical figures of the mission encounter, such as the "missionary", the "chief", and the "witch"/"diviner", as I do in Chapter Eight. These can then be approached independently from various other angles, such as the official colonial archival record. Through such comparisons, it becomes apparent that Mariannhill's photographers replicated public discourses photographically, such as witchcraft, education, African festivities as "public offence", or gender relations. Figure 1 of the scene at a river showing women being chased by an armed "warrior", may serve as an example for those reiterated gender roles. Mariannhill's photographers thus tapped into what Pinney has called "the recursive archive" (2005:265), a stockpiled accumulation of images as "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991) from which they chose the best image solutions for particular publications.

In order to make the mission's situation, problems, actions, and results in South Africa effectively intelligible to their financially strong audiences in Europe, the mission's photographers excessively repeated categories, dichotomies, or even binary relations over the years. This created a repository from which the editors of the mission's periodicals could systematically source imagery for many years to come. For the limited period between the 1890s and 1915, the collection provides an almost continuous engagement, representing the missionaries' idea of an encounter situation between themselves, their subjects, and other

interlocutors in colonial Natal.

For some of these other interlocutors, such as Mariannhill's interaction with state power and local chiefs, I was able to rely on the work of Clemens Gütl (2005), but still needed to fill in particular situations myself. This involved visits to the South African National Archives Repositories in Pietermaritzburg, Durban, and Cape Town, where correspondence between the monastery, the missions' superiors, and respective district magistrates and other officials are housed. Next to Mariannhill's archives and the National Archives, the third category of textual and image archives I consulted where those of museums in Europe, but also in South Africa. Ethnographic museums were enthusiastic collectors of Mariannhill's photographs, in particular since Br. Aegidius Müller had started a focused advertising and sales campaign in 1898. Although Mariannhill's involvement with ethnographic museums was rather short-lived, correspondence archives of these museums make the reception of photographs in Europe tangible, while the generally undocumented reception by benefactors remains untraceable. The reception of Mariannhill's photographs as "ethnographic" will be dealt with in Chapter Six.

Two more archives played a crucial role over the years, in particular for the study of the cooperation between Gerard Bhengu and Max Kohler in the production of paintings during the late 1920s, which I discuss in Chapter Seven. As a general hub for the documentation of Natal history, the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban also holds parts of Kohler's manuscripts, family photographs, and many of Bhengu's paintings. These he either produced explicitly for Kohler, or at a later point for Killie Campbell. Kohler's extended family donated manuscripts, photographs, and some paintings in two stages during the 1990s. They are stored in two cardboard boxes in the form they arrived, and had so far not been accessioned or catalogued in any way. I made a first foray in this regard by categorising and listing all items. Possibly this information has by now been added to the collection's documentation. The second archive is the one of Kohler's home institution, the Missionsärztliches Institut in Würzburg, Germany. It contains more than 250 letters, which Kohler exchanged with the institute on regular basis between 1922 and 1937. I evaluated the entire collection and transcribed a considerable part of the correspondence. Eventually, the study of European and South African archives in combination allowed me to explore how Mariannhill's photographs have been appropriated, and therefore made it possible to reassemble parts of Mariannhill's "extended archive".

Alternatively, I could have structured Mariannhill's archive, and accordingly my work, by creating my own distinct matrix of genres. But as should become clear throughout the eight chapters, image genres can be a dangerous terrain, as not all of them join neatly, many overlap, and they sometimes even cause friction or opposition. As I explain in Part One, the missionaries themselves glossed over most of their own photographs with the adaptable term "mission life". Interpretations of genres may also change over time, as well as between interpretive communities, other than the missionaries. Instead of genres I thus relied on those photographs which were most socially buoyant, generated "reproductive power", and which I could therefore trace in various material appearances: as negatives, reproduced as prints, in periodicals, and most

importantly translated into other media, such as glass stained windows and Bhengu's paintings. I thus focused on photographs which gathered more social momentum than others. At the same time, I tried to locate these photographs within the remaining collection and through the social conditions of their production. Mariannhill Missionaries not only reproduced these particular photographs more often in their periodicals, but they also contextualised them much better than other photographs. I found that these buoyant photographs circulated much more widely and more easily than others. Some of them thus had far more social impact on people at later points. It became evident that this holds true especially for the earliest photographs, prior to 1915. They were produced at a time that still allowed for a more creative aesthetics in a tradition of genre photography and *tableaux vivants*. Aesthetic compositions and their internal narratives turned these pictures into even more potent mimetic capital to later editors and audiences.

When I first encountered the photographic collection in its desolate state in the archive of Mariannhill Monastery in 2007, it was far from clear who exactly made the photographs, whom they depicted and where and when they had been taken. The exceptional constellation of original negatives in combination with prints, both annotated by the photographer, as well as textual information on images used in the periodicals, gradually allowed me to answer these four questions. To determine all four coordinates for one image, however, was only possible in those few cases of socially buoyant photographs. According to the photographs' polyvalence as objects, they impacted people in different registers. These cases eventually constituted my entry-points to historical situations, and allowed me to explore other photographs which were less well-contextualised, by comparison to the first.

The process of photographic production at Mariannhill left behind other material traces in the form of the photographic studio, technological equipment, written notes, but also the possibility to re-establish a relationship to the landscape, as far as the exact locations are still traceable today. The photographs also refer to individual places and individuals, which are present in accounts other than the mission's. In combination, all these instances present traces far beyond the two-dimensional image. Drawing together all these coordinates allows us to reassemble the presence and impact of photographic practice (cf. Hevia 2009; Latour 1991, 2005; also see Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016a, 2016b). Reassembling at least a part of the photographic oeuvre of Mariannhill then means that I follow those buoyant photographs that did and still do have an impact in interaction with other things and people. In the process, all may be considered as social actors in specific historical moments. Their actions may still be followed through the privileged situation of Mariannhill's photographic production, and according to the traces this environment left behind.

Tracing intersections and aspects of these involved agencies, materials and venues brings us closer to an understanding of Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre as a "distributed object" within a temporal process (Gell 1998:232ff). This means that the oeuvre is constituted by images that precede and succeed each other in particular relationships. Furthermore, I hope to show that it was not only the respective photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller in particular, who is distributed

through the photographic oeuvre. Also the personhood of the photographed historical individuals may re-establish agency under particular social and material circumstances. In this way, I hope to provide a better understanding of how and why people endeavoured to make photographs, to be photographed, to modify and transform photographs, and why they required and circulated them. This will explain the social potency and reproductive power, which particular images developed over time, and how these photographs mattered and continue to matter in the lives of people.

PART ONE

-

FAITH IN IMAGES

CHAPTER ONE

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Trust in Images

Introduction: Photography as Image, Object, Narrative, and Practice

Before, and still after the First World War, the general narrative in Mariannhill's periodicals employed imperialist tropes, like the "expansion of the kingdom of God". These were combined with agricultural tropes, such as the "vineyard of God", which is tended to, in order to be harvested for souls later. Many articles address benefactors to join in these efforts by donating money, goods, their sons and daughters as potential novices, or to join the ranks themselves. In 1897, the editorial of the *Mariannhill-Kalender* stated: "But mission is a war too, which costs a lot of money. And this campaign [*Feldzug*] goes against a dreadful foe, against Satan and his helpers and their cunning [*listig*] assaults" (Anon. 1897:34).[76] Just after the First World War, in 1919, the rhetoric became even stronger and still resonated with the experience of the past years: "Also Catholic Mission is a war—but one of honour. It is a war for God's plans. However, every war necessitates the three big M's: Men, Material, Money" (Anon. 1919:108).[77]

The common "conversion story" of Christian missions (cf. Cox 2005, Pels 1999:56-57, Thomas 1992, Thompson 2004) thus indicated a particular direction and movement of people, goods, and finances. Cox summarises the "providentialist master narrative" of conversion as follows:

> […] male clerical heroes, assisted occasionally by unnamed women or "natives," move from the Christian heartland into a kind of global religious vacuum peopled by non-Christians who are sometimes portrayed as noble, sometimes as vicious, but always as ignorant of the benefits of the Christian gospel. (Cox 2005:6)

Mariannhill Missionaries implied the basic dichotomy of this narrative since 1889, but epitomised it most clearly on the front cover of the *Mariannhill-Kalender* since 1905 with additional captions (Figure 10). In its top part, the frontispiece contains images of the two Saints St. Benedict and St. Bernardus, the mother of Jesus, Maria, and her mother, St. Ann.[78] At the bottom, a panorama of Mariannhill is shown with a nun and several African children encountering three monks, who are toiling away on a field. In the centre piece, next to the title lines, we can see two depictions of the supposed past and present situation on the ground of the mission: to the left, dancing men with shields and spears, dressed in fur and beadwork; to the right, a preaching Trappist priest, surrounded by a missionary sister, a Black bridal pair, a Black priest, a man with a book (likely a catechist with Bible) and a family with two children praying before the priest; all of them are dressed in European fashion. The image to the left is captioned "*Einst* [Once]", and the one to the right "*Jetzt* [Now]". The left image may relate to the earlier mentioned martial prowess of the Zulu, as well as the alleged shortcomings in both dress and architecture, while the right image directly suggests their replacement with a variety of Christian social achievements, institutions, and material culture.

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[76] My own translation from the German original.
[77] My own translation from the German original: "*Mannschaft, Material, Moneten* [Geld]".
[78] Together they are the name patrons of "Mari-ann-hill".



Figure 10: frontispiece, *Mariannhill-Kalender für das Jahr 1906*.

Several authors noted that early mission projects visually expressed this narrative dichotomy of spiritual conversion in their photographic production through a material, and in particular through a sartorial transformation. While some identified this as the basic building block of mission narratives (Eckl 2006b:236, Geary 1991:49, Krüger 2011:134-136, Webb 1997:14, Wiener 1990:77, also see Hirsch 2007, Rippe 2018), Nicholas Thomas even considered it a "master caption" of the conversion process (Thomas 1992:372). But hardly anywhere does this dichotomy appear as such an explicit confrontation in both text and image, as on the frontispiece of the *Mariannhill-Kalender*.[79] In particular the co-presence of the two timeframes makes the intention of a master caption by the producers and its perception with consumers plausible.

As a critique of this dichotomy, Peter Pels (1989, 1999:65-66) observes that in the case of the periodicals published by the Dutch Missionary Fathers of the Holy Ghost[80] (C.S.Sp.) between the 1940s and 60s, there existed a third category of "exotic" images, which neither related judgementally to the negative tropes of colonialism on the one hand, nor to the supposedly positive influence of missionaries. Instead, they may have addressed the benefactor's sense and receptiveness for exotic Otherness. In my experience with Mariannhill several decades earlier, however, the missionaries easily transformed such neutral depictions of alterity into representations of obstinate paganism. Therefore, even more than Pels does, I insist on the importance of captions and articles to direct the message of images.

Be this as it may, in the case of Mariannhill we have no possibility to retrace whether the targeted audiences indeed perceived these images as "exotic". Direct statements from two parties in this triangular relationship are no longer available: neither do we have firsthand records by the mission's subjects, nor a representative sample of the mission's benefactors in Europe or the US. Those whom the missionaries were speaking to and those whom they spoke about, thus rarely spoke for themselves in public. In an overview of Mariannhill's earliest publication activities, Fr. Paschalis Boneberg speculated during the mid-1930s under the heading "dissemination" that the *Vergißmeinnicht* was initially intended "[f]or the German-speaking readership of all sections of society, in particular in Germany, Austria, Switzerland etc. The main part of the readers, however, apparently belonged to the middle class, and in particular to the farming and working class" (Boneberg 1936).[81] The reception of Mariannhill's periodicals and photographs with this diverse interpretive community, however, can no longer be analysed, due to the lack of sources. It is therefore impossible to retrace all agencies in the colonial system. We can only hypothetically reconstruct the audience's collateral knowledge and try to delineate how the missionaries may have desired their benefactors to react. I therefore concentrate on those groups whose statements we can indeed follow and relate: missionaries and artistic photographers in the First Part; visitors to the monastery and administrators in Part Two; and ethnologists in Part Three.

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79 For a detailed analysis of a particular illustrated article by Br. Aegidius Müller see Rippe (2018).

80 Also known as the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, or simply as "Spiritans".

81 My own translation from the German original.

In particular in Chapter Two of this Part, I will explain that—relative to the moment of conversion—Mariannhill Missionaries presented the dystopia of a "before" and the utopia of an "after" alternatively as a dichotomy of an "already/but still". On a regular basis they recalled the initial future promise of the "mission as a movement" from Europe to South Africa. In this way the stark dichotomy of the before/after is broken up once more. In order to amend their subjects' insufficiencies, not only in space, but also in time "[t]he mission as a religious movement, did not merely reproduce or salvage a past, it also envisioned a future for its participants" (Pels 1999:45). An important part of this process included the presentation of visual evidence as a transfer of knowledge about how those people who had so far been imagined in a state of the past had *already* been elevated to a state of close contemporaries (cf. Pels 1999, 2009). *But still*, so the narrative dichotomy, many potential converts resisted the efforts of the missionaries, who therefore required further help from benefactors.

The alleged fact that some converts indeed "prayed" and "worked" according to the Trappist motto (*ora et labora*), had to be communicated to the audiences who supported the mission financially. This had to be done, ideally not only in the form of drawings like the frontispiece, but preferably through the supposedly more realistic medium of photography. In order to do this most efficiently, Mariannhill's photographers refracted—or "africanised"—the contemporary matrix of European aesthetic conventions and photographic formats in South Africa. On the one hand, they presented Africans as possessing the ability to assimilate European culture well. On the other hand, as I will show in the next chapter, the missionaries presented this assimilation process within boundaries, by couching many narratives of how their African subjects engaged with the production process of photographs and other media as an ambivalent imitation. This they did, partially to retain their representative authority, partially to present entertainment according to European conventions.

In this process, the missionaries themselves imitated, copied, and even plagiarised European art and imagery by applying these to the situation in Natal. Such appropriations crucially conditioned and shaped the practice of production, and therefore the content of photographs, before these were eventually projected back to Europe. According to the title of this First Part, "Faith in Images", I discuss the hopes resting on photographs: not only did the missionaries attempt to disprove the original believes of some Africans with the help of photographs, while displaying the new faith of others; but they themselves trusted in the realism commonly attributed to photographs, in order to represent their project convincingly. At times, they even reflected at length on the authenticating capacities of photographs, asking their benefactors to share in the faith that their photographs were objective in an epistemological sense. As I shall argue in Chapter Two, this promise could best be fulfilled, and its effect even be enhanced, by cross-connecting photographs with several other media.[82] In this chapter and the

[82] Making a similar argument in her book *Faith in Objects*, Erin Hasinoff (2011) describes the mission exhibition "The World in Boston" of 1911. However, it is not possible to depict actions of faith with the help of objects, and thus to either *see* or *have* faith in objects *per se*. Hasinoff addresses photographs only tangentially, which I believe, must be analysed in conjunction with objects, in order to understand the working of either one in the

next we are concerned with processes of, first, interpictoriality, and, second, intermediality between media as diverse as photography, theatrical performance, film, and a stained-glass window.

As I will show in the course of this study, the very same images may indeed be used by different people for different projects; projects to convince others of particular goals. Mariannhill's editors, educators, photographers, architects, painters, and other artisans cooperated and worked towards the same goal: to turn outsiders into allies and financial supporters. They hoped to do this by improving and propping up various media against each other. Therefore it is insufficient to only study photographs in the case of Mariannhill, but instead we must address the broader landscape of media and the interest it was supposed to serve. Latour (1990:24) suggested to analyse such strategies as follows:

> Thus it is not all the anthropology of writing, nor all the history of visualization, that interests us in this context. Rather, we should concentrate on those aspects that help in the mustering, the presentation, the increase, the effective alignment, or ensuring the fidelity of new allies. We need, in other words, to look at the way in which someone convinces someone else to take up a statement, to pass it along, to make it more of a fact, and to recognize the first author's ownership and originality.

Mariannhill's photographs are what Latour goes on to describe as "immutable mobiles": in order to re-trace the very journey to South Africa, which the missionaries had made themselves, they sent photographs back from the alleged periphery to the centre. In this physical movement, photographs had to retain, or at least to suggest a certain "immutability" regarding the information they were supposed to convey. Even if this appears as a commonplace, it is crucial to point out that Mariannhill's photographers and editors continually attempted to certify and prop up the idea that their photographs and texts indeed represented what actually happened on a grass roots level. However, in order to make this transfer and translation process successful and effective, Mariannhill's photographers had to (re-)arrange and manipulate their work to a very high degree over various stages, in a performative, as well as in a technological sense. As we shall see, this process of stabilising photographs independently and within the periodicals, relied on references already familiar to European benefactors through various other media. The missionaries' expectation and anticipation of benefactors' experiences of intermediality were thus essential in the propaganda process, even if we can no longer retrace these very experiences themselves. According to the double meaning of "faith in images", I will therefore deal with epistemological questions around Mariannhill's photographs in this chapter. In the next chapter I deal with how the process of conversion at Mariannhill was performed through photographs, while being enhanced through other media.

In order to study these otherwise untraceable experiences, I partially rely on the idea of "resemblance". Other than a randomly chosen concept, photographic "resemblance", or "*Ähnlichkeit*" in German, was a contemporary and commonly applied idea within European

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case of mission exhibitions, and indeed mission projects at large (cf. Part Three).

photographic practice to establish a photographic sitter's "character" or "identity". Photographers and their clients alike used these terms to determine the success, and thus the "truthfulness" of a photographic portrait. As a Latourian "crisis" or "controversy" (Latour 2005), these concepts allow us to expand this idea from portraits to the contemporary discourse on so-called "genre photographs", which intended to depict the typical "daily life" of certain social groups. When audiences recognised, confirmed, or denied photographic "resemblances", this highly subjective process left traces. In the two cases of "portraits" and "genre photographs", photographers presented their work in the sense of artistic photography as "characteristic" and "typical". In order to operationalise the concept of "resemblance" for a historical study of the situation around 1900, we must treat it as what the semiotician Peirce considered as "collateral knowledge" (cf. Introduction): as specific contemporarily available knowledge about photographic images and technology which social actors would have had at the time when they engaged with photographs. This contemporary knowledge established the idea that images could show "resemblance" and thus supported faith in images.

First, we need to take a closer look at the image narratives, their claims, and the knowledge they intended to mediate to benefactors. I will do this in the first chapter by comparing several published examples from Mariannhill's photographic archive to the contemporary production of artistic photographs in Germany. Wherever possible I situate established conventional aesthetic formats in social action. I shall first present underlying views on the turn-of-the-century construction of "race" in Natal, and their expressions in the photographs of Mariannhill. After all, this is necessary in order to understand how the missionaries used photographs to reassemble the relationship with their subjects, and how they thereby fashioned Selves and Others. After relating the question of photographic authorship in Mariannhill's photographic production to the European discourse, I will introduce the six main photographers of Mariannhill Monastery, who were active between the 1880s and 1930s. Several of Mariannhill's photographers had experiences with the medium prior to their arrival in South Africa. In order to establish their points of departure and visual references, it is necessary to take a look at each individual biography. This will help us to better understand, not only the migration and appropriation of images, but also how the photographs may have been perceived by social actors in the past. I then explore the art historical background and technological conditions of image production, so to separate it from an analysis of the aspects related to space and material culture, which I discuss in Parts Two and Three respectively.

Here it should become clear that in particular Br. Aegidius Müller shifted between various discourses, which determined the production of his photographs. Müller not merely ran a simple portrait studio, but he simultaneously worked as an ambulant photographer who fashioned himself as an artist. Since the introduction of light-weight and commercially available cameras in the 1880s, professionals, lay people, and critics even more intensely quarrelled over the question whether photography could, or rather should be an art form. By establishing societies and journals, lobbyists attempted to establish interpretive authority, and thus upheld a

discourse on what photography was supposed to be (Kaufhold 1986, Plumpe 1990). This chapter is therefore not an attempt to determine what photography was, but to approximate what photographic practitioners of the Mariannhill Mission believed it to be.

We thus have to consider whether a photograph is discussed and distributed in the field of (art) photography, mission propaganda, or ethnology, and which role the idea of the author plays in each of these fields (cf. Bate 2007). In the field of art, the idea of the author was essential to social actors themselves. For missionaries, mostly the impact on the benefactors was of importance. Ethnologists, instead, focused on the knowledge they could gain from the photographic image about either objects or bodies. Throughout this study, I suggest that Br. Aegidius Müller tried to provide not necessarily "mechanically objective" representations (Daston and Galison 2007), but attempted to create an apparently *authentic* and ideal impression for each of his different customers and audiences. I suggest that he did so by providing an *aesthetic* experience through image and text. Furthermore, he added to this by presenting himself, his confreres, and his African contemporaries as having an authentic experience. For Müller, "aesthetic" therefore meant to find a working-balance of photographic style between (1) his social experiences with his photographic subjects, (2) the visual condensation and heightening of this experience through locally established exoticising visual conventions such as material culture, and (3) the employment of photographic aesthetic conventions already familiar to the targeted European audiences from experiences in urban photographic studios and popular print media.

The process of circulating photographs through various interpretive communities enhanced certain ideals, which often appeared as pairs, or even as seeming binaries: Black/White, African/ Western, colonized/colonizer, traditional/modern (eg. Tilley 2007:13), even though their relevance for audiences may at times be questioned. The circulation of colonial photographs also invoked the binaries periphery/centre, non-science/science, and craft/art. The gazes of the various involved communities through Mariannhill's photographs are therefore in many ways interlocked and therefore difficult—if not impossible—to disentangle. In all cases, a reconstruction of gazes relies on complex conversations and negotiations. These manifested in various other media than the mission's periodicals, such as for example postcards, which I discuss in various instances. In Part One I discuss the missionary gaze at Africans, in Part Two I introduce the outsider gaze by tourists, travellers, journalists, government officials and Africans, and in Part Three I discuss the ethnological/anthropological gaze, all *through* Mariannhill's photographs (cf. Edwards 2013).

Similar to their "writing cultures" (Clifford and Marcus 1986), the agendas and related "picturing cultures" (Geary 1990:290) of urban photographers, missionaries, anthropologists, and ethnologists around 1900 were different, if not diametrically opposed. Professional photographers attempted to please the immediate aesthetic likings of their customers according to conventional standards. Also Mariannhill Missionaries had the aesthetic interests of a European middle-class of benefactors in mind when composing photographs. As I will show in

Chapter Six, the photographic preferences of some ethnologists instead became rather eclectic. Even if initially clearly defined, they often relied on the photographs provided by others (cf. Griffiths 2002:111). Within the "visual economy" connecting these three groups (Poole 1997), the same photographs eventually circulated promiscuously and were appropriated widely (cf. Edwards 2009, Zimmerman 2001, also see Chapter Six). In order to understand Mariannhill's photographs, we therefore have to study all three photographic practices and discourses in conjunction, especially regarding the parallel development of photography, physical anthropology, and ethnology (cf. Pinney 1992).

In all three cases the photographic focus shifted between bodies, environments, objects, and combinations in relation to how material culture was used in supposedly customary routines or environments. Along the line, practitioners within the three overlapping discourses cooperated and benefited from each other's achievements. Anthropologists, ethnologists, as well as colonial administrators utilised the established intimacy, infrastructures, and the logistic networks of missionaries to approach their subjects (Chapters Four and Seven). Missionaries inserted themselves into already established popular and scientific discourses, and also extracted tropes to make their arguments towards their allies. Photography as an industry benefited from the established needs and developments through travellers' experiences and experiments with photographic chemicals and technologies. Missionaries, ethnologists and anthropologists produced photographs in the tropics under extreme climatic conditions, and some reported back, for example via photographic journals.

As we will see throughout this study, in particular Mariannhill's photographer Br. Aegidius Müller was actively involved in all of these conversations. Immediately after taking over the photographic studio in late 1897, he started advertising his photographs with European ethnologists and anthropologists. In 1900, for example, he also addressed fellow photographers in the tropics through the journal *Photographische Chronik*, asking them to attend to a problem he had with chemical developers. In return he offered "interesting things and facts worth knowing" from Natal (Müller 1900). At the same time, Müller engaged in a side project, by publishing his "artistic" photographs in both South African and German journals.

“*Südafrikanisches Rassengemisch*”: Objectivity and the Subjectivity of Race



Figure 11: collage by the author, showing all 13 photographs illustrating Müller’s article in their order of appearance (Müller 1909); some have been resized to fit the frame.

Early on, the editors of Mariannhill's periodicals made explicit claims to the "truth" and "objectivity" of their occasional reports on the mission's spiritual and material development ["*Rechenschaftsberichte*"]. "Race" was one encompassing framework against which the missionaries had to objectify the mindset and nature of their subjects. Often, they formulated their claims for the truth of their reports as replies to criticism by readers and benefactors, who had complained about the style of writing, the lack of entertainment, and the lack of information how money had been spent. In an appendix to the *Mariannhill-Kalender* of 1891, the editor explained that

> […] the Mariannhill Kalender will strictly remain with the truth and will neither be deceived, nor deceive its dear readers: it only reports on the things which are self-seen, self-heard and self-experienced. […] Everything that relates to mission work in the whole of Natal, the neighbouring areas, as well as the areas of South Africa further away, and of which we believe that it is trustworthy and certain, eventually is fitting material for the Mariannhiller Kalender and will concern us, as far as there is space.—Easily we could paint people according to our fantasy (and would not lack the natural inclination), describe Africa's tropical life like a novel and place it in the realm of fairy tales. But by doing so, neither god, the mission, nor the truth would be served; we are here as the *ambassadors of truth,* placed right in between the two [god and mission subjects], and both of them would see right through any lack of love for truth. (Anon. 1891:149)

As proof for the attention paid to the truth by the mission's converts, the editor remarked in a footnote that two Black boys, who worked at the printshop, had criticised one report as untrue. In the light of such corrections, the missionaries were not at all in a position to print any exaggerations, so the editor, as this would destroy the Trappists' morality in the eyes of their converts. Several more editorials of the *Mariannhiller Kalender* discussed the conundrum to present only "sheer objectivity [*reinste Objektivität*]" (eg. 1894).

In 1909, the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller still made sure to present his work as "objective" representation. However, the fact that it involved performance, staging, and retouching is not in contradiction to this claim. Once we compare the archival stock of annotated prints to their negatives, we realise the exact repetition of scenes and poses, and at times even the repeated attempt to re-create the very same image during the same photographic occasion. I hope to show that the posing of scenes and the manipulation of photographs was well accepted in the contemporary photographic common sense, and could therefore be considered, if not as "objective", nevertheless as "typical". Müller took many photographs for the purpose of propaganda in the periodicals, which therefore have to be considered within this context. It will be a central question in this chapter how an epistemological analysis of photographs complicates a historical analysis of claims to "truth". As the process of conversion from the perspective of the missionaries inherently involved questions about what defines Selves and Others, the contemporary South African discourse on "race" became an influential factor (cf. Ashforth 1990). Others have dealt with the constitution of segregation in South Africa, and Natal, in particular before the 1920s. Against the backdrop provided by these authors, I now focus on the ambivalences in the process of objectifying race in Mariannhill's photographs.

Towards the end of his career, Müller wrote an article in the *Vergißmeinnicht* of 1909,

titled "*Südafrikanisches Rassengemisch* [A South African Mixture of Races]". Here he presented an almost encyclopaedic view on the heterogeneity, not only of South Africans at large, but in particular of their photographic appearances. Encyclopaedias of human races were a common genre at the time, and also well-known to Müller (cf. Chapter Six). Furthermore, there was a difference between the reports before and after the *Vergißmeinnicht* received illustrations from 1907 onward: Müller now directly referred to his photographs, integrated them into his story, not merely as illustrations, but as an essential part of storytelling. This also distinguished Müller's use of photographs from other contemporary mission propaganda (cf. Rippe 2018). As author of both text and photographs he could combine them most efficiently. Nevertheless, in the following example, like in many of his articles and letters, he spoke of himself in the third person:[83]

> From the great sample card [*Musterkarte*] for facial types of the various countries and races, we could here only present a small selection. Our photographer, who made the images presented here, would be able to show to our readers many more interesting types, because human beings of the most varied differences in standing, rank, race and religion have to leave their likenesses [*Konterfei*][84] with his camera in colourful succession. Today he takes photographs of several bishops in full attire, tomorrow of a Protestant minister with his bride in full ornament. In the morning a gay wedding party is the aim of his "snapshot" [Engl. in original]; in the afternoon a pious broken monk, who only has a few steps towards the grave, and whose old, far-away mother longs once more for an image of her child. The man with the semitic nose is followed by the Muslim with a fez, the Hottentot by a missionary, the viceroy [*Vizekönig*] of South Africa by a poor Indian family. The very same lens, which eternalises a prince of royal blood next to his entourage, performs the same work 24 hours later on an old and wrinkled heathen diviner. The photographic lens does not know difference, even less so than the undertaker; the lens is really democratic and truthful [*wahr*] to the extent of being rude, as it sketches [*zeichnet*] everyone, without exception, as he really is. To the one it leaves the crooked nose, to the other the lopsided mouth, to the third his chagrin, and to the fourth her beauty wart. And just like the undertaker, the lens may surprise one or another in a situation in which he no longer wants to find himself at a later point. Therefore, also today's images represent the named races true to nature [*naturgetreu*].[85] (Müller 1909:176-177)

It is the photographs' relation to the main text and their captions that frame and classify the subjects. Eventually, this relation presents the classifications as objective identities. In previous parts of his article, Müller had distinguished the inhabitants of South Africa as "Zulus, Basutos, Hottentots, Fingoes, Betshuans, Bushmen, and the various Kafir-tribes, such as the Tembu Kafirs, who often divert immensely from the pure Zulus". He then went on to enumerate the English, Dutch and Indians, Germans and French, Griqua, Portuguese, Swedes and Norwegians, Malays, Russian Jews, and Chinese, who all constitute social strata in South Africa: "From all these races, black, yellow and white, thus evolve mixed races". Müller not only claimed this diversity in his text, but he also demonstrated it with the help of his own photographs (Figures 11 and 12).

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[83] Even though the author is not identified by name, according to the particular knowledge presented, it must have been Br. Aegidius Müller. I address the question of authorship in the next section.

[84] The antiquated German term "*Konterfei*" is derived from the Latin "*contra-facere* [*nach-bilden*], which can be translated with "to imitate" (cf. Kluge 1963). The term is not yet present in the dictionary's versions of 1899 and 1905.

[85] My own translation from the German original.

As Müller saw "mixed races" not only as the inevitable future of South Africa, but already as a reality, he announced that also Mariannhill had kept a keen eye on their conversion to Catholicism. He added polemically that this mixed race will certainly evolve, despite "the blustering and whining by members of the white master race [*Herrenmenschen*], who frown upon miscegenation [*Rassenmischung*] in the newspapers" (Müller 1909:174). One year before the South African Union, the urban centres of Natal were predominantly British. By using the term "master race", Müller probably referred to Whites at large, even though some representatives of British and Boers at the time considered each other as races apart.

The identities, which Müller applied to photographs showing Black Africans, may not have always matched the actual historical self-identifications of the depicted subject. It is crucial to observe that "racial" ideas were not only perpetuated through photographic practice and representation, but they also determined who had access to the means of photographic productions in the first place, and under which circumstances. Some of the people appearing in front of Müller's camera actively sought out his services, some merely tolerated his curiosity, while yet others even tried to avoid it. Nevertheless, all of them must be considered active protagonists within the changing social system around 1900, parts of which are today merely accessible to us through photographs. In photographs, however, people's contemporary racial identities remain ambivalent. It is therefore necessary to introduce the inherent uncertainties regarding the concept of "race" at the time, and the resulting need White society saw in distinguishing and defining people within the contemporary colonial common sense.

The "Natal Native Code", first issued in 1891, stated: "The word 'Native' shall be deemed to mean, and to include, any member of the aboriginal races or tribes of Africa south of the Equator" (Mitchell 1893:5). As a juridical term, "Native" did thus not by definition exclude people of "mixed" descent, as referred to by Müller. This categorisation was therefore explicitly reconsidered to include "mixed people" between 1904 and 1911, in order to maximise "native" tax revenue. Further developments, however, firmly established three categorisations (Posel 2001:90). These ranged on a spectrum from "Native" or "Black", over "Coloured", to "White". According to the contemporary racist discourse, people falling under these categories differed not only in their biological setup and physical appearance, but regarding "civilisation", education, and training. Accordingly they lacked sufficient skills for both intellectual and manual work. As a result, there was a perceived difference in the racist discourse regarding "native" skills in relation to the execution of most crafts and arts, including photography. Just after 1900, many commenters on race relations mentioned the Trappists of Mariannhill in their capacity to educate "the Native" through both their schools and training facilities. The full extent of Mariannhill's involvement in the "native question" still has to be explored, and is beyond the scope of this study (but see Gütl 2005). We will nevertheless return to the question of photographic training in the next two sections on authorship.

Increasingly after 1900, "mixed races" became part of the general administrative problem, usually referred to as the "native question" or the "native problem" in South Africa.

According to Legassick "[t]he dynamics of the situation were created by such factors as comparative rates of racial population increase, the degree and character of miscegenation and the extent and character of the workrole distribution in industry (by skills and race)" (1995:50-51). This contemporary discourse on how (or how not) to integrate the growing population of Africans into society, politics, and the economy, did bear resemblance to the contemporary discourse on the "social question" in Europe. Both were concerned with the alleged lack and even the degeneration of "morals", "civilisation", and genetic material in terms of "eugenics". Therefore both discourses supplied opportunities for religious missions to compare social issues in the lands of their activities to those "at home" when addressing their benefactor audiences in their periodicals (cf. Habermas 2011). Especially Mariannhill's first Abbot, Franz Pfanner, was highly concerned with both discourses and published on the comparison throughout his time in South Africa (Pfanner 1890, 1894; also see Denis 2015; Gütl 2005). In Chapter Two I discuss in more detail how Mariannhill's photographers articulated this particular discourse through photographs.

Both the Cape and Natal governments undertook several inquiries just after 1900 to determine inter-racial relationships and practical solutions to the "native question". Many missionaries, including the former Mariannhill priest A.T. Bryant, Mariannhill's missionaries Fr. Bruno Schrimpf and Fr. Theoderich (Langa) Sonnen[86] (cf. Brain 1982:254), as well as Abbot Gerard Wolpert were called upon for their expertise on the "Natives". The results of these inquiries were published as *The Natives of South Africa* (The South African Native Races Committee 1901), the *Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-1905* (The South African Native Affairs Commission 1905) and the *Natal. Report of the Native Affairs Commission, 1906-7* (The Natal Native Affairs Commission 1908).[87] As an update to the 1901 evaluation, *The Natives of South Africa: Their Economic and Social Condition* was published just one year before Müller's article. It critically reevaluated inscriptions of "race" since the late 19th century by stating that it had been up to repeated court cases to (re-)define the legal status of children from parents of different and mixed race groups (The South African Native Races Committee 1908:126-128). These evaluations circled around matters regarding economic power and its dependence on skin colour, by addressing issues such as "land, labour, political differentiation, and urban control" (Maylam 2001:147). While Africans were supposed to be brought into the fold as a working force, they were at the same time not supposed to become too similar and indistinguishable from Europeans, as to endanger the clear segregation in this power relation. In this way "miscegenation" was not only framed in moral terms, but also related to juridical questions of descent. The time period between the Second Boer War of 1899-1902 and the beginning of the Apartheid regime in 1948, is therefore often referred to as the "segregation era" (ibid.:143, Dubow 1989, Legassick 1995).

[86] Schrimpf was American by birth and Sonnen a studied Zulu linguist (see below). Apparently they had been chosen as informants due to their language competence.

[87] These reports consisted of various volumes: the reports as such, as well as collections of "evidence" in the form of transcribed interviews with Black and White informants.

The expression of an anxiety within the colonial discourse that the colonised became too similar, is often referred to as "mimicry", as introduced by Homi Bhabha (1984). This was the European fear of Africans mimicking Europeans in terms of dress, manners, consumption patterns, and other forms of expression. Colonial society often considered social imitation as a potential precondition for "miscegenation". The White society of Natal expressed this anxiety about inter-racial intercourse and reproduction partially through constructing Black males as sexually aggressive against White women during the so-called "rape scares" of the late 19th century. This anxiety flared up once more in South African media just before the time Br. Aegidius Müller wrote his article (Maylam 2001:170). Relationships between Black men and White women thus stirred much greater public anxiety (ibid.:170-171), even if they were not yet explicitly prohibited by law.[88] The "blustering and whining", described by Müller, furthermore resulted from the fear of resurfacing Black aggression after the so-called Bambatha Rebellion in Natal between 1906 and 1907.

"Racial" fear, however, worked in more than one direction, in so far that also Europeans would socially "imitate" Africans by "going native", as it were. Like the sexual availability of White women to Blacks was seen as lessening White authority, also White male promiscuity was considered a detriment. In the discourse on the German colonies, for example, this phenomenon was referred to as "*Verkaffern*"[89] (Axster 2005). The prime example for colonial Natal is the Scottish John Dunn, who had been fully integrated as a White chief into the regime of Zulu King Cetshwayo, and thus became the progenitor of the extensive Dunn family of Euro-African descent. In particular the photographic performances by Whites depicting such "transgressions" could become problematic. Even if they only mimicked "Blackness", due to their potential to circulate, such photographs could have a powerful social impact (cf. Chapters Four and Seven).

Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre indeed contains evidence that "mixed" families had their photographs taken at the Mariannhill Studio at about the same time as Müller's article was published in 1909. Even though they are rare, the remaining oeuvre contains photographs of White men with their Black women and children (Figure 12), and of Indian men in intimate contact with White women, such as poses which are commonly reserved to married couples or lovers in the contemporary photographic canon. In his article, Müller even promoted the idea that some White small-scale farmers in Natal practically had no other choice than taking a Black woman as a spouse. According to Müller, Black women were much "sturdier" and thus more resistant to the hardships of South African farm life than their British contemporaries (1909:174).

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[88] The 1903 Criminal Law Amendment Act has been repeatedly interpreted in recent literature as if it generally prohibited sexual intercourse between White women and Black or Coloured men (eg. Ramsay 1992, Gütl 2005). However, the act only mentioned *illicit* sexual intercourse between White women and Coloured people, in particular within the context of prostitution. It does therefore not explicitly include sexual relationships in wedlock, even though relations between White women and Coloured men may have been very rare anyway (also see Morrell 2001:262).

[89] A German Mariannhill Missionary once explained the phenomenon to me as "*Verbuschen*" (lit.: spending too much time in "the bush"), which was perceived as a problem for every missionary spending prolonged periods at remote mission stations. This not only had sexual connotations, but also a general degrading in morals.

According to Morrell (2001:260) informants for the above-mentioned commission report voiced such concern about forms of miscegenation increasingly by 1906-7. Morrell explains that there existed a White concern in the Natal Midlands about cross-racial inheritance of property through miscegenation at the time (ibid.:263).

Müller nevertheless tried to support his argument by pointing to the first and second photograph of his article as evidence: showing such "sturdy" women, he praised both their physical constitution and their performance at work (cf. Figure 11). Figure 12 is not included in Müller's article, but shows such a "mixed" couple with their six children sitting for their portrait at the Mariannhill Studio. As the eldest daughter and her mother consciously displayed rosaries during the photographic occasion, they were likely members of the Catholic parish. Apparently, Müller's studio was sufficiently liberal to constitute an intermediary space between public, as well as private performances. In this space "mixed" families indeed perceived of themselves as socially respectable and therefore as photographically representable.



Figure 12: a family in the Mariannhill studio, approx. 1905 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

Unlike the affiliate Br. Aegidius Müller, Mariannhill's priests and lay brothers were celibate. In so far, they were not officially engaged with the questions and results of economic inheritance in terms of (biological) descent regarding their own land and enterprises, like other Natal colonists. As a result they may have been in a better position to perceive the situation through the eyes of their subjects. This may also explain Müller's rather amused perspective on the anxious public discourse on "race". However, the editors of the above mentioned *The Natives of South Africa* also pointed out the Trappist's inclination not to involve Africans in any ecclesiastical matters, while their Protestant colleagues even trained Africans as ministers (1908:215). This may be regarded as a similar discourse of descent and inheritance, if only in an institutional sense. Mariannhill in fact had sent four of their pupils to Rome already during the 1890s. The four priests eventually did not become members of the Reformed Cistercians (Trappists), but worked under the Bishop of Durban as so-called "diocesan" or "secular" priests. Due to struggles over matters of authority, the attempt was discontinued after 1900, and only taken up again several decades later (Brain 1982:253, Mukuka 2005).

A liberal view on the discourse of "miscegenation" at Mariannhill did thus effectively not mean a total inclusion of Africans in every respect. We do not know enough yet about the opinions of individual Mariannhill Missionaries—leading and writing individuals in particular—and their opinions on various political questions on race over time.[90] At least on a political frontstage, Mariannhill diplomatically adjusted to the colonial racial common sense. Even if the coeducation of Black and White children was intended in the beginning, it never became common practice at Mariannhill and its stations, due to external critique by White commentators (Gütl 2005:313). Mariannhill's photographic record of school children nevertheless still shows exceptions after 1900. Furthermore, the monastery diplomatically adjusted to the colonial common sense by hosting segregationist politicians with great respect; for example, the British High Commissioner to South Africa, the Earl of Selborne in 1908 (cf. Maylam 2001:144, Chapter Three), and Charles T. Loram during the 1920s (Chapter Seven), at both Mariannhill Monastery and Centocow Mission respectively. Like Mariannhill's general involvement in education and the economy, the wide-ranging relationships to many well-known architects of segregation are still in need of more research.

We realise that "race" had a highly ambivalent status. Also terms like "native" had a socially defined juridical dimension (cf. Legassick 1995), as well as one in daily social practice (cf. Dubow 1995), which were not necessarily identical. As Bowker and Star (1999), Posel (2001), and M'charek (2013) have shown, "race" is indeed a product of common sense fictions, constituted through the social practice of objectifying biological and visual "facts". In the contemporary public discourse, and in Müller's article in particular, "race" was presented as a visual fact that could be observed and therefore be hardly disputed. Once we look at the photographs from a considerable spatial and temporal distance, they are far from "racially"

[90] But see Denis (2015) for a first attempt at analysing Pfanner's opinions in this regard.

distinct, as there hardly ever was a definite standard or bottomline for either "Black" or "White".[91] A close analysis of photographs in conjunction with other sources thus allows for a destabilisation and reconsideration of "racial" ideas, if we consider photography among the social practices regarding race, as indicated by Dubow (1995). The resemblance to, and the deviation from imagined racial ideals was therefore always open to contestation and thus social anxiety. In the case of Müller's article, the photographs only *appear* and *work* as racial types through a textual explanation.

In the article's 13 portraits, Müller analysed several of the 27 sitters according to their "racial composition", and the resulting qualities of character (cf. Figure 11). Almost every sitter looks directly at the camera. All appear to be relatively comfortable, and six of the 27 depicted individuals even smile. Three portraits had been taken during the early 1890s by one of Müller's predecessors, and are either in profile, or, even more often three-quarter portraits.[92] These were two conventional formats, which Müller himself no longer employed after 1900. Instead, he favoured full-body *en face* portraits (cf. Chapter Six). The photographers at Mariannhill handled various photographic conventional portrait styles over the years, of which I will explore several more throughout this chapter.

[91] But see Bowker and Star (1999) and M'charek (2013) for the introduction of artificial standards during Apartheid.

[92] "Three-quarter" denoted an angle of the face half-way between "*en face*" (frontal), and "profile".



Figure 13: digitally inverted glass plate negative of image 3 in Figure 12. Original caption in article: "*Nr. 3 Mischrassen (Siehe Text)*"—"Nr. 3 Mixed races (see text)" (CMM Archives, published in Müller 1909:175).

In one group portrait (Figure 13) Müller identified from left to right a "Zulu-Dutch girl of the rough type", a "15-year old Zulu-French girl of impulsive sanguine temperament", a "Zulu girl of pure race" and a "girl with the soft and melancholic traits of the Zulu-Indian race". The fact that Müller had already inscribed very similar identifications as informal notes to himself on the photograph's glass plate negative, not only confirms his authorship of the article, but also the degree to which he considered this interpretation as a factual reality.[93] In the article he went on to identify the girls in the same order as "representatives of the phlegmatic, sanguine, and melancholic temperaments". For the girl of the "pure Zulu race" (Figure 13, lower right), so he wrote, one would have to invent a new temperament, for which he suggested "thick-skinned", because "it is so difficult to teach them reason". Müller eventually omitted the "choleric", the last of the "four temperaments". This pseudo-scientific framework for interpreting the physiognomy of human faces in terms of their "character" was still as popular at the time in order to judge personality, as it had been when Prior Franz Pfanner used it to classify desired novices in 1874 for his foundation in Bosnia, and in 1886 for Mariannhill: he appreciated phlegmatic and choleric people, was suspicious of the sanguine type, and refused melancholic candidates.[94] This convention of analysing "appearances" in order to deduce "character" was also common in contemporary photographic instructions, as I shall explain below. In the particular publication on the practice of retouching photographs that was at the disposal of Müller (see Arnold 1892), the author treated the framework of physiognomy as an ideal way according to which photographers should manipulate sitters' photographic appearances in order to achieve a balance between a social ideal on the one hand, and the "resemblance" to the sitter's own ideal of appearance on the other.[95]

Müller thus applied popular and allegedly scientific ideas to his photographs. Instead of clear visual indicators, he based his interpretation on his personal knowledge regarding the particular "racial mixtures" supposedly displayed in the photograph. Like so many other experts working in "native affairs" before and during Apartheid, he engaged in the ambivalent and risky business of defining "races". Based on his definitions of individuals in photographs, he furthermore attempted to evoke humorist aspects for European benefactor audiences, supposedly emerging from the knowledge created within the particular relationship between missionaries

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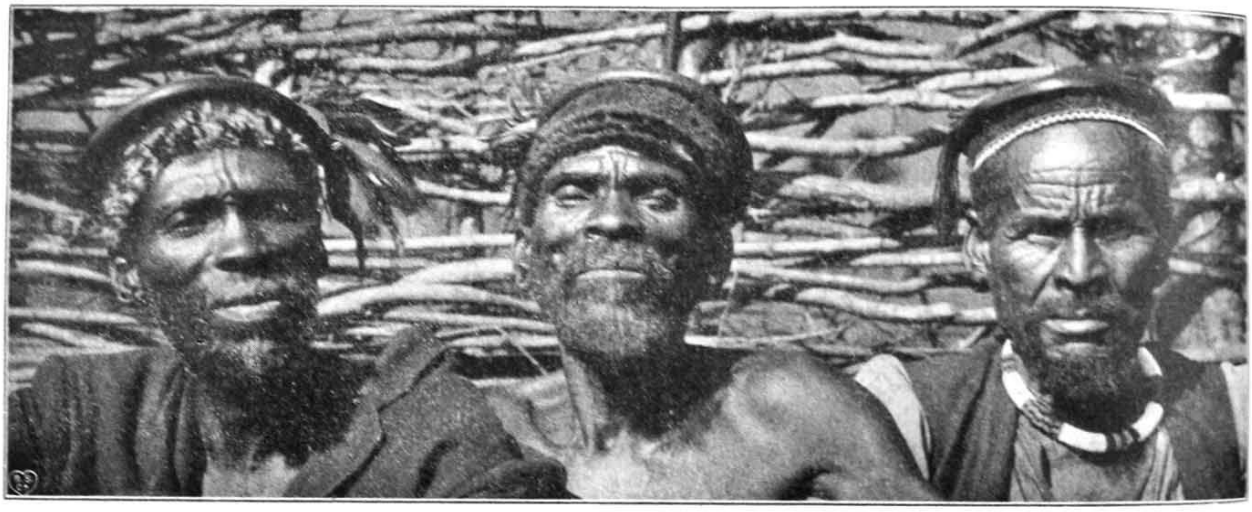
[93] The inscription on the negative reads: *"(1.) Indisch (Kuli) Germanish [sic], (2.) reine Zulurasse, (3.) Zulu französ. Rasse, (4.) Germanish [sic] Zulu Rasse*" [accordingly, this caption has to be applied to the positive image in reverse order].

[94] Pfanner (1874), *Die Klostergeschichte von Maria Stern*, cited in Gütl (2005:118); also see Pfanner (1886).

[95] In the 18th century, scientific writers such as Carl von Linné and Johann Lavater conceived of the "four temperaments" as scientific categories. Von Linné even applied the four temperaments to classify the various traits of "races" worldwide (cf. Pratt 2008:32, Said 2003:119). Still in the 1880s, Theodor Piderit presented them as a convenient way to codify alleged sentiments through portraits. For the missionaries it was even more convenient to read them into the depictions, so to evoke them with benefactor audiences in Europe. By 1908, the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* still upheld the classificatory value of the four temperaments as a hereditary fact (Maher 1908:585). Physiognomic determination was thus not only a strategy of scientific racial anthropology (Chapter Six), but equally part of popular and religious discourses (cf. Poole 1997:110). With particular reference to Von Linné's work and theories of race, the German anthropologist and ethnologist Felix von Luschan eventually denounced this interpretative framework as a "pointless game, with only historical value" (Von Luschan 1922:2).

and their subjects. Some of these same photographs, which had originally been produced and selected for purposes of propaganda, later-on became scientific objects for European anthropologists and ethnologists (Chapter Six).

In his article, Müller considered every individual dressed in a non-western way as a "heathen type". Figure 14, for example, is described as follows: "Picture Nr. 10, a cunning shamrock! The three councillors or ministers of the heathen chief who lives close to Mariannhill are still alive. We certainly do not need to assure you that all three men are cunning rascals. A rogue hides underneath every wrinkle" (Müller 1909:176). This jovial and humorous tone of writing is characteristic for the first decades of Mariannhill's periodicals, and indicates that the texts in combination with the photographs indeed intended to entertain. At the same time, they nevertheless claimed to inform and even to educate the reader. This ambivalent form of humour will be of concern throughout the following chapters. Müller further authenticated his photographs through the subtle presentation of suggestively intimate and expert knowledge on the subjects (Figures 13 and 14): he pointed out their social positions, he knew whether they were dead or alive, and he penetrated their overall character. Rarely he identified common people by name in publications, even if he occasionally registered their names on glass plate negatives, or in the albums he kept at the studio. The three old men for example were indeed *izinduna* (advisors) of the nearby *Inkhosi* (chief) Lokothwayo, as Müller indicated with other prints of the same image in albums.



Nr. 10. Drei Geheimräte des Häuptlings. — Ein geriebenes Kleeblatt.

Figure 14: original caption: "*Nr. 10. Drei Geheimräte des Häuptlings—Ein geriebenes Kleeblatt*"—"The chief's privy council of three—a cunning shamrock" (as published in Müller 1909:180).

Despite Müller's carefree interpretations of photographs through physiognomic frameworks, the presentation of his photographs as "truthful" and "objective" was still at the very heart of his

approach. In the text quoted above, he claimed his work as an objective depiction of his sitters' physical appearance. He further stated that such a "truthful" photographic representation may at times divert from the sitter's own self-image. It may differ from what they wanted, or indeed did *not* want to present as their own appearance: beauty, ugliness, and eventually "character", as defined by the four physiognomic types. These were eventually concerns about aesthetics, which defined the abstract notion of "character" through physical traits. Müller's idea of objectivity does not refer to unposed recordings of "everyday life", or "snapshots", as he himself claimed. A snapshot with a short exposure time differs in so far that the subject is potentially unaware of the camera. In the above quote Müller's idea of objectivity instead presented the lens as having its own agency, without being in need of himself as photographer to produce truthful images. Still, *through* the lens he presented himself as an indiscriminate observer of the entire social landscape around him. To understand photographic practice at Mariannhill within the contemporary photographic discourse, we need to establish the modalities of conventional contemporary claims to objectivity and truth (cf. Daston and Galison 2007). Müller's photographic practice and his writing about it must be scrutinised thoroughly, as it was not established within the rules of reference of a scientific community. Instead, it relied on strategies of contemporary popular media, mission propaganda, and as I shall explicate in this chapter, on the contemporary European artistic discourse on photographic aesthetics.

We have to consider whom Müller photographed, and whom he attempted to address with these photographs; or to phrase it with M'charek (2013), how "race" became a "relational object" in the form of photographs. Even if all sitters in the above photographs appear as "Blacks", "Africans", or "Natives", the historical individuals may have thought of themselves differently. There was not only an established and highly subjective discourse on racial identity centred on South Africa, but likewise a worldwide discourse on photographic personal identity. Due to the involved subjective "objectivities", I use the capitalised terms "White", as well as "Black" or "African" only as historical approximations, which do not necessarily coincide with the self-identification of the respective historical individuals, or the social identifications applied to them by others.

According to the social relationship between sitter and photographer, Müller would also have dealt with and presented them differently: the members of the Catholic family were commercial customers paying for a service (Figure 12), the four girls were most likely subjects of the mission living in Mariannhill's so-called "*Marienhaus*"[96] with certain obligations (Figure 13), while the three *izinduna* of Chief Lokothwayo were probably neither spiritually nor materially dependent on the mission (Figure 14). In the first case, Müller had to adjust to his customers' wishes, for example by committing to certain poses, or through the retouching of facial features. Retouching can in fact be followed through the traces and discolourations left on many of the glass plate negatives. Müller would furthermore not have been able to freely publish

[96] Like the "*Josephshaus*" for boys, the "*Marienhaus*" provided accommodation and training for girls, in order to prepare them for becoming Catholic wives and mothers (Gütl 2005:310).

and comment on the photographs of commercial customers. As subjects to the mission, the four girls may have considered the use of their image in the mission's periodical as a contribution to the propaganda effort, or simply did not dare to criticise this form of use. As the three men were most likely illiterate, like many of their age-mates (cf. Chapter Four), it was unlikely that they actively followed either the ensuing circulation of their photograph, or Müller's interpretations of it.

Photographic Authorship and Self-Fashioning at Mariannhill

While this may be said for most mission propaganda efforts, Mariannhill in particular was entangled in the discourses of various other interest groups employing photographs. A brief analysis of this situation at the outset is necessary to establish how Mariannhill's photographers presented the mission by establishing particular views on themselves and their subjects. They did this through performative movements of inclusion and exclusion in photographs, thereby establishing Selves and Others. In the last decades of the 19th century, the three projects of commercial studio photography, Christian mission, as well as museum-based anthropology and ethnology developed ideas on the practice of photographic self-fashioning, and thus by implication the fashioning of Others.

All three projects produced discourses within Western society that were driven by institutionalised fora, societies, their journals, and other forms of publications. At the same time, these projects interacted with the project of colonialism. Just like Christian mission, ethnology and anthropology, also photography must be considered as naturally embedded in institutionalised social practices of peer groups, lobbies, and fora, which worked for a common interest. At the turn of the 19th century, many commercial studio photographers were members of photographic societies. Together with the editors and readerships of photographic journals, they worked towards distinguishing themselves as artists, and their products as an independent art form. One of the reasons was for example the goal to further the revision of copyright laws, once infringements started to endanger professional businesses increasingly.

The forms of reflexivity of photographers, ethnologists/anthropologists and missionaries had commonalities and differences regarding their use of the photographic medium. All three involved an imagined relationship between an observing subject and one or multiple photographic objects or subjects. The three related discourses tried to visually manifest differences and similarities in terms of either social hierarchy, race, or religion. Their use of photography, however, differed in terms of expression: professional urban photographers often staged themselves flamboyantly, in order to establish themselves as artists and thus to further business (Sagne 1998, Dewitz 2010). Anthropologists and ethnologists around 1900 rather avoided to involve themselves or their colleagues in the photographs they took. This would at least hold true for their published scientific work.[97] Missionaries instead had to include themselves in their photographs as agents, in order to present to their benefactors an active relationship with their subjects, which was beneficial to the conversion of the latter.

In their work on the (textual) author, both Barthes (1977 [1968]) and Foucault (1998b [1969]) questioned the idea that a written work has a concrete originator. Instead, they reconsidered the idea of an author's "oeuvre", on what discourses and circulations it is based,

[97] As examples one may think of German anthropologists and ethnologists, such as Gustav Fritsch, Wilhelm Joest, and Felix von Luschan, who visited South Africa during the 1860s, 1880s, and in 1905 respectively. To my knowledge, for all three cases no published photographic self-depictions remain.

and what the function of the "author" is within those. Implicitly following Barthes, Foucault further explored ideas on the excessive migration of images between painting and photography and related questions on authorship at the end of the 19th century (2002 [1975], also see Stiegler 2004). Like in the experience of intertextuality of both writer and reader described by Barthes, the production and reception of photographs depended on an experience of intermediality: in a form of co-production, photographers, their clients, and their audiences often rethought and reproduced preexisting images. The idea of the single author was thus questioned in the contemporary German discourse on the appropriation and even the plagiarism of images. It was only intentionally strengthened once more with the improvement of photographic copyrights shortly after 1900, when professional photographers actively reclaimed the economic rights to their own work. I shall briefly cover this discourse in this section further below.

Without referring to either Barthes or Foucault, Alfred Gell developed a similar approach by considering the oeuvre of an artist as an object, which is distributed in space and time (1998:232). As there were multiple authors at work at Mariannhill, who nevertheless all tried to represent the phenomenon of the mission encounter as "part of a single coherent project" (ibid.:245), the *collection* of multiple oeuvres may be thought of as a "distributed object" (cf. Introduction to this study). In the case of Mariannhill it will not be possible to turn the authors "inside-out", as Gell suggests, by showing the interconnectedness of all the material traces they produced (ibid.:222). Nevertheless, by at least trying to reassemble and reconstruct from these traces the "authors" of particular photographs to the greatest extent possible (cf. Foucault 1998:213, Latour 2005), we will learn more about the production process of images throughout all chapters. Repeatedly, I will return to the question of what role the ascription, as well as the denial of artistic authorship (for both Black and White social actors) plays in the concrete historical discourses around image production at Mariannhill Monastery and Centocow Mission.

According to these ideas, the filed, annotated, handled and previously published photographic object in the mission's archive cannot be attributed to one single author. It is never entirely clear who conceived of a photograph's *mise en scène*, as the pose is necessarily a negotiation between photographer and his models. Also other actions may have been carried out by different people, independently or in cooperation: the release of the shutter and thus the exposure on the glass plate negative; the chemical development and fixation of the plate and print; the annotations on the glass plate; the writing of an article using the photograph in the mission's periodical, and the application of a caption; and eventually, yet another person may have annotated, filed and categorised the original prints, which are today scattered over several of the mission's archives. If all these actions are carried out by different people, all involved individuals are necessarily "producers" or "creators" of the photographic object, even if they are not attributed with the role of "author" or "artist". In the case of photographs from a distant past, neither the photographer nor the sitter are still alive. Unless either one of them has left behind some kind of testimony, we can therefore no longer reconstruct their interactions and negotiations in relation to the resulting photographs (cf. Bigham 1999). As far as this is possible

for the case of Mariannhill, I discuss authorship in this chapter as it is addressed either in the textual discourse, or in the photographs themselves.



Figure 15: Br. Aegidius Müller in the photographic studio, approx. 1900 (CMM Archives).

This cabinet card shows the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller as a *savoir vivre* bohemian, comfortably seated in Mariannhill's photographic studio. He lounges in a wicker chair with his right leg draped over the armrest. Wearing a velvet smoking hat, decorated with a long, dark feather, he rests his right hand with a self-rolled cigarette on the raised knee, and draws a swagger or walking stick close to the torso with his left hand. A glass of—most likely—wine rests on an insect-eaten tree trunk, with the bottle next to it on the ground.

This could be a studio portrait as taken in most European towns during the 1890s, but at the same time it points towards a set of less conventional photographic tropes. The pose taken by Müller was certainly unusual for an associate of a Catholic monastery, but not so for the canon of European artistic photography. Self-portraits in eccentric fashion, often in "orientalist" style were not an unusual practise amongst urban artists, and often mimicked earlier travellers, such as the like of Richard F. Burton, Francis Frith, or any other explorer or tourist who ventured to the Middle East during the 19th century (cf. Billeter 1985, Dewitz 2010, Jooss 2010). A well-known series of Frith's self-portraits from the late 1850s bear a striking resemblance to Müller's pose.[98] Dressed in oriental style and photographed in a similar fashion, even the monastery's founder Abbot Franz Pfanner may have served as model for Müller's portrait (Figure 155). We will hear more about Pfanner's own experiences in "the orient" in the last chapter.

David Bate described this kind of portraiture as one of two dominating models within a "colonial vision" of "men mimicking the orient", directed from and towards the colonial self: "the 'warrior'—those images of men who are armed and dressed in signs of warfare; and the 'despot'—those figures whose despotic power is signified through their body-image, the casual 'slothful' pose" (1993:90). Bate's "provisional division" may also work as a division-in-progress for our South African case, as will become clearer with two more examples in Chapters Seven and Eight, even combining various of such visual tropes. Although it may not have been Müller's intention to imitate an "oriental despot", his performance must nevertheless be considered within a *tradition* of this discourse. In the second half of the 19th century, audiences may have considered this photographic performance of orientalist colonial fantasy as practice, but would not yet have used the term "orientalist" to describe it, as the term merely stood for the academic study of the East at the time. It was only established as a postcolonial metadiscourse, and a critique of how those colonial fantasies came about, with the work of Edward Said (1978). As a distinct feature, the photographic backdrop displays a clear reference to stereotypic imaginations of the South African landscape: situated next to a country road, we can see a beehive-shaped hut with smoke curling towards the sky, as it is usually attributed to the "Zulu".

The practice of White sitters dressing up and posing in such an explicit way is only apparent in a few other photographs of the collection (cf. Chapters Five, Seven and Eight). Like the one under consideration, many photographs were never published. Contemporary intentions therefore remain unclear. The photographs nevertheless show a degree of playfulness and private

[98] For more on the orientalist portraits of Frith in a "turkish summer costume" see Bate (1993:87) and Nickel (2004:148-153).

enjoyment in experimentation with the medium. I argue that playfulness also underlies many other photographs I introduce in the course of this chapter. Müller's portrait eventually places him in between the various spaces, which he traversed: on the one hand, the interior of his South African studio, where he routinely recreated and imagined the world exterior to the monastery and the mission stations; on the other hand, the imagined spaces common to European aesthetic conventions, reaching as far as the orient. Close-by and far-away spaces were folded into a world of imaginative "backdrops" (cf. Appadurai 1997, Chapter Four).

As the photograph is glued on a carton embossed with the label of the "Mariannhill Studio", Müller's pose may have been intended as an example for customers; but no similar images can be found in the remaining collection. It could also have been a gift for Müller's family in Germany. In the latter case, the medium would have travelled between South Africa and Europe physically, while at the same time this movement was performed in the image itself. Müller created an image of South Africa for Europe by merging visual tropes he and his audiences were already familiar with. His pose was derived from Europe's experience *with* (but not necessarily *in*) the exotic "orient". This photograph in particular shows the extent to which Müller was capable of creating a world of and for the imagination: he emulated (or africanised) a European visual trope (literally) in front of a South African backdrop.

In and through the photograph under discussion, Müller distanced himself in every way possible from the ideals of the Trappist community; ideals which he otherwise used to represent and promote through his photographs. The photographic performance of his own profane inclinations towards consumption therefore questions ideals and realities: according to the Trappist rule, alcohol with a low alcohol content (beer or cider, no wine) would only have been served in strict limitations during meals (Bonaventura 1887:57). The Trappists of Mariannhill instead replaced such drink with an unfermented kind of tamarind water, as they could not plant the ingredients for either beer or cider under the conditions given in Natal. Also tobacco was apparently prohibited for the monks at Mariannhill Monastery, at the most maybe tolerated (Gütl 2005:117, 204; but see Chapter Four).

According to what I explained so far, we can already draw some conclusions about photographic authorship. Self-portraiture in particular was a common practice at Mariannhill, and therefore helps to reflect on the idea of authorship. Scholars writing about photographic practices often assume that photographs of identified photographers are self-portraits. However, unless one of the following three circumstances occurs, the identity of the photographer remains unknown: either, we need to have been present during a photographic occasion; or we know through circumstantial evidence that the photograph has been taken with a self-release mechanism; or the photographer pointed the lens towards a mirror. Even in the case of a photograph of someone taking a photograph, there is always yet another "invisible" photographer (cf. Chapter Two). For the case of Mariannhill I try to evaluate alternative circumstances. At a high point during the early 1890s, Mariannhill had at least three photographers, of which at least two had been professionally trained in Germany. They were

simultaneously present at the monastery, and occasionally took photographs of each other. In the case of a few occasions, there are indications that even untrained members took photographs, if necessary.

An analysis of the self-perception and self-reference of Mariannhill's photographers is further complicated by the fact that the Trappist authorities intentionally subdued the identification of textual authorship after Abbot Pfanner's deposition in 1892. The visitation report of 1892 by the Abbot of Ölenberg, Franziskus Strunk, explicitly forbade authors of Mariannhill's press to sign their articles (Strunk 1892:17), a practice which was however watered down over the years to come. Strunk introduced this rule in order to control the monastery's editors, criticising that the periodicals had misrepresented the Trappist order at large. However, anonymity was also a general trend with the contemporary religious press (Altholz 1991).

With very few exceptions, also Mariannhill's photographers never signed their work. The multiplicity of potential authors involved in the photographic practice at Mariannhill therefore requires the discussion of their different personal and professional backgrounds in the next section. Such an analysis will allow us to better understand the resulting skills, aesthetic preferences, and therefore photography at Mariannhill as image, object, narrative, and practice. Professional photographic training at the time tried to improve the photographer's abilities to create and maintain social relationships with sitters. As I showed above, this included and nurtured the cultivation of a particular representative form of self-fashioning. This fact not only allows us to study a particular photographic practice, but also provides us with identifiable portraits of some of the photographers.[99]

Also the article I described in the previous section was not signed (Müller 1909). However, I believe that Müller was the only author who could have written with such intimacy and knowledge about the photographs and the people they depict. The transfer of information from the glass plate negative to the article shows this most explicitly (cf. Figure 13). Also the style of writing is similar to articles where Müller is the confirmed author. However, even before 1909, none of Mariannhill's photographers ever signed a photograph with his name in the image. If some origin is indicated, it is merely done through the name of the mission, "Mariannhill" or "M'hill", the place "*Südafrika*", as well the occasional indication of a date. These three coordinates were provided within the image space, as they constituted the minimum requirements for copyright protection since 1876 (Dommann 2006:355).

It was only Br. Aegidius Müller who established personal photographic authorship, and even added two more identities, other than his religious name. First, he inscribed his Zulu name "*Madwebula*" on multiple glass plate negatives showing himself, together with other annotations.[100] This signature, however, only appears on paper strips on the negative, never on the

[99] On the one hand, the shutter may have been released by an assistant. In this case the photograph would not be an "auto-portrait". On the other hand, there is the possibility that Müller operated the camera with a pneumatic self-release mechanism with either one of his feet, which are both just outside the frame (cf. Parzer-Mühlbacher 1905:100).

[100] Müller's spelling differs from written Zulu (*-twebula*) as it can be found in contemporary dictionaries. This

printed image. Being an antiquated Zulu word for "photographer" associated with "magical" practices, Müller employed this term as a private and likely ironic form of self-fashioning. When he instead engaged with the South African art world, he used his secular name "Joseph Müller" instead, as I will show in the next sections. In Chapter Six I discuss how he eventually was forced to actively claim authorship with German publishers, in order to prevent the repeated plagiarism of his photographs in Europe.

In his practice of self-fashioning as artist and author, Müller thus employed at least three identities, which evolved around the consumption- and production patterns within his practice as photographer. Depending on whom he thought to address, he either used his secular identity "Joseph Müller", his religious identity "Br. Aegidius", or his Zulu identity "*Madwebula*". These identities emerged within his reactions to particular discourses: artistic photography, catholic aesthetics, metaphysical ascriptions, the reactions to Catholicism in South Africa, tourism, juridical conundrums, as well as correspondence with ethnologists in Europe. The idea of the author in relation to photographs must therefore be considered as an identity which needed to be continually adjusted and propped up. Once we understand this as a process of entanglement (cf. Hodder 2016, Chapters Five and Seven), it will further our understanding of related claims to the authenticity of photographs.

In Chapters One to Six I establish Br. Aegidius Müller as the main camera operator and author, by showing that he controlled a considerable chain of media through various forms of social interaction, from the collection and description of objects, the taking of photographs, to the writing of texts, as well as the active distribution of these media through various circuits. At the same time, I argue that he must be considered as an avid consumer of these media from other sources, which he appropriated within his own work.

Many other photographs, made between approximately 1897 and 1915, show Müller reading books, riding horses, climbing mountains, exploring forests, hunting, smoking, drinking, and eventually in the process of taking photographs.[101] Even if Müller himself performed many roles for the camera, some of these images never appeared in the mission's periodicals. The fact that most of these photographs still appeared in the mission's official albums on display in the studio, makes it unlikely that they were made for strictly private purposes. Many photographs show himself or confreres in the process of reading, writing, photographing, and conversing or bartering for objects with Africans. The existence of these photographs indicates that Müller himself understood, appreciated, and consciously cultivated these engagements as conventional instances of processing, producing, but also of performing knowledge. In this chapter and the next, I explore similar image compositions, starting from the hypothesis that there was indeed a heightened awareness of photographic authorship and self-fashioning, as well as a need to perform for the mission's audiences.

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suggests that he heard the word from native speakers, rather than having looked it up in a dictionary (cf. Chapter Eight).

[101] More than 40 photographs of the listed activities still exist in the collection, some as prints, and some only in form of negatives.

As shall become evident in various instances throughout this study, next to all the other roles he performed for the camera—or maybe even exactly through these roles—Müller conceived of himself as an artist. Proponents of artistic photography explicitly suggested to their colleagues to become, and indeed perform as artists, through their entire "being and behaviour" (Miethe 1902:399). The identity as "artist" manifested photographic authorship and therefore the juridical right to one's own photographic work. Eventually, Müller presented himself as an artist, and was perceived as such by others. For example, in March 1901, after having visited Mariannhill Monastery for two days, the pioneering and thus well-known Natal dairy farmer and politician, Sir Joseph Baynes (1842-1925), praised Müller in a letter of gratitude to Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher:

> The photos I brought away have been greatly admired, so much so, that I feel quite sorry the opportunity did not favour having my own photo taken at your studio, by your very able artist; I am sure those photos remove any doubt as to whether photography is an "Art".[102]

This statement addresses the contemporary aesthetic and juridical conundrum of photography in two of its dimensions, and furthermore shows its immediate resonance within the South African colonial society: could the medium of photography indeed bring forth "art", and could accordingly the operator behind the camera be considered an "artist"? Once their work was acknowledged as "artistic", and as a result contained their agency, photographers were in a position to defend their work legally and thus economically in terms of copyright. The contemporary legal discourse will therefore serve as indicator for the intercontinental and cross-cultural importance attributed to the question of (artistic) authorship at the time. In the remainder of this section I will delineate the question of photographic authorship and self-fashioning at Mariannhill by considering it against the background of the legal discourse in Europe. As this chapter is concerned with the appropriation of contemporary photographic aesthetics at Mariannhill and related claims to truth, I now provide a general backdrop of how photographic aesthetics, legislation, and authorship developed in interdependence in the field of commercial studio photography. In Parts Two and Three we shall see that also mission, tourism, and ethnology were involved in the same visual economy.

Since the 1860s, the German-speaking law discourse struggled over whether or not to integrate photographs into the copyright legislation for artworks. The discussion evolved around the question whether photography was merely a "trade [*Handwerk*]" involving the autonomous process of mechanical imprinting ("mechanical objectivity"), or whether it was in fact an "art form", which certified the photographer as an artist, and therefore as author. In the first case, the photographer was considered as only a craftsman with little impact on the photographic result (Dommann 2006). The dominant opinion considered the process foremost as a mechanical imprinting, similar to how Müller described it above (1909), or what Gerhard Plume referred to as the "dead gaze [*der tote Blick*]" (1990). This opinion held that the agency was with the

[102] CMM-GR: Baynes to Streicher, 11.03.1901. For biographical data on Baynes see Leverton (1972).

camera, rather than its operator. In order to establish the same legal rights for their works as fine art painters, photographers had to actively claim the status of their work as "art" for each individual photograph (cf. Dommann 2006, Plumpe 1990, Kaufhold 1986, Ricke 1998, Stiegler and Thürlemann 2011). The photographer as "artist" thus had to enliven his work through the idea of the creative and individual genius. As Plumpe (1990:95) puts it, the photographer needed to saturate his work with his own personality. Photographers explicitly followed this strategy by utilising stylistic conventions of fine art painting, which I explore in this chapter, as far as they are relevant for our case.

The very idea of the photographer's agency as artist is epitomised in Joseph Baynes' letter to Br. Nivard Streicher in 1901. In particular since 1897, German professional photographers pushed for a revision of photographic copyright in order to secure rights regarding the reproduction of their own work (Hoerner 1989, Ricke 1998, Weise 1994). Adolf Miethe, the editor of the two journals, *Das Atelier des Photographen* and *Photographische Chronik*, played an essential role in this process (see below and Chapter Three). As Müller read these journals and even published in them, he actively followed these discourses. As I suggested above, photographers therefore not only had to transform themselves from mere "craftspersons" into "artists", but also perform this image through their attempts at photographic self-fashioning. As we will see, the discourse therefore continually circulated around the comparison between the painter's and the photographer's capability to capture the essence or "character" of either a person or a scene. The idea of investing an image with a maker's personality may also be compared to what Gell (1998) framed as the distribution of personhood. I will return to this more explicitly in Chapter Eight.

Revisions of legislation first took hold in 1876, and eventually in 1907. In the process photographers targeted two main themes: first, the customer's right to his or her own (photographic) image, and second, the photographic reproduction or recreation of already existing images. These two fields can be equated to the fields of photographic portraiture on the one hand, and genre photography on the other; the latter in particular in its relation to so-called *tableaux vivants*. I will discuss both of these formats in detail below. The resulting question of authorship in our case—in its confirmation as well as its infringement through plagiarism—may be seen as a central issue in the relation between European photographers, Africans, and the representations they co-produced.

The debate about copyright was played out between various competing producers of photographs. The crucial difference between the situation in Europe and the colonial situation of photographic practice in South Africa was that depicted Africans were often left out of this equation. The discourse in Europe strived towards the *creation* of the individual *against* the masses and the technical apparatus, and his or her rights and claims to images. The practice of taking photographs of the colonial Other was diametrically opposed: people were framed and their images circulated as replaceable stereotypes of homogeneous social masses, or "tribes". Mariannhill Missionaries only started to circulate photographic portraits of individual converts

after 1900 (Chapter Two). In relation to the ongoing discourse of segregation, "African" artistic authorship as such only became a phenomenon in South Africa's art world during the 1920s (Chapter Seven).

Since photographs were generally considered to be very "objective" representations, they became functionally instrumental to all kinds of controlling surveillance, involving police work, psychology, medicine, journalism, ethnology, and physical anthropology (Sekula 1986). The establishment of this alleged indexical relationship between representation and subject allowed for either the identification or denial of particular expert skills: the discourse considered someone as a skilled photographer, who could convincingly establish this relationship. Whether these skills were referred to as "social", "craft-like" and "technological", "artistic", "scientific", or even "magical", depended on knowledge and how the involved stakeholders constructed and perceived this knowledge. At the same time, these skills created new and potentially independent knowledge in the form of a photograph. Once the photograph was disconnected from its maker, the associations with the product, however, could be re-transferred to the interpretation of the author and his skills. A photographer could thus either appear as a craftsperson, artist, scientist, or a magician, which all give different qualities of validation to authorship. As we shall see, Br. Aegidius Müller in particular took on these authorial roles purposefully. Within the relationships photography can create, Müller fulfilled the conditions required for certain social roles, even the one of of the potentially supernatural *mathwebula*. At the same time, however, Müller's performance and representation of these identities inflicted the complementary roles on the mission's subjects, clearly without their consent.

The Six Photographers of Mariannhill

The missionaries exchanged knowledge and skills at the monastery across various fields of action. I therefore introduce Mariannhill's six photographers in this chapter, some of Mariannhill's writers and editors in Part Two, and collectors and curators of museum objects in Part Three. All of these members must be considered as part of the authorial network within the process of knowledge production I just described.

Whenever novices arrived at Mariannhill Monastery, they were registered in the so-called "*Kloster-Catalog*".[103] This record contains only the most basic dates, such as the birthdate, date of arrival, and of the various vows each member made. Furthermore, we find notes on the place of birth, previous occupations and belongings, as well as few details on the parents. These informations constituted a starting point for biographical research. Early private documents or correspondences, however, either no longer exist in the archives of Mariannhill, or they are in an unreadable condition. Those individuals who left the community before they died, generally took most of their belongings and other traces with them. Associates like Br. Aegidius Müller had an affiliate status, which allowed for a much more private and independent life away from the monastery. Therefore, none of Müller's private documents or correspondences ended up in the archive. As I explained in the introduction, full members of the congregation were under a much stricter rule, obliging them to adhere to a daily routine.

I now turn to the individual biographies of Mariannhill's six known photographers, according to the order how they entered the congregation. Very few remaining photographs made between 1880 and 1882 show that the Trappists had already brought along a photographer to Dunbrody, their first settlement at the Western Cape. This first photographer, however, remains unnamed and parted from the community after only a few months. According to Prior Pfanner, on his departure this photographer was "in a very bad constitution" (Kempf 1982:51).

Still at the Cape, **Fr. Othmar (Josef Peter) Gross** (1851-????) joined the community on 24 June 1882 from Düren in Germany, a city half-way between Aachen and Cologne. This was still five months before the community eventually settled at the present location near Durban. On arrival, Fr. Othmar's occupation was recorded as "civil servant", but he must have soon taken the first photographs at Mariannhill, which depict newly erected building structures, monks at work, and few group photographs of the community (eg. Figure 3). Up to 1889 he held the position of Mariannhill's sub-prior. He then returned to Germany in early 1889, with the order to acquire equipment and expertise for the printing press. In 1891, he eventually underwent training at the Photographisches und Graphisches Lehrinstitut of Wilhelm Cronenberg (1836-1915) on Castle Grönenbach in Bad Grönenbach, Bavaria, some 130 km to the West of Munich (cf. Gross 1891). Cronenberg had bought Castle Grönenbach in 1881, but was already well-known for training photographers in his two photographic studios in Bad Kissingen and Darmstadt since 1858.[104]

[103] *"Der Kloster-Catalog"* lists all basic data on newly arrived members up to 1895.

[104] Cronenberg moved his institute to Castle Grönenbach in 1881, and there expanded the range of offered training (cf. Sedelmayer 1910). On the letterhead he used when running the school in Grönenbach, he nevertheless dated

The photo historian James Cornwall claims that Cronenberg's institute was Germany's first photographic school working on a larger scale (1979:136). Photography was however taught privately already since the early 1840s, and taken up as subject at universities in Berlin and Leipzig in the 1860s (Stenger 1950:226). Other training institutes, similar to the one of Cronenberg, had been started up since the early 1860s in several other German cities (Hoerner 1989:96). Some of these institutes, however, no longer existed by the 1880s.

Cronenberg's school was successful, because, other than only training for photography, he additionally offered (1) spacious premises and laboratories; (2) lodging on site; (3) a picturesque environment; (4) the additional training of a broad spectrum of other printing technologies; (5) a training that could be concluded within a few months; (6) and eventually he advertised extensively, also with the fact that he had earned the title "*Hessischer Hofphotograph*" in the 1870s.[105] These advantages may explain Mariannhill's choice for this particular school.[106] Cronenberg eventually sold the castle in 1901 (Sedelmayer 1910:253), once he had opened the Praktische Lehranstalt für Photographie und Photomechanische Verfahren in Munich in 1898 (Eder 1932:993). After his training with Cronenberg, Fr. Othmar only returned to Mariannhill briefly in 1891, before leaving the community for personal reasons. Instead, he joined the Alsatian Trappist Monastery Ölenberg.

A rather obscure figure in relation to Mariannhill's photographic production is the painter, mechanic, sculptor, and photographer **Anton Schmidt** (????-1920). He joined the monastery together with his wife in 1886. Like Br. Aegidius Müller, Schmidt and his wife were affiliated to the monastery as lay people (Welzel 1951:478). Due to this independent affiliate status, nothing is known about the Schmidts' pre-Mariannhill past. The couple lived in a private accommodation (with an artistic studio) close to the sister's convent. In several notes up to 1890, Schmidt is briefly referred to as photographer (eg. Vonbank 1890:112). Approximately between 1897 and 1914, he appears on several photographs together with Müller. This leads to the assumption that both influenced each other concerning their photographic practice. The photograph below must have been taken, or has at least been released by another permanent lay resident of Mariannhill by the name of Von Manteufel.[107] He is present in another photograph of the same occasion, which must have been taken by Müller instead. This shows that photographic authorship is an ambivalent idea, and did not require absolute professional expertise at all times. In 1903, Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, mentioned in a report on Mariannhill's industries that the monastery had two (active) photographers (Streicher 1905:26). As Leyendecker was absent in German East Africa at the time, I believe this to be Müller and Schmidt, Müller being the main photographer running the studio.

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the foundation of his institute to 1858.

[105] In 1888, just before Fr. Othmar left Mariannhill in 1889, Cronenberg had placed an advert in the journal *Jahrbuch für Photographie und Reproduktionstechnik,* the same journal where Fr. Othmar published an article about his experience of training with Cronenberg in 1891.

[106] Cronenberg not only taught at his own school, but also published on topics of print technology. In 1895 he wrote a well-received book on the half-tone process (*Autotypie*), which was even translated into English one yer later.

[107] Nothing is known about Von Manteufel's identity and occupation at Mariannhill.



Figure 16: Br. Aegidius Müller (left), Anton Schmidt (with pipe and rifle), an unidentified boy, and a dog at the Umhlatuzane River near Mariannhill (CMM Archives).

After Fr. Othmar had left in February 1889, **Fr. Isembardus (Fridolin) Leyendecker** (1869-1942) was immediately put to work at the photographic business. Only twenty years of age, he arrived at Mariannhill a few months before Br. Aegidius Müller in July 1889. Leyendecker had learned the trade of photography at his father's studio in Bernkastel an der Mosel,[108] a small village in western Germany, relatively close to Trier and the border of Luxembourg. His father, Nikolaus Leyendecker (1824-1896), is known to have taken photographs already by the late 1850s, and he is believed to have been the only photographer in the area until the late 1880s.[109] He thus practiced photography early on, an experience which he would have passed on to his son Fridolin, the later Fr. Isembard, during the 1880s. In addition to being a photographer, Nikolaus Leyendecker also worked as a carpenter, and by the 1890s he owned at least 14 extensive vineyards. This indicates that he was not able to make a living from the photographic profession alone. In the 1880s, the business became even more competitive, and Nikolaus Leyendecker

[108] In the 19th century the name was alternatively spelled "Berncastel". Due to municipal restructuring the village is today called "Bernkastel-Kues".

[109] In local archives at the town Wittlich, under which Bernkastel falls today, only few landscape photographs, but no portraits, remain. I thank Lutz Engelskirchen of the Landesmuseum Koblenz, and Claudia Schmitt of the Stadtarchiv Bernkastel-Wittlich for this information (personal communication, May-October 2013). I also thank the collector and local historian Roland Klinger for providing me with several portrait photographs by the "Photographisches Atelier N. Leyendecker" from his private collection.

began travelling to neighbouring towns, offering his service as an ambulant photographer. In adverts he stressed that he was "able to compete with every other studio of bigger cities, be it in regard to direct photographs, or enlargements" (Petry 2009:275).

Precisely at a time when other photographers established themselves in Bernkastel permanently in 1889, Nikolaus Leyendecker's son Fridolin left for Mariannhill. As it was not uncommon that siblings entered Mariannhill's male or female communities together, Fridolin's six-year-older brother Franz, a trained baker, joined him some years later, and became the lay brother Garzia. Yet a second brother became a cleric, and joined an unknown congregation. Once Fridolin had become Fr. Isembard at Mariannhill, he only performed actively as photographer for about three years, until another professional photographer arrived. He nevertheless remained involved, and was well situated in between European and South African photographic businesses. For example, when he ran the studio during an extended illness of Müller in 1901, Fr. Isembard advertised the existence of a befriended Durban photographer to a German glass plate manufacturer as a potential outlet market.[110] Between 1903 and 1907, Fr. Isembard served as superior for Mariannhill's stations in German East Africa,[111] and between 1907 until the separation from the Trappist order in 1909, he was prior of Mariannhill Monastery. In 1911, Fr. Isembard became superior of St. Paul near Venlo in the Netherlands, which opened in 1913 as Mariannhill's very first noviciate in Europe (Wendl 1998:168). Only in 1923, Fr. Isembard returned to Mariannhill, where he died in 1942.

As **Br. Aegidius Müller** is one of the most eminent protagonists throughout this study, I shall sketch his biography in more detail. Mariannhill's *Kloster-Catalog* recorded that he was born as Joseph Maria Caspar Müller on 30 March 1853 in the small village of Lövenich near Erkelenz, approximately forty kilometres to the northwest of Cologne. He was baptised on the very same day at the Catholic parish church[112] as the third child of Johann Müller and his wife Wilhelmina (née Dahmen). Besides one surviving older sister, he had two younger brothers and one younger sister. Müller's father was a teacher at Lövenich's school and died in 1869. Beyond this date, the archives of Erkelenz do not reveal any traces of the family's presence. This creates the impression that Wilhelmina Müller moved elsewhere with the children, once her husband had died. At some point in the 1870s or 1880s, Müller must have settled in Cologne's suburb Ehrenfeld, where he resurfaces in an account written during the year 1889 (Vonbank 1890:53).

From the contemporary official address book and business inventory *Greven's Adreßbuch* of 1888, one can glean that Cologne had no less than 22 photographic studios within the inner city ring, several providing equipment and possibly training. It is unclear, however, whether Müller had any experience with photography before his arrival in South Africa. During his last years in Cologne, Müller practiced as an accountant and lived just outside the inner city, at the address Everhardstrasse 14 in Cologne-Ehrenfeld. At the time, this suburb mostly consisted of

[110] CMM-MM: letter (copy), Leyendecker to "Trockenplattenfabrik Unger Hoffman, Dresden", 21.10.1901.

[111] Leyendecker also took photographs near Mariannhill's East-African stations, as shown by the photographic collection and related correspondences in the Weltmuseum of Basel, Switzerland.

[112] KAL: Baptism register Lövenich bei Erkelenz, Pfarrei Maria & Elisabeth, 1853, p.16.

industry, as well as housing for the working class. The address book's entry on Müller suggests that he lived together with his widowed mother. No private, and only few handwritten notes by Müller can be found in the CMM archives, even though he wrote for the periodicals more actively than most of his confreres.[113]

Müller's motivation for joining a mission in South Africa is unclear. It might have been religious conviction, maybe the death of his mother, the unreliable economic situation in the Cologne area, or the general anti-Catholic sentiment at the time.[114] The most plausible catalyst is Pfanner's appeal towards lay people in March 1889 to become associates or so-called *Franziner,* in order to relieve the contemplative monks at Mariannhill.[115] This lay brotherhood was also interchangeably referred to as either "Semi-Trappists", "*Tertiare*", "*Oblaten*", "*Familiare*", or "*Associierte*". Pfanner had founded this "sub congregation" in early 1888 as an alternative option for people who wanted to join the mission, but did not want to bear the heavy rules of the Trappist order. In the mission's periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* of 13 March 1889, Pfanner added a four-page pamphlet, which Müller may have read. The *Mariannhill-Kalender* of 1890 also included a version of the "light rule" for the community.[116] A trip from England to South Africa cost about 190 fl. with a reduction negotiated by Mariannhill to 170 fl., which the novices had to accommodate for themselves.[117]

On 20 August 1889, a group of 50 people met at the inn Fränkischer Hof in Cologne: 28 men and 22 women[118] at an age between 15 and 42, all destined to the Catholic Mission Monastery Mariannhill in South Africa (Vonbank 1890:12). On 23 August 1889, after a journey via London, the party boarded the steamship Tartar of the Castle Line at Southampton. Up to this point they had been guided by Br. Pankratz Baierwaltes OCR from Würzburg, who regularly guided groups of novices from Cologne to Southampton, on their way to Mariannhill, via Madeira and Cape Town. Amongst the group were the accountant Joseph Müller, the professional painter Josef Mäder,[119] and the priest Fr. Athanasius Vonbank. Vonbank eventually authored the novelistic and propagandistic travelogue *Von Innsbruck nach Mariannhill*, in which he described the course of the group's journey to South Africa. The notes for this account, he kept, discussed,

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113 In 2009, Cologne's City Archive collapsed during extension works on the subway network, rendering all potentially existing biographical data inaccessible. Also all other regional archives (secular as well as church archives in the Cologne area) bear no traces of Müller.

114 See Chapter Two for a brief account of the impact of the "Culture Wars" on Mariannhill.

115 Pfanner had chosen St. Francis of Assisi as the community's patron saint. St. Aegidius was one of St. Francis's followers, and may thus explain the choice of Müller's religious name.

116 *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1890: A. Schwestern-Regel, pp. 90-92; B. Franziner-Regel, pp. 92-94.

117 Pfanner indicated the prices in "fl.", the Austrian currency *Florin*, which was issued between 1857-1892 (cf. Gütl 2004:15). 1 fl. equalled 1,71 *Mark*, and thus approx. 3 Shilling 5 Pennies. The prices for the journey would thus have been approx. £32 10S, or including the reduction, £29 1S.

118 The enumeration of professions joining the party also mentions one photographer. This cannot be Joseph Müller however, as he was accountant at the time, and the latter profession is listed separately once. The identity of the mentioned photographer could not be retraced.

119 Josef Mäder became Br. Otto, and would paint Müller's photographic studio backdrops over the coming decades (cf. Chapter Four). Mäder first chose to become a priest, but later decided (or it was decided for him) to become a lay brother.

and compiled together with Joseph Müller (Vonbank 1890:99). One night before entering the Port of Durban, one of the authors marvelled at the African night sky and wrote: "The Milky Way is more elongated, wider, and also more intense in light. I wish I was a photographer, and thus able to photograph this sky and send it to Europe." (Vonbank 1890:98).[120] It remains unclear whether this is the voice of Fr. Athanasius Vonbank or Joseph Müller.

In the night of 19 September 1889, at the age of 36, Müller arrived at Mariannhill. The official date for entering the congregation is noted as 23 September 1889 in the *Kloster-Catalog*. On Sunday, 6 October, at half past five in the morning, Müller, four other *Franziner*, and 21 Trappists were initiated. Müller was clothed, and received the religious name "Br. Aegidius" from the Abbot of Mariannhill, Franz Pfanner, with the words:

Exue veterem hominem,	Remove your old identity,
Indue novum habitum,	put on your new clothes,
Accipe nomen tuum.	Receive your [new] name.[121]

Müller's arrival is further marked by a short article in Mariannhill's periodical *Josephsblättchen,* where he described the experience of his first Christmas day in South Africa (Müller 1889). One segment is worth quoting, as Müller here conceived of himself as a literate and refined mind, fond of music, literature, and theatre. The theme of nature was a central interest for Müller across these media. It would also become important in his photographic occupation, especially in later years.

> On the evening of the first Christmas day, after *compline*, I am sitting in front of the entrance to our "*Franzinerklösterli*",[122] which we are very fond of, because it is designed—in its entire outer appearance and interior design—in the spirit of St. Francis. At quarter to eight, the progressing dusk forces me to close the book, and now suddenly light and darkness change, the heat of the day and the coolness of the evening, so that within ten minutes a semidarkness covers the earth. Almost as swift as a scene shifter in a theatre, the sky—which was still in broad day light seconds ago—pulls a veil of stars over its face. The hot temperature of the day drops to 14 C; considering the quick change, an almost touching chill. I make a few steps forward to the young eucalyptus trees which are planted in front of our "*Klösterli*". Their globate crowns form a long green string of pearls, descending the hill in a curve to my right. From the green bushes to my left, the long branches of some sort of bamboo pole emerge in a particular way. Like festoons they move fantastically to and fro in the quiet evening wind. Behind this scenery the valley *Josaphat* closes by forming even and complaisant hill chains; only the stretched-out and significantly higher table mountain poses an exception, like a very stern and dignified king.[123]

The *Tafelberg*, or table mountain of Mariannhill, which Müller described, is indeed a distinct landmark in the area and features in many photographs Müller made of the surrounding area in later years. Of these we shall explore one particular example in Chapter Eight.

As his first occupation in December 1889, Müller was transferred to the so-called

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120 My own translation form the German original.
121 My own translation from the Latin original: Vonbank (1890:130).
122 *Klösterli* = Swiss German diminutive of "*Kloster* [Monastery]".
123 My own translation from the German original.

"*Vestiarium*", where he had to dispense clothing and equipment to confreres.[124] He shared this post with Fr. Ludgerus Selbman (Anon. 1890:15). They were the successors of Fr. Severin Grimm, who, in the previous year, had compiled an exhibition of "ethnographic" objects, which he then accompanied to Europe, where it was supposed to tour several cities. Fr. Severin eventually remained in Europe and joined Mariannhill's house in Würzburg permanently, from where he administered financial and propaganda matters. In his new position, Müller wrote a short article on this planned propaganda exhibition (1890), which I will discuss in Chapter Five. As a museum was not yet in existence, it appears that the collection and curation of "ethnographic" objects was initially taken care of by the *vestiarium*. This was now partially Müller's task. Even before he became an active photographer, he engaged with the material world of the monastery on the one hand, as well as with the one of Africans on the other.

There are no further archival traces regarding Müller's first years at Mariannhill, besides a note that he left the congregation on 23 August 1890. This obviously means that he left the Franziner community, but stayed on as an affiliate lay brother. In 1892, after the first visitation, which caused Abbot Franz Pfanner to resign,[125] the institution of the Franziner was abandoned, for no specific reasons other than that it "had no grounding" (Strunk 1892). As I explained already, it is unclear when Müller began his engagement with photography, and whether he had a professional training in Germany or at Mariannhill itself. However, it is very likely that once Pfanner had left Mariannhill, the second Abbot, Amandus Schölzig (1836-1900), adopted a policy to employ the Ex-Franziner with secular work, in order to relieve the Trappist priests and brothers. At the same time, it seems that the rift between the factions of missionaries and monks within the Trappist community became even greater after 1892. Schölzig thus tried to balance contemplation and mission, as well as propaganda, which was necessary to support the latter. Before becoming a Trappist, Abbot Amandus Schölzig held a position as professor for "oriental languages" at the educational institution of the Monastery Klosterneuburg near Vienna, as well as editor of religious publications (Ludwig and Reitterer 1995:29-30). He was thus well-versed in the needs and interest of European academia and society at large for information on South African matters. In 1894, his first initiatives were a building for the monastery's museum and a new building and expansion of the photographic business (cf. Chapter Five).

During these years yet another photographer entered the stage. After the departure of Fr. Othmar Gross in 1889, the position of photographer was only temporarily filled in by Fr. Isembard Leyendecker for less than two years, until another professionally trained photographer arrived in 1891. This was **Fr. Desiderius (Joseph Hubert Aloysius) Fresen** (1873-1939), who hailed from Essen in Germany, and was eighteen years of age on arrival. Fr. Desiderius was hitherto unknown in the history of Mariannhill, and I could only identify him as a temporary photographer through a close reading of the contemporary accounting books. Research on his

[124] The job description used at Mariannhill was "*Equipierungsrat*", one who dispenses equipment to confreres. The Trappist Rule instead speaks of the "*Vestiarius*" (Bonaventura 1887:109ff).

[125] The title "Abbot" is however kept for life.

previous biography and training as photographer in Essen did not yield any information.[126] Even though he left the congregation only five years later, in 1896, he may have been responsible for a variety of photographs that I will discuss later. The documents of Fresen's application for naturalisation in 1905 show that he stayed in South Africa, moved to King Williams Town, remained in the photographic business, married, and raised kids.[127] Notes on containers of photographic negatives suggest that he maintained contact with Mariannhill, and at least on one occasion was commissioned to take photographs of the mission station Keilands in the Eastern Cape.

Even if the exact forms of interaction and cooperation between the five photographers cannot be fully reconstructed, it is clear that at the end of 1897 Müller emerged as the main professional photographer of Mariannhill, occasionally aided or relieved by either Fr. Isembard Leyendecker or Anton Schmidt. While I consider Müller as the operator of the studio, and the main photographer after 1897, it is much harder to distinguish photographic operators in the period prior to 1897. The idea of the photographic "author" thus falls apart even more, and can only be reassembled for particular occasions. The lingering question with Müller remains his very relationship with Europe after 1889; whether—or better where—he received professional training as photographer, and thus where he collected ideas on the photographic economy and related aesthetics, as they appear in his article of 1909. He was able to draw from a considerable photographic experience and expertise on the ground, but nevertheless directed his attention and search for more expertise towards Europe. As photographic technology, aesthetic trends, and the visual demands of benefactor audiences and ethnographic museums changed considerably during the 1880s and 1890s, the necessary information concerning related practitioners, proponents and their networks could not have been solely supplied to Müller by Leyendecker, Fresen, Schmidt, or any other photographer in the colony of Natal.

Instead of direct evidence for Müller's training, I will only be able to provide circumstantial evidence. There are two possibilities: either he was sent back to Germany in 1896, to undergo training at a photographic school for about one year, and returned to Mariannhill in the course of 1897; or he acquired his knowledge locally at Mariannhill Monastery from one of his confreres, and was additionally aided by published instructions, which I will discuss in the next sections. But for neither one of these two hypotheses could I find concrete evidence. It is possible, however unlikely that he became a member of a local photography club or society, as I explain below. Instead, he acquired and updated photographic equipment and expertise through correspondence with practitioners in Germany at least since 1898 (cf. Parts Two and Three). This makes it likely that he had established contacts with experts during a sojourn at a photographic school in Germany. It is confirmed that he took over the studio in October 1897, when the accounting books first recorded payments to the monastery's main register under his name.

[126] The Stadtarchiv Essen does not hold any registration records of the timeframe 1883-1920. Therefore nothing could be found regarding Fresen's youth. His father was an artistic gardener and nurseryman. I thank Jutta Vonrüden-Ferner of the Stadtarchiv Essen for this information (personal communication, July 2011).

[127] CAR: CO_8610_22_1-1905.

At least one of Mariannhill's necrologies mentions that Müller was a "trained photographer" (Welzel 1951:480).[128] This suggests that he went through an institutional training experience like his confreres Fr. Othmar Gross on Castle Grönenbach, Fr. Desiderius Fresen in Essen, and Fr. Isembard Leyendecker in Bernkastel. Members were dispatched to Germany on a regular basis, in order to follow training in various trades, and so to improve the expertise on the ground. Still by the mid-1890s, Cronenberg's institute on Castle Grönenbach appears to have been one of the few that focused exclusively on training. An advert of Cronenberg's school (approx. 1888), which I retrieved from the nearby Staatsarchiv Augsburg,[129] gives some further insights: for the reason that not only photography, but the entire process of development and printing was taught, the institute attracted students from all over Germany, Dutch East-India, Silesia, Bulgaria, Romania, Finland, Sweden, Russia, Portugal, Switzerland, America, and the Netherlands.[130]

In neighbouring countries like the Netherlands, for example, one still had to train in photography with an individual photographer at the time, as schools were only founded after 1910 (Rooseboom 2006:307). This would take on the form of an apprenticeship of several years, as the photographer could not focus on teaching alone.[131] The photographic course on Castle Grönenbach instead took only between two to six months, depending on the student's experience. It may have been such a training that enabled Müller, not only to run a professional photographic studio, but to build and maintain connections with German photographic and academic professionals, which he preferred over local ones. Müller also ran the printing press at Mariannhill during the First World War, which he could have hardly managed without having been trained in printing technologies (cf. Nolte 1928:167).

One way or another, Müller became aware of ethnographic museums' interest in photographs, read and published in contemporary German illustrated magazines, consulted professional photography literature, read photographic journals, and corresponded with the editors on questions of photographic chemistry, technology, and law. He must have become aware of this complex landscape somehow, and at the same time acquired the knowledge to navigate it. I reconstruct at least parts of this network in the next chapters.

A genealogy of photographic training can eventually be traced from Nikolaus Leyendecker's business since the 1840s up to 1923, when Fr. Isembard Leyendecker trained

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[128] The author of Mariannhill's major necrology, Br. Joseph Welzel, identified Müller as "*ausgebildeter Photograph*". Welzel had known all deceased confreres personally.

[129] SAA: Akten des Königlichen Bezirksamts Memmingen. Betreff: Die Graphische Lehranstalt von Cronenberg in Grönenbach. 1889-1893. Tit. V. Fach 12. Num.18.

[130] This array of origins may have been selective, in order to show the diversity of students for the purpose of advertising. In the 1880s and 1890s, Cronenberg taught approximately 40 students per year (Cornwall 1979:156).

[131] The Lehr- und Forschungsanstalt founded in 1888 by Josef Maria Eder in Vienna also played an important role. It was the first state-funded school for photography worldwide. It not only had the aim to train photographers, but likewise to perform research on photographic chemistry and technology. Other professional institutes followed in 1893 in Leipzig, and 1900 in Munich (Lechner 2003). The photographic laboratory of Hermann W. Vogel at the Technische Hochschule in Berlin since 1863 was only an ancillary institute for other sciences, and had no academic status (Hoerner 1989:104).

Mariannhill's last full-time photographer **Br. Leonard (Walter) Weber** (1896-1984). The available equipment was by then much easier to handle, so that Weber went through a less rigorous training than his predecessors. His occupation was also limited to photography, and could therefore be supervised by Leyendecker. As a result, Weber was less professional and meticulous in his photographic approach than Müller. He never annotated his negatives and also did not number them according to a filing system. Even though he still worked on glass plate negatives when he began his work in approximately 1924, he gradually used more celluloid negatives during the 1930s. In 1939, Weber became boarding master at Mariannhill's St. Francis College. As it was forbidden to enemies of the state to take photographs during the Second World War, the studio had to close its doors for good (cf. Rippe 2007). After the war, the studio was used for other purposes, as more and more individual members had their own cameras and could easily produce photographs for the propaganda publications independently.

It remains to consider the involvement of Africans in the photographic practice at Mariannhill, or any potential transfer of photographic expertise and knowledge. Norman Etherington writes that photographers were *trained* at Mariannhill (1997:105), which is however only a citational slippage from "visitors could *observe* […] even professional photographers at work" (Brain 1982:135, my italics). While the training of Africans at the printing press and as ornamental painters has been documented photographically before 1914, there is no trace whatsoever of the training of Africans in photography, even if it may have been envisioned at one point. In the before-mentioned article, written at Castle Grönenbach in 1891, Fr. Othmar Gross speculated:

> However, this brief sketch of the achievements of nine years should have brought hope to the experts of photography, to count amongst their ranks some individuals of the wild Zulu tribes in due course. […] And so it will not take too long until we can see [at Mariannhill] black artists producing zinc cliches [*Zinkcliches*] and photo types [*Lichtdrucke*]. But as of today, we are still lacking the necessary staff for training. (Gross 1891:148)[132]

Four years later, in 1895, an anonymous author opposed this promise in Mariannhill's own periodical *Vergißmeinnicht*, by stating that "Kafirs stand only at the beginning of all culture". He argued that they could not be turned into academics, theologists, or advocates yet, even though this may be possible with some few exceptional individuals. He continued that "also for artistic crafts, eg. engraving or woodcarving, or crafts like the one of the mechanic, turner, musician, photographer, printer and the like, the Kafir is not yet suited. He will never rise to an independent skill" (Anon. 1895:61-66). First, so the author, the most basic practical occupations had to be mastered. In the eyes of the mission, these were agricultural skills and basic craftsmanship (cf. Gütl 2005). In 1895, some of the missionaries therefore considered Africans not yet capable of mastering photography, neither as a technological and artistic skill, nor as a commercial business.

Even though Müller may have had an *assistant*, it is therefore uncertain whether he ever

[132] My own translation from the German original.

had an *apprentice*, someone who eventually practiced photography independently. In a similar situation Ghanaian Protestant converts actively engaged with the medium photography and consumed European material culture through photographs shown to them by missionaries (Meyer 1997). A similar encounter with photographic technology and its related material culture must have taken place at Mariannhill, when Africans entered the studio to be photographed. It is however yet another question whether the photographer on occasion introduced them in detail to the technology of the camera and the working of chemicals. But as a matter of fact, Figure 97 shows a photograph taken in Mariannhill's studio just after 1907: the man in the centre holds up the publication *How it is Made* (Williams 1907), explaining—among many other topics—how photographic glass plate negatives are produced.



Figure 17: One of Mariannhill's artistic painters, Br. Otto Mäder, with two apprentices, approx. 1900 (CMM Archives).

At least during the first decades of the mission's existence, it appears to have been important to the missionaries that (the representation of) authorship, and thus representational authority, remained with themselves. At the beginning of the next chapter I present two cases where Mariannhill's photographers considered situations of African authorship in relation to

photography, even if only in simulation and as potential parodies. The situation, however, appears to have been different in the case of painting and drawing. Before 1914, Mariannhill had at least three known professional painters. They worked on the interiors of Mariannhill's many churches, but also painted portraits and sceneries of mission life. The earlier-mentioned Anton Schmidt and Br. Otto Mäder both worked mainly at Mariannhill Monastery, and Br. Ludger Janssen at Centocow Mission. At least three photographs exist that show both Mäder and Janssen being assisted by Black boys. In the example above, however, Mäder can be seen supervising a boy while drawing an ornament on a chalk board (Figure 17). Both Mäder and the boy work on images typical for Mariannhill's churches, and appear to be copying from illustrations placed next to their working surfaces. The photograph can thus be taken as evidence that Mariannhill's painters did indeed take on Black apprentices, if not for figurative painting, at least for the work of ornamental drawings.

The situation only changed crucially by the mid 1920s, when—at least in one case at Mariannhill's outstation Centocow—mission personnel fostered, and even explicitly promoted the authorship and agency of the African figurative painter Gerard Bhengu (Chapter Seven). Unlike with Müller and his hypothetical assistants, it will be possible in this situation to think of something like a shared authorship between Bhengu and his first patron and mentor Dr. Max Kohler. The fact that so far no Black photographers could be identified in South Africa prior to the First World War, does not mean that they did not exist.[133] Müller had contact to at least one Black photographer, who had been professionally trained before 1913. Due to the lack of information on this photographer so far, I hope to write about him at a later point.

[133] The state of research is very different for West and East Africa, where African photographers have been recorded as early as the 1880s. For some of the existing overviews see Wendl and Behrend (1998), Geary (2002, 2013b), Haney (2010), and Schneider (2011).

Between Pictorialism and Propaganda

The Vergißmeinnicht also appears in a new dress, because Mariannhill celebrates its **25. Jubilee** in the course of this year. Like in the Mariannhill Kalender, we want to present *pictorial depictions* [*bildliche Darstellungen*] of African mission life also in the Vergißmeinnicht. A single glance at a well-executed [*wohlgetroffen*] picture often tells us more than one single print-page.[134] Otherwise, our mission leaflet should generally retain its original character, i.e. it will bring first of all truthful reports from daily mission life, so that our honoured readers and benefactors may always be well-informed about the progress of our common great project; yes, as it were, they may become eye-witnesses of the colourful life and bustle, as it plays itself out, on the one hand in the regular spaces of the Trappist monastery, on the other hand in the huts, schools and chapels of the lively Kafir-people. Along with the reports about the more important daily occurrences, there should be in proper variety some interesting reminiscences from earlier years, as well as exciting stories etc., interchangeably in part educative, in part of entertaining content, so that our modest leaflet should do justice to all wishes and expectations of its honoured readers.[135] (From the editorial of the *Vergißmeinnicht*, Frey 1907a:2)

In the years prior to the mission's 25th anniversary in 1907, Br. Aegidius Müller attempted to create a photographic record that would positively display the mission's impact on its social environment. In the year of the anniversary, his photographic record was eventually used to illustrate a concise history as a Festschrift: *Das Trappisten-Missionskloster Mariannhill, oder Bilder aus dem Afrikanischen Missionsleben. Im Auftrage seiner Obern gesammelt von einem Ordenspriester* (Frey 1907).[136] Even though the images had been "assembled [*gesammelt*]" by the editor Fr. Dominikus Frey, most of the 221 photographs on 188 pages, had been taken by Müller over the previous years. The renowned Catholic publisher Herder in Freiburg, who was also responsible for the periodical *Die Katholischen Missionen. Illustrierte Monatsschrift*, even distributed Mariannhill's *Festschrift* through its branch in America. A contemporary review in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* praised it for its "numerous exceptionally fine photographs". As a concise account of the mission's efforts, the anniversary publication chronologically sketches Mariannhill's history of the past 25 years. It is told along the lines of landmark events, in particular the periods under the three Abbots, Pfanner, Schölzig, and Wolpert. Furthermore, it contains many anecdotal stories and photographs of the encounter between the missionaries and their African subjects.

As indicated in the quote above, Mariannhill's anniversary also gave reason to revamp the mission's periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* in the style of contemporary German popular illustrated magazines, educational literature, and travel journals. At least those Mariannhill members who worked for the press, read journals such as the popular *Über Land und Meer*. Previously without illustrations, from 1907 onwards the *Vergißmeinnicht* was packed with photographs. These were not only of Mariannhill's own making, but additionally sourced from European press stocks and

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134 In several variations this saying is phrased as "a picture says more than a thousand words" and has been ascribed to many authors. Burke, for example, attributes it to Kurt Tucholsky (2001:9).

135 My own translation from the German original. Italics and bold letters are as they appear in the original text.

136 *"The Trappist Mission-Monastery Mariannhill, or pictures of African mission life. Collected by a priest of the congregation by order of his superiors".* The still existing publisher Herder in Freiburg has not maintained an archive for the time in question (personal communication, Tabeah Faubel, July 2014). Also the Mariannhill archives no longer contain any correspondence on the matter.

Bible imagery.

The quote lays out the periodical's new program in relation to its use of photographs. According to what I explained about ideas on objectivity at Mariannhill, this program explicitly introduced itself as presenting the privileged perspective of an "eyewitness".[137] In his explanation of the "eyewitness principle", the art historian Ernst Gombrich compares it to the artistic attempt of "mimesis", the approach of copying truthfully from nature (Gombrich 1980:246, also see Burke 2001). Gombrich, however, defines representations according to the "eyewitness principle" as a "negative" rule, according to which "the artist must not include in his image anything the eye-witness could not have seen from a particular point at a particular moment". According to him, mimesis is a less useful approach, as an artist is unlikely anyway to capture in a picture all available detail of a real situation. Both Gombrich and Mariannhills editorial, however, only give a new name to an issue photographers have struggled with since the establishment of the photographic profession, and the professional discourse on it: the conundrum of objective versus subjective interpretation between the camera and its products, the photographer and the photographed. Whether a photograph indeed "resembles" what it depicts according to what an eyewitness could have seen, thus depends on the "collateral knowledge" of the person evaluating the photograph.

In order to speak to audiences in Germany successfully, Mariannhill's photographers therefore had to frame their depictions of South Africa in visual idioms German audiences were familiar with, according to a particular program (cf. Krüger 2011, Rippe 2018). While claiming to present an "eyewitness" perspective, they nevertheless produced photographs according to contemporary conventions. In the following, I explore how Mariannhill's photographs related to the contemporary discourse addressing this diversion. Like the texts in Mariannhill's periodicals, the photographs were anecdotal in the sense that they presented seemingly ordinary stories from "everyday life" around the missions, but can in fact be deconstructed as highly engineered. The worldwide photographic movement providing a language for this effort is generally referred to as "pictorialism" or "art photography". It had its high time between the late 1880s and the 1910s, the exact timeframe of Mariannhill's most active photographic production.[138]

As I already explained above, in the 1890s proponents of professional photography began to apply artistic styles and painterly conventions to the composition and physical manipulation of their work. They motivated colleagues to seek inspiration with painters, however in variation and moderation. One aspect of this effort was to promote photography as an "art", instead of a "craft", in order to be able to claim property rights. Part of this discussion was carried out through the many photographic journals, which appeared, but also disappeared quickly during

[137] On the use of photographs as evidence in mission periodicals also see Storning (2016), Stornig and Bauer (2018), Rippe (2018).

[138] While photographic styles, conventions, and practices were of course more diverse at the time, there was a contemporary authoritative community of artists, lay people, and professional photographers, who maintained a discourse through exhibitions and journals. Since then, art history and photographic history has mostly focused on the most successful practitioners in the art world, mainly based on the evaluations of their oeuvres in museum archives. In the process, private and consumer photography has often been excluded (but see Starl 1995).

the second half of the 19th century. One of the most popular journals in Germany was *Das Atelier des Photographen*, published between 1894 and 1932 under the editorship of Adolf Miethe. According to the photo historian Ludwig Hoerner, the *Atelier* was a "completely new form of photographic journal", due to its big format, special art paper, as well as full-page collotype and autotype reproductions of photographs. Accordingly, the journal had an "exclusive reputation" for the quality of its texts and the reproduction of its photographs. The intended audience were professional studio photographers (*Fachphotographen*), who appreciated the journal for its close proximity to their daily work. The monthly *Atelier* featured instructive articles by specialists, while its weekly addendum, *Photographische Chronik*, presented news on economic and juridical issues, chemical recipes, as well as a Q&A section. For all these reasons, many photographic societies, associations, and guilds chose the *Atelier* as their organ (Hoerner 1984:36).

Müller had a subscription to these journals, posted questions in the *Chronik* on a regular basis, and in 1904 even succeeded to have two of his photographs published in the *Atelier*. In fact, these two photographs show the only Black people in the journal's existence prior to the First World War. Some of the published photographs in photographic journals more generally served as examples to explain issues raised in the articles, such as composition or lighting. Other photographs, such as Müller's, stand alone and unrelated to the text surrounding them. We may safely assume that the editor chose them as aesthetic examples of best practice, and therefore promoted them as inspiration for colleagues.





Photographic Studio: Mariannhill und Pinetown.

Der Begriff „Schärfe“ ist eigentlich ziemlich dehnbar, namentlich für solche Arbeiten, die nicht ins Reproduktionsfach schlagen, bei dem durchgängig sogen. Strichschärfe erforderlich ist. Man hat sich indessen dahin geeinigt, dass eine Unschärfe von $^1/_{10}$ mm als zulässige Grenze angenommen wird.

Die scharfe Abbildung ist nun abhängig von dem Korrektionszustand des Objektives und der angewendeten Blende. Bei den nichtanastigmatischen Objektiven ist meist die Bildmitte bei Einstellung auf ein ebenes Objekt genügend scharf, die Schärfe nimmt aber, namentlich bei grosser Blendenöffnung, nach dem Rande zu mehr und mehr ab. Der absolut scharfe Bildwinkel solcher Objektive kann daher zuweilen sehr klein sein.

Durch Aufhebung des diesen Fehler bedingenden Astigmatismus und der sphärischen Aberration erstreckt sich die absolute Schärfe auch bei voller Oeffnung um sehr vieles weiter nach dem Bildrande zu, und man erhält daher mit den Anastigmaten ein gleichmässig scharfes Bildfeld von grosser Winkelausdehnung. Weil die so mit grösster Oeffnung erhaltene Schärfe sich von der Mitte des Bildfeldes aus nach den Seiten erstreckt, nennt man sie auch wohl Seitenschärfe.

Stellen wir dagegen auf ein Objekt von grosser Tiefenausdehnung, etwa eine Landschaft, mit voller Oeffnung ein, so finden wir, dass nahe und weit entfernt liegende Gegenstände nicht gleichmässig scharf erhalten werden können, dass aber eine befriedigende Schärfe durch eine stärkere Abblendung zu erzielen ist. Da nunmehr die Schärfe sich nicht seitwärts, sondern nach der Tiefe zu ausdehnt, nennen wir sie auch Tiefenschärfe. Sie ist bei allen Objektiven, ohne Rücksicht auf den Korrektionszustand, lediglich von dem Oeffnungsverhältnis abhängig und um so geringer, je grösser dieses ist. Sehr lichtstarke Objektive haben daher eine geringe Tiefenschärfe.

Eine geringe Tiefenschärfe macht indessen bei nahegelegenen Objekten eine sehr sorgfältige Einstellung notwendig, wenn man eine befriedigende Schärfe erzielen will. Nun ist man aber bei Momentaufnahmen in den meisten Fällen gezwungen, die Entfernung zwischen Objekt und Objektiv durch Abschätzung zu bestimmen. Je geringer nun die Tiefenschärfe ist, um so leichter und auffallender resultieren hier Fehler. Der erfahrene Lichtbildner blendet daher so weit, als es die Umstände nur erlauben, sein Objektiv ab, falls er mit einem äusserst lichtstarken arbeitet, um diesen Fehler nach

Figure 18: original caption: “Photographic Studio: Mariannhill und Pinetown” (*Das Atelier des Photographen* 1904[no. 9]:143).

The history of early photographic societies in South Africa (Natal in particular), their organs, and artistic photographic production is still rather unexplored, as existing accounts are brief and quickly jump to the mid-20th century (see Bensusan 1966, Grundlingh 2001). In 1893, the "Maritzburg Camera Club" was founded in Pietermaritzburg, but apparently no longer active once the "Durban Amateur Photographic Society" was established in 1921. The latter was later renamed "Durban Camera Club" (Sketch 1921, Bensusan 1966:87). Even though a photographic journal, *The South African Photographer*, existed since at least 1895, only in 1906 did the international "pictorial movement" manifested itself in Cape Town in form of an exhibition. With the assistance of the British Photographic Royal Society, the photographic society Brotherhood of the Linked Ring, and the American Photographic Salon, an exhibition of 629 pictorial photographs was set up in Cape Town's City Hall in 1906. Likewise in the spirit of pictorialism, a Mudie Thomson[139] published *The South African Photographic Journal* in Cape Town between 1909 and 1911 (cf. Bensusan 1966:86). Müller was clearly aware of these local developments, and also interacted with the South African art scene.[140] For example, as I shall describe below, he presented his work in the politico-cultural journal *The State*, which was connected to the art scene through such writers as Mudie Thomson. It was founded and backed by those industrial and political actors, who also moulded early ideas on race and segregation, but at the same time influenced the South African fine art world through their collection and funding activities. Howard Pim and T.C. Loram, for example, were two of the political actors who stood in the background once the South African art world admitted Blacks such as Gerard Bhengu in the late 1920s. Both painting and photography then not only served to represent Black South Africans, but even as tools to actively *cultivate* the development of African artists along separate lines (cf. Chapter Seven).

By 1908, the art photographic scene still focused on Cape Town. As far as Natal was concerned, Mudie Thomson only attributed artistic skills and pictorial intentions to two photographers in Pietermaritzburg (Thomson 1908:92). By this time, however, Br. Aegidius Müller had already developed a national and international network and reputation as an able artistic photographer. Against the background of these developments in both Germany and South Africa, I show in the following two sections that Mariannhill's photographic production depended on the contemporary idea of "photographic resemblance", which constituted an important topic in the discourse around the photographic format of the "portrait", and, as I will argue in the next section, can also be followed in relation to the format of "genre photographs". The contemporary art discourse on fine art painting distinguished "landscape", "portraiture", "genre", "history" and "still life", whereby these categories were transferred in various degrees to photography (cf. Peters 1979, Plumpe 1990:154-155). I only explore portraiture and genre

[139] Bensusan attributes female gender to a "Mudie Thompson", while contemporary sources speak of a "Mr. Mudie Thomson".

[140] I have not yet been able to evaluate the journal myself. It is therefore unclear whether the exhibition or the journal contained any of Müller's photographs.

photography,[141] as Mariannhill's photographers produced them according to handbooks and journals. Even though they never explicitly framed the construction of space around mission stations as "landscape photographs", and the depiction of objects as "still life", I will discuss these in Parts Two and Three respectively.

In the quote above on his photographic practice, Müller (1909) alluded to a classic explanation regarding the ambivalence of resemblance in portraiture, and how common people in their vanity strove towards imitating higher social classes (also see Vogel 1875:363, Waetzoldt 1908:83). With the depiction of people in portraits, but also in genre photographs, the recognition of either individuals or genre scenes due to "resemblance" played such a considerable role in the historical contexts and narratives that it was often explicitly referred to either as a "problem" or a "question" (eg. Arnold 1889, 1892; Waetzoldt 1908; Albien 1911; Warstat 1916; also see Brevern 2013, 2014). In this chapter and the next, I consider this contemporary "problem" and how it was approached in South Africa and Europe.

An exploration of resemblances in Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre requires an analysis on various levels. To begin with, I compare the *contemporary* attribution of categories to published photographs in the mission's periodicals, as well as to some of the original photographic prints in the mission's archives. As we are in the exceptional position to analyse contemporary perceptions of aesthetics regarding the photographic practice at Mariannhill, I must now briefly compare it to evaluations of image production and categorisation by other mission congregations and denominations. Other than Mariannhill's photographic archive in its entirety, the mission's periodicals followed the logic of "the mission as movement" (Pels 1999, 2009), according to which missionaries attempted to fill a cultural and spiritual void through their sacrifice and in particular their presence, which determined an intended "image program" (Krüger 2011, also see Gullestad 2007, Kittel 1996, Rippe 2018).

As a comparative focal point I therefore begin with the above-mentioned anniversary publication. As indicated by its editor, Fr. Dominikus Frey, he had assembled stories from previous issues of both the *Vergißmeinnicht* and the *Kalender*. Thus the arrangement of photographs in the anniversary publication presents altogether 221 photographs on 188 pages, which had been taken since the early 1890s. This selection adequately represents the existing topics used for propaganda purposes throughout the years. These same topics were introduced in the *Vergißmeinnicht's* editorial in 1907 quoted above: on the one hand photographs depict the life of the Trappists at the mission stations, and their interactions with Africans. On the other hand, they present the life of Africans (both Christians and non-Christians), in particular relating to their daily home life, education, and religious life. The quote above clearly separates these topics in terms of spatial arrangements, and relates them to both education and entertainment. I will therefore deal with the construction of space in relation to images in Part Two.

[141] "Photographic genres" as categories are not to be confused with "genre photography" as a distinct pictorial style. Genre painting and photography usually denoted the depiction of daily life in obviously arranged scenes, as I will explain in more detail in the following sections.

Some of the topics in the anniversary publication necessarily overlap, but nevertheless allow for a statistical evaluation. This evaluation is carried out according to the intended message in the publication, either defined by a photograph's caption, or the section the photograph is placed in. By far the most numerous photographs with a clear single topic are the 50 landscape views of mission stations. Altogether 73 photographs explicitly address interactions between missionaries, mission sisters, and Africans in relation to religious practices, education, work, charity, and visits to homesteads. 38 photographs explicitly address the topic of work, either on the mission's fields, at the monastery's workshops, or at the sisters' sewing and kitchen facilities (cf. Chapter Three). 39 photographs address an issue related to children, either regarding education, work, in daily non-Christian life, or romanticising portraits that were explicitly related to fundraising (cf. Chapter Two). 21 photographs show only Trappists, either in portraits, group photographs, or while working or praying. With only one exception of a group photograph, the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood are exclusively shown in interaction with African protégées in 27 photographs. 58 photographs show only Africans, of which 28 show supposedly converted Africans in form of portraits, or at their homes. These are identified as Christian either by their clothing, their activities, or merely by a textual caption. 38 photographs explicitly address African non-Christian life as it supposedly existed outside the mission's (and European) sphere of influence, and its cultural practices and material culture. The latter photographs may be considered as "ethnographic" or "anthropological", in so far that they addressed how Africans looked differently, or did things differently than Europeans. However, Müller only referred to this last category as "ethnographic" when corresponding with European ethnologists since 1898. I will discuss these photographs and their construction within conversations with anthropologists and ethnologists in Part Three. The missionaries also successfully introduced photographs showing their interactions with Africans into ethnological circles. As I shall explain in Chapters Two and Six, this was exceptional, since several ethnologist considered European presence in "ethnographic" photographs as a contamination of research data.

Other than the jubilee publication I just discussed, the *Mariannhiller Kalender* and the *Vergißmeinnicht* presented foreign religious imagery, paintings, as well as photographs sourced from German press agencies, in particular since the *Vergißmeinnicht's* revamping in 1907. These additional illustrations related either to Germany, Europe at large, or other non-European countries. When the monthly *Vergißmeinnicht* was first equipped with photographs in 1907, the above-quoted editorial positioned the periodical as a "modern", and thus by definition as an *illustrated* newspaper. It intended to satisfy European readers by additionally embracing politics, technological innovations, entertainment, as well as other secular news.

As I mentioned in the general introduction, categorising all of the periodicals' photographs from today's perspective would be an ambivalent endeavour. This ambivalence can be circumvented, however, by analysing the categories used at the time. Since 1905, the bound yearly volumes of the *Vergißmeinnicht* included an inventory, where the editor Fr. Dominikus Frey applied categories to texts, and later also to images. The stable categories under

"Illustrations" between 1907 and the 1920s were (1) "people", (2) "images of mission-life", (3) "Geography and Ethnography [*Land und Völkerkunde*]", (4) "Modern Technology", and (5) "Religious Depictions". These were rearranged over the years, and later inventories also included categories such as "from the world of animals", "varia", and eventually "images of the war".

These ascriptions are however not as straightforward as they seem to be. While "people" referred to *identified* portraits of either missionaries, converts, or for example German politicians, "Images from Mission-Life" include all photographs relating to Mariannhill, including those photographs of Africans that would otherwise be labelled "ethnographic" in the colonial discourse. Instead, the heading "Geography and Ethnography" included every other area of the world outside the orbit of Mariannhill's influence, including other parts of South Africa, as well as central Europe. Both articles and illustrations resembled those of contemporary illustrated magazines, such as *National Geographics*,[142] *Globus*, or *Über Land und Meer*. While the editors presented the monthly *Vergißmeinnicht* as "news", the *Kalender* format presented a review of each year, and often repeated topics and stories already presented in the *Vergißmeinnicht*. The very first illustrated issue of the *Vergißmeinnicht* in 1907 contained altogether 227[143] images, separated into the five categories mentioned above: 33 are individual portraits, 73 "Images from Mission Life", 124 "Geography and Ethnography", 11 "Modern Technology", and 31 "Religious images". We can see that the majority of illustrations (124) were not of Mariannhill's own making. But according to the aesthetic conventions, which I referred to above, all included illustrations were well in tune.

Next to the stories in Mariannhill's periodicals (cf. Chapter Two), in particular the ongoing repetition of similar photographs, created a sense of familiarity with the readers. Familiarity in turn created an interest in Mariannhill's progress, such as the material development and expansion of the stations. Stereotypes of generic Africans, such as "the convert", "the warrior", or "the diviner", needed constant repetition, in order to become powerful complementary images to those of "the missionary" (cf. Chapter Eight). In order to create certain scenarios exactly as they were intended, the photographers also re-staged them in the studio: for example a woman delivering her children to the mission, or children posing (or rather being *posed*) with text boards, expressing either appeals for money and clothing, or gratitude towards benefactors for already received donations (cf. Chapters Two and Four). On the adaptable stage of the studio, the photographic performance achieved an even greater theatrical quality, due to its various backdrops, as well as an assortment of props to choose from (cf. Chapter Four).

Other reoccurring topics in Mariannhill's oeuvre may at first sight not have been an explicit part of the propaganda programme, as I just evaluated them in the statistics of the *Festschrift* and the *Vergißmeinnicht*. The missionaries nevertheless produced and used some of

[142] I am not aware of any studies on these contemporary magazines. But see Lutz and Collins (1993) for an analysis of *National Geographic* after the Second World War, with some remarks on earlier decades.

[143] As a comparison, the periodical of the nearby Lutheran Berliner Missionsgesellschaft, *Missionsfreund* for the year 1907, only contained 19 images altogether. The *Missionsfreund*, however, also had to cover the society's activities in Asia and America.

these photographs as mimetic capital to muster allies: single portraits and group portraits of paying customers, visitors and tourists, as well as group photographs of Trappists with honorary guests show Mariannhill's relationships to the colonial world at large. Due to the studio's commercial nature, today's CMM photographic archive also contains a fair amount of commissioned portraits of White, as well as fewer Black clients. These clients were either tourists visiting Mariannhill only for one day, or local residents, who traded at Mariannhill on a regular basis.[144] Amongst these are also portraits of British soldiers stationed in Natal between the Anglo-Zulu War (1879) and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). One contingent of soldiers was stationed near Mariannhill at "Pinetown Bridge". Government representatives, as well as other visitors of social standing, were presented with photographs as gifts, and often with their own portraits to memorise the occasion of their visit (Chapter Three). Among these were for example the above-mentioned Joseph Baynes in 1901, and the Lord of Selborne in 1908. The demands of local customers, visitors, and tourists also further intensified the production and trade with exotic images of "African life". While the portraiture industry established and demanded the negotiation of individual "character" through "resemblance", the format of genre photography established typical and at the same time recognisable scenes through a "resemblance" with preexisting images. It is these two topics that I address in the next two sections.

[144] Several photographs showing the latter kind of visitors are still housed in the archives of the Bergtheil Museum in Durban, which deals in particular with the history of German immigrants to the area (cf. Chapter Three).

Photographic "Character" as a "Problem of Resemblance"

In this section and the next, I show that Müller worked in his African studio according to particular European aesthetic conventions. In recent literature, the most obvious of those conventions has rarely been discussed adequately. It evolved from the public and professional debate about the fact that before and after 1900, professional photographers were much troubled by their clients' demand to produce a "likeness", which was supposed to display "likeness" to its referent, the sitter. While English-speakers used the term "likeness" in these two forms[145] (eg. Robinson 1869), it was consistently framed with the term "*ressemblance*" in French (eg. Disdéri 1862), and "*Ähnlichkeit*" in German. This German term can be translated into English as either "similarity", "resemblance", or "likeness".[146] As evident from the case of Müller's (1909) description quoted above, photographic resemblance involved the idea of the sitter's idealisation through his or her photograph. It was explicitly used in this way in the photographic discourse, as it was carried out in photographic studios and journals from the early 1850s onwards (cf. Hoerner 1989:76, 95, 151). By the late 1880s, the notion became so pervasive that it was even brought up in satirical magazines, such as the popular *Fliegende Blätter,* published in Munich.[147] In the edition of 1888, a drawing shows an elderly woman in a photographic studio. She implores the photographer, just before the image is taken: "please, please, Mr. Photographer, but not too similar [*nur nicht gar zu ähnlich*]". Throughout the 1890s, due to the before mentioned clashing interests of professional and artistically inclined lay photographers, the relationships between photographer and photographed, art and technology, were often made an issue in caricatures presented in contemporary satirical magazines (cf. Krauss 1978, Henisch and Henisch 1998).

Since Hermann W. Vogel's *Lehrbuch der Photographie* (1870), and its English translation (1875), written instructions for studio photographers in Germany dedicated considerable space to the artistic and aesthetic staging of the sitter. Focusing on commercial studio photography, the book contained more than 80 pages on *Die Kunst der Photographie oder die Photographische Aesthetik.* The book's fourth edition of four volumes (*Handbuch der Photographie*) even dedicated one entire volume to issues of aesthetics: *Die Photographische Kunstlehre oder die künstlerischen Grundsätze der Lichtbildnerei: für Fachmänner und Liebhaber* (1891).[148] All editions were well received and especially the part on aesthetics was considered as an innovation (Röll 1939:53). However, Vogel explicitly borrowed image examples and aesthetic ideas from the British photographer Henry Peach Robinson (1869, 1892), who is generally acknowledged as one of the first propagators of pictorialist ideas, next to the French André A.E. Disdéri (1862). Also Vogel himself had already started his work on aesthetics as early as 1866 (Röll 1939:49).

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[145] The first indicates a concrete photographic *object*, the second the *quality* of resemblance.

[146] In order to avoid further confusion I will from now on translate "*Ähnlichkeit*" with "resemblance".

[147] *Fliegende Blätter* was a common title for light readings in Germany. Its use for Mariannhill's first periodical (cf. Introduction) is not necessarily related to this particular satire periodical.

[148] Vogel noted in the introduction that after part I. (chemistry) he considered the aesthetic part of such great importance that he released it as part IV., even before part II. (optics) and part III. (practicalities).

Still in the 1891 edition, Vogel stated that, apart from his own work, there has only been one work published in Germany so far, translated from the English, which dealt specifically with the artistic aspects of photography.[149] Eventually, also Vogel's successor as professor at the Technische Hochschule in Berlin, Adolf Miethe, in his *Lehrbuch der Praktischen Photographie* (1902), included a long section on *Die Photographische Ästhetik im Atelier und im Freien*. Miethe was also the founder and editor of the above-mentioned journals *Atelier des Photographen* and *Photographische Chronik*, where Müller received and presented some of his ideas and photographs.

Hermann W. Vogel (1834-1898), based in Berlin, developed an international reputation through the translations of his work into various other languages, and the fact that he also served in juries for photographic competitions and exhibitions in the US. He also mingled with both ethnologists and anthropologists in Berlin. He cooperated with anthropologist Gustav Fritsch, who was responsible for photographic instructions in German anthropology and ethnography, which he first formulated in the early 1870s. Vogel and Fritsch had travelled to Egypt together in 1868, in order to observe and photograph a sun-eclipse (cf. Röll 1939, Herneck 1984). This was the same year that Fritsch started releasing his influential publications on South Africa, including his own photographs (cf. Chapter Six). At the same time, Vogel himself started engaging with the ethnological and anthropological community at large by attending and presenting at meetings of the Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte (eg. Vogel 1875b). During 1882 and 1883, Vogel also trained the anthropologist Franz Boas in photography (Jacknis 1984:4), before the latter emigrated to the US in 1887.

Vogel, and later his successor Miethe, worked as scientists and journal editors, but also contributed substantially to innovations in the field of photographic chemistry and technology. Particularly in their function as editors, they positioned photography as a practice in the discourse between science, art, and the interests of commercial studio photographers. Müller read their journals, and corresponded with fellow photographers through the Q&A sections, at least since 1898.[150] I shall refer to these correspondences throughout the next two chapters.

The general public discourse on the various qualities of photographs was only carried out regarding the most eminent examples and practitioners of (semi-)professional "artistic" photography and painting, and thus excluded the mass of amateur "snap-shot" photographs (and related aesthetics), if only to position itself against them (cf. Kaufhold 1986, Starl 1995).[151] When some photographic amateurs eventually desired more "art" and less "truth" in photographs by 1891 (Kaufhold 1986:18), Vogel still introduced his *Lehrbuch/Handbuch* (1870, 1875 and 1891) with the conundrum of "photography and truth" as follows:

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[149] Most likely he referred to the work of Robinson.

[150] Vogel founded and edited the journal *Photographische Mittheilungen* between 1864-1899, and Miethe founded and edited *Das Atelier des Photographen* and its addendum, *Photographische Chronik* in 1894 (cf. Hoerner 1984).

[151] See Starl (1995) for a history of private snapshot photography in Germany and Austria.

Experience has demonstrated that a sharp and spotless, or in short a technically perfect photograph, be it portrait or landscape, may appear on the one hand untrue, or it may displease when the observance of the laws of the beautiful (which are the cause of our pleasure in the works of the plastic art or paintings) have been disregarded. That these laws are not applicable to photography in their generality, which more than any other art is "glued to the substance" [… '*verhaftet an den Körpern'* (bodies) *klebt* ...], is evident. (Vogel 1875:292, also see 1891:1)

While the painter is free to bend reality according to his aesthetic preferences, so Vogel, the photographer is bound to the physicality of his sitters' bodies (also see Kracauer 1960:4). In the section on "characteristics and individuality", Vogel stated that "I call all external signs [of a sitter] that are necessary to a true and comprehensive representation characteristic" (1875:360). In regard to these "external signs" as "Character", Vogel thus equated "truth" repeatedly to the degree of "resemblance [*Ähnlichkeit*]":

Admirers of photography assert so often that this young art represents the pure truth, the true counterpart of nature.[152] Photography can, indeed, when rightly applied, produce truer pictures than any other art, but they are not absolutely true, and because they are not absolutely true it becomes important to learn the sources of error, and they are manifold. (Vogel 1875:293)

As such sources he considered potential distortion through the lens, illusions of perspective, or elongations of the image during printing. In 1891 Vogel added: "Even coroners [*Untersuchungsrichter*][153] pay homage to this conviction, and assert that a photograph must be similar [*ähnlich*] at all times. Unfortunately this is not the case" (Vogel 1891:2).[154] In order to achieve an acceptable balance of "truth" and "beauty" within his approach to aesthetics, apart from lighting and other practical issues—which I will consider in Chapter Four—Vogel relied entirely on principles and examples taken from classical painting, genre painting, and renaissance statues, such as those by Giovanni Rustici. In the section "arrangement" he suggested the geometrical pattern of the pyramid as a basic structure for composing an image, which may repeat itself throughout the horizontal line of the photograph, in order to achieve a "balance" in the image: "[the] arrangement harmonises the best with our feelings […] because the pyramid rests on the firmest foundation; and we demand a firm stand for every figure at any price, particularly in photography" (1875:336). This pyramidal aesthetic was generally considered as favourable, and often described as widely practiced (eg. Hoffmann 1889:309, Miethe 1902:412).

Analysing Müller's photographs (eg. Figure 21) with these criteria in mind, clearly shows his consequent attention to a pyramidal composition. In this particular case, not only one major pyramid can be distinguished, descending from the girl at the very back (carrying a baby on her

[152] My own translation/correction from the German original: "[…] *unter Wahrheit die Übereinstimmung mit der Wirklichkeit verstanden.* ([…] comprehending truth as the photograph's correspondence with reality.)" (Vogel 1870:388).

[153] Vogel here appears to speak of judges and their use of photographs to identify criminals, rather than their use to analyse crime-scenes. The notion of truthful resemblance was naturally of importance in the juridical field, i.e. mug-shots to identify suspects, or in the case of crime-scene photography, in order to determine the cause of death and the course of events. e.g. Ginzburg (1989), Mnookin (1987), Regener (1999), Sekula (1986).

[154] My own translation from the German original.

back), but also three smaller pyramids, constituted by the two crouching girls to the left, the two standing in the centre, as well as the two children to the right. Adding to this geometrical composition is the fact that the scene is partially reflected in the water, an aesthetic component that Müller used in his work repeatedly (cf. Figure 1). The latter aspect shows particular attention to proper lighting, not only of the figures, but also in order to bring out their mirror images. The pyramidal construction can also be observed in many of Müller's other photographs presented in this study, and was generally practiced by pictorial photographers. Another feature of Vogel's instructions, which can be observed in most of Müller's photographs, is the clear attention to the "supporting leg [*Standbein*]" and the "free leg [*Spielbein*]", the upper body and head turned against the feet, and eventually the hands and arms, of which one should hang down, while the other is placed somewhere else (eg. a table, or holding an object). According to Vogel, the sitter then "appears, even in the lifeless picture itself, capable of motion" (1875:332). The intention was thus to create a lifelike and natural impression, even though the arrangement was obviously and conventionally posed (cf. Benjamin 1963b:54).

Such aesthetic conventions thus bring up the question whether photographers at the time attempted to create either mimetic, or idealised photographs. As we already heard from Vogel, "resemblance" was somewhere in between. While it is not possible to review the entire discourse on "photographic resemblance" here, I must briefly refer to the discourse predating the 1880s.[155] As described by Von Brevern (2013), "photographic resemblance" was already perceived as ambivalent by French writers in the 1850s, when for example Francis Wey (arguing against positions such as of Rodolphe Töpffer) stated that an *artistic* photographer (like a painter) could indeed create *characteristic* resemblance true to the sitters character, contrary to the belief that the camera only mechanically reproduced a mimetic *identity* (also see Holschbach 2006). "Photographic resemblance", is thus not the same as the "iconic" in semiotic terms, but instead was an *argued* and per definition a negotiated relationship from early on. However, all authors who dealt with the topic so far, only discuss conceptions of "resemblance", either during or before the 1860s. This is why I will present a brief overview of statements made by authors during the time Mariannhill's photographs were taken, and which Müller would have been able to access.

Müller was clearly aware of Vogel's, Disdéri's and Robinson's ideas, and had read at least one author who discussed them. The still existing small stock of contemporary photographic literature from Mariannhill's studio contains a handbook on retouching by Hans Arnold (1892), where the author further explored ideas from his earlier publication *Ueber Aehnlichkeit in der Portraitphotographie* (1889). In both works he explicitly identified the photographers' attempts to achieve "resemblance" as a contemporary "problem". Mariannhill's collection of photographic

[155] As Von Brevern (2013) rightly states, a (international) history of "photographic resemblance" has not yet been written. Surprisingly few authors analyse it as a contemporary concept in a historical discourse, and none of these authors does so for the period just before and after 1900. All accounts are rather inconsistent and do not address the idea's pervasiveness and particularity (eg. Gage 1997, Trachtenberg 1992). However, it may be misleading to assume that all language-discourses relied on a singular contemporary conception.

literature further contains volumes of the *Atelier des Photographen* and of the *Deutscher Camera Almanach*, where Fritz Möller published the article *Etwas von der Ähnlichkeit* (1898) and where Gustav Albien published the article *Das Problem der Ähnlichkeit im Porträt* (1911).

Arnold stated that "resemblance" was at the very heart of photographic practice (1892:46). All four mentioned works were concerned with the professional studio photographer, and theorised the "problem of resemblance", as Albien would have it, in the same way for more than 20 years by contrasting photographic practice to the work of artistic painters. While the latter had much time at his hand, so they argued, not only to study his subject, but also to alter the painting, the commercial studio photographer instead had to "read", understand, and accordingly to reproduce the physiognomy of his sitter quickly. As the painter achieved favourable resemblance artistically, the photographer had to create it through skilled social interaction. Only in such a way could the photographer have the sitter strike the desired pose and the facial expression at the very moment of exposure. Accordingly, the photographer had to adjust perspective, lighting, and decide on which side of the face to photograph. Arnold (1889) thus distinguished a "natural" from an "idealised" resemblance (also see Kirchbach 1889, Möller 1898:94). Arnold further argued that the difference between the two eventually depends on the willingness of the photographer to meet the wishes of his customers. It was the latters' "vanity" and final judgement that eventually decided whether a photograph was indeed "resemblant" or not. It may also be argued that only a sitter's immediate acquaintances could indeed judge the quality of photographic "resemblance" (cf. Gage 1997:119). Br. Aegidius Müller eventually addressed this contemporary issue of image evaluation with a photographic composition, showing four women near the mission station Kevelaer. The photograph was published twice in the *Vergißmeinnicht* (1909, 1917) with the title "Female Vanity. A heathen Kafir girl contemplates her photograph" (Figure 19).[156] Almost identical *mise-en-scenes* had been produced earlier by the Berlin studio Loescher & Petsch.

[156] My own translation from the German original. In a published version of later decades, the same photograph is titled "message from home". The caption therefore claims that the girl is reading a letter, instead of looking at her own image.

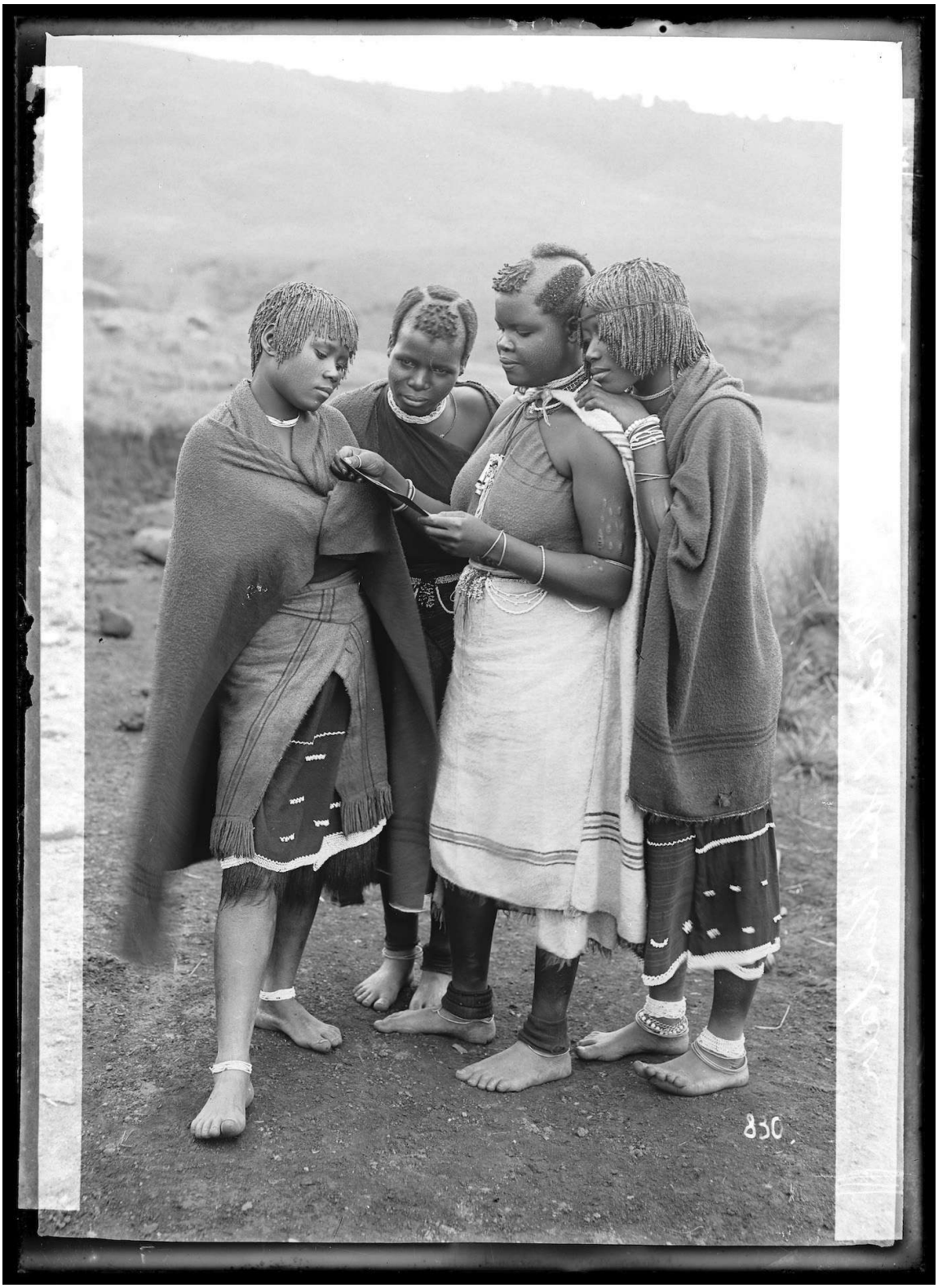


Figure 19: original caption: "*Weibliche Eitelkeit. Ein Heidnisches Kaffernmädchen betrachtet seine Photographie*"—"Female vanity. A heathen Kafir girl contemplates her photograph" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, published in *Vergißmeinnicht* 1917:80, also 1909:225).

All three mentioned authors writing on "photographic resemblance" understood the idea as a manifestation and measurement of the sitter's "character", expressed through his characteristic posture and facial expression. Especially Arnold and Möller considered it necessary to approach photographic study through physiognomy, and especially through the work of Lavater and Piderit. According to them, the face could be read through explicit blueprints, such as the "four temperaments", which Br. Aegidius Müller invoked in his 1909 article. Möller went as far as composing a "physiognomic tableau [*Physiognomische Tafel*]" of 200 photographs showing distinct facial expressions that he thought could generally be found with people. His performance of the "four temperaments" was published with his article in 1898.[157] We recall that also Müller considered his arrangement of portraits in 1909 as a "sample-card [*Musterkarte*] of facial types". All mentioned authors relied equally on the notion that an underlying canon of beauty existed, which was, according to them, exemplified by artists like Velázquez or Rembrandt, and should be appropriated by photographers: "One has to know what humanity considers as beautiful or ugly, in order to be able to depict it" (Möller 1898:78). The notion of "resemblance" was here once more directed towards an ideal of art. This shall become even more important in the next section.

In the 1930s, Walter Benjamin was still haunted by the demand of "*Ähnlichkeit*" or "resemblance", when writing up his memories of experiences he had in the photographic studios of Berlin and elsewhere, as a child around 1900:

> The gift of perceiving similarities is, in fact, nothing but a weak remnant of the old compulsion to become similar and to behave mimetically. In me, however, this compulsion acted through words. Not those that made me similar to models of good breeding, but those that made me similar to dwelling places, furniture, clothes. Never to my own image, though. And that explains why I was at such a loss when someone demanded of me similarity to myself [*wenn man Ähnlichkeit mit mir selbst von mir verlangte*]. This would happen at the photographer's studio. Wherever I looked, I saw myself surrounded by folding screens, cushions, and pedestals which craved my image much as the shades of Hades craved the blood of the sacrificial animal. In the end, I was offered up to a crudely painted prospect of the Alps, and my right hand, which had to brandish a kidskin hat, cast its shadow on the clouds and snowfields of the backdrop. (Benjamin 2002:391-392, also see Benjamin 1972)

In his two almost identical essays from the 1930s, "doctrine of the similar" (1977a), and the "mimetic faculty" (1977b), Benjamin only described "resemblance" in relation to textual and linguistic imitation. It is therefore difficult to project it forcibly onto photographic representation. But in the particular case of the quote above, he contrasted the idea to the concrete situation in a photographic studio, where "similarity [*Ähnlichkeit*]" and thus "resemblance" was obviously a concrete part of an established discourse and a vocalised practice, as uttered by photographers in the presence of their sitters. Benjamin recalled the photographer's attempt to *make* him similar photographically, explicitly to himself, but implicitly also similar to an Alpine peasant stereotype, while Benjamin himself *resisted* to become similar.[158] In the next section I will

[157] For overviews of the contemporary mutual influence of physiognomy and photography see for example Trieder, John and Immisch (2001); also see Kaufhold (1986) and Woodall (1997).

[158] The volume in which this extended quote appears, also contains a photograph on which the description may be

elaborate on this principle in relation to Müller's attempts to fuse popular European "genre images" with his own photographic imaginations of Africans.

Read against what I just explained, Müller's earlier quoted theory (1909) thus indeed amounts to something resembling "mechanical objectivity" (Daston and Galison 2007): other than the painter, the camera allegedly records *everything* that comes before it.[159] Müller stressed the unfailing and penetrating objectivity of the lens, unearthing a person's "character" at any time. For the professional studio photographer, however, such a situation eventually created an aesthetic problem, which Vogel formulated by saying that

> […] a great many [sitters] do not care particularly for a true representation of their character. The rascal wishes to appear as a honest man; the lady passing into the sear and yellow leaf of autumn wants to be young and coquettish; the servant girl wishes to represent the mistress; the daughter of the mechanic wants to look like the court lady, and the street-sweep would be a gentleman" (Vogel 1875:363, also see Waetzoldt 1908:83, Müller 1909:177).

However, it should have become clear by now that Müller proclaimed, rather than indeed practiced this theory, and instead adhered to Vogel's doctrines of aesthetification, and thus the ambivalent notion of "resemblance".

Vogel himself considered a margin of permitted "beautification", the possibility to cover ugliness, or to direct attention to other features of the person by lighting, retouching, or garment. He thus distinguished three levels of retouching: on the positive image, on the negative, but also on the "original", by which he meant the application of cosmetics (1875:375, also see Arnold 1889). Vogel's assessment eventually was a practical instruction intended for the photographic apprentice, while we must acknowledge that the one of Müller was mission propaganda for a German-speaking Catholic middle class. Whether it was through mediation by others, or by studying the book itself, Müller had indeed followed much of the advice as put down by Robinson and by Vogel: throughout his working life Müller arranged, framed, cropped, and retouched extensively to achieve his aesthetic intentions, which can in many cases be shown by comparing negatives to printed and published positives. Photographed subjects and objects were either enhanced aesthetically, or in few cases even eradicated from the image (cf. Chapters Two and Four). The analysis of glass plate negatives also allows to retrace Müller's practice of excessive retouching, in particular of customers' faces (and sometimes hands). The digital inversion of the glass plate negative below (Figure 20) shows a group of seven females, probably a mother with her six daughters. The discolouration and the tonal shading of the faces clearly shows the intentional smoothening of the features through retouching. This resulted in a lightening of shadows on the left side of the faces, giving an impression of flatness to the facial surface. It may be that Müller either carried out a standard manipulation, or that he retouched according to the particular wishes of each client. Other than European photographers, Müller had to develop particular skills to deal adequately with the exceptionally wide range of skin tones of

based: in 1902 Walter Benjamin and his brother Georg posed in an alpine peasant outfit in a photographic studio (Benjamin 2002:391).

[159] Also see Mnookin (1997:17) for a similar legal interpretation from the 1860s.

his various customers according to their different "racial" backgrounds.



Figure 20: seven unidentified females in the Mariannhill Studio, approx. 1905 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

Of course, next to Vogel there were many other professionals who published advice on how to best take artistic photographs. This was the case in particular since the 1880s, when smaller and faster cameras became available to a broader mass of people in Europe and elsewhere. Common to most positions was that "*ideal* and *resemblance* underwent a paradoxical fusion" (Regener 1999:44). It is thus important to realise at this point that "photographic resemblance" (*Ähnlichkeit*), did not stand for "mechanical objectivity" around 1900, but indeed reflected an epistemological ambivalence. Hans Möller wrote in 1898 that clients often stated that they wanted a "characteristic" photograph, while they actually meant "conventional" (Möller 1898:94). This conventional middle ground of well-established and neutral poses, such as the "three-quarter", "half-length", or the "full-body portrait", allowed the sitter to blend in by adopting, or rather by *imitating* socially accepted poses (cf. Starl 1993:27-35).[160] As I will show, such poses were likewise adopted by Africans outside of the studio, often under Müller's

[160] Or, as Roland Barthes suggested, when being photographed we imitate our own imagined *social* self (1993:13).

direction. This has to be taken into consideration when evaluating photographs as historical sources. I will thus consider the "portrait" as an aesthetic format of photography supposed to identify an individual (cf. Brilliant 1991, Woodall 1997, Waetzoldt 1908), but I also consider it as a format that is thought of as "resembling" (rather than being "identical" with) an individual only in very concrete and subjective situations. I will discuss such "photographic occasions" in more detail in Part Two.

Due to the difficulties concerning the *recognition* of photographic "resemblance", interviewing people around Mariannhill with photographs became an ambivalent exercise for me: several of my interlocutors were absolutely sure to recognise ancestors due to a resemblance of facial features. A woman I interviewed in 2007 near Mariannhill, insisted vehemently that a photograph showed her father in old age. She maintained this opinion, even after I had explained to her that this would be temporarily impossible, as I had dated the photograph with certainty to approximately 1905. Many Africans near Mariannhill also recognised Abbot Franz Pfanner in depictions of other monks, equally bearded and dressed in Trappist robes. But also authors of the congregation itself have in recent years repeatedly misidentified Trappists in the old photographs, due to the uniformity of their appearance. As stated earlier, "recognition" is a highly subjective perception, and thereby renders "resemblance" a subjective claim. During the early decades of photographic practice in Europe it was often disputed who exactly was depicted in a photographic portrait, and it was even common that sitters themselves could be fooled with photographs of others as their own (cf. Mnookin 1997:31, also Gage 1997, Brevern 2013). Resemblances between individuals depicted in the photographic collection of Mariannhill will nevertheless prove useful for studying biographies of people alongside those of their photographs, by tracing the same individual through multiple depictions.

"A Picture as well as a Photograph": Africanising Genre Photographs

In this section I shall discuss the notion of "resemblance" within the practice of "genre photography". Throughout the rest of this chapter and the next I will also develop its connection to the practice of the *tableau vivant* as an independent medium. Mariannhill's photographers relied on image examples from Europe, which at the time was the main direction of the mission's propaganda work. Br. Aegidius Müller, for example, arrived at Mariannhill with a particular worldview, training, and certain ideas on popular culture in terms of literature, music, material aesthetics, and photography. This becomes apparent in his description of the landscape around Mariannhill in 1889, which I quoted above. Apart from biblical imagery, he integrated rather worldly image conventions in his efforts of framing the mission, as well as his own self-fashioning. The archives at Mariannhill Monastery still hold several publications of German photographic journals and instructions, such as the *Deutscher Camera Almanach* and the earlier-mentioned *Atelier des Photographen*. These publications served as sources of inspiration, and as an interface with contemporary print culture. Contrary to the congregation's imperative to "divest himself of his old identity", Müller occasionally still used his secular name "Joseph Müller" when interacting with White South Africans.

The South African art world payed attention to Müller's work, once he had promoted it intentionally outside the sphere of mission propaganda. In December 1909, he was awarded the first price for one of his works in a photo competition, held by the publication organ of the Association of Closer Union Societies. Members of the British High Commissioner Milner's "Kindergarten" had initiated the monthly journal *The State*, in order to further the idea of South African Union. In October 1908, Lionel Curtis announced it during a meeting of the Closer Union States Societies in Durban, which was held during the first session of the South African National Convention (Nimocks 1968:111). Many of the attending politicians visited Mariannhill while in the area, some even purchasing photographs (cf. Chapter Three).

The journal was first released in 1909, initially edited by Philip Kerr and funded by the Rhodes Trust and at least three imperialist mining magnates. These were Sir Abe Bailey and Lionel Phillips (Dubow 2006:163), as well as Howard Pim (Legassick 1995:56). Not only did these men actively influence racial politics, but they were also active art collectors, who eventually loaned or donated their collections to the South African National Gallery and the Johannesburg Art Gallery in the 1930s (cf. Chapter Seven). *The State* dealt with a wide range of political issues and at the same time was considered as a forum for pro-Union cultural activists, in order to create a unified South African identity by developing its own aesthetics (Dubow 2006:164, also see Merrington 1995).

The winning photograph was published in *The State* under the name "Josef Müller" with the following caption:

"The State" Photographic Competition.
This month all South Africa from the Sambesi to the Cape was represented in the entries received. "The Naiads of Natal", by Mr. Josef Müller of Mariannhill, Pinetown, is a picture as well as a photograph. The graceful grouping of the Kafir girls at the stream would have delighted a Burne-Jones or perhaps have induced an Alma-Tadema to forsake the marble baths of ancient Rome for the natural watering places of the Natalian bush. Every detail of the scene will repay study, from the plump limber-shanked picaninny to the tasseled topknot of the young Zulu wife who is filling her calabash. […] (Lancelot Ussher, *The State*, 1909).



Figure 21: original caption: "First Prize—Photo competition. The Naiads of Natal. By Josef Müller" (as published in *The State*, 1909. Copy at Museum Africa, Johannesburg).[161]

The lauder's identification of the work as "a picture *as well as* a photograph" not only shows the association he makes with popular British artists of the time, but also points to the possibility that similar works may indeed have inspired Müller. The photograph is titled "The Naiads of Natal" and shows a group of five young women, posing in a water pool or stream, while being watched by four children. Other than in the portraits presented in the last section, here the gazes of the photographed subjects are closed within the image, and do not aim at the lens. This suggests that such an arrangement was not intended as a "portrait", but indeed as a "picture". As a pictorial composition it does therefore not acknowledge the camera's presence.

[161] The photograph's print is here shown as it appears in the journal *The State* (1909). This particular cut-out is housed in the photographic collection of the Museum Africa in Johannesburg (PH2010-230 / 572-13). It is filed under the label: "Zulu - Dress - Women". In *The State's* 1909 copy at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban the photograph has been cut out. Whether both do match is unclear.

While the photograph itself is indeed present in Mariannhill's photographic studio albums, the caption cannot be found there. In the albums, as well as on the original glass plate negative, the German caption is rather descriptive and related to action and location: "Girls scooping water at the Umlazi [river]".[162] The more imaginative caption "Naiads of Natal" was only applied under the secular authorship of "Josef Müller". Apparently, "native" and scarcely dressed women, with titles invoking classic literature and art, such as "woodland nymphs" were a common topic in commercial colonial photography (Thomas 1992:369). Furthermore, such "classicizing of indigenous figures" was already a common trend with the pre-union effort to aesthetically appropriate South African themes within European conventions (Merrington 1995:652), eventually brought together in the journal *The State*.

For this reason we have to address a key problem in the art historical interpretation of colonial imagery. This concerns the repetition, resemblance, as well as the recognition of images. The photographic theme of women collecting water repeats itself throughout Müller's surviving oeuvre in more than 40 different variations. For the jury member Lancelot Ussher, who was an experienced photographer himself (Bensusan 1966:106), Müller's winning photograph bore resemblance to the work of the British painter Edward Burne-Jones and the Dutch-born Lawrence Alma-Tadema. Such acts of recognition and association may have been possible for contemporary audiences, but pose a problem for a researcher more than 100 years later. Lacking the contemporary "collateral knowledge", we have to reconstruct associative frameworks, of which some are more evident than others. We can at least observe that Ussher associated Müller's composition with two painters, whose oeuvres were known for their orientalist and classicist sceneries. There are thus not only potential difficulties with identifying "cross-cultural" aesthetics, arising in the process of performance and posing during the photographic occasion. Furthermore, there are problems with identifying the origins of images over time, depending on what Pinney called the "recursive nature of image production" (cf. Pinney 2004, 2005, also see Ginzburg 1989a). As I discussed in the introduction, a combined consideration of provenance and provenience (Joyce 2012, 2013), as well as image genealogies (Gell 1998) allow us to approach such origins. At the same time, we should not lose sight of individual image producers and their intentions.

The South African art historian Michael Godby (2008) earlier pointed out the need for art historical analysis in studying South African historical photographs. As I just explained, this involves the conundrum of "resemblance": how can we know what a photographer had seen, and what he attempted to depict in his photographs, unless we have his written confirmation? We would have to balance our analysis of prototypes with potential image examples of what the photographer had actually seen before he decided to take a photograph. To provide an example, it was certainly the case that African mothers, as we can often see them in photographs from Natal, routinely carried babies on their backs. And it may be equally true that the perception of this habit was reinforced by popular imagery. It is problematic, however, to state that such imagery

[162] My own translation from the German original: "*Mädel schöpfen Wasser am Umlazi*".

"draws its vocabulary simultaneously from Christian Madonna imagery" (Garb 2013:30). It is a crucial difference whether one merely claims from a temporal distance that photographs look similar and that they were influenced by pictorialist conventions, or whether one shows empirically that contemporary social actors, photographers, and their interpreters indeed expressed an "intertextual" or "interpictorial" experience. These issues are usually addressed in terms of iconography and iconology, which I already discussed in the introduction.

With few exceptions, Mariannhill's photographs are carefully staged and many are modelled after common "genre" themes, as I will show throughout this work. However, even if the photographers staged a particular *mise en scène*, it can not always be clearly pin-pointed whether they intended to reference particular artwork. This may only be claimed in case the artwork which had served as an inspiration is clearly indicated, or in case the resemblance to another artwork amounts to such a degree that it is unmistakable (cf. Ginzburg 1989a:49). As with portrait photography in the previous section, this begs the question of how one can possibly measure "resemblance". Mariannhill's photographers may have drawn inspiration from artworks, either through pre-existing textual narratives, or from published imagery. They would have acquired them from popular magazines with pictorial illustrations, or from illustrated Bibles. Once they had been stockpiled at the photographic studio, such images can now be approached as what Pinney called "recursive archives" (2005:265) and what Greenblatt thought of as "mimetic capital" (1991). Before I present several examples for such cases, I need to return to some contemporary aesthetic conventions and the epistemic discourses concerning photographic "resemblance" and "reality".

It is documented that Alma-Tadema's paintings were indeed at times re-staged as *tableaux vivants* in Europe (Reissberger 2002:100). As I explain in the next chapter, the performance and photographs of *tableaux vivants* were first recorded at Mariannhill during theatre plays at Pfanner's Jubilee in 1888. This European theatrical convention consisted of staging people as so-called "living pictures" in arranged *mise en scène.* This required the actors to halt in a particular position for a prolonged period of time, often lingering on a play's final scene. The audience was supposed to *experience* the formation, and eventually to *recognise* the imitated image. Since the late 18th century, *tableaux vivants* became popular in the context of theatre performances *on-stage* (Jooss 1999), but were also re-created *off-stage* as fashionable home entertainment (see Wallner 1870 and 1895). Once print media allowed in-text printing of photographs by the 1880s, depictions of *tableaux* became increasingly popular as illustrations (Brandl-Risi 2013; Krauss 2005; Jooss 2010, 2011; also see Foucault 2002:873). The latter fact also contributed to the recognisability of *tableaux* with wider audiences other than the upper class, and the social game of recognising *images* in *tableaux vivants* (Krauss 2005:59).

In the following I explain the performative idea of the photographic *tableaux vivants* as a freezing, or a mortification of the photographic model, and its relation to the idea of the genre photograph as a staged narrative, and as being explicitly opposed to snapshot photographs. Building up the idea over several sections of this chapter and the next should enable us to better

understand photographic practice at Mariannhill. We can then conceive of the *tableau vivant* as an intentional and conventional pose and performance during a photographic occasion, a medium in its own right. The *tableau* as such exists in between a pre-photographic image idea, which preceded the photographic occasion on the one hand, and the material photograph on the other. When performing a *tableau* for a stage play or photograph, models intentionally held the pose in order to create a lasting ensemble, and not because exposure times required it (see next section). The *tableau* thus constituted a stable entity for a considerable time, which justifies to consider the *tableau* as a form of medium in itself, or as what Holschbach has called an "intermedium" (2006:36, also see Plumpe 1990:82), situated in between a preceding image idea and the photographic image-object.

Once the idea of the *tableau* became a conscious and intentional part of the photographic occasion, its participants before and behind the camera had to discuss the anticipated image. Accordingly, the photographer attempted to *make* the models similar to an image, while the models attempted to *become* similar. However, like Walter Benjamin in the previous section and Mariannhill's novices whom I described in the introduction, models may also be reluctant to pose. The act of imitation may thus have taken place knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly (cf. Schade 1996:74). Like with portrait photographs in the last section, with genre photographs the question is however, whom or what did the models imitate? The characteristic features of a person, the conventional pose of studio photography, or even a concrete example of artwork? Paying attention to the conceptual differences to the case of portraiture, I now explore the notion of "resemblance" in relation to "genre photographs", such as the "Naiads of Natal". A tableau-like performance here became the medium of imitation.

In 1909, the same year when Müller wrote his article and received his "First Prize", the photographer L.L. Kleintjes from Munich published in the *Deutscher Camera Almanach* on genre photography. "The genre photograph is hard to define", he wrote, "but can be located on a spectrum between portraiture and landscape (or interior)". In this central position of the "genre", the individual and its surroundings are equally balanced in the idea of "daily life". Kleintjes further posed this idea against—thereby criticising—the "sentimental and sweet works", which many photographers had produced earlier (also see Hofmeister 1898). According to Kleintjes, it required great artistic skills "to tell a story with a 'before and after' of occurrences in one single image, so that our mind may grasp the succession of events, even though our eye is only presented with one episode" (Kleintjes 1909:35).[163] He also suggested to present the photographic subjects as representatives of an entire "category [*Gattung*]", such as any "random work" could stand for "work as such". He concluded that this would literally be a "genre", a "*Gattungsbild* in the strict sense of the term".[164] He considered it to be "complicated to produce a

[163] My own translation from the German original.

[164] The German "*Genrebild"* was also referred to as "*Gattungbild"* or "*Sittenbild"*. The term "genre image" was firmly established between the 1830s and 40s in Germany. Already by the 17th century it was distinguished from "history painting", which was used for historically or biblically derived themes (Stechow and Comer 1976). While the history painting is related to a concrete point in space and time, the genre painting is atemporal in the

narrative [*erzählendes*] genre image", as it needed capable "models", on whose understanding of their task the success of the photograph depended. He thus suggested to find a "striking type [*markanten typus*]" for this purpose. In general, it was the "externalities [*Äußerlichkeiten*]", so he wrote, "which hindered the photographer to have his fantasy roam freely when producing an image. Reality can be found somewhere in between fantasy and the image. It is the latter into which everything has to be translated up to the smallest detail, before the camera can come to its right. Everything too much or too little will remind the beholder that the image has indeed been *posed,* and not *seen*" (Kleintjes 1909:40-41).[165]

Already 20 years earlier, C.F. Hoffmann had made it clear that his conception of photographic truth relied on the *plausibility* of a genre-scene: "it is therefore the *apparent truth, the perfection of the illusion*, which must be preserved in the image" (1889:284).[166] The concern was thus about the artistic composition of the photograph, and not whether the event had actually taken place. Also Henry P. Robinson had made a similar statement already by 1869, which he still repeated in 1892.[167] We see once more that it was legitimate within the international contemporary photographic discourse to distill generally-assumed social realities into artistic photography, as long as the depicted event remained plausibly connected to the everyday world of the audience. "Genre photographs" are usually understood as explicitly posed depictions of "scenes of daily life", scenes, which a European audience could therefore even better recognise and position as a concrete narrative within a wider social discourse (cf. Petersen 2008a). Genre photography as an image category thus connected seamlessly to the practice of *tableaux vivants* as a mode of theatrical performance. Edmund Wallner (1876) already made this connection when he proposed genre photographs as examples for the staging of *tableaux vivants*.

Like most colonial photographs, many of Mariannhill's photographs can be located on this "spectrum between portrait and landscape", as identified by Kleintjes in 1909. Scholars, such as for example Gidley (1994), Gore (2015), Griffiths (2002), Jäger (2009), Stevenson and Graham-Stewart (2001), and Waldroup (2012) suggested that art photography and pictorialism indeed played a role in the representation of the European colonies and the Americas, as well as in the practice of Black West African photographers around 1900. Also some of the authors in Theye's (1989) *Der geraubte Schatten*, and also Wiener (1990) suggest that there was a connection between ethnographic photography and genre photography and pictorialism. None of the authors, however, provides examples for the photographers' artistic motivation and aesthetic principles, or related image examples (but see Grossman 2014; Mnyaka 2012, 2014). None of these studies draw connections in this regard between modes of production, intentions, and contexts of employment, such as the use of artistically inspired photographs in ethnographic academic circles. For the case of Mariannhill, such biographies can in some cases be followed in

sense that it relates only to a wider epoch, region, or group of people.

[165] My own translation from the German original. Emphasis as in the original. (also see Vogel's statement on the same conundrum in the last section).

[166] My own translation from the German original. Emphasis as in the original.

[167] Robinson (1869, 1892:109), also cited in Mnookin (1997:26).

detail, showing that conventions of art and ethnography were indeed mutually influential.

Also other mission societies were clearly aware of the advantages of framing their work according to prevalent European artistic aesthetics (cf. Jäger 2009, Maxwell 2011), but they have not yet been explored in relation to concrete examples. In this section I therefore describe the tradition of genre photography as it was applied to supposed "everyday life" at Mariannhill. In the next chapter I discuss its application in relation to the representations of conversion and faith and in the context of actual theatre performances. In Chapter Six I will eventually contrast it to allegedly "ethnographic" photographs. Even though there were voices against it amongst European photographers, Müller followed a particular style of genre photography since approximately 1900, which can be counted amongst the "sweet and sentimental" examples mentioned above. Some contemporary photographers instead considered it "undesirable to imitate [*nachzuahmen*] a genre painting by posing sitters in the same way, and by making the background and everything else similar [*ähnlich*] to the proposed example, as this can only be a disappointment to the beholder, in case he is aware of the original" (Hoffmann 1889:282).

Apart from the majority of individual portraits, group photographs, and landscape views, Müller adopted many themes, which were popular in the German entertainment press at the time, and reworked them into africanised genre images that had various degrees of "narrativity". He dressed, staged, framed, and captioned photographs of children as "African cupids", equipped with local adornment, bow and arrow (Figure 22); courting African couples in romantic postures, or "Zulu warriors" in *pose plastique*, mimicking exaggerated fighting postures, resembling statues or paintings of Greek warriors, equally with shield and spear; in his studio he arranged "traditionally" dressed African women holding "tea-circles", complete with porcelain service and smoking cigarettes.[168] For such photographs the smoke had to be retouched onto the negative in an elaborate process. Especially the latter kind of images reference examples from satire journals, presenting for humorist effect Africans' alleged inability to adapt adequately to European culture. Maybe at the most extreme end of photographic fantasies at Mariannhill stood photomontages of African toddlers riding giant butterflies or crickets (Figure 22). Even if photographic montage became generally more popular during the 1920s, the permanent arrangement of previously unrelated images on one surface was not a common practice at Mariannhill. Nevertheless, I will deal with some more examples in Chapter Two. While montages remained experimental at Mariannhill, other topics were reproduced, or rather re-staged and re-enacted, repeatedly over the years (cf. Rippe 2018).

Authors such as Fiedler (2005) and Fabian (1992, 2000) discuss similar examples as "ethnographic humour" and "White humour" respectively. They take their examples from popular ethnographic accounts, such as the work of Adolf Bastian published in 1855, and Leo Frobenius in 1907. Both Fiedler and Fabian may still not have realised the pervasiveness of the

[168] This example can be matched to an image appearing in the satire journal *Fiegende Blätter* (1896:225), titled "[…] *das erste Kaffeekränzchen in Ostafrika* [… the first coffee-circle in East Africa]. The artist was Rudolph Grieß, who published caricatures taking place in Africa in the same journal on a regular basis.

phenomenon at the time. They nevertheless make the plausible suggestion that such forms of humour can be understood as a coping mechanism employed by colonial actors, in order to suggest to a European readership that one was in control of the situation. This suggestion may hold true for several of the examples I present throughout this study.

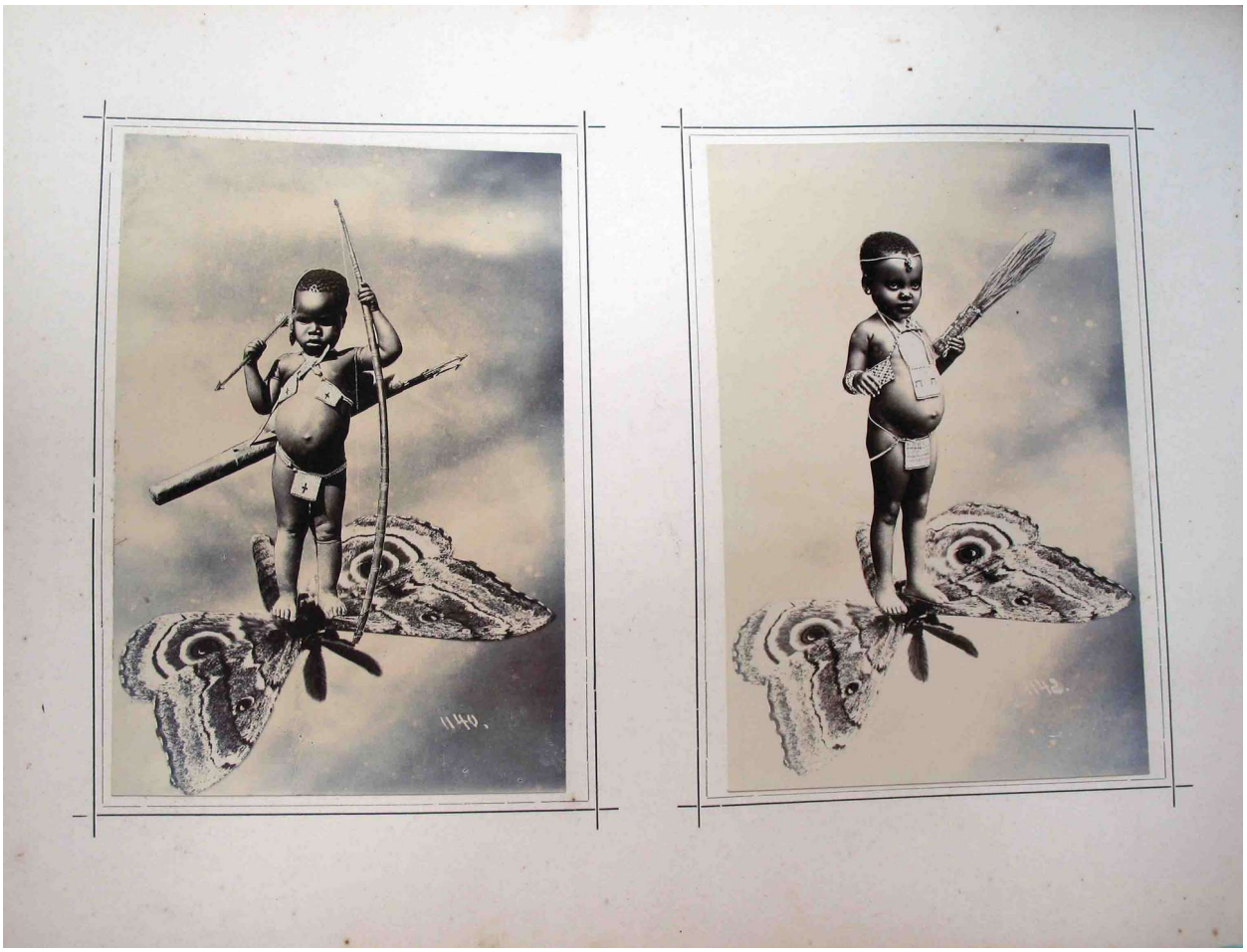


Figure 22: toddlers riding butterflies. approx. 1900-1908 (CMM Archives).

By comparing photographs to contemporary genre paintings, it is possible to trace other artists, who served as an inspiration to Müller. Two of these are the humorist genre painters Carl Spitzweg and Pietro Torrini. The German Spitzweg (1808-1885) is known for his work in the satirical magazine *Fliegende Blätter,* and in his case it is the sheer number of similar photographs in the remaining oeuvre of Mariannhill, which make an inspiration plausible. For example, Spitzweg's well-known painting *Der Naturforscher in den Tropen* (1835) matches several of Müller's attempts of immersing himself photographically in lush nature scenarios close to Mariannhill (Figure 23). These resemblances must not only be seen in terms of image reproductions, but in the wider late-romanticist and *Jugendstil* (art nouveau) experience of coming closer to nature, which was a prevalent notion in Europe at the time. Michael Godby

identifies a similar inclination with the German anthropologist Gustav Fritsch, who travelled through South Africa during the 1860s (Godby 2008:127, also see below and Chapter Six). Spitzweg furthermore produced scenarios within the wider field of humorous genre paintings, popularised through the magazine *Fliegende Blätter*. His oeuvre consisted of a standard repertoire, which even he himself repeated on a regular basis. His painterly world was populated by eccentrics and collectors, the mundane parts of a monk's or hermit's life, lovers in forest glades, hunters, women carrying pots in rustic landscapes, and eventually orientalist images set in Middle Eastern coffee houses or harems. It even included more fantastic themes, such as dragons, witches, diviners and sorcerers, witches and their familiars, or, as in the potential adaptation by Müller, nymphs (ie. naiads) in forest glades (cf. Roennefahrt 1960, Wichmann 2002). Several of these themes could already be found in earlier imaginations of the South African encounter scenario.

A concrete example after the Italian artist Pietro Torrini (1852-1920) is the painting of several monks sharing a joke, of which a contemporary commercial reproduction could even be found amongst archived photographs at Mariannhill Monastery.[169] Müller appropriated it to illustrate the press release of the *Mariannhiller Kalender* in 1904. The priest sitting at the table and holding the *Kalender* is Fr. Dominikus Frey, the editor of Mariannhill's print media at the time.

[169] Müller appropriated Torrini's painting by retouching the cover of the book handled by the principal monk: "*Mariannhill Kalender für das Jahr ????*".



Figure 23: original caption: “Am Wasserfall am Tafelberg”. Br. Aegidius Müller, near Mariannhill, approx. 1910 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).



Figure 24: print of a painting by Pietro Torrini. The cover of the booklet held by Fr. Dominikus Frey has been fitted with a photograph from Mariannhill's collection and the line "*Mariannhiller Kalender für das Jahr ????*" (CMM Archives).

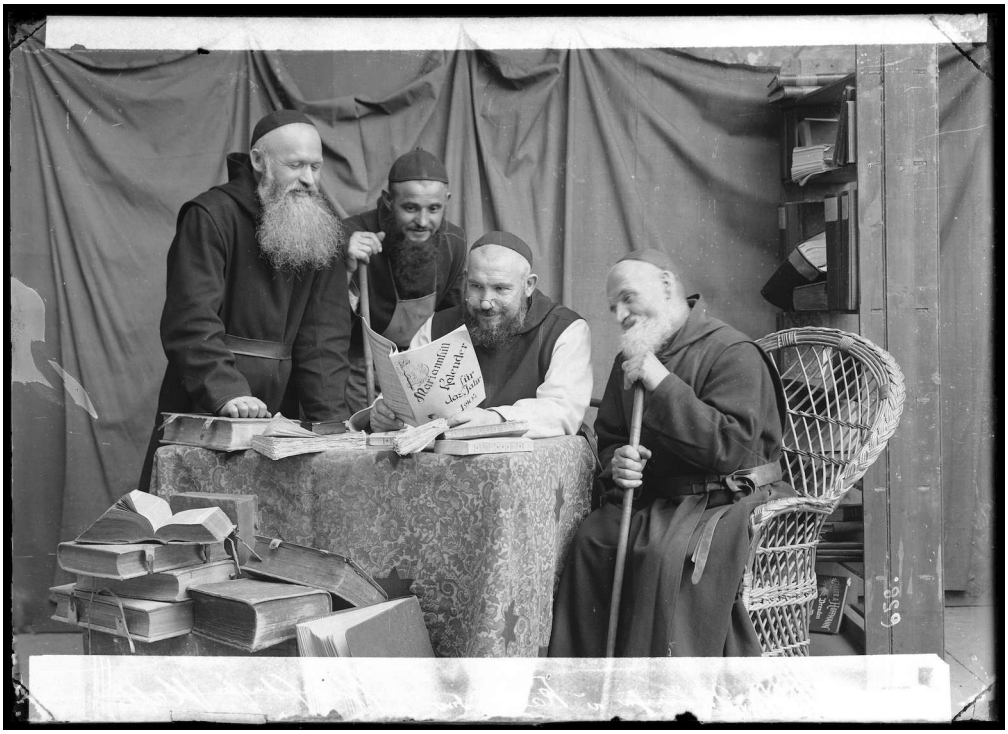


Figure 25: original caption: "*Mönche u. Kalender*"—"Monks and calendar" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, published in *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1905:61).

Apart from the theme of nature and mythic idylls, painters like Spitzweg addressed their experience of the distant exotic and strange, in particular of the orient. Spitzweg in particular had such an experience only in mediated form through visiting the 1851 World Exhibition in London (Roennefahrt 1960:19). He nevertheless made ample use of this experience for his paintings. The spectrum of inspirations for Müller must have been more diverse than Spitzweg and Torrini, but as I explained earlier, resemblances cannot always be identified, unless we are able to somehow trace the "collateral knowledge" of the time through a concrete material artefact, such as in the case of Torrini's work. As suggested by Ussher, Müller may indeed have been inspired by Alma-Tadema and Burne-Jones, for example on his way to Mariannhill in 1889 via London, where the party of novices spent plenty of time visiting cultural institutions and popular tourist destinations (Vonbank 1890).

The photographic depictions of Mariannhill's surroundings were thus not only reflections of an experience in the South African exterior (as opposed to the confinements of the photographic studio and the monastery), but equally an excessive reflection of photographic and artistic trends within the visual economy shared with Europe. Artists like Spitzweg had in fact already reworked their experiences of an exotic, and in particular of an orientalist Other in Europe. As I mentioned earlier, Spitzweg's experience in this regard had already been filtered through staged events at the London World exhibition in 1851. The resulting canon or tradition was then once more reproduced and "africanised" by copyists such as Müller in South Africa, according to expectations of his audiences. I earlier argued that this experience is epitomised in Müller's orientalist pose (Figure 15).

Even though some contemporary German photographers disliked "sentimental genre themes", Müller continued to produce them up to the beginning of the First World War. According to established practice, a "good genre photograph" should not be in need of any more explanation, other than a short title. It should work by creating its own *visual* pun, rather than relying on an extensive caption, or by being reminiscent of earlier works (Hoffmann 1889:285). Müller followed this established practise, especially in his later work. The following examples were taken approximately between 1905 and 1910. They are reproduced from albums, which would have been on display in the photographer's studio.



Figure 26: original caption: "*Angehende Katecheten, Himmelberg.*"—"Young Catechists, [mission station] Himmelberg", with Fr. Odo Ripp (CMM Archives).



Figure 27: original caption: "*Die Versuchung, Kevelaer*"—"Temptation, [mission station] Kevelaer" (CMM Archives).



Figure 28: original caption: "*Die erste Hose, Kevelaer*"—"First trousers, [missions station] Kevelaer" (CMM Archives).



Figure 29: original caption: "*Die Schule ist aus, St. Wendel*"—"School is over, St. Wendel [parish near Mariannhill]", 1909 (CMM Archives).

All four photographs show their models imitating particular poses to correspond with the title. They resemble conventional stories and widely reproduced imagery that audiences would have been familiar with, ie. that would have worked according to their "collateral knowledge": (1) The central boy strikes a face of contemplation, as if being asked a difficult question by Fr. Odo; (2) "Eve" tempts "Adam" with an apple, while he performs a gesture of hesitation with his right hand; (3) the boy looks at his mother, as if asking for affirmation, while stretching his new trousers to the test. But especially the fourth photograph strains the pose to its limit: while the narrative suggests that the children are on their way home from school, not one of them is lifting a foot. Instead, all children—at least in the visible right part of the image—merely weigh in on their left foot in order to suggest movement. All 23 children appear to have been briefed with the same idea, and carried it out diligently in the exact same way. While aiming to suggest natural movement, the image instead appears to be totally mortified.

Photographic instructions at the time advised to make sure the "movement" of a pose is situated in the right "moment": a warrior striking his axe should be depicted in the very moment, not when the axe hits its aim, but rather when it is still raised above the head, so that the beholder

may anticipate the outcome (Vogel 1891:136). Hoffmann instead suggested not to photograph such poses at all, which would have only lasted for a moment in "real time". He was afraid that such a pose may have appeared in the photograph as if the model could not have held it for too long (1889:311). As all 23 school children in the photograph above eventually performed exactly the same pose, the effect is highly artificial (also see Rippe 2018). Despite the fact that his own approach did not "work", even according to contemporary best practice, Müller nevertheless repeated such depictions of school children many times.



Figure 30: original caption:"Vorbe [-reitung] Gruppierung zu einer Photographischen Aufnahme im Kaffernkraal, Centocow, Januar 1914"—"grouping for a photographic image at a Kafir Kraal", Centocow, January 1914 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

The very knowledge and idea that photographers first staged and then manipulated their works in the long process of creating them, was apparently common with both photographers and their audiences. In one case, Müller even photographically performed this very act of arrangement himself. Accordingly, he staged his own intervention as a *tableau vivant*, ie. with the people posing for it. Figure 30 shows Müller at a homestead near Centocow Mission in January 1914. The glass plate negative holds the following caption: "grouping for a photographic image at a

Kafir Kraal".[170] Müller first attempted to write "preparation [*Vorbereitung*]", but on second thought crossed it out, and replaced it with "arrangement [*Gruppierung*]". He thus consciously pondered the appropriate terminology for his own action depicted in the photograph.

This is probably one of the very last photographs ever taken of Br. Aegidius Müller, before the First World War broke out in July 1914. The image was published with its original title in the *Vergißmeinnicht* of 1916, and thus even presented the staged nature of Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre publicly. Just like the three authors I discussed so far in relation to genre photography, Müller treated his photographic subjects literally as "models". Looking at the small boy, whom Müller attempts to direct into position, we see that these models were at times reluctant. Assuming that the clearly disgruntled facial expression of the boy is not a theatrical performance, it is indeed the most outspoken trace of a resistance to become "similar" to the imagination of the photographer, in the sense suggested by Benjamin. The photograph therefore shows a performance of the arrangement of a group of photographic models, or, phrased differently, it is a genre photograph with the topic of creating a *tableau vivant*. Müller thus engages in a meta-tableaux, and the resulting photograph becomes a "meta picture", as Mitchell called it (1994, cf. Chapter Two).

In the same way, we may now also better comprehend the photograph of the "four girls at Kevelaer", who are supposedly contemplating a photographic portrait of one of the girls (Figure 19). In the same way as in the previous example, Müller attempted to produce a genre photograph that addresses the "problem of photographic resemblance" of the last section in its relation to portraiture. Through its title, "female vanity", the composition suggested that the girls were scrutinising the accuracy of the photographic depiction, thus its "resemblance".

As I explained, photographers who produced genre photographs generally attempted to depict "everyday life". This eventually invites a comparison to "ethnographic photographs", in particular in the case of Mariannhill's photographic production (cf. Chapter Six). In an article in the *Photographische Rundschau* on the photographic *Figurenbild,* the Hamburg amateur photographer Theodor Hofmeister addressed the relation between a social reality and its photographic representation by wondering whether "any photographer will ever be able to describe a peoples as they really are, if he is not familiar with their customs and practices, their family life and common activities" (1898:262).[171] In Chapter Six, I will argue that "genre photography" and "ethnographic photography" went hand in hand at Mariannhill, and the first was eventually transformed into the latter, in close conversation with European ethnologists. In both practices photographers claimed to record typical "everyday life", by condensing it in the form of apparently staged scenes.

According to Langdon (1996:294), in Europe "the figure of the peasant—folkloric, pious, or threatening—recurs throughout 19th century art, epitomising a pure, unchanging existence,

[170] My own translation from the German original: "~~*Vorbe*~~ [*-reitung*] *Gruppierung zu einer Photographischen Aufnahme im Kaffernkraal, Centocow, Januar 1914*".

[171] My own translation from the German original.

remote from the flux and corruption of city life".[172] Even if depictions and imaginations of foreign "savages"—whether "noble" or not—have been around for much longer, representations of colonial subjects appropriated this triple figuration of Othering (folkloric, pious, or threatening) by the second half of the 19th century. Images, previously made by European artists to frame the encroaching influences of industrial centres on rural idylls in Europe, turned into what Landau (2002) calls an "image-Africa", the endless repetition of colonial themes. This process must therefore be considered, not so much as a European depiction of Africa, but even more as an "africanisation" of European prototypes as they were popular around 1900. This process of aestheticization was thus similar to the one attempted by the journal *The State*, in order to create a common South African Identity.

In the grass roots situation of Mission at Mariannhill, Africans took on and played out photographically the social roles as they imagined them in cooperation with the photographer. While we cannot recreate the thought processes of Africans at the time, it may be save to say that Mariannhill's photographers wanted their European audiences to recognise the resulting genre photographs as something familiar to their own European "daily life". Africans may not have carried out active social imitation, or "mimicry", purposefully (cf. Bhabha 1984), by aspiring to imitate or parody European appearances. They still took part (knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly) in photographic performances regarding their own "transformation", as the missionaries imagined it as part of the conversion process. In order to survey a wider field of mimetic practices at Mariannhill, we thus need to engage in what Ferguson called "the anthropology of imitation" (Ferguson 2002, also see Huggan 1998), which is indeed more bi-directional and cooperative. As it was closely related to the practice of photographic representation of Africans, as well as their theatrical performance, the topic of social imitation will reoccur throughout the next chapters.

The previous section on portraiture and this section on genre photography explained that the notion of photographic "reality" and "resemblance" handled at Mariannhill was highly subjective and constructed, but at the same time also highly conventional. This convention relied on the idea that photographers (through their artistic faculty) were indeed able to condense their photographic subjects' essence or "character" into something of a higher, or at least a more abstract "truth". In the case of portraiture, *sitters* in their portraits became "types" of either a social stratum or ethnicity. The same was the case for the *models* in the format of genre photography, who became "typical" representatives of a certain group, trade, or ethnicity. In both cases, photographs were supposed to "resemble" an original, either a known individual, or an image prototype.

Hofmeister stated in 1898 that the attempt to capture an event involving a moving body through a snapshot with a short exposure time, may result in a well-defined image, but would hardly be balanced and pictorial in a compositional and artistic sense (1898:263). For this reason

[172] Also see Hoffmann (1889:284) for a contemporary perspective on European peasant "models", and Kaufhold (1986) for an overview of the interconnection of pictorialism, genre and the stratification of German society.

he suggested to resort to well-planned and well-prepared compositions instead, by involving "patient models" (1898:269). He perceived snapshot photography as not suited for the production of artistic photographs, as it did not allow to capture the "typical" aspects of a situation (also see Hoffmann 1889:283; Plumpe 1990:46). In early 1899, Müller went through an experience in which he came to understand these problems with snapshot photography. Even though he considered the resulting photographs as "more real", they eventually did not serve his ultimate purpose of mediating narratives effectively. A closer look at this experience in the next section will help us to better comprehend photographic practice at Mariannhill according to technological and aesthetic developments between the 1880s and 1910s.

Exposure of "the Most Original Reality".

In October 1883, Mariannhill's periodical *Fliegende Blätter* published an excerpt on experiments with exposure times from the "photographer's diary". It must have been Fr. Othmar Gross, who recorded these during the first months after the Trappist's arrival, January, February, and March:

> Wet collodion plates, silver-bath 1:15. iron-developer. - 30 lines landscape-lens, with smallest aperture. -
> 7 am, blue sky, 20°C in the shade. Landscape with a hill and a single tree on top, approx. 1/2 hour away. 10" [sec.] - A group under the same conditions.
> 10 am, dark buildings, 6", 30°C in the shade. -
> 1 pm, 30°C, Kafir group with dark backdrop, 3" -
> 2 pm, 30°C, bigger group of people, 3", overexposed. -
> 3 pm, 30°C, big head. visit 5", black storm-clouds to the South. -
>
> a six-days-old Tannin dry-plate after Russel, landscape, 1/2 minute,
> 10 am, overexposed.
>
> The summer sunlight does not have the strength of the winter light. In summer, if it does not rain, there is a perpetually blue sky, but in winter it is white and clouded most of the time. (Anon. 1883)[173]

In December 1883, an entry in the same periodical added: "The light here is so bright that the photographer can already take pictures before 5.30 am" (Anon. 1883a).[174] The duration of the plate's exposure and its dependence on the availability, as well as the intensity of light was inherently written into the medium of photography (cf. Part Two). With the commercialisation of faster (more sensitive) plates and better (more light-intensive) lenses from the late 1870s onwards, exposure times could be kept far below one second, and by 1883 new shutter systems enabled snapshot photography (Gautrand 1998). As evident from the quote above, already in 1883 Mariannhill's photographer experimented with the much more sensitive (and thus quicker) dry plate, instead of a wet plate. Certainly from the early 1890s onwards, it was thus easily possible to photograph moving objects and subjects with exposure times up to 1/2000 second, and even beyond this rate in good daylight (cf. Eder 1892).[175]

A rare, and probably the earliest example for short exposure times at Mariannhill is Figure 31. It shows three members of Mariannhill Monastery crossing a river in the year 1890. They are from left to right: Fr. Theoderich Sonnen, Anton Schmidt, Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, and four unidentified Africans. Only one year after their arrival, Sonnen and Leyendecker were still novices, and therefore wearing white habits with white scapulars.[176] Mind the splashing, but clearly defined water before the legs of Anton Schmidt.

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[173] My own translation from the German original.

[174] My own translation from the German original.

[175] See for example Daston and Galison (2007:155) for the application of "high-speed" photography in the natural sciences, prior to the 1890s.

[176] As both would have worn black scapulars after their first vows in 1891, the caption indicating 1894 is incorrect. It was probably applied by Fr. Dietmar Seubert during the 1970s or 1980s.



Figure 31: original caption on the image: "*Photo-Zinko Mariannhill 189?*". Original caption on the carrier: "*Die Photographen beim Durchqueren eines Flusses*"—"The photographers while crossing a river", approx. 1890 (CMM Archives).

The evidence of the splashing water makes us aware of the fact that the aesthetic composition of photographs at the time was not restricted by prolonged exposure times. All photographs presented in this study could have been made with all the compositional liberties of snapshot photography. Nevertheless, the idea that exposure time still limited photographic practice at the end of the 19th century lingers on today, and even haunts academic thinking and writing about historical photographs.[177] But on the contrary, sitters did not have to remain motionless for prolonged periods at all times. Under ideal conditions, either under a clear sky or in a well-lit studio, it was possible for any photographer to avoid blurriness with reasonable exposure times. Photographic poses therefore depended not on technological restrictions, but on theatrical conventions, either implemented by the sitter or by the photographer. While it will be important to consider technological issues throughout the next chapters, it is thus even more important to think about the resulting social interactions, and the implications this may have had for the

[177] This is even the case with the most critical of critics of photographic interpretation (see Stocking 1993:217).

construction of photographic aesthetics, such as involving ides as "resemblance". In the remainder of this section I consider three more photographic occasions, which provide us with insight in this regard.

In the very first volume of the *Mariannnhill Kalender* of 1889, we can read how three Trappists (Fr. Josef [Biegner] and two Novices) explored the area of Mariannhill's two extensive farms, and approached people with a photographic camera:

> The people were in great excitement; especially the young men received our visit badly, as our mysterious box appeared somehow suspicious to them. We did not allow ourselves to be discouraged, even though we did not even have one stick to defend ourselves. Once we had succeeded to appease the people, we started to set up our "observation box [*Guckkasten*]".[178] We explained to them that we indeed had no other intention than to portray [*abmalen*, thus paint] their faces; it was nevertheless difficult to make this clear.
>
> Eventually, they were at ease. The women reappeared from their holes, wearing all their most valuable things, and were draped in their most beautiful clothes; some children (in "birthday suit") huddled next to them. The men came with their lances and shields of leather. They all took the positions we indicated to them. They did remain calm after we Trappists had mingled with them, and once we had taken away all suspicion. The exposure only took a few moments, as the local light is very sharp.

The same procedure is recounted for yet another homestead:

> We immediately proceeded to place our apparatus in a convenient position, once the Kafirs of this Kraal had agreed to it. They even complied to appear in their complete attire. One of them took his leather shield and acted as leading character. His hair was twisted very carefully into locks, which stood erect like small pyramids. His cheeks were painted with red colour in the form of a triangle, which was again framed in yellow. Around his loins he had draped some fur. More youngsters and children appeared, and in an instant it was done. The Kafirs could not marvel enough at the fact that their figures had been imprinted [*abgedrückt*] with such speed. This secret was however not new to them, as we had already photographed them during an earlier occasion.[179] (anon. 1889:128)

The priest must have been Fr. Josef Biegner, but the two novices cannot be identified. It thus appears that initially also non-professional members of the monastery experimented with the camera, if necessary. No photographs were published with the article and no photographs matching the description do appear in the photographic collection. The fact that all three Trappists were inexperienced photographers could have had the result that the photographs did not turn out well. Africans on their part showed a performative readiness, partially due to previous experiences of posing for a camera.

The *Mariannhill Kalender* of 1896 holds another rare account, titled "*Reiseerlebnisse* [travel experiences]". It tells the story of a long journey into the Drakensberg Mountains by two Mariannhill priests, undertaken in the (southern) winter of 1894. It was most likely narrated by Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, who had arrived at Mariannhill shortly after the publication of the previous article in 1889:

> At the beginning of the last dry season I received the order from our abbot to travel to the Drakensberg, there to make photographic images for various purposes. We had been told by a reliable source that the region provides

[178] The German term "*Guckkasten*" was also used to denote "raree shows"—the display of exciting visuals in wooded boxes on fairs—which is unlikely to be the intended meaning in this case.

[179] My own translation from the German original.

much of interest, which had so far not been studied.[180] (anon. 1896b:46)

In 1894, the second Abbot of Mariannhill, Amandus Schölzig (1894-1900), not only initiated the opening of a museum, and the extension of the photographic studio, but he also ordered photographs to be taken, and specimens of "natural history" to be collected at the mission stations (see Chapter Five). Accordingly, this account not only presents related texts and images, but the author even described the making of photographs. The participants of the expedition, and even the author himself, are not named. They can nevertheless be identified by some cross-referencing of texts and images as Fr. Theoderich Sonnen and Fr. Isembard Leyendecker. Sonnen had arrived at Mariannhill on 2 July 1889, together with Leyendecker.[181] They would thus have become well-acquainted during the sea passage of several weeks, still without a vow of silence. Sonnen eventually became a distinguished Zulu linguist under the pseudonym *Langa*[182]*,* and editor of the *Vergißmeinnicht* between 1900 and 1905. We also remember him from his involvement in the governmental surveys I described above. Shortly after this involvement, Sonnen left the congregation and applied for naturalisation in 1908[183], just like the photographer Fresen before him. Already by the time of their journey in 1894, Leyendecker attributed fluency in Zulu to Sonnen, who therefore acted as their interpreter. Other than in the photograph above (Figure 31), in 1894 both men wore the white habit with the additional black scapular on top, which they had received when giving their first vows together on 16 July 1891.

The author identified himself as professional photographer, and further stated jokingly that such a journey was "unheard of for Trappists". To do so they had to violate the "rule of stability", by spending the night outside of the monastery's confinements, or one of its outstations. It appears that those of Mariannhill's members, who preferred the idea of mission over contemplation, started joking about the dispensations given to them by the abbot in this regard, once these points of friction had been criticised during the visitation of 1892.

The journey's account describes its legitimising purpose as several modes of collecting information in form of photographs and specimens. At the same time, it tells about the technological restrictions concerning photography at the time, as well as the hardships of a missionary's life. This narrative of a journey to Reichenau[184] and beyond, was used to tie in several themes of potential interest to a German-speaking readership. The baseline remained to point out the contrast between the supposedly deficient reality of the local people, and their inherent potential to become a part of the civilised environments of the mission station Reichenau, and finally of Mariannhill Monastery. The narrative of a movement, from more to lesser civilised areas between Europe and Africa, was thus recreated once more within the local

[180] My own translation form the German original.

[181] It is therefore unlikely that they were the two novices accompanying Fr. Joseph in the previously described excursion, as the *Kalender* must already have been printed in late 1888, in order to be shipped to Europe before the beginning of 1889.

[182] *"I-langa"* (Zulu) and "*Sonne"* (German) both mean "sun".

[183] CAR: CO-8660-22_01-1908.

[184] Reichenau was Mariannhill's first experimental mission station, close to the Drakensberg.

network of mission stations (cf. Pels 1999). As part of the narrative, the author not only indicated shortcomings, but also mentioned the amiability and hospitality of local people, in order to mediate a degree of hope of future conversions to the reader (cf. Thomas 1991). On their way, the explorers furthermore collected zoological, as well as geological specimens, to "incorporate [*einverleiben*]" them into the recently founded museum at Mariannhill Monastery. They also copied "hieroglyphs"[185] and "Bushmanpaintings" (Figure 32), but in the first place photographed landscapes and people.

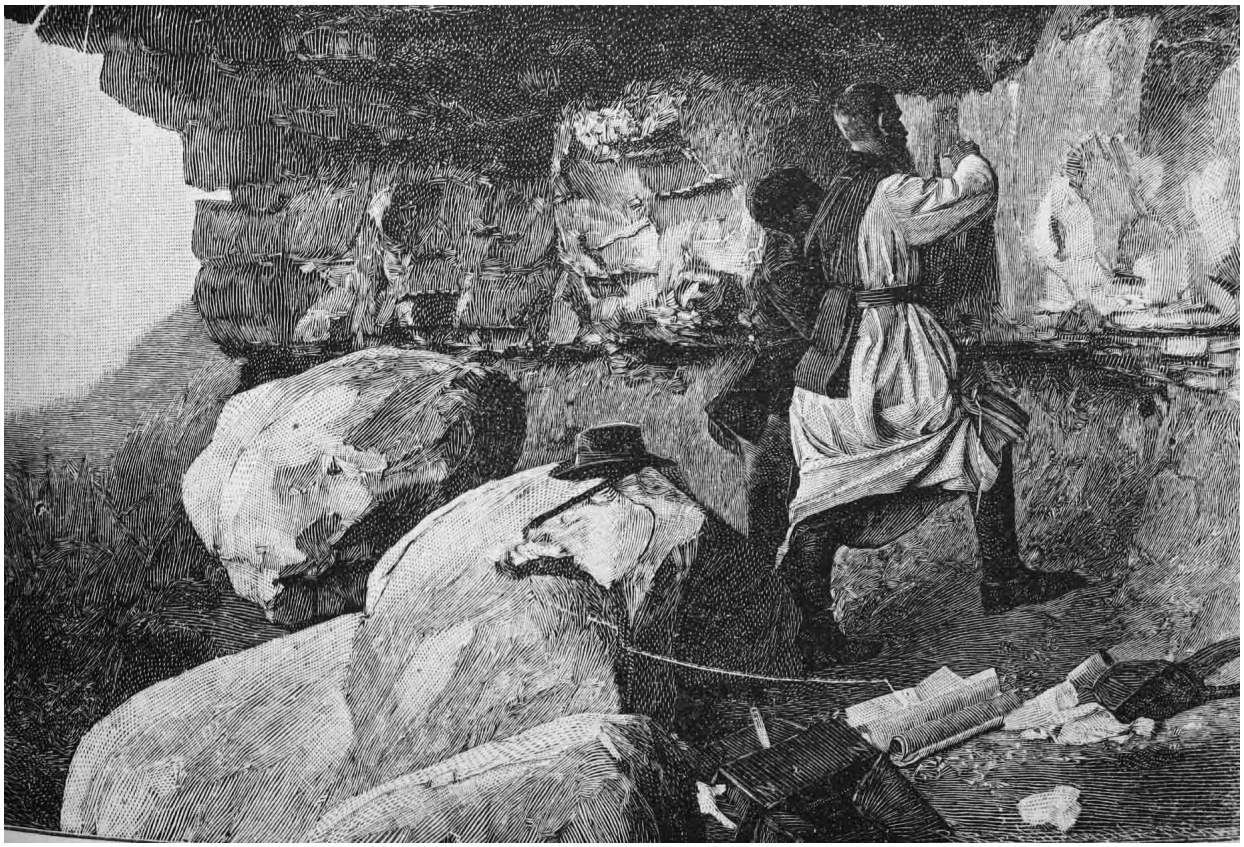


Figure 32: original caption: "*P. Th. beim Abzeichnen der Hieroglyphen*"—Fr. Theoderich Sonnen and a Black companion copying "hieroglyphs" from a stonewall. The photograph had been transferred into an engraving by the company (Richard) Brend'amour in München. The respective signature can be found in the lower right corner (as published in *Mariannhill Kalender* 1896:46).

During the trip, which could have taken several weeks from Mariannhill Monastery near Durban, the two Trappists had only brought along 36 glass plate negatives. The risk was high that several plates broke while travelling on horseback through mountainous terrain; others could have easily been over- or underexposed, or chemical complications could have occurred, due to the great changes in temperature in the Drakensberg area. Their equipment also contained a magnesium-

[185] The nature of these "hieroglyphs" is not explained, and no copies have been preserved in Mariannhill's archives.

powder flashlight.[186] But when used in a windowless African hut, so Fr. Isembard wrote, the device produced such a great amount of smoke that the taking of a photograph became impossible. Once Leyendecker fell ill during the trip, he passed the camera on, however reluctantly, to Sonnen. To Leyendecker's own surprise, the photographs made by his confrere eventually turned out well. Again, the question of authorship within Mariannhill's oeuvre undermines the appearance of the photographic record as a singular monolithic statement, as if created by a clearly definable group of people.

After the excursion to the Drakensberg from Reichenau Mission, Leyendecker travelled further along other mission stations by himself, and eventually also reached Centocow Mission. Of the entire trip's 36 exposed plates, 11 images were eventually published with the article, which is closed with the frequently employed exclamation: "*Alles zur Größeren Ehre Gottes!* [Everything was done for the greater glory of God!]". The photographs taken on such trips were not only used in the periodicals, sent to benefactors in Europe, and marketed with ethnographic museums (cf. Chapter Six). They were also sold at the photographic studio to visitors, where they embedded the experience of a visit to the monastery within the surrogate experience of the mission's exterior, and the extensive network of outstations (cf. Chapter Three). Such journeys were not only long and arduous, but as a result the photographer also had to shut down the studio business at Mariannhill for prolonged periods. Therefore the photographers would do such extensive tours of the missions only every other year, or in case an important social event or festivity could be anticipated, and was deemed worthy of photographic documentation.

Several years later, in March 1899, Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, Br. Aegidius Müller, and several of their confreres travelled to the mission station Lourdes in East Griqualand, to attend the visit of the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, William P. Schreiner. They remained in the wider area for more than two weeks, and also took photographs of what is commonly referred to as a "first-fruits ceremony" in the South African context (cf. Chapter Seven). Almost five years after the previous excursion, photographic technology had progressed even further. Through photographic journals Mariannhill's photographers would have been aware of discourses about the first experiments with cinematography, which also raised questions about photographic seriality. A series of seventeen photographs produced during the occasion is captioned (with some variations in spelling) as "*Erntefest bei den Amabacas* [a harvest feast with the Amabaca]" on every single image.[187]

In a letter dated 15 April 1899 to Felix von Luschan, curator at the ethnographic museum of Berlin, Müller presented this series as a very special addition to a descriptive sales catalogue, which he sent along with the same letter. I will deal with this particular correspondence in Chapter Six, and here only focus on this particular series. In his letter, Müller did not discuss

[186] Developed by the already mentioned Adolf Miethe and Johannes Gaedicke in 1887 (Newhall 1949:170).

[187] I hope to describe this occasion in more detail elsewhere: due to the fact that I was able to locate the photographs in the actual landscape of today's Umzimkhulu district during my fieldwork, it was possible to connect the photographic occasion historically to the visit of Schreiner. The analysis of both events is however far too complex to present here.

ethnographic detail, but rather emphasised that "these are snapshots[188], depicting scenes from Kafir life—dances and throngs of people, completely unadorned and without any addition. Six of the photographs are in double cabinet format and ten are in cabinet format".[189] Müller stressed the fact that these photographs had *not* been posed. Four months later, in a letter to Johannes D.E. Schmeltz, director of the ethnographic museum at Leiden, Müller repeated the claim, but phrased it differently. He also sent a different selection: "[Nr.] 605, 1-12 and 5 double cabinet, all in all 17 images, present dances and throngs of people at the harvest feast of an Amabaca Chief in East Griqualand. […] Images Nr. 605, 1-12 and 606, 1-11, and also images 16, 1-8 in the explanations are snapshots, in which scenery and arrangement [*Gruppierung*] are presented without any addition by the photographer, and thus as the most original reality [*in originellster Wirklichkeit*]".[190] Müller thus admitted implicitly that other photographs in his oeuvre (which came to Berlin and Leiden in the same packages) were apparently posed and arranged. Bearing in mind his other work in the photographic studio, and the work he did around Mariannhill near Durban as I described it above, one realises that the presentation of *actual* "snapshots" as a "mechanical objectivity" is exceptional in Mariannhill's oeuvre, even for Müller himself (cf. Daston and Galison 2007). 10 years later, in 1909, Müller expanded the argument to his entire oeuvre, in order to bolster its truthfulness.

To my knowledge, attempts at documenting process by constructing a scenic narrative through photographic series or sequences in an almost cinematic fashion, were rather unusual in early ethnographic photography of the 1890s, at least in an African context.[191] Even if Müller numbered the series from 1-17, it is unclear whether he intended to create a narrative. Not all of these numbers are still on the printed images, as some have been retouched. It is nevertheless still possible to arrange them in an approximate order. The series further consists of two numbering systems, relating to two different size formats: twelve photographs carry the number "605", and five photographs carry the number "274". This fact is inherently connected to the technological side of the production process: the series "605" has the conventional size 10.2 x 16.2 cm (cabinet), and the series "274" has the conventional size 13.4 x 21.7 cm (double-cabinet). In his letter to Schmeltz, Müller only pointed out the series "605" as snapshots, but not the series "274". The second series was not enlarged to a bigger format, but being contact prints the size of the prints is identical with the size of their glass plate negatives. This means that the camera of the larger format was much bigger than the camera used for the smaller format, and may even have been mounted on a tripod. One can further observe that people captured on the small format never look towards the camera, and therefore do not seem to be aware of its presence, except for one case (Figure 33). Here, Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, who was a trained photographer himself,

188 *Momentaufnahmen* ("records of a moment").

189 EMB: Letter, Müller to von Luschan, 15 April 1899: my own translation from the German original.

190 NMVWNMVW: Letter, Müller to Schmeltz, 24 August 1899.

191 But see the photographic work by the German art historian Aby Warburg (1896), the German ethnologists Paul Ehrenreich (1898) and Karl von den Steinen (1898), as well as the American anthropologist Matilda Coxe Stevenson (1880s-1910s). All four photographic bodies have been produced in the American south-west (cf. Isaac 2005, Sanner 1996).

gazes towards the camera with a knowing smile.



Figure 33: original caption: "*605. Erntefest d. Amabaca*". Small series "605". Fr. Isembard Leyendecker and several other Trappists are visible on the very right (NMVW-A15-140).



Figure 34: original caption: "[*16.*] *274. Erntefest d. Amabaca.*". Large series "274" (NMVW-A15-145).

By the late 1880s, shorter exposure times also involved the use of light-weight and hand-held cameras, instead of those on tripods. Very small and transportable cameras in various formats were by the late 1880s commonly referred to as "secret" or "detective" cameras. An accession register of Mariannhill's photographic studio mentions such a "*Geheimkamera* [secret camera]" already in 1891. Most of these cameras were referred to with the name due to their small size, as compared to the previous generations of cameras, which had to be mounted on a tripod.[192] It would therefore have been less obvious to photographic subjects what the photographer was doing. In the case under consideration the camera's size clearly influenced peoples' behaviour and therefore the outcome of the photograph.

The second series of five larger images ("274") instead shows people looking towards the camera in every image, an indication that the camera could not be concealed. In the contemporary perception and legal discourse in Europe, the new experience of capturing motion in "snapshots" was also connected to the idea of the moving, and potentially unaware photographic subject. Being photographed without one's knowledge eventually extended to the legal conundrum of one's right to one's own image (Dommann 2006:349). In the particular case under discussion, however, the scientific and anthropological paradigm of non-intrusive recording was served, which involved the anthropologist's "invisibility". According to the British anthropologist Everard im Thurn, the resulting product supposedly entailed more authenticity in such a way (1893:190). Müller's statement thus manifested claims to photographic reality and "mechanical objectivity" in scientific discourses—here towards the ethnological community as represented by Von Luschan in Berlin.

The ceremony could not have been recorded, had exposure times not yet been reduced even more drastically by 1899. However, even if Mariannhill's photographers may have attempted to create a more "holistic" image of the ceremony[193] (with one camera visible and stationary, and another one more concealed and mobile), they did not succeed to record central aspects of the ceremony, which would have allowed for ethnographic analysis. The way how Müller presented the series of 17 photographs, in fact covers up content itself: even if he may have tried to convey more knowledge by combining photographic seriality with true snapshots, he eventually failed. Instead, he succumbed to stressing that "throngs of people", being photographed *in motion*, are more "real" and thus more essential than ethnographic detail in form of the actions making up the feast's overall course and script. It is indeed not possible to distill any central action, or even a narrative from the series, which would define the event as a "first-fruits ceremony" on first sight. Müller's presentation of this particular series may be explained with the contemporary discourse on, and fascination with film and photography. First, the

[192] However, there existed versions in the form of a flat disk, which could be concealed underneath one's waistcoat with the lens protruding between the buttons.

[193] The attempt to create a holistic, or at least more complete account of the situation can be reconstructed from the fact that the photographers remained stationary, and turned once in a full 360 degree circle, while taking the 17 photographs of all cardinal points. I was able to compare the photographs to the landscape after discovering the exact location where they had been taken.

depiction of movement in a single image—action suspended in midair—and second, the creation of narrative by serialising photographs, had been an interest of photographers since the early days of photographic practice in the 1840s. The excitement with new technological possibilities during the 1890s is thus here presented as an argument to gloss over the lack of ethnographic evidence.

This is the only instance in the photographic oeuvre of Mariannhill, where the photographer intentionally created "snapshots", and at the same time put forward claims to their increased truth value.[194] After 1899, Müller indeed avoided this practice, and instead further refined his oeuvre of well-engineered genre photographs. As argued in a similar way by Hofmeister (1898), the trend of genre photography allowed Müller both more freedom and precision in arranging his models according to pre-conceived narratives.

If we consider the four textual accounts describing photographic encounters involving snapshot photography (1883, 1889, 1894 and 1899) as reasonably straightforward descriptions, they do testify to the fact that Mariannhill's photographers had to negotiate access to sites, and that they had to gain the models' permission to take their photographs. The technological conditions and skills of taking photographs were thus closely related to and reliant on social expertise and skills. Photographic occasions had to be negotiated, but depending on the available exposure time, they did not rely on cooperation entirely. While the sitters in 1889 had considerable freedom to choose their attire, and did so with some enthusiasm, it was still with the missionaries to indicate the most favourable pose. Even in the textual narrative, the authors always stressed their own agency and presence during the occasion, which could eventually even be concealed with smaller cameras during the occasion in 1899.

[194] As Müller mentioned to Schmeltz, two more sets of serialised snapshots do exist (approx. 1897), as well as few singular photographs had been likewise taken at big public events, such as African weddings. However, these are never referred to as such in any of Müller's texts.

Conclusion

The missions's approach of documenting the encounter with, and impact on their subjects may eventually be considered as auto-ethnographic. In its contrast with the photographic construction of "Blackness", it could also be described as what Patricia Hayes has called an "ethnography of whiteness" (1998:171-172). Over 60 years, Mariannhill Monastery had six photographers, who all worked for the same project with similar intentions. Despite this arrangement of multiple authors, we may therefore speak of one "distributed oeuvre", consisting of individual works relating to each other as protentions and retentions (Gell 1998). According to the *relative* subjectivity of "race", as I explained it at this chapter's beginning, the perception whether a person was considered Black, Coloured, or White was a matter of "resemblance".

The contemporary aesthetic notion of photographic "resemblance" served as an analytical concept to connect questions of authorship and race, self and other, through its relation to the photographic portrait and the genre photograph. The attempt to situate a photograph in the contemporary perceptions and discourses of its production period may be considered a commonplace by now. It is nevertheless crucial to do this in several ways. First, it is obvious to employ texts that cluster around, and describe certain photographs. Second, these texts provide us with popular contemporary concepts, in order to engage with photographic ontologies and epistemologies. As I showed for the idea of "resemblance", it was a commonly applied notion in both portraiture and genre photography. This demands to look at photographs and other images in conjunction, not only within one oeuvre, but also beyond it. Including experiences of intermediality we have to think the biographies of multiple authors alongside a single photograph, as well as the entire *oeuvre* that constitutes the photographic collection of Mariannhill.

Contemporary audiences therefore depended on their collateral knowledge, in order to recognise and distinguish resemblances in both portraiture and genre photography. It was only their knowledge of either faces or sceneries that allowed them to recognise resemblances between images, and therefore either establish or question authorship. Photographers thus extended the conception of imitation (or copying nature) from painting to photography, in order to determine a person's true "character" or "identity". Both portraiture and genre photographs commonly attempted to express the characteristic and the typical; the one of an individual, the other of a population or group. For these reasons we will recall in Chapter Six that a full analysis of anthropological and ethnographic photographs around 1900 cannot be achieved without taking their similarities to commercial and artistic genre photography into account.

Like the anthropologist Gustav Fritsch and the champion of artistic photography, Hermann W. Vogel before him, Mariannhill's photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller was strongly influenced by German romantic aesthetics of the mid 19th century. In particular Vogel had traversed and crucially influenced photographic technology, chemistry, aesthetics, art, and ethnology. He cooperated with anthropologists like Fritsch, trained the emigrant anthropologist Franz Boas, and

also the artistic photographer Alfred Stieglitz. Just like Vogel, Müller must therefore be considered a "trans-disciplinary subject" (Schneider 2011:132). Even though Müller may indeed have committed plagiarism in several ways and cases (cf. Chapters Six and Eight) he not only translated between various media, but equally between disciplines. Müller ran his own photographic studio, while at the same time dealing innovatively in an international setting of the photographic economy, pictorial aesthetics, as well as material culture from an ethnological perspective.

Even though Mariannhill's photographs are posed and constructed, they are not necessarily false, untrue, or inauthentic representations. Instead, I showed the contemporary visual conventions and photographic practices, which allow to delineate parts of the intercontinental visual economy. Actors within this economy would have viewed the emerging images as condensed and typified, according to contemporary conventions (Kaufhold 1986). *Tableaux vivants* constituted a theatrical mode of performance, much better suited for the needs of the mission's propaganda than the "objectivity" of snapshot photographs. *Tableaux vivants* served the photographer to facilitate interpictoriality, while at the same time providing experiences of intermediality for the models and the audiences. Eventually, posed photographs could better fulfil the demands of producing typical photographs for mission propaganda. Under particular circumstances, consumers considered these as even more objective than snapshots.

In particular during the 1890s, juridical discourses were strongly related to technological and social developments, and eventually translated into claims to photographic and artistic authorship. These interactions gave further rise to discourses on art photography and to photographers fashioning themselves as artists. Müller in particular established himself as an artist between his customers and models, by cultivating elaborately staged *tableaux vivants*. The *tableaux vivant*s—like the picture postcard—became part of the discourse on copyright law around 1900, as both raised questions about intermediality. In particular *tableaux vivants* constituted a possibility to insert an artistic copy into the production process, and so to circumvent the copyright law (Plumpe 1990:79ff.). According to this law, the photographer had to show that he had indeed *transformed* an original image idea sufficiently, so that it became an independent image. Had he indeed created a mimetic *copy* (ibid.:82), it would have been considered plagiarism. Apparently, Müller's transformations had been "africanised" sufficiently, so that they were no longer considered as copies.

In the quote above, Müller used death, impersonated by the undertaker, repeatedly as a metaphor for the "natural" processes the camera was supposed to emulate: "surprise" on the one hand, and "indifference" on the other. Clearly, photographers at Mariannhill did not employ these two notions when actually approaching their African subjects: on the one hand, they built on social relationships that had been slowly established over time. On the other hand, they carefully arranged poses, chosen from a vast array of preexisting visual conventions. By including themselves in this process, the missionaries intended to increase their success in claiming authorship, objectivity, and evidence. We can still not be certain how much of a contemporary

"African" society these photographs truly show. At least, we can be certain that photographers and photographed cooperated in creating performances, partially based on a "recursive archive" (Pinney 2005) of "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991) and directed towards the desires of European audiences. While some contemporary audiences may indeed have considered some of the photographs as attempts at art and humour, over several decades these photographs sedimented as claims to historicity. Several of the following chapters will show this more clearly.

Eventually, Müller himself was caught in a trilemma, which is expressed in the central quote of the first section (Müller 1909): First, he had to uphold the objectivity in representation demanded by the logic of the mission movement, and which could be served by the camera's supposed "mechanical objectivity"; secondly, he was deeply immersed in the discourse of commercial studio photographers, which demanded to idealise clients according to their own wishes regarding subjective "resemblance"; and, thirdly, he embraced the artistic aesthetics provided by the upcoming photographic art movement of the 1890s, which hoped to transcendent the former two perceptions by explicitly establishing artistic individuality and subjectivity. As a result, Müller established different forms of photographic authorship and identity, which enabled him to participate in different discourses and thus different claims to photographic truth.

CHAPTER TWO

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Images of Faith

Introduction: Faith in Intermediality

If the last chapter was about faith in photographic technology, this chapter is about the performance and representation of both faith and doubt in religion. Clemens Gütl suggests that the turn from contemplative monasticism to active mission work at Mariannhill, was—at least initially—a "means to an end" (2005:329-333). According to his evaluation, the Trappists' engagement with mission activities was first intended, not to convert as many Africans as possible, but to provide a topic in order to drive the propaganda machinery, which would eventually maintain the monastery economically. In this chapter and the next, it is therefore necessary to determine some of the continuities and discontinuities between Mariannhill's photographic record on the one hand, and the historical spaces and occurrences that can be established through the comparison with alternatives sources on the other hand.

"*Olde Studio*" reads a recently installed signboard on the western wall of the small building, which had until 1939 been the photographic studio of Mariannhill Monastery (Figure 98). Chiseled into the right corner stone is the year of its foundation: 1894. The last occupant, Fr. Lukas Mettler, lived in the building until his death in late 2007. Occasionally, during important events and celebrations, he served as photographer. Even though he did not use the building as studio any longer, he employed the very room where photographs had been taken before the 1940s, to screen slide projections on the early history of Mariannhill. Whenever a big-enough group of visitors was around, Fr. Lukas gave a presentation, including a taped narrative playing along projected photographs of Mariannhill's past. The screening was scripted according to the biography of the mission's founder and first Abbot, Franz Pfanner.

Images of various formats, contents, origins and times played a role in most mission projects, and their circulation had multiple directions (cf. Morgan 2005:147-187). Already during the celebration of the silver jubilee of Pfanner's priesthood, 10-12 November 1888, Mariannhill Missionaries showed so-called "magic lantern" projections in order to entertain, as well as to educate White and Black visitors:[195] "Biblical Scenes and pictures of well-known individuals, such as his Holiness, and eventually also some nice pictures of landscapes" (Gross 1888b:31).[196] Apart from the magic lantern, the celebrations also featured theatre plays; the related performance of so-called "living pictures" or "*tableaux vivants*", illuminated with Bengal fire; "apparitions of ghosts"; an exhibition of mission-produced goods, as well as paintings; and finally a parade with torches and fireworks. The published "reverberations"[197] of this event also recorded the presentation of a compilation of portrait photographs as gifts to the abbot: these had

[195] Also known as "*laterna magica*". One projection apparatus and a yet unaccessioned collection of photographic slides remain in the CMM Museum in Würzburg and the Roman archives. This remaining collection contains many copies of Mariannhill's main stock of photographs.

[196] My own translation from the German original. Mariannhill's sub-prior Fr. Othmar Gross was likely the editor of this book, as he also edited a second volume for the same event. This second *Festschrift* consists mainly of Pfanner's biography (Gross 1888a).

[197] The celebration's review is titled "*Nachklang* [reverberation] *zur Jubelfeier des R.R.D. Franz Pfanner*" (Gross 1888b).

been taken of every member of the Trappist community, as well as of the school children.

Photographs were also taken during the celebrations, especially of the already mentioned *tableaux vivants*, which actors performed at the end of a play titled "*Weihnachts-Oratorium*" by Heinrich Fidelis Müller. These *tableaux* included King David surrounded by the prophets, as well as five Nativity scenes.[198] The various writers in the booklet compared these performances to the "*Passionsspiel*" at Oberammergau in southern Germany. This particular Passion Play is still today famous for its *tableaux vivants*, the temporary freezing of the play's pivotal scenes, for the audience to contemplate on. Fr. Pius Kohl wrote about the opinions his Black subjects expressed concerning these living pictures during the festivities at Mariannhill in 1888: "They knew that White people can make nice paintings [*Bilder*][199]; they also knew that one can make statues [*Bilder*] from stone and wood (nice ones too), which they could see in our new church; however, they had not expected that one could assemble pictures [*Bilder*] of White and Black people, and even much more beautiful than painted or carved ones" (Gross 1888:76).

After all, it were the missionaries who noted down these statements and reflections on the performances. They are remarks on the performances being appreciated by the converts, but even more they are remarks on the "civilising" effect of the performances on the converts. Rather than only celebrating Pfanner's jubilee as such, the missionaries invested into all of the mentioned media, and recalled them textually later on, in order to show to local, and especially to overseas audiences how much the mission's protégées had prospered. The missionaries used these media not only to show how well the converts had progressed in following the Trappist motto "*ora et labora* [pray and work]", but also how versed they had become in performing, and indeed in mimicking those Christian values through media such as theatrical performances, mission-produced goods, and eventually various forms of paintings, photographs, and slide projections.

Textual conversion stories most clearly allow us to analyse the intended construction of a relationship between missionaries, their subjects, and their benefactors. In the *Vergißmeinnicht* and *Mariannhill-Kalender* these stories are written either in a pious or a resistant key, which both may have an additional tone of either drama or entertainment: the authors describe their African interlocutors either as engaging positively with Christianity (sometimes more successfully than most Europeans), or as resisting it, sometimes forcefully (already/but still). In both cases, the stories often lead to the climax of the main protagonist's death, which the mission's authors either stylise as religious fulfilment, or as the character's demise due to his or her misdeeds. Some of these stories are connected to dateable events and individuals, others are highly generic, to an equal amount. The naming of protagonists with either baptismal or Zulu names increased steadily since the last years of the 1890s. This development also coincided with narratives on the first Black priests of Mariannhill (cf. Mukuka 2005).

Particular conventions of writing may be related to the periodicals' multiple authors and

[198] None of these photographs could be found in the photographic collection of Mariannhill.

[199] The German language does not distinguish between picture (ie. the materiality of a painting) and image (ie. an image-idea).

editors.[200] As Mariannhill's writers often worked anonymously and the editors changed quickly, in particular during the 1890s, it is very difficult to attribute styles to particular individuals with certainty. In the conversion stories during the 1890s, the writers created a dichotomy between believers and non-believers, which was independent from photographs: textual storytelling distinguished between "civilised" and dressed African Christians, and "uncivilised" pagans in "traditional" fashion. Benefactors were therefore able to recognise the same distinction in photographic illustrations, even if in some cases these did not relate directly to the texts (cf. Chapter One). With the arrival of Br. Aegidius Müller as photographer and writer in 1897, and in particular since 1907 with the illustrations in the *Vergißmeinnicht*, stories became more and more related to images by directly referencing them as narrative devices.

African subjects as protagonists in the stories of the periodicals, as well as the readers of the periodicals in Europe, nevertheless remain untraceable participants in Mariannhill's media production. For further analysis I therefore have to rely on situations of intermediality as arranged and imagined by the missionaries, and as I established them in the main introduction and the last chapter. The analysis of such situations of intermediality allows us to perceive the communities of missionaries, Africans, and benefactors, within their relations as imagined by the missionaries. This does not, however, allow for statements on the genuine reception or agency of either mission subjects or benefactors. In Mariannhill's photographic studio, sitters were exposed to images, which would have partially guided their performances and even became part of these performances. The publication *The Living Races of Mankind* is one example with which I introduced this study. Furthermore, I showed that *tableaux vivants* constituted a common and independent medium, which has to be analysed as a crucial element of photographic performance. As photographic models, the mission's subjects performed familiar *tableaux*, so that these could be recognised by, and have an influence on European benefactor audiences.

As I showed in the last chapter, photographs constituted an essential part of storytelling in Mariannhill's periodicals, in particular after 1907. Next to the last chapter's *tableaux vivants*, I will introduce other modalities of media in this chapter, which facilitated this connection. Throughout the seven sections I discuss the following media in their relations to photographs: photographic "metapictures" reflecting on their own modality in the process of conveying knowledge; theatre photography and *tableaux vivants* in their explicit form; then in their implicit form; text and the very act of writing; the relationship between photographic negative and positive, in particular in the act of retouching; film and montage; and eventually the conventional medium of stained glass windows, which allowed for a particular assemblage of narratives in Catholic churches. In the Third and Fifths Chapter I discuss how Mariannhill Missionaries performed guided tours over the monastic ground for tourists, and how they curated exhibitions with photographs and other particular objects of the mission encounter. Conceiving of objects, as

[200] Future studies may want to provide inter-congregational and -confessional comparisons of these narratives according to their similarities and differences. It also seems crucial to analyse whether these stories were written by a priest, a mission sister, or a lay brother.

well as exhibitions, as particular media of their own, will allow to broaden our understanding of social actors' experiences. Mariannhill Missionaries thus combined various media in different constellations with photographs, and as a result increased their reproductive power.

To engage in propaganda by employing specific media and the facilities to produce them was an extraordinary financial and logistic effort: in order to produce photographs, the mission needed not only cameras, negatives, chemicals—which all had to be imported from Europe at the time—but also a studio with darkroom and a room for backdrops; theatre not only needed a cast, costumes, props, and a stage, but a great amount of time to rehearse; a printing press and its equipment also had to be imported; the logistic challenges to produce a film involve many of the previous dimensions; the decoration of church interiors with both wall paintings and stained glass windows demanded not only architectural and artistic skills, but once more the import of a considerable amount of industrial goods from Europe; eventually, guided tours, museum collections and exhibitions, as I discuss them separately in Parts Two and Three, require space, time to collect and arrange, and especially skilled personnel to curate them.

All of these media may therefore be considered as "mimetic capital". These could be images, objects, texts, performances, everything that has the capacity to manifest an established and accepted equivalence with scenes of the mission encounter. Most importantly, so Greenblatt notes (1991), mimetic capital may be stored and reused at a later point in time and nevertheless retain the potential to develop the reproductive power I mentioned above. Through its reproduction in photographs and its repetition in mission periodicals over many years, the missionaries introduced this mimetic capital to their audiences. Mariannhill's photographers and editors made Africans resemble what Europeans could understand. In the process, mimetic capital became a staple, audiences familiarised themselves with it, and thus integrated a supposedly foreign lifeworld into their own.

The mimetic capital relevant in relation to Mariannhill are those images and objects, which could be easily injected into several interpretive communities, whether they belonged to a national and international art world, mission benefactors, or a community of ethnologists. In order to even better function as mimetic capital, the missionaries related these media in a mutual dependence with photography. As I explained in the last chapter, photographic models needed a certain histrionic inclination, and theatrical performances needed to be recorded photographically, in order to be circulated. Texts in periodicals benefitted from illustrations, and meaning in photographs could be better directed with captions. Images more generally are useful mimetic capital, because they can be cut up and rearranged, such as in a photographic montage, a film montage, or the composition of a stained glass window.

If we define "mimesis" according to the art historical convention as a claim to truthful imitation of reality, then "mimetic capital" is most valuable, exactly because of its promise to represent in such a way. Extracted from a repository, or having gone through a selection process, the missionaries used images and objects as supposedly authentic media in the creation of their periodicals and exhibitions. They brought particular mimetic capital into correspondence with

the imagination of benefactors, in an attempt to approximate a presence of the originals. Like Europeans addressed the fear of uncertainty in knowledge with claims to "objectivity" (Daston and Galison 2007:372), they attempted to tackle their fear of otherness with objectifications and conceptualisations of "race". In the process they created difference.

As Michael Taussig argues in *Mimesis and Alterity* (1993), it is exactly such acts and discourses of imitation, which create an awareness of alterity and thus an excess of meaning, exceeding a mere copy or imitation. Crucial in Taussig's account is the mutual reflexive awareness by both coloniser and colonised about processes of imitation and representation, leading to something he calls "mimetic excess". Like Taussig, Homi Bhabha (1984) presented a partially cryptic, but widely received account of colonial imitation, as mimesis and mimicry respectively. Both must be credited for introducing the critical study of colonial imitations through various representational means. I will focus my own study on the forms of imitation and resemblance as performed, implied, and identified by Mariannhill's photographers (cf. Roque 2015:206). The mission's narratives presented in this chapter evoke similar forms of such excessive imitations. As I started to explain in the discussion of race in the last chapter, colonial mimicry and the creation and perception of identities can only be grasped as a discourse and process, not as an entity (cf. Bhabha 1984). Therefore it is crucial to analyse the "photography complex" (Hevia 2009) in its relation to other media and the process of how missionaries established connections.

By propping up the credibility of their periodicals through a variety of media, Mariannhill Missionaries addressed the fears of both South African Whites and their benefactors. The establishment of religious faith as the convert's own and genuine "inner experience" through trustworthy evidence was essential for mediating the mission's success (cf. Van der Veer 1996:15). Therefore the choice of religious faith as an example of genre photography is crucial. I will begin this chapter with a cluster of photographs that epitomise the opposition of non-Christians with technological modernity. Africans' alleged (in-)ability to mediate knowledge in comparison to White contemporaries became a common trope within the colonial discourse. As I partially introduced it in the last chapter, it was a commonly held cliché that Africans imitated European practices, rather than being productive themselves in a genuine way. White colonial actors (missionaries in particular) expressed this idea in relation to the various media I am discussing in this chapter, especially concerning the realm of theatre.

Even before 1900, a discourse evolved in South Africa that Africans imitated Europeans only imperfectly (cf. Bhabha 1984). As a partial critique on Bhabha, Bate (1993) and McDow (2011) point out that colonial relationships often involved situations where the coloniser imitated the colonised, as much as the other way round. We already saw one case around 1900, involving Br. Aegidius Müller cross-dressing in oriental garb and pose, and will see another example from the 1930s in Chapter Seven. Colonial visual culture furthermore depicted and ridiculed Africans in their attempts to copy European material culture. Mariannhill Missionaries in particular recorded forms of imitation by Africans as exceptional, yet ambivalent behaviour. Mariannhill's

converts certainly cultivated ideas on European fashion, material culture and manners, but we only know about such acts through representations crafted in cooperation with Europeans, at least until Black South Africans established an independent press. It is therefore unclear in how far it was the intention of Mariannhill's subjects to be represented, and whether they were fully aware of the missionaries' representational intentions. We not only have to pay attention to the social aspects of representations, but also to the mode and materiality of its creation. This may include oral or bodily performance and pose, material culture, or whether it is mediated by text, painting, or photography. We thus have to engage in what Ferguson has called an "anthropology of imitation" (2002).

Each of the next sections discusses photographs where a performance of faith as both religious belief and trust in the truth of representation is the topic. Each section increases the involved degree of photographic manipulation, as well as the way how different media were pitted against each other.

Photographing Photographic Representation

The following set of three photographs is an apt turning point between the two forms of faith as presented in the first and second chapter. A comparison of these three photographs will help us to understand the missionaries' ideas on how photography as a practice was positioned between themselves, their subjects, and their audiences, such as clients, artists, benefactors, but also ethnologists. On the one hand, these three photographs show the importance which Mariannhill Missionaries attributed to the idea of photographic representation. On the other hand, they show the importance the missionaries attributed to photographic authorship and indeed authority. The three photographs are therefore suggestive of the very heart of colonial imitation, as two of them depict Africans handling photographic cameras. The authority regarding the creation of representations expressed itself in the denial of full authorship to converted Africans. Even though the missionaries presented photographic authorship as a common experience with Africans, it remains ambivalent. This common experience is only performed together with supposedly non-Christian Africans, and never extended to dressed and supposedly converted Africans. I suggest that the missionaries thereby attempted to retain control over photographic authorship. Africans appearing like Europeans while performing as photographers would have established them as absolute equals in the eyes of outsiders to the relationship, and thus rendered the mission's propagandistic enterprise obsolete.

So far, we have seen two photographs that show the topic "photography" in a *tableau vivant*-like manner as genre photographs. One depicts the act of staging a photographic pose (Figure 30), the other depicts Africans engaging with the product itself in a tactile manner (Figure 19). Both scenes are genre compositions that narrate, and therefore ponder their own ontologies according to the *creation* of resemblance on the one hand, and the *recognition* of resemblance on the other hand. Figure 30 shows an imagination of what social action preceded the actual moment of photographic exposure, and Figure 19 shows an imagination of how photographs can be engaged with socially as objects. I now explore three photographs, which imagine the very moment of what is commonly referred to as "taking a photograph", or even more precisely, as the moment of a negative's *exposure* to light. In the epistemological imagination of photographic practice, this moment is situated in between the previous two, in between the social acts of preparing the models on the one hand according to other preconceived images, and the analysis of the product on the other hand. The three photographs thus circle around the very moment of how photographic indexicality is commonly imagined.

This may be one of the reasons why audiences—contemporary, as well as in the recent past—found these photographs compelling. Even though the full extent of their contemporary reception cannot be reconstructed, we do know that they were published, circulated widely to ethnological museums, and distributed as postcards. Since the multiple reflexive turns of the 1980s and the reevaluation of photographic archives in this regard, in particular one photograph

(Figure 36) has been extensively re-produced in writings of the social sciences.[201] Scholars considered this photograph as a representation of representation, which is the reason why it developed reproductive power, similar to the art history of the painting *Las Meninas*. In order to understand these reactions, we need to consider the collateral knowledge, regarding photographic iconographies, as well as photographic indexicality and technology.

It is striking that of the authors who have engaged with this photograph so far, only the poet and essayist Subbash Jaireth (1999) reflected on it to some degree. At the same time, he is the only author who does not reproduce the photograph with his article. In all other cases the photograph is separated from the text, merely illustrating the authors' explicit or implicit analysis of the "colonial gaze" without further comment. All authors appear to take the depicted pun most literally (a coloniser being photographed by a colonised subject). Apparently, they consider this to be obvious enough for the photograph to be presented without commentary. This reminds us of the claims made around 1900 for genre photographs, which I described in the last chapter. These should work without captions, due to the strength of their internal narrative, as well as the popularity of particular image topics.

In all of the photographic situations I described so far, historical actors positioned themselves in between various media, between image examples and conventional forms of recreating them, such as photography and theatre. Both White and Black contemporaries thus engaged with various forms of performance. Elizabeth Edwards has distinguished three forms of performance in relation to history and photographs (Edwards 2001:20): first, "the performance of the image through the spatial dynamic of its framing"; second, "the performance of making photographs"; and third, the "theatre or performance within the frame". Edwards states that "[t]hese categories are not mutually exclusive, but rather integrally interconnected in the performance of history". These kinds of photographic performances are most clearly exemplified in images that involve and engage other images epistemologically. Such images, like the ones I am about to discuss, have been referred to by William J.T. Mitchell and others as "metapictures" (Mitchell 1994:35, 2008; also see Nöth 2007; Stoichita 1997).

All three photographs were made close to Mariannhill Monastery between approximately 1891 and 1905 (Figures 35, 36, 37, and without a second camera also Figure 30 [1914]). Four photographs, with the same or similar compositional intention over more than 20 years, implies that the photographers attempted to re-produce the same image idea. The photographs make us wonder about the presence, the position, and the performance of the photographers, as well as about who the photographic subject is. We may wonder what the photograph's intended narrative is, and for what purpose it was created. Over the next pages I discuss the photograph regarding

[201] The following authors either sourced the photograph from the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, the Ethnological Museum of Berlin, or the Ethnological Museum of Leiden (All versions differ slightly. The copy at the Pitt Rivers Museum is considerably cropped to the left, only showing half of Leyendecker's body). In chronological order: Edwards and Williamson (1981), Wright (1992), Pytlik (1997), Jaireth (1999), Adler (2000), Stevenson and Graham-Stewart (2001), Griffiths (2002), Warner (2006), Thompson (2007), Edwards (2013); also see Roodenburg (2002), Bool (2007) for reproductions of Figure 35. Both photographs have also been used in various exhibitions including colonial photographs.

the collateral knowledge, which contemporary audiences would have brought to it by considering the visual economy regarding colonial humour.



Figure 35: original caption: "*Ein Kaffer läßt sich photographieren*"[202]—"A Kafir has his photograph taken". Fr. Isembard Leyendecker (acting as if?) causing an exposure by lifting the camera's lens cap, approx. 1891 (NMVW-A15-71).

[202] This caption appears in Müller (1899). Alternatively it may be translated as "A Kafir *permits* to have his photographs taken".



Figure 36: original caption: "*Eine photographische Aufnahme*"[203]—"The making of a photograph". Fr. Isembard Leyendecker with a group of unidentified Africans near Mariannhill, approx. 1896 (NMVW-A15-12).

[203] As captioned in Müller (1899); alternatively captioned "*Photographische Aufnahmen im Kraal*" (mind the plural) in Müller (1901).



Figure 37: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Photographische Aufnahme im Kaffernkraal*"—"The making of a photograph in a Kafir kraal". Br. Aegidius Müller with a group of unidentified Africans near Mariannhill, approx. 1905 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

The three photographs are shown here in chronological order (approximately 1891, 1896, and 1905). The first and second involve Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, and the third Br. Aegidius Müller, both apparently involved in communication with Africans. All three photographs must have been taken relatively close to the monastery, as two sets of cameras had to be taken along. For all three photographs I could find others that have been taken during the same photographic occasions. In each case they were taken from exactly the same vantage points, however, do show entirely different protagonists and activities. A succession of unrelated performances in the exact same photographic space indicates a staging of the photographic scene. No photographs exist that may have been taken with the cameras visible in the photographs under discussion. This may have had the simple reason of ideal lighting, and further indicates that the scenery was indeed only set up for the second camera. We have to consider the fact that the photographer had only two possibilities to position himself in the field, in order to achieve technically and aesthetically ideal lighting conditions. In order to create shadows accentuating the models' features, light had to fall on a model either from the right or the left. Unless the sunlight was diffuse due to clouds, or the

sun was very high, photographing with or against the sun was not an option. This is also due to the fact that dark skin in combination with strong sunlight is much harder to photograph than light skin.

In the first case we can see a very young Fr. Isembard Leyendecker in, or just after 1891 (Figure 35).[204] Fr. Isembard is shown during the very brief moment while removing the cap from the camera's lens, in order to expose the negative. The man in front of the camera poses with an umbrella next to a spear. Several similar photographs in Mariannhill's archive depict the already mentioned opposition between supposedly "modern" and "traditional" material culture. Some of them are intended as, and even captioned as "*Scherzbilder* [pictures with a visual pun]". One of those shows a Black couple adorned with beadwork. The man is dressed with a loincloth, the woman with a larger cloth covering the entire torso. Additionally, they are posing with an umbrella, cylinder, and white gloves. In an alternative take both are shown in the same pose, but instead the man carries shield and spear, which indicates that both scenarios were enacted for the camera. The photographs discussed here may be no exception to this practice of performance and framing. However, we must also consider the possibility that the umbrella is a prop of the model's own liking. We will return to this point repeatedly.

Several years after 1891, 20 Africans posed with Fr. Isembard for the next photograph I wish to discuss (Figure 36). Fr. Isembard had by now grown a substantial beard. This photograph suggests an even greater confrontation of sartorial "tradition" with technological "modernity" by depicting a scantily dressed resident of the homestead while handling a second camera. On first sight, there is no indication whether Mariannhill Missionaries understood this "reversed" photographic encounter as generosity in sharing knowledge, or as a visual pun to entertain a European audience. In both South Africa and Europe, representations of a "native photographer" may have been considered uncommon, and even inappropriate. As Fabian and Fiedler suggested for colonial situations (Chapter One), it may even indicate that the colonialist involved in such a situation had lost control within the social relationship. In order to control the evolving mimetic excess, humour may have appeared as an adequate and appropriate device at the time. In order to comprehend the contemporary conventions of humour, circumstances of production, and their consequences, we now require a detailed analysis of the photograph.

The photograph can be divided into three sections: Fr. Isembard dominates the left part and appears to point out to a group of men and women what is happening ahead of them. A still camera on a tripod takes in the right part of the image. One of the African men peers through the camera lens while being covered under a dark cloth. This was essential in order to block light and provide contrast for the image to appear on the camera's matt screen—in fact mirrored and on its head. The man has exchanged the apparatus for his shield and sticks, which lie in between the tripod's legs. The camera's lens itself aims back towards the group with Fr. Isembard. It is crucial to realise that at this moment the camera did not contain a glass plate negative. The plate

[204] We recall that Fr. Isembard only received his full Trappist dress in 1891. The printed caption indicates 1894, but imprinted dates do not always comply with the date of the photographic occasion.

would only have been inserted after the act of bringing the subjects into focus on the matt screen. As shown in the previous photograph (Figure 36), during the actual moment of exposure the photographer no longer viewed the scene as it appeared through the lens or on the negative. As a third section we may consider the photograph's background, which is constituted by a group of sitting, apparently uninvolved, but nevertheless attentive spectators.

The third person suggesting interpretative agency—next to Fr. Isembard and the man behind the camera—is the young woman directly in front of the lens. First of all, her position makes it unlikely that the man behind the camera saw anything at all while peering through the lens. This is one more indication that the scene was only set up to create a pictorial arrangement. Secondly, the woman points—just like Fr. Isembard—to the lens of the visible camera, while looking straight into the lens of the invisible camera. Also several other bystanders direct their attention towards the lens of the visible camera. Everything in the image seems to rotate around this lens, which turns the camera into an extraordinary item of entangled material culture.

The seemingly out-of-the-ordinary exchange of roles constitutes a tension between photographer and models. While the woman points to the one lens, she looks at the other and her eyes simultaneously release and confirm the tension built up through the photograph's staged nature. The woman's eyes indicate her awareness of the invisible photographer's presence, whose perspective we inhabit as viewers of the photograph. This constellation exemplifies the triadic relationship between the photographer, the sitter, and the viewer (cf. Geary 1991a:36-37, Mitchell 1994:58). The photograph mimics and reflects upon the social and representational relations lying behind the frame of the second camera. One may think of this constellation as endlessly involving yet another camera, and thus the repeated encasements of authorship, a *mise en abyme*. This means that the process of photographic representation can never be fully represented photographically.

The third photograph shows Müller with a group of 12 Africans, mostly women and children, as well as two men (Figure 37). Like in the previous photograph the group enacts the production of a photograph with the help of a second camera, with the only difference that the sides are reversed and Müller is turned away from the visible camera. One of the African men handles the camera, while the other poses with a woman. Reminiscent of European courtliness she links arms with him, while he is pointing his stick towards the camera's lens. The poses may have been arranged by Müller, who appears to use his left index finger and his right thumb to indicate how the "here" of the referent, and the "there" of the camera are connected. Like in the previous photograph, these gestures effectively separate spaces and thus constitute an original, as well as its potential future representation in a nevertheless connected spatial arrangement.

There are at least three possible scenarios of what Leyendecker, Müller, and the two respective invisible photographers behind the second cameras thought to perform: the first scenario would have simply been one in which the African men are shown while actually preparing a photograph as photographers. The second scenario would have imagined Leyendecker and Müller as enacting a demonstration in the role of photographer: they are

explaining and directing the scene, before the proper act of exposure is taking place. In this case they would eventually have stood next to the camera, while lifting the lens cap (cf. Figure 35). They would have allowed the African men only a temporary peek, while they themselves were setting the scene. The third scenario would have been the creation of a staged genre photograph to *simulate* either scenario one or two. In this case the photographed camera was merely a dummy and prop, and was never supposed to take an image in the first place. As a matter of fact, so far I have discovered no photograph that may have been taken with one of the "visible" cameras. The contemporary caption ("taking of a photograph")[205] around 1900 appears to suggest to the reader that the intended narrative was indeed scenario one. However, we can assume that it was clear to many contemporary viewers, even if only vaguely familiar with photography, that the African men are not depicted in the moment of photographic exposure. Therefore, at least some contemporaries may have interpreted the photograph as scenario two.

Independently of the question whether contemporary viewers only attributed partial, or indeed full photographic agency to the African men behind the cameras, it is important to recall that many of Mariannhill's photographs were primarily taken with a European audience in mind. This audience was well acquainted with the earlier-mentioned caricatures, employing sartorial and technological frictions for humorous effect. German satirical magazines, such as *Fliegende Blätter*, *Simplicissimus,* or *Kladderadatsch* are likely sources of inspiration (cf. Ciarlo 2001, Henisch and Henisch 1998, Joch 2004, Langbehn 2011). Since the 1880s, *Fliegende Blätter*, for example, frequently presented drawn cartoon caricatures about the practices of professional and amateur photographers in cities, caricatures of the encounter between photographic technology and rural German peasants as clumsy and unexperienced sitters, but also caricatures of Africans in the German colonies as "greedy cannibals", some in interaction with missionaries (cf. Nederveen Pieterse 1990). Next to the distinctions in dress, which I already discussed, two other distinct topics were either the comical confrontation of Africans with European forms of technological "modernity", or cartoon imaginations of Africans appropriating local means to imitate European technology, for example the employment of a giraffe as an elevator.

Most relevant for our case is the contemporary Euro-American take on the replacement of the commonly male White professional photographer with its social Others for humorous effect: children, women, animals, and colonial subjects. The first two were of course only mild attempts at humour, as female lay and professional photographers had become more common by the 1890s.[206] Animals instead were supposed only to be photographed, and not to take photographs themselves. Explicit examples of such "role reversals", showing monkeys taking photographs of explorers, appeared for example in the British satirical magazine *Punch* in 1860,

[205] Müller applied this caption twice, first in a catalogue he produced in early 1899, and later in a 1901 article (cf. Chapter Six).

[206] Of course women had been considered as a growing market for cameras since the 1890s (Jacob 2011), and thus been treated seriously along the line. The most extreme form of replacing the male White photographer may be the anthropomorphisation of the camera itself, having its own agency as to what and how to photograph (Krauss 1978).

and still in *Harper's Weekly* in 1909, the latter being captioned as "Photo-safari" (Henisch and Henisch 1998:126-127). In yet another example from 1948 "two natives have just taken a snapshot of [two] captured travellers [tied together in a cooking pot], with one saying to the other: 'If these shots don't sell, we'll have to eat the explorers'" (Morgan 1948:62 [quoted in Henisch and Henisch 1998:126]).[207] In all cases, the humorous effect was drawn from the fact that the colonial situation had turned against the coloniser. Eventually, the very first anthropological publication using Mariannhill's photograph (Figure 36) in the early 1980s stated that it "shows an amusing village scene" (Edwards and Williamson 1981:16). Originating from the time of the photograph's production, this pictorial narrative apparently still worked many decades later. The following example will support this assumption.

Similar compositions were common in South Africa, in particular those produced for, or appropriated by, the local market in postcards. Prime examples are the two South African companies Sallo Epstein & Co and T.H. O'Flaherty. The most explicit examples in Epstein's series show scantily, supposedly "traditionally" dressed "Zulu" women playing table tennis, men playing pool billiard, or a Black couple riding a fancy motor car. Both publishers also reproduced Mariannhill's photographs, once the picture postcard economy began to proliferate in the late 1890s (Geary 1998, 2013; Langbehn 2010; also see Beukers 2007:164). Once copyright legislation allowed to freely reproduce photographs as picture postcards, this caused distress for the authors of photographs. At least in the German juridical system this transfer between media did not fall under the contemporary law of copyright (Dommann 2006:356). At least in practice, the same happened in South Africa to Mariannhill's photograph. First O'Flaherty, and later individual senders added to the apparent potential of its narrative.

[207] From the magazine "Camera: A Practical Magazine for Photographers", 1940.



Figure 38: original caption: "A native photographer". T.H. O'Flaherty, Copyright. Sent from "Lalpoora" Durban, 1 August 1904 (By courtesy of Christraud M. Geary, private collection).

The postcard's producer, O'Flaherty, captioned the card with the printed title "A Native Photographer", thereby ironically investing the Black man with full photographic agency. In so far, this is an even more detailed ascription of photographic roles than in Mariannhill's captions. Already guided by this first interpretation, the sender of this particular card (Figure 38) added yet another layer in 1904, by addressing a friend or relative in London as follows:

My dear Winnie,
Have recommended Dolly to try her luck down here when she has got the buisness [sic] at her finger-tips. Warriors would like being posed / Fred.[208]

Presumably Dolly was a British amateur photographer, whom Fred had earlier invited to visit Durban. According to him, the area provided photographic models who were not only exotic, but at the same time eager to pose. Fred re-narrated this invitation to Winnie, maybe as a joking commentary on their mutual friend's or relative's hobby. In addition to the fact that the Mariannhill photograph was published in a series of explicitly satirical postcards, this particular commentary is in line with my earlier suggestions about a contemporary culture of colonial humour. Missionaries, postcard publishers, as well as the card's senders and receivers apparently

[208] I am grateful to Christraud Geary for making this postcard available to me.

shared a discursive field, to which they added successively. Only the existence of such discursively established power relations would let the depicted Africans appear "deficient", instead of merely "different" (Joch 2004:68).

In the next section on Mariannhill's theatre productions, as well as in other chapters, we will once more see that Mariannhill Missionaries joined other players in the European press in a discourse on the supposedly "imperfect" imitation of European culture by Africans—on which the intended humour eventually relied (cf. Joch 2004:68, also see Pels 1989, Rippe 2018). In the case of Figure 38, a potential difference in the photographer's qualification is thus simply implied by the visual facts that he is African, undressed, and the resulting caption stating that he is "native". For the contemporary viewers, the appropriation of the camera by a person, who was in their eyes likely unfamiliar with photographic technology, appeared imperfect. Through the act of trying nevertheless, the person appeared as "amusing".

All three photographs (Figures 35-37) present the encounter of Africans with photography, a particular technology, craft, and practice that required particular skills. The same idea with a different effect is reproduced in photographs showing crafts and trades carried out at Mariannhill's workshops: scenes of young African apprentices engaged in shoemaking, carpentry, sewing, or building activities, all show them on the monastery's premises. They are depicted while being supervised and instructed by a lay brother. But other than the "native photographer", they are wearing "modern" clothes. The depicted situations therefore present less of a confrontation, and the protagonists appear as "imitating" well, especially because they were under the supervision of a Trappist monk. Most importantly, they do not invert, and thus do not question representational authority. Had the "native photographer" in our photograph been dressed in "modern" clothes, he may have been perceived as doing just this. Accordingly, the two photographs under discussion can be read as combining European and colonial image traditions: they challenge the very question of representative authority in a controlled way through (a likely caricature of) a representation of photographic representation.

Curators, historians, and anthropologists—whether Black or White—may find themselves in an uncomfortable situation with this colonial photograph (Figure 36): apparently, it is capable of creating a tension between, on the one hand the excitement of seeing how a photograph may have been taken by a Black person, and on the other hand a disgust of colonial situations epitomised in a potential parody. Only one of the authors mentioned above ever analysed Mariannhill's photograph in detail. All other authors either considered it as unnecessary to comment on it, or avoided it. Jaireth (1999), building on Bakthin's *heteroglossia*, refers to the intersections of gazes in Mariannhill's "*Photographische Aufnahme*" (Figure 36) as *heteroscopia.* He considers this as "the presence of someone else's seeing in my seeing" (ibid.:9). Other than making similar points to the ones I presented above, he considers the gaze as determined by the captions provided along with an image, as well as one's subjective and culturally determined ways of seeing. Essentially, he describes an experience of intermediality *in* the image and *of* the image, which depends, as I have explained, on the contemporary collateral

knowledge.

When discussing aspects of the colonial gaze in her essay "Looking at Photographs: Between Contemplation, Curiosity and Gaze", Elizabeth Edwards (2013) does not refer to any of the photographs illustrating her article. Assuming that she herself selected these photographs, she gave Mariannhill's photograph the title: "a photographic encounter". Without any textual explanation the photograph indeed only relies on those gazes visible in the photograph, as I described them above. It then becomes impossible not to think about gazing, while gazing at a genre photograph that has this very topic. Edwards' intention may eventually have been exactly this, to present the image without further explanation as a provocation.

Few similar photographs from the 19th century, and to my best knowledge none with reversed roles are in circulation today.[209] This allowed Mariannhill's photograph to take a centre-role in the reconsideration of photographic occasions in colonial situations. Leyendecker and Müller unintentionally created a photographic study of the practice of their very subject for anthropologists and historians of photography: a visual elaboration on Müller's textual account of his own profession, which I presented at the last chapter's beginning (Müller 1909). Not only did the photographers reflect on their own presence, but they used the medium photography to reflect on its own production as a practice in a colonial encounter. This is what Mitchell called a "metapicture" (Mitchell 1994), where we see a performance of the production of an image.

Earlier, the painting *Las Meninas* by Diego Velázquez (1656) has been considered as a "posed tableau [*gestelltes tableau*]", ergo a *tableaux vivant* in 1888 by the German art historian Carl Justi (Justi 1888:314, also see Stratton-Pruitt 2003:125) in the late 19th century, as much as it has been identified as such in the recent past (Mitchell 2005:50). It is often considered as the prime example of the artistic representation of representation. In the same way, Mariannhill's reflexive meta-photographs are elaborately staged *tableaux vivants*. Likely built on ideas of colonial humour they are genre photographs with the explicit intention to delineate actors, their actions, and their relationships. In particular the role-reversal makes this argument plausible. This is of course only one possible interpretation, and today the photographs are certainly capable of accommodating several others, in particular without a caption. How then does Mariannhill's photograph "work", or what does it "want"? Like *Las Meninas*, the Mariannhill photograph creates an ideal subject position, placed into a discourse of representation (cf. Hall 1997:60). With a similar idea as Hall, Mitchell considered this intention of what *Las Meninas* "wants" as a *tableau vivant* (2005:50): like the beholder inhabits the space of the sovereign in the case of *Las Meninas*, in Mariannhill's composition the beholder takes the place of the (potentially Black) cameraman. Following Foucault, Mitchell further argues that *Las Meninas* displays an "order of things", "an epistemic field that produces a sense of the kinds of objects, the logic of their speciation, their taxonomy" (Mitchell 2005:155, also see Langbehn 2011:95).

With Michael Taussig one may further observe "mimetic excess" within the situations I described for around 1900, as well as more than 80 years later: a self-reflexive awareness of the

[209] Amongst others, see for example Geary (1991a), Geary (2002), Bernhardt (2006).

multiple dimensions of colonial roles and representational directions in a situation of "second contact", where the binary of Self and Other appears to be dissolved (Taussig 1993:252). One may argue, however, that this kind of "second contact" already took place around 1900, when Mariannhill's photographs were taken: they merely simulated an encounter situation of "first contact" for humorous effect. In this sense, Mariannhill's photograph may thus be said to reveal parts of a colonial common sense (Stoler 2009). The photograph in fact at the same time confirms and denies the presence of a "native photographer", and eventually questions the arrival of the truly *creative* Black African photographer possessing artistic authority: this holds true for the photographing African in the image itself, as well as the (potentially Black) photographer behind the invisible camera. This *doubled* presence of the "creative native", as both artistic model and sovereign artist, was only fully realised with Gerard Bhengu's 1927 self-portrait, possibly the very first identified self-portrait of a Black South African figurative artist (Chapter Seven). The following examples in this chapter will likewise deal with the establishment of colonial relationships through the simultaneous involvement of multiple media.

Staging Faith: "Histrionic Zulus"

On 15 November 1904, Bishop Henry Delalle OMI (1869-1949) visited Mariannhill for the celebration of his recent inauguration as Vicar Apostolic of Natal.[210] During the festivities, the play *Joseph in Egypt* was performed by the Black boys of Mariannhill's school in the English language, and thus continued a tradition of religious theatre at the mission. As early as 1886, for Pfanner's inauguration as abbot, musical performances had been presented by Black children dressed in Tyrollean fashion (Gross 1887:20). As I explained in the introduction to this chapter, already two years later, in 1888 for Pfanner's silver jubilee, the missionaries performed religious and non-religious plays. They eventually continued a tradition of theatre at Mariannhill beyond both World Wars.

While the first plays in 1888 included popular German comedies, such as *Madame Pompadour und ihre Katzen* by Moritz Peuschel, or *Das Polnische Juden-Quartet* by Emil Neumann, those after 1900 were mostly of religious nature and included the already mentioned *Joseph in Egypt* (1904), the *Nativity Story* (1906, 1908, 1909) or Wiseman's *Fabiola*, as well as *The Prodigal Son* (both 1907).[211] Performances by students of the St. Francis College after the Second World War also included plays by Shakespeare, Dickens, and Shaw, as well as adaptations of "Zulu folklore" (Hermann 1987:59). In the second half of the 20th century, even Mariannhill's own foundation history was turned into theatre plays on several occasions (Vorspel et al. 1921-1989:537).[212]

Stage plays at Mariannhill have been acknowledged as initiating "Zulu theatre" (ie. in the Zulu language) in South Africa between 1918 and 1925 (Fuchs 2001:279, Groenewald 2002:33, Peterson 2000).[213] "For educational purposes" the early plays before 1913 had been explicitly not performed in Zulu, but in the English language (Anon. 1907a:147). As Peterson (2000) explains, theatre at Mariannhill was intended to be both recreational and educational for African converts, in order to control their leisure time by keeping them away from the bad influences of urban life. Peterson discusses the social and educational debates around *Joseph in Egypt* and other Mariannhill plays for the time period after the First World War under Fr. Bernard Huss (1876-1948). Performances at Mariannhill predating 1918, however, have so far not been studied. As scripts of these earlier plays did not survive, it will not be possible to say whether the versions by

[210] The French Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (*Oblati Mariae Immaculatae*) were the first Catholics to arrive in Natal. Delalle succeeded Charles Jolivet as Apostolic Vicar, who had accepted the Trappists in his vicariate in 1882. Before Natal was reorganised into a diocesan system in 1951 under a Bishop, it had been structured in form of vicariates under a Vicar Apostolic (cf. Brain 1975, 1982, 1997; Brown 1960).

[211] Reviews on these plays can be found in the respective issues of the *Vergißmeinnicht*.

[212] For the centenary in 1982 a competition-call on the history of Mariannhill was published in the periodical *Umafrika.* One of the competitors "Mr. Alexius Buthelezi wrote a play in Zulu on Mariannhill, with original musical compositions. This was staged on 24. July by the *Umabatha* group of players and students of St. Francis College". Plays were increasingly documented with photographs during the second half of the 20th century, of which some are preserved in albums at Mariannhill's St. Francis College.

[213] This is contested by Kruger (2002). Without providing evidence she claims that Lovedale Mission already performed plays during the mid-19th century.

Huss were adaptations of earlier scripts.

Peterson further speculates that the parallels between *Joseph in Egypt* and the actual Natal history of wars, calamities, and natural disasters since the 1860s, must have been obvious to the African audiences. Christianity may thus have appeared to them as a likely solution to their own compromised situation (ibid.:45-49). At least the two following contemporary sources I accessed did not indicate such interpretations for the plays just after 1900. Parallel performances to Mariannhill's theatre plays, however, did comment on current political events, such as the so-called Bambatha Rebellion between 1906 and 1907 against the implementation of higher taxes for Africans. These were presented in the form of parody, for the purpose of entertainment: "Amongst other things two [Black] lads performed. In a highly comical dialogue they acted out the dispute between a Kafir and an Englishman about the splendid [*famos*] Poll-Tax or Head-Tax" (Anon. 1907:146).[214] I will address the related historical circumstances in Natal in more detail in Chapter Four.

The very first recorded performance of *Joseph in Egypt* in 1904 was conceived and directed by Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger (1872-1962).[215] The monastery's organist, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch, arranged the musical score. As reported by the *Natal Witness*, Neuschwanger had procured the play from America and "adapted it to the exigencies of the occasion".[216] Other than suggested by Groenewald (2000) and Peterson (2000), the early plays were neither only "in-house" performances, nor were they only for a Black audience. Instead, they also included guests, and especially many White spectators.

After their ordination in 1908, both Hanisch and Neuschwanger were transferred to Centocow Mission in the Polela District. Hanisch became superior of Centocow in 1911, and Neuschwanger assistant priest (cf. Chapters Three and Four).[217] Just like at Mariannhill, they introduced a tradition of theatre. In 1913, Fr. Thomas once more staged a "Dramatic Play in Zulu 'Joseph in Egypt', interspersed with Songs & Choruses" for Centocow's 25th anniversary and the solemn benediction of its new church (also see Peterson 2000:236). The illustrated programme of the festivities (Anon. 1913) even listed the play's 25 "*dramatis personae*" with either their Zulu or baptismal names.[218] Unlike in the description of earlier plays, the missionaries here partially extended theatrical authorship to the actors.

Initiating the local reception of Mariannhill's theatre plays in 1904, the *Vergißmeinnicht* reported on the performance of *Joseph in Egypt* at Mariannhill:

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214 My own translation from the German original.

215 Earlier histories wrongly suggested that also the play in 1904 was directed by Fr. Bernhard Huss (see Groenewald 2002:33, Peterson 2000:33). Huss may have nevertheless already been present during these early plays, as he joined the community in 1895.

216 See Morgan (2007) for a Protestant view on the "Passion Play" and *tableaux vivants* in America around 1900. These were also filtered through the discourse around the performances at Oberammergau in Germany. Morgan however presents them as focussing on the religious experience, not on the theatrical one.

217 For their portraits see Chapter Two. In 1921, Neuschwanger moved to the USA permanetly as one of the first Mariannhill priests.

218 Usually the first name was Christian, and the surnames were either Zulu or European; depending on whether a benefactor was involved in "adopting" the respective person as a patron, and by so doing supplying the surname.

Seven times the curtain rose, and every time the same surprising picture: Zulu Kafirs as highly skilled actors!—Altogether 25 people performed, and every single actor rose to the occasion, to which most of them were unaccustomed. Especially the leading roles were performed with a certain mastery. There was nothing forced and nothing that could be called artificial. It was nature and life.[219] (Anon. 1905:35)

Also the local English newspaper *The Natal Witness* reported approvingly in the same week as the event, under the title "A Unique Drama—Histrionic Zulus." Setting a somewhat more ambivalent tone, the article focused on the interaction of the play's director with the actors:

The performance is probably unique in the history of the stage, principally because the actors were natives who doubtless had never witnessed a play in their lives before, or seen the interior of a theatre. […] There were only about thirty, or fewer, boys on the place who could speak English, and most of them were not linguists by any means. However, he [Neuschwanger] persevered with his task, and demonstrated the power of teaching which the European possesses, and the ability to imitate and more especially to learn by rote which are apparently inherent qualities of the Zulu.

It could not be expected that they would give the words the necessary declamation, and this, of course, they failed to do, and the result was the audience laughed occasionally where they should have been sad, and preserved solemn countenances when they should, according to the nature of the piece, have laughed.

[219] My own translation from the German original.



Figure 39: original captions: "*Dreikönig. Weihnachtsspiel*". "*Eine Weihnachtsaufführung der Kaffernkinder in Mariannhill"*—"A Christmas play by the Kafir children of Mariannhill". This scene was restaged as a *tableau vivant* in Mariannhill's photographic studio (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, published in *Vergißmeinnicht*, January 1907:9).

While the German review in the *Vergißmeinnicht* was exceedingly positive, the English review by the *Witness* was ambivalent and considered issues of imperfect imitation and its unintended humorous effects on the audience. In the following pages of this section and the next, I will analyse the layers of performance and imitation between the plays as such, as well as the photographs taken of these plays. To my knowledge, no photographs survived of the 1888 production, and apparently none were taken during the 1904 production. It was only in the January edition of 1907[220] that the *Vergißmeinnicht* published a photograph showing an enactment of *The Nativity Story* (Figure 39), as performed during the Christmas festivities of 1906. The photograph was given the title "*Eine Weihnachtsaufführung der Kaffernkinder in Mariannhill*"[221] and had the following extensive caption:

[220] 1907 marked the monastery's 25th anniversary. This occasion also saw the introduction of photographs to the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht*. Previously only the *Mariannhiller Kalender* had been illustrated, albeit with engravings derived from photographs.

[221] "A Christmas-play by the Kafir children of Mariannhill".

The actors conceived of their roles with such seriousness, and performed, despite their inborn southern animation, with such religious character, and also a calmness, dignity and certitude, which was most appropriate to the play. They would have certainly received greatest honours on one of the bigger European stages. Also very charming indeed was the effect caused by the contrast between the children's black skin colour and the colourful costumes, which the sisters had skilfully made from aprons and pieces of cloth.[222] (*Vergißmeinnicht*, January 1907:9)

When discussing theatre at the mission, Mariannhill's publications repeated the same trope of ambivalent imitation beyond the 1940s. While the publication often rendered imitation as well-executed, they sometimes stressed this ambivalence by drawing it into daily life: "Most Africans love acting" and have "the wonderful gift […] of acting *on and off the stage*, as most of them are born actors" (Kneipp 1963:100-101, Schimlek 1949:42).[223] The "natives' quality" to *imitate*, rather than to *create* was stressed by several more authors at the time of the plays, such as the two missionaries Dudley Kidd (1904:282) and Alexandre-Henry Junod (1905:6, also see Chidester 2010:148, Peterson 2000:70, Thomas 1994:133). As we will see in Chapter Seven, these rhetorics only changed by the 1920s.

Likewise ambivalent were the ideas about *whom* the children imitated in the first place. While the text indeed mentioned that their imitations of Biblical protagonists were outstanding, other voices in the *Vergißmeinnicht*, like in the above example, stressed that Black Africans were even more fitting actors for the Bible's oriental characters. Even more so, one description stressed the fact that the play *Die Heilige Elisabeth von Thüringen* (1909) had been adapted for, or maybe even adapted by the African actors themselves:

Only with difficulties she proceeds, supported by her stick. Without further ado she squats on the floor in front of the princess, and pulls from her wooly hair a small spoon made of bone. Entirely after the fashion of the Kafirs [*ganz nach Kaffernart*], off and on she begins to take snuff with it, and to catch the endlessly gushing tears. In short, one could see that the actors were *Kafirs*, but they also understood it to imitate their Black fellow countrymen perfectly.[224] (Anon. 1909:137)

Missionary accounts for propaganda purposes often moved between positive spectacle and negative drama. This is why we have to pay attention to the mediating role of missionaries and photographers, and the role they played in a situation of colonial mimicry. Mariannhill's editors used photographs of theatrical performances to suggest to benefactors that converts not only successfully *performed* faith, but effectively *attained* faith. In order to avoid the impression of a performance, and instead present a transformation, the photographic practice at Mariannhill thus had to claim representations as truthful. Nevertheless, missionaries and other commentators considered it necessary to express an anxiety, but also an excitement about African imitation, in particular as it was connected to various media, such as photography and theatre. This is phrased most poignantly in the slightly ironic heading employed by the journalist of the *Witness* in his

222 My own translation from the German original.
223 My own italics.
224 My own translation from the German original. Italics as in the original.

review of Mariannhill's play: "Histrionic Zulus". This may also be considered as what Taussig called "mimetic excess" (1993), an anxious awareness of the mimetic faculty.

It is therefore important to ask whether the fact that a photograph was posed, was explicitly pointed out to audiences in Europe. In the publication involving the nativity scene (Figure 39) the anonymous author did indeed point out that it was a play, but he did not point out that it had been reenacted for the purpose of being photographed. As the painted backdrop in this particular photograph of the Christmas play makes clear, it was re-staged in Mariannhill's studio. Far from the original setting in a large hall or open-air, this studio re-enactment can be considered a *tableau vivant*, as they had already been performed at Mariannhill in 1888. Before 1914, plays were thus staged at Mariannhill not only for the sake of public performances, but also exclusively to be captured in photographs. However, this fact was not made explicit at all times.

As we already know, *tableaux vivants* were dramatically staged scenes, often drawn from popular literature or the Bible, which photographers soon came to reproduce for commercial purposes (Petersen 2008b). At Mariannhill after 1900, Black actors still concluded their theatrical performances by posing for *tableaux vivants* (sometimes also referred to as "*Gruppenbild*"); these *tableaux* often epitomised the play's moral message. In 1905, when the curtain rose for the last time, the actors were grouped around the throne of the Pharaoh in a "painterly manner", thus forming a *tableau vivant*, while being illuminated with Bengal fire. The *Vergißmeinnicht* referenced photographs of the later occasions in two cases, in 1907 and in 1909: "One year later they performed Kafir Christmas plays, of which Nr. 1 of this year reproduces a group portrait performed at the end in truthful depiction [*getreuer Darstellung*]" (Anon. 1907:146).[225] In 1909, after all, the author pointed out the rupture in the representative process, which had been obscured in previous accounts:

> As our photographer happened to be visiting [the mission station] Mariatal during Christmas, he produced a photograph of one of the various scenes, which we present here to our honoured readers in zincographic reproduction. Due to the circumstances, the photograph has been made in the *open air*—therefore the garden-like backdrop. But otherwise it is a truthful representation [*getreue Wiedergabe*] of the interesting Christmas play, about which our Blacks at Mariatal will speak for a long, long time.[226] (Anon. 1909:137)

The "circumstances" referred to in the quote must have been the fact that the actual theatrical performance took place at night and had been illuminated once more with Bengal fire. This apparently constituted an inconvenience for the photographer, which required him to re-stage the entire scene once more in daylight. Nevertheless he considered it to be a "truthful representation" of the entire experience.

The photographs that show explicitly *theatrical* performances of religious faith, form only a small part of Mariannhill's remaining photographic oeuvre. Nevertheless, I argue that they can help us to better understand the various other kinds of *explicit* and *implicit* photographic

[225] My own translation from the German original.
[226] My own translation from the German original. Italics as in the original.

performances at Mariannhill between the 1890s and 1915. Acting in the space of the theatre stage may be considered the quintessential, and also the most accepted form of imitation. But, as I have shown already, ideas on theatrical imitation easily slipped into photographic practice. The aspect of performance is explicit in Mariannhill's photographs of Catholic, as well as African rituals, ceremonies, celebrations, children's plays, children's drills, and more generally posed portraiture. In the following sections, I explore how the missionaries extended the ideas developed within the practice of theatre photography to other photographs. This allowed to improve performance of African models in order to mediate complex ideas, an so to better convince benefactor audiences.

The previous reviews of theatre performances at Mariannhill and beyond initially described Africans as unimaginative copyists. But the ability to create *resemblances* was in the case of Mariannhill's plays also presented as a desirable talent to be cultivated. The *Nativity* photograph and its caption may be understood as such an attempt of bridging Europe and South Africa by creating mutual empathy. The accompanying text suggested to European benefactors that South African children had the potential to adapt: not only by carrying out theatrical mimesis of a classic Christian Biblical topic involving faith and adoration, but by doing this in a most skilful and professional manner.

Therefore, despite this apparent reiteration of stereotypical ascriptions of imitation to Blacks by Whites, we once more need to acknowledge that social actors' appropriations of otherness as a valuable addition to their own performative repertoire were more multi-faceted and multi-directional. In 1908, for example, Robert Baden-Powell introduced the invented tradition of a Zulu war song to the Boy Scouts Movement (Chidester 2010:143). In 1936, the Black South African writer Herbert I.E. Dhlomo "traces the origins of African drama to the rituals performed in 'primitive' African societies. The rituals, he argues, were based on the instinct of imitation, the belief that like produced like" (Peterson 2000:190). Dhlomo indeed suggested that "these ceremonies were based on what anthropologists call Sympathetic Magic", however without making reference to the anthropologist in question, J.G. Frazer (Dhlomo 1977 [1936]:3; also see Chapter Eight). Eventually, Dhlomo advised that "the African dramatist should not fear being mocked as an 'imitator' of European art (Dhlomo 1977:7)". While the missionary Junod had described magic and imitation as a contemporary character trait of Africans to keep them at a distance (1905), Dhlomo instead embraced the anthropological profession and framework, but used it to trace the "civilised" African's evolvement from the "traditional". At the same time, like Dhlomo during the 1930s, some African intellectuals repeated the exact same "before/after" dichotomy—as used by missionaries decades earlier—in print culture (eg. *Bantu World*). Apparently, in this case the opposition criticised European caricature imaginations of the "tribal" by confidently opposing it with the image of a "modern" African (cf. Robbroeck 2011:123, 2008; also see Oguibe 2002). Dhlomo thus nevertheless suggested that Africans participated in, rather than imitated global practices of fashion, science, and art. This is also what Ferguson (2002) suggests in his "anthropology of imitation" (also see Chidester 2010). Both

White and Black social actors used theatre, performance, and photography to articulate difference and race through the related tropes of imitation.

In 1931, Mariannhill's stage director of the 1920s, Fr. Bernard Huss, picked up on these issues in an article published in the journal *Africa*. Retrospectively based on his 30 years of experience and perspective as a missionary at Mariannhill and its stations, and with the help of "social anthropology and ethnology", he argued against the contemporary opinion by Africans that "one must be a native in order to understand the native" (cf. Chapter Seven). Huss referred to the new generation of self-conscious African intellectuals, such as Dhlomo, as the "New Native". To make his point, Huss distinguished a particular "European mind" from a "Native mind", of which he once more divided the latter into two variants:

> In some cases the native mind is a reaction, a revolt, a protest against the European mind. The native slogan 'Africa for the Africans' is a retaliation for the European's 'a white South Africa'. In other cases the native mind is a more or less feeble or crude imitation, sometimes also a ridiculous caricature or pathetic distortion of the European mind. […] In consequence of this metamorphosis we may, in theory, distinguish two main schools of thought in the native mind, the school of unrest and that of adjustment. In practice there is much overlapping and elements of both schools may be mixed in the same mind. (Huss 1931:448-451)

This account by Huss is a crude psychological essentialisation of the relationship between Africans and the missionaries. Before 1914, Mariannhill Missionaries had formulated the opposition between "unrest" (before) and "adjustment" (after) in so far that Africans either had to adjust to the conditions on the mission's land, or had to leave (cf. Chapter Three). The economic and social relationship to the mission was thus determined by Africans' attitudes towards labour, land, and religious affiliation. Access to these benefits depended on Africans' adjustment to the mission's terms of conduct, dress, and material culture, at least externally. As I explained, the missionary also used these points to represent successful conversion.

Due to the remaining uncertainty in performance, however, the missionaries divided this attitude of "adjustment" once more: on the one hand there were supposedly those Africans who imitated required Christian conduct sufficiently in order to be baptised, and to then reap the benefits; accordingly Mariannhill missionaries referred to them as "bread Christians [*Brotchristen*]", whom they thought to be a product of Protestant education. On the other hand, the Trappists prided themselves with the production of "quality", instead of "quantity". They claimed to educate "true Christians [*richtige Christen*]", by training them "to work from their earliest youth with relentless discipline by example and instruction" (Anon. 1895:30). The quality of "true faith" however needed to be represented, not only as imitation in the form of theatre plays, but as an authentic experience for both converts and audiences. Stories in the periodicals did this by narrating textually the conversion experience of individual Africans, or the good deeds they had supposedly done. These textual accounts explained that the converts had been genuinely motivated by their newly adopted Christian conviction, which had often been triggered by a particular transformative experience. When the *Vergißmeinnicht* introduced photographs in 1907, the editorial quoted in Chapter One claimed that these photographs would

eventually enable readers to become “eyewitnesses” to these processes. Next I turn to an example where this drama of conversion is most explicit, but not explicitly pointed out as a performance.



Figure 40: original caption: “*Laßt die Kleinen zu mit kommen!*”—“Suffer the little children to come unto me” (published in *Vergißmeinnicht*, October 1913:230).

Several of Mariannhill's photographs from the turn of the 19th to the 20th century depict fully clothed Africans posing in front of rectangular buildings, some engaged in prayer. In contrast, other photographs depict scantily dressed men and women in front of dome-shaped "beehive huts", either posing as if fighting, performing acts of divination, or engaged in household activities. Captions, either in photographic albums or in the published periodicals, tell us that the first group shows Christian subjects and the second group "heathens". I introduced such images in the introduction of Chapter One, as they appeared in their most opposed fashion on the frontispiece of the *Mariannhiller Kalender*. In 1905, editors even added captions, indicating either a "before" or "after" of the conversion process.

Sometimes this dichotomy also involved a third category of photographs showing the interaction of missionaries with Africans in the process of conversion. There are however only few examples in the photographic collection which show all three conditions—the "before", the "in between" and the "after"—within one single image. In order to combine all three in one photographic composition, the photographer had to stage the scene in a theatrical manner. Like with the last examples, it is therefore important to distinguish whether this fact was pointed out to the audiences of the periodicals. In order to analyse photographic performance and production in a theatrical off-stage scenario, I will now compare two photographs. As an extension to the opposition of the "before/after" construction, the opposition of "adjustment" and "unrest" described by Huss in 1931, is here performed photographically in its most poignant way.

Educational Catholic literature or illustrated Bibles of the late 19th century frequently presented the scene of "Jesus blessing the Children" from Mark 10:13–16.[227] In the years prior to 1909, this scene is repeated every year in Mariannhill's periodicals in the form of painted illustrations with the exact same bible reference (eg. Figure 40). Therefore, it would have been a scene immediately recognisable to a Catholic readership in Europe.[228] The missionaries used it to stress the importance and malleability of children for the mission project (cf. Thomas 1992). Performances such as the one within theatrical productions like the Nativity Story in Figure 39, and "Blessing the Children" in Figure 40, may have been part of the inspiration for Figure 41. In all cases, only the priests are identified, and no personalised names were given to the other actors.

[227] King James Version (KJV). (13) And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. (14) But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. (15) Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. (16) And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

[228] See Morgan (2005) for the use of similar imagery in a Protestant context. See Gullestad (2007) for the use of textual and visual Bible references by the Norwegian Missionary Society.



Figure 41: original caption: "*P. Solanus erteilt Unterricht*"— "Fr. Solanus catechising". Fr. Solanus Peterek and a group of parishioners, St. Bernhard Mission, Alexandra District, Natal, 1908 (digitally inverted glass plate negateive, CMM Archives, published in *Vergißmeinnicht*, September 1909:198).

Figure 41 was published in September 1909 in the *Vergißmeinnicht*. It shows the Priest Fr. Solanus Peterek interacting with a group of Africans at St. Bernhard Mission in 1908. The photograph was thus taken not more than a year after the theatrical nativity scene, and thus makes it likely that Müller continued experimenting within the social and technical conventions of theatre photography, involving the repeated photographic choreography of the same scene with different models. Like with the genre photographs I described in Chapter One, an internal narrative is visible. The priest seems to bless a young woman with his right hand, while resting his left palm on the head of a child. The woman, with her eyes closed, raises the hands of the child next to her, and directs them into a praying gesture. Similarly, all the other children are addressing the priest with folded hands, while one is even holding onto his sleeve, so as to make even closer contact.

The text accompanying this image in the *Vergißmeinnicht* is from the Bible passage Luke 2.24: "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against" (Anon. 1909a). According to the anonymous author, the last line sets the scene for the photograph taken

in South Africa, and at the same time refers to the contemporary struggle of European nation states against Catholicism, during the aftermath of the so-called "Culture Wars". The author identified and denigrated three factors, which supposedly accompanied this confrontation: the "immoral arts", the "lying press", and "ungodly science". Both situations, the one in Europe referred to in the text, and the one in South Africa in the image, enabled the author to identify several of the depicted protagonists in the photograph, whom he framed as particular established literary figures: the "antagonist" to the right raises his opened hand in the direction of the priest. His forehead is creased and his concerned look seems to express disapproval of the scene. The author identified him as "a real magician [*wirklicher Zauberer*]". He is the only man in the image who is adorned with various items of "Zulu" material culture: a head-ring, large earrings, and an assortment of sticks. At least it was such items that accrued value as heavily charged identity markers within the colonial, ethnographic, and missionary discourses on the Zulu, as I shall explain in Part Three.

The author continued to identify counter-clockwise more figures, such as a "disapproving woman", a "mocking man", the "type of the complacent Pharisee", as well as the "arrogant sceptic", who all appear to mimic the corresponding facial expressions in a theatrical way. The author then went on to describe the principal woman, and the child whom she is directing as representatives of the ones who are receptive to Christianity. Eventually, he pointed to the children as "untouched by the spoiling of sin". We are presented here with a particular set of gestures performing faith, as well as its antagonisms. At least European audiences would have perceived them as such according to images they had been presented with earlier.



Figure 42: original caption: "P. ~~Emanuel~~ Angelicus lehrt in Kevelaer Dec. 1908"—Fr. Angelicus teaching at Kevelaer Dec. 1908". Fr. Angelicus Konieczka, with parishioners at Kevelaer Mission, Polela District, Natal, December 1908 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, unpublished).

In the same year, 1908, Müller staged an almost identical scene at Kevelaer Mission, another outstation of Mariannhill (Figure 42). Here, Fr. Angelicus Konieczka takes an almost identical pose as Fr. Solanus Peterek, pointing to an entity in the distance with a serious look. As in the other photograph, the man directly in front of Fr. Angelicus tilts his torso backwards, in order to avoid whatever it is he associates—or is meant to associate—with the hand of the priest. And, like in the other photograph, children are posed in devout prayer, though here it is an adult holding on to the priest's sleeve. It may not be a coincidence that both priestly figures are dressed in white, contrasting with the darker dresses of the parishioners. Even though the compositional advantage of contrast is evident, there is no confirmation in the textual narrative that the photographer intended to portray the missionary as the bringer of "light into darkness", as other authors argue (eg. Acke 2013, Langbehn 2011, Kirkaldy 2005). Because these two remarkably similar photographs were made in the same year, 1908, but in places far apart, I argue that the composition was devised by the photographer rather than by the protagonists. Müller traveled between the mission stations, and seems to have tried out certain scenes with different

protagonists. The narrative of the article closes with the commonly repeated appeal for the needs of the mission; in order to relieve the very oppositions just shown, the mission needed money. Therefore the "before/after" construction is here presented to the benefactors as the even more effective argument of "already/but still".

In order to create this mechanism, the photographer and author (possibly, but not necessarily the same person) had to translate the immaterial idea of faith and its antagonism into one single physical performance. The visualisation of the scene obviously had to appeal to the European imagination, rather than the one of Africans. Therefore, Müller employed a topic that would speak strongly to European middle-class Catholics. He had to translate a complex social situation into an likewise complex visual configuration, which people in Europe would be able to place into an understandable framework. Without making it explicit, also Nicholas Thomas points to an "already/but still" formation. He states that an ambivalence like the one I just presented is "rhetorically central, a necessary predicate for the history of conversion (1992:375)". Being "naturally innocent", children are thus constructed as the natural entry point for the mission (ibid.:376).

As I explained in Chapter One, Africans at mission stations were familiar with photographic practice, theatre performances, as well as religious performances during important feast days or celebrations. By 1908, they would have been familiar with the general idea of *tableaux vivants*, the striking of a pose so that it could be contemplated, and in this case photographed. Even if Africans performed as the antagonists in a photographic *tableau vivant*, this very fact indicates the opposite: that they actually performed as collaborators with the mission (cf. Chapter Four). In Chapters Three and Four I will show that Africans' decisions to either agree to or avoid having their photographs taken, were based on the actual relationships with missionaries, as these can be established via sources alternative to photographs. If one compares the two photographs presented above, the poses are very explicit and distinct, not only in their singular appearance, but as a consistent arrangement. It is therefore unlikely that the textual narrative in the *Vergißmeinnicht* was applied independently to the first photograph. Rather, image and text must have been composed purposefully in interaction.

A general "instability and mutability" (Thomas 1991:153, 157) in missionary conversion narratives interchangeably ascribed positive and negative attributes to mission subjects. This eventually helped to intensify the impression of conversion. Mariannhill photographs of this kind thus show Africans *performing* Catholic ritual. The photographs emulate religious practice through acts of religious faith in form of generally recognisable gestures: hands folded in prayer, giving blessings, or by the normative script of rites of passage, such as baptisms, marriages, or funerals. According to the basic structure of the conversion story, the photographs increased faith in its performative power when it was contrasted with the presence of an antagonist, such as the "magician". The missionaries here imposed a textual propaganda narrative on "the heathen". "The magician", so the author explained, acknowledged the existence of God, while remaining opposed to it. The mission's narratives often presented the polarity between heaven and hell as a

reality, equally recognised by African protagonists themselves, who are then left with the "proper" choice.

The scene presents the idea and the space of the mission station, but at the same time evokes the one of its "heathen" exterior through the respective performed relationships. According to the article's author, the configuration represents social relationships supposedly present in South Africa, infused with those prevalent in Europe (cf. Van der Veer 1996:11). The idea of children as "true believers", as well as their employment for the mediation between Europe and South Africa becomes even more explicit in the next section.

Ventriloquizing Faith

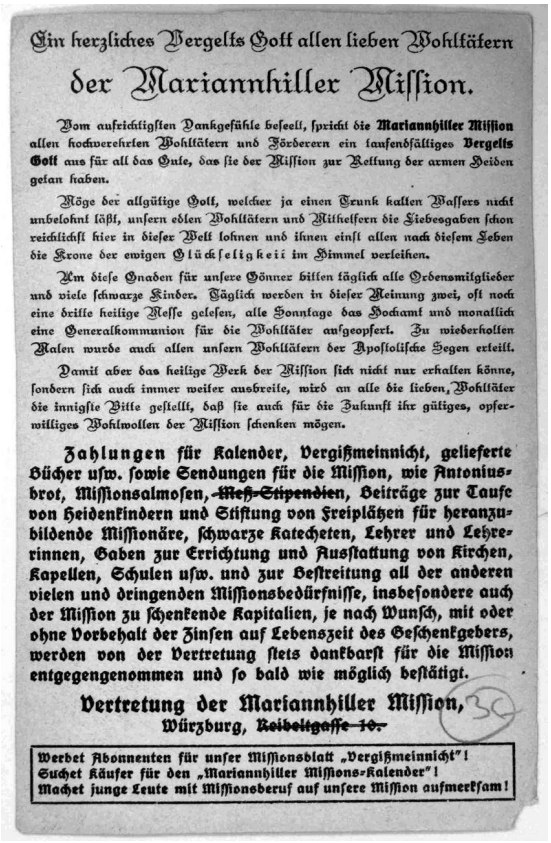
African children were dominant in Mariannhill's texts and images as the main aim of conversion, but occasionally they also appear as the main protagonists, or even as actors. Propaganda involving children differed somehow from the above "before/after" constructions, because the missionaries also presented children as independent of this equation. More specifically they presented children as mediators between these two poles. In the three examples presented in this section, we take a second look at the two surfaces of text and image in combination. We then explore the backstage to these constructions, which the missionaries did not present as such to the benefactors in Germany, whom they hoped to win as allies.

The dominant presence of children in photographs and texts did not fully correspond with the missionaries' actual focus on potential converts at all times. Frequently, the missionaries presented children in text and image as suffering physically and materially from the economic situation their parents had allegedly created for them. At the same time they presented the children as being fully aware of this situation and of the two sides of the construction. While "picturing pity" was thus a representational strategy directed at benefactors (Gullestad 2007, also see Hölzl 2014, Jensz 2018), the grass-roots strategy of conversion differed initially: in a letter written to the local magistrate Jackson in 1885, Prior Pfanner argued that Mariannhill's focus was foremost on young men, who would then, once converted, bring along their families.[229] Who in fact motivated whom, is difficult, if not impossible to recover (but see Chapter Three). In the journals at least, it was the children instead, whom the editors made to appear as mediators between missionaries, their "heathen" parents, and the benefactors. In this capacity (aided by the missionaries in various ways) the children introduced and translated for benefactors what the "mission" was about.

The first example I would like to present is a propaganda card with a hand-coloured photograph on its front, showing a priest holding two children by their hands. The verso contains a call for funds, dating to approximately 1900. The text promised to European benefactors that celestial benefits before death were indeed possible, and that all the priests, as well as the Black children at Mariannhill not only prayed for the wellbeing of the benefactors on a regular basis, but that even 2-3 daily masses were celebrated with this intention.

[229] DUR: SNA 141/1885. No. 32. 25.2.85.





Ein herzliches Vergelts Gott allen lieben Wohltätern

der Mariannhiller Mission.

Vom aufrichtigsten Dankgefühle beseelt, spricht die **Mariannhiller Mission** allen hochverehrten Wohltätern und Förderern ein tausendfältiges **Vergelts Gott** aus für all das Gute, das sie der Mission zur Rettung der armen Heiden getan haben.

Möge der allgütige Gott, welcher ja einen Trunk kalten Wassers nicht unbelohnt läßt, unsern edlen Wohltätern und Mithelfern die Liebesgaben schon reichlichst hier in dieser Welt lohnen und ihnen einst allen nach diesem Leben die Krone der ewigen Glückseligkeit im Himmel verleihen.

Um diese Gnaden für unsere Gönner bitten täglich alle Ordensmitglieder und viele schwarze Kinder. Täglich werden in dieser Meinung zwei, oft noch eine dritte heilige Messe gelesen, alle Sonntage das Hochamt und monatlich eine Generalkommunion für die Wohltäter aufgeopfert. Zu wiederholten Malen wurde auch allen unsern Wohltätern der Apostolische Segen erteilt.

Damit aber das heilige Werk der Mission sich nicht nur erhalten könne, sondern sich auch immer weiter ausbreite, wird an alle die lieben, Wohltäter die innigste Bitte gestellt, daß sie auch für die Zukunft ihr gütiges, opferwilliges Wohlwollen der Mission schenken mögen.

Zahlungen für Kalender, Vergißmeinnicht, gelieferte Bücher usw. sowie Sendungen für die Mission, wie Antonius-brot, Missionsalmosen, ~~Meß-Stipendien~~, Beiträge zur Taufe von Heidenkindern und Stiftung von Freiplätzen für heranzubildende Missionäre, schwarze Katecheten, Lehrer und Lehrerinnen, Gaben zur Errichtung und Ausstattung von Kirchen, Kapellen, Schulen usw. und zur Bestreitung all der anderen vielen und dringenden Missionsbedürfnisse, insbesondere auch der Mission zu schenkende Kapitalien, je nach Wunsch, mit oder ohne Vorbehalt der Zinsen auf Lebenszeit des Geschenkgebers, werden von der Vertretung stets dankbarst für die Mission entgegengenommen und so bald wie möglich bestätigt.

Vertretung der Mariannhiller Mission,
Würzburg, ~~Reibeltgasse 10.~~

Werbet Abonnenten für unser Missionsblatt „Vergißmeinnicht"!
Suchet Käufer für den „Mariannhiller Missions-Kalender"!
Machet junge Leute mit Missionsberuf auf unsere Mission aufmerksam!

Figures 43 and 44: original heading: "*Ein herzliches Vergelts Gott allen lieben Wohltätern der Mariannhiller Mission*"—"May God bless all benefactors of the Mariannhill Mission". Front and verso of a propaganda card. Even though it was printed before 1914, this particular card was only circulated after 1918, as the changed address was crossed out (collection of the author).

The discursive principle underlying the relationship between missionaries and benefactors, was one of reciprocity. Not only would the missionaries, with the financial support of their benefactors, save "heathens" for the supposed betterment of humanity, but they also promised to pay back the benefactors by celebrating mass for them. Furthermore, the text on the card mentions that in an even greater effort Mariannhill had negotiated an Apostolic blessing, exclusively for their benefactors. Many versions of this card, dating from the period between the 1890s and 1920s, are still stocked in CMM archives. In similar formulations, also the frontispiece of the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* made the same promises. The propaganda card discussed here, mentions several forms of financial contributions, for which the benefactors could expect the earlier named benefits in return: payments for the *Mariannhiller Kalender*, *Vergißmeinnicht*, donations of books etc.; donations of material goods; *Antonius-Brot* [donations for those in need]; *Missionsalmosen* [Alms or charity]; *Meß-stipendien* [mass stipends];[230] donations for baptisms of heathen children; donations for the education of missionaries, black

[230] Few volumes registering so-called "mass stipends" are still preserved in the monastery's archive: benefactors payed a particular sum to a priest in order to have their "intentions" included in the prayers during mass.

catechists, and teachers; donations for the foundation or equipment of churches, chapels and schools, etc. The enumeration of categories of payment however overlapped, as all money given by benefactors was generally referred to as "*Almosen*". A crucial part of this exchange was constituted by the symbolic "adoption" of children. Benefactors were given the possibility to secure a single child's livelihood for several years by donating "at least 400-500 Marks" (Gütl 2005:320). In return, they received the right to give their first and second names to the respective child; apparently, not an uncommon promise with Catholic missions in general (Hölzl 2014:277). These circumstances also explain the diverse array of German names in Mariannhill's baptism registers (cf. Chapters Three and Four). The missionaries meticulously recorded these transactions in ledgers, either in Germany or at Mariannhill. Confirmations that the money had been received, were later returned to the benefactors (Gütl 2005:320-322).

Religious images of Bible protagonists, as well as photographs of "mission life" involving the full spectrum between "before" and "after" constituted a crucial part in this exchange. Not only were these images and photographs supposed to bring home the messages conveyed in the accompanying texts, but they were in themselves presented as gifts to benefactors: the missionaries promised elaborately designed single photographs and albums, photographic foldout booklets (*leporellos*) with a variety of Mariannhill's photographs, or a selection of coloured religious images to benefactors for finding new subscribers for the mission's periodicals.



Figure 45: original title: "*Heidenkinder mit engl. Spruch*"—"heathen children with Engl. rhyme" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

The previous example involved the textual construction of children as praying for benefactors, and their separate depiction in interaction with a missionary. The next example shows children, supposedly as active agents within the mission dialogue, now even employing text themselves (Figure 45). By posing children in torn rags in the photographic studio around 1900, the photographer gave them a voice, so to speak.[231] He provided them with a scroll showing a German text in rhyme form, ventriloquising as follows:

Bin ein armes [poor] Heidenkind,	I am a little heathen child,
unser so viel wie Gras wohl sind,	like grass we grow in forests wild.
hab' keine Strümpf und keine Schuh	I have got neither shoes nor socks,
auch weder Hemd noch Kittel dazu.	While others have both shirts and frocks.
Vater u. Mutter liegen nackt im Kraal,	My savage parents live in a kraal,
	They do not pray, but drink and bawl.
Gottes Gebet macht uns keine Qual.	
Aber Zauber- und Hexengeschichten,	From sorceries I run away,
's graust mich Euch davon zu berichten.	
	To God I'd like to learn to pray.
Bin ein armes Heidenkind,	Who'll pitty a poor Kafir child
such ob ich wohl Mitleid find.	And save me from a life so wild?

At least four similar versions of this poem exist in many different setups: either showing children by themselves, or occasionally accompanied by a sister. The texts appear in three languages: German, English, and Polish. The particular poem presented here sums up the essential themes of the general propaganda narrative in seven lines. Above are presented both the original contemporary German version and its English translation, as it appears in photograph. The first line introduces the idea of the "child" in a transitory state, which is still "poor", because it is not yet part of the Christian community. The concept of the "heathen" thus creates a dichotomy between those who believe, and those who do not believe, accordingly allowing for the idea of a transition. The second line points to the great numbers of "poor heathen children", and therefore to the necessity to take action for both missionaries and benefactors. The third line indicates that (proper) clothing is essential to have, but is here only implicitly connected to Christianity. The fourth line indicates that the children's parents are undressed, idle, and potentially promiscuous, and therefore not capable of taking care of their children adequately.

[231] Dressing up children in torn rags and posing them before the camera for advertisement purposes was not an uncommon practice at the time. In the 1870s, the photographs of Dr. Thomas Barnardo, proprietor of an institution for homeless children in London, caused a legal media scandal for misleading the public through staging and thus manipulating photographs. Barnardo worked with before-after constructions, thus already presenting a solution to a problem, instead of having the children "voice" it themselves (e.g. Hirsch 2007, Tagg 1993).

The fifth line presents the children as fully capable to receive and comprehend the Christian message, which is provided by the missionaries. In the sixth line eventually, "sorcery [*Zauberei*]", people who use it, but also those who believe in it, are presented as the main obstacles of the missionary endeavour. The final line repeats the initial identity, and eventually requests pity from benefactors.

In an inherent contradiction, "heathen" children are here presented as already more rational and as more capable of morally informed decisions than their parents. As the first *potential* Christians, they are constituted as mediators between their "heathen" parents, the missionaries, and the benefactors. Potentially "unspoiled", so the narrative of the rhyme goes, they can still be set on a course towards civilisation, while the same was difficult with their parents (cf. Thomas 1992). Through the presence of the text scroll, the children were explicitly invested with the ability (whether real or not) to read, write, argue, and therefore to translate both ideas and language. Implicitly, however, the missionaries aided the very act of mediation by providing the infrastructure, the media, and, presumably the content. This image act may therefore be considered as an act of ventriloquism.

Social realities within the Catholic mission cosmos were not hermetic. However, its construction through the mission's print media and archival documents had consequences for using them as historical sources. The birth identities of Africans (ie. their Zulu names), which may have facilitated their location as historical personalities through documents in civil archives, were often covered up with the baptismal name in the mission periodicals and baptism registers (cf. Chapter Four). To fully understand the missionaries' narratives, it is therefore necessary to look at the parallel discourses in colonial society.

Comparison with themes of contemporary British legislature of Natal in the late 19th century shows that several concerns were overlapping. In the *Natal Native Code* of 1891, the registration of "native diviners and healers", or the control of "native unrest" caused by alcohol abuse, were increasingly surveyed and legally codified. The missionaries did not identify all aspects of the lives around them in form of photographs, which they had earlier identified textually: polygamy, the abuse of alcohol, violence, could only be indicated in photographs as potentials, through depicting the multiple huts of a homestead, indicating the multiple wives of a patriarch, when women are shown brewing beer, or men posing as if engaging in battle.[232] At the same time, there were antagonistic intentions between missionaries and other White South Africans. The very idea to educate Africans was not in the interest of every colonial settler, or government official, as this would have diminished an uneducated, and easy-to-control labour force (eg. Etherington 2010, Khandhlela 1993). This debate, which was one aspect of the so-called "native question" (cf. Chapter One), involved Mariannhill with endless correspondence and public disputes in newspapers during the 1880s and 1890s (cf. Gütl 2005).

As we could see in the last section, the photographer and converts (re-)enacted concrete events at Mariannhill and its stations. The example of the last section was a staged theatrical act,

[232] For the representational categories used at Mariannhill see Chapters One, Five, and Six.

but presented in the periodical as the representation of an actual occurrence. Catholic rituals, such as baptisms, were not as obviously staged, but nevertheless engineered to various degrees, as we shall see in the next section. Various transformatory rituals, as both performances and experience of religious faith manifested the ideal relationship between missionaries and their subjects. If one defines a successful conversion in form of a baptism as the permanent transformation of a "heathen" individual into a faithful Catholic, the missionaries were left with the problem how this new presence of faith could be described in either text or image (cf. Van der Veer 1996).

Photographs at least constituted one possibility for the missionaries to present additional *quality* of conversion towards benefactors, instead of only recording *quantity* by counting baptisms over a certain period. Eventually, there is no way of determining whether attempts of conversion at Mariannhill were indeed successful, unless the converted attained agency by acclaiming and recording faith through their own testimony. This agency of course could be enacted, as we already saw in this section. No available sources allow for any conclusion whether conversions around 1900 were indeed successful or not: published narratives, archival records and statistics, registers, and indeed photographs only stated that the formal and institutional process of conversion had taken place, and that converts had displayed external signs of conviction; these documents never proved whether the person eventually became permanently convinced of the transformation. In the rest of this section I present several instances where Br. Aegidius Müller attempted to solve this problem by using combined photographs and texts to enhance the agency of children at the mission station Mariathal. This mode of alleged documentation involved concrete events, as well as named protagonists, rather than stereotypical sceneries and types.

How better to convince European benefactors to supply the mission with more money, than having the receivers of the financial support write letters of gratitude themselves (cf. Van der Veer 1996:2)? The historian Carolyn Jeannerat looked for evidence of tracing faith in the textual archive through the letters of a Lutheran missionary wife in the Transvaal (Jeannerat 2009). Erdmuthe Giesekke summarised letters—supposedly written by Africans—for a European audience in the 1920s and 1930s. While Jeannerat provides a literal reading of Giesekke's letters, my own research leads me to believe that missionaries may have enriched the accounts of their African protégées, in order to provide an even more committed experience and practice of faith, both verbally and visually. Missionaries would obviously prompt their subjects, and, on occasion, speak for them, if not become ventriloquists.

I will present one last example that demonstrates two epistemological aspects of a convert's faith, both of which were intended to impress potential benefactors. As I showed, versions of Figure 45 have been in circulation since the 1890s, where anonymous and scantily dressed children had been placed in the photographic studio, and made to hold large scrolls with written appeals for money, often in rhyme-form, in either English, German, or Polish. Even though the rhymes were often formulated in the first person, it would have been obvious to

benefactors that the five-year-old children would not have written such elaborate requests themselves. The example I present next is more sophisticated, and probably was more effective, as the children's agency appears to be genuine.

While descriptions of the people around Mariannhill in the 1880s and 1890s were rather remote and stereotypical, around 1900 converts came to be named in stories, and were given their own voices; moreover, editors would identify the individuals in the photographs they published. This tendency is confirmed by the historian Richard Hölzl (2014:283ff), who explains it with the rise of mission literature explicitly produced for children at this time. One such example is an article in the *Vergißmeinnicht* of 1911:[233] "*Neujahrswünsche der Kafferkinder von Mariatal*" (Anon. 1911) reproduced several supposedly original letters by children of Mariannhill's school at the station Mariathal as "autographs" in Zulu, and even in the children's original handwriting. While being a lithographic transfer process, an "auto-graph" is also an account in one's own script, not merely a signature.[234] The article's author promised to the benefactors "*eine Probe der Gesinnung* [an example of disposition]", which the children actively conveyed with the help of the two media, text and photography. Thus Melchior Nkandi writes: "Dear Europeans, greetings to you good people, at the beginning of the New Year! We Blacks received religious faith [*Glauben*] from you. And for this we thank you very much. Live well and happily on this earth for many, many years! We will meet in Heaven […]" (Figure 46).[235]

[233] For an additional interpretation on these photographs see Rippe (2014).

[234] The handwritings are literally referred to as "autographs" in the German text: a lithographic transfer process. The OED refers to an autograph as "1. A manuscript written in the author's own handwriting. 2. A person's own signature".

[235] My own translation of the German text, which the article presents as a translation of the Zulu Original. One may nevertheless wonder which of the two is the original. Zulu: *Mariathal, January 1st 1911. Balungu abatandekayo! Sanibona bantu abahle ekuqaleni kwalo nyaka. Iina abamnya ma satola ukukolwa ngani. Siyabonga kakulu. Salani kahle nihlale kamnandi emhlabeni imi nyaka emi ningi. Sobonana ezulwini Y'imi na. Melchior Nkani. owas'e xopo.* German: *Liebe Europäer, Seid gegrüsst beim Beginn dieses Jahres! Wir Schwarze haben den Glauben durch Euch bekommen. Dafür danken wir recht sehr. Lebet wohl und glücklich auf Erden viele, viele Jahre! Im Him-mel werden wir uns sehen. Ich. Melchior Nkani, von Ixopo (Mariathal).*



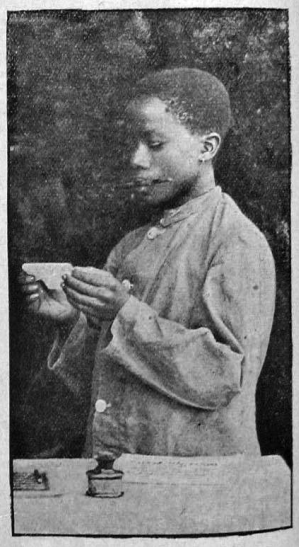
Einer für viele.

Mariathal, January 1st 1911.

Balungu abatandekayo!

Sanibona 'lantu ablile
ekugaleni kwalo nyaka. Sina abamnyama
satola ukukolwa ngani. Sizabonga kakulu.
Salani kahle nihlale kamnandi emhlabeni
imi nyaka emi ningi. Sobonana ezulwini.

Y'imi na
Melchior Nkandi
owas'e xopo.



Melchior.

Liebe Europäer,

Seid gute Leute, gegrüßt beim Beginn dieses Jahres! Wir Schwarze haben den Glauben durch Euch bekommen. Dafür danken wir recht sehr. Lebet wohl und glücklich auf Erden viele, viele Jahre! Im Himmel werden wir uns sehen.

Ich
Melchior Nkandi,
von Ixopo (Mariathal).

Figure 46: "*Neujahrswünsche der Kafferkinder von Mariatal*"—"Good wishes for the New Year from the Kafir children of Mariathal". The autograph and photograph of Melchior Nkandi (published in *Vergißmeinnicht*, January 1911:4).

The article explicitly indicates that some of the nine candidates were not yet baptised. Melchior —who is portrayed in the photograph re-reading his very letter before it is published— nevertheless mentions that they had received their faith from the Europeans. However, they would never meet the benefactors, so he writes, at least not during their lifetimes. Melchior further indicates the spatial distance between Europe and South Africa, as well as South Africa's dependence on Europe for its faith. In this way, Melchior's narrative establishes the benefactors as living in the centre of faith, and the mission as its periphery.

On the following page, Johannes Ndhlovu writes, albeit in plain print: "Dear Europeans! I wish you all the best for the New Year! I thank you for having pity on us blacks. May God make you rich, most of all in your soul. Pray, so that we may all have faith. I close with greeting you most warmly. Johannes Ndhlovu". Like Melchior, Johannes refers to the transmission of faith, which needs to be sustained by Europeans through their prayer. Others of the nine children likewise ask for prayers, but also for material goods. Even more, they, "the believers", offer to pray for the Europeans, while complaining that "alas, otherwise here heathens still roam everywhere [in South Africa]". The writings eventually become even more elaborate and promise the benefactors "much grace on earth, and thereafter the eternal life" for what they had done for "the Blacks" so far. The series of texts and images indicate a relationship between missionaries and children, but even more so between benefactors and converted children. The children are portrayed as being even more pious than the benefactors may have thought of themselves. An educational component for European audiences—including children—may have been the article's additional intention (cf. Acke 2013, Hölzl 2014, Thomas 1991:144).

In the previous examples only three spaces are conflated within the image–text relationship: the moment of the mission encounter between the "heathen" exterior and the mission station are posed against an ambivalent Europe, where Catholics too were said to struggle with non-Catholics. In addition, the images in this section introduce yet another dimension to connect these spaces: the article represents instances of the converts' very own agency, which they had attained through the fact that the missionaries had once come to South Africa. The portraits show them in the very moments of writing and re-reading, as well as the extracted original texts themselves. This representational return-movement thus rhetorically complements the missionaries' original agency through their "sacrifice" by physically moving to Africa (cf. Pels 1999). As a result, the children are presented as personalised individuals to the greatest extent possible on the pages of a periodical: with portrait photographs, personal names, and their very own handwriting in photographic reproduction. Through their autographs, the young converts appear to be capable of multiple reflexive acts, and therefore to be in control of their own situation: they address the European audience directly via their texts; and, in some instances, they look straight at the camera, and therefore at the audience to which they are writing. Whether the original letters, written in Zulu, were ever sent, and whether they would have been understood by German benefactors, are not issues that the artcile adresses.

Eventually, the children are presented with an awareness of the representations they had

produced of their own situation. To use the terminology of theatre, in multiple ways the children are breaking the "fourth wall", which is in this case constituted by the surface of the photographic image-object: this physical division of the narrative, between actors on-stage on the one hand, and the audience on the other, after all determines what is "real" and what is "play". While the "breaking" of this division is clearly not the case in the previous genre photographs I discussed, both cases explored in this section actively connect and invert the "here" and the "there". The mission's editors intended this movement to involve and draw audiences into the narrative created by photograph and text. The article emphasised that the photographed space inhabited by the children can be transgressed in both directions by texts, photographs, as well as prayers, goods, and money.[236] Like the previous example of children in rags holding scrolls, the children in this case became entangled in particular stereotypical material culture in regard to clothing and writing. But in contrast to the last example, they are here presented as being properly dressed and having fully mastered the skills of script and rhetorics, necessary in order to go through the process of conversion successfully (cf. Thomas 1991, and Chapter Three). Similar to this chapter's first example of the "native photographer", the situation creates an ideal subject position for the benefactor audience, and thus once more provides the audience with a sense of mimetic excess.

[236] Also see Ferguson (2002), who presents a similar case about a letter by two African boys, addressed to Europe at large.

Retouching Faith: Signs in/of Transition

The following three sections rely to different degrees on the idea of montage. Montage is here simply understood as the physical practice of combining and arranging different images either into a new still image, or in consecutive fashion into a moving image or film. In order to fully comprehend the process of mediating faith and conversion photographically around 1900, we need to consider the contemporary possibilities to manipulate the photographic image as a material object during the post-production process. As I already explicated in the previous chapter, Müller and his predecessors followed the technical standards as they were promoted for example by Hans Arnold (1892) and Wilhelm Vogel (1894). The highly conventional practice of retouching photographs could relate to the minute adjustment of details such as wrinkles, but as we shall see also to exchanging or eradicating faces, even entire bodies. The merging of separate photographs into one, must instead of retouching be considered as a photographic montage. Reasons for such manipulations could have been manifold, and related to either enhancement, beautification, or simply the addition or erasure of things either desired or denied.

The manipulation of photographs, either through retouching or montage, was not only more common at the time, but also much better executed, than today's common sense would have it. Unless we have access to the original glass plate negative, or to contemporary stories about the manipulation, we can no longer retrace all the manipulations as they were performed at the time. When evaluating a historical photograph as a historical trace, the realisation of a manipulation challenges our belief in a photographic reality even more. At the same time, however, the multiplicity of historical traces within one image increases our possibilities to understand historical actors' intentions. After we have established the idea of "photographic resemblance" as a subjective claim, instead of semiotic iconicity, we now proceed to question semiotic indexicality, as established by Charles. S. Peirce. Writing in the 1890s, he stated that

> [p]hotographs, especially instantaneous photographs, are very instructive, because we know that they are in certain respects exactly like the objects they represent. But this resemblance is due to the photographs having been produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature. In that aspect, then, they belong to the second class of signs, those by physical connection. (Peirce 1980:106)

With "instantaneous photographs" Peirce referred to what I have earlier called "snap-shot" photographs. Peirce did not consider, or at least never referred to the common practice of retouching, which was highly common during the time he wrote. Once a photograph has been retouched, it does no longer "correspond point by point" with a historical original as a representation. But as I explained through the conventions of genre photography and *tableaux vivants*, it is often uncertain anyway what the exact nature of an original was. With this realisation the claim collapses that photographic representation would provide what Daston and Galison (2007) called a "mechanical objectivity".

Photographers at Mariannhill also manipulated negatives in a way that went far beyond

the common and relatively subtle retouching of blemished skin, wrinkles, and the accentuation of facial features. In the last chapter we have seen that Müller produced fantastic montages of African toddlers mounting giant butterflies. Such montages, consisting of two different photographs, placed a subject into a new space, or before a new backdrop. In this mode of montage audiences were supposed to recognise the manipulation for humorous effect: the act of defying reality in an obvious way eventually constituted the precondition that a photograph could work as entertainment. In a second mode, Mariannhill's photographers either added, exchanged, or eradicated crucial components of photographic compositions. Similar to the explicit and implicit presentation of theatrical performance, this form of manipulation was not supposed to be apparent. I now proceed to demonstrate this with two examples where it is possible to reconstruct the manipulation. As I already indicated, in many other cases this may no longer be possible, which eventually forces us to reevaluate Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre with even greater care.

The *rites de passage* of Catholic life constitute many images within the photographic collection: starting with baptism, proceeding to communion and marriage, and naturally ending with a funeral. These are four regularly photographed instances of what is usually referred to as the "holy sacraments" (also see Pels 1994). The missionaries tried to represent their subjects as passing these rites "successfully". The holy sacraments are per definition ritualistic performances following a common script. Therefore they presented the quintessential occasions involving African subjects, which a western audience was able to understand. As I already explained, in order to present the photograph of a Christian rite even more effectively, it was necessary to present a negative "heathen" scenario that supposedly preceded it. An example are the earlier described "first-fruits ceremonies", which some Mariannhill Missionaries envisioned as morally opposable and even as "the devil's wedding" (cf. Chapters One and Seven). These rituals would have been imagined and re-imagined quite differently by European or African communities, depending on how they could place them in their previous canons. "To enact any kind of rite is to *perform,* but to enact a rite of passage is also to *transform* (Grimes 2000:7)". The photograph below can consequently be thought of as a *performance* of a *transformation.* However, to transform this performance into an effective photographic representation, it was necessary to enhance some of its features by retouching it.

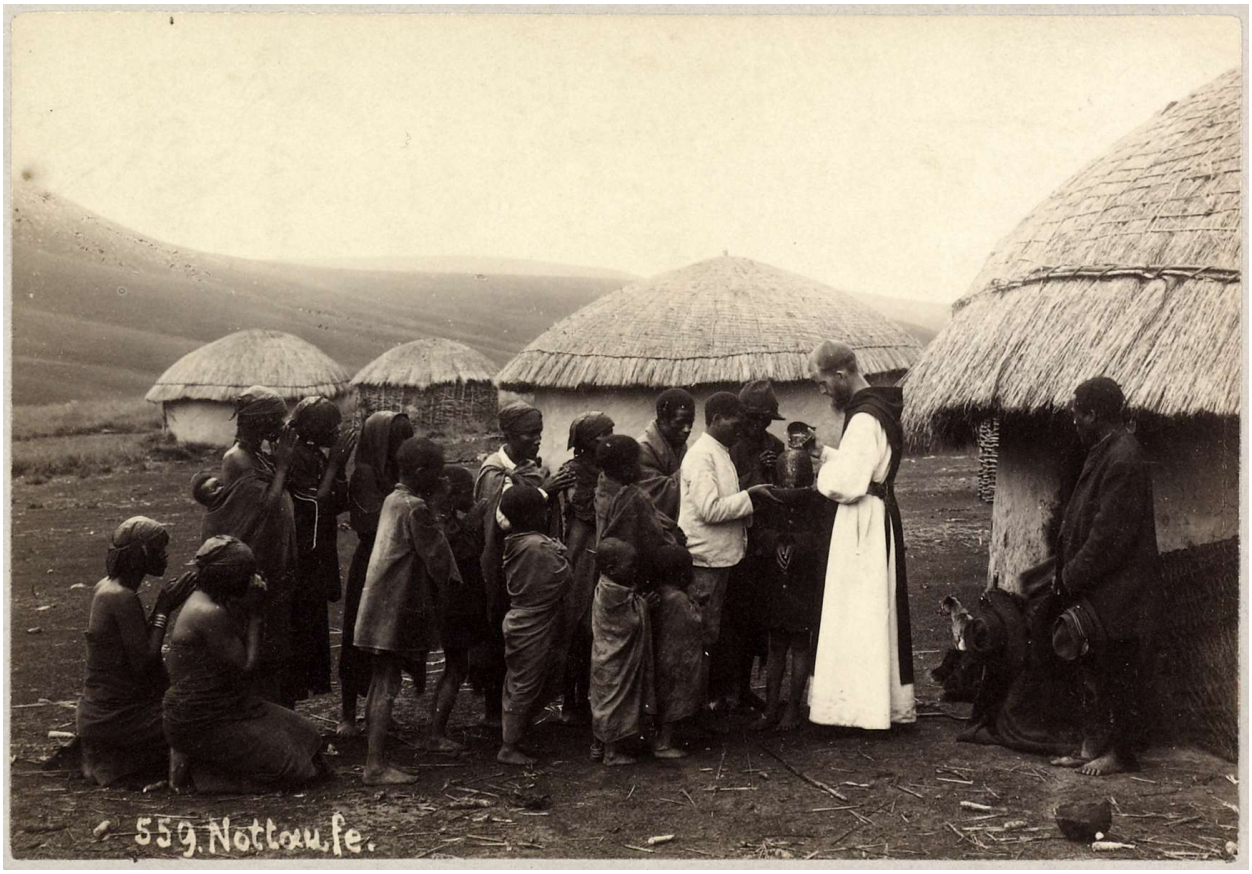


Figure 47: original caption: "*559. Nottaufe*". Fr. Isembard Leyendecker performing an "emergency baptism", East Griqualand, approx. 1897 (NMVW-A15-124).

Figure 47 depicts the performance of a baptism somewhere in the Umzimkhulu valleys of the Eastern Cape (East Griqualand) in approximately 1897, close to Mariannhill's mission stations Lourdes and Centocow. The photograph is captioned as "*Nottaufe*".[237] Such "emergency baptisms" were a common and reoccurring topic in the mission's periodicals. Reading the photograph under this pretext, Fr. Isembard Leyendecker can be seen pouring water over a child's head, which is supposedly in the anticipation of death, so that a baptism had to be performed in *periculo mortis*, either just before or in the moment of death. Some fifteen bystanders support the act (as a performance for the camera) in prayer. One male member of the community collects the poured water in a calabash below the child's head. The context of an "emergency" can of course only be provided by the caption. As a matter of fact, the photograph therefore combines two rituals at once, a life ritual as well as a death ritual. Whether the child was really about to die, and whether the bystanders were aware of the intended narrative involving death, is yet another question.

The active and powerful substance in the image is the holy water. In both photographic space and historical space it is effective for both the bystanders and the beholders of the *mise en*

[237] Not the same as "extreme unction", which could also be given to an already baptised person.

scene. At the same time, the substance is ephemeral in several ways. As the actual agent of conversion, holy water was a necessary component to make the ritual work for the people on the ground, but likewise for the benefactors, towards whom the photograph was directed. Assuming that the water had indeed been present in the first place, it was not at all times possible to capture the timid stream of liquid photographically. In the mid 1890s, photographic lenses and plates may have been fast enough to capture motion to some degree, but not fast enough to appropriately capture ephemeral liquids under bad lighting conditions.

Once the photographer had developed the glass plate negative at Mariannhill's studio, he retouched the holy water, so to make it more prominent (see negative and positive details, Figures 48 and 49). The keen observer may realise that negative and positive are not identical, which indicates that Müller made at least two attempts at arranging the scene, and accordingly two attempts at retouching the images. The effort that went into the repeated staging of the scene, as well as the repeated manipulation of retouching the water indicates that the photographer considered the water as an essential, if not the most central element of the ritual. But factually the water is unreal, or at least missing the clear indexical referent which is commonly believed to define photographic authenticity.



Figures 48 and 49: details of Figure 49: the pouring of holy water. A detail from a positive print on the left, and a detail of a digitally inverted glass plate negative to the right (CMM Archives).

The fact that the water had been retouched does not necessarily mean that it was not there when the photograph was taken; it may have only been enhanced. But at the same time, we can never be sure whether a "valid" baptism with actual holy water had indeed taken place. This detail makes clear that the initial staging of a scene, and its later post-production manipulation are on consecutive epistemological levels. The creation of the photographic image included the photographer's tactile involvement, not only during the photographic occasion itself, but also with the negative as object. As I showed, retouching and manipulating photographs was a common practice at the time. Müller and his predecessors had studied contemporary European literature on the topic, were well versed in the art, and applied it frequently. Likewise, they added other ephemeral substances and details that were in moments of transition: the flames of open fires under *utshwala* cooking pots, the smoke from cigarettes, or the wheat grains an African women pours from a basket, in order to separate them from the chaff. Also faces had to be retouched occasionally so to become more prominent as compared to the bodies. All these details were crucial, in order to convey an experience of religious faith in the case of the emergency baptism, as well as a more general sense of trust in Mariannhill's photographs.

In a second example I would like to discuss, a priest had to be eradicated from a group photograph, as he had fallen into disgrace with his superiors. Fr. Willibald Wanger (1872-1943) was considered a problem soon after arriving in Mariannhill in 1892, due to his "deficiencies in character" (Mettler 1968:13), his smug behaviour, and his non-submissive attitude within the Trappist community. The exact nature of his offences are hard to define. They were never clearly spelled out in writing (but see Mettler 1967:13, 15), and only inscribed once they escalated, so that disciplinary measures had to be taken. The entire story is too long to tell, so a few details must suffice. Wanger soon established himself as a distinguished Zulu linguist, not only at Mariannhill Monastery and Lourdes Mission, where he worked between 1896 and 1906, but also internationally. After Abbot Gerard Wolpert had resigned in 1904, the newly installed American administrator Obrecht maintained a hard line against the community of active missionaries, of which Wanger was one of the most outspoken and critical against the new regime. As a result, Obrecht planned to punish Wanger with temporary exclaustration for one year. By his own decision, Wanger instead left the Trappist congregation for good. In 1909, the new Provost, Gerard Wolpert, took Wanger in once more as an "*Oblate*". By 1912, Wanger had taken on editorial tasks at Mariannhill's press, and published a highly controversial Zulu Catechism, which was disputed for many years, and only circulated with restrictions (cf. Mettler 1967).[238] Once he had unsuccessfully applied for the chair of social anthropology in Cape Town in 1921, Wanger left South Africa to Germany for good.

[238] As one example it was once more holy water that stirred problems. During the catechism quarrel, one of the contested issues was that terms that had previously been used for "superstitious" substances in Zulu were not deemed adequate by Wanger's critics as a translation for "Holy Water" (cf. Mettler 1967, Sauter 1958:22-23).



Figure 50: priests at Mariannhill, 1906. Original version, not retouched. Fr. Willibald Wanger sitting in the bottom row, far right (CMM Archives).



Figure 51: priests at Mariannhill, 1906. Retouched version. Wanger's head has been replaced with the one of Fr. Isembard Leyendecker (CMM Archives).



Figure 52: novices at Mariannhill, approx. 1905. The origin of Leyendecker's head, sitting at the table with a book (CMM Archives).

Wanger's quarrel with Obrecht coincided with the preparations for Mariannhill's 25. jubilee. The already discussed *Festschrift* contained a photograph of the community of priests, who had been present at the monastery during 1906, with Obrecht at their centre (Figure 50, published in Frey 1907:7). Once Wanger had been expelled from the monastery in 1907, Obrecht apparently considered Wanger's public photographic presence as intolerable, in particular in published form. It was apparently not possible to reassemble and rephotograph the group of priest. Instead, Müller went to work and replaced Wanger's head with the one of Fr. Isembard Leyendecker (Figure 51), which he had taken from yet another studio photograph (Figure 52).[239]

In the Fourth Chapter, I will present yet another retouched photograph, in which one subject has even been removed entirely (Figure 82). Photographed in a homestead near Mariannhill Monastery in the year 1891, a monk's figure can only be recognised as a blurred silhouette. Apparently one of the photographers had made a rather crude attempt at eradicating the foreign presence in a setting which otherwise shows no obvious evidence of European influence. The exact motivation for this manipulation can only be guessed at, but seems to have

[239] According to a note by Mariannhill's biographer Br. Joseph Welzel, there were two editions of the publication. This story appears in an unaccessioned manuscript, which Mariannhill's archivist in Rome ascribed to one of Mariannhill's biographers, Fr. Joseph Welzel. However, I doubt that the publisher Herder in Germany could have been convinced to immediately run a second edition, only because one single photograph had to be retouched. It is more likely that the change was made after the first proofs had been provided by Herder.

been the wish to delete the missionaries' influence for the achievement of an even more exotic expression. In all cases I just described, the mission's photographer heavily manipulated the photographic image in order to establish a set of relationships between the missionaries, their subjects, and the mission's benefactors in Europe. Other than the previous examples, the artificiality was by definition covert.

Filming Faith: Photographs as Filmic Devices

After the Second World War, Mariannhill Missionaries continued with an insistent self-representation. This is most poignant in a propaganda film produced during the 1950s. Here the amount of exotic images is minimised, while the film's narrative instead focuses on the recruitment of new members, already implied by the title *Mariannhill ruft!* (*Mariannhill is Calling!*).[240] Photographs here explicitly became narrative devices within the medium of film, in order to establish a relationship between the missionary community, potential future novices, as well as benefactors at large. In fact, in the production process photographs became filmic props: in a first instance, they serve to convince the film's protagonists to join the mission as novices. In a second instance, the photographs were ultimately directed at the film's viewers, to follow the film's protagonists in their decision to become missionaries. As a Mariannhill priest told me, after its release in the 1950s, the film would have been screened during mission talks, or other fund raising activities. The occasion of watching the film was an experience of intermediality, complemented by memories of photographs in the mission's periodicals, explanations by the missionary screening the film, and the supplementing propaganda material he brought along.

Even though it is beyond the time frame I set out to analyse, and even though it is like the photographs themselves a choreographed performance, the film does give an impression of how central photographs still were for propaganda efforts during the 1950s. As a performance, the film intentionally shows how missionaries used photographic albums at the time, like they had already done in the decades before the Second World War. Keeping in mind what we have said about the internal narratives of genre photographs, the film makes clear how the missionaries understood photographs as inherently narrative devices, even during their temporary superimposition in and through the moving images of the film.





Figures 53 and 54: opening lines of the film *Mariannhill Ruft!* (1957) in its initial title stills: "Mariannhill is calling! —Come across and help us! (App. 16:9). The career of a missionary".[241]

[240] In 2008 the film was recovered, digitised, and released on a DVD with the title *Unterwegs mit Menschen* (Rohring 2008). The CMM press editorial staff in Reimlingen compiled and edited the DVD in cooperation with Steyl Medien e.V., the media organ of SVD.

[241] My own translation from the German original.





Figures 55 and 56: still images of two boys approaching Mariannhill's boarding school Aloysianum near Lohr am Rhein, Germany.

The film's first scene shows how two boys, not older than 12 years, approach a big mansion.[242] They stop at the front portal and look around. One of them rings the bell under the doorplate "*Mariannhiller Mission*". A young man in a black cassock, obviously a Catholic priest, opens the door and invites them in. The scene is narrated by a strongly over-articulated German male voice in very simple sentences:

> These two boys are visiting the mission seminar of the Missionaries of Mariannhill. They would like to know how to become missionaries. With pleasure one of the priests will explain it to them. The Missionaries of Mariannhill have been working cheerfully for 75 years for the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Their field of labor is foremost the garden of South Africa, the Christmas Country Natal, also the land at the whooshing waters of the Zambezi, as well as the sunburnt salt veldts of the Kalahari. Much has been achieved in these 75 years: much work for the kingdom of God, and much work to further German culture. Unfortunately there are not enough workers in the wine gardens of the Lord. But still, there are always courageous young people who want to commit themselves entirely to the work of the mission. They fill in the ranks of the missionaries, to keep the work of Christ alive. Already at a young age the training of the future missionary begins. For this purpose the Missionaries of Mariannhill have several beautiful seminaries in the German *Heimat*.[243]

After inviting the two boys into the house, the young missionary presents them with a photographic album. He points out several things, including the school where the training of novices takes place. Two photographs on the same page, however, go unmentioned: a Black African couple, as well as a Black toddler eating from a cooking pot. The last photograph belongs to the genre of colonial humour described earlier, and was popular with postcards of Natal (cf. Geary 2013a, also see Figure 78).

At this point the scenery changes. As viewers of the film we now join the boys being immersed into the story of the photographic album, as its images are literally animated by the narrator's voice, who is speaking instead of the young priest: The voice explains to us, the audience, what the priest explains to the boys. The next scene thus shows a boarding school, where boys are prepared for a good Catholic life, and are eventually trained for a career as

[242] The building can be identified as the Aloysianum near Lohr am Main, Germany, a boarding school run by CMM between 1910 and 2003.

[243] My own translation from the German original.

missionaries. Photography therefore appears even more explicitly as a performed medium, which not only appears in the film, but actually carries the filmic narrative itself. It appears as if the priest would tell the story—which we as viewers experience through the film—to the boys with the help of photographs in the album.




Figures 57 and 58: still image of a priest showing a photographic album to the two boys; still image of a close-up of the same album.

Accordingly, the film of 31 minutes functions within a three-level-narrative: (1) the disembodied voice of the narrator, (2) the mute scene of interaction between the two boys and the priest, and (3) the content of the priest's explanations to the boys with the help of a photographic album, which is instead presented to the viewer as a re-enacted documentary on the training of missionaries. It is always the one voice that narrates the explanations of the missionary about how the boys may become members of the congregation: the one a lay brother, the other a priest. The visualised narrative further accompanies unnamed candidates through schooling, learning a trade (brothers), and academic study (priests), and eventually to the practical preparations for becoming missionaries.

Under the heading *Afrika rückt näher* ("Africa comes closer") we eventually are told how the missionaries-to-be take classes in the Zulu language at Mariannhill's Pius Seminar in Würzburg, which had been founded as a priest seminary in 1927 (Wendl 1998:252). Like the two young boys, the young novices are now introduced by an even older and more experienced priest to the still unfamiliar flora and fauna of their future field of action. The narrating voice remarks that "a well-equipped mission-museum is available for this purpose". The leopard to the right (Figure 59) was by 1957 already well-traveled through mission fairs and exhibitions for at least thirty years, as earlier photographs from the 1930s show. Today, the same leopard is still on display at the seminary's museum, however toothless. The white-haired priest holds out a stuffed lizard for the young men to see and touch (Figure 60). Again with more distance, the next shot pans along a life-size diorama installation of an African homestead, while the narrator's voice describes it as a "picturesque group, portraying the special peculiarities of the heathen world,

their way of life, as well as their habits and customs true-to-life" (Figures 61 and 62).[244]





Figures 59 and 60: still image of a zoological display, including a zebra and two leopards; still image of an older priest showing a stuffed lizard to novices, right next to the display.





Figures 61 and 62: still image of a homestead, including plaster-modelled inhabitants.

It is remarkable that the film references the actual subjects of missionary endeavours only in passing: references to South Africa are shown only in one still image within the opening titles in the form of Mariannhill's church, and via the two before-mentioned photographs in an album, a map, taxidermically prepared animals, as well as an African homestead with the just described life-size plaster-modelled inhabitants. One possible explanation may be that it was too expensive to shoot on location, even if historical and contemporary still photographs as surrogates could surely have been provided.

Even if the film reproduced visual and narrative tropes similar to the early photographs, it focuses on the missionaries' training, which had been relocated to Europe just before the First World War. From there, representations functioned as a push narrative, rather than a pull narrative from South Africa. Prior to the First World War, propaganda had only been written from a South African perspective. The film portrays the preparation of going to Africa, and not

[244] A similar diorama display still exists in the museum of the Pius Seminar in Würzburg today. For the discussion of a similar "Zulu" diorama from the 1920s at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History, see Arnoldi (1999).

the encounter on the ground, which is only hinted at through the replicas of animals and people, as well as photographs. Through the integration of the medium of photography as a prop, the film explores in a first step the promised future situation of schooling and training.

In a second step, the film eventually shows the anticipated movement towards Africa, in order to implement and apply the acquired skills to the anticipated religious void. The anticipation of travelling to South Africa is shown in the last scene of the film's documentary part where a group of missionaries and missionary sisters depart at an unidentified airport. This may indicate that the film was not only directed at potential future novices, as represented by the two young boys, but also to their parents and families. Through the imagination of a movement, the scene not only invokes the leaving behind of relatives as a sacrifice, but also the anticipation of effecting cultural change. In the film's final scene we eventually return to the two boys. Immediately after the priest's story ends, they leave the mansion confidently, having made the decision to join the congregation and to re-live the proposed movement.



Figure 63: still image of one of the film's last scenes. Family members are waving goodbye for the departing missionaries and missionary sisters.

This film was made at a time when the photographic studio at Mariannhill had already been closed for at least 15 years. The film nevertheless re-traces narratives based on the same mimetic capital in form of photographs and objects, which had been made and collected several decades earlier. It must be doubted whether Africans near Mariannhill in the 1950s still lived in the way

the plaster models portrayed them. The film thus maintains a certain historicity and connects it to the early production period of the photographs, which the priest showed to the boys. The film constitutes a last major statement that displaces Africans as "less-civilised" by visual means, before the mission's representational strategies changed during the 1960s. The film still presents various media as important devices to help the mission's work, such as photographs, collected specimens and objects in museums, as well as the study of languages as they were presented and taught at the seminary. These devices, as represented in the film, exemplify a missionary's essential skills of mediation between benefactors, novices, and Africans. The film itself was a new and even more efficient device to combine other devices within a montage.

Equalising Faith: Individual and Ideal Resemblance



Figure 64: stained glass window at Centocow Mission, KwaZulu-Natal. Produced in 1911 by Oidtmann, Linnich near Aachen, Germany (photographed in 2007 by Dudley and Glen Smith).

Once Centocow Mission had been founded in 1888, a moderately sized church was opened in 1892, but quickly outgrew the demands of the increasing number of parishioners. Therefore Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, began planning a new Church in 1910. In the previous year, not only had the founder of Mariannhill died, but at the same time the community of Mariannhill was separated from the Order of Reformed Cistercians.[245] On 28 December 1913, Centocow Mission celebrated its 25th anniversary, as well as the consecration of its new church, which was dedicated to the Heart of Jesus.

These historical occurrences and the exceptional effort of recollection at Centocow apparently created an impetus to bring together what had happened to the community at large since the monastery's foundation in 1882. The construction of the new church at Centocow in 1912 eventually presented the opportunity to encapsulate the past thirty years in form of one particular artwork: a coloured stained glass window became the artistic centrepiece of the new church, incorporating many of the key figures, who had influenced Mariannhill's development

[245] Mariannhill therefore ceased to be a Trappist monastery. Temporarily it became a Mission Institute under the name "Religious Missionaries of Mariannhill" (RMM), until in 1923 it was established as the "Congregation of the Missionaries of Mariannhill" (CMM).

since the 1880s. The window was the first attempt to visually manifest and to permanently unify the main actors in Mariannhill's grand hagiographic play.[246] Commissioned in 1911 with the German artistic window manufacturer Oidtmann in Linnich, close to the city of Aachen, the window was installed in the new church in 1912. In 1913, the community eventually consecrated and officially opened the church. For this event Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger once more staged the play "Joseph in Egypt".

Initially, the window was created to manifest Mariannhill's foundation story for a local audience of parishioners and allies, as well as an international audience of benefactors. In both cases missionaries could use it to point out specific actors, and explain their role in Mariannhill's history, but at the same time position the roles of parishioners and benefactors in relation to these historical actors. Since 1912 until today, the stained glass window has been present during every service above the high altar (cf. Figure 66). With a diameter of 2.6 meters, the window can be observed fairly well from the front ranks of the audience. Perhaps priests would have referred to the window when preaching, or when showing visitors around.

Over the years many people have tried to make sense of the window's arrangement. This effort even increased with the availability and circulation of various close-up photographs within the CMM and CPS communities. In 2010, the window became even more visible, mobile, and therefore interpretable through its photographic reproduction on the cover of a promotional CD by the Ingwe Municipality near Centocow. Since then, photographs of the window also circulate on the internet. I now present my own analysis of its content to show that the montage of the window's components and their interpretations are not always matching their historical image prototypes. Rather, the window's interpretations have always been malleable. The window nevertheless made sense to social actors as they created resemblances through memory by positioning the window in the ongoing development of narratives of the mission encounter, rather than in historical evidence.

The protagonists in the window can still be identified, first, by resemblance with historical photographs in CMM archives, second, through documentation in the contemporary mission periodicals, and third, through the available correspondence in CMM Archives between the architect of the church and the manufacturer of the window.[247] The window's style is commonly referred to as "*Nazarenerstil*" in Germany and was popular between the 1880s and 1920s with Oidtmann's stained glass images.[248] Oidtmann's still-existing register book for commissioned works, dating June 1911, further identifies the window as a "*Mantelschaft Marien*", denoting a conventional group arrangement of classic Catholic iconography. As such, it is commonly referred to as "*Schutzmantelmadonna*" in German, or "Virgin of Mercy" in English. Over the past centuries it has been manifested in form of statues, painted altar pieces, or like the image

[246] See what I write above about theatre plays involving Mariannhill's own history.

[247] The archive of Oidtmann was destroyed during the Second World War. Therefore no correspondence on the underlying ideas on composition could be retrieved. Also the photographs, which have been used as blueprints, no longer exist in Oidtmann's remaining archive.

[248] Personal communication, Heinrich Oidtmann, Linnich, December 2012.

under discussion, in form of stained glass windows (eg. Belting 1990:398ff, Phillips 2005).

Phillips (2005) discusses the much earlier, but similar case of one particular altar piece, which is commonly referred to as *The Virgin of the Seafarers* (1531-1546). She argues that the painting, commissioned for the House of Trade's Hall in Seville, represents the Spanish Monarchy's understanding of its expansion in South America. Even more than the single protagonists involved in the imperialist endeavour, the Virgin is supposed to protect the project in its entirety. According to Phillips, contemporary beholders would have recognised the painting's internal narrative and its protagonists, and understood the respective elements of the iconography. For the case of Centocow Mission, we may assume that this was indeed the case for the missionaries and visiting Catholics, who could have explained elements to African parish members, if necessary. Like with *The Virgin of the Seafarers*, the respective group of protagonists at Centocow, and thus the mission project at large, is placed under Maria's protective cape ("*Mantel*"). Maria, the mother of Jesus, is therefore the most central figure in this image. The arrangement seems to suggest that every beholder, given that he or she joins the depicted religious community, will be protected under the mantel. A resident of Centocow, Br. Adrian Pellazino, stated that "the image depicts the community of all in Christ in a profound way" (Pellazino 1914a:37).[249]

From left to right the window shows historical depictions, either confirmed by photographs or by their sartorial distinction: Bishop Jolivet of Natal (1826-1903); Pope Pius X. (1835-1914), who separated Mariannhill from the Trappists; two unidentified CPS sisters;[250] Cardinal Gotti (1834-1916), who was instrumental in the negotiations; Fr. Edward Müller (1870s-1945), Mariannhill's first Black priest; Abbot Franz Pfanner (1825-1909), the first abbot of Mariannhill; Amandus Schölzig (1836-1900), the second abbot of Mariannhill; and Br. Robert Eichholz,[251] who had been one of the first lay brothers to arrive at Mariannhill in 1882. The depicted Africans were initially referred to as generic figures of the conversion narrative, but later occasionally drawn into particular local narratives as concrete historical personalities: African ministrants; a man with a spear over his shoulder; a Christian mother with child; and two African converts. For these figures I was not able to find any matching photographs. The intended relations between missionaries, subjects, and benefactors can nevertheless partially be reassembled through the ensuing correspondence.

Shortly after the death of Abbot Franz Pfanner in 1909, Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, started negotiations with the window's manufacturer, Heinrich Oidtmann. Once Oidtmann had presented the first sketch for the window, Streicher replied with several requests on two important issues he wanted to be adjusted in Oidtmann's sketch (Figure 65): due to his importance, Abbot Franz should be moved closer to the centre. Concerning Bishop Jolivet,

[249] My own translation from the German original: "*Die Gemeinschaft aller in Christus ist auf dem Bilde sinnreich dargestellt*".

[250] CPS members today refer to one as Mother Natalia, the first CPS superior, and the other as Sr. Philippine Treumund from Centocow.

[251] Alternatively identified as Br. Phillip [Ettl] (Pellazino 1914:37).

Streicher remarked that "the artist should also rework the image of Bishop Jolivet according to the supplied photograph, especially the mouth, so that it will resemble him better. He is still so well remembered by everyone". Br. Nivard Streicher here invoked the contemporary notion of "photographic resemblance", as I explained it in Chapter One. "Resemblance" could only be established within a subjective relationship of individuals, and thus the recognition by memory.

When Streicher further discussed the image's other features with the monastery council, his confreres found the "kafir-heads and faces not kafir enough, too tame [*zahm*], too European". Accordingly, Streicher suggested to Oidtmann that "a better study of the photographs may solve this problem".[252] While Jolivet's resemblance, and thus his recognition, relied on a personal encounter, Br. Nivard wanted the African faces to become distinctly generic African types and explicitly non-European. It is unfortunately unclear to which photographs Br. Nivard referred. A general tendency of European artists to depict non-Europeans as "too European" had already caused anxieties about mis-representation in ethnological circles over several decades, with Gustav Fritsch in 1872 (cf. Broeckmann 2008:148), Everard im Thurn (1893:185), and Fritz Graebner (1911:54).[253] All three observed a practice of europeanising non-Europeans, in particular for the late 18th century, and instead hoped for more accuracy in contemporary representational practice around 1900. Like Fritsch claimed to control all stages of the reproduction process of photographs into engravings in close cooperation with engravers, Br. Nivard negotiated the window with Oidtmann. They extended the idea of "resemblance", first from original to photograph, and second, from photograph to artistic reproduction. For Jolivet's depiction, Br. Nivard demanded *individual* resemblance, and for Africans *ideal* resemblance.

Even in later years, resemblances in the window were either denied, or newly established. The window's prominent position, its general claim to represent a historical situation, as well as the general malleability of interpretations enabled social actors to update the window's function according to their contemporary needs. Next to the identities Streicher was worried about, a close study of photographs in Mariannhill's archives enabled me to analyse three other identities of individuals depicted in the window. They are ambivalent, however, because no contemporary statement during the time of production ever confirmed them. Due to the importance of the prominent identities, which people applied to the portraits over time, they had to be stabilised according to how they fit within the window's overall assemblage of identities.

All Black figures in the window appear to be generic depictions, but nevertheless received identifications. The Cape of Maria did exclude non-Christians, apart from one character. An African man in non-European dress with a spear can be seen to the left side of the window. The inclusion of a single supposedly unbaptised person once more pronounces the earlier-mentioned narrative feature of presenting resistance within assimilation. People around Centocow, as well as Mariannhill's historically informed members, commonly identify the man as Chief Sakajedwa

[252] My own translation of the German original: letter, Streicher to Oidtmann 15.09.1911, in Streicher and Seubert (2003).

[253] Also see Lips (1984 [1937]:42) and Poole (1997:34).

of Polela. But no provenience for this portrait or any historical identification is traceable. In the late 1880s, several reports in Mariannhill's periodical *Vergissmeinnicht aus Mariannhill* describe Chief Sakajedwa as a man of considerable age. Any depiction of him as a young man is unlikely to be taken from a photograph, and indeed no identified photographs of him exist in the CMM archives. Similar to the situation at Mariannhill with Chief Manzini (cf. Chapter Four), relations had deteriorated by the early 1890s, and Sakajedwa left the Trappist's farm before the relationship could be captured photographically. The man in the stained glass window most likely was not intended to be Sakajedwa in the first place, but rather a generic "African warrior". This is confirmed by a report on the church's opening by Br. Adrian Pellazino. He referred to the figure simply as a "heathen warrior with a pike [*Lanze*] (Pellazino 1914:37)"[254], and thus a representative of the "untamed" African world, to which Br. Nivard referred in his letter to Oidtmann.

Just below the left hand of Jesus one can see a depiction of Fr. Edward Cece Mnganga Müller (1872-1945), which can be matched with several of his photographs. He was one of the first children to be baptised at Mariannhill Monastery in 1884. In 1889, Alfred T. Bryant took Müller with him to Rome, where he studied for the priesthood. As the very first Black Catholic priest of South Africa, Mnganga returned to Mariannhill in 1898 (cf. Mukuka 2008). Bryant, too, is thought to appear in the window, as the young blonde man to the far right, behind Mnganga. Even if the figure is often orally referred to as Bryant, this identity is very unlikely, as there is no resemblance whatsoever to the existing photographs of Bryant. But as recorded in Centocow's chronicle, Bryant did indeed spend the year 1894, his last year as a Trappist monk, at Centocow. This may be a reason why he was eventually included in the window, if only by later identification.

When inquiring about the identities of Africans with residents at Centocow, I was told that the person standing in for Sakajedwa's portrait was a Mr. Shulembe, who used to live close to the bottle store of the neighbouring village of Emakhuseni. On another occasion, the priests at Centocow told me that descendants of Chief Sakajedwa had recently made a pilgrimage to see the window, as they had heard by word of mouth that the window contains a depiction of their ancestor. In the same vein, a woman in her eighties told me that the person I had identified as a "true" photographic image of Fr. Edward Mnganga, was in fact a depiction of her father. Being an early convert of the mission, her father Ivo Made indeed played a similar role as an interlocutor of the mission. During the celebrations for the opening of the new church at Centocow on 28 December 1913, the programme for the festivities identifies Made as the actor performing as "Juda" in the play "Joseph in Egypt" (cf. Anon. 1913:8). Possibly due to his general social prominence, Made's family carried his identity into the window.

From the beginning, Abbot Franz Pfanner was granted a doubled presence in the window's composition: first, to the lowest right, and second, at the centre, next to the cross descending from the hand of Jesus. This bi-location must have occurred when Br. Nivard requested with

[254] My own translation form the German original.

Oidtmann that Pfanner should be moved closer to the centre. Apparently, Oidtmann failed to remove the abbot's first depiction. Members of Mariannhill today explain this by saying that because Pfanner was the window's most important protagonist, he is present twice: once as an active missionary, and once during his contemplative period of retirement at Emaus after 1892.

In the early efforts to create the window, but also in its later interpretations, various levels of intermediality were at play. Throughout the years, people tried to make sense of the window by negotiating what *should* be visible in it, according to the evolving histories of Mariannhill and Centocow. The church window can therefore be approached according to what we know about *tableaux vivants*. Even if the window was not "performed" by models interacting communally, it nevertheless unites several photographic performances within a montage as a conventional type of Catholic imagery. In this conventional form the composition is enlarged to monumental proportions, in order to be viewed publicly. It can furthermore be compared to earlier well-known montages involving multiple photographs in a single arrangement, such as David Octavius Hill's depiction of the First General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (1843), Henry Peach Robinson's *Fading Away* (1858), or Oscar Gustave Rejlander's *The Two Ways of Life* (1857). Even though the makers acknowledged these compositions as montages, the remaining ambivalence between their truth value on the one hand, and their artifice on the other still caused much irritation with contemporary audiences in the mid 19th century (cf. Benjamin 1963b, Font-Réaulx 2012:211). Likewise, the window at Centocow is questioned and reinterpreted continually.

Other than all the previous examples involving portable photographs, temporary performances, or texts, the stained glass window of Centocow Mission is more or less irremovable, and has therefore been accessible at all times since 1912. During its more than one hundred years of presence, it accommodated multiple interpretations as a historical trace, always according to the contemporary needs of the people who contemplated on it. This permanent, re-composed—and most importantly—un-captioned exposure of an image differed from the temporary circulation of photographs: either as photographic negatives, or as published and captioned prints, they can easily disappear in archives or bookshelves. On their reappearance they may cause a temporary rupture, as I learned once I went about trying to evoke knowledge with and on them in 2007 and 2011. This may lead to experiences of surprise, excitement, but also of shock and anger, due to the felt loss or deprivation of a visual past. In contrast, the window's permanent presence became such a common view that some identities in the window slowly sedimented with the local community. Apparently, people rarely questioned these identities and occasionally reanimated them with few modifications. The window thus constituted a stable focus point that enabled, but also directed the re-production of Mariannhill's past according to particular subject positions, as I showed them in the meta-photographs at the beginning of this chapter.



Figure 65: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Vorbereitung zur Beichte 1914 Janr. Centocow (od. Katechese etc.)*"—"Preparation for confession 1914 January Centocow (or catechism etc.)". Fr. Emanuel Hanisch with a group of young men, women and children (men to the left, women to the right) in the Sacred Heart Church of Centocow Mission (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).



Figure 66: original sketch for the stained glass window for Centocow Mission, prepared by Oidtmann in 1911. The bottom line reads: "*Sub tuum praesidium* [lat.: under your protection]" (CMM Archives).

Conclusion

I began both chapters with the idea that we can never fully reconstruct consumers' ideas on the mission periodicals; be they missionaries, African subjects, or benefactors. In particular the personal opinions of individuals can be rarely discerned. In the case of the mission's photographers and editors, we can follow their narratives intended to summon allies, but not their personal convictions. We can thus only reconsider the photographs as both images and objects as they circulated between interpretive communities. Photographs were a staple within a religious economy that existed between Europe and South Africa. It dealt in (representations of) people, ethnographic objects, narratives, and prayer; all of which provided incentives for the various social actors—Europeans and Africans alike—to imagine the respective other side of the transaction. Whether audiences in Europe took these images at face value or not, we can only retrieve for a limited number of cases with respective sources, such as reports by visitors to Mariannhill Monastery (Chapter Three) and ethnographic museums (Chapter Six). Nevertheless, the analysis of photographs in their relationships to other media showed that benefactors considered these constellations as sufficient evidence for the mission's success to keep the money flowing. With the introduction of photographs to the *Vergißmeinnicht* in 1907, the periodical experienced an increase in subscriptions, despite the fact that a remuneration was introduced at the same time (Boneberg 1936).

An analysis of the situation at Mariannhill made us realise that photographs, cameras, and several other media played a considerable role as artefacts in the missionaries' imagination of their relationship with both their subjects and benefactors. The photographs discussed here show the awareness and understanding of African photographic models concerning the representational process and its related images and artefacts. It nevertheless remains unclear how great their representational agency was after all. The depiction of photographic practice and artefacts in meta-photographs—one medium used to reflect upon itself—may suggest more generally that the mutual and combined involvement of media strengthens their efficacies and social salience. This may be argued through the realisation that *tableaux vivants* constitute a medium in themselves. Only the medium of the *tableau vivant*, a performance held by models over a prolonged period and manifested in a photograph, can accommodate oppositions, which otherwise do not occur in such condensed form. Even if many of the photographs show only *one* place—the place of the conversion story—they indeed imply multiple spaces, as they would have hardly existed in co-presence. These spaces at the same time implied each other and created an ideal subject position for benefactors. I showed this, first, for the African photographers, the theatrical performances, the staged narrative of opposition, the fundraising photographs involving children, the propaganda film situated in Europe, and eventually for the stained glass window. The effectiveness of photographs as "immutable mobiles" to address benefactors as allies, must be based on the premise that photographs were intentionally presented to benefactors as trustworthy at least in the sense of "typicality", despite the fact that they could be occasionally

recognised as performances.

Religious faith, as well as the appearance and conduct that supposedly came with it, was something that Christian missionaries wanted their subjects to attain. Equally the mission needed to convince their benefactors in Europe that this very experience had really taken place. Faith—and thus the development from a supposed "traditional" and "heathen" state of mind and body towards a "modern" and Christian one—was the very promise that missionaries gave to European benefactors, for which the latter provided financial aid in return. Whether the promise was ever fulfilled, was for many benefactors impossible to check upon in person. Photography was one way of showing to European audiences that it was indeed possible to "civilise" Africans by exposing them to the constituents of Catholic faith. With photographs, missionaries could indeed recreate the dystopia, allegedly existing before the arrival of Europeans. In a Mariannhill photograph titled "heathen kraal", it is the caption—not the image itself—that claims that the subjects' "heathenness" is apparent in the supposedly insufficient dress and "primitive" architectural construction.

In all the articles I discussed in this chapter, the authors portrayed conversion by emulating a European identity, and by amending an African alterity by mimicking familiar imagery in an African setting to a near "coevalness" (cf. Pels 1994:337, also see Fabian 1983). The idea of theatricalisation may be applied to the entire photographic production of Mariannhill, but especially to the examples I presented. Balme described theatricalisation as the process of a performance becoming metonymic for an entire cultural group, for example when performed as plays in Europe (Balme 2007). With Greenblatt's "mimetic capital" (1991) the accumulation of iconographic material at Mariannhill can then be rethought as genealogies of performances. The missionaries used photographs to document the interactions with their converts in such a way that the ultimate goal—the conversion of as many South Africans as possible—remained ambivalent. The photographic record was an attempt to anticipate and thus promise a plot-line, in order to make something a reality, which was not yet the case. Catholic families, foremost in German-speaking countries would have followed the periodicals for decades and even across generations. Through the constant repetition of familiar and conventional human types and narrative tropes, they were not in regular need of explanation: oppositions like "good" and "bad", "before" and "after", "magic" and "religion" all began to imply each other.

The Trappist editors wrote about and next to photographs they had chosen selectively from the growing image stock available to them. The stories and photographs in the periodicals had to be well balanced: on the one hand, they needed to be sufficiently powerful to convince benefactors that the suffering missionaries and their suffering subjects indeed were in dire need of financial support and additional novices. On the other hand, they had to be encouraging enough in order to reassure benefactors that the mission would eventually succeed and that the mission field was in fact a pleasant- and interesting-enough environment to spend one's life as a missionary, even if far away from the conveniences of home. Various forms of allies, sets of relationships, and dependencies were created in this way. Apparently, they remained stable

enough to be reassembled at later points in time. Faith in images, in an epistemological sense, can thus also be built up effectively on seemingly fictional assemblages (cf. Latour 1990:28).

In the case of Mariannhill, religious faith was reproduced through narrative compositions that tapped reproductive power from popular images and visual conventions. In some cases, however, photographs indeed refer to historical events. Even if such a composition implies a shared history of its protagonists, it instead often lacks a strong narrative such as the one of the genre images I discussed. Therefore its fragments can be re-interpreted selectively according to alternative narratives than the one of the mission. One of the key questions here is whether we can deduce from performances in photographs about historical occurrences either before, after, or during the photographic moment. This is the topic of the next two chapters, and will consider the photographic occasion in its entirety, as its can be reassembled for specific coordinates in space and time. Photographs do not provide a way to study either social interaction or material culture of a photographic *préterrain* independently. Both must be considered in interaction with social actors and their multiple traces before and behind the camera as social and material constituents.

PART TWO

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PHOTOGRAPHS AND HISTORICAL SPACES

CHAPTER THREE

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The Guided Tour at Mariannhill Monastery

Introduction: Making Space

Clemens Gütl's account of early Mariannhill provides crucially important historical insights, alternative to the propaganda narratives. In particular, he describes the mission's internal frictions and the interactions with African neighbours. However, the account does not establish the fact that Mariannhill Monastery developed into a prospering tourist destination since the mid-1880s. The missionaries in fact made extensive efforts to socialise with commercial partners, politicians, tourists, and local visitors at all times, at least on a professional basis. This situation must therefore be reconsidered by comparing accounts by insiders and outsiders to the mission. I will do this in particular by analysing the mediating role of photographs within these relationships.

In this chapter I describe how various social actors co-created Mariannhill Monastery as an environment, by physically, textually, and photographically distinguishing different spaces, as interior and exterior to the mission station. Access to the monastery compound was highly regulated for visitors and only possible during particular hours. Visitors were not allowed to enter the ground by themselves and instead obliged to experience the monastery by guided perambulation. They could therefore not experience the day-to-day interactions between missionaries and their subjects, but only well-rehearsed performances. Nevertheless, visitors got a glimpse at how Africans and monks produced commercial goods in the workshops. They could also witness these things by purchasing evidence in form of either genre photographs of such situations, mission-produced goods, or by inspecting "Zulu curios" at the end of the tour at the monastery's museum and the photographic studio. The fact that visitors could correlate these photographs and objects with their experience on a grassroots level—however limited—stabilised the experience of their visit. As I will suggest, the missionaries established parts of the monastic ground as a "front region" or "frontstage" (MacCannell 1999 [1976], also see Goffmann 1990 [1956]), in which they performed the mission's success for visitors. This region was strictly separated from the monastery's private quarters and the monks' day-to-day routines.

Mariannhill Monastery, as much as Centocow Mission, were tourist sites in the most explicit sense, and even vacation sites. International tourists and local visitors came to see Mariannhill and its workshops as an attraction, while neighbouring White and Black families traded at the stores, or came to be photographed in the studio. In 1908, following many other famous names, the entire family of the local sugar magnate Campbell visited Mariannhill, and every member signed individually into the visitor's book on passing through the monastery's gate. In the 1920s, people such as the writer Alan Paton and the educationalist Charles T. Loram worked and spent their holidays at Centocow Mission (cf. Chapter Seven). Apparently, more than other missions, Mariannhill's work and extensive network of stations was present in the public mind, as much as it was represented in local and national tourist guides since the early 1890s.

Before and during the visitation by Trappist superiors in 1892, self-representation at Mariannhill existed in form of either group- or single portraits showing Mariannhill's members as contemplative monks, and only very few scenes of interactions with Africans. In the

following, I suggest that after the visitation, the self-fashioning of Mariannhill's members as missionaries developed an even greater reflexivity and self-referentiality for the purpose of creating more engaging and entertaining photographs for the studio's customers and the benefactor readership of the periodicals. Mariannhill's photographic activities beyond the monastery's grounds had only developed slowly with the foundation of the first outstations between 1886 and 1888. Once the monastery had established itself as a tourist destination, and a photographic studio and a museum had opened commercially in 1894, photographic production and the collection and redistribution of museum objects proliferated. The attempt to start active mission work then required representing Africans, and especially interactions with them. Müller, however, only referred to his photographs explicitly as "ethnographic" once he started to engage with European ethnologists in 1898 (cf. Chapter Six).

In the first part, I discussed "types", posed portraits, and genre photographs that reiterate essences, generalisations, and stereotypes as intentional performances and staging of the mission encounter. In order to understand the representational process in a colonial situation, it is necessary to link, not only the photographic image, but alongside it the photographic object, product and commodity to a historical situation as it can be established by alternative sources. This allows to position these performances outside of the mission's narrative. Phrased differently, in the following two chapters I relate the photographic spaces of the last chapter to historical spaces. I show how the "image world" (cf. Geary 2003, Poole 1997, Sontag 1979) of the last chapter had been produced and assembled in the first place. Furthermore, I explore the material environments that enabled and positioned historically the photographs constituting this image world. I hope to provide historical ground by analysing in two steps how photographs were produced and re-produced in particular occasions. In Chapter Three, I describe how the missionaries created a context for visitors to the monastery through a guided tour, so to experience the space before they were presented with photographs of it. Only by narratively and physically establishing an inside, could the missionaries construct an antagonistic outside, which still had to be christianised. In Chapter Four I discuss very specific photographic occasions outside of the monastic compound, as well as those transgressing both spaces.

In the historical narratives created by insiders and outsider to the mission, efforts of creating and relating spaces are linked to the monastery's efforts of proselytisation. In the *Vergißmeinnicht* of 1897, an anonymous author explained Mariannhill's "*Missionssystem*", which was alternatively referred to as "*Missionsmethode*" (Dahm 1950:177ff). First of all, this method was based on the extensive purchase of land (cf. Gütl 2005), so that the missionaries could establish adjacent villages for their *Amakholwa* communities of converts. Near Mariannhill Monastery this was the parish of St. Wendl, and near Centocow Mission the two villages of Emakholweni and Esibomveni. Another feature of this system was the establishment of boarding schools, instead of day schools. This allowed to maintain a steady influence on the children, instead of having them return to their often distant homesteads on a regular basis.

As we already realised in the last chapter, the fore-field to photographic production, the

préterrain, also consisted of multiple audiences, correspondences, and the constant movement of people and ideas between South Africa and Europe (Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999; Pels 1999). In this Chapter I explore this fore-field in South Africa, as well as concrete situations of photographic production. Mariannhill's photographers took photographs at Mariannhill Monastery, inside the studio, at its various other mission stations, but also outside the closed perimeters of the missions. As the conditioning of photographic production took place within a complex colonial setting, we need to take into account the relationships between missionaries, their subjects, and the colonial administration. We thus need to approximate the last chapter's potential photographic fictions to accounts produced by contemporary outsiders.

While I generally focus on the biographies and actions of particular photographic subjects, I also consider the actions of several other historical actors in the ambit of Mariannhill. In Chapters Three and Four these are government officials, travellers, magistrates, journalists and other writing visitors, and in Chapter Six anthropologists and ethnologists. As professionals in their respective occupations, these actors produced alternative traces to and next to photographs, while claiming to provide expert knowledge on colonial society. In the case of missionaries, it was less clear to the public mind what their expertise entailed exactly. As Trappist monks, Mariannhill Missionaries had a considerable internal division of labour and therefore a wide array of skills, as some of the biographies have shown already. This allowed Mariannhill Missionaries to continually reproduce the mission space through various internal media geared towards propaganda, which I already described in the last chapter. Outsiders instead penned a multiplicity of administrative reports and travelogues on their interactions with and visits to Mariannhill. In particular, newspaper articles and travelogues followed the narrative setup of the obligatory guided tour.

Mariannhill, unlike other missions, maintained representational institutions at the mission station itself, where objects and images where accumulated to manifest and mediate colonial ontologies. I will therefore reconsider the mission itself, the space between the mission and the "native reserve", and the space of the photographic studio and the museum as "contact zones". These enabled the missionaries, but also many other social actors to co-produce knowledge. Mariannhill's centre and agency of representation was clearly located at Mariannhill Monastery in South Africa, instead of Europe. As this was a situation unlike with other mission congregations, we also have to rethink relations of centres and peripheries (cf. Cooper and Stoler 1997).

The location of Mariannhill Monastery, close to the harbour town of Durban, can hardly be called a "contact zone" in the strict sense of Pratt's 18th century "border zone" (2008 [1992]), with a stark contrast in the imagination of space and life worlds. I hope to show that the missionaries at least presented it as such.[255] Pratt considers contact zones as "[…]social spaces

[255] Colonial intermediary space has been alternatively conceptualised either as "third space" (Bhabha 1994), or, as an adaptation of Foucault's heterotopia, as "xenotopia" (Barth, Halbach and Hirsch 2010). For my purposes the operationalisation of different "contact zones" appears to be sufficient.

where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination […] (ibid:4), and […] space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (ibid:6).

In Pratt's sense, the contact zone is not so much a particular space, as much as it is constituted by the actors within an encounter. The question is then who takes part in the interaction, and who eventually represents the occasion, and by what means. To nuance Pratt's discussion I analyse in a first step the relations of different spaces towards each other, and how this relation influenced the encounter. I will specify the above-mentioned distinct spaces in their relationships, in particular to the photographic studio at Mariannhill. In the fourth chapter I furthermore consider the role of specific objects within photographic occasions and spaces. This is essential to understand their later transformation in different spaces and contact zones, such as museums and exhibitions. In this way, locally and abroad, the missionaries established objects as "African", as "mission-made", or as indicating a process of conversion (cf. Chapter Five).

The essay "Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand" by the South African anthropologist Max Gluckman (1940) inspired me due to the fact that the opening of "the bridge" as both place and event, certainly constitutes a photographic occasion in a contact zone. Gluckman's use of photography is rarely acknowledged as reflexive visual anthropology. Arguing for the fact that Europeans and Africans constitute one coherent social system, he also made this point visually through the use of photographs. Gluckman took photographs of the event himself, which he used as illustrations for his article (cf. Wingfield 2012b). Occasionally, similarly complex social occasions defined the encounter between Mariannhill's photographers and their subjects. Due to the social gravitas of both the event and the participating people, Mariannhill's photographers singled out such occasions. In both Chapters Three and Four I will show that only in such cases other traces accumulated around photographs. Such traces eventually allowed me to reassemble the respective photographic occasion.

In this chapter I first describe how the missionaries presented their station as enclosed by "otherness". Then I analyse the textual and photographic descriptions of this "outside" and contrast Mariannhill's self-representation with others. Eventually, I will describe the course of the guided tour at Mariannhill: on the one hand for White visitors, and on the other hand for the case of an African chief. The latter was spoken for in a report in the *Vergißmeinnicht*, while White visitors were in a position to publish their own accounts of the visit.[256] Mariannhill's public image was thus created in the course of popular and popularising writing, but also through administrative, as well as governmental correspondences and interactions. Photographs played an important mediating role in both spheres.

[256] It may well be that reports by African intellectuals on Mariannhill appeared even before the First World War. Future researchers may want to consider evaluating Zulu newspapers, for example from the Protestant press.

The Monastery: Naming the Land and Creating the Mission

The Colony of Natal was made up of several so-called "divisions". In virtually all of them Mariannhill had established mission stations by the early 1900s. Mariannhill Monastery itself was located in the very centre of the Umlazi Division's northern part, which consisted of mostly private farmland, apart form the Durban city area. The division's southern part was constituted by the so-called Umlazi Native Reserve. It bordered on the Alexandra Division to the south, the Camperdown and Umgeni Divisions to the west, and the Indwedwe and Inanda Divisions to the north. While the eastern boarder was delineated by the coastline, the northern and southern borders followed the Umgeni and Umkomanzi Rivers. The native reserve to the south of Mariannhill was again divided from the northern private farms by the Umlazi River. These private farms thus formed a corridor from the Durban harbour towards Pietermaritzburg, in between the two very large Inanda and Umlazi Native Reserves.[257]

When a census was held in 1904, the Umlazi Division had a population of 66.765, consisting of 6.244 "Europeans", 22.998 "Indians", 36.968 "Natives", and 555 "mixed and others".[258] The entire division measured 592 square miles (1.533 km^2), of which Mariannhill's two farms occupied 55 km^2. Between 1875 until 1905, the Umlazi Division had one magistrate located in Durban, with a branch court held at Pinetown every two weeks. Due to their convenient logistic locations, the respective magistracies also used Mariannhill Monastery, as well as the mission station Centocow in the Ipolela Division as so-called "branch courts" (cf. Chapter Four). On 1 March 1905, a second magistracy was opened in Pinetown by the Assistant Magistrate H.J. Colenbrander.[259] Below I shall explain how varying professional and personal relationships to the magistracies at both Mariannhill and Centocow allowed for different photographic practices.

At least by 1888, Mariannhill Missionaries had fully appropriated the landscape around the monastery by applying German names to the area's topographic formations. The map reproduced here was first published in the *Vergissmeinnicht* in 1888 (Figure 67). In this way the missionaries had overwritten, as it were, the earlier Dutch names of their two farms, Zeekoegat and Klaarwater. The introduction of new German names eventually made the space more familiar for German-speaking visitors and benefactors, and at the same time more exotic for other visitors. The German names indicated on the map were applied in the periodicals, but also used for the purpose of the missionary's own orientation. They used them to reference the landscape in correspondence, administration, as well as baptism registers. The same map also

[257] See the very detailed map by Imasson (1904), *Map of the Colony of Natal*: "Compiled in Surveyor General's Office, Natal, from Diagrams and general Plans therein, and from data furnished by the Engineer in Chief for Railways, and by the Chief Engineer P. W. Dept.".

[258] PAR: *Magisterial Reports, Colony of Natal* (1904:49). However, the numbers between years, as given in the yearly reports, fluctuated considerably. In 1904, the Colony of Natal in its entirety had a population of 1.108.754, consisting of 97.109 "Europeans", 904.041 "Bantu" and 107.604 "Mixed and other Coloured Races" (South African Native Affairs Commission 1908:7).

[259] PAR: Annual Reports Department of Native Affairs, Colony of Natal (1905:15).

distinguishes between “buildings after European fashion” on the one hand, and “Kafir Kraals” on the other. This topography was therefore not only a measure to create a representational frontstage for outsiders, but the missionaries used it at the same time in backstage management.



Figure 67: original caption: “*Karte von Mariannhill in Natal*”. Map of Mariannhill’s farms *Seekoegat* and *Klaarwater* with a “germanised” topography, lithograph, 1888 (CMM Archives, also published in the *Vergissmeinnicht aus Mariannhill*, 1888. For an earlier version see *Der Trappist unter den Kaffern*, 26 October, 1884).

The still-existing main gate to Mariannhill Monastery was built between 1906 and 1907, after the entire compound had been surrounded with a second enclosure in the form of a fence in 1905.[260] The first enclosure was constituted by the walls surrounding the monastery's cloisters (*Klosterklausur*), initially in a small temporary structure, and only by the 1930s in its present form. This additional enclosure was set up because throughout the 1890s, the community had been complaining repeatedly to the magistracy about what one of the fathers called a "gang of young natives" and "rascals".[261] According to the complaints, these intruders verbally and physically disturbed the contemplative life of monks and sisters, as well as the education of converts. Eventually in 1898, the missionaries started to evict those people from their land who would not comply with their attempts at conversion. Once their own efforts had not shown any success, Fr. Ambrosius Hartes requested the magistracy to take action:

> Enclosed you will find a list of Cafirs whom we wish to have officially evicted from our farm. They have been notified time and again to leave but they do not heed the notice. Two weeks ago the Brother Missionary informed them by letter fully explaining that they must leave within the next fortnight. This warning has not been heeded. All Cafirs on our farm are obliged to attend instructions, to send their children to school and to become civilized. These Cafirs have refused to comply. Besides as Missionaries and for the good example of our growing Christian population we cannot allow these heathen orgies, such as dancing, utshwala [beer-like beverage] carousals and the like heathen customs to be carried on on our missionary premises. These people are perfectly incorrigible and do not wish to better their condition. An other reason for their expulsion is that we need our place for our Christians and we cannot allow our Christians to settle in the immediate neighbourhood of such Cafirs as these are. Trusting that you will perform the expulsion of the said Cafirs as soon as possible; these men have all received the notice to leave.[262]

The magistrate followed the request and ordered a White police inspector to notify the indicated 13 "kraal-heads" to leave the Trappists' land within one month time. The fact that the names were later ticked off by pencil may indicate that they were notified, but could also mean that the respective person had indeed left the land. This episode shows that by 1900, the Trappists had consolidated an inside of the mission compound according to their own values and rules, and in consequence also an outside, which in their view was still to be converted and civilised.

In 1904, Dom Obrecht became Mariannhill's temporary administrator. After Abbot Gerard Wolpert's resignation, it was his task to restore monastic order at Mariannhill, and in the process he saw a further need to protect the community by fencing the entire compound. Since 1905, Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, therefore had extensive correspondence with European contractors supplying building material for the gate and the fence. In the process, Streicher conceived of the idea to decorate the gate with an image showing "the group of Mother Ann and Mary". When contemplating how to execute this image for the gate, Streicher wrote on 25 August 1906 to the Dutch stonemason Stolzenberg:

> While I am agonising myself what would actually fit, I come across the *Mariannhiller Kalender* of 1906, and find on the frontispiece exactly what I am looking for [cf. Figure 10]. […] Into this opening, so I hope, it will be possible

[260] Letter, Streicher to Josten, 14.04.1905. In Streicher and Seubert (2003).
[261] DAR: 1-UMB-3/1/10-1897: letter, Abbot Schölzig to Resident Magistrate Umlazi Division, 26.04.1897.
[262] DAR: 1-UMB-3/1/11-1998: letter, Hartes to Magistrate's Office Durban, 18.08.1998.

to place the image just like in the *Kalender*. If the group, which has become typical through the *Kalender*, now becomes imperishable [*unvergänglich*] in stone, so to speak, this does not hurt at all. Of course we will not tell anyone that the stone image was made after the *Kalender*, but instead the other way round: The editor of the *Kalender* has taken a slice [*Schnitt*] from the gate.[263]

Along with the letter, Br. Nivard sent the cover of the *Mariannhiller Kalender* of 1906 (Figure 10). It shows a depiction of St. Ann, with St. Mary kneeling before her.[264] This is the image Br. Nivard wanted to "become imperishable in stone". Even if a certain irony in his writing is implied, he wanted the *Kalender's* audiences to see Mariannhill as the actual physical prototype of space, and as the genuine source from where images emanated. There was thus an inherent concern about the relation between Mariannhill as an actual space, and the images it produced for the sake of propaganda. In this chapter we shall see that propaganda not only consisted of the mediation of ideas over a great distance, but that it was at the same time co-produced on the ground in a common experience between missionaries, their subjects, and other colonial actors. Next to political interlocutors this involved commercial clients, curious visitors, and tourists. Since the mid-1880s Mariannhill had become an important player within Natal's growing tourism economy. Already in 1887 Pfanner explained the situation as follows:

One thing is for certain: Nowhere else than with us—together in one place or in one house—can one see so many different things, at least not in South Africa. By this I mean things of agricultural and industrial nature, literature and the schooling system, in addition to the Trappists' completely foreign [*fremd*] way of life, to which we recently added the peculiar agency of the sisters.

There is no foreigner [*Fremder*], who does not find something of great interest to him, be he a farmer or an industrialist, a pedagog or a missionary, an architect or an engineer, a litho- zinco- typo- photo- or any other kind of -graph, be he a craftsman or economist, a gardener or a herdsman, a pomo- or a physiologist, be he a pro- or regressionist [*Fort- oder Rückschrittler*], a monk or a man of the world, Catholic or Freemason.

Another Trappist monastery had made the same impression on the Turks earlier; one day in Bosnia I guided several Turks through the monastery [Mariastern]. The familiar Beg [rich landowner], who had visited us several times before, told the foreign [*fremden*] Turk, who visited for the first time: "Go to Vienna, there you cannot see so many things as you can with the Trappists". And indeed, in Vienna, or in any other big city, the foreigner [*Fremder*] has to walk a lot before he can see such a diversity of things. With us he may see everything in a few half-days, or even within hours.[265] (Pfanner 1987:40)

At least since 1894, visitors to Mariannhill would sign in with a so-called "*Fremdenbuch* [visitor's book]" once they entered the grounds, or from 1907 onwards, when they passed the new portal I just described. As I will explain below, "*Fremde*" was a common term in the Trappist vocabulary to refer to secular outsiders. The volume of 1908 recorded 162 signed visitors for the month of July alone. An article in the *Vergißmeinnicht* of the next year commented that the monthly average must have been even higher, as usually not every visitor signed in (Anon. 1909c:26). These visitors, so the article, came from all parts of the world, but

[263] My own translation from the German original. Letter, Streicher to Stolzenberg, 25.08.1906. In Streicher and Seubert (2003).

[264] The combination of their names is also the common source ascribed to the creation of the name "Mari-ann-hill". Contrary to the common hagiography, this name had not been conceived by Pfanner on arrival in Natal, but already in Bosnia during the 1870s (Gütl 2017).

[265] My own translation from the German original.

especially from Europe, and in particular Germany. The guests were most often educated, and a majority were curious non-Catholics. The same article also boasted with a considerable number of famous visitors of the past years. Among these were for example the Prince of Prussia, Joachim Albrecht, and the Governor of Natal, Matthew Nathan (cf. Figure 74). Also many politicians attending the first session of the South African National Convention visited the monastery in several groups, while they assembled in Durban during October 1908, and prepared parts of the terms for the South African Union of 1910. Over the years, many distinguished guests were photographed in the studio, together with the Abbot and high-ranking priests. On the one hand, this allowed the Trappists to present their guests—photographically, and textually through their enthusiastic remarks on the monastery—as social capital to audiences in Europe. On the other hand, as it was explicitly mentioned in the article, it was a common practice that the missionaries sent the photographs to such distinguished guests some time later as a gesture of reverence.

Whether famous or not, all visitors to the monastery had the possibility to take a guided tour with a standard script. This led past the various workshops, farms, stables, the sisters convent, the printing-press, and eventually to the photographic studio, as well as Mariannhill's own museum. As a matter of fact, the entire setup of the tour must have appeared as an industrial open-air exhibition to visitors, within which the actual museum was embedded (cf. Chapter Five). At all stops the guests were not only supplied with information on Mariannhill's history and activities, but could also purchase produce, such as farm goods or artisan products hand-crafted by the converts employed at the workshops. Memorabilia of a special kind could be acquired at the photographic studio and at the museum. Many visitors to Mariannhill reported that they purchased photographs of the mission, "native views", but also had their own portraits taken. The studio was thus not only central in supplying photographs to Mariannhill's own press for the periodicals, or to Mariannhill's houses in Europe and the US, but was socially embedded in the space of the mission station itself. Next to the studio, the museum was in complex ways related to practices of collecting and curating of both objects and photographs (cf. Chapter Five).

Visitors and hosts alike explicitly evoked the idea of a guided tour along these very institutions of production and re-production. The imagined social impact of the institutions intended a betterment of the "native question". This justification constituted a topic for conversations between visitors and missionaries. The presentations of these conversations (within and about the space of the mission) took place on the ground, but as I will show, they were often continued later on in public or private correspondence. We shall come to know how Mariannhill was represented in public guide books, as well as by guides of the Trappist community. The guided tour at Mariannhill Monastery must be separated in at least two parts: first, the general tour of industrial sites and workshops, which I will describe in this chapter, and second, the tour of the museum and the visit to the photographic studio. In the museum and the studio the missionaries had the possibility to narrate their experiences and endeavours related to objects and photographic albums, which also referenced places other than the monastery or its

missions. As the collection, accumulation, and redistribution of museum objects took place in a very distinct physical and discursive space, I will discuss the museum separately in Chapter Five.

Guided tours of industrial sites and factories already occurred in the late 18th century, but only became popular with a wider public in the last third of the 19th century. In particular their representation through picture postcards during the 1890s added to their popularity (Marsh 2008). The idea of the public guided tour was thus not yet all-pervasive when it was initiated at Mariannhill during the 1880s. Tony Bennett describes the efforts at public museums at the end of the 19th century as setting themselves off against earlier and messier forms of collecting, in order to become disciplinary machines for the masses (Bennett 1995). Mariannhill's tour and exhibitions had similar tendencies. However, as I shall describe in Chapter Five, the situation in Natal was different to the one in Europe or the USA. Black South Africans may have taken tours and visited exhibitions, but their experiences hardly ever became part of the representation of exhibitions. But as always, there are exceptions.

One of the visual strategies to create familiarity with benefactors in Mariannhill's periodicals, was the frequent repetition of depictions of the monastery, as well as the extended network of the mission stations. The editors achieved this through photographs, but also through various kinds of maps. The missionaries thus used photographs to familiarise those who could not see for themselves by providing a virtual tour: photographs could either be bought directly at the studio, or were sent to Europe as gratitude in form of prints, photographic foldout booklets (*leporellos*), as well as in periodicals. The tour, the various institutions folded into it, and their representations in form of photographs, were supposed to further social and moral education, not only of the African subjects, but also of the addressed audiences. The educational impact was thus not only presented during the actual tour, but also in later recollections and condensations of it.

Both insiders and outsiders, participants and observers, explicitly considered early Mariannhill before the First World War as an "experiment". On first sight this appeared as a paradox, which consisted of the *mission* to convert "natives" through the presence of contemplative *monastic* craftsmen (Kolbe 1895, Martindale 1931, Merriman 1905, Ricards 1879, Streicher 1905, also see Pels 1999). In theory this was a paradox because the monks were only allowed to communicate with the outside world with explicit permission by their superiors. The experiment was therefore carried out in a well-defined and disciplined space, constituted by various disciplining institutions, such as craft workshops, schools, hospitals, and agricultural facilities. In order to maintain, manage, and represent this experimental space, a printing press, a photographic studio, a museum, a library, and eventually an archive were set up, in exactly this order. According to the idea of the experiment, namely that contemplative Trappists did something unheard of, the outcome (or success) was yet unclear. As we shall see in the next sections, it was exactly this remaining contradiction in the idea of contemplative European monks engaging in mission-work, which created fascination for outsiders. Eventually, this translated into a high number of visitors. The construction of Mariannhill as an imagined space

took place in representations, as much as in historical space during the guided tour. As I will show, visitors only experienced Mariannhill in a restricted way during these tours. Later they re-assembled this space according to what they had heard and seen, however, only partially in photographs of the studio.

When visiting the monastery, tourists had already been aware of its extensive network of mission stations in both Natal and East Griqualand. At least they became aware of it when browsing the collection of photographs showing the missions, and especially Centocow Mission. Not only was it the last of Mariannhill's stations before one crossed from Natal into East Griqualand, but also many traces lead back and forth from and to Mariannhill. These are of a biographical nature, but also relate to the transfer of ethnographic artefacts and research, as well as photographs. In the following section I present a general overview of the station, while repeatedly comparing it to the situation of Mariannhill. Moving back and forth between these two places allows us to explain the differing preconditions for the production of both photographs and knowledge in relation to these transfers. In Chapter Seven we will eventually turn to Centocow entirely for the period of the late 1920s.

The Missions: Centocow and Beyond

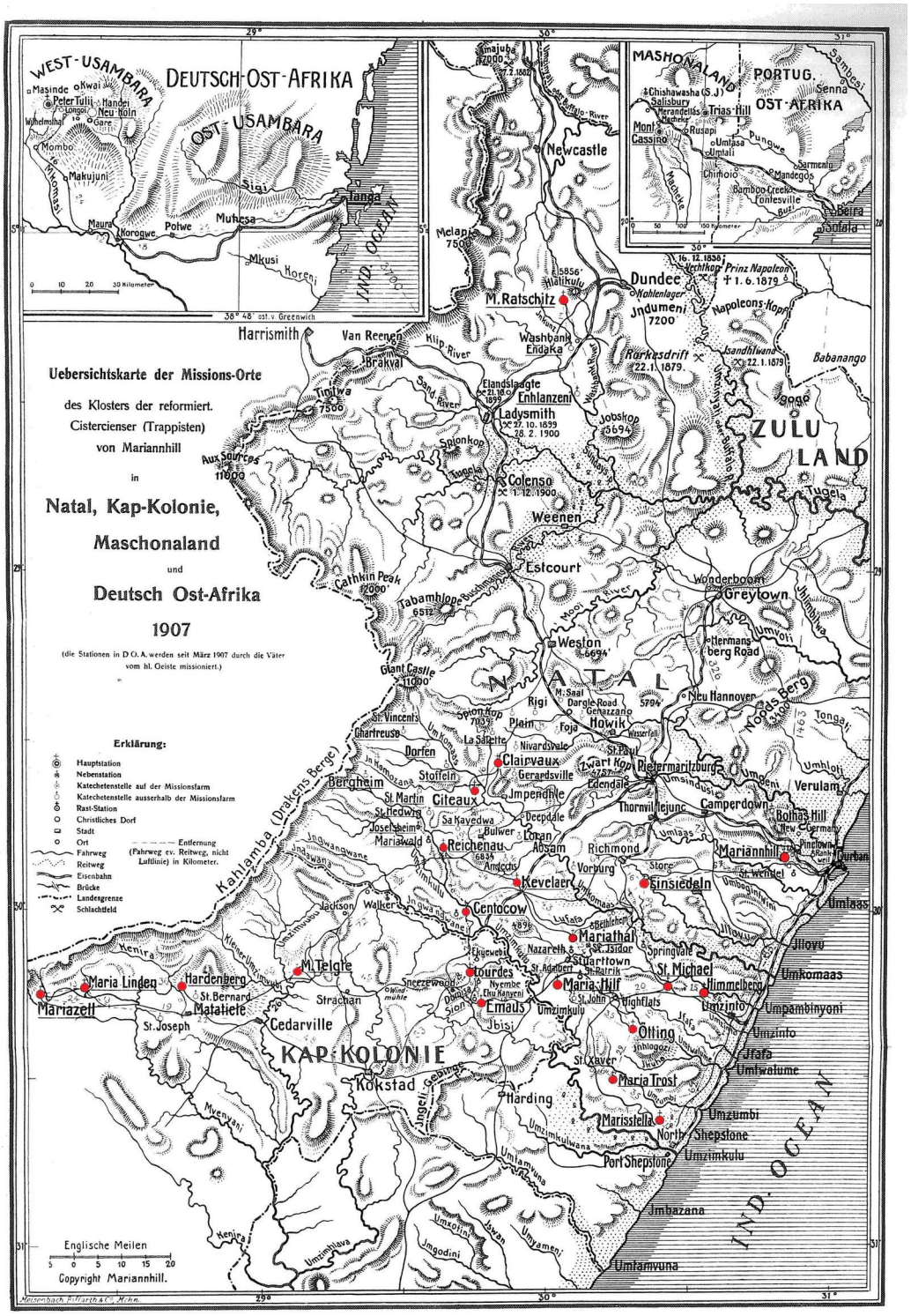


Figure 68: map of Mariannhill's mission stations as active in 1907, indicators added by the author (published in Frey 1907, also see the colour section).

The idea of a "tour" can be drawn much wider than only the tour for visitors at Mariannhill Monastery. Visitors would have been aware of the monastery's network of filial stations in Natal and East Griqualand, and even chose to visit some of them. The stations were present in narratives and in the photographic studio at Mariannhill, and in so far were not only a physical reality, but also constituted an essential part of the representational work. By 1899, Mariannhill had developed an extensive network of more than 20 filial stations all over Natal[266] and East Griqualand[267] (Figure 68). The community had also established a house with two priests in Johannesburg, as well as stations in German East Africa and Rhodesia. The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood (CPS) were called to help with the Belgian Trappists of Westmalle in the Congo, and also remained in German East Africa once the Mariannhill Trappists left in 1907. Three Mariannhill houses were established in Germany, two in Austria, and one in Switzerland. The sisters founded a noviciate in the Netherlands, and so did the Missionaries of Mariannhill in 1911.

The South African "dependencies" of Mariannhill Monastery were usually referred to as "mission stations" or "filial stations". As "daughter houses" these stations depended on Mariannhill Monastery as a "mother house". In order to create lasting connections to Europe, Pfanner and his successors named these stations after well-known places of pilgrimage in Europe, many of them dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Jesus (cf. Gütl 2005:78). Depending on whether these places of pilgrimage were in Austria, Germany, or Poland, the Abbots hoped to attract benefactors from these specific countries to fund the respective mission. For reasons that will become clearer throughout the rest of this study, I will only discuss the mission station Centocow in more detail. Centocow was, after the neighbouring Lourdes Mission, the biggest outstation in terms of resident missionaries and numbers of converts residing at or near the station. As visible on the map, all filial stations had their own sub-stations, and upheld extensive farming lands with networks of several churches, often served for by only one priest.

In early 1900, the entire male community related to Mariannhill Monastery comprised 329 members, however spread out over the sub-stations in South Africa, with 24 members residing permanently abroad;[268] 10 of these in Europe. The community of missionary sisters numbered 354, equally dispersed over the mentioned localities. Of the male community, only 167 resided permanently at Mariannhill Monastery. A major part of these were professed lay brothers (75), while professed priests were a minority at Mariannhill with only 8 individuals at the time. This was a fact lamented throughout the time before the First World War, as priests

[266] Maria Ratschitz, Einsiedeln, St. Bernard, Mariathal, Mariahilf, Ötting, Maria Trost, St. Michael, Centocow, Reichenau, Kevelaer, Clairvaux and Citaux.

[267] Lourdes, Maria Telgte, Maria Hardenberg, Maria Zell, Maria Linden and Emaus. The main filial stations in both Natal and East Griqualand even had their own sub-stations.

[268] The following evaluation is based on statistics as they were presented in the *Familiäre Mitteilungen* 1899:24-26. Fluctuations took place throughout the early years, with a considerable number of members leaving and entering the community each year: as a peak, 57 new members entered in 1892, but in the same year 25 left the community. As this was the year of Pfanner's disposition, his personal propaganda efforts had ceased, and it appears that since then slightly fewer novices entered the community each year.

were needed to perform daily mass, and to take care of the community's other spiritual needs. The community's majority at the time was therefore made up of novices, as well as several associates, such as the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller. Members moved between the monastery, the stations, and the houses in Europe frequently, either to relieve confreres from duty, to collect or deliver goods, or to help with construction work. Also African converts, workers, as well as school children were relocated, often permanently, between stations over considerable distances.

Since its foundation in 1888, Centocow Mission became one of Mariannhill's most important outstations. Müller took many photographs in the area, and it will therefore be of crucial importance to understand the network of involved actors contributing to the visual and material economy between the mission stations and the monastery. Moreover, influential members preferring the missions over monastic life, temporarily worked and gathered crucial experiences in this region, amongst them Mariannhill's third Abbot Fr. Gerard Wolpert, Fr. Alfred T. Bryant, and Fr. Willibald Wanger. In later years, the creators of Mariannhill's early theatre productions, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch and Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger became the leading missionaries at Centocow (Cf. Chapters One and Four).

Centocow is situated about 150 km to the west of Durban, near the village Creighton, from where a railway line used to connect Natal and the Eastern Cape.[269] The mission became well-known for its fruit orchards and tree nurseries, as well as wine and honey, which were exported far into the country (eg. Ergates 1906). Due to its remote location, the station was not as much of a tourist destination as Mariannhill, but still had visitors who wrote about it early on (eg. Kufal 1894). The mission was also known for the successful pass rates of its boarding school, as the mission's periodicals often boasted before 1914.[270]

Like Mariannhill Monastery, Centocow Mission attempted to be self-sufficient as much as possible, and to provide schooling, as well as artisan training for its *Amakholwa* settlement. Pfanner, Wolpert, and Streicher chose one particular farm in the Natal Midlands to found Centocow, because it was situated between two large "native locations" or "reserves".[271] "Location No. 1" of the Polela District to the West was inhabited mainly by *Amakhuze* communities, while "Location No. 3",[272] as part of the Ixopo District to the East, contained a smaller *Amabhaca* community (cf. Brookes and Hurwitz 1957:18). The protocol of a council meeting at Mariannhill Monastery in 1888 mentions that the indicated farm "Trinity" was ideal for a mission station, as "[…] there lived no Whites in its vicinity, and also no Protestant

[269] The historical train line still exists, but is defunct. A part of the line is still used occasionally by a refurbished historical steam train to take tourists on joyrides between Pietermaritzburg and Riverside.

[270] This popularity brought the young writer Alan Paton to stay at Centocow as a teacher in late 1923, to supervise examinations, but also to write at the mission (Paton 1995, 2009). By the 1920s, also several other political actors visited Centocow for holidays or social events (cf. Chapter Seven).

[271] According to Brookes and Webb "[i]n Natal the name 'Location' has always been used for rural reserves as well as for urban villages. In the other Provinces it is used for the latter only" (1979 [1965]:58, also see 166).

[272] The two locations were renamed "Upper Umkomaas No. 1" and "Upper Umkomaas No. 2" during the first decades of the 20th century.

missionaries" (Zürrlein 1999:14). In this strategic position, Centocow Mission became a crucial political factor, and it was mutual dependence that furthered a relationship with the local magistracy, which was represented as positive from both sides throughout. This even continued during times of war, when Germans and also Catholics were otherwise denunciated.

Abbot Franz Pfanner had adopted the mission's name from the Polish place of pilgrimage Częstochowa, and immediately hoped to anglicise it "[…] as either Centocau or Centocow, so that British mailmen shall not curse [his] legs to fall off" (Panner 1888:55).[273] The city Częstochowa in Poland is famous for its Monastery Jasna Góra, and the religious icon of a "Black Madonna" with Christ, dating back to the 14th century. The black face of the original icon in Poland is usually thought to have been caused by the perpetual burning of candles underneath it. As a "Black Madonna", however, people at both Centocow and Mariannhill interpreted copies of the icon as "African".[274] Unfortunately, I was not able to study contemporary perceptions during my fieldwork.

According to his own account, Pfanner conceived of the name "Czenstochau" explicitly in order to attract "slavic" benefactors as patrons, and thus to re-pay the sum, which he had already invested to buy the farm (Pfanner 1888). Mariannhill Monastery had several Polish members, as well as benefactors, apparently enough to make it profitable to publish the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* in the Polish language for several years. The station Centocow was eventually financed by a Polish aristocrat, which the current occupants of Centocow, the Polish Pauline Fathers from Jasna Góra, believe to be the Countess Maria Theresa Ledóchowska (1863-1922). Ledóchowska had a particular presence in South Africa as benefactor of Catholic mission projects, for example by supporting the one of Fr. Franz Mayr (cf. Gütl 2004).[275]

The first superior of Centocow between 1889 and 1900 was Fr. Gerard Wolpert (1855-1945). Like some of his confreres at the time, Wolpert had never studied theology upon entering the Trappist order in 1883, but was nevertheless admitted to the priesthood in 1888, and soon after put to practical mission work (Gütl 2005:150). In 1900, he was transferred back to Mariannhill and became the monastery's third abbot. However, he resigned again after only four years, as the monastery's internal tensions between the ideals of contemplation and mission became too strenuous for him. Within these tensions, Wolpert was an important member of the mission faction, who opposed the advocates of the contemplative ideal. Eventually, Mariannhill was separated from the Trappist order in 1909, and Wolpert became the first Superior General (*Provost*) of a new mission institute in 1910 (Dahm 1950:219).

At Centocow, Wolpert was succeeded by Fr. Balduin Reiner (1900-1909) and Fr.

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[273] The missionaries themselves nevertheless spelled the name *Czenstochau* in their periodicals, and it was only officially anglicised by the order of Provost Fr. Gerard Wolpert in 1913 (Anon. 1913a:176).

[274] For one such interpretation see an anonymous and untitled story in the *Vergißmeinnicht* (Anon. 1901:24). The ethnic interpretation of the Black Madonna as "*Amabaca*" was even strengthened by the lines running across the Madonna's left cheek. The story recounts that a Black boy interpreted these as incisions, and accordingly as "tribal" markers of the "*Amabaca*". For more information on the original icon in Poland see Niedzwiedz (2010).

[275] Due to such engagements Ledóchowska was beatified in 1970 (Gütl 2004:22).

Innocenz Buchner (1909-1911).[276] Fr. Emanuel Hanisch arrived at Centocow in 1908, and eventually became its superior in 1911 (cf. Dischl 1982, Pellazino 1914a).[277] Fr. Emanuel was the nephew of Fr. Alexander Hanisch, who curated the museum at Mariannhill. This personal relationship certainly benefitted the transfer of information, but also the transfer of ethnographic objects from Centocow to Mariannhill, and further to the ethnographic museum of Stuttgart between 1905 and 1914 (cf. Chapter Six).

On arrival at Centocow in 1908, Hanisch introduced a crucial routine of documentation, which was extraordinary when compared to Mariannhill's other stations at the time. This involved three different types of records: a station chronicle, a scrap book (*Sammelbuch*) for newspaper clippings and letters, as well as a photographic album.[278] Hanisch instructed Sr. Philipine Treumund CPS to write the mission's history for the past 20 years since its foundation in 1888, and continued writing the chronicle himself since his arrival. In the chronicle's introduction, Hanisch indicated its purposes: "A chronicle is a precious repository [*Fundgrube*] for the scholarly historian, an immensely useful source for the young mission pioneer, and an interesting book for everyone (Treumund et al. 1888-1956)".[279] For Hanisch, these three records had a retrospective, but also a prospective use value, as future missionaries could learn from past experiences and the interactions with the mission's common interlocutors. The combination of these three sources allowed for insights in the contemporary use and importance of photographs, of which I will analyse one case in Chapter Four.

Returning to the actual network of missions, Centocow was closely connected to Mariannhill's nearby filial stations Lourdes and Emaus. Centocow and Lourdes Missions were both founded in close succession in 1888. After Pfanner's resignation in 1892, Emaus Mission served as his old-age residence. Despite their proximity, the three missions were separated by multiple geographical, political, and religious borders. Unlike Mariannhill Monastery itself, the respective area is remotely landlocked against the Drakensberg. As we shall see, the region experienced a long history of religiously and politically motivated geographical (re-)imaginations. Mariannhill Missionaries nevertheless frequently crossed these borders—along with their converts—in order to commute between their stations. All three stations were connected to the monastery by various events, media, and persona. As filial stations they were administered by the monastery as a mother house. The stations therefore had to report back to, and most interesting for our concern, they were represented by Mariannhill Monastery. The media institutions, such as the photographic studio and the printing press with its various periodicals, featured Centocow and Lourdes in most editions with the longest reports, anecdotal stories, and photographs. But also ethnographica, collected around Centocow eventually ended

[276] The position of superior and the actual responsibilities as recorded in Centocow's chronicle are not clearly specified, as priests moved around a lot for various reasons. Also Abbot Gerard Wolpert apparently spent much time at Centocow after his resignation between 1904 and 1909.

[277] Hanisch stayed at Centocow until 1920 and became Bishop of Umtata in 1937.

[278] The photographic album has been transferred to Mariannhill Monastery, and the Chronicle and scrap book to the CMM Archive in Rome.

[279] My own translation from the German original.

up in Mariannhill's museum, and some even in German Museums.

The Umzimkhulu Valley(s), as the wider region between Centocow and Lourdes is sometimes referred to, is historically split between Natal's Polela and Ixopo Districts to the North, and East Griqualand's Umzimkhulu District to the South. Since the beginning of the formal annexation of "No-Man's-land" between 1879 and 1894, the Ingwangwane River and the Umzimkhulu River constituted the border between Natal and East Griqualand, as part of the Cape Colony (Saunders 1974:188, Ross 1976). Even if the latter region was discontinued as a formal administrative unit by the late 1870s, East Griqualand was obviously referred to by the same name beyond the 1890s, and was more commonly known as the Transkeian Territories.[280] At the same time, the two rivers have always been natural landmarks for orientation, and still today many place names in the area refer to them. While Centocow was on the Natal side of the historical border, Lourdes and Emaus were several kilometres South to the border. The Umzimkhulu River passes Centocow just a few hundred meters downhill from the mission's main compound and joins the Ingwangwane River towards the sea several kilometres downstream (cf. Map, Figure 68).

Once the Catholic Church had restructured its diocesan system in the 1950s, the Umzimkhulu River became the border between the newly-founded Mariannhill Diocese and the Umzimkhulu Diocese, with Centocow and Lourdes falling under the latter (Dischl 1982). Since then the two missions have been drifting away from their former motherhouse at Pinetown, which became the centre of the newly established Mariannhill Diocese. Under Apartheid, since 1974, the Umzimkhulu District South of Centocow became a satellite of the Transkeian *Bantustan*, factually an independent "Homeland" for Africans. From then on, the Umzimkhulu and Ingwangwane Rivers constituted the border between South Africa and the Bantustan. As for everyone else, this complicated movements for Mariannhill Missionaries, whenever they had to leave the country in order to do their work, or to visit other stations. These reorganisations separated Centocow and Lourdes Missions from Mariannhill Monastery and added to the stations' separate development. Mariannhill Missionaries nevertheless held on to Emaus Mission, due to its symbolic connection to Mariannhill's founder Abbot Franz Pfanner. Since 1994, the municipalities of Umzimkhulu and Ingwe (formerly Polela) have been unified as part of the Sisonke District in KwaZulu-Natal, and at about the same time the Pauline Fathers[281] from Jasna Góra in Częstochowa, Poland, took over Centocow Mission.

On the one hand, border areas, such as the Umzimkhulu district, were ambivalent spaces, but not necessarily secured and monitored more than other places at all times. On the other hand, the fact that both sides of the Natal/Cape border were peripheral to their respective centres, did not create a situation of marginality for the missions, or for governmental control. On the contrary, due to their strategic positions, Centocow and Lourdes became crucial hubs in the production of knowledge for the intersecting interests of mission propaganda, government, as

[280] The land beyond the River Kai, from the perspective of the Cape Colony.
[281] "Order of Saint Paul the First Hermit" (O.S.P.P.E).

well as ethnological interests during the 1890s and once more during the 1920s. Even though the African population clearly outnumbered Europeans, the latter upheld a tight information network and infrastructure, in order to facilitate control over Africans. This network consisted of White traders, missionaries, as well as Black and White government employees and police.

Centocow and Lourdes were close to the railway line, and Centocow even had its own train station after 1900. The very next stop in the Cape was the border station and trading post Riverside, dominated by the trading store of James Cole. White traders, such as Cole and Donald Strachan, played a crucial political and economic role in the local colonial society, and, like missionaries, had considerable influence on Africans (Rainier 2003). Due to the high percentage of Africans in the area, the trader's livelihood likewise depended on their African interlocutors. Magistrates, their staff, as well as White and Black police were another group of colonial actors, who were deeply involved with the daily life of missionaries and their subjects, due to the relative remoteness of the area in an even tighter network of dependencies. In this situation, Centocow mission itself served as a particularly important contact zone for the involved protagonists, which I explore in Chapter Four through the occasion of a magisterial branch court session, held at Centocow in February 1912. Müller documented this event photographically with considerable effort and preparation. This occasion can only be reassembled due to the social spaces and networks I just explored and the traces they produced.

A Stopover on "Route XVII"

In the valley [Botha's Hill, just North of Mariannhill], which for the most part is a native reserve, there are many tribes located; and the tourist would do well to pack up a few days' provisions, secure a trustworthy guide, and march down to visit the kraals of, say, the Bango tribe, whose portly and popular chieftain ever extends a courteous welcome to the white traveller. Should the tourist be a master of the camera, he will come out of the region with a sufficient stock of artistic negatives to make up an album of views which will delight all who see it. A few beads or cheap pocket knives are sufficient recompense to models, whilst a judiciously bestowed shilling on some of the old kraal mothers will ensure a kindly reception, not only to the tourist himself, but to those who follow him. When Natal possesses a picture gallery of her own, or when the number of colonists has increased sufficiently to make the pursuit of oil painting from nature lucrative, this district is certain to become one of the most popular artistic resorts in South Africa.

J. F. Ingram, *The Colony of Natal: An Official Illustrated Handbook and Railway Guide* (1895:161).

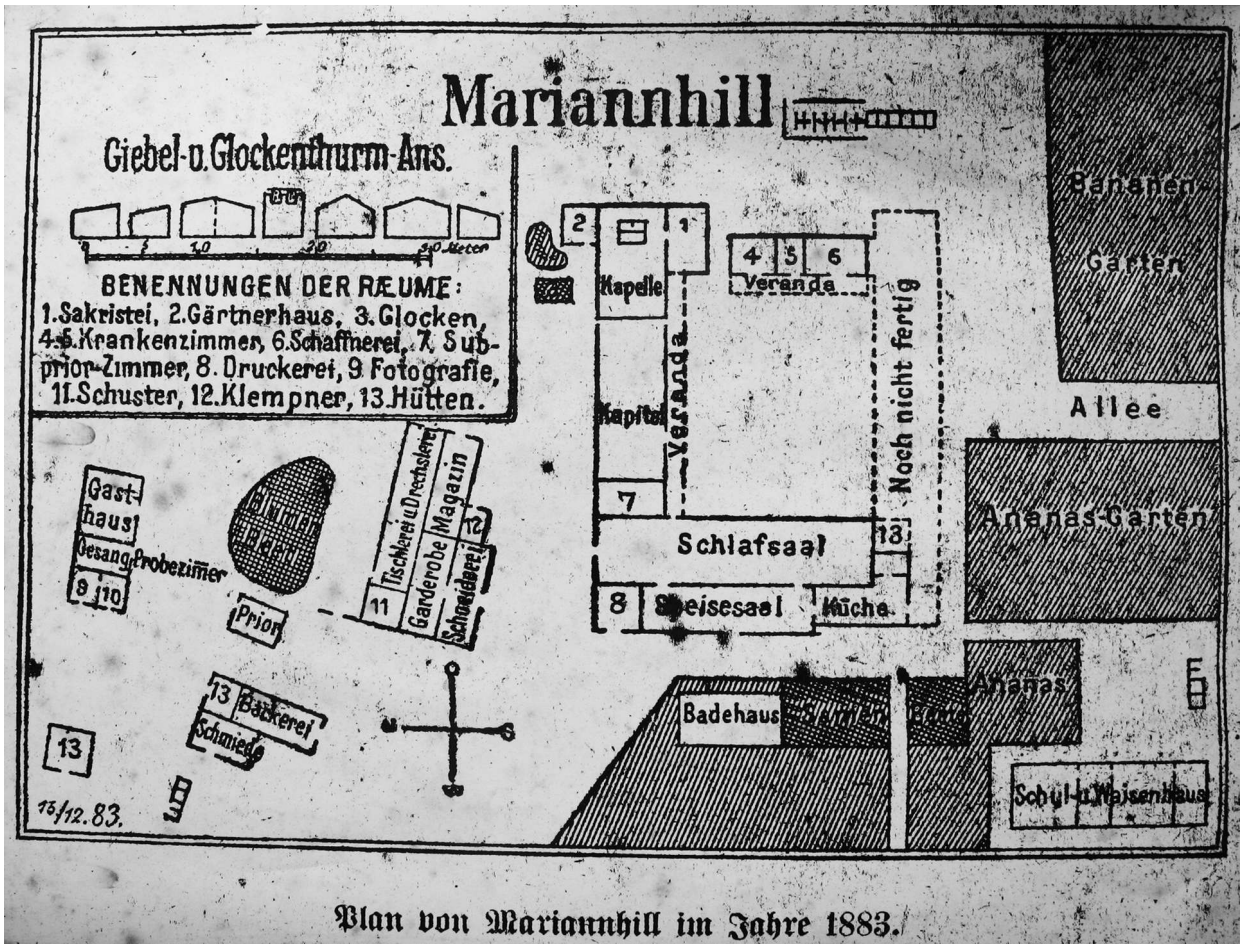


Figure 69: original caption: "*Plan von Mariannhill im Jahre 1883*"—"Map of Mariannhill in 1883". As number "9" this map indicates a very small room dedicated to "photography [*Fotografie*]" (CMM Archives).

Since the early 1890s, Mariannhill and its mission stations became firmly integrated in a larger network of "must-do" stopovers, devised for tourists to South Africa, and Natal in particular. The

above quote from the most popular guide to Natal encouraged tourists travelling in the area around Mariannhill Monastery to seek the contact with the local African population and to take their own photographs of people and landscapes in an artistic fashion. It even predicted a great potential in the area for a future artistic painterly culture. Even though tourists may indeed have followed this advice, the photographic results often remained in private repositories and may not have survived until today. At the same time, many of these tourists instead sought the service of Mariannhill's photographic studio to purchase "native views" of a much higher quality than they could have produced themselves. Additionally, the very same studio also offered to take portraits of visitors' themselves. In this way, Mariannhill's photographic production captured several experiences and relationships photographically: the one of the tourists on the one hand, and the missionaries' with both the visiting tourists, as well as their African subjects on the other hand.



Figure 70: photograph of Mariannhill Monastery, approx. 1895. The photographic studio is the second building from the left, which had been constructed explicitly for this purpose in 1894 (CMM Archives).

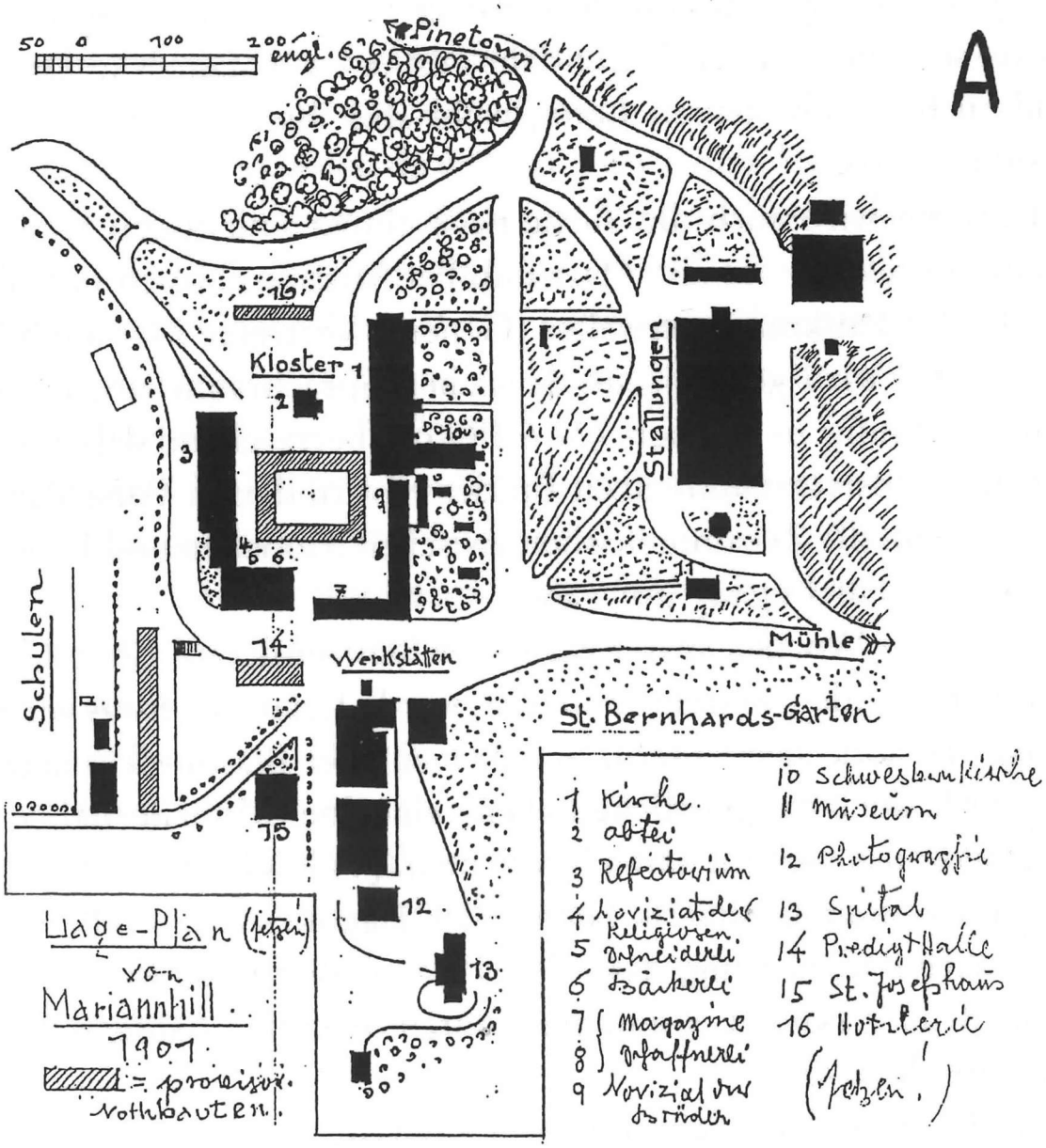


Figure 71: original caption: "*Lage-Plan von Mariannhill, 1901*"—"Site plan of Mariannhill, 1901". "[…] *12 Photographie* […] (as published in Balling 2003:130).

The above photograph (Figure 70) and site plan (Figure 71) can be matched: the photograph was taken from the location of the "*Stallungen* [stables]", facing towards the "*Werkstätten* [workshops]". The photographic studio is the second building from the left (Figure 70), which is indicated as number 12 in the site plan (Figure 71). Visitors not only marvelled at the

phenomenon of the monastery itself, but also at the Trappists' enormous land purchases around their mission stations. We must therefore understand Mariannhill as an extensive and complex network, rather than a single monastic and hermetic compound. As I suggested, Mariannhill was constructed and perceived as an experimental space, constituted by a well-defined, but also permeable inside and outside. During the tours at the monastery, guides narrated and reproduced these perimeters with the help of a clear script, but also with the help of photographs at the studio, which included the many outstations.

Many visitors to Mariannhill recorded their experiences at the monastery either in published travelogues, or newspaper features. I traced more than 20 publications[282] reporting on Mariannhill between 1885 and 1915 alone, and there may well be many more. Of those I can only describe a few in order to show how visitors experienced the space of the mission station, how they wrote about it, and how photographs were involved in this process. To begin with, publications advertising South Africa to the world can be distinguished in at least two common formats: both individual travelogues by overseas individuals and official travel guidebooks were well in place in South Africa by the late 1890s. In particular the latter kind of publication not only attempted to promote tourism, but also permanent immigration. In particular the providers of infrastructures, such as railway companies and shipping lines presented their customers with travel guidebooks to make their networks and services even more approachable. The first explicit tourist guidebook for South Africa was *Brown's 'South Africa': A Practical and Complete Guide for the Use of Tourists, Sportsmen, Invalids, and Settlers* (Brown and Brown 1893). The Union Castle Line eventually bought out the authors and published the guide up to 1960 (Mackenzie 2005:29). As early as 1893, Mariannhill Monastery was thus presented as a worthwhile stopover in the suggested itinerary referred to as "Route XVII", from Durban to Pietermaritzburg (Brown and Brown 1893:204-211). Through the travel guidebook, the commercial directory for a local consumer market, but also by word-of-mouth, Mariannhill thus gained a reputation as an increasingly popular destination for both commerce and tourism. Tourists marvelled at the monastic lifestyle at large, the architecture, the industrial workshops, but also the educational institutions. In particular the latter two dimensions established Mariannhill as a crucial player within the colonial landscape, and defined its relation to governmental institutions.

Even though Mariannhill only received its own train station after the First World War, it was already suggested as an excursion from Pinetown Station by 1895, in the first local guide book issued by the Natal Railways (Ingram 1895). In 1903, the guide's second edition was equipped with photographs from and of Mariannhill (Harrison 1903). The guide's third edition (Tatlow 1911) even contains an extensive article on "Natives and Indians" by James Stuart, which is illustrated exclusively with Mariannhill photographs for the part on the "natives".[283]

[282] Excluding the frequent short reports in Natalian Newspapers.

[283] The Zulu linguist James Stuart (1868-1942) was Assistant Secretary of Native Affairs (ASNA) between 1909 and 1912. He is generally known for his collection of African oral history, published as the "James Stuart Archive" (JSA), which I discuss below (cf. Leverton 1977, Hamilton 1998).

Stuart wrote his article on some of the common colonial themes of superstition, marriage, and material culture alongside Mariannhill's photographs, which he apparently had selected himself. He ends the article with the lines: "It is hoped that the series of photographs illustrating these notes will assist in giving the reader a clearer idea of the people than would have been otherwise possible" (Stuart 1911:464).

In 1894, one year after the very first national guide book had appeared, a natural history cum ethnographic Museum was established at Mariannhill, and at the same time the photographic studio was professionalised with a substantial new building. By 1911, when the third edition of the Natal guide book was released, Mariannhill Missionaries had already been well known internationally for the imagery they produced of Africans, but also locally for their portrait studio. The photographic production at Mariannhill thus clearly fed on, but also reacted to, a commercial directive; not least by adapting its imagery to examples, as they had already been present in abundance in the first edition of the Natal Railway Guide (Ingram 1895).

Joseph Forsyth Ingram had been a professional photographer in Durban during the mid-1880s, and thus probably provided some of the illustrations for his own publication (cf. Spencer 1982:83). As he seems to suggest in the quotation above, guidebooks like his own may be considered as "how-to" guides, inspiring tourists where and especially what to photograph.[284] In this regard Mariannhill was present in two ways: first, in form of a location *en route*, and in the later editions of the guides in the form of the many photographs, serving as an inspiration for what and how to photograph. Mariannhill therefore contributed to the "image world" of Natal in a double sense: not only by selectively representing landscape and people, but also by creating expectations of what visitors wanted to see, and what they would demand to purchase in form of already existing photographs. With the help of travel guides, foreign visitors were therefore able to accumulate visual knowledge on beforehand, and accordingly they were able to recognise sceneries and people on arrival. As Susan Sontag phrased it in her elaboration on the "image-world": "the notions of image and reality are complementary" (1979:160).

Due to its unusual layout, the appearance of its inmates, as well as the enacted work, Mariannhill Monastery was a destination sought after by tourists from the first years of its existence, and considered as equally exotic as the African homesteads in its neighbourhood. While foreign Whites considered African appearances as exotic, local White and Black South Africans must have been equally thrilled by the appearance of the monks (and their photographs):

> Strange figures too they look, these shaggy-bearded, sunburnt men, with countenances expressive of meditation and complete indifference to the things about them, their peculiar garb giving them in addition a mediaeval appearance, or such, at least, as we are often accustomed to associate with the middle ages, which must strike the observer as quaintly out of harmony with the bustling thoroughfares of a modern town. (Powell 1899:65)

[284] See for example Sontag (1979:65) on the early efforts of the Kodak Company to guide tourism by indicating what and where to photograph.

The author of the first tourist guide to Durban, Sidney Powell[285], thus projected Mariannhill's monasticism into a distant, but not unattractive European past (also see Merriman 1905). The attractions, which visitors came to marvel at, were not only of material nature in form of architecture, the great number of workshops and the artefacts they produced, but foremost the extraordinary performances, first by "civilised natives" in the workshops, and furthermore by the silence of the monks, despite which this was all possible. It was this apparent friction between the austere conditions under which the Trappists lived and the fact that they still seemed to achieve what they set out to do, which fascinated many visitors:

> The monks rise at two a.m. and go into church. At three a.m. the brown-frocked lay brothers go out to do kitchen work and to study Kafir [language]. The white monks remain till nearly six, praying and singing psalms. At 4.30 the lay brothers return to mass, remaining in churchy till 6.30, when they go to breakfast and afterwards to the workshops. The white monks finish their office at 6.30, when they have breakfast and study for the priesthood. They are examined by the Bishop in theology, philosophy, &c. Reading is allowed, i.e. devotional books, no newspapers or fiction. The guides who travel about, and who are exempt from the vow of silence, are obliged to confine their conversation strictly to business, and may bring no news of the outside world to their brethren. (Thomas 1894:23)

Such reports, however, were not absolutely accurate at all times, and often relied on the visitors' own observation, as well as idealised statements by the monks themselves. As Gütl (2005) showed, especially Mariannhill's more remote outstations were considered as lacking the Trappist's discipline in terms of conduct and consumption. As I already explained in Chapters One and Two, the reception and processing of information at Mariannhill on and for the outside world increased quickly during the 1890s. In the process of Mariannhill becoming a tourist destination, the editors of Mariannhill's periodicals quickly realised the necessity of consuming and reproducing secular literature and illustrations for the purpose of raising funds.

Increasingly aware of the fact that every visit by an outsider could have a potential afterlife in the worldwide printing press, Mariannhill Missionaries treated visitors to the monastery most courteously, so that they would leave with the most positive impressions possible. Mariannhill's editors even employed the most prominent visitors as social capital, either at the time of their visit, or many decades later, once they had become famous. Next to the South African politicians and German royalty, which I mentioned above, there were for example Mohandas Gandhi in 1895, Mark Twain in 1896, and Rider Haggard in 1914. Being published authors, two of popular fiction, the three men eventually crafted their own elaborate accounts of their visits.

In 1895, Mohandas Gandhi recounted his observations at the monastery in the British journal *The Vegetarian.* The article was titled "A Band of Vegetarian Missionaries—And their Work in South Africa". Gandhi remarked that since 1894 the monastery kept a "visitors' book", but merely twenty pages were filled in.[286] Eventually, he was slightly disappointed that the

[285] The Durban architect Sidney Walter Powell (1878-1951) was the author of this anonymised 99-page publication, titled *Durban—The Sea Port of the Garden Colony of South Africa*, which is acclaimed to be the first tourist guide to Durban (Coan 2013).

[286] These registers still exist, but only for the years between 1908 and 1960s. By this time the mission had become independent, and members started collecting documents.

monks kept their meatless diet not out of conviction, but rather because "it helps them to crucify the flesh better". He still appreciated the Catholic belief and its materialisation: "The most prominent feature of the settlement is that you see religion everywhere. Every room has a cross and, on the entrance a small receptacle for holy water, which every inmate reverently applies to his eyelids, the forehead and the chest (Gandhi 1996 [1895])".

In 1896, Mark Twain listed among the monastery's austere conditions (mostly exaggerated) that all literature was denied to the monks at Mariannhill (Twain 1897:651). However, Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, told Twain's manager, Carlyle Smythe, conscience-stricken, and "in a whisper, as if he were confessing some horrible sin", that he had read all of Twain's books (Smythe 1897:467). Twain and his entourage had met Br. Nivard on their way to the sister's convent. Before they left the monastery, lunch had been ordered for them at the convent by the use of a telephone line. This recently installed technological innovation was yet another fact that caused much wonder with the visitors. It is unclear whether either Gandhi or Twain ever set a foot in the photographic studio or the museum. People who were even more famous than Gandhi and Twain at the time, such as government officials or religious dignitaries, were however photographed together with the Abbots and high-ranking priests, and later received prints as a gesture of reverence.

Two more groups of visitors repeatedly appeared at Mariannhill, and, amongst other thing, had their photographs taken. During the South African War, between 1899 and 1902, a large contingent of British soldiers was stationed at Pinetown Bridge. While on free time, many soldiers came to Mariannhill, to have their photographs taken, or to buy memorabilia. Since the first half of the 19th century, also many Protestant Germans had settled in the nearby Durban townships Westville and New Germany. These communities were partially augmented by "deserters" from Mariannhill, as we will learn later. Members of this community also constituted regular visitors to Mariannhill, to trade or barter with the missionaries, but also to have their photographs taken. A considerable number of named, as well as unidentified portraits of such commercial customers remains in Mariannhill's collection, as well as in the photographic collection of Durban's Berghtheil Museum. The latter institution curates the history, material culture, and photographs of German immigrants to Natal. Since the 1830s, these immigrants have been referred to as the "Cotton Germans" or "Bergtheil Settlers" (Volker 2006). A great part of these settlers came from Protestant Northern Germany, and were thus much closer to the ministers of the nearby Lutheran Berlin Mission than to Catholic Mariannhill. Nevertheless, some of these Protestants still chose the commercial services offered at the monastery, amongst them the photographic studio.

Either a lay brother, who was given permission to speak, or in exceptional cases the abbot himself, served as "guides" for "visitors". In a previous section I introduced the so-called "*Fremdenbuch*", or "visitor's book". The German term "*Fremde*" indicated that the Trappists perceived every secular individual as a "foreigner [*Fremde*]". The term "*Fremde*" for "a person of the world [*Weltperson*]" was clearly established in the Trappist rule (Bonaventura 1887), and

accordingly clearly established the monastic space as being beyond the secular world. The Trappist rule further described the so-called "*Gastwart*" as the mediator between the monastic community and the outside world. He had to make sure that, while leading guests across the premises, they did not enter the private quarters of the monks, and were not to interact with the other monks in any way. These conditions were even stricter regarding gender relations. In one extreme case during the mid-1880s, private quarters had to be fumigated for spiritual cleansing, once a curious female visitor had entered against the guide's advice (Gamble 1976). The two social roles, of guides on the one hand, and visitors on the other, were also clearly established during tours at Mariannhill. Both guests and guides perceived their roles as such and used the respective terms accordingly.

> The stringency of the rule of silence is to a great extent relaxed in the case of the monastic cicerone, who will be found to speak English with tolerable fluency (the majority of the brothers are of German nationality), and to evince a courtesy and intelligence totally foreign to the nature of guides as a class. He bores us with no dry-as-dust particulars reeled off by rote in a dreary unpunctuated monotone, but conducts us over the Monastery buildings with interesting comments and scraps of information by the way, and answers lucidly any reasonable questions we may put to him. (Powell 1899:69, also see Thomas 1894)

Most visitors described their experience in hyperbolic terms early on, either referring to personal interest, or moral appreciation:

> The Trappist establishment at Marionhill [sic] is one which should be seen by everyone visiting Natal. […] He [Abbot Pfanner] devoted three hours to taking me over it, and showing me all the various industries and works which are carried on. […] I came away much interested, and wonderfully impressed with all I had seen in this remarkable institution. (Young 1890:92-94)

It was those visitors' interests (not rarely curious Protestants, attempting to observe and monitor their exotic competitors) that necessitated the monastery's proper self-representation in form of guided tours. The script shared by the guides included all the workshops, the schools, the sister's convent, their sewing workshop, and optionally the industrial buildings at the mill, including the printing press. The visitors reproduced this script in their travelogues, as they had experienced it before. The missionaries themselves also translated the same experience into photographs: each workshop and its inmates were recorded at work, the schools, overviews of the entire mission, landscape scenes of the surroundings, as well as the various mission stations. The visitors could buy those photographs at the end of the tour at the mission's photographic studio, and in this way reassemble the experience in their publications—be they travelogues (eg. Cameron 1913), or newspaper articles (eg. Andrews 1915)—and even send them as postcards.

As I already indicated, the supposedly morally edifying and educational experience of the guided tour was also restricted by particular rules for the visitors. A photograph of the 1890s makes this most explicit. It shows a tree with a notice board nailed to it. The text reads as follows:

Notice

The Monastery can not be visited on Sundays or Church holidays except by special permission of the R. Rev. Abbot. On weekdays the Monastery and shops can be visited from 8-11 am and from 1-4 pm. Visitors are requested not to go alone to the Sisters Convent or the workshops, but only in company of the janitor or of one of the stewards. Without a special permission the Sisters Convent can be visited only from 10-11 and 2-3 daily, never on Sundays.

By order of the R. Rev. Abbot.

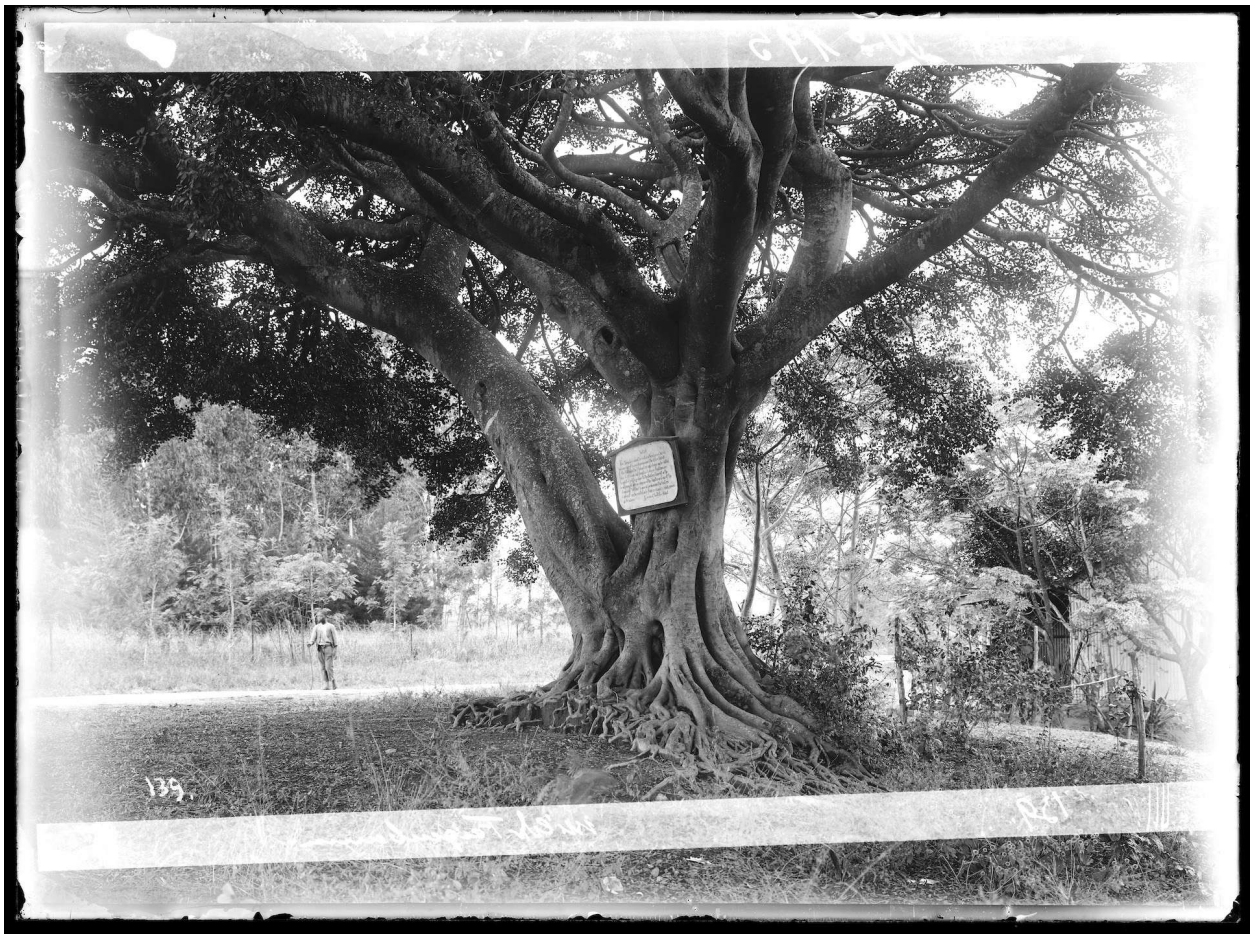


Figure 72: photograph of a note on a tree, which visitors would have passed when entering the compound of Mariannhill, approx. 1890s (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

According to this notice board the guided tour was obligatory. Visitors were thus not allowed to explore the compound individually, not even the workshops, which nevertheless produced commercially for foreign customers. The existing photographs of the workshops always depicted an interaction between a Trappist lay brother and African apprentices, thus emphasising a relationship of education and tutelage (Figure 73). I will analyse this situation in more detail in

Chapter Five according to the objects, which were both produced and photographed in this interaction. Still in 1915, a visitor marvelled with surprise at the performance of the apprentices:

> Mariannhill is, as has already been stated, the workshop for all the mission stations of the Trappists in South Africa.[287] Here the brothers labour with their Kafir assistants, each at his own particular trade, and the class of work turned out by them is in the highest degree creditable. All the shops are brick buildings, a specially large one being devoted to wagon-building, which is the chief industry of the place. In this building and all the others it was interesting to watch the native boys at work, and the skill with which they used the tools was surprising, when it is considered that they are generally represented to possess no ability in trades requiring cunning. (Andrews 1915:51)

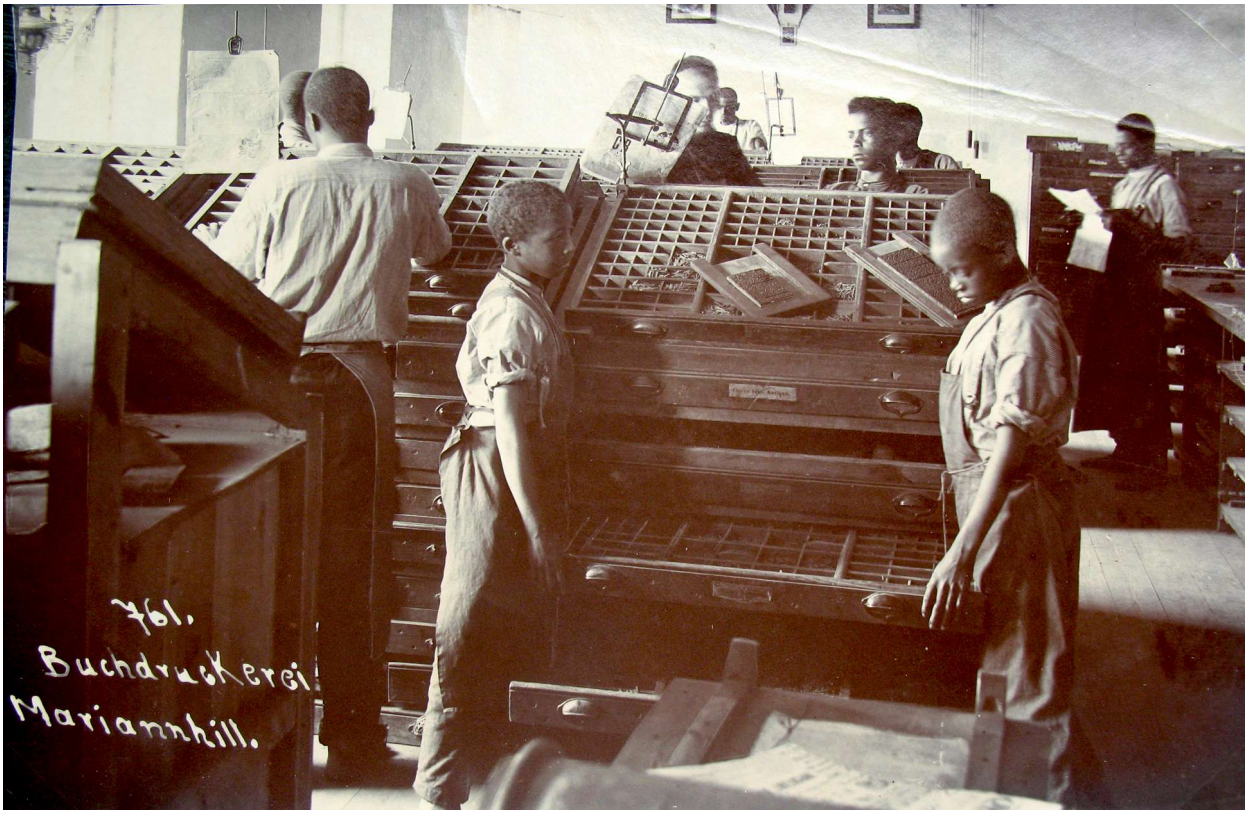


Figure 73: original caption: "*761. Buchdruckerei Mariannhill*"—"print-workshop at Mariannhill", approx. mid-1890s (CMM Archives).

Most remarkable is the fact that I never came across any photographs of the monastery grounds that had been taken by outsiders during the tours under discussion. Only the archives of the Durban Old Court House Museum hold a set of very blurry photographs showing Br. Nivard Streicher, which were maybe, but not necessarily, taken on the ground. It may thus be—even though it cannot be confirmed—that taking photographs was not permitted to visitors. An alternative interpretation may be that visitors never saw the necessity to take any photographs, because they could purchase much better ones at the studio than they were able to take

[287] This is incorrect, most stations had their own workshops, and even their own specialised industries. Centocow, for example, had a reputation for running a successful tree nursery.

themselves. Also the mentioned news reports and travelogues always utilised Mariannhill's photographs, instead of providing their own.

Of course, many private photographic collections, which may have contained such photographs, no longer exist or are difficult to locate. However, the absence of photographs taken on Mariannhill's ground by outsiders may be further explored through at least two collections, which had been collected for strictly private purposes. The first example is the visit of William Waldegrave Palmer, 2nd Earl of Selborne, on 29 October 1908. Palmer was the British High Commissioner to South Africa between 1905 and1910. He visited Mariannhill with a group of members of the South African National Convention, which at the time assembled in Durban. He was photographed with his entourage in the studio, but also outside, together with Br. Nivard Streicher. In 1975, the Museum Africa in Johannesburg purchased one of Palmer's private photographic albums, titled "South African and Family Photographs". It contains photographs labelled as "groups of Zulus", which Palmer had purchased at Mariannhill, but no other photograph at or near the mission.[288] Another private collection of photographs bought at Mariannhill was donated after 1904 to the Linden Museum of Stuttgart by the industrialist Adolf Mayer (cf. Chapter Six). It also contains amateur photographs of a tour through Natal, partially accompanied by Br. Aegidius Müller. However, once more none of these amateur photographs had been taken at the monastery itself.

As previous examples showed, Mariannhill's superiors were most anxious to safeguard the peace and privacy of the religious community, be it against African neighbours or White visitors. Until the separation from the Reformed Cistercians in 1909, the abbots attempted to uphold the image of a contemplative community, while at the same time engaging in the "experiment" of mission. Both of these aspects also had to be reproduced photographically. But for both cases—mission and monastery—the photographic studio never produced any truly "private" photographs in the sense addressed by Geary (1991). Geary of course discusses Protestant missions, and not the hierarchical, celibate, and contemplative setup of Catholic congregations. Mariannhill's mundane life is only presented in staged scenes, showing the community taking walks during pastime, playing croquet or chess, as well as while reading in the cloisters. Also very standardised portrait photographs exist, which may nevertheless have been used for private ends, but would have had to pass the superior's censorship.[289] The monks wore their cassock at all times, and civilian dress only when a member had to enter the public realm with the intention not to be recognised as a Catholic (cf. Gütl 2005:82, 140). All remaining photographs of the community made before the 1920s, must therefore be considered as public images for propaganda and tourism. However, as Geary suggests, one may still consider the private use and readings of such public images, which I attempt throughout the rest of this study.

In their internal German house periodical *Familia*, Mariannhill's members were able to exclusively address their confreres concerning matters of a shared, but still not entirely private

[288] MAJ: MA 1975-2006.

[289] See the passage on Obrecht's regime in the introduction.

interest. In 1911, Br. Otto Mäder addressed the external impression of industrial education and its apparent contradiction to the actual "picture" on the ground:

> On wandering through our workshops in the afternoon, visitors receive the impression of a happy life and of determined labour. The youth attends school in the morning and works in the afternoon. Practical labour indeed, labour which may be equated to a monetary value: in fact, this is the ideal of the modern pedagogue realised: the working-school [*Arbeitsschule*]! However, imagine the visitor would engage with the matter any closer, and ask for example: "How many kafirs have raised themselves to the perfect worker, or to become a master craftsman, after all?—then the great and beautiful picture is dwarfed considerably [*schrumpft zu einem kleinen Bildchen zusammen.*[290] (Mäder 1911:138)

To Mäder's own great disappointment, the past 20 years had merely turned out 20 of such individuals, who indeed mastered the various craftsmanships, in particular their financial and entrepreneurial dimensions. Therefore, in his eyes, the current training was still highly inefficient. This account can be seen as a concerned view of the frontstage, as seen from the backstage. Mäder's concern also brings us back to my discussion of authorship and the question about Black photographers from Chapter One. Like with other craftsmanships, Mariannhill apparently failed to train their protégés in the necessary entrepreneurial skills. Whether this was intentional in the case of photography, as I suggested in Chapter Two, or unintentional, must remain unanswered. Such economic skills would have been essential for Black photographers to accumulate sufficient capital in order to start their own businesses and thus to feed their own photographs into the visual economy I described above.

In the next section I present three very particular tours, which allow for even more nuanced insights into this relationship. The first was given to the German traveller and ethnologist Wilhelm Joest in 1883, the second to the African Chief Lokothwayo ka Manzini in 1903, and the third to the British novelist Rider Haggard in 1914. Due to three particular interests, these accounts do not only describe Mariannhill as a space of its own, but they also invoke the outside that constitutes it as a mission. At the same time, all three accounts question Mariannhill and its common narratives in particular ways.

[290] My own translation from the German original.

"Our Visitors"

Saturday 15. [March 1884]. [I] compliment most dutifully. Rose early + on foot through town to the train + went to Pinetown with Lehmann[291] within 1 1/2 hours. Nice tour, cheerful villas, tall banana and pineapple trees + lush green vegetation. Surroundings of Durban are very swampy. In Pinetown neither wagon nor horses, had breakfast at the "Imperial Hotel", then went on foot across four grass fields to the Trappist Monastery Marianen Hill [sic]. [They have been] there for about one year, have planted beans, corn, sweet potatoes, etc. The Prior Francis [sic, Pfanner] first spoke about the deserters + then showed us the prayer room, carpenter, shoemaker, tailor, photographer, printer, etc. They work like crazy, get up at 2am, prayer is their rest. Now 83 guys [*Kerle*], [they are] eating at the moment, potato mash with dumplings + pumpkin with onions. Then, with 100 degrees in the shade, the guy [Pfanner] dragged us to the place where the new monastery is supposed to be built + to the river, where there is a nice street + soon a mill, tannery, cloth-making with turbines. Almost 2 hours, complete madness. Enraged [we went] back to the monastery + under burning sun we staggered back to Pinetown, where we drank 2 bottles of sparkling wine and 5 sodas. Home, rest, bath, supper at L[ehmann's], a bit tired in the end.

Journal entry by Wilhelm Joest, Saturday, 15. March, 1884.[292]

In early 2012, I first visited the new building of Cologne's museum of ethnology, the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum. Eventually I found myself standing in an exhibition space wherein curators had attempted a reconstruction of Wilhelm Joest's lifeworld. This was done by recreating his actual living room in Berlin, including the ethnographic objects it once contained. The room also boasts a large wall map on which his various journeys around the world are traced with a red line. The line traversing South Africa points inland towards Mariannhill from Joest's 1884 stopover in Durban. Accordingly I investigated his travel publications to confirm whether he may have visited the monastery.

Wilhelm Joest (1852-1897) was a German traveller and ethnologist, well-off due to his father's sugar imperium (Soenius 2003). Born in Cologne, he travelled virtually the entire globe, and eventually moved to Berlin in 1885, where he was tightly connected to the ethnological community, both as a member of Berlin's anthropological society (BGAEU)[293] and through Berlin's ethnographic museum. After his death in 1897, Joest's collection of ethnographic objects, photographs, as well as substantial amounts of money were bestowed on the anthropological society, and later to the newly founded (1906) Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in Cologne, which still carries his name today (cf. Chapter Six). Between 1883 and 1884, Joest travelled through South and East Africa, and published reports on his adventures in various formats. Not only did he write books (1885, 1895), but prior to that sent letters "from the field", which were published in the leading German newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung*,[294] as well as other popular periodicals. The quote above is a very rough, but interestingly colloquial draft of such a newspaper article from Joest's original journal.

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[291] Most likely an affiliate of the German consulate in Durban, under Gustav Mohnhaupt.

[292] My own translation from the German original. I thank Burkhard Fenner of the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, as well as Herrn von Rautenstrauch, for providing me with this passage of Joest's yet unpublished diary. The manuscript is currently in the process of being transcribed by Sabine Eller, who is also working on Joest's biography.

[293] "*Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnographie und Urgeschichte*".

[294] The conservative pro-Bismarck *Kölnische Zeitung* is not to be confused with the pro-Catholic *Kölnische Volkszeitung* (also see Wiese 2013).

Joest was the first ethnologist to visit Mariannhill, and as far as I know also the very first traveller, who wrote an elaborate—and critical—account about having received a tour at Mariannhill. This was at a time when the monks themselves had not yet fully embraced academic ethnology for their own endeavours, and which would not happen for yet another 15 years. While later visitors often remarked on the workshops, the schools, and the museum, Joest was primarily concerned with the previously-described contradiction of an allegedly "contemplative mission" and its impact on the German community in and around Durban. He already noticed a photographic studio at Mariannhill, but did not state whether he bought any photographs at Mariannhill, or even took his own.[295] It is unlikely that he was able to buy any photographs at Mariannhill, as an article in the *Natal Mercury* mentioned two years later that "the photographic establishment [at Mariannhill] has not yet produced much, owing to the deterioration of the chemicals brought out from Europe" (Anon. 1885:3). But Joest purchased commercial images for his later publications elsewhere in Natal, and also took his own. He lamented, however, that taking photographs was still arduous for the private traveller at the time, up to a point where it became impossible: moving around proper (scientific) photographic equipment from the harbour was difficult, due to the implementation of taxes and the resulting costs for transport (Joest 1895:218). Considering that Joest indeed had considerable funds, one can imagine that it was even less likely for other travellers to take high quality photographs, at least until the 1890s when light-weight and hand-held cameras became widely available.

As Joest was travelling and writing just before the Berlin Congo Conference, where European powers negotiated the division of the African continent, his efforts of publication have to be seen in the light of the pro-colonial editorship of the *Kölnische Zeitung*. Along with the establishment of a German colonial programme, the Bismarck regime developed an antagonism against Catholic institutions, generally referred to as "*Kulturkampf* [Culture War]" since the early 1870s, lasting officially until 1879. In 1873, the medical doctor, (physical) anthropologist, and politician, Rudolph Virchow, coined the term *Kulturkampf* in the German parliament. Virchow not only influenced the matter under discussion as politician, but also as medical doctor, as well as an anthropologist. In 1868 he had co-founded the BGAEU together with Adolf Bastian (cf. Chapter Six). For Mariannhill the struggle of the Culture War obviously had reverberations until the First World War, as I pointed out in the last chapter in regard to articles in Mariannhill's own periodicals. The Cologne area in particular was a contested ground with an almost equal distribution of Catholics and Protestants. Like Joest, also Pfanner had a stake in the area. This was the nearby Trappist Abbey Mariawald, where Pfanner had entered the congregation as a novice in 1863 (cf. Gütl 2017).

Like several other German ethnologists, Joest had an outspokenly critical and strongly nationalist political opinion. During his travels, Joest compiled a report on newspapers and magazines in the German language outside of Europe, in which he listed Mariannhill's

[295] Fritz Graebner, curator at Cologne's Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum since 1906, would buy a photographic set from Mariannhill in 1910 (see Chapter Six).

Vergißmeinnicht as one of only two German periodicals for the entire African continent: he stressed that while the language is German, the *Vergißmeinnicht* itself is not "German" (1888:14). He did not elaborate on reasons why he disliked the periodical, but targeted it for being inherent Catholic propaganda. In the final version of his report on Mariannhill in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, Joest strongly criticised the situation of personnel, and especially the "deserters" coming from Mariannhill in economic destitution. According to him, they "harassed" the European community around Durban, and put its German-speaking citizens in a bad light.

Gütl (2005) indicates that former Mariannhill members substantially fuelled the German communities of the area. While indeed many novices were recruited over the years, as many left the congregation after only short periods, and either made their way back to Europe, or stayed in South Africa. For example, the earlier-mentioned photographer Fr. Desiderius Fresen in 1896, and the linguist Fr. Theoderich Sonnen 10 years later, decided to stay and had themselves naturalised (cf. Chapter One). As Gütl shows, the monastery was a refuge for adventurers, eccentrics, but also for characters with a criminal past. At the same time, the monastery was also a refuge for outsiders of African communities, who made the decision to exchange their situation of straddling between a rural life and the encroaching temptations and hazards of urban modernities, by becoming *Amakholwa*—converts to Christianity.

According to a chain of accusations by Joest, Pfanner had lured young men to South Africa under the pretence of becoming missionaries, not making them fully aware what it meant to become a Trappist Monk (Joest 1885). Joest wrote that Mariannhill's agents in Europe had appealed to potential novices by arguing that they could not live their Catholicism in a Germany that maintained the laws of the Culture Wars, and that South Africa would therefore be a much better alternative. As novices were recruited directly for Mariannhill Monastery itself, they never went through a noviciate in Europe before the First World War, as was the case with other mission congregations. Eventually, Pfanner responded to Joest's letter in Mariannhill's periodical[296] under the headline "*Unsere Besucher* [Our Visitors]" (Pfanner 1884a). In his idiosyncratic and polemic style, Pfanner turned Joest's critique into a confirmation of his own approach: indeed, the monastery was a place of discipline and order, and those who were unfit had to leave. Joest again responded in his book *Um Afrika* (1885) by ridiculing Pfanner as a fanatic.

In an early chronicle of Mariannhill, written during the 1890s, Pfanner's long-time secretary, Fr. Joseph Biegner, recalled that "it was in October of 1884 that a Freemason Africa traveller published a defamatory article in the Jewish paper *Kölnische Zeitung*, and denigrated our collecting brother [*Sammelbruder*],[297] saying that he would mislead young people to emigrate. This made the police alert in entire Germany, so that the brother could no longer move around safely, neither in Germany, nor in Austria; therefore all other collecting brothers were

[296] At the time called *Der Trappist unter den Kaffern*.

[297] Several lay brothers were dispatched to Europe and the US for the sole purpose of propaganda and collecting of alms, as early as the mid-1880s. They were referred to as "*Sammelbrüder*" (cf. Gütl 2005:322-329, Wendl 1998).

much restricted as well".[298] Joest had indeed pointed out that the German government should not lose sight of the Trappist agents, in the same way that it confronted all other emigration agents. As a direct outcome of the correspondence between Joest and Pfanner, the periodical *Der Trappist unter den Kaffern* was renamed *Vergissmeinnicht aus Mariannhill* in 1885. According to Biegner, this adaptation intended to draw away the attention of the German authorities from the Trappists (Biegner 1898).

This episode clearly shows the impact of, and the sentiments caused by religious periodicals at the time, and also the alertness of several social actors to European issues. It also shows the particular *préterrain* that facilitated visits to Mariannhill and how these were eventually written up (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999). Biegner's strong language again illustrates his defensiveness within the entanglement of media, religion, and politics. In 1884, when Pfanner explained his strategy to civilise Africans in the periodical *Der Trappist unter den Kaffern*, he even considered it necessary to call upon his Catholic audience not to circulate the periodical any further, in order to prevent the "Protestant ministers and Freemasons" around Durban from foiling his plans (Pfanner 1884). Also Mariannhill's superiors after Pfanner saw themselves under much external pressure, and thus took efforts to rework the monastery's standing in South Africa, as well as in Europe. These antagonisms expressed themselves not only in a very conscious self-representation through photographs in the periodicals, but also in the construction of the monastic space itself. The missionaries consciously positioned photographs and various other material objects collected or produced at the mission, in order to establish themselves between their African subjects and their various national and international audiences. Therefore we must consider the fact that the monastic guides led visitors along a spatially and thematically prescribed and continually adjusted narrative. The self-fashioning through the museum and the "material culture" it accumulated, will be one of the arguments in Chapter Five.

But visitors to Mariannhill were not only well-faring and opinionated Europeans. At the same time, those people whom the visitors observed and discussed during tours, were not only "pious monks" or "laborious converts". Also Africans who had not (yet) converted, often visited the station to look for work, to barter, and obviously to be photographed. There are no indications whether Africans themselves ever took the initiative to have their photographs taken and to acquire them, or whether the photographer approached them to sit for portraits in the studio in exchange for a compensation. It is also uncertain whether they were aware of the future use to which their portraits were put in the mission periodicals. I would be surprised, however, if African sitters had not succeeded to procure and circulate amongst themselves photographs, as well as volumes of the *Kalender* and the *Vergißmeinnicht*, if only to look at images of nearby and faraway places.

In 1903, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch, the later superior of Centocow Mission, attended to the visit of the recently inaugurated Chief Lokothwayo ka Manzini to Mariannhill. Hanisch attended to his guest, first in person, and later in writing. Lokothwayo had just been acknowledged by the

[298] My own translation from the German original (Biegner 1898).

government as chief of the *Amanganga* on 1 February 1900. Under the headline "*Ein Hoher Besuch* [An Important Visitor]", Hanisch reported in the *Vergißmeinnicht:*

> At the appointed hour, the announced guest arrived on horseback in the company of a servant. He is a portly figure, a real Zulu, maybe 25 years of age. He wore European dress, which was however void of any royal decoration. Only a big silver medal, with an image of the English Monarch that he wore on his left side, could arouse the suspicion that one was dealing with a person of "royal blood". Ears, neck, and hands were, following Kafir custom, adorned with shining brass rings.[299] (Hanisch 1903:29)

The monarch on the silver medal must have been King Edward VII. In 1901, Magistrate Henrique C. Shepstone had informed all district chiefs and headmen of Queen Victoria's passing, and of the King's succession.[300] King Edward's formal coronation ceremony took place on 9 August 1902. Either magistrates circulated the medal for the occasion, or Lokothwayo purchased it by his own conviction. Eventually, he chose to wear it for his visit to the monastery, and may have performed a sympathy with the fellow British ruler due to the temporal proximity of their inauguration. Even if Africans supposedly lived on the alleged periphery of European settlements, popular imagery was clearly a part of their daily life, and they were therefore active consumers of South Africa's "image world" (cf. Geary 2002:20), and thus active participants in the respective "visual economy" (Poole 1997).

In his report on the tour, Hanisch described how Lokothwayo had encountered attractions, of which some where performed especially for the occasion of his visit: at the school Lokothwayo encountered the children of his own subjects, while they were taught by a missionary. At the sleeping quarters he exclaimed that "there are probably more Zulus with the *amaRoma* [ie. Roman Catholics] than are still left outside". Then both men attended to a prepared lunch break, where "one could once more observe how much the stomach of a Kafir can take". As Lokothwayo was constantly in awe, he had to be frequently "admonished" to continue the "survey", so Hanisch, in order to include everything that was there to be seen. On observing Black employees at the workshops, Lokothwayo wondered whether it was really possible that people "in a black skin like himself" could achieve all this? He then admired the cleanliness at the girl's school and its dining hall, where one of the pupils taught him how to use a spoon. On to the sewing workshops of the women, where he wondered whether this was real after all, "for how was such speed of production possible"?

Hanisch pointed out Lokothwayo's alleged shortcomings (gluttony, distraction, unfamiliarity with "modern" material culture) in the ironic style common to the periodicals. Eventually, he presents Lokothwayo in an apparent paradox: overwhelmed with all the features of an industrial modernity, the Lokothwayo of Hanisch's narrative doubted his own capacities, and thus implicitly suggested his own "lack of civilisation". More than in any other account on or by Mariannhill, this particular tour, as well as its description, presents Mariannhill's industrial

[299] My own translation from the German original.

[300] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/14-UD_98/1901: letter, Shepstone to Principal Under Secretary, 30.01.1901 (Henrique C. Shepstone was the eldest son of Theophilus Shepstone).

compound as a civilising exhibition and implement. Assuming that the quotes by Lokothwayo are indeed literal to some degree, this account provides us at least with a glimpse of Lokothwayo's perception of a division of spaces: of an inside, as well as an outside to the mission station. It is unknown whether Lokothwayo ever visited the museum, or even had his photograph taken at the studio; it is at least not narrated in Hanisch's story, and no photographs of the occasion exist. As I explain in the next Chapter, Lokothwayo had already been photographed during an earlier occasion in the 1890s. In 1903, Lokothwayo was photographed once more; this time in a martial, but highly honorary pose with spear and loincloth, probably at his own homestead, only a short while after his visit to the monastery in 1902 (cf. Chapter Eight). In both cases I will attempt to reconstruct parts of the photographic occasion by involving the colonial *préterrain*, in order to better understand the outcome of photographic traditions; in Chapter Eight I will do this in particular regarding Lokothwayo's construction as both chief and warrior, as well as for the related case of a so-called *isangoma*, or "witch doctor".

Since the 1880s, the British novelist Henry Rider Haggard had been highly influential in the construction of these two figures.[301] Touring South Africa as a member of the Dominions Royal Commission in 1914, Haggard also visited Mariannhill. On 2 May 1914, he arrived at the monastery together with Guy V. Essery, the magistrate of Pinetown. Once Essery had signed into the guest book at the entrance gate, they followed the common tour along the workshops. They were guided by Fr. Willibald Wanger, who had returned to Mariannhill as an "Oblate" in 1909, after his exclaustration and his ensuing adventures in Mozambique since 1907 (cf. Chapter One). Over lunch, Wanger and Haggard had an extended conversation:

> We lunched at the nunnery where a dear old lady served us a most excellent repast and here I had a most enjoyable conversation with Fr. Wanger, who is a great student of native law and history. He told me a very strange witch story. A deceased brother, a Pole, who investigated such matters, visited an old witch-doctress in the neighbourhood, one of those who say that they are inspired by a 'whispering spirit'. He put to her some questions in Polish. She listened and went through her invocations, which were accompanied by a whistling noise, proceeding apparently from the roof of the hut. Then to the father's utter amazement she proceeded to answer his *Polish* questions perfectly rationally and in good Zulu, prefacing her replies with the statement 'My Lords, the spirits say' etc. Fr. Wanger's conclusion about the whole matter is the same as that of Gen. Joubert, that the Devil is at the bottom of it, and that those who attribute all these native witchcraft manifestations to fraud are very much mistaken. (Haggard and Coan 2000:237)

The conversations recorded during this visit likewise reproduced the polarisation of an inside and an outside to the mission. Mariannhill's periodicals usually either exposed magical practice as a hoax, or they presented it in fictional stories. But occasionally the "heathen magic of Africa" was presented as real. Haggard himself had promoted various South African stereotypical figures,

[301] Haggard had served as government secretary in Natal between 1875-82, and eventually built his literary career on this experience. Haggard's diaries of his 1914 South Africa journey were edited and published in 2000 by Stephen Coan. The only rough hand-written notes Haggard made during the visit to Mariannhill Monastery were: "glass shop – stained glass made / photographic studio – museum" (Personal communication Stephen Coan, 2012). This at least indicates Haggard's initial interests, even if he did not transfer them adequately to the final manuscript of his diary.

such as the "Zulu warrior" and the *isanusi* or *isangoma.*[302] But when writing novels, which were explicitly fictional, he never had to convince readers whether African supernatural powers were real or not (cf. Pels 1998).

At the same time, however, both opinions co-existed with Mariannhill missionaries. Fr. Willibald Wanger belonged to the fraction of "believers", and was convinced that it was the devil who had enabled the "witch-doctress" with supernatural perception. At least so he told Haggard and wrote himself in Mariannhill's periodicals, where on several occasions he attributed strange occurrences to supernatural causes and presented them as real. Also Mariannhill's former member A.T. Bryant was amongst those who could not explain some of their experiences with Africans, and thus attributed them to the supernatural. Some of their confreres, such as Br. Aegidius Müller, instead did their best to reveal such practices as fraud, as we shall see in Chapter Eight. These two seemingly incompatible viewpoints, however, were published in the periodicals interchangeably. In order to translate such practices for a European audience, Müller, for example, compared African magic exactly to the kind of European "believers" (such as Haggard himself) who were often referred to as "spiritists" at the time. This double-view, involving the revelation of magic as real in some cases, and its unmasking as fraud in others, is symptomatic of the historical necessity to reaffirm faith in a constant representational movement between fiction and reality (cf. Chapter Eight).

The purpose of anticipating these constructions at this point, is to show that particular views, either by a politically inclined ethnologist on the missionaries, by an African Chief on the missionaries, or the views of a novelist on both Africans and missionaries, were co-produced in specific situated conversations, or "ethnographic occasions" (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999). In particular the manuscripts of Joest and Haggard—not yet refined for publication—lend themselves to such a reading. The monastery was frequented by Africans, tourists, curious neighbours, commercial customers, as well as government officials and committees. These interacted with the monks, their subjects and objects on the ground, observed interactions, commented on misdeeds or achievements, and eventually consumed produce. As Rider Haggard recalled about his visit to Mariannhill's workshops in 1914:

> The ingenuity of these good monks is great; they make everything from terracotta plaques and high-class saddlery down to articles such as boys' and ladies' belts manufactured from the skins of snakes and iguanas whereof I purchased a selection as presents, one of which is the beautiful tobacco pouch I am using at this moment. […] These monks are doing a great work among the natives. All success to them. They wear upon their faces that air of goodness which comes to those who in an utterly unselfish spirit devote their lives to the moral and physical elevation of the ignorant and the fallen. The sight of them and the contemplation of the fruits of their labours makes poor worldlings like myself feel ashamed. They do so much, we so little. (Haggard and Coan 2000:237-38)

The experience of the tour endowed narratives on mission-produced objects with a particular quality of social relations. As (narrated) souvenirs they even were able to carry this experience elsewhere. As becomes clear in Haggard's narrative, particular African-produced consumer

[302] Alternatively referred to as "witch finder" or "witch doctor".

goods became souvenirs in the course of the tour, and were associated with acts of charity (cf. Foster 2008). I will discuss such endowments in relation to objects collected for Mariannhill's museum in more detail in Chapter Five. The tour, its subjects, objects, and photographs became involved in modes of representation that inflected the inside and outside of the monastery in various ways, partially depending on the interest and intentions of the respective visitor, and not always to the liking of the missionaries themselves. The guided tour thus constituted polarised representations of Africans: on the one hand manifested by the experience and photographic representation of "civilised" Africans capable of work, and on the other hand manifested with the help of photographs and objects of "primitive" heathens. The next section shows how these photographs became commodities and eventually part of an international visual economy through the institution of the photographic studio.

"The Photographic Studio Mariannhill near Pinetown—Portraits and Photos of every Kind and Size"

Not of lesser interest was the *photographic studio*, in which is mirrored, as it were, the great work of Mariannhill in its entirety, half of Natal, the mission, as well as monastic life. The distinguished guests did not only take along a rich selection of photographs, but they even used the opportunity to have their photograph taken together with the Abbot [Obrecht] and the Trappist priests, who were present at the time. The end of the interesting tour was a brief visit to our extensive *museum*, as well as the new *hospital*, which is equipped with all practicalities.[303] (Anon. 1907:201)



Figure 74: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Gouverneur u[nd] Gruppe 30/1 09*". Sir Matthew Nathan, Governor of Natal, and his entourage, together with Br. Nivard Streicher, 30 January 1909 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

In 1907, the *Vergißmeinnicht* described the experience of a visit to Mariannhill Monastery by Prince Joachim Albrecht of Prussia. The photographic studio was an inherent part of the script for the mission's guided tour, and often one of the last spaces visitors entered: here they could

[303] My own translation from the German original. Italics as they appear in the original.

sample views from all the missions, including Centocow. Not only could they literally *re-collect* what they had just seen at the monastery, and purchase in the form of photographs, but they could further manifest the experience of the visit by having their own photograph taken. The photograph above shows the Governor of Natal, Sir Matthew Nathan and his entourage together with Br. Nivard Streicher. Not only had they been given a tour by Br. Nivard, but they were photographed, and at the same time engaged with other available visual material in the studio (cf. Chapter Six).

Even if visitors would never retrace the vast network of the often remote mission stations in person, they could here at least witness it in form of photographs. The studio was the very hub of image production for Mariannhill's endeavours in South Africa, as every glass plate negative, once exposed, had to return here to be chemically fixated, developed, and eventually to be stored. The positive prints were likewise produced here and then stored in form of albums and cabinet cards. Alternatively, they were sent to Mariannhill's printing press, to be used for the periodicals, at the same time sold to visitors, or dispatched by mail order.

Next to White South African or European tourists, also Africans were among these visitors on a regular basis. Whether they were paid models or paying customers, and what their intentions and agencies would have been in both cases, can no longer be fully clarified. I will nevertheless discuss such questions of performance at the end of the next chapter. White customers instead often described their experiences in later accounts. They marvelled not only at the photographs of Africans on display, but at the studio itself as an extraordinary institution. Rev. Frederick C. Kolbe, editor of the *South African Catholic Magazine*, recalled his visit in 1895:

> At the photographic studio I was supplied with some excellent studies of native faces and customs—a picture of one woman, over a hundred years old, showing more wrinkles than I had ever thought possible to find upon one human form. They have also been careful to multiply copies of Bushman paintings found on one of their estates. Such photographs provide interesting souvenirs for the benefactors of the mission in Germany. (Kolbe 1895:332-333)

An anonymous correspondent of the local newspaper *The Natal Witness* reported in 1904 that

> Mariannhill boasts a photographic studio the same as any town, where visitors may be photographed. It is fitted with every convenience, and stocked with views taken at the different stations, some of them being exceedingly good, especially the enlargements. They include various scenes taken near the station, and a well assorted collection of Kafir pictures. Altogether there are about 900 of these pictures kept in stock. (Anon. 1904)

Still in 1913, the British travel writer Charlotte Cameron commented that

> [t]he photographic gallery should not be missed, as here one discovers hundreds of interesting views, and intimate knowledge of the Kaffir homelife. (Cameron 1913:157)

In 1891, the exposed plates at Mariannhill's studio numbered 200, as recorded in an inventory of all the workshops of the same year. The "900 […] pictures kept in stock" mentioned above in

1904 would have meant an increase of only 700 plates within 13 years. Considering both the propagandistic and commercial production, such a minor increase is unlikely. I therefore suggest that the correspondent of *The Witness* was only writing about the commercially available photographs on display. However, the majority of photographs was indeed only taken after the studio's professionalisation in 1894, and even more since Müller started running the studio in late 1897. It is thus crucial to realise how Mariannhill's photographic studio distinguished itself from many other local studios: it was not simply a portrait studio, but instead also maintained and expanded its stock of photographs, which documented its surroundings according to conventional artistic standards.

A randomly filed note came into my hands one day when working in the archives of Mariannhill's Generalate in Rome. Müller had scribbled it on a small sheet of paper, possibly during the last year of his life at St. Mary's Hospital in 1920: "My testament is in the locked drawer at the photographic studio, where the money is stored. [signed] *Jos. Müller Br. Aegidius*".[304] As he stored a very private document with the studio's money in a locked drawer, we may conclude that he was the only person who had access to it. Even if the heirs and the nature of the inheritance remain unknown, the note indicates that Müller managed his own finances, and therefore ran the studio independently.

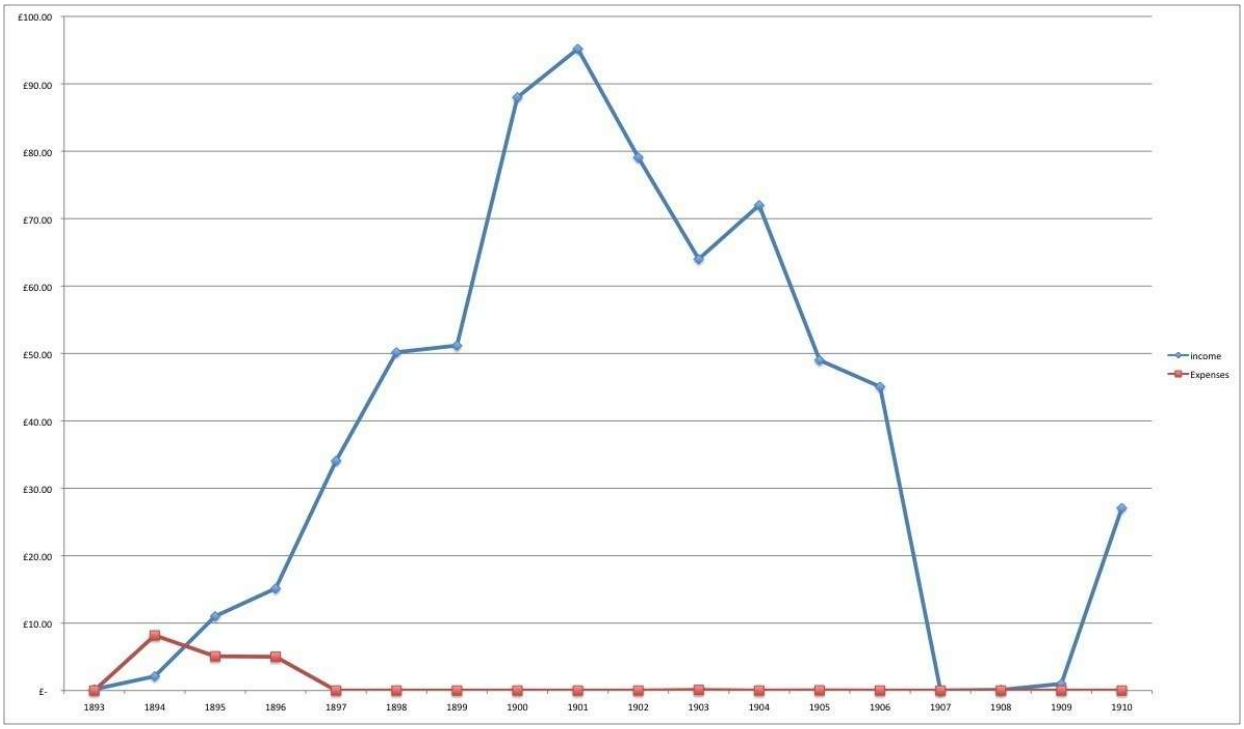


Figure 75: chart of the photography studio's income (blue), and expenses (red), as recorded in the accounting books at Mariannhill Monastery.

In 1889, Mariannhill's press anonymously published a small booklet for internal use, titled:

[304] My own translation from the German original.

Anleitung zur Buchführung für Mariannhill und die Filialen. These instructions for accounting coincided with Müller's arrival, who was, according to the register of personnel, the only member trained as an accountant at the time. As "*vestarius"* he was also responsible for the distribution of goods and clothing amongst the monastery's members since 1889. It is therefore likely that he compiled this booklet, which intended to explain to the superiors of the monastery and the outstations how goods, value and finances had to be understood and written up. The chart above (Figure 75) displays the photographic studio's income and expenses, which I extracted from the accounting books, the monastery's so-called "*Cassabücher*". These books still exist for the period between 1893 and 1922, and constitute the general record of the monastery's financial returns and investments. Items recorded here are as big and general as, for example, the entire income of the store of Centocow for one month, or as small and personal as a single hat, which Br. Aegidius Müller purchased in November 1897 for 9 Pennies, just after having started at the studio. The records of the individual accounts of each workshop no longer exist, and annual stocktaking inventories of the workshops only remain for the year 1891.

Reading the chart of the photographic studio's income and expenses (Figure 75) shows that the monastery initially invested in the studio, especially in 1894, when the new building was set up. Already by 1895 the studio seems to have produced enough revenue to support itself. The sums indicated in the chart are thus only the annual *gains* returned to the monastery, not the total *income*. The latter would have been registered in the studio's individual accounting book. Even if the studio appears to have been financially independent, the monastery still occasionally paid for custom fees and fines for photographic paper and equipment. Most of these goods arrived together with other purchases from Germany, from where the monastery also imported most of the equipment for all of its workshops. The photographers, for example, purchased glass plate negatives exclusively from German companies. These were stored in their original boxes until 2012: J.F. Schippang (Berlin), Richard Jahr (Dresden), Kapim (München), Agfa (Berlin), Westendorp & Wekner (Köln), only to name a few of the brands used over the years.

Müller had more freedom than any other member of the monastery, as the Trappist priests and brothers had to be given dispensations by their superior or abbot for every action diverging from the rule. Unlike his Trappist confreres, Müller could also dispose of his own finances. As several payments in the accounting books indicate, he had an account with the monastery, which would for example give out money for his hospital sojourns. The accounting books also indicate that he invested money in Germany, possibly with, or for relatives. He also appears as the only member in the financial register, who had (recorded) subscriptions to at least two German newspapers, the *Kölner Volkszeitung* and the *Augsburger Postzeitung*. Müller's financial independence, the fact that he was not a Trappist monk, and in particular his position as photographer, made possible and even obliged an engagement with worldly media and matters. This also involved travelling throughout Natal and East Griqualand, in order to photograph at the mission stations.

Not much literature exists on 19th century photographic studios on the African continent

as commercial and aestheticising businesses. Amongst others, the two edited volumes by Wendl and Behrend (1998), and by Saint Leon and Fall (1999), as well as the two recent studies by Haney (2010) and Schneider (2011) discuss cases in West and East Africa. They even traced Black African professional photographers, who established themselves before 1900. However, most analysis quickly jumps to professional photographers beyond the 1920s. Only Schneider (2011) discusses the period between the 1840s and 1890s for West Africa. I still hesitate to make comparisons to a South African case between the 1880s and 1914. No literature exists which discusses the economic situations of South African photographic studios in detail, apparently due to a general lack of related sources. Overviews on South African photography (see Introduction) do not deal with Natalian studios in any detail. Also Webb (1992), who writes explicitly about photographs from Natal, draws conclusions from literature on studios elsewhere. In the remaining pages of this chapter and the next I make an attempt to connect the economic, practical, and performative traces that remain for the case of Mariannhill's studio.

The fact that a Catholic monastery had a photographic studio along with its other workshops is a curiosity, but not a novelty. As I explained in the introduction, the Trappist Abbey at Staouéli in Algeria had a photographic studio already by the 1860s. The studio at Mariannhill contributed substantially to the monastery's income, as an analysis of the financial records between 1893 and 1922 showed. To examine the relative total value in comparison to other economic factors at Mariannhill, a more extensive study, including all workshops, the more than 20 mission stations, and various other factors would be necessary, which cannot be provided here.

Despite extensive inquiries, I was not able to trace any official registration of the studio with public authorities. The Umlazi Magistracy did monitor businesses in the area, but listings of local industries never mention the photographic studio. Industries that were recorded for Mariannhill in a screening during 1904, were a "Jamery [?], Bricks, Carpentry/Joinery, Corn Mill, Blacksmith & Wagons, Bookbinding".[305] Photography instead is not exactly an "industry", and smaller service-workshops in the margins of bigger cities, between Pietermaritzburg and Durban may not have been ranking high among the magistracy's interests. It also appears that advertising for the studio and other workshops was unnecessary: even if the studio's cabinet cards had individualised and elaborately decorated versos, the photographers never placed any adverts in popular business registers, such as the *Natal Almanac*, or local illustrated magazines, such as the *Pictorial Mercury*.

When Müller took on the business in 1897, the commercial register *Natal Almanac* listed six professional photographic studios in Durban. The studios are listed according to the name of the proprietor. Their number had already doubled by 1899, according to the same register. Pietermaritzburg even had eight photographers in 1897. By 1917, Durban still had 11 studios, by now with more marketable names, such as "Empire Studio", or "Rembrandt Studio". The number of studios in Pietermaritzburg, on the contrary, had dwindled to merely four. The demand

[305] DUR: 1_UMB-3_1_20-1904.

for more studios in Durban may be explained by the fact that it had always been a harbour town and trading hub.

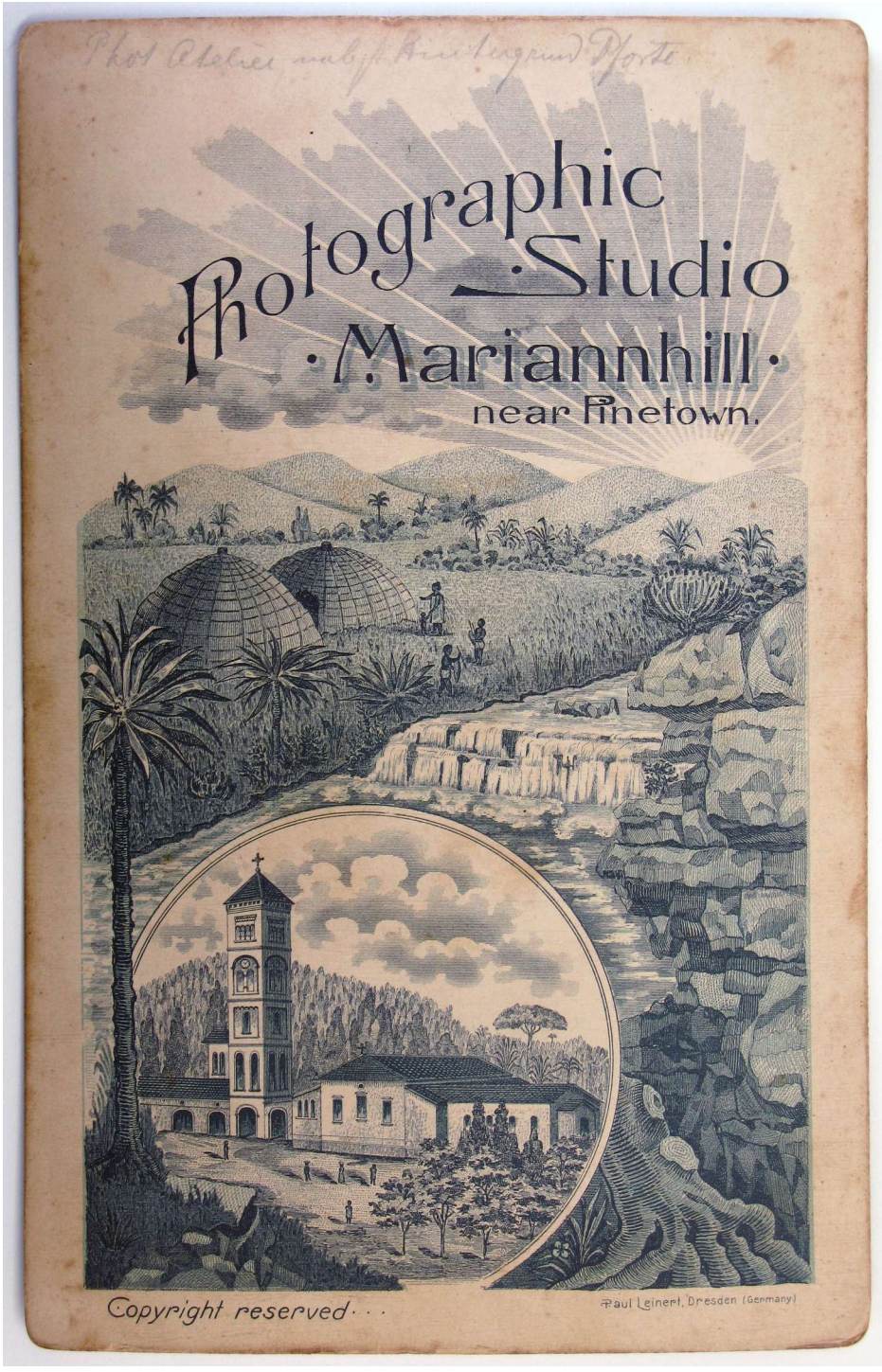


Figure 76: "Photographic Studio Mariannhill near Pinetown. Copyright reserved … Paul Leinert, Dresden (Germany)". Verso of a cabinet card, as sold at Mariannhill Monastery, approx. 1905 (CMM Archives).

Over the years, the studio used a variety of differently decorated cabinet cards, which differed in size, colour and the amount of information, either on its front or verso. It is difficult to say which cabinet cards dominated, as the current collection does no longer represent the entire distribution of the historical production. The decorated versos of Mariannhill's cabinet cards referred to the studio throughout as "The Photographic Studio Mariannhill near Pinetown". An earlier version than the one reproduced here, also promised that the studio was able to supply "Portraits and Photos of Every Kind and Size". The elaborate design of the cabinet cards involving a depiction of the monastery and its surroundings (Figure 76) was only introduced after 1904, once Mariannhill's bell tower (or *campanile*) had been raised in the course of 1903. Once more, the cabinet card shows the monastic ground as a space amidst a pristine landscape, including an African homestead. The card's design renders the monastic ground distinct by inserting it within a circle. While the provider of photographic equipment, Paul Leinert in Dresden, manufactured the printed cartons, we may assume that the graphic design—or at least parts of it—had been provided by one of Mariannhill's artists.[306] Müller considered it necessary to introduce a "Copyright Reserved…" in the carton's lower left corner, in order to indicate the studio's legal rights over the images.[307] Evidence, which I present in Chapter Six, indicates that the inscription was introduced around 1905, as a result of Müller's own experience with, and growing anxiety about copyright infringements. The publishers of the monastery's periodicals were already conscious of the circulation and impact of their photographs by the early 1890s, and occasionally commented on this in the periodicals. On one occasion, for example, the *Vergißmeinnicht* found that the Catholic youth periodical *Das Heidenkind* had republished their photographs and used "misleading" captions (Anon. 1894:15). However, as the Mission Benedictines of St. Ottilien in East Africa were not considered a competing institution, the *Vergißmeinnicht* only asked for correction, and not for compensation.

Photographs, produced at the studio between the 1880s and 1939, were standardised commercial commodities, and sold in various forms: either as single prints in form of cabinet cards, as postcards, and even in picture frames. For sales over greater distances, such as to Europe, Müller sent photographs without any stabilising carrier, in order to save weight. Once in Europe, so he advised his customers, "only a professional photographer" should fixate the thin photographic paper on a cardboard carrier.[308] The standard price for the conventional format of cabinet cards around 1900 was 1 Shilling[309] in South Africa, or 45-50 *Pfennige*[310] in Germany. The South African price could be calculated from single payments in the accounting books,

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306 Leinert advertised his services in the journal *Photographische Chronik*, to which Müller had a subscription. For an introduction to advertising on photographic versos in Austria and Germany see Starl (1981, 2009), and for the case of West and Central Africa see Schneider (2016).

307 Due to the business of their printing press, the Mariannhill Trappists were well aware that they dealt with British copyright law. However, no photographs have ever been registered with the Stationery Office in London. The German "*Urheberrecht*" instead did not rely on the registration of a photograph.

308 See my discussion of Müller's correspondence with Felix von Luschan and J.D.E. Schmeltz in Chapter Six.

309 12 Cents equalled 1 Shilling. 20 Shillings equalled 1 Pound.

310 100 *Pfennige* equalled 1 *Reichsmark*.

divided by the number of sold photographs, while the German price is derived from sales to ethnographic museums, which I discuss in Chapter Six.

The studio sold at least two formats around 1900, which Müller described as "*Cabinet*" (approx. 10.2 cm x 16.2 cm) and "*Doppel-Cabinet*" (approx. 13.4 cm x 21.7 cm). By the 1880s, the *Cabinet* format had replaced the *Carte de Visite* format, which was about half the size of cabinet cards (cf. Starl 2009:21). On one occasion in 1899, Müller sold the smaller cabinet cards for approximately 45 *Pfennige* and the double-cabinet format for approximately 65 *Pfennige*.[311] An incident, often referred to as the "*Stuttgarter Fall* [Stuttgart case]", had just collapsed prices for photographs when Müller started his business. In October 1897, the journal *Über Land und Meer*, published by the *Stuttgarter Verlagsgesellschaft*, had introduced dumping prices for the reproduction of photographic prints, and in April 1898 photographic studios in Berlin's department stores followed by selling a dozen cabinet cards for 4,80 Mark, which was less than half of the earlier price (Hoerner 1989:86-88, 110-112). The "Stuttgart case" also reinvigorated the question about copyright and authorship, which I discussed in Chapter One. Customers now considered to have their photographs reproduced by big companies, instead of the photographic studios where their portraits had been taken in the first place. Mariannhill's business was well informed regarding the prices handled in Germany, and quickly responded and adjusted to the many dimensions of the European photographic economy at large. I will return to this case, and in particular to issues of reproduction and copyrights at the end of Chapter Six, where I discuss issues of circulation and the reception of Mariannhill's photographs with European museums.

Most of the studio's sitters were thus local or foreign customers, visiting Mariannhill as a tourist destination, to trade at the various workshops, or only to visit the photographic studio. They could buy "ethnographic" types (cf. Chapter Six), views of the monastery and its community and outstations, but they could also have their own portraits taken. It is thus plausible that the price for the first photograph, including the service of *taking* it, was at least three times higher than additional prints.[312] The purchase of a photograph, and in particular having one's own photographs taken, would therefore have been a greater investment for some people. The price for a single photographic print at the time was 1 Shilling, while one could, for example, buy a pig at Mariannhill for 5 Shillings. This price may have excluded some visitors (Black *and* White) from buying photographs. It seems likely that photographs of Africans, such as the one of Lokothwayo's brother Bulawayo (Figure 96), were made in the first place (from the perspective of the photographer) for commercial sale and for using them in the propaganda periodicals. This does of course not exclude the idea that African sitters themselves purchased copies, or received them for free. It is difficult to say what a Black worker earned at, or near, Mariannhill around 1900. For paid labour the accounting books neither recorded the specific nature of the work

[311] NMVWNMVW: letter, Müller to Schmeltz, 24.08.1899. The cards were slightly more expensive than on the contemporary German market, even though Müller claimed that he did not even make a profit on the sale. Instead he considered it as a contribution to science (cf. Chapter Six).

[312] This is at least a logic that common price lists of contemporary German studios suggest, such as the one of the Munich "Studio Elvira" from 1906 (cf. Herz and Bruns 1985).

carried out, nor its duration. Only in few cases can the actual value be estimated, when for example in 1894 a Black man was paid one shilling for guiding two religious sisters from Pinetown to the monastery, or when in 1906 Mariannhill's *Amakholwa induna*, Joseph Phewa, received a monthly salary of 10 Shillings.[313] It is possible that he had additional means of income, what would render the purchase of a photograph for 1 Shilling less crucial. Even though Phewa appears to have been one of the more prominent *Amakholwa* on Mariannhill's land (cf. Chapter Four), there is no (identified) portrait of him to be found in the archives.

When Müller started running the studio in late 1897, the income suddenly rose drastically until 1901, when he was hospitalised for an unknown period. In late 1901, he must have been seriously ill, as he paid for a sanatorium in Durban.[314] As stated in his obituary, Müller suffered from chronic heart problems, which may have slowed down the production from this point in time. A considerable decline in his physical appearance and signs of ageing can be observed in portraits during the relatively short timespan up to January 1914. Since 1901, the financial gain continued to dwindle until Mariannhill's 25th anniversary in 1907. A short comeback in income is indicated between 1909 and 1910, when entries for the studio eventually stopped entirely. Eventually, Müller discontinued his photographic practice in the course of 1915, due to the restrictions of the First World War. These ruptures reconfirm my initial suggestion that most photographic activities—at least financially—took place between 1898, when Müller started a structured sales program, and 1907, the monastery's 25th anniversary. As the chart above shows, the studio's financial income had already petered out long before 1915. Even if Müller continued to travel as far as Centocow to take photographs for the periodicals until the beginning of the First World War, portraits already show him as a worn-out man. On 12 January 1920, Mariannhill's architect, Br. Nivard Streicher, replied to an inquiry about photographs by Arthur H. Tatlow:[315]

> I looked into the photographer's shop and found that since the beginning of the war he has not done anything in the photographic line, he has not taken any new pictures. There are some large albums here full of Natives and "Native Life", also all the negatives are here. The photographer does not ease to send the albums out. You would have to come or send someone to pick what would be suitable and make your own copies from the negatives. (Letter, Streicher to Tatlow, 12.01.1920, in Streicher and Seubert 2003)

During the First, and again during the Second World War, many of Mariannhill's German

[313] Apparently, Phewa was still *induna* in 1906 (next to the newly installed *Amakholwa* Chief Alois Cele) as Phewa's occupation as *induna* is explicitly mentioned in the accounting book entry.

[314] The hospital referred to in the accounting books may have been the Catholic St. Augustine's Hospital. Müller's illness is also referred to in a letter by Fr. Isembard Leyendecker to a German glass negative company in 1901. Leyendecker ordered new supplies and mentioned that for the reason that the photographer was ill, he himself was temporarily taking over the task of ordering supplies.

[315] We remember Tatlow as the editor of the travel guide *Natal Province* (1911), for which he had sourced photographs from the studio earlier, in particular for the article of James Stuart. Tatlow had been appointed manager of the South African Railways and Harbours Publicity Department in 1910. Due to several successful tourism campaigns he was given the name "Father of National Publicity" by 1930 (Maxwell-Mahon 1981:640). According to Br. Nivard's letter, Tatlow intended to continue using Mariannhill's photographs during the 1920s, but it is uncertain whether he did.

members were interned at the monastery and its stations, or at least were their movements restricted. Also the taking of photographs was limited, as supplies from Germany were cut off, and taking photographs was generally prohibited for enemies of the state. Therefore the photographic production at Mariannhill stopped in the course of 1915. Due to a shortage of staff in 1916, Müller was re-appointed to run the printing press (Nolte 1928). At the time, the press was still located in the mill building, a few kilometres south of Mariannhill, before it was eventually reestablished next to the monastery in the 1950s.[316] At the end of the First World War, Müller must again have become seriously ill and was hospitalised at Mariannhill before 1919, probably for the reason of heart problems.[317] Joseph Caspar Maria Müller died on 5 February 1921 at Mariannhill's Hospital, at the age of 67.

Already several months earlier it had been decided during the monastery's plenary council of 1920 to restructure the book keeping, to change from the Trappist garments to a new black cassock with a broad red cingulum,[318] and eventually to make an effort to constitute new communities of African priests and sisters. Once Mariannhill had been separated from the Reformed Cistercians in 1909, the missionaries were nevertheless only able to freely establish their identity as a mission congregation after the First World War. This eventually allowed for crafting the monastery's chronicle retrospectively in 1921. It (re-)covered the first 30 years of the mission, as compiled by members who had been present since the early days. As I already explained in the introduction, no archive had been maintained during Trappist times. The council of 1920 also announced that "the *Vergißmeinnicht* must be supported better. This had already been pointed out earlier. One should also summon a new photographer, to procure the necessary illustrations" (Vorspel et al. 1921-1989).[319]

Br. Leonard Weber, Müller's successor, eventually arrived in October 1923. During his journey he had been accompanied by Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, who himself returned from Europe after ten years at Mariannhill's house St. Paul in the Netherlands. Over the following months he taught the basics of photography to Weber. The latter worked in the studio until it had to be closed for good with the beginning of the Second World War. Instead, he was transferred to become boarding master at Mariannhill's St. Francis School (cf. Rippe 2007). However, inscriptions on photographs indicate that the studio was indeed used much longer for internal purposes, such as portraits of both students of the St. Francis College and members of the monastery. Even though Weber's work is more recent than Müller's, it is less well contextualised: unlike Müller, Weber did not write extensively, he never published, and he did

316 The previous secular manager of the press, a Mr. Braun, had left the position, and it seems that Müller was now the only member of the congregation capable of running the business. This fact points again to his prior training at a photographic institute, possibly that of Cronenberg in Germany. As I explained, Cronenberg was exceptional by teaching not only photography, but printing technologies more generally.

317 Letter, Wolpert to Leyendecker, 22. March 1919. Cited in Kneipp 1981c: 64.

318 Also referred to as "soutane", the "cassock" is a single coat-like dress, usually worn in only one single colour. The cingulum is the belt-like band, worn around the waist. In many cases the change in dress helped to distinguish the photographs from the 1920s, from those prior to 1914.

319 Insert of printed protocol, plenary council 1920. My own translation from the German original.

neither annotate his negatives, nor the remaining archival prints. Also later members of the congregation never engaged with his work extensively. Müller's pre-World-War-One photographic production was thus aesthetically superior in the eyes of both insiders and outsiders to the monastery. We shall see this once again in more detail in Chapter Seven.

Br. Leonard Weber took the photograph below after 1930 (Figure 77), by now on a celluloid negative. He continued to use the same backdrops, as well as the same furniture and props after Müller's death in 1921. The negative of this photograph reveals a display table to the left, and in particular a rack of postcards. It is likely that it would have been cropped out in the photographic print delivered to the family. Weber used the display table to present customers with the various formats of photographs on sale. In the detail showing the postcards we can discern (from top to bottom) the founder of Mariannhill, Abbot Franz Pfanner, a baby eating from a big iron cooking pot, and also a female *isangoma* (diviner) in consultation with a client (Figure 78). We already know the baby from the album, which the Mariannhill priest showed to the two young boys in the propaganda film of the 1950s (Chapter One). The two other characters we shall meet again in Chapter Eight.



Figure 77: unidentified family with unidentified priest in the Mariannhill Studio, approx. 1930 (digitally inverted celluloid negative, CMM Archives).



Figure 78: detail of Figure 77 showing a postcard rack and a picture frame on the table to the left.

Conclusion

The photographic studio was the central hub of Mariannhill's propagandistic efforts, which commercially received, (re)produced, and once more redistributed photographic images for more than 50 years, between the 1880s and 1939. Like the other workshops, it was an economic institution, but at the same time connected all other institutions involved in propaganda efforts. Most importantly, it was a theatrical space in its own right, nested within the mission station, and at the same time able to reproduce and draw in narratives referring to the mission's exterior. The studio was not merely a commercial portrait studio, but in particular Br. Aegidius Müller was an ambulant photographer, who documented and staged "mission life" in entire Natal and East Griqualand. This chapter showed the studio's interior development and economy, in combination with its material layout as yet another space nesting within the one of the monastery compound. Visitors, such as Governor Nathan and his entourage, or the family more than 20 years later, engaged with photographs in an experience of intermediality.

The studio allowed the missionaries to locate themselves and their subjects as protagonists accordingly, during the tour, as well as in wider narratives. This argument will become even more prominent once we approach particular photographic occasions in the next chapter and the curation of objects in Chapter Five. Due to the professional aesthetic, social, and technological skills of the earliest photographers between the 1880s and 1914, mostly the oldest images started to circulate. The ones produced in the 1920s and 1930s, instead were less appealing and thus remained dormant.

In 1906, when working on Mariannhill's front gate, the architect Br. Nivard Streicher made it clear that he considered it important that images emanated from Mariannhill, instead of being imposed from the outside by popular print culture. The ensuing sections of this chapter showed how the experience of a guided tour constituted the experience of monastic space and successful mission, while at the same time implying the antagonistic outside of this space, which still had to be assimilated. The missionaries achieved this division through conversations during the tour, but even more effectively through photographs of this periphery. As I mentioned in Part One, many interlocked gazes were involved in this photographic production. "Gazing" *at* Mariannhill as a tourist destination involved not only literally traversing and experiencing a space that had a predefined and obligatory layout and trajectory through a guided tour. To an even greater extend this involved the literary and visual modes of representing this division. Visitors and missionaries eventually co-produced the monastic compound in textualised narratives with the additional help of photographs. Often they used Mariannhill's own precompiled photographs as *aide de memoire* when writing up their accounts.

Due of its contemplative nature, the monastery needed separate and semi-public spaces in order to receive guests adequately. These may with Goffman and MacCannell be considered as "frontstage". The workshops, the photographic studio, and the museum were the most explicit manifestations of this frontstage, even though visitors may instead have perceived them as a

view into the "backstage", the mission's "making of". According to Br. Otto Mäder's (1911) report to his confreres, this frontstage did after all not present what actually was at stake. Visitors to Mariannhill in fact relied on photographs, the production of which they had not witnessed. Instead, they matched them with (or rather allowed them to be complemented by) the glimpses they received of the workshops and the stories they were told by the missionaries. We may thus already see the unfolding of an "ethnographic tradition", which can better be rendered as a "photographic tradition". The idea of "collateral knowledge" becomes important once more, as visitors to Mariannhill indeed did not witness the making of photographs showing "mission life" themselves. Nevertheless, the missionaries gave the impression to the visitors that they had witnessed the occasion by supplementing it through the dispensing of photographs "*in situ*", the very place were the photographs had been produced.

In 1886, Mariannhill Monastery started the project of creating a wide network of mission stations, which expanded for almost 30 years. In the same time period, the monastery became a major tourist destination in Natal, for its industrial and architectural work, but also for its exotic appearance. At the monastery's photographic studio, visitors could perceive this orbit of influence as an extended visual microcosm that inspired a distinct repertoire of photographic representations. The missionaries presented this network as ever-expanding, according to the propaganda image of "the Kingdom of God" (cf. Chapter One).

Missionaries at Centocow, as one example of this peripheral situation, of course had their own perspective on Mariannhill, as well as the world surrounding them. Due to the diplomacy of Centocow's superiors, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch in particular, Centocow established ongoing positive relationships with the local magistracy, which also had crucial influence on the production of photographs, as we will see in the next chapter. Centocow was also the very first of Mariannhill's mission stations to establish an elaborate practice of documentation in form of a photographic album, a chronicle, and a scrap book. Even Mariannhill Monastery only established its chronicle retrospectively by the early 1920s. These sources and their making were only enabled by the particular relationships at Centocow Mission. At the same time, it is only these traces of the relationship, which allow us to reassemble and describe the particular social situation at Centocow Mission retrospectively.

CHAPTER FOUR

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African Histories, Photographic Occasions, and Material Encounters.

Introduction: Photographs and their Occasions

In the last chapter I discussed Mariannhill Monastery as a space, and more specifically the occasions of guided tours as contact zones. While the last chapter presented the frontstage scenario for tourism, this chapter considers backstage scenarios in a double sense. Not only does it show the colonial and mission encounter at the grassroots, but equally their manifestations and enactments in the form of photographs. In the previous chapter, I discussed photography as a *product* within the spatial setting of Mariannhill Monastery. In this chapter I discuss photography as a *process* within four other spatial settings (cf. Wingfield 2012b). Mariannhill's photographic oeuvre was not an attempt to document a *status quo* in all its dimensions, but to establish the extremes on both ends of a developmental spectrum. I presented this in the First Part, as well as in the main introduction through the quotes by Alfred T. Bryant and Sr. Adelgisa Hermann. It is therefore impossible to reassemble the extended colonial society in Natal and East Griqualand between the 1880s and 1915 in a holistic manner through Mariannhill's remaining photographic collection. Nevertheless, I hope to show that it is at least possible to approximate specific situations through the entry points constituted by those photographs I have called "buoyant images" in the introduction.

This I will do by addressing four stable spaces that emerged during photographic occasions; stable in the sense that the involved actors repeatedly constructed these spaces through cooperative performances. First, I consider the African non-Christian homestead in its opposition to the one of Christian Africans, and both in their relation to the monastic space. Secondly, Mariannhill's mill and its compound; as an intermediary space between the monastery and the "native reserve" it allowed both Trappists and Africans to approach each other outside the restrictions inflicted by the monastery. Thirdly, the photographic occasion of a branch-court hearing at Centocow Mission in 1912 is the only photographic trace we have for the interaction between Africans, the missionaries, and government representatives. As a fourth scenario, I discuss the photographic studio at Mariannhill as a performative space in its own right. Distinctly nested within the monastic space itself, this involved the different materialities of architecture, backdrops, and props. In fact, just like the studio, each of the four spaces either restricted or allowed for different ways of photographic performance through their specific social and material setups.

The photographs related to these four occasions can hardly be quantified. Only few similar examples exist within Mariannhill's oeuvre, and can therefore not be categorised as photographic genres. Instead, they allow us to treat historical subjects and objects in a most empirical way. Also regarding depicted objects it will not suffice to cover them by generalised object histories, as they exist for many musealised objects (cf. Chapter Five). Instead, I hope to show how such generalised and deductive object histories cause productive friction with Mariannhill's photographs. Before I approach these spaces, I first lay out the various intersecting formats of writing about Africans at the time. In Chapters One and Two I already covered

stylistic elements of Mariannhill's propagandistic publications, which, as we will see, easily fused with historical and ethnographic publications. The only way to learn more about why some subjects would engage with the missionaries in photographic occasions, while others did not, is to tease apart the existing published historiography regarding Africans near Mariannhill, and eventually relate it to available unpublished archival sources, and in particular to the photographs themselves.

Jean and John Comaroff describe the ongoing interactions of nonconformist missionaries with their subjects in South Africa, as well as related forms and negotiation of consumption, as a "long conversation" (1991:199). In the social field of Mariannhill, this entailed both formal and informal interactions and conversations with other protagonists, such as government officials, civilians, ethnologists, and traders. These interactions did not merely involve conversations, but at the same time the mutual exchange of consumer goods and other trade objects (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). In the case of Mariannhill, such exchanges contributed to a sociability, which was otherwise subdued by the official rule organising Trappist discipline. In particular the practice of photography is an exchange, which at the time required conversation, explanation, and likely material compensation. As I already showed in Chapter One, Mariannhill's photographers were able to establish a certain familiarity and trust, in order to take photographs of their subjects. Photographs do not simply represent social relations, but were at the same time shaped by them (cf. Edwards 1992, Wingfield 2012b). Photographs also were consumer products, and as such part of social interactions.

Barbara Wolbert was probably the first to bring together photography, material culture, and Latour's symmetric approach to anthropological study (Wolbert 1998a, 1998b, 2000). The title of my study, *Things in Between*, implies the interconnectedness between photographs, other images, texts, social spaces, as well as objects and subjects. Within this "photography complex" (Hevia 2009), which does not discriminate between Western and African uses of photography, also images and objects may be considered, if not as actors, nevertheless as acting entities. As such they left specific traces throughout their social involvements, during which they changed the course of actions. Due to the evidence I presented in the previous Part, Mariannhill's photographs cannot be considered as straightforward representations of historical situations, but only as traces that may lead to other sources. In combination they nevertheless allow us to approximate a historical situation. Despite these circumstances, Mariannhill's photographic representations are still historically valuable in the sense that they are results of encounters between missionaries, their subjects, other colonial actors, as well as the performance of a shared material culture in front of a photographic still camera.

Following particular controversies or crisis, not only allows to retrace the networks such occurrences established (Latour 2005), but it also allows to follow the constitution of images and objects as mimetic capital. The most eminent example for Natal and Zululand may be objects taken away as war booty during the looting of Zulu homesteads in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 (cf. Stevenson 2005). In mutual interdependence, photographs allow for analysing the activation

and re-activation of such objects in micro-historical accounts. In this chapter and the next, I shall consider photographic performances involving, for example, a fly whisk, snuff spoons, and a very particular kind of necklace. All objects mediated power during the respective photographic occasion they were involved in. Their existence, as it appears to us through the photograph, is intrinsically connected to the historical and material presence of the photographic apparatus. We must therefore consider such objects as both theatrical props and agents within both the historical and present performance of power relationships.

According to what I discussed in Chapters One and Two, we can assume that sitters and models were well aware that a photographic occasion was taking place, and that they willingly cooperated in the performance of the proposed *tableaux*. Whether they were indeed fully aware of their photographs' future circulation is yet another question. In all interactions with their African contemporaries, Mariannhill Missionaries depended on their skills to quickly learn, speak, and write in other languages. As many of them were German-speakers, they had to master English, as well as several Zulu dialects, depending on the location of the respective mission. As writers of song books, catechisms, Bible translations, as well as Zulu dictionaries, they had to perform extensive translation work. Missionary scholars, like Fr. A.T. Bryant, also carried out interviews and rendered these into English. But also the photographers, and in particular Br. Aegidius Müller, needed to articulate their ideas in Zulu during photographic occasions. The complex topics of genre scenes, which we have seen in the previous Part needed to be communicated, in such a way that all actors were able to relate to each other and understand their respective roles within the composition's narrative. In order to better explain the process of such encounters, I shall deal with the formation of "photographic occasions" in this chapter.

The starting points for my analysis so far have been photographs that often bear no other information than the image content. Sometimes it is complemented with a caption, even a name, or the often unrelated text surrounding it in a mission periodical. But unless one more independent parameter or coordinate is available, it is unclear whether the information provided in the caption or text is indeed an outcome of the very same occasion as the photograph itself. There is thus always a potential antagonism between image and text. In order to analyse this systematically, I will reconsider methodologies of how to reconstruct the production of (textual) ethnographies and colonial knowledge (Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999; Pels 1994) for the particular representational ontologies of photographs. When dealing with the process of *photo-graphy* as a form of description like *ethno-graphy*[320] it is possible to delineate the same stages of knowledge production (Rippe 2007, also see Hayes et al. 2002:110). The three-step of *préterrain*, an ethnographic occasion, and an ethnographic tradition, as developed by Pels and Salemink, can thus be adapted as *préterrain*, photographic occasion, and photographic tradition.

If we perceive the photograph and the monograph, or the article in a mission periodical, as documents and objects at the same time, it is possible to write their biographies, from the point of their first inscription during an occasion, towards instances of later appropriation as

[320] The "writing *with* light" vs. the "writing *about* other nations".

photographic traditions. As I showed in the last chapter, with photography we must consider the possibility that the content was not only created in the situation of the photographic occasion, but may have been additionally inspired by other imagery, or even have been derived from a textual description, thus a preexisting tradition. A reconsideration of the photographic *préterrain*, occasion, and tradition must therefore involve the wider contemporary visual economy.

Ethnographic texts often did not rely on a particular occasion, but on earlier texts, and thus created an "ethnographic tradition" (Pels 1994:323). But other than texts, photographs necessarily relied on actual encounters and experiences before a camera. Even if they had been posed, heavily retouched, or were collages of multiple photographs, they can most often be related to one dominant place in space and time. Nevertheless, the "occasion" is always more complex than what is obviously depicted. We have already seen *depictions* of photographic occasions at the beginning of Chapter Two. Even if missionaries and their subjects co-produced photographs to some extent, and even if Africans may have had agency as photographers, these staged genre compositions showing Africans as photographers relied on particular image traditions of colonial humour and caricature.

In this chapter instead, I present photographic occasions of a kind, which were only partially possible to stage in the first place. This was due to the social gravitas of the involved protagonist, such as African chiefs, magistrates, and policemen, who could not be directed as easily as common people. Due to the particularity of those occasions and the professions of the involved protagonists, also other traces emerged that help us to further explore the photographs. Photographic productions thus created very particular social occasions. Nevertheless, just like Pels argued for the case of "ethnographic occasions" (1994:322, 345), the *historical* "photographic occasion" is rarely considered and analysed sufficiently. I will do this for the above-mentioned four scenarios. Having introduced the monastic space in Chapter Three, I move to even more distinct spaces as contact zones in this chapter. In later chapters we will see that the related photographs were repeatedly picked up and rethought, thereby creating photographic traditions, which no longer related to the original occasion.

As I shall argue further in this chapter's second section, photographs as objects may thus create an occasion *as* past for viewers at a much later point. We must then look at a succession of "photographic occasions" involving the same photograph over time. Even once the depicted person is long dead, his or her photographs may still live an afterlife. Due to their production date, all of the photographs I deal with exceed living memory. After the occasion of its initial production, meaning is always re-produced during later occasions in relation to experiences, subjects, and objects existing in the new timeframe as reference points for the interpreting person. If a viewer has not been present during the original photographic occasion, he or she must again draw other information alongside to make sense of a particular photograph. This may be texts, oral history, or material objects, which are visible in the photographs from which meaning can be extrapolated: common material culture, clothing, buildings, topographical landmarks are some examples. This train of thought, evolving around experiences of

intermediality, has its validity for the remaining chapters of this study.

A common format for the tactile handling of photographs since the 1860s was the so-called "*carte de visite*", and since the 1880s the "cabinet card".[321] During my research I experienced that photographic images may indeed still serve as actual *carte de visite*, or calling cards in social relations: even if digitally reproduced and reprinted in an enlarged format, photographs became objects that allowed me to gain temporary access to communities, and in turn to be identified with knowledge about, and the access to images (Rippe 2007). As I oscillated between the archive and the field exterior to it, it was possible to connect information to the photographic image, as well as the photographic object. Such a photographic entry point was the portrait I discuss in the second section (Figure 79).

[321] Photographers commonly pasted the thin and light-sensitive photographic paper on cardboard, which was often decorated and embossed with the name of the respective studio.

Mariannhill's African Historiography

> Some day will turn out a sensational author who will find among the few threads of Zulu history sufficient stuff wherewith to weave a romance worthy of providing the youthful lovers of fiction with a pabulum [food, dish], which, though somewhat sanguinary and coarse, will nevertheless be stimulating in its way and tasty to those for whom it is prepared. Such a vocation, thanks to Providence, has not been allotted to us. To relate facts rather than invent fiction is our task here, and that we will do, not, it is true, serving it up like Chinese tea, but seasoned here and there with a dash of milk and sugar. (Sihlobosami [A.T. Bryant] 1887:239)

Alfred Thomas Bryant (1865-1953) was one of Mariannhill's first and most prominent members, who, after all, did set out to become the "sensational author" he denied to be in 1887. Bryant also continued to "season" his textual accounts, just like his contemporary, Br. Aegidius Müller, "seasoned" his photographs. Bryant should not be mistaken for an "anthropologist" or an "ethnologist", but was first of all perceived as a Zulu linguist and historian by his contemporaries. When he and Fr. Willibald Wanger applied for the chair of social anthropology at the University of Cape Town in 1921, both were dismissed for their lack of training in the discipline (Schapera 1990). Bryant is today mainly remembered for his *Zulu-English Dictionary* (1905), and even more so for his historical account of the region's early African politics, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929). Despite the fact that Bryant left the Trappist congregation after 10 years in 1894, he maintained personal correspondence with several members at both Mariannhill and Centocow.[322]

Amongst other protagonists, Bryant will serve as a baseline to study the production of knowledge on Africans. We must then realise that some written accounts on Africans did not rely on the writer's own encounter with an informant, but rather on other texts and in so far continued "ethnographic traditions". Some writers even committed straightforward plagiarism (cf. Chapters Six to Eight). The historian Clemens Gütl (2005) found it difficult to trace single biographies of Africans, who either opposed or engaged with Mariannhill. I will show that several of Mariannhill's photographs provide unique entry points to study not only the interactions of Trappists and Africans, but also the nature of photographic production. In this section I focus on how scholars, missionaries, and government officials described Africans in the periphery of Mariannhill Monastery and Centocow Mission. The next section then deals in more detail with the creation of Mariannhill's community of converts, the *Amakholwa*. "Creation" is to be understood both in the sense of how they were established politically as a "tribe", as well as how their descendants later reassembled their existence during my fieldwork.

In 1887, at the age of 24, Bryant wrote Mariannhill's first history, from which I quoted above. It has the extensive title *Roman Legion on Libyan Fields, or, the Story of the Trappist*

[322] While Bryant was a member of the Reformed Cistercians at Mariannhill Monastery between 1883 and 1894, he held the religious name Fr. David. *Roman Legion on Libyan Fields* is the only known work he ever published under the Zulu pseudonym *Sihlobosami*. I agree with historians, such as John Wright, that there is almost no substantial information available on Bryant's biography, either during or after his time at Mariannhill. Even though I have written up what could be traced, Bryant's biography would not add valuable information to better understand the production of photographs.

Missionaries among the Zulus in Natal, South Africa: The Establishment of their Monastery at Mariannhill. Printed in a highly portable, smaller than A5 pocket size, it was Mariannhill's first propaganda brochure for and English-speaking audience. In 1950 and 1953, Fr. Francis Schimlek published the very last account of Mariannhill's propaganda publications, which recognised Africans by name as historical actors and interlocutors. Schimlek was the editor of the Zulu newspaper *Umafrika* between 1950 and 1963 (Kneipp 1982:67). His two books, however, are in many parts unacknowledged rewrites of, and updates on Bryant's 1887 publication *Roman Legion*, as far as historical information on the beginnings of Mariannhill is concerned. Both of Schimlek's accounts overlap, as the one focuses on Mariannhill's history in general, and the other on "Medicine vs. Witchcraft".

Unlike most of Mariannhill's German publications at the time and in the decades to come, Bryant did not focus on the agency of Abbot Pfanner. He only mentioned him by name one time in the third part of the book. Instead, Bryant was much more concerned with his own agency as teacher, critic, ethnographer, and indeed as a writer *par excellence*. In 1887, he collected such stories, which he may have considered as the most entertaining ones. His writing style is polemic and ironic throughout, but nevertheless provides several threads for further inquiry. *Roman Legion* appeared just one year after Mariannhill had founded its first mission station Reichenau, and the mission was therefore in need of new personnel. As Bryant was one of Mariannhill's first members to become proficient in Zulu, he stressed the initial role of African informants and intermediaries. As one of the first encounters between Trappists and Africans, Bryant recounted an episode involving a former "great induna" of the *Amanganga* Chief Manzini ka Makalela. This *induna* had turned his back on his chief, and instead defected to the Trappists:

> Another little affair was one in which the little man called the Spade, *Fotsholo*, figured as the hero. At a time when the monks could scarcely discern the difference between a Zulu word and the bull's foot, this Kafir from his professed knowledge of English, was prized by them as a brilliant of the first waters. He was the medium, the solitary link that bound the people to the monks and these to the people, He was the interpreter, the *aide-de-champ* [sic], so to say, of the Trappist *inkosi*[323], Secretary for Native Affairs, aye, Governor, if you like; and had one seen him praying in the front row in the church during service, he might have believed him a saint also. But there were some,—and they among those who ought to have known him best—who branded him an impostor from head to foot. Nor was it long that this assertion became sufficiently manifest to the missionaries as to lower him a degree or two in their estimation. His knowledge of English, it turned out, was just enough to be able to understand the burly blacksmith for whom he had previously worked. His interpretations were, to the original, as chalk is to cheese, while the faithfulness with which he clung to his masters was of the species classically known as Carthaginian ["Carthaginian faith"=treachery]. (Bryant 1887:140-141)

Intermediaries are essential to consider in the analysis of textual representations of colonial encounters. Still, they are often difficult, or even impossible to trace in the archival record (cf. Lawrance, Osborn and Roberts 2006, Habermas 2013, also see Chapter Seven). And so does Fotsholo neither feature again in any later narrative, nor is he ever identified in photographs.[324] I shall still refer to him once more in Chapter Five. In a similar manner, the texts

[323] Bryant's own footnote: "Chief, for so the Natives termed the Superior of the Monastery".

[324] For the historical ambivalence of photographically represented intermediaries see for example Guy (2002).

underlying the published volumes of the "James Stuart Archive" have been co-produced in close interaction with certain intermediaries (cf. Hamilton 1998, 2011; Wright 2011). James Stuart, whom I introduced in Chapter Three, recorded oral accounts on 19th century Zulu history, by interviewing Africans in the Pietermaritzburg area between the 1890s and 1920s. One such account by Maziyana ka Mahlabeni of the *Amandelu*, amongst others, speaks about two groups during the time of Shaka, who eventually settled near the place where Mariannhill was established in 1882, the *Amanganga* and the *Amapumulo*:

> The Iziyendane, Mtetwa, amaNganga, amaPumulo etc. were those who attacked the tribes south. They adopted a Zulu chant, and if any stranger would hear them chanting, thus he would dash off and jump into a swamp or other hiding place. These men therefore were transformed into Zulus and were regarded as such by the tribes South.[325]

The *Amanganga* and the *Amapumulo* were thus not "Zulus" as such, but their vassals instead. Once fleeing from the Zulu during the *Mfecane*, they eventually became refugees on entering Natal. In the end, we cannot clearly reconstruct this ethnographic occasion involving Stuart and Mazinyana in 1905, as nothing more is known about Mazinyana's biography, and the information he provided is rather fragmentary and foremost focused on genealogies. For the case of another of Stuart's informants, the historian John Wright (2011) argues that it is only through the interviewer's biography, and the relationships inscribed therein that we can learn about the person interviewed.

As I mentioned earlier, Hamilton and Leibhammer have identified the area and timeframe in which Stuart and many Mariannhill Missionaries worked as a "collection hotspot" for both information and objects (Hamilton and Leibhammer 2014, 2016b, also see Hamilton 2011). As they argue, information on Natal's past and present, as well as "ethnographic" objects, were accumulated within a limited timeframe during the late 19th and early 20th century by a limited number of people. Mariannhill Missionaries contributed to the creation of such accounts on Africans in various ways. At Mariannhill Monastery, but also at Centocow and Lourdes Missions, the physical space of the station provided a logistic hub, which attracted Africans, as well as collectors. The stations thus directed the collection of information and objects, as well as their later re-distribution. This was for example facilitated through hosting branch courts, or by collecting and redistributing ethnographic information and objects (cf. Part Three). Before the First World War, this kind of knowledge production involved Fr. A.T. Bryant, Fr. Paschalis Boneberg, Frs. Emanuel and Alexander Hanisch, Br. Otto Mäder, Fr. Franz Mayr, Br. Aegidius Müller and Fr. Willibald Wanger. In later years, also Fr. Albert Schweiger and Fr. Bernard Huss played a crucial role.

All of these men had come to South Africa in order to join Mariannhill Monastery, where they gathered experience, and received at least a religious, catechetical, and linguistic training.

[325] JSA-2:296: Evidence by Maziyana ka Mahlabeni, 26.4.1905. According to this informant, in the 1820s the *Amatuli* Chief Ntaba ka Myebu had his homestead "Kwa Gobela" close to were Mariannhill Monastery was built in 1882.

The entire network of involved scholars, and the diversity of their roles at Mariannhill and beyond would require an additional study (but see Part Three). As became evident from the individuals and biographies mentioned already, influential people gravitated towards Centocow and Lourdes before 1914, which was the centre of Mariannhill's mission fraction, in opposition to the the monastic fraction at Mariannhill itself. Among these were Bryant, Wanger, and Fr. Emanuel Hanisch. The photographs I am concerned with were made in the timeframe when these people were most active, and must therefore be related to prevalent ideas, representational agendas, and the available knowledge of these years. I will however limit my analysis to those protagonists, who were actively involved with photographic occasions.

The production of knowledge around Mariannhill also involved government officials, scribes, policemen, and especially magistrates. As the Pinetown Court was only established by 1875,[326] both the Pietermaritzburg, as well as the Durban archival repository of the South African National Archives only contain reports on the *Amanganga* from 1879 onwards. According to the system of indirect rule, Stuart and other colonial administrators recorded names of leaders, the names of their "tribes", as well as their locations. More or less detailed ethnographic studies of particular "tribes" were only carried out and recorded in so far as magistrates required them to solve politically relevant executive conundrums. These could involve what is often referred to as "succession disputes" and related homicides, struggles over land, "native unrest", and "faction fights". Magistrates thus created foremost instrumental knowledge, which must be understood within the intricacies of its "ethnographic occasion" (cf. Pels 1994, 1996). Below I will describe how one such occasion at Centocow Mission in 1912—usually performed to create textual records—turned into a photographic occasion.

Two years after the Trappist's arrival, in 1885, about 250 Africans[327] lived on Mariannhill's 11.115 acres (approx. 55 sq.km). By 1894, the number had almost tripled to approximately 700 Africans.[328] It appears that the chiefs of the *Shozi*[329] clan, who headed the *Amanganga,* were the only African leaders in the Pinetown area, who interacted with Mariannhill Missionaries on a regular basis. In 1887, it was only the before-mentioned *Amapumulo* under Chief Mangcingci, who also had some of their members living on the mission's land. Fr. Gerard Wolpert explained in the mission's periodical that "both Kafir tribes were of very different characters". According to him, the *Amanganga* were "much more gentle and amenable" than the *Amapumulo*, whom he considered as "rough, defiant, and shifty". Therefore, so he wrote, the missionaries started to expel the *Amapumulo*, who had "given a bad example", so to make space for those who "were amenable to Christianity" (Wolpert 1887:45). In later narratives and records of Mariannhill, the *Amapumulo* no longer appear. The process of selecting suitable subjects was

[326] DAR: 1_PTN-3/3/3/15-17/15/4. Draft version of the Pinetown District Record Book, 1939.
[327] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/4SNA-141/1885. No. 32, letter, Pfanner to Jackson. 25.2.85.
[328] Blue Book of Native Affairs, 1894, quoted in *Natal Mercury,* Wed. 29.05.1895, p. 3.
[329] Bryant referred to "*Lushozi"* as the "address-name", or *isiTakazelo,* of the "*emaNgangeni".* The latter designation he referred to as "*isiBongo",* or "clan name" (Bryant 1905:750, 1929:692). Today, Shozi is used as a family name of the Chief's lineage.

apparently still ongoing in 1898, as I described at the beginning of the last chapter through the correspondence between Fr. Ambrosius Hartes and the Durban Magistracy.

Unlike the *Amabhaca, Amakhuze,* and *Inhlangwini* near Centocow and Lourdes Missions, members of the *Amanganga* always remained relatively small during colonial times (approx. 1.000), and, unlike the *Amabhaca* in particular, were never split into multiple competing lineages. In 1903, the *Amanganga* were present in the Umlazi, Umgeni, and Ndwedwe Divisions of Durban County with 554 "huts",[330] with the majority of 364 in the Umlazi Division. Of these, 70 huts were in the reserve, while the majority of 294 huts were on private land.[331] Until 1909, the number of huts in the Umlazi Division increased to 527; 80 in the Reserve, and 447 on private land.[332] Unlike all other present communities, the majority of the *Amanganga* did thus not reside in the Umlazi Native Reserve (Location), South of the Umlazi River, but immediately to its Northern shore. A considerable number of huts must therefore have been on Mariannhill's land, consisting of the two farms "Klaarwater" and "Zeekoegat", which were only divided from the Native Reserve by two other farms, "Dassenhoek" and "Welbedacht" (cf. Imasson 1904).

Mariannhill Missionaries had made early attempts in the periodicals at describing their subjects in a quasi-ethnographic manner during the 1880s and 1890s. Only the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller, and the painter Br. Otto Mäder, published material in ethnographic journals before World War One, such as the Austrian *Anthropos* (cf. Part Three). In 1929, Bryant published the study, which is still today considered as the most detailed, though also much disputed account of the Natalian political past: *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal: Containing earlier Political History of the Eastern-Nguni Clans*. It is foremost an account of "tribal" histories and politics until the mid-19th century, however sometimes with remarks on a community's past beyond 1900. Amongst these, Bryant recounted a history of the *Amanganga* (Bryant 1929:545-547, also see 1964:77-79), as well as of the *Amabhaca* (Bryant 1929: 352, 378ff). He probably assembled these stories during conversations he had with Africans as a missionary, already during his time at Mariannhill between 1883 and 1893, and at Centocow during 1894. Bryant also returned to Centocow at least once in 1919, apparently to do restudies for an unspecified book, possibly *Olden Times* (Gerold and Dlamini 1938:22).

At the same time, Bryant plagiarised other authors. While Bryant's work was still admired by scholars like Max Gluckman (1940), the South African historian John Wright (1991) retraced Bryant's accumulation of earlier histories via plagiarism of the work of Theophilus Shepstone. It is therefore impossible to say when Bryant relied on his own interviews, and when on already existing ethnographic traditions. It is nevertheless likely that Bryant collected his version of the *Amanganga's* history himself during interviews. Gütl suggests that Bryant also collected earlier data on the *Amanganga* from informants at Mariannhill (2005:265). Gütl's view can be supported via Mariannhill's baptism registers, where three of the first converts in 1885

[330] This is the general term used at the time. One homestead, or "*Kraal*", may have consisted of multiple huts, depending on the kraal-head's economic prosperity and the resulting number of his wives.

[331] PAR: Blue Book of Native Affairs, Ministerial Department of Native Affairs, Colony of Natal, 1903:25.

[332] PAR: Annual Reports, Department of Native Affairs, Colony of Natal, 1909:15.

were referred to as "a warrior of Shaka", an "old soldier of the Chief (King) Chaka", and generally as "Chaka's men".[333]

Manzini's *Amanganga* initially made their way from Zululand to Natal as refugees during the *Mfecane* in the course of the 1830s. This grand narrative of Natalian history is considered a social disturbance and assimilation process caused by the large-scale expansion of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka (Chaka) ka Senzagakona during the 1820s. The first contact of Africans with a greater force of Europeans took place when the Boers had arrived from the Cape during the 1830s. This conflict escalated under Shaka's successor Dingane, eventually to the defeat of the Zulu, leaving them behind with an increasing image of militarism and savagery (Hamilton 1998). This period was followed by the annexation of Natal as a British Colony in 1843, and accordingly Europeans initiated a long process of restructuring the life of Africans. Initially, Theophilus Shepstone, the first Secretary of Native Affairs of the Natal Colony, officially recognised 56 chiefdoms (Lambert 1998:25, also see maps in Guy 2013:246-247). This account was made according to the status quo of those Africans, whom Shepstone identified inside the boundaries of the Natal Colony at the time of annexation. Some of these he labelled as "aboriginal tribes", others he appointed as tribal chiefdoms, which had accumulated from the remnants. Manzini's *Amanganga* were among these "aboriginal tribes".

During the reign of Shaka's brother and successor Dingane in the early 1840s, the *Amanganga* finally fled to "The Bluff", a large peninsula that forms a natural harbour for the city of Durban. Manzini ka Makalela, the last survivor of the main line of the *Amanganga*, joined his people only at a later point, because he was still serving in one of the regiments of Mpande, another brother of Shaka, and successor to Dingane (Bryant 1929:546). The *Amanganga* finally reached their present place of residence, once

> […] in later years, the British Government [had] permitted their removal in a body, under Manzini, to a spot on the northern side of the middle Mlazi river. That locality being afterwards demarcated as farms for European purchase, Lokotwayo, heir to Manzini, and his people were relegated to the broken country on the opposite side of the river (just above the Richmond road drift), with another section of the clan at the Ndwedwe (near Verulam). (Bryant 1929:547)

This was, and still is, the wider area southwest of Mariannhill, to the North and South of the Umlazi River around Dassenhoek, Kwandengezi, and Zwelibomvu (also see Bryant 1964:79). By 1886, when Mariannhill Missionaries officially started their mission activity with the first station Reichenau, Natal's Umlazi Division alone contained twelve governmentally recognised "tribes", so the official jargon, of which the chiefs were paid between £6 and £15 *per annum*, under Law 13 of 1875. This was considered "as a recognition of their good conduct and services […] so long as they conduct themselves to the satisfaction of the Government".[334] The Zulu

[333] Leo Mkonto (70 y), Filip Mancioele (70 y) and Joseph Mcanti (85 y) were baptised on 8 February 1885, and 4 March respectively. All three resided in walking-distance from the monastery and died between 1887 and 1889. I will discuss the baptism register below.

[334] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/4-SNA-80/86: Minute paper, SNA to Magistrate of Umlazi, Jackson, 29.01.1886.

Kingdom under its last King Cetshwayo ka Mpande eventually ceased after being defeated during the Anglo-Zulu war in 1879, and Cetshwayo's death in 1884 (Guy 1979). Cetshwayo's son Dinuzulu was no longer recognised as King by the British, and instead searched for new allies, such as the Boers. But at the same time, he also was in contact with Mariannhill, first during late 1887 and once more in 1889 (cf. Guy 2002b:187-88). Mariannhill Missionaries had in fact attempted to establish stations in Zululand, and for this purpose Fr. Gerard Wolpert and Br. Nivard Streicher had visited Dinuzulu in early 1887. However, due to Dinuzulu's banishment for his resistance to the annexation of Zululand, these plans were never followed up. Even if Wolpert's and Streicher's trip to Zululand was unsuccessful after all, coincidences on the way back to Mariannhill brought them to discover the farm Trinity in the Polela District, where Wolpert should establish Centocow Mission soon after in 1888 (cf. Mäder 1914).

According to Mariannhill's hagiographies, it was Chief Manzini of the *Amanganga* himself who had called the Trappists to the area in 1882, so that they could "teach [his] people to hear what the black flies on the white sheets of paper tell people" (Schimlek 1953:57). This contact had initially been made by the Protestant minister Posselt of the Lutheran Berlin Mission at Clermont near Pinetown. In the course of 1882, Posselt wrote in his mission's periodical that he had known Manzini for many years and that eventually, "one day", a messenger of Manzini appeared to request that he may teach his people (quoted in Gütl 2005:263-264).

As Mariannhill Missionaries bought up the land between Pinetown and the *Amanganga* in the same year, Posselt instead decided to leave the *Amanganga* with the Trappists. But from the beginning, there had been quarrels over several issues and tense encounters with Manzini, which concentrated on the patronising behaviour of the Trappists, primarily in regard to the education of children and their permanent residence at Mariannhill's boarding school. In addition, there were claims to land, which is confirmed by the Trappists themselves, contemporary media, and also the current *Inkhosi* of the *Amanganga* (Bryant 1887:151, also see *The Natalian*, 30.07.1887, Gütl 2005). African families accused the Trappists of detaining their children in their schools. They were especially concerned about their female children, for the potential loss of *lobola* (brideprice): marrying off girls in a Christian way would have eliminated the payment of cattle to the bride's family.

Manzini's descendants told me that these disputes had finally caused Manzini to move his homestead further away from the monastery. It was initially about eight miles from the monastery (Schimlek 1953:59), on the farm Dassenhoek, which was between Mariannhill's farms and the Umlazi reserve.[335] The place where Manzini established his second residence is today known as the township Kwandengezi. Manzini still appeared for the occasions of branch court hearings at Mariannhill before 1887 (cf. Bryant 1887), but his relationship to the Trappists had soured by the end of the 1880s, when contact was only maintained through the Chief's *izinduna*. In a similar way, the Trappists' relationship to the chief at Reichenau Mission declined

[335] This is again confirmed by the entries on the residence of Manzini's baptised children in Mariannhill's baptism registers of the 1880s.

around 1890. Like Manzini, Sakajedwa and his followers left the mission's land before the establishment of the professionalised photographic studio in 1894. This seems to be the reason for the fact that no photographs of either Sakajedwa or Manzini exist, but only of the latter's prominent *izinduna*, and eventually of his son Lokothwayo.

As one of the "hereditary" chiefs, opposed to the "appointed" chiefs, Manzini received the relatively high payment of £10. Amongst the 12 chiefs recognised in 1886, Manzini ranked on place six of the payment list.[336] By 1896, the *Blue Book of Native Affairs* counted five hereditary and five appointed chiefs within the division, although the situation was far more complex: by now also several other chiefs had their followers in the same division, who were represented by their respective *izinduna*. By 1898, the number of chiefdoms had increased to 17, either directly or indirectly represented. Manzini had by then dropped to rank 10 in terms of payment.[337] In 1891, the *Natal Native Code* introduced the possibility for mission stations to install their own chiefs for their communities of converts (*Amakholwa*) and thus to form their own "tribes" (see below). These started to appear in the area over the following years. This general increase of competing parties under the colonial system of "indirect rule" may partially account for the growing friction between Africans and the resulting violent conflicts within the division during the 1890s (cf. Gütl 2005, Lambert 1995, Mahoney 2012, also see Pels 1996).

Manzini, the *Amanganga* Chief near Mariannhill, died in 1899. Only a while before his death, a delegation of three Trappists had paid him a last visit:

> Manzine [sic], the old Chief living near us was, as we were told, seriously ill. We therefore decided to pay him one more visit. He had so far not shown any attempt to become a Christian. But, could not the approach of his death possibly change his mind?[338] (Anon. 1899:84)

Even after 17 years, the Trappists could still not convince Manzini to convert, and he "showed [them] the door, with the words: 'He, the King, is not an *umfana* (boy)!'" (Hanisch 1903:29). Manzini's death was reported by a messenger of his son Lokothwayo to the Secretary of Native Affairs on 25 August 1899 (Gütl 2005:343). As Manzini's position had been defined by Natal's first secretary of Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, as "aboriginal" and thus "hereditary", his title was passed on to his son Lokothwayo, whom he had already declared as his legitimate heir and successor in 1884 (ibid.:344). On 1 February 1900 Lokothwayo ka Manzini of the *Shozi* started to rule over a people whose descendants still today refer to themselves as *Amanganga*.

Like the *Amanganga* living near Mariannhill Monastery, the *Amabhaca* near Centocow Mission were refugees of the *Mfecane*. But, unlike the situation at Mariannhill, the area around Centocow saw extensive succession disputes and prolonged correspondence about them. One reason for this difference is that at Mariannhill, the *Amanganga* under Manzini and Lokothwayo only had one line of succession.[339] For Centocow the case was very different: since colonial

[336] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/4-SNA-80/86.
[337] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/11/98-SNA_UD_218/98.
[338] My own translation from the German original.
[339] But see Gütl (2005) for some inter-familiar disagreements regarding the succession of Manzini.

presence in the wider area from the 1830s onwards, the Umzimkhulu area was to various degrees inhabited by African groups identifying themselves as *Amakhuze*, *Amabhaca*, and *Inhlangwini* (cf. Bryant 1929, Hammond-Tooke 1962, Van Warmelo 1935). Once Mariannhill Missionaries arrived at Centocow in 1888, these groups still populated the region. As inscribed in governmental maps, as well as Mariannhill's own maps, the land between Centocow and Lourdes was exclusively inhabited by communities identified as *Amabhaca*. This may be the straightforward reason why Mariannhill Missionaries initially interacted with (and photographed) the latter. They only started approaching and representing the *Amakhuze* (living in the location to their West) some fifteen years after their arrival. As I explain in the next section in relation to the baptism and marriage registers of Lourdes Mission, the missionaries kept close track of their converts' "tribal" affiliations in relation to the fear of faction fights. Like at Mariannhill, at Centocow the missionaries distinguished between reluctant and more approachable subjects: according to Br. Adrian, the *Amabhaca* were "pugnacious [*rauflustig*]", while the *Amakhuze* were "roguish [*verschmitzt*]" (Pellazino 1914a:35).

A similar uncertainty regarding categorisation and representation also troubled government representatives. In this particular area, the colonial governments of Natal and the Eastern Cape had more difficulties than elsewhere categorising and confining groups, due to a long history of extensive migration and changes of affiliation.[340] Still in the 1930s, the government ethnologist Nicolaas J. van Warmelo apologised for not being able to give any detailed numbers on the population, as "to properly clear up the tribal tangle in Umzimkulu District will require more time than I have at my disposal" (Van Warmelo 1935:24). In an earlier archival statement from 1915, tribal identities and their origins were likewise far from certain for government officials: most likely in order to determine rail fares, a superintendent of the South African Railways inquired with the Secretary of Native Affairs whether the "baca tribe" belonged to the "Natal or to the Cape Natives".[341] After some to and fro of letters, he was assured that "the members of this tribe are natives of the Cape Province". Due to the evident migration in the area, African identities cannot be determined through general ethnic glosses, but must be clearly situated within the historical discourse. This will become even more evident with Gerard Bhengu in Chapter Seven.

In the case of Centocow, conflicts even brought magistrates and their informants to pen extensive accounts of "tribal history", which were collected in a long succession of interviews, and various related correspondences between 1910 and 1914. From 1910 onwards, the political landscape between Centocow and Lourdes was seriously disturbed. The *Amabhaca* Chief Bhekukupiwa ka Cijisile had died in 1910, and his brother Magxuma was installed as acting chief.[342] Three more chiefs, some of *Amakhuze* origin, died in the area at the same time, all under mysterious circumstances. Through speculations that all incidents were related political murders,

[340] I will not deal here with the history and migration of the previously mentioned groups, as it is highly complex. For overviews see for example Bryant (1929), Hammond-Tooke (1962), and Scully (1909).

[341] PAR: CNC 787/1915.

[342] PAR: SNA 3645/1910 [-1914].

Africans, government, and missionaries alike developed an increasing anxiety in the resulting "*indaba enkulu* [great debate]" (Hanisch 1910). In 1913, Magxuma, too, died under unknown circumstances, and again in 1914 the next potential heir to the hereditary chieftaincy of the *Amabhaca*, Bhekukupiwa's son Mvovo, deceased, not even having reached adulthood.[343] A major succession dispute had broken out, which eventually had reverberations into the 1920s and beyond, even until today. The acting *Amabhaca* Chief in the late 1920s, Nyongwane ka Bhekukupiwa shall concern us again in Chapter Seven.

Entries in Mariannhill's baptism register for the late 1880s indicate that new arrivals came, for example, from Pietermaritzburg, Johannesburg and other places, as far as Basutoland. Other than the neat division into "tribes" and nations may suggest, the African and European population around Mariannhill was much more diverse, and the immigrants to the area had certainly more complex biographies of migration than can ever be reconstructed. The colonial ascription of "tribe" is still employed by some African communities today, but one cannot uphold that these had ever been stable units. Rather, they must be seen as conglomerates of at times rapidly shifting affiliations. Also the Black Catholic community of *Amakholwa* around Mariannhill must be considered in this way: browsing the early baptism registers of Mariannhill Parish for the 1880s and 1890s, one quickly realises that Mariannhill's *Amakholwa* were not only formed by converted *Amanganga*, but also by more recent migrants (cf. Gütl 2005). In July 1887, Fr. Gerard claimed that there was "no shortage of Kafirs", who were open to Christianity and desired access to Mariannhill's farms, especially as winter was approaching (Wolpert 1887:45). Africans arriving in the metropolitan area around Durban, and looking out to make a living, had limited alternatives: instead of suffering the insecurity of dwelling independently near cities, they could only associate themselves with various Protestant mission societies, such as the Berlin Mission at New Germany, or they may have joined a local chiefdom.[344]

[343] PAR: CNC 1126/1915.

[344] We remember that Mariannhill was the only active Catholic mission congregation at the time, as the French OMI did not engage in active mission work. A history of interactions between missionary denominations in Natal has not been written so far, and also cannot be provided here.

A Crisis of Identity: Umpathwa or Umdamane—*Amakholwa* or *Amanganga*?



Figure 79: original caption on the glass plate negative: “122. Umdamane”, 1891 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

The historian Norman Etherington dates the rise of a "*kholwa*" identity, of African Christians in Natal to the early 1850s, and the establishment of *Amakholwa* chiefdoms to the 1860s and 70s, which were however "ill defined" (1978:113). The earliest inscription of their governmental recognition as individual "tribes", which I was able to find, is the *Natal Native Code* of 1891:

> 8. The word 'tribe' signifies a number or collection or body of Natives forming a political organisation or community, and composed of not less than 20 kraals, under the government, control, or leadership of a chief, and which organisation or community has been recognised or established by the Supreme Chief. The communities existing now, or hereafter to be formed in connection with mission stations, may be regarded as tribes. (Mitchell 1893[1891]:4)

Representations of mission work usually describe the movement towards, and the first encounter with unknown people. However, these representations can hardly be separated from the already established work of ministry involving the *Amakholwa* community: such daily work at Mariannhill involved the ongoing selection, registration, and classification of already known individuals (cf. Pels 1994, 1999). For administrative purposes Mariannhill Missionaries routinely documented such religious interactions. By analysing one particular photographic occasion in relation to the earliest baptism registers and a historical map, I hope to show that the production of photographs, but also the collection of objects I describe in Chapter Five, was embedded and even determined by the various social relationships of Mariannhill's colonial, political, and religious encounters.

Figure 79 depicts a bearded senior Black man, portrayed in a three-quarter perspective, in front of a beehive-shaped homestead. Such buildings were conventional during the 1890s in the area around Mariannhill. It is yet another version of the same photograph I already presented in the introduction and Chapter One. The high sun reflects off the man's polished head ring and his forehead. At the bottom of the image, running across the sitter's chest, the imprint "Mariannhill" is clearly visible. The photograph must have been taken either by Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, or Fr. Desiderius Fresen in the course of the year 1891.

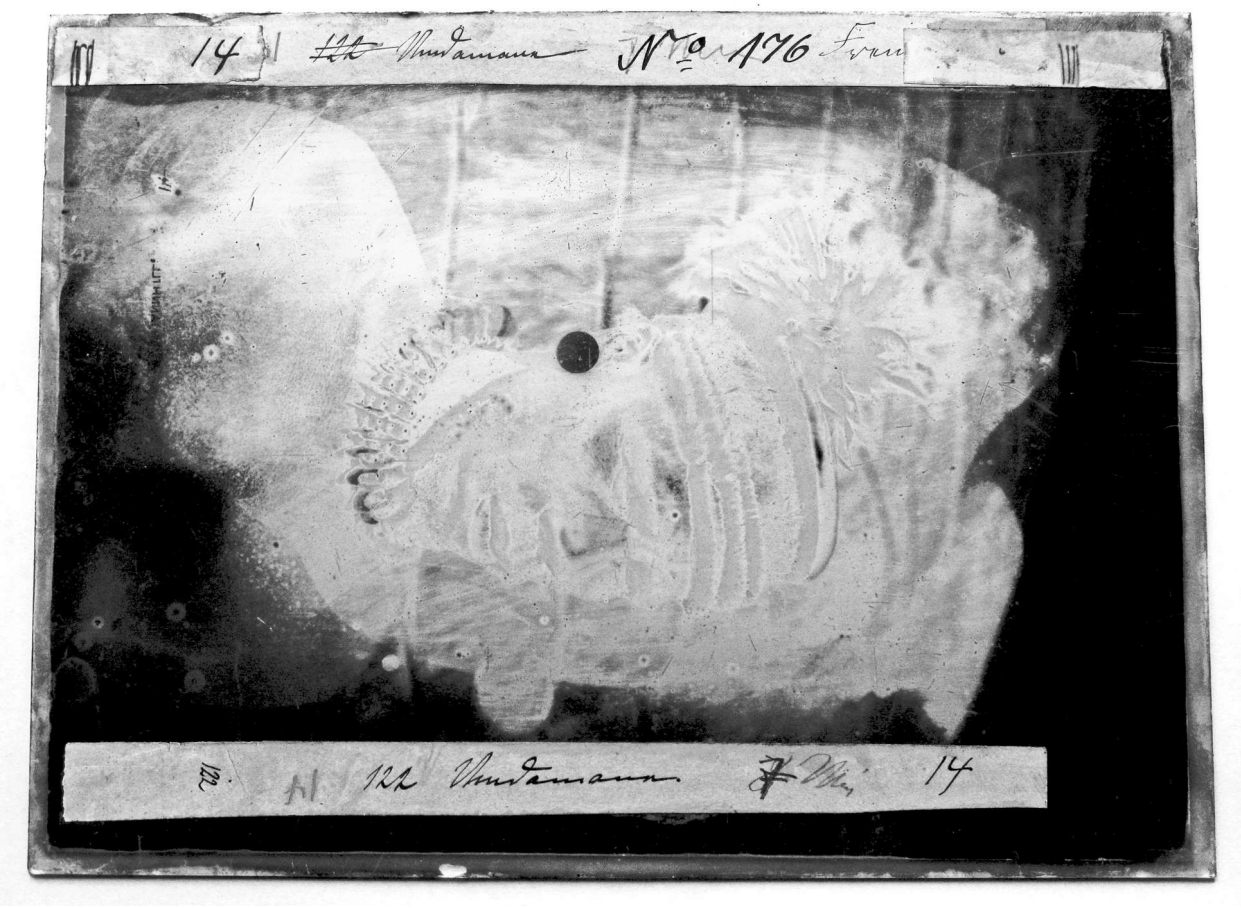


Figure 80: The inscribed side of the glass plate negative of Figure 79 (CMM Archives).

This photograph serves as an extended case, which will occupy us in this chapter and the next. The fact that multiple identities have been related to this one photograph, allowed me to connect their biographies between several discourses and timeframes. In early 1898, Müller offered this photograph, among many others, to several European ethnographic museums. His correspondence with a curator of Berlin's ethnological museum, Felix von Luschan, eventually prompted him to compile a booklet with descriptions for 114 photographs (Müller 1899). Here he introduced the depicted man as an *induna* ("minister or advisor"), of Chief Manzini. The text also locates the man close to the *Umhlatuzane* River near Mariannhill Monastery. By retrieving the original glass plate negative in the archive of Mariannhill Monastery, I came to know the man's name: Umdamane. As a very rare exception, the photographer considered this name important enough to inscribe it on a paper strip glued onto the negative (Figure 80). It was this very object of the glass plate negative, which allowed me to connect the space of the archive to the historical space near the Umhlatuzane River. As a material object it was the negative which had once shared spatial proximity with Umdamane, as well as the photographer, who was therefore able to inscribe the plate with the sitter's name. In this particular case, there appeared to

be no reason for me to question this claim to indexicality.

In 2007, the three coordinates of Umdamane's residence, his name, as well as his social position, brought me in contact with several members of the Phewa family. This family is known to have had *izinduna* in their lines, who served under the local chief Manzini. Without help of annotations, but according to the facial resemblance of the depicted, they identified the person on the photograph as a potential ancestor. Remarkable about this identification was that they selected him with absolute certainty from almost a hundred photographs I had brought along. Once a photographic *resemblance*, and thus the man's identity had been established, the portrait photograph, as well as the rest of the collection I had brought along, began to develop evidentiary power. In Chapter One I explained that not only within its own time, but in particular over temporal distance, photographic resemblance must be considered a claim used to justify identity. The members of the Phewa family did speak about several of the visible material culture items, but never referred to the man's extraordinary necklace. As we discussed the photograph's production date (1891), they applied the name Mpathwa Phewa to the depicted person, who allegedly was the head-*induna* of Chief Manzini. Manzini was Chief of the *Amanganga*, responsible for the people on the land where the mission station is now situated. The most striking authentication for the family, other than the resemblance, were Müller's annotations. These located the depicted person at the Umhlatuzane River. Also close to the Umhlatuzane River, at a place known as Emaus, so they told me, their ancestor Mpathwa was one of the first Africans, who had built a European-style house.[345]

The name Umdamane instead, written on the negative, did not sound familiar to any of the family's members. They justified the name with the persistent European practice of misspelling African names and concluded that the name could be a misinterpretation of one of Mpathwa's praise names: for example "Udubane", indicating that Mpathwa's influence reached as far as Durban. Furthermore, they thought that the wider collection of Mariannhill's photographs from the 1890s gave evidence that the local population was not starving or suffering in any way. Therefore they never were in need of the missionaries' presence or help. The collection of photographs we discussed, included depictions of African artisans, such as blacksmiths. For the family, these indicated the existence of autonomous technological production. This led to several perspectives on the relationship between Africans and Trappists, such as their economical cooperation, rather than a one-sided dependence on materials and knowledge from Europe. Obviously, so they stated, the missionaries also depended on African labour; co-dependence was a common phenomenon with Christian missions (Pels 1999), but neglected in Mariannhill's own hagiographies.

The family considered the fact that the missionaries had photographed "Mpathwa" as evidence that the historical relationship really existed. The initially positive relation was—according to Mpathwa's descendants—only violated during the implementation of the "Group Areas Act" of the 1950s. The Act led to the family's removal from the land where their ancestors

[345] Not to be confused with Mariannhill's filial station by the same name in East Griqualand.

had lived and which had been bought by Mariannhill Monastery in the 1880s. After 1994, the family accused Mariannhill Monastery of not having provided the proper title deed to secure the property for the African community. At the time of our encounter, the family was running a court case for a land claim against the monastery. This was settled in 2009 with leaving the claimants a part of land to the North of Mariannhill. By this time, however, the photograph could no longer be used as evidence, as it had already received a more dominant identification, which I describe below.

As a direct reaction to the sudden appearance of the photograph in 2007, the family had quickly appropriated a copy of "Mpathwa's" photograph in form of a telling montage. They had photocopied the portrait together with an image of the mission's founder, Abbot Franz Pfanner on an A4-size paper, thereby uniting them on one image surface as contemporaries in their own rights. Pfanner's image came from the cover of the only hagiography ever translated into Zulu (Balling and Khumalo 1983).[346] The family considered Pfanner as an ally of Mpathwa, as Pfanner had his own issues with European authorities. The ambivalence in Pfanner's standard hagiography appealed to the family, as he is said to have resigned in defiance, before his superiors could make him resign in 1892. For the family, this montage of two portraits on the same carrier served to inscribe, and to re-assemble a relationship that had allegedly existed in the past. Two photographs, both originally produced to propagate adventure and dependence across continents, had been re-appropriated within the current socio-political microcosm as evidence, as well as an object of empowerment.

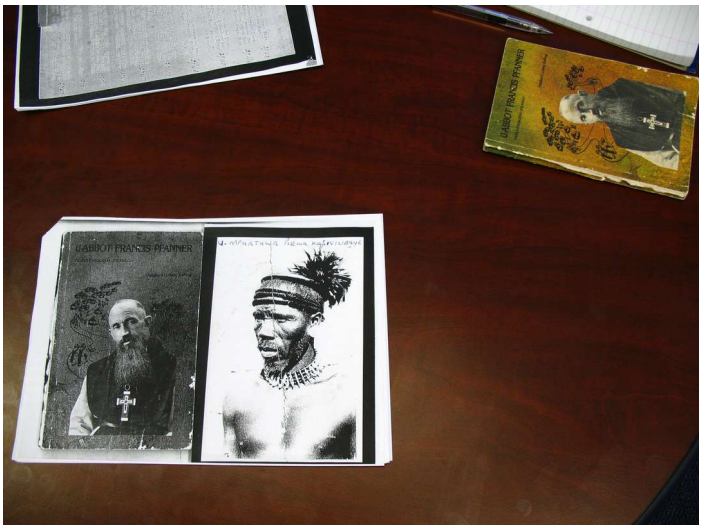


Figure 81: Abbot Franz Pfanner and "Mpathwa Phewa". To the right, the book by Balling and Khumalo (1983) from which the copy had been made (photograph by the author, 2007).

[346] The booklet had originally been published in German in 1960, before the first beatification process, and was republished in the late 1970s (Balling 1879). It was then translated into English (Balling 1980), from which the Zulu translation was crafted for the occasion of Mariannhill's centenary.

Several weeks after I had met the Phewa family, who had identified the photograph as their ancestor Mpathwa Phewa, I was able to meet the present *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga*, E. Bhekamanganga Shozi (Cf. Chapter Eight). Here I was introduced to his eldest *induna*, who, even before seeing the photograph, claimed to be the grandson of Manzini's *induna* by the name of Umdamane Zungu. Henceforth, more information accumulated around the photograph. *Induna* Zungu—most likely in his 80s—was, like his grandfather, an *induna* of the current *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga*. He recited the following story about his grandfather: Umdamane was a well known doctor and rainmaker among his people, which brought him great fame and influence; so much influence that it was beyond the liking of his chief. One day, when one of the chief's wives was sick, Umdamane had taken her to his homestead in order to treat her—without informing Chief Manzini. When she died unexpectedly, the chief's family decided that this was a legitimate motive to get rid of the potential usurper, and killed him.

In 1907, Müller published an article about rainmakers in the *Mariannhiller Kalender* (1907a), in which he presented a strikingly similar narrative about Umdamane: "Eight years ago [1898], close to Mariannhill, the Trappist Mission amongst the Kafirs, the famous doctor and rainmaker Umdamane was poisoned at the instigation of the former Chief Manzini, for no other reason than the fact that he achieved too much prestige with the people through his successes in rainmaking (Müller 1907a:90)".[347] It is very unlikely that *Induna* Zungu ever read Müller's version of the story, which is not only written in German, but also printed in gothic script, and never had a wide local circulation. Therefore the narrative of *Induna* Zungu appears to be an independent oral tradition, rather than being sourced from later textual accounts.

Eventually, the same photograph, which had previously been identified as "Mpathwa Phewa", received a second identification as "*Induna* Umdamane Zungu". This second identification even accommodated the inscription from the glass plate negative, and was finally approved of as authentic by the current *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga*, the great-grandson of Lokothwayo ka Manzini. It does not matter whether the application of the earlier identity was "correct" or "incorrect", "true" or "untrue". Crucial for the analyses of photographs is that they may accrue a certain strength of conviction by being positioned within social relations, depending on how they correspond with other photographs and traces. By bringing the photographs of the mission's founder Pfanner, and the *induna* cum doctor into spatial proximity, the family gave space to new narratives on two figures, who had initially been captured for Mariannhill's conversion story.

Had I not experienced this ambivalent identification of a photograph, I may never have made the acquaintance of *Inkhosi* Shozi, and I may have asked very different questions about Mariannhill's social past. I may never have learned about the existence of Mpathwa Phewa, an equally real and important character for the area's history, which I now briefly recount. Clemens Gütl (2005) studied the social and economic relationships between the Trappists and Africans at Mariannhill, and also described the establishment of the *Amakholwa* around Mariannhill. After a

[347] My own translation from the German original.

first failed attempt in 1891, a "Joseph Pfanner" was installed as the *induna* of Mariannhill's *Amakholwa* community in 1893. "*Induna*" thus not only denotes the "headman" of a chief or "*inkhosi*", as it was applied and understood within the governmental discourse, but the same term was equally applied to the early leaders of *Amakholwa*, ie. the "foremen" at missions, even before they had been established as proper government-recognised chiefdoms.

In cooperation with Gütl, I was able to confirm that "Joseph Pfanner" was in fact the baptismal name of Mpathwa Phewa. The Christian name may have been directly given to him by the Abbot, Franz Pfanner (also see Gütl 2005:282, 350).[348] Both the Zulu name and the European baptismal name were apparently used interchangeably, also with variations in spelling. Mpathwa also appears in Mariannhill's archive, as a recurring figure in the accounting books, receiving payments, made for work carried out at the monastery. In his capacity as "bricklayer" a "Joseph Pewa" was even summoned temporarily from Mariannhill to Centocow in 1889, as mentioned in Centocow's chronicle. And indeed, Pfanner had announced to the monastery council in July 1889 that he will send "Joseph Pfanner, one of our Black Christians, to East Griqualand, to use him there as supervisor, ranger, and missionary etc." (Zürrlein 1999:25). Mpathwa will also return as collector of "ethnographic" objects in Chapter Five. The most intimate relationship between Mpathwa Phewa and Abbot Franz Pfanner, however, evolved through the story told by his descendants. In 1909, Phewa was sent to collect Pfanner's dead body from his place of retirement at Emaus Mission in East Griqualand, in order to return it to Mariannhill. Mpathwa Phewa thus was a prominent historical person, and may even have been photographed by the Trappists. But other than Umdamane, he has never been identified in a photograph.

Once Chief Manzini of the *Amanganga* had died in 1899, there was less opposition to the Christian "separatists". The area was repeatedly struck by several draughts in the early 1890s, locust swarms from 1894 onwards, influenza in 1895, and eventually the devastating rinderpest zoodemic of 1897 (Lambert 1995:143ff). Gütl argues that due to the resulting impoverishment in the Umlazi Location to the South of Mariannhill, inter-tribal friction increased. Some Africans envisioned a solution to this complex problem by joining Mariannhill's *Amakholwa*. At this point, Fr. Ambrosius Hartes and Abbot Gerard Wolpert also succeeded in 1900 to install a Alois Cele as the "chief" of the Mariannhill *Amakholwa*, so that they could become an officially government-recognised chiefdom (Gütl 2005:394).

The missionaries initially selected converts on the basis of their capabilities, as defined by whether they were judged as reliable, trustworthy, and sincere in their faith. Potential friction in this regard was monitored by collecting and recording particular data. At Mariannhill Parish, as well as at the monastery's former outstations, such as Lourdes and Centocow, baptism-, marriage-, and death-registers from the earliest decades are still kept. Also canonical interactions, such as "stipends", payments made by people to priests for including their prayers in the sermon, or people who worked for the mission, entered respective records.

[348] Alternatively the name may have been taken on from someone of the abbot's family in Austria, who may have served as a name patron.

At Mariannhill's largest outstations Centocow and Lourdes Missions, book keeping practices differed according to the social circumstances at the respective mission. At Centocow, priests kept a so-called *liber familiarum*, of which copies remain for the 1920s and 1930s. Here the superior monitored the developments and relationships within those particular families, whose members had married at the mission. At Lourdes, priests developed a shared practise during the first decade of the 20th century, to meticulously enter into the marriage register whether the spouses were of "Zulu", "Baca", or "Inhlangwini" origin. The two local scenarios differed from the one at Mariannhill Monastery in so far that politically loaded tribal identifications abounded, and one saw a need to monitor the various antagonistic and competing groups and their relationships with each other, as well as those to the mission.

By conversion to Christianity, the previous identifications were eventually supposed to be absorbed in one *Amakholwa* identity. In the particular case of Lourdes Mission, the attempted transformation of people was in fact arrested in the very act of registering one of its stages (marriage as one of the holy sacraments). Instead of erasing the complex tribal relationships, the missionaries re-inscribed them. Some twenty years later, the government ethnologist Jacobus van Warmelo still considered the Umzimkhulu area, the land between Centocow and Lourdes, as a "tribal tangle" (1935:24). He had been in a close working relationship with Mariannhill's mission staff, and most likely also discussed these issues with them (cf. Chapter Seven).

The missionaries also registered Africans on photographs, but only in few cases, as the one of Umdamane, were they identified as individuals in the institutional privacy of the photographer's personal registration system. The social positions of Manzini's two *izinduna*, Umdamane Zungu and Fothsolo Dube, becomes clearer when we look at the earliest baptism register of Mariannhill Parish for the years 1884 to 1891.[349] These can be complemented with contemporary reports from the periodicals, governmental reports, as well as a contemporary map. This analysis will also clarify why Umdamane received photographic attention.

Umdamane already was *induna* of Manzini before the Trappists' arrival in 1882. He lived in "[his] own Kraal on the Umhlatuzana [River] beyond Pinetown". So did Umdamane state himself via an interpreter in 1881, when he appeared as witness in an investigation about a murder of an infant twin at the Umlazi Resident Magistrate's court.[350] He was approached as an authority and expert on "tradition", with the question whether the death of one of the children must be dealt with as accident, or as intentional infanticide according to "native custom". Next to his residence, Umdamane also identified himself as "an 'Induna' of Manzini".[351] The area to the West of Pinetown and north-west to Mariannhill is still today referred to as "*Zungu* Bush" by residents. Some Indian landowners told me that still today one could find "Zulu artefacts" in the undergrowth. As we already know, *Zungu* was Umdamane's "address name" or *isitakazelo*, and is today used as the family's surname. Like Umdamane's photograph, events like his

[349] See Gütl (2005:353-364) for a partial analysis of the registers.
[350] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/3-SNA_442/1881.
[351] Quotation marks as they appear in the original handwritten protocol.

interrogation present us with an impression of direct access to Umdamane. However, similar to the photograph, it is merely mediated through a textualisation of his speech, and the interpretation and translation from Zulu into English. Umdamane himself was illiterate. Like his chief Manzini, and even the *induna* of the *Amakholwa*, Mpathwa Phewa, he signed his transcribed statements with an "X".

What appears to be an early spectre of Umdamane, is narrated in a story by Pfanner, titled "*Sensation"*. It was published in the precursor to the *Vergißmeinnicht*, the first edition of the periodical *Fliegende Bätter aus Südafrika*. Pfanner recounted a conversation with a "lesser chief", immediately two days after the Trappist's arrival on the farm *Zeekoegat,* in late December 1882. Pfanner claimed jokingly to have recognised the visitor "as someone important" on first sight, for his "European dress, his spurs and his nice horse". He further described the man's exuberant excitement when he told him that his and other children will be instructed at the Trappist's school, but will also be trained in handicrafts, and all that free of costs. The man then immediately rode back to his homestead, so Pfanner, where he lived with his six wives. The homestead was "in some distance on a hill, looking down onto the monastery" (Pfanner 1883). According to the local topography, this could have only been the homestead of Umdamane, as I will deduce further below. This conversation was once more confirmed by Pfanner's secretary Biegner, even 30 years later. Biegner confirmed that the man's name was "u'Damani, a Kafir 'doctor'"(Biegner 1911:225).

Umdamane next appeared in an article in May 1885, as a "pighead, who also calls himself a doctor, has 10 wives, and soon wants to take two more. He generally lives in the expectation to become an important man one day" (Pfanner 1885a).[352] Pfanner did not mention Umdamane by name. He was however the only individual on Mariannhill's farms at the time, who matched all described characteristics. After "the pighead" had conceded to let two of his 12 year old sons attend Mariannhill's school, two priests took them from Umdamne's homestead. They were supposed to remain at Mariannhill within the newly introduced boarding system, and to be "educated, and christianised respectively". Indeed, one of Umdamane's sons was the only 13-year-old to be baptised in the months previous to the publication, and also the third person ever to be baptised at Mariannhill. As the idea of a boarding school was unclear to Umdamane, he approached the monastery two days later, with the hope to retrieve his children. Remaining unsuccessful himself, he soon sent the children's mothers. But also to them, so Pfanner, he would not return the children. When another father visited to claim his children, it came to a physical confrontation between the man and several Trappists, involving a *knobkerrie*: a wooden stick, which Pfanner eventually had to "confiscate".

Even if multiple cases of "abducted children" appeared over the following years, and even made it into the local press, as well as claims before the local magistrate (Gütl 2005), Umdamane continued to have his children baptised at Mariannhill over the next decade. His motives remain unclear, but he apparently considered the advantages to outweigh the

[352] My own translation from the German original.

disadvantages. Pfanner's description of Umdamane as "polygamous doctor" however would stick beyond the latter's death. Umdamane maintained a low profile over the following years and can only be traced two more times, apart from still existing photographs. Before we approach these occasions, I need to introduce the baptism register.

The very first person ever baptised at Mariannhill was a European male of 32 years from Berlin, Germany. He, and also the second baptised African woman, both were "re-conversions" of a previous Lutheran and a Wesleyan. The third person was the before-mentioned African boy of "approx." 13 years, holding the baptismal name Bonaventura Aloys Engel. The baptising priest, "Fr. Franz Prior", also noted the "*Locus ex quo oriendus*", the "place where he originated": "*vom Semering*". The register further indicates for "*Parentes ejus"*: "*Damani* (*Priester oder Doctor*) *Ethnicus, ejus mater ethnica*". The name of the father reappears in various spellings, which I believe to be early textualisations of the name Umdamane. Umdamane himself is indicated as father, but labelled with the common Latin term *Ethnicus*, thus "heathen" (cf. Lewis and Short 1958). In several instances the baptising priest added Umdamane's profession as "*Ethnicus Doctor*". Umdamane is the only person with such a detailed description in the entire baptism register.[353]

Also other baptisms of Umdamane's children, mainly girls, are recorded, and eventually even Umdamane's mother is listed among the early converts of his homestead. The children are listed with their new Christian names, and only occasionally with their original Zulu name. Other "*Parentes"* are identified as "*Wesleyani*", or "*Catholici*", instead of "*Ethnicus*", but always defined with or against a religious group in one way or another. The baptisms were never carried out individually, but up to 14 at a time. Pfanner occasionally described the organisation and performance of these mass conversions in the early periodicals, and at the same time presented similar information to the local magistrate. The missionaries presented such information in a straightforward way, and never adjusted it for respective audiences. As "*testes*" (witness) of the first baptisms, often served a Benjamin Makhaba from Basutoland (cf. Gütl 2005:302). Next to Fotsholo, Makhaba was another intermediary, whom Bryant (1887) mentioned as crucially instrumental, together with Fr. Hyacinth Salomon, during the first attempts of instruction and ministry.

On the register's second page, the category "*locus ex quo oriendus*" is changed into "*locus ubi habitat*", the place, where the baptised person lived. It is restricted to Mariannhill's two farms, "Zeekoegat" and "Klaarwater". As I explained at the beginning of Chapter Three, at least since 1884 the missionaries started naming every single hill and valley on their farms after Biblical, European, Middle Eastern, and Asian topographic formations. Eventually, in 1888 one of the missionaries drew a very detailed map of the farms (Figure 67) with the by now

[353] The earliest baptism register exists in at least two versions. At one point after 1907, Mariannhill Monastery transferred a copy to the nearby Parish church, once it had become independent from the monastery. In this process, the original Latin register was translated, and then transcribed into a new volume. But in the process crucial information was dropped, such as the Latin identifications I just described. The original Latin register was transferred to the CMM Archives in Rome.

established nomenclature, but also indicating African homesteads: a clear distinction was made by marking "traditional" dome-shaped "beehive-huts" as circles, and European-style houses as squares. We thus find in the register that baptised people (not only children) resided at the *Himalaya*, *Karpathen*, *Schafkopf*, or like Umdamane's children, at the *Semmering*. The latter name refers to a mountain pass and holiday resort in Austria, and was applied by Pfanner to an elevation exactly one and a half miles to the West of Mariannhill Monastery, with a walking distance of maybe 45 minutes. The baptism register indicates that most of Umdamane's children lived at this homestead. Today the same elevation is still the highest point in the area, and for this reason holds several water reservoirs. In the 1888 map, the *Semmering* instead features a homestead with nine huts, one of only two homesteads of such dimension on both farms. This was Umdamane's main residence.[354]



Figure 82: original caption: "*Mariannhill Süd Africa. Heidnischer Kraal 123*". Umdamane's homestead, approx. 1891 (NMVW-A15-111).

[354] Children of Umdamane also lived at the *Kap,* a bend in the Umhlatuzane River, just underneath Mariannhill's table mountain, about one and a half miles to the North-West of Mariannhill Monastery.

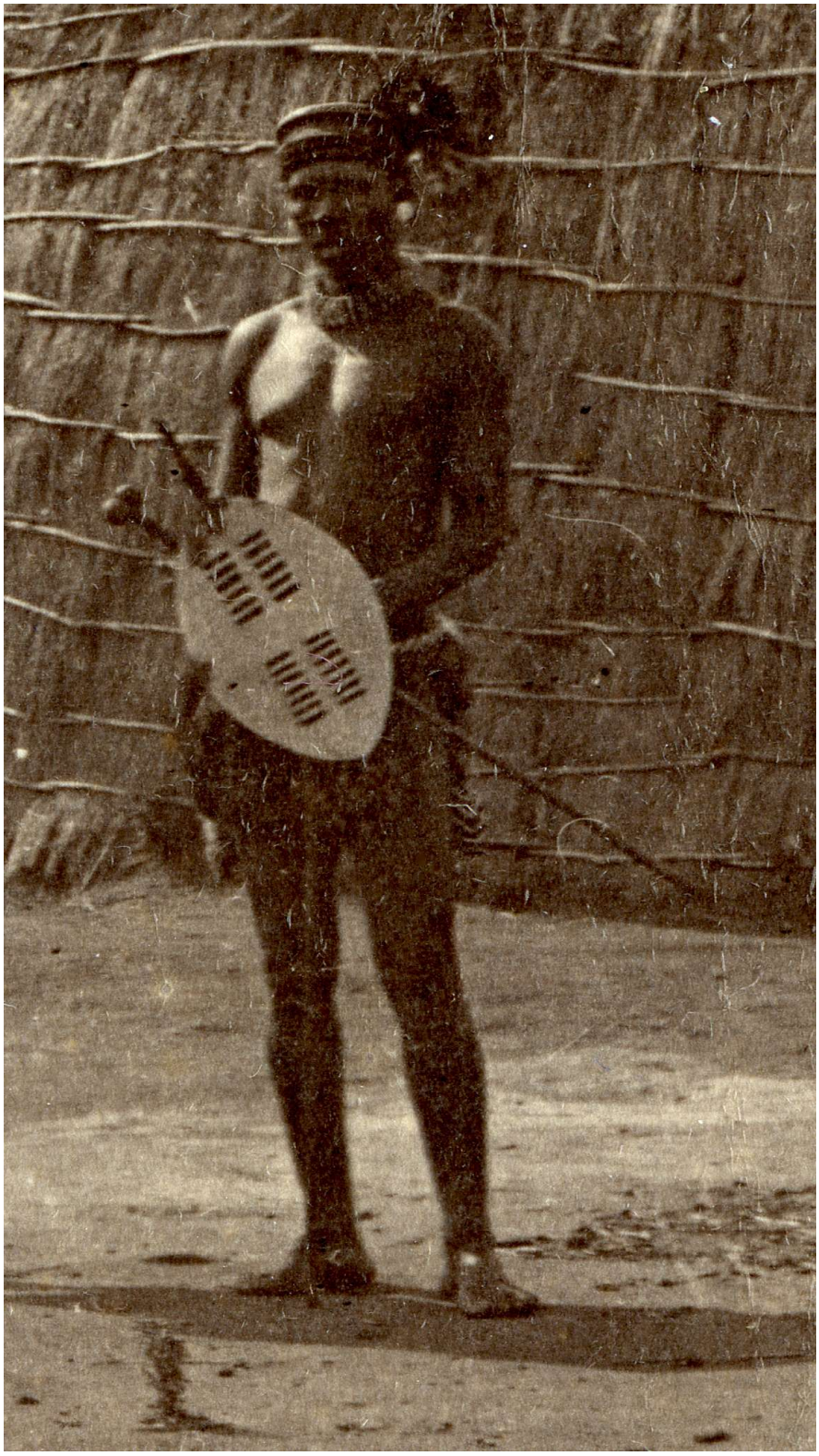


Figure 83: detail of Figure 82.



Figure 84: detail of Figure 82.

The combination of sources also enables us to identify a photograph of Umdamane's homestead on the *Semmering* (Figure 82). Here we can see Umdamane to the very right, holding a small shield (Figure 83). In his catalogue (1899), Müller counted 11 huts for this homestead, and presented Umdamane (without mentioning his name) as the "*umnumzane* [Kraal head]". Umdamane is wearing the exact same head gear as in the photograph above (Figure 79). Also the light conditions and the original numbering system do match. We can therefore be certain that both photographs were taken during the same occasion. To the left of Figure 82 we see the homestead's cattle enclosure, and in the centre, four children engaged in stick fights.

The most curious element of the image, however, is a faint trace just to the left of the two smaller fighting boys. Close examination of the print reveals the silhouette of a retouched figure, whose outline matches a monk's cloak (Figure 84). This is the only case with such a drastic intervention I was able to trace so far. It is therefore exceptional that the photographer went to such an effort as to laboriously eradicate a confrere from the negative, while he let them be on others. The representation of the relationship between missionaries and their subjects as necessary co-dependence, which I described in Chapter One, was thus not desired in all instances. In this case the presence of a priest in a homestead—to teach, baptise, or to take photographs—apparently did not fit the caption of a "heathen kraal", which is inscribed at the photograph's lower right. When Müller sold this photograph to ethnographic museums in 1899, it came together with others that indeed showed encounters between missionaries with Africans in similar homesteads. Therefore we may also consider it as an experiment, which turned out to be too laborious and time-consuming in order to be repeated. As I explained in Chapter One, Müller soon learned that it was much easier to stage his photographs according to his own ideas, rather than to rely on the insecurities of snapshot photography and extensive retouching.

The photograph allows the localisation of Umdamane's portrait (Figure 79) in the spatial environment of his homestead, and again the localisation of his homestead on the map and in textual descriptions. This map, combined with the baptism register, not only indicates that Mariannhill (at least for the first ten years) tolerated non-Catholics on their ground, but also that spatial and social relations to Umdamane were extremely close for some time. The textual proximity of the written record in form of baptism registers can thus be correlated to the spatial, as well as the visual proximity of the photographic image. Umdamane depended on the Trappists benevolence to tolerate him on their farm as a non-Christian. According to this fact, he conceded to have his children baptised, and to engage with the missionaries on the smallest common denominator. Even though Umdamane never converted to Catholicism himself, those proximities made the photographic engagement possible.

The Phewa family initially did not recognise Mpathwa's role as *induna* of the *Amakhowla,* but instead conferred with the at the time apparently more attractive identity inscribed by Müller as *induna* of Manzini. As we will see, historically both "*induna*-ships" were in some way antagonists. Mariannhill Missionaries considered the *Amanganga Induna* Umdamane Zungu as antagonistic "pagan traditionalist", while the *Amakholwa induna* Mpathwa

Phewa was an antagonist to the non-Christian *Amanganga* Chief. It was thus the double-identification of a single portrait, which introduced me to the constructions of these past and present binaries. The photograph had literally served as an imagined "contact zone", between the Phewas, the Shozis and myself; as such it opened up new historical spaces.

Snuffing with Lokothwayo



Figure 85: original caption: "3*91. Kafferchief Lokotwayo & Indunas*", approx. 1895 (CMM Archives).

Just like the last, the next three sections deal with photographic occasions in particular contact zones involving the Trappists, their potential and actual African subjects, as well as government representatives. Each zone's particularities allowed for the production of different knowledge, during the time of the photographs' production, as well as during my fieldwork. Traces accumulating around the following photographs make it even clearer that familiarity during a photographic occasion could only be established outside of the restrictive monastic compound, or inside of the photographic studio. The monastery's and mission's ground were instead controlled by the script of the guided tour, the discipline of the Trappist rule, and the discipline of governmental rule. Away from the monastery and the mission stations, a certain sociability could manifest itself in the act of sharing certain pastimes and consumption goods. Also inside of the studio, whatever seemed appropriate could be performed, and even recreated with the help of props and backdrops.

Distinguishing such spaces will enable us to connect photographs and individuals, but also to explore the mediating role of objects within their relationships, either as social objects, or as theatrical props. In this Chapter I only deal with the explicit role of objects in social

relationships and their photographic performance, their "backstory" before entering a repository (Hamilton 2011, also see Chapter Five). One may of course argue that also photographing an object is an act of archiving, thus arresting the "backstory" as part of an object's biography. Photographs may still provide us with traces of an everyday object's social life, in order to reassemble aspects of the relationship between Africans, Trappists, and other social actors. In such situations, we will not be able to rely on existing material culture studies, as these commonly discuss objects in ethnic categories. Instead I hope to tease out the relational dimension of these objects during photographic performances. When discussing Mariannhill's museum in Chapter Five, I instead deal with the institutionalised process of collecting, exhibiting, and consequently photographing objects in a musealised state.

The photograph under discussion only exists once as a contemporary print in the Roman CMM archives. The print is captioned at the bottom of the image as "*391. Kafferchief Lokotwayo & Indunas*". The first and only time the photograph has been published was in the booklet for the monastery's 25th anniversary (Frey 1907:153). Not only was it published without a caption underneath the photograph, but even the caption in the image had been erased for this purpose. Although the photograph is not dated, it is possible to place it in a chronological narrative, due to various instances of resemblance. It is one of only two photographs in the collection that depicts a meeting between Trappists and a leader of an African community.[355]

We can see eight men, five Africans and three Trappists. Two of them are lay brothers, while the man in the white habit is a priest. The central three Black men are wearing long coats, and the two sitting elderly men even wear head rings. Their difference in dress led many of my interviewees to the conclusion that they were dignitaries of some kind. Descendants of Umdamane and Lokothwayo eventually identified the standing man in the centre as Lokothwayo, by cross-referencing resemblance of face and objects in other photographs. Lokothwayo had officially succeeded his father Manzini as *inkhosi* in 1900 (see above and Chapter Eight). The identification of Lokothwayo by his descendants, however, contradicted other opinions that he must be either one of the two sitting men. Others thought that the two men's senior standing is indicated by their head rings. But as I will explicate in Chapters Five and Seven, a head ring was foremost a sign of the wearer's relationship to, and his dependance on his chief. The chief himself was apparently not obliged to wear a head ring. Lokothwayo's descendants eventually identified the two elderly men with head rings as two of Lokothwayo's *izinduna*.

[355] The second photograph was taken at Mariazell Mission near Matatiele, but due to the fact that it was not possible to trace the identity of the chief, I will not discuss it here.



Figure 86: detail of Figure 85: man resembling Umdamane.

I was told that Lokothwayo would have inherited the two *izinduna* from his father, who then guided him while gathering experience. The *induna* to the left constitutes yet another familiar presence: he has an unmistakable resemblance with Umdamane, the *induna* of Manzini, whose identity was finally attributed to the portrait photograph, which had first brought me in contact with the descendants of Mpathwa Phewa (Figure 79). For the occasion of this photograph, Umdamane did not wear his leopard claw choker, or any other detachable adornment, which he had worn for his portrait in 1891.

Equally through cross-referencing of photographs, the Trappist to the left could be identified as Fr. Hyacinth Salomon (1867-1904), a Polish priest, who was one of the first Mariannhill Missionaries in Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia). Salomon had joined the monastery three months before A.T. Bryant in 1883, and is like the latter known as one of the first members to be proficient in Zulu. According to Bryant, Salomon was the first to catechise at the school, and was thus together with Bryant and Benjamin Makhaba one of Mariannhill's first active missionaries (Bryant 1887:76, 80-81). Probably his early acquaintance with the *Amanganga* and a proficiency in Zulu were the reasons for his involvement in the photographic occasion of Figure 85.

But after all, there is a problem to reconstruct the photograph's production date: both Umdamane and Manzini are said to have died in 1898 and 1899 respectively: Manzini's death has been recorded in governmental records, such as Lokothwayo's report to the local magistrate (Gütl 2005:343). According to Müller, Umdamane was murdered at the instigation of Manzini in 1898 (Müller 1907a). Lokothwayo's official inauguration as Chief by the British Government took place in 1900, after Manzini had declared to the government already by 1884 that Lokothwayo would be his rightful successor (Gütl 2005:344-345). Also Fr. Hyacinth's presence constitutes a temporal constraint. He was ordained, and therefore wearing his full Trappist habit only in 1892. After 1895, he served at other stations than Mariannhill, and eventually died in April 1904. It is therefore most likely that the photograph was taken during these years of his presence at Mariannhill until 1895. The fact that Lokothwayo is here identified as chief, while his father was still alive, may be simply explained with the possibility that the caption was only applied after 1900.

I further suggest that the photograph was taken on the ground of the Mission's mill and workshop, which still exists a few kilometres to the South-East of the monastery. This can be concluded from the fact that two of the lay brothers are wearing aprons of the type that was used at the mill. Also, one of the brothers can be recognised on another photograph taken in front of the mill. It follows that the photographer and his equipment were not readily available at the mill, but had to be summoned from the monastery. To reach the mill with his equipment would have taken him at least 45 minutes. This indicates that the meeting must have been planned beforehand, or that the photographer happened to be at the mill by accident. In any way, the occasion was considered as important enough to be captured photographically.

Several photographs taken in about 1900 show women delivering maize to the mill. Even

decades later, so I was told by locals, women still took their "mealies [maize]" to the mill, where they could have them ground. The place was thus approached for practical and economic reasons. Africans were of course long involved in a money economy, but may have paid their "hut tax" to the Trappists in form of mealies, or may have bartered for other goods (Gütl 2005:368). The buildings of the mill were not only used for grinding corn, but also housed the printing press and other artisan workshops.

Some of the *Amanganga*, those along with Manzini, who did not intend to become *Amakholwa*, withdrew early to the native reserve South of the River Umlazi, several miles from Mariannhill. Others, who were not eager to leave their plots, but at the same time did not conform to Trappist conduct, were expelled in an increasingly forcible process during the 1890s. Thus while some people were attracted, and others kept at bay, the mill constituted an intermediate space between the mission as centre and the periphery of the native reserves. At the same time, this would also have given the missionaries the possibility to better monitor who dwelled in their realm, who entered it, and who left it (cf. Gütl 2005:395-301). According to the various interests of the involved communities, the mill was an important point of encounter, or a "contact zone" (Pratt 2008 [1992]) in the relationship of Trappists and Africans, where goods, but also ideas were exchanged.

As performed in the photograph, and exemplified by the act of taking it, meetings between missionaries and their interlocutors were not only religiously motivated. Next to economic exchange, the contact zone of the mill allowed for social interaction and the exchange of luxury goods. Intimate contact is closely connected to the act of performance, and was often intended by the missionaries in this regard, in order to prove good deeds. One may think for example of photographs of attending to the sick in medical care or ministry, the act of baptism, or religious sisters handing out bread and soup, and caressing children (cf. Pels 1999).

In this particular case, however, we still do not know what the conversation was about, or why the photograph was taken in the first place. While it is obvious in other photographs, there is no indication for the photograph under discussion to what degree people perform for the camera. Despite this uncertainty, I consider the image as a historical social situation, and therefore analyse various details as being captured unintentionally. The three Trappists, the Chief, and the two senior sitting men seem to be engaged in conversation. The two African bystanders, and the senior man sitting to the left, are looking directly into the camera. The Trappist priest is depicted addressing the chief, who himself appears to be reclining and receptive. The sitting *induna* to the left, whom I believe to be Umdamane, is holding up an unidentifiable object. The central sitting lay brother hands another object to Lokothwayo. To the right, the sitting *induna* and the standing brother each handle yet two more objects. Scrutinising the respective details in high resolution, reveals the main substance of interest as dried tobacco or "snuff", as well as the paraphernalia required for its consumption. Lokothwayo takes a dash from the brother's snuff container (Figure 87), which the latter holds out with his left hand. The *induna* to the right clearly handles a snuff spoon in his right hand (Figure 88). Also the lay brother to the right holds an object resembling a

snuff spoon of a darker material in his right hand (Figure 89).



Figure 87: detail of Figure 85. Lay brother presenting a snuff container to Lokothwayo.

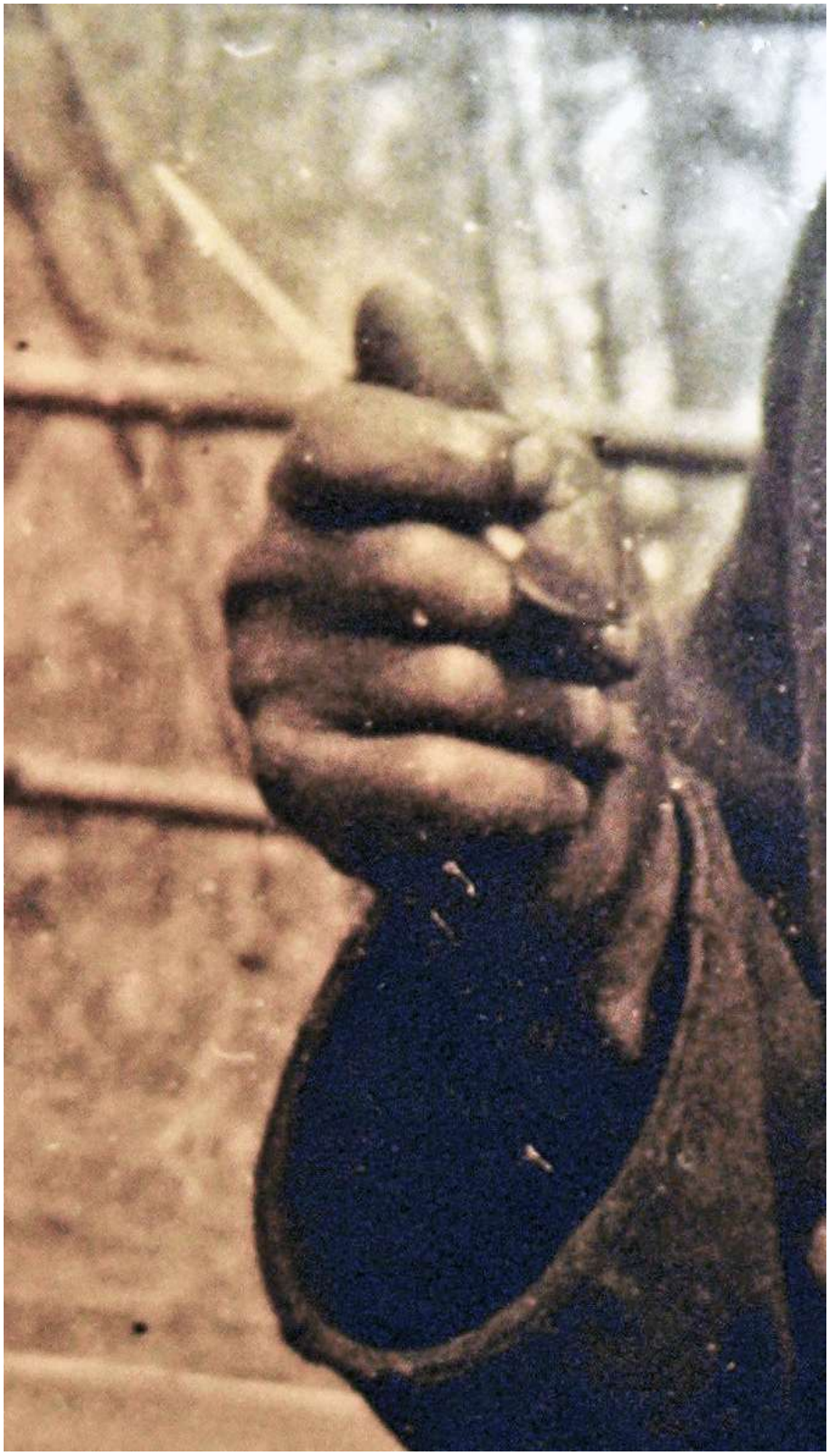


Figure 88: detail of Figure 85. *Induna* to the right, handling a snuff spoon.



Figure 89: detail of Figure 85. Lay brother to the right, handling a snuff spoon.

Scholars have so far only discussed the consumption of snuff tobacco in 19th century Natal and Zululand regarding musealised snuff spoons and snuff boxes (Nettleton 2016; Wanless 1991; also see Krige 1965 [1936]; Shaw 1935, 1938). Whenever these authors attempted a social analysis, they have fallen back on, and generalised from the few existing textual sources of the mid-19th century. Instead, I attempt a brief interpretation of the photograph, taken around 1895 against several textual accounts of the following years. The photographic scene matches some of the contemporary textual descriptions of visits by Trappists to the homesteads of chiefs close to Mariannhill Monastery (eg. Anon. 1898:53, Anon. 1899:84). The Trappists brought along the highly appreciated substance as gift and social catalyser. Accordingly, they describe the distribution of snuff through the hierarchy of the homestead, along the chief's *izinduna* and his wives, thereby rendering visible the conventions of re-distribution and the submissiveness of commoners to their chief. Apparently, in one of the cases cited above, the offering Trappist had even brought along his own snuff spoon.

As far as the photograph is concerned, this suggests that the exchange and consumption of this particular substance was taking place in a situation of mutual interest and enjoyment. Ann Wanless (1991:132) states that with Natal Africans there was a clear connection between powerful men, the articulation of their power, and the distribution of snuff to their commoners. Tracing her account back via her citation of the anthropologist Eileen Krige (1965 [1936]:60), who again cited the British missionary Rev. Joseph Shooter (1857:224), we learn that "when a [powerful] man furnishes snuff for a party, he usually pours a large quantity into his left hand, and holds it for the others to take pinches as they may require, but without looking at them". I am not indicating that the interaction of the lay brother and Lokothwayo—even though it matches the description perfectly—must be interpreted positivistically according to a narrative that precedes if for almost 40 years. Rather, I mean to say that the Trappists as hosts of the occasion, and in particular in their role as landowners, were indeed in a position to perform their power by distributing snuff. Many of Manzini's, and later Lokothwayo's subject's, had to rely on the Trappist's goodwill, even if the chiefs themselves no longer lived on their land.

In total opposition to this practice of sociability, but nevertheless through a similar description, the retired Abbot Franz Pfanner lamented in 1900 about the Trappists own excessive use of snuff tobacco. Like smoking, snuff was forbidden by the Trappist rule, so Pfanner, and he considered its "passionate, lavish, and ostentatious" consumption since his deposition in 1892 as "unhygienic, annoying, and costly". He added that "wherever the snuffers gather, the snuff box will soon play a role. Often with ridiculous gesticulations, it is presented to the bystanders […]". The Trappists' open handling of the substance in front of their subjects, so he argued, eventually undermined any attempt to eradicate its consumption with the African converts during mass, who "blithely reach out for their boxes, once they consider the sermon as too tedious" (Pfanner 1900:44).[356] Despite Pfanner's criticism, and his claim that snuff was forbidden by the Trappist rule, the original Trappist rule itself includes snuff tobacco and containers in its sign language vocabulary (Bonaventura 1887:365). Had snuff not been part of a common practice at European monasteries, it would have hardly been included in a rather limited list of signs, which had been devised to deal with matters of a disciplined daily monastic routine.

These related discourses allow us to perceive the photographic occasion in its multiple dimensions: first, snuff would have eased both the photographic production and the conversation, even if we do not know its subject matter; if the conversation was not about snuff, then photography must have been part of it at some point. The distribution of snuff could also have eased the taking of the photograph in terms of an exchange, while in effect constituting the photograph's subject matter. The same occasion may also have constituted one of the moments in which the Trappists acquired snuff spoons and snuff boxes for their museum, some of which are still there today (cf. Chapter Five).

[356] My own translation from the German original.

The Performance of Colonial Power at Centocow Mission

Once the construction of Centocow's new church had started in 1911 (cf. Chapter One), Müller visited the mission at least twice to take photographs; first in February 1912, and once more in December 1913 to early 1914. Even though the missionaries of Centocow had regular contact with African authorities, as testified in the mission's chronicle and the periodicals, there is not one single named portrait of any of the local chiefs, or of any other identified individual, as they exist at Mariannhill.[357] At the monastery, due to the photographic studio's proximity to the available contact zones I described earlier, the photographers were able to build closer relationships with chiefs and their *izinduna*. This allowed for "honorary portraits" (cf. Bank 2008, Sekula 1986), such as those of Umdamane and Lokothwayo (Chapter Eight). Like in the previous example of the snuff spoons, I will here attempt to render visible the agency of one particular object in social relations through its photographic performance.

The following photographic occasion is exceptional for both Mariannhill and Centocow for yet another reason. It is the only occasion of the entire collection depicting an encounter between government representatives and Africans through Müller's lens. It is also one of only two instances in which a chief was photographed at or near Centocow. However, these photographs were taken not as individual portraits, but as group photographs.[358] Other than the undated genre photographs I described in Chapter One, and similar to the photograph of the meeting between Lokothwayo and the Trappists, such a datable photograph serves as an entry point to Centocow's micro-politics. At the same time, it allows us to understand the work of photographs and other objects in the social relationships between missionaries, government, and African subjects. The occasion in which the following three photographs were taken, was constituted within a *préterrain* of complex social relationships and negotiations of magistrates from two districts, the missionaries at Centocow, three different African chiefdoms, as well as the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller from Mariannhill. The reconstruction of this occasion was only possible because the interaction of participants in the event produced particular traces. Like in the previous case at Mariannhill's mill, an evolving social network determined the production of photographs. Reverberations of a "photographic tradition" from this occasion will appear in Chapter Seven.

On 21 February 1912, Müller took several photographs, of which at least the following three survived. Two articles in the *Vergißmeinnicht* (Pellazino 1912, Hanisch 1913) and one in *The Natal Witness* of 1 March (Clark 1912) reported on this occasion at large: the two magistrates, J.F. Clark of Bulwer, and F.A. Farrer of Ixopo[359], visited Centocow Mission,

[357] Few photographs of two other chiefs living near Mariannhill's stations close to the Drakensberg do exist. Only one of these chief has been identified. Although Müller's sojourns were relatively brief, opportune occasions must have presented themselves to take photographs of these men. As the involvement of these photographs in my discussion would have required extensive research on yet two more localities, I decided to focus only on Mariannhill and Centocow.

[358] The second occasion was the "first-fruit festival" in 1899 (cf. Chapter One).

[359] The very next day after the court hearing, Magistrate Farrer returned to Ixopo early in the morning. He had to

apparently for the purpose of holding a so-called "branch court". Additionally, the missionaries organised a festive program in honour of their guests. Br. Adrian Pellazino explained their motivation as follows:

> For obvious reasons every missionary wants to be on good terms with his magistrate, because the latter has a considerable influence on all things concerning the mission, directly and indirectly. On the indicated day, even two of these gentlemen honoured our mission station with their visit. Therefore, we considered it as appropriate to prepare a little ovation.[360] (Pellazino 1912:222)

This "little ovation" in fact consisted of a "grand promenade concert", including a brass band and choir, arranged by Centocow's two resident priests, Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger and Fr. Emanuel Hanisch, who had earlier been responsible for the theatre choreographies at Mariannhill Monastery (cf. Chapter One). Next to "the large attendance of natives, numbering between two and three hundred people" (Clark 1912), "about a dozen white colonists" were present (Pellazino 1912). The event was rounded off with a performance of the British National Anthem.

The magistrates' visit had to be planned some time ahead, in order to prepare the "ovation" accordingly. Therefore, also the photographer was able to anticipate the occasion, and accordingly arranged several things in advance. In a letter, sent one week ahead, Magistrate Clark proposed to Fr. Emanuel Hanisch "to drive to Centocow this time and [that he] shall pick up Mr. Farrer at Creighton" in the evening before the meeting. The key for the gate, so Clark, "might be left at the nearest Kafir kraal".[361] In the same letter, Clark also reconfirmed with Hanisch that the mission's "photographer had requested [of him earlier] to summon a rather large crowd of natives to show up at the mission station". As a backstage scenario, this letter attests to considerable familiarity and trust between magistrate, missionaries, and Africans, as far as practical arrangements were concerned. At the same time, we also learn more about the purpose of the photographs on the frontstage: Müller intended to compose an interesting scenario for the mission's propaganda periodicals.

attend to matters relating to the succession dispute I described in Chapter Three, for which he served on a committee.

360 My own translation of the German original.

361 CMM-AR: Letter, Clark to Hanisch, 15.02.1912. It is unclear whether magistrate Clark drove a horse cart or a motor car. Mariannhill missionaries only acquired motor cars in the early 1920s.



Figure 90: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Kaffr*.[*ische*] *Gerichtssitzung Centocow 1912*"—"Kafir court hearing Centocow 1912". Magistrate of Polela District, J.F. Clark, residing over a court case at Centocow Mission on 21 February 1912 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, published in *Vergißmeinnicht* 1913:12).



Figure 91: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Gerichtssitzung Centocow 1912*"—"Court hearing Centocow 1912". Second version, magistrate of Polela District, J.F. Clark, residing over a court case at Centocow Mission on 21 February 1912 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, unpublished).

The first of the three photographs I wish to discuss was eventually the only one published in a short article by Fr. Emanuel (Hanisch 1913). It shows a court hearing, resided over by J.F. Clark, magistrate of the Polela Division. Seated behind a desk with a finely embroidered tablecloth, he points his pen at two accused men in long dark coats. Before him on the table are two file books and a glass of ink. He is accompanied by two White and four Black policemen.[362] In the ironic style common to the periodicals, Hanisch wrote that "as can be seen in the photograph" (Figure 90), Clark is just about to sentence the "two sinners" before him to six months in prison with forced labour, for having "appreciated the national beverage too much during a wedding feast, and for henceforth having beaten several holes into the skull of a tribal companion".[363] Through the illustrated article in their propaganda periodical, the mission could visually demonstrate to

[362] Hanisch identified the two White men as Policeman Labranche and Police Sergeant Collis (Hanisch 1913). Magistrate Clark identified them as "Sergeant Collis, N.P. [Natal Police], [and] Tpr. [Trooper] Terblanche" (Clark 1913). Assuming that Clark knew the men serving under him better than Fr. Emanuel, I will refer to the trooper as Terblanche.

[363] My own translation from the German original (Hanisch 1913:12). I was not able to retrieve related documents on this particular court case in the National Archives.

audiences in South Africa and Europe their relationships with two groups: a relationship of discipline with the African subjects, and one of cooperation with the government.

Another unpublished photograph was taken during the same occasion and shows a very similar *mise en scène*: the same White protagonists and Black policemen perform in a similar way, but in a different location. As Clark apparently tried multiple cases over the day, other African men than in the previous case are on trial, and the audience now includes nine men with head rings, as well as two women. Like the previous photograph, this one appears to have been taken from a slightly elevated position, in order to guarantee the visibility of all vertically arranged protagonists. Both photographs are furthermore arranged according to Müller's balanced style of composition, suggesting that he had some say in the setting of the scene. In the second case, the location was apparently shifted for better lighting conditions, which may be gathered from the fact that the scene appears in bright sunlight. It may therefore be that the previous photograph (Figure 90) was taken at a later point, as the sky in it appears to be heavily clouded. Due to bad weather conditions, the following festive events eventually had to be relocated to the new church, which was still under construction at the time (Clark 1912, Pellazino 1912). The accompanying festive musical programme had been arranged for the visit of the two magistrates. It consisted of a concert, as well as speeches by both Clark and Hanisch to the gathered Black and White visitors, both stressing the positive relationships and the great success of the mission in educating their African subjects.

The relationships between the three groups of protagonists become apparent on various other levels than the often biased descriptions in the mission's periodicals. They can be retraced in the photographs, through the later circulation of the photographs, as well as through other relatable sources. In the first photograph (Figure 90), the two men before the table are guarded by an African policeman, who is shouldering a stick, a spear, as well as a *knobkerrie*. When on daily duty, Black policemen were not allowed to carry guns at the time.[364] Three more Black policemen are observing the scene from the right of the table. To the left of the table and directly opposite of it, two groups of altogether 30 African men either squat or kneel in a semicircle. In the first photograph, most men are wearing full suits, while in the second, several men appear to have combined their *umutsha* with long dark coats. The latter was a minimum requirement "by police order" for the appearance before court, as Hanisch pointed out in his description of the first photograph (Hanisch 1913).

On both photographs, the same man can be seen seated on a chair next to the table. In his letter to Hanisch, Clark mentioned that he had "commanded" both the *Amakholwa* Chief (Anton) Wofi (Duma), as well as Chief Mjila (Memela) of the *Amakhuze*, to attend the event, and to

[364] Possibly restrictions were even tightened, once it was anticipated that armed black policemen would desert and join the rebells during the 1906 "Bambatha Rebellion" (cf. Stuart 1913:422). Already the 1906 *Revised Rules and Regulations*, issued by the Natal Police Forces, stated on page 8, under section 51, that "[u]pon ordinary duty and patrol revolvers only will be carried by the European District Police. Indian and Native Police carrying knobkerries or assegais should have Section 46 carefully explained to them." Section 46 explains their responsibility to justify any deadly use of the weapons carried.

"invite as many of their men as can spare the time to go to Centocow", because "the photographer wanted a large crowd".[365] In his article, Hanisch identified the man on the chair as "the chief of the Centocow Christians". Wofi was a former subject of the paramount *Amabhaca* Chief Bhekukupiwa of the Ixopo and Ipolela Divisions, and had been appointed as chief[366] of the *Amakholwa* community at Centocow in 1896.[367] Due to his new affiliation with the Trappists—similar to Fotsholo at Mariannhill—Wofi was consequently shunned and harassed by Bhekukupiwa and his followers, as the chief still considered Wofi as "his dog".[368]

Available sources on the political and social past of the Centocow region for the time before the first World War rest in official archives, or are scattered over the mission's repositories. Oral history of the area, as I heard it, only starts with concrete events of the early 1930s, while genealogies indeed reach further back in time. Colonial texts, but also the stories I was told, were often the outcome of attempts to control, and even more often inscriptions of the resulting conflicts between African groups. These have often been labelled as "native unrest" or "faction fights" (cf. Hamilton, Mbenga and Ross 2010). The two photographs supposedly show moments of colonial domination and intervention, in which a magistrate creates the documents as a reaction to such moments of "unrest". In the case of the first photograph, Hanisch further defined such a moment as a brawl during a wedding. Apparently, it would be such documents as photographed on Clark's table that were later on archived, and thus available for interpretation. Our concern, however, is to determine the status of the discussed photographs as both source and trace. As I already explained, and further evaluate below, the photographs are themselves an outcome of the very particular social setup at Centocow.

Therefore we need to realise that the production of the discussed photographs had different conditions than the production of the textual documents such occasions usually brought forward. As we could see already, the photographs were not only an outcome of a disciplinary measure, but even more so of well-adjusted politics. All three parties, the missionaries, the representatives of government, and the *Amakholwa* Chief Wofi with his followers met—even if not exclusively for this purpose—in order to perform a court hearing for Müller's camera. Even if an actual trial may have been held after all, it could only be turned into a good photographic performance due to the possibility for adequate preparations. As we could see, these preparations relied on the fact that the three parties had developed good (or at least working) relationships. These not only allowed for briefing the magistrates some time ahead, but also for having the local chiefs summon as many photographic protagonists as possible. *Amakholwa*, as well as *Amakhuze* were both antagonistic to the *Amabhaca*, and therefore could rely on the government and the missionaries, given that they complied with the latters' demands. Both government and missionaries instead considered Chief Bhekukupiwa of the *Amabhaca*—as well as his successors after his death in 1910—difficult to deal with. This was the case in particular during the tense

[365] CMM-AR: letter, Clark to Hanisch, 15.02.1912.
[366] In the case of *Amakholwa* the title "chief" is often interchangeably used with the title "*induna"*.
[367] PAR: SNA 835/1896.
[368] PAR: SNA 731/1898.

period of multiple homicides of local chiefs at the time, which I described in the last chapter. Apparently for this reason, Clark did not consider the *Amabhaca* for cooperation. Instead, he relied on, and summoned the *Amakholwa*, and possibly also the *Amakhuze*, for the very purpose of taking a photograph.

The relationship of cooperation between mission and magistracy had intensified, when, in 1905, the Bulwer magistracy established a so-called "branch court" at Centocow.[369] Such courts would convene once minor cases had to be tried in this relatively remote area. The magistracy thus used the Catholic Mission station as a logistic hub, and partially relied on the relationships, which the missionaries had already established with their African subjects (cf. Harries and Maxwell 2012:20). Issues that did not fall under legal or criminal law could be dealt with by the missionaries themselves, or by the Catholic Black *Amakholwa* chief, Wofi, who, like at Mariannhill, would have been suggested to the government by the mission (cf. Gütl 2005). The mission station was also an opportune location for the (unlikely) case that a magistrate himself was not fluent in Zulu. He then could rely on the missionaries or mission-educated Africans, who often chose a career as professional court interpreters (cf. McClendon 2006).[370]

In particular the magistrate of Ixopo, J.F. Clark, and Centocow's superior, Hanisch, had developed a beneficial relationship since Clark's inauguration as magistrate in 1909, even despite the twice-ambivalent identity of the missionaries as German Catholics.[371] The missionaries received benefits whenever they needed legal permission, such as for the building of schools and churches. Clark and his successors in return had loyal interlocutors and informants in the missionaries, whenever problems arose in the area regarding the "native population". The relationship was apparently friendly to such an extent that Clark even took his wife along to Centocow for celebrations and recreative visits. Both sides indicate the nature of this relationship in correspondences and in the mission's chronicle.

The involved individuals eventually performed this positive relationship in a group photograph. Either before or after the two court scenes, Müller arranged the present White authorities around a smaller table, which was covered with the same cloth as in the previous photographs (Figure 92). In the makeshift situation away from his studio, Müller had to improvise with the available props at hand. While he was actively involved in negotiating the two photographs of the court hearings beforehand, the group photograph may have been an outcome and continuation of the event, as well as a confirmation of the positive relationship of mission and government. For the group portrait, the three before-mentioned government representatives were joined by the magistrate of Ixopo, Frederik A. Farrer, the two resident priests of Centocow, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch and Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger, as well as

369 PAR: PWD 5431/1905.

370 Before becoming a magistrate, Farrer had been a "1. Class Zulu Interpreter" since 1883 (Anon. 1906:66). Likewise, Clark must have been fluent in Zulu, in order to fulfil his duties of trying cases on a frequent basis, or issuing warrants in Zulu. Zulu language skills were also a factor for the promotion of policemen (Natal Police Forces 1906:75). Most Mariannhill Missionaries would have been fluent in Zulu by 1912, as they had established the language as subject in their schools and in their various publications.

371 Hanisch had been at Centocow already since 1908, but only became superior in 1911.

Mariannhill's museum curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch.



Figure 92: original caption on glass plate negative: "*Gruppe Magistrat Cl.*[*ark*] *Centocow 1912*"—"Group with magistrate Clark, Centocow 1912". Group portrait taken either before or after the previous two photographs. From left to right, seated: Fr. Emanuel Hanisch; J.F. Clark, Magistrate of Polela District; F.A. Farrer, Magistrate of Ixopo District; Police Sergeant Collis; Policeman Terblanche. Standing: Fr. Thomas Neuschwanger; Fr. Alexander Hanisch (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives, unpublished).



Figure 93: detail of figure 92. The "fly whisk" held by trooper Terblanche. The crossed rifles on Terblanche's left sleeve indicate that he was a "marksman, 1st class" (cf. Natal Police Forces 1906:16).

Eventually, it is a particular intentionally relational object that allows us to retrace relationships within, through, and beyond this photographic occasion. In all three photographs, Trooper Terblanche carries a "fly whisk" in his right hand, commonly also referred to as "switch", or as "*i(t)shoba*" in Zulu.[372] In both of the photographs where it is visible, the whisk is tied around Terblanche's wrist by a loop. The particular ways how he casually handles it, appear as expressions of long-term use and close familiarity with the object. In the first photograph, the whisk hangs by the loop, while Terblanche casually leans on a chair cross-legged. In the group photograph, he rests the whisk's shaft in the space between thumb and index finger with an apparent and intimate pressure. In this way, the whisk constitutes a presence that is uncommon, and almost irritating: historical ethnographies commonly describe it as a distinctively "African" object, which makes it difficult to explain in this situation. Nevertheless, there are some traces to follow that may allow us to further reassemble parts of the photographic occasion with the whisk's help. The irritation is partially constituted through friction with the ethnographic and

[372] In the second photograph of a court hearing the switch was probably still present in Terblanche's right hand, but obscured by the body of the accused.

photographic record. Objects resembling this particular whisk are usually connected to two distinct discourses of the colonial South African *préterrain*: first, African diviners in Natal, and second, the Zulu Royal House and the so-called "Bambatha Rebellion" of 1906-07. In the following, I consider the object under discussion against these two discourses.

Commonly made from the white tail ends of cows (*itshoba*) or other bovines (eg. black wildebeest), fly whisks are foremost associated with diviners (*izangoma*) in the ethnographic and the photographic record of South Africa, and Natal in particular (cf. Hooper, Davis and Klinghardt 1989:350; Papini 1996:214; Shaw and Van Warmelo 1988:713). Used as paraphernalia during the performance of divination, they also appear repeatedly in Mariannhill's photographic collection (cf. Chapter Eight). At Mariannhill and especially at Centocow just before and after the 1930s, fly whisks of converted diviners became "converted artefacts", and in so far "trophies" of conversion (Thomas 1991, see my discussions in Chapters Five and Eight). As detached museum objects, fly whisks thus became generalised negative markers of divination, and consequently of the changing relationship between the mission and their African subjects.

The second dimension of the *préterrain*, which makes this particular appropriation confusing, starts in 1888 with the political activism of Harriette Colenso, the daughter of the Anglican Bishop John Colenso (cf. Guy 2002b). The South African historian Jeff Guy discussed several photographs of Harriette Colenso taken during her tours through England in the early 1890s. Here, Colenso poses with fly-whisk-like objects. Guy argued that, in order to lobby for the cause of Zulu King Dinuzulu, Harriette had herself repeatedly photographed with a so-called "*shokobezi*", a particular symbol referencing the *Usuthu*, the Zulu Royal House. However, there are material, as well as empirical problems with this claim. In material terms, contemporary scholars like A.T. Bryant (1905) and James Stuart (1913) described the *shokobezi* merely as the tip of a cow tail attached to one's head or garments.[373] Furthermore, in no historical record, either text, photograph, or across both, is a whisk ever related to the concept of the *shokobezi*. Also, there are no photographs in circulation, which show any member of the Zulu Royal House with a whisk.[374] Unlike in many other African countries, whisks have no historical record of being used as symbols of authority in Natal and Zululand.[375] Only after the 1950s, political leaders like Gatsha Buthelezi re-appropriated whisks during political rallies (cf. Marks 1986, also see Chapter Five). To my knowledge, Harriette Colenso herself never referred to the whisk as *shokobezi*, or mentioned the *shokobezi* otherwise in her published work. The *shokobezi* eventually reappeared once more in its original form about a decade later as adornment during

[373] Bryant (1905:579): "*um-Shokobezi* (s.k.),n.l. Wearer of ubu-Shokobezi ie. a warrior of the u-Sutu. or Cetshwayo's army (not that of u-Zibebu), who adopted this custom. *ubu-Shokobezi* (s.k.),n. Head-ornament made of the bush of a cow's tail and carried in two pieces erect on the top of the head". Stuart (1913:Glossary): "*Tshokobezi,* properly *umtshokobezi*—Bushy portion of ox or cow-tail, usually white, worn about the head or neck by adherents of the Usutu faction among the Zulus; the wearer of such badge".

[374] I am grateful to the British historian Gwil Colenso for discussing this topic and for confirming my evaluation.

[375] I am not aware of any photographs showing prominent Natal chiefs with fly whisks. But see Guy (2006:175) for a photograph of an unexplained exception.

the 1906 Bambatha rebellion. This time, supporters of the militant anti-tax movement appropriated it as a sign of open rebellion against the colonial government (cf. Carton 2000, Mahoney 2012, Stuart 1913). I do not want to deny the possibility that indeed contemporaries may have identified whisks as *shokobezi*, either in the early 1890s, in 1906, or eventually in 1912. Rather, I would like to open up the whisk in its full potential as mimetic capital, and the reproductive power it developed accordingly.

The question thus remains why Trooper Terblanche chose an object as an insignia of institutional hierarchy, which at the same time held such a highly ambivalent mimetic potential with *izangoma* on the one hand, and the Zulu Royal House on the other hand. Like in the First Chapter, peoples' collateral knowledge regarding one particular object in a photographic performance is highly uncertain. Due to this uncertainty of meaning, it may be helpful to briefly compare this situation to the photograph of the meeting between the Trappists and Chief Lokothwayo, where snuff tobacco and the spoons to consume it are likewise part of a photographic occasion. In both cases, the two kinds of objects appear as mediators between the two involved parties: as a social catalyser in the first occasion, and as a very prominent insignia of authority in the hand of law enforcement in the second. As an equivalent material culture existed around snuff consumption in Europe, and in particular with the Trappists, snuff spoons and tobacco may be considered as part of a shared material practice and experience.

The fly whisk, however, has no obvious direct European equivalent. In the following lines I suggest that it therefore appears as a conscious and intentional appropriation by trooper Terblanche. While Black African policemen were no longer allowed to wear any "African" adornment after at least 1906, the photographic record of the previous years—at large, as well as at Mariannhill—often shows ample evidence that it used to be a common practice for Black policemen to wear beaded necklaces or other adornment.[376] But also European policemen were officially "not allow[ed] any deviation from the authorised uniform". In Chapter Seven I will provide evidence that at least by the late 1920s, any form of imitation of Africans carried out by Europeans, was suspicious to the White authorities. Nevertheless, in 1912 Terblanche presented the whisk openly in front of his superiors Sergeant Collis and Magistrate Clark, his African subordinate colleagues, the assembled crowd of Africans, and the *Amakholwa* Chief Wofi, as well as the missionaries hosting the event of the court hearing. Terblanche thus displayed the whisk with a performative intention during a photographic occasion, as an extension of his own position in the racialised hierarchy and power spectrum. His own hierarchical position was indeed precisely in between the Africans and the Europeans present during the occasion.

The South African historian Hlonipha Mokoena (2016) makes a similar point regarding an undated studio photograph of a White Natal policemen holding a "swagger stick" next to a Black policeman holding a "*knobkerrie*". Mokoena argues that the first is likely to be an appropriation of the latter, and that an appropriation may only work in this direction, in order to

[376] The *Revised Rules and Regulations* of 1906 state under section 102 that "the wearing of beads or ornaments of any kind is prohibited" for "Native and Indian Police".

denote a White officer's domination over a Zulu police force, but not the other way round. According to Mokoena, the *knobkerry* thus cannot be appropriated by the Black policeman as a swagger stick due to the established racial and institutional hierarchy. Based on her study of the illustrated magazine of the Natal Police, *Nongqai*,[377] Mokoena further suggested to me that "whenever white policemen were in charge of black units, they would symbolically express their attachment by creating an object that mimicked something 'Zulu' / 'native' / 'indigenous'".[378]

For the particular case of Terblanche at Centocow, however, we still have no contemporary confirmation of the fly whisk's role within the specific social relationships on 21 February 1912 at Centocow Mission. Due to the object's photographic performance and Mokoena's evidence, it nevertheless appears likely that Terblanche attempted to emulate an object (intentionally related to divinatory power and/or royal power) that would indicate his attachment to, and disciplinary control over a Black police unit. If we try to comprehend both objects—spoons and whisks—as non-human actors within social interactions, then the consumption of snuff as a social catalyser temporarily bridged between the Trappists as landowners and missionaries, and their African tenants and potential subjects. Here it would be unnecessary to involve ideas on imitation, due to the Trappists own background. The switch instead indicated a hierarchically and racially articulated relationship through intentional imitation. In the process, it created difference, rather than similarity, and thus "mimetic excess" (Taussig 1993).

When further retracing the roles of various human and non-human actors in the evaluation of the photographic occasion at Centocow in 1912, we have to take into account that there already existed an iconography, or rather a "photographic tradition" preceding this occasion. Such a tradition may have been known to Müller in form of circulating photographs. At least since the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879, similar photographs and engravings to those in Figures 90 and 91 circulated widely, and defined instances of interaction between government and Africans for contemporary public audiences, but also for later generations. One example is the engraved depiction of a "tax collection", originally published in the *Illustrated London News* on 28 June 1879.[379] The occasion of magistrates collecting the "Poll Tax" or "Hut Tax" from Africans, once more received public attention during and after the 1906-07 Bambatha Rebellion, which was triggered by the raise of taxes for Africans.

Tax collections, however, would not have been held at Centocow Mission. Nevertheless, the presence of a whisk in a very specific position during the occasion of a court hearing in 1912, may still have evoked memories of the recent rebellion with the present African men. This

[377] *The Nongqai: The Natal Police Magazine* was published since 1907. The term "*Nongqai*" also denoted members of the Zululand Native Police: "Policeman. Members of Z.N.P. Corps. The word, which really means 'watching,' is probably derived from *uGqainyanga*, a moon-gazer, i.e. night-watchman (Stuart 1913:Glossary). According to Stuart, the term was only used for the native policemen of Zululand, not those of Natal. According to Holt (1913:249), the term was also used by/for Black members of the Natal Police: "Meaning those who wander—the Zulus' name for the Natal Police".

[378] Personal communication Hlonipha Mokoena, January 2018.

[379] For example reproduced on the cover of the book *Betrayed Trust* (Lambert 1998).

assumption can only be upheld, however, if the whisk as material marker left behind by the rebellion was indeed as prominent as historians have claimed so far. As I mentioned in Chapter One, arguments over the implementation of this tax were present in the public sphere to such an extent that they were even presented as satiric stage performances at Mariannhill in 1907. Illustrations of "tax collections" and "court hearings" may indeed look very similar, and therefore easily cross over in their later receptions. For a historical evaluation, however, it is important to clearly distinguish illustrations according to the nature of their occasions. This will become even more important in Chapter Seven, where I reconsider Müller's photographs of the court case being picked up as a "photographic tradition". At least in the minds of Max Kohler and Gerard Bhengu these photographs still had currency by the late 1920s.

We can further follow the idea that Müller indeed had a certain iconography in mind when arranging the court cases. The two photographs may appear as common court scenes of the time, but nevertheless they bear traces of artistic arrangement. Another photograph of a "trial" in the same region, and at about the same time, appears in a history of *The Mounted Police of Natal* (Holt 1913:232-233). Here the photographer kept a considerable distance and did not intervene in the spatial arrangement of the group. This eventually was disadvantageous to his composition and the available lighting conditions. Both of the photographs at Centocow instead are arranged and enacted, not only according to the spatial script of a (probably more than ideal) court hearing, according to the aesthetic conventions I explained in Chapter One, but also according to the social script available to the involved protagonists. Müller arranged several groups of protagonists so that all important components were well structured and clearly visible from the camera's vantage point. Therefore we are once more left with the slippery ground of the relationship between the photographic image and the question of a supposedly authentic experience, which participants might have had during the occasion.

Even if the missionaries of Centocow had permanent relationships with their subjects and magistrates, these relationships were not those of the photographer and therefore had to be mediated once he visited. This particular social condition, however, created particular traces, such as the letters exchanged between Clark and Hanisch in 1912, which eventually allowed for a closer analysis of this occasion. To make this even more explicit, we now turn to the photographic studio at Mariannhill as a contact zone: on the one hand this situation allowed for even closer relationships between the photographer and his sitters, but on the other hand it did not necessitate the correspondences and mediations, which would allow for a closer historical analysis.

Following an analysis of objects and their eminence all the way through, we must, in a first instance, also consider the photographic camera as a non-human actor. The camera influenced the human actors of the respective photographic occasion, who had to position themselves either before or behind it. After all, Müller had planned this occasion long ahead and even choreographed its setup, including the summoning of additional protagonists. In a second instance, this also holds true for the resulting photographs of this occasion, which eventually

became social objects themselves. In particular the group photograph of missionaries, magistrates, and policemen, would have been distributed amongst the participants, and in so far served to confirm the positive relationships. Such material aspects of photographic equipment and images will become even more explicit in the next section.

A Photographic Studio and its "Backdrops"

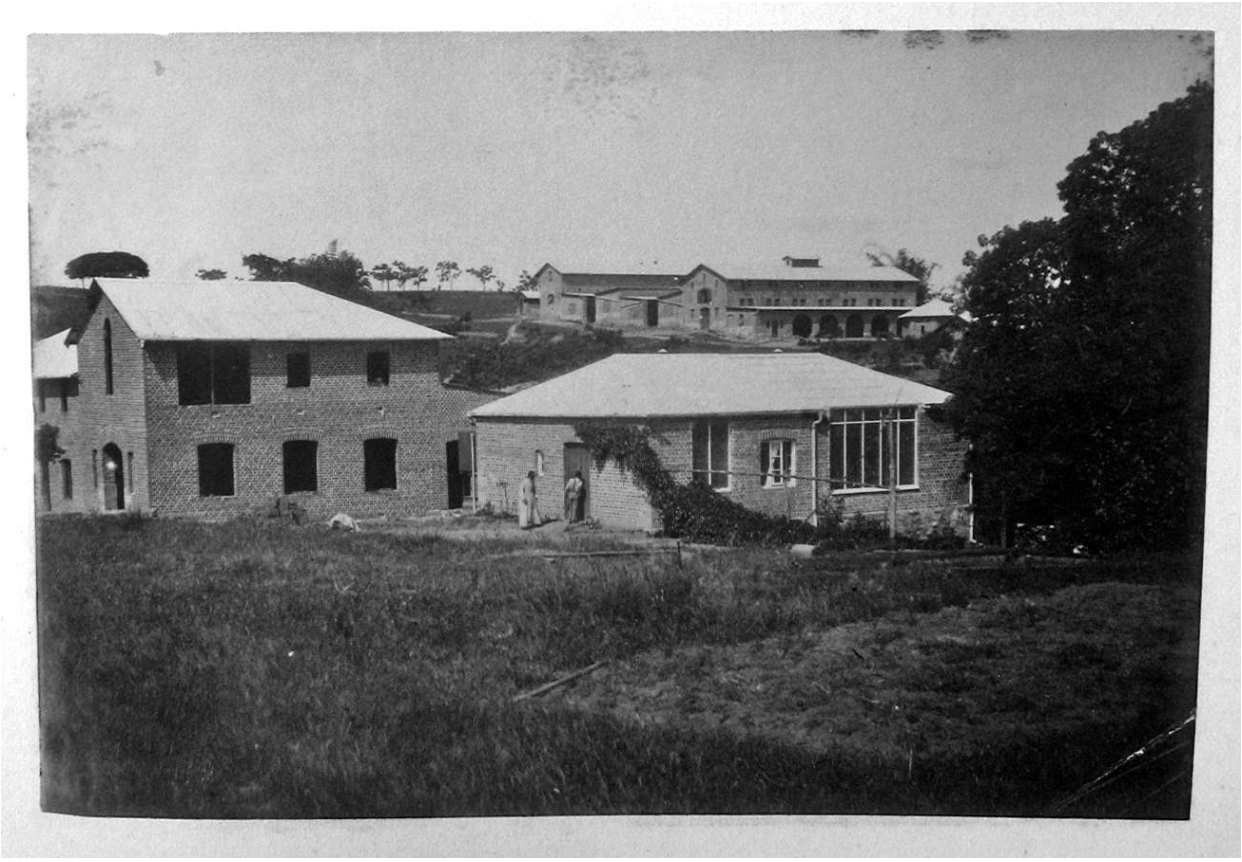


Figure 94: The photographic studio of Mariannhill, as seen from south-west in approx. 1900. The right part of the studio's roof is the headlight described in the quote below (CMM Archives).

In the previous chapter's last section I discussed Mariannhill's photographic studio as an economic institution. In this chapter's last section I discuss the studio as a performative space. This space was determined by architecture, props, and people, all arranged and posed in order to optimise the outcome of the photographic product. Other than in the previous photographic occasions I described, the involved actors in the studio positioned everything inside and outside of the camera's frame with the explicit purpose to benefit the photographic image. Also the sitters themselves would have considered their dress and poses, often long before arriving at the studio. In particular the studio's architecture and the layout of its rooms—designed for this very purpose in 1894—is important to consider in order to understand the interactions of photographer and sitters.

One of the most important factors influenced by the architecture obviously was the idea of light, as Müller remarked during a correspondence in 1907:

Question 213. Mariannhill-Studio. My studio [*Atelier*] has a single curtain of grey-blue colour, a riffled side window and a thick roof light of smooth window glass. In order to keep out direct sunlight, this window is painted with a thin layer of white oil colour. The resulting light is strong and soft [*weich*], as long as the coating is new. With time, however, it becomes dusty, smudgy, and yellowish, so that the exposure time has to be more than doubled. It is inconvenient to remove the coating and to redo it every year. Which coating would you recommend that is durable and remains well transparent at the same time? Is there any kind of paper, which could be used instead of paint? Where could it be obtained? What kind of glue would one use to fixate it?[380]

Br. Aegidius Müller to the editor of the *Photographische Chronik* (Müller 1907c:289).

It seems strange that Müller did not succeed in finding a solution to his lighting problem by involving South African colleagues, but instead was seeking expertise in a distant Europe. This either means that the expertise was thin on the ground, or that he did not trust it. As, for example, his correspondence with the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg shows, he had a very good command of English. Furthermore, there were multiple other photographic studios in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, and even one in Camperdown during the 1890s (Spencer 1982:84). Müller may have indeed consulted with colleagues in South Africa. Nevertheless, we can only trace his inquiries with the network of German-speaking lay people and experts, which the *Photographische Chronik* allowed him to access.

The journal's editor eventually suggested to Müller that the paper which he recommended would last longer in "the climate there" than in "our climate".[381] The editor apparently knew Mariannhill Studio, as Müller had posted questions to the journal at least since 1898. His inquiries were mostly related to chemical issues, which I will not elaborate on here. Apart from popular magazines and newspapers, Müller also was an active reader of German photographic literature and periodicals. Through them he corresponded with other overseas practitioners, and thus kept in touch with the technological, theoretical, and especially with the aesthetic pulse of Europe. As I shall explain in this section, the photographic studio not only was a commercial and artistic business, but a separate representative and performative space of its own. As a physical space it was supposed to further the photographic imagination by fusing a South African lifeworld with European aesthetic conventions. I will therefore draw together questions of how the physical possibilities and restrictions of the studio enabled or limited the performances and social interaction between photographer and photographed.

Next to cameras, glass plate negatives, and other earlier-mentioned photographic equipment, the spatial setup of the studio, and the social relations with sitters, four other factors were of every studio photographer's concern: as Müller indicated in his inquiry above, this was foremost the condition of lighting, next to the sitters' pose, the painted backdrop, and eventually the arrangement of props as the things in between. The latter served to bridge the artificial void between the photographic product on the one hand, and the sitter and the backdrop on the other hand. According to these eight dimensions, it was possible to control the situation inside the studio to a much greater extent than situations outside. All of these conditions left traces in

[380] My own translation from the German original.

[381] The identity of the person answering the questions cannot be ascertained, but may have been the journal's earlier-mentioned editor Adolf Miethe (cf. Chapter One).

particular ways that allow us to reassemble parts of the experience in the studio. I will now discuss these dimensions in order to determine how they shaped the experience—and were shaped and adjusted at the same time.

The photographic studio of Mariannhill was well-equipped with multiple cameras. The only remaining inventory list of 1891 recorded one large studio camera, but also smaller transportable cameras, down to a very small camera, colloquially known as "secret camera".[382] Some of the old cameras, tripods, lenses, and exposure frames for negatives are still kept in the archive of Mariannhill Monastery and the CMM museum in Würzburg.[383] The photographic prints made at Mariannhill during the late 1890s and early 1900s were so-called "daylight collodion" prints.[384] As so-called "contact prints" the glass plates were inserted into a custom-made wooden framework together with light-sensitive paper, and then exposed to daylight for a certain period of time. In a next step the paper had to be chemically fixated. Almost all of the still existing glass plate negatives produced before 1915 bear the photographer's inscriptions, first on the image itself, and second on paper strip glued onto the plate's longer edges.[385]

Comparably few of these inscriptions—both in the image and on the paper strips on negatives—indicate what and who can be seen on the image. Rarely Müller indicated when the plate had been made. Other references are of a more practical nature, such as which of his sometimes multiple attempts at staging a scene resulted into the "better plate", either in a chemical or in a compositional and aesthetic sense. The remaining collection contains many plates presenting several shots of the very same *tableaux vivants* (inside and outside the studio), which are often almost identical. This means that while changing plates, several seconds passed and the sitters either remained in their poses, or had to recreate them once more for the next shot. Occasionally, Müller noted advisable exposure times on the plates, or remarks on certain oils he used to treat the plate.[386] The plates are also inscribed with several numbering systems, which can no longer be reconstructed within a coherent system. A frequent and remarkable inscription on the glass plate negatives is once more the term "*Fremde*", which I introduced in the last Chapter. Plates inscribed in this way show commercial customers, Africans, but also monks. Therefore, this caption may have either indicated that the depicted person was a foreigner to the monastic community, or that the respective photograph had been explicitly made to represent the monastic

[382] Alternatively these cameras were known as "*Detektiv Kameras*" or "*Geheim Kameras*". I discussed the difference in sizes in Chapter One.

[383] Two cameras are still in existence at Mariannhill's museum in Würzburg, one of the German brand "J.F. Schippang & Co.". It has so far not been possible to draw connections between glass plate negatives and the brands of camera they have been made with.

[384] The photo conservator Clara van Waldthausen analysed the collection "A-15" at the Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden.

[385] The style and colour of inscriptions within the image itself allows to date them approximately. If the writing appears white on the positive image it had been painted with lightproof paint onto the negative. Every fragment of the exposed paper, which was covered by the respective part on the glass plate remained white. If writing instead appears black on the positive image, it had been scratched mirror-inverted into the emulsion side of the glass plate. Light could thus penetrate the plate and darken the respective fragment on the positive print.

[386] Dates on the negatives must thus be interpreted carefully, as they could either indicate when the image was taken, but also when it was further processed, maybe several months after the plate had been exposed.

world towards the outside world. Like the tour guide, the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller was an intermediary, who had to define and direct both insiders and outsiders to the monastery.

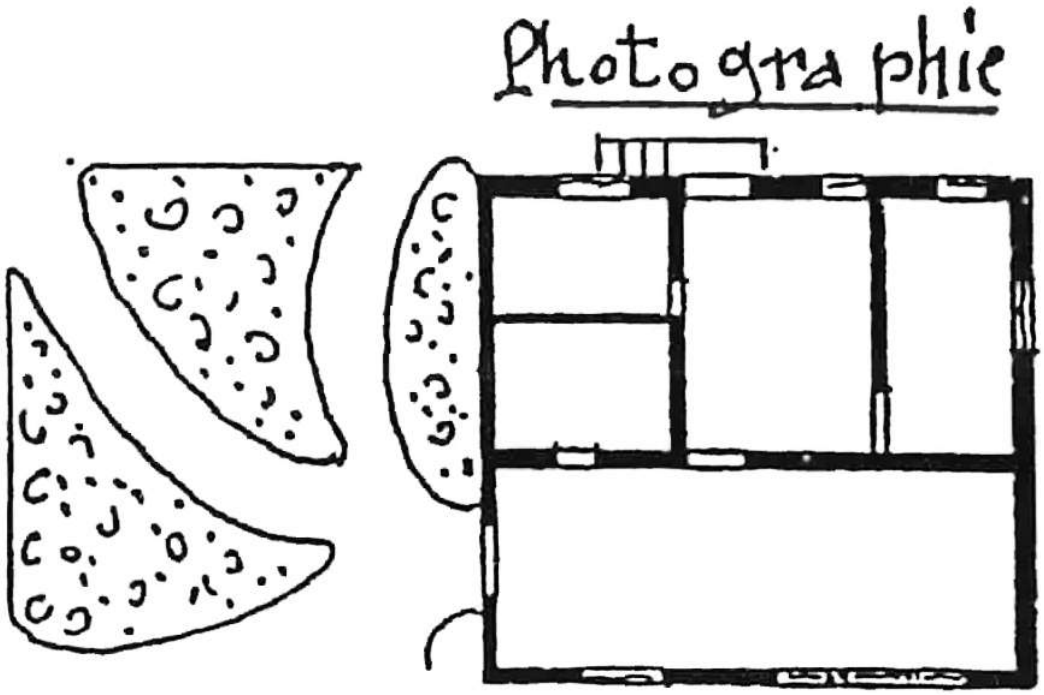


Figure 95: Floor plan of the photographic studio of Mariannhill. Detail from an architectural sketch by Br. Otto Mäder, 1901 (as reproduced in Balling 2003:131).

The still-existing studio building initially had five rooms, as an architectural sketch by Br. Otto Mäder from 1901 shows (Figure 95). Figure 94 shows the photographic studio in approximately 1900, and can be matched with the architectural sketch in Figure 95. Half of the building was occupied by the studio space, taking up the entire length of the building's wall, as visible in Figure 94. The studio's main entrance for visitors was the door on the south-western side. This is indicated by the lawn pattern directing a footpath towards the door. Most likely, the central room to the west provided an opportunity for customers to dress and groom. In particular some of the White women in the remaining photographic collection are unlikely to have arrived with the elaborate dresses and hairdos they were photographed with (cf. Figure 20). The other three remaining rooms must have been a darkroom, and possibly Müller's private rooms, which he could access alternatively through a second entrance in the north-eastern wall.

The front of the main studio must have served as a lounge, where customers could acquaint themselves with the products on offer through displayed albums. As a so-called

"*Pultdach-Atelier*", the studio had a slanted top-light window, which Müller described in the quote above. A second window was almost seamlessly connected to this roof window, making up almost the entire surface of the right half of the south-eastern wall (cf. Figures 94 and 99). In Germany this particular form of studio was usually oriented towards the north, in order to provide most ideal light conditions (cf. Vorwig 2003). In the case of Mariannhill, however, the windows faced south-west. They were turned away from the sunrise, as well as other buildings, which might have overshadowed it. As a so-called "*Tageslichtatelier*" the studio only made use of available daylight, and there is no evidence that the photographers ever used artificial light sources, like magnesium flashes (cf. Chapter One). Even if there would have been sufficient light, also in the rear part of the studio, Müller never documented his working process inside of the studio, as he did outside of it (cf. Chapter Two).

Müller's quote above describes the actual impression of light shed by both the top window and the lower window onto both the photographic sitters and the painted backdrops. Comparing Müller's evaluation to the one I presented in Chapter One for the case of Mariannhill's other photographers, it appears that all of them naturally developed a sense for the different qualities of light in South Africa. They also attempted to express this quality in words, in particular as to how the South African light compared to the one in Europe. As a shared experience over time, it was often this particular quality of light that has allowed me to recognise unidentified Mariannhill photographs in larger collections. This particular light—which Müller described as "soft [*weich*]"—creates a distinct impression of the photographed subjects, to which I indeed often applied the quality "soft" myself, even before I had discovered Müller's inquiry.[387] Eventually we have to clarify what the expression of "soft lighting" could possibly mean. The idea of "softness [*Weichheit*]" was also explored extensively in one of the books Müller had at his disposal, matching the following description (Arnold 1892:58-64).

The light in the studio could only be modulated by adjusting the blinds of the wall window (cf. Figure 99), as well as by applying white paint to the top window, even if the latter was difficult to control. As a desirable result, light was diffused and the shadows cast by the sitters onto the studio's floor and backdrop thus reduced to a minimum. In this way the illusion of the backdrop's potential reality was not broken. This was indeed the case in Walter Benjamin's experience, who found that his kidskin hat had cast its shadow onto the backdrop (cf. Chapter One). As I observed at the beginning of Chapter Two for photographs taken outside, Mariannhill's photographers preferred to photograph models with the light from one side, rather than photographing with or against the light. This allowed for an even accentuation between highlights and shadows across the model's body. In the studio, this was necessarily from the right to the left. "Soft" lighting in the setting of Mariannhill's studio therefore means that there is a balance between highlights and shadows with a very smooth graduation from the right to the left.

[387] See Kratz (2011) for a discussion of issues around the general importance of lighting and its attributes across different media, such as museum exhibitions, film, and theatre.

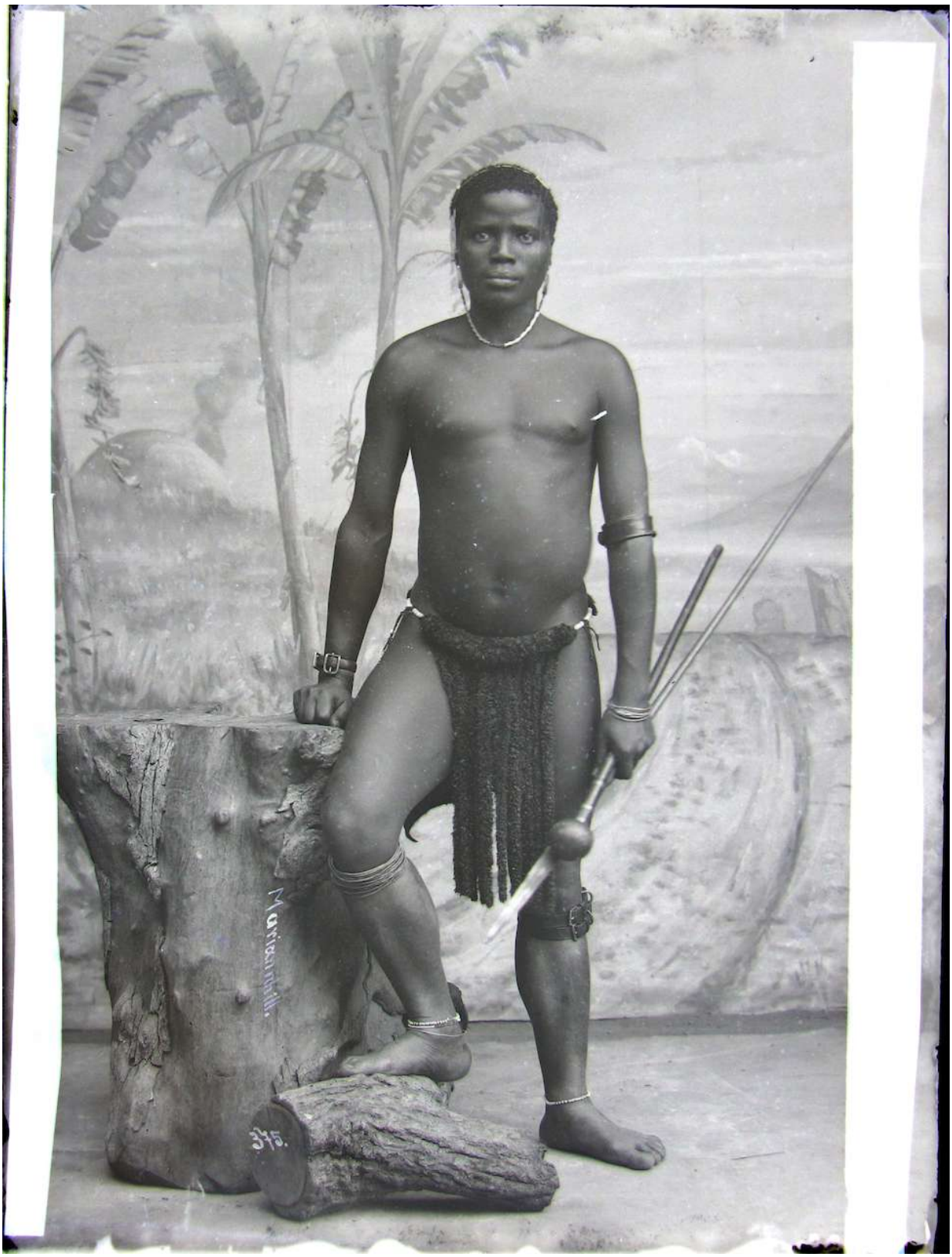


Figure 96: original title: "*Bruder v.*[on] *Lokotwayo*"—"brother of Lokothwayo" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

This condition of lighting can for example be observed in the print showing Bulawayo, Chief Lokothwayo's brother, who poses in an *umuthsha*, with a *knobkerrie* and spear. Due to the obligation to dress upon approaching White settlements, Bulawayo must have arrived at least with an additional coat, similar to those worn by men during the photographic occasions I discussed throughout this chapter.[388] He may have brought along his stick and spear, or they may have alternatively been supplied by Müller. We also recognise the backdrop with smoke curling from a hut, as it appears in Müller's portrait in orientalist style (Figure 15). While it is very hard to tell whether Müller dressed people up or not, his successor Br. Leonard Weber did so with certainty. During the 1920s and 30s, he supplied children and grown-ups, men and women, inside and outside of the studio, with "traditional" items and clothing, most likely from Mariannhill's museum. This is confirmed by the fact that he photographed different men with exactly the same arrangement of items and clothing. He also photographed women, first in "Western" dress, and once more in "traditional" attire.

Even if Müller never photographed Chief Lokothwayo in the studio, he engaged with several other members of the *Amanganga*, such as Lokothwayo's younger brother Bulawayo, one of his younger sisters, as well as residents from Umdamane's homesteads. During the years after 1900, several members of both families were photographed either inside or outside of the station. As Müller could build relationships with his sitters over time, he knew exactly whom he had in front of his lens, and occasionally even inscribed some of the sitters' names on either negatives or prints.

The going-out of the Trappist photographers, to record the periphery of the mission stations, thus paralleled a taking-in of Africans to the studio at Mariannhill Monastery. On the one hand, the photographers went outside the mission stations to picture both "heathen kraals" and "Christian homes". To both kinds of photographs the missionaries referred to as "mission life" (cf. Chapter One). On the other hand, they photographed Africans in both "traditional" and "Western" dress in the studio.

Several photographs exist in the remaining collection that show Africans wearing suits and dresses. While some dresses appear to be custom size, other sitters appear in ragged clothing of the wrong size, children are missing one shoe (cf. Chapter One), or women appear in dresses, but with bare feet. The latter cases may indicate that the clothing came from an overseas donation, or the children were dressed purposefully in shabby clothing to raise benefactor's pity. However, it still does not allow us to determine for certain which sitters were *Amakholwa* of the Christian community, and which were not. Figure 97 is one of the few photographs in Mariannhill's remaining collection that shows Black sitters confidently posing in style. Even though the five smartly dressed Black men may well have been either Protestant or Catholic Christians, they do not appear like farmers of Mariannhill's *Amakholwa* community. They

[388] Africans were not permitted to approach any White settlement or town without proper dress further than fifty yards (eg. Bryant 1887:116).

present themselves very confidently in their demeanour and poses, more confident than someone who only wears a suit occasionally. Also the hair of every single men is finely groomed and put into shape, a process that would have been much too elaborate to be done only for the occasion of the photograph. In order to make such an identification, however, we would have to take into account the entire process of production, and reconstruct the photographic occasion as far as possible. As this is not possible for this case, we may nevertheless relate to the book held up by the man in the centre: *How it is Made: Describing in Simple Language how Various Machines and Many Articles in Common Use are Manufactured from the Raw Materials*. Published by Archibald Williams in 1907, this book relates directly to many of the trades performed at Mariannhill's workshops, including photography. Just like the man on this study's cover performed a book about the world's racial alterities, the African man in this case may have intended to display his knowledge about, and his close proximity to the making of the modern world and its products. This scenarios can be further connected to the following discussion of backdrops.



Figure 97: five African men in the Mariannhill Studio. The man in the centre presents the 1907 publication *How it is Made* by Archibald Williams (CMM Archives).

Just like photographs, studio backdrops have two distinct dimensions, as they are both image and object, both picture and prop. When closely examining the face of the studio's internal south-eastern wall today, one finds several places where the many layers of paint have flaked off. Underneath, it is possible to make out fragments of an original backdrop which had been painted directly onto the plaster. With the building of the new studio in 1894, it became possible to put up large-scale scenic landscape backdrops. While one backdrop was painted permanently onto the wall, others were painted on shiftable canvas frames, and could therefore be exchanged conveniently. At least eight distinct backdrops can be discerned on the remaining images in Mariannhill's archive. The earliest backdrops were not figurative, but merely curtains draped behind the sitters. Another early backdrop was mostly plain in a light colour, partially fading into cloudy structures. The already mentioned permanent image on the plaster of the studio's wall depicted a view on the sea with a sailing boat, from the perspective of a balcony. It not only covered the studio's entire south-eastern wall, but also extended to both adjacent walls (Figure 99). Two of the moveable backdrops instead suggest interior spaces: one shows part of a ruin to the left, fading into an interior space with a glass window to the right (Figure 98). The second shiftable backdrop showing an interior, appears to be a monastic courtyard (Figure 100). The remaining three moveable backdrops again depicted exteriors: a country road with palm trees and a beehive hut to the left (eg. Figures 15 and 96); another country road next to a forest scenery with leafed trees to the right; and eventually a lake scenario within a forest, mixing leafed trees and palm trees (Figure 99). Customers thus could choose from a varied selection of scenarios, and may have additionally requested to be photographed in front of a particular section of a backdrop. However, the sitters and models never engaged directly with the backdrops, but almost exclusively faced the camera in the case of portraits, or faced each other in the case of genre scenes (cf. Figure 101).

On the very same steamer as Br. Aegidius Müller in September 1889, arrived Br. Otto Mäder (1863-1937). He initially joined the monastery as a novice for the priesthood, but eventually became a lay brother. Mäder had been trained as a painter in Germany, but apparently had experience with several other artistic disciplines. Today, Mäder is foremost known for his elaborate copies of rock art (cf. Flett and Letley 2007). At Mariannhill he also worked at the glass window workshop and as a draughtsman at the "*Bauschaffnerei* [architectural bureau]" under Br. Nivard Streicher. In addition to this he was a published linguist since the 1890s and was interested in general ethnological matters (cf. Chapter Five). One photograph suggests that Mäder also painted the studio's backdrops (Figure 98). Here he can be seen either finalising or touching up one of the backdrop canvases in the studio. Mariannhill's photographers did not purchase random commercial backdrops, like their colleagues in Europe, West Africa, and elsewhere (cf. Hoerner 1989:41, Wendl and Prussat 1998:30, also see Starl 2009). Instead, Mariannhill's painters produced their own individualised painterly backdrops, which referenced their immediate surroundings. Mariannhill's studio photographs can therefore be easily identified in photographic collections other than the congregation's.



Figure 98: Br. Otto Mäder (standing right) working on a backdrop, assisted by a Fr. Petrus and an unidentified Black boy (CMM Archives).



Figure 99: original caption on glass plate negative: "*303. Religiosen 03/08 1900*". A group of 33 Mariannhill priests with Abbot Franziskus Strunk of Oelenberg, and the newly inaugurated Abbot of Mariannhill, Gerard Wolpert (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

Custom-made backdrops had the great advantage that the representation of light, as seen on the painted plants and objects, could be matched perfectly with the light actually available in the studio.[389] This impression could additionally be modulated by adjusting the light illuminating the sitters. The relation between windows, the backdrop, and the sitters is most evident in the above example. The negatives of the old photographs often contain details not intended to be seen in the developed and commercially distributed positive print. In the case of this crowded group photograph, widening the image frame considerably could not be avoided (Figure 99). This photograph shows otherwise invisible and unintended "technicalities", such as the alternate moveable backdrops, temporarily stored to the left, and the window with adjustable blinds to the right. We can also see the roof window Müller wrote about. Such photographs make the backdrop distinguishable from other elements of the studio space as a physical object and prop,

[389] It was not uncommon that studios commissioned backdrops with artists, as discussions in journal. Future studies may want to compare Mariannhill's painted studio backdrops to the painted church interiors for stylistic commonalities. Most of the church interiors were done by Mäder and his confrere Br. Ludger Janssen.

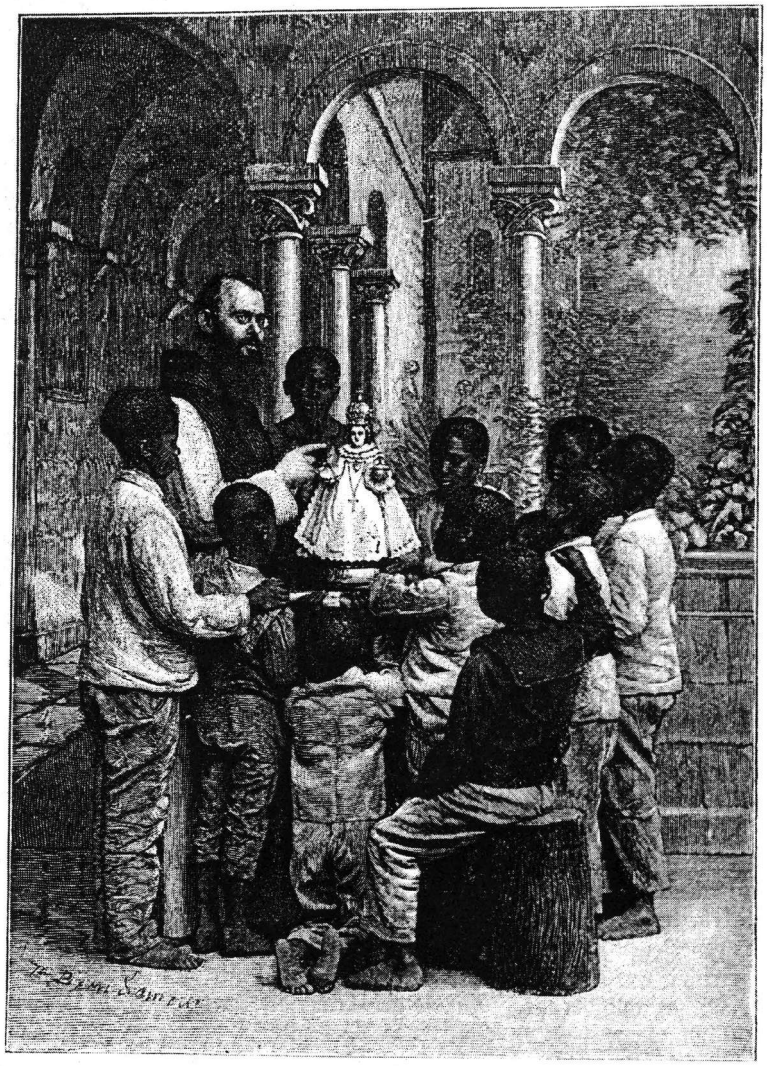
which had to be staged like any other object in visible photographic space.

The authors writing in a special issue of the journal *Afterimage* on "the photo backdrop and cultural expression" are amongst the few who have dealt explicitly with early photographic backdrops in non-European countries. Apparently there were no alternative sources, which would have allowed these authors to approach studio backdrops in another way than through the photographs themselves. Arjun Appadurai's (1997) contribution nevertheless allows us to place the situation of the studio *within* a colonial experience. Appadurai distinguishes a studio's contextual (invisible) backdrop from its physical (visible) backdrop. He calls these two backdrops a "double frame" (1997:6). These two backdrops relate to each other like the "préterrain" and the "ethnographic occasion". According to Appadurai, the invisible backdrop are "the discourses and images that inform the eye of the photographer", while the visible backdrop is the one that both photographer and photographed engage with in physical space. We may add to Appadurai's account that also the sitter and models have particular images and discourses in mind when they pose and perform for the photographer. By relating these two kinds of backdrops, Appadurai points to a clear process of intermediality at play: "photographs, visual texts and verbal discourses—ethnological, touristic, bureaucratic and missionary—which, in various combinations, chains and packages, shape the reading competence of particular groups of intended viewers of these photographs" (1997:6). Eventually, also the previous occasions I described—Umdamane's and Lokothwayo's photographs, as well as the court scene at Centocow —relied on these discourses and the images they had produced.

Webb's (1992) account of the Natalian photographic economy of the 19th century may further help us to clarify these processes of intermediality. She explores the idea that "studio photographs" have several different qualities and features, which distinguish them from "field photographs". While the latter is per definition thought of as exterior to any urban scenario, the photographic studio enabled Mariannhill's photographers to mimic such exterior spaces, as well as interior spaces. South African landscape and vegetation was obviously very different to what Europeans were accustomed to in terms of exteriors, as well as from the photographic backdrops they knew from European metropoles. While a certain degree of familiarity had to be upheld at Mariannhill's studio in terms of conventions regarding backdrops and props, the exotic was manifested in form of distinctly South African features of landscapes, indigenous buildings, as well as plants. Many of the backdrops depict sceneries of lush vegetation, for example local plants like tree aloe (*aloidendron barberae*), which is yet another indicator that the backdrops were painted locally, rather than being imported.

Because Mariannhill's studio was commercial, its clientele included Protestants from the nearby New Germany, followers of Indian and other non-Christian religions, as well as potentially non-religious visitors. These audiences necessitated religiously neutral backdrops, thus restricting any distinctly Catholic mural paintings as they existed in abundance in Mariannhill's churches. The physical backdrops at Mariannhill had to be compatible with religious, as well as non-religious imaginary backdrops of White, as well as Black sitters and

models, in the sense of Appadurai. These physical backdrops thus derived their meaning from circulating imagery about, as well as the sitters' own experiences in, either South Africa or Europe. On the one hand, the ruin in Figure 98 and the courtyard in Figure 100 achieved their ambience of an exotic monasticism recalling a medieval Europe only in the South African context. As I explained in the last chapter, at least some visitors had described such associations during the guided tour at Mariannhill (cf. Powell 1899:65, Merriman 1905). On the other hand, the distinctly African backdrop with a beehive hut typical for Natal, would instead have accrued its greatest exotic potential only when viewed in an edition of the *Vergißmeinnicht* in a German middle class Catholic living room.



P. Prior gibt Unterricht vom gnadenreichen Prager Jeſukinde.

Figure 100: original caption: "*P. Prior gibt Unterricht vom gnadenreichen Prager Jesuskinde*"—"Fr. Prior teaches about the merciful Infant Jesus of Prague". Engraving by Brendamour, Munich (as published in *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1899:42).

We briefly have to consider such very specific circumstances of viewing Mariannhill's photographs. In the case of print matter like the *Vergißmeinnicht* and the *Mariannhiller Kalender* with their often poor image reproductions, it may not have been possible at all times for consumers of Mariannhill's images to distinguish the two kinds of backdrop, as indicated by Appadurai. Until the late 1890s, the *Mariannhiller Kalender* reproduced photographs in form of engravings (eg. Figure 100). Photographic half-tone printing was only used sporadically and the *Vergißmeinnicht* did not present any images at all before 1907. Through the use of engravings, foreground and background/backdrop received the same depth-of-field, and as a result the two-dimensional backdrop became indistinguishable from the three-dimensional foreground. As I already explained in the last chapter, it was not always made explicit to the reader of the periodicals whether a photograph had been staged, or whether it had been taken inside or outside of the studio. Even if the effect was not at all times intended, the mechanical form of reproduction in this case gave the impression that the painted backdrop was as real as the foreground and that both formed one single space.[390] Once the technological possibility was available after 1900, Mariannhill's editors nevertheless favoured the supposed objectivity of the photographic half-tone print over the possibilities of a realistic impression with the help of engravings.

As I already explained in the last two sections, material objects played a particular mediating role between models, backdrops, and audiences. In the process they became theatrical props. As much as religious objects were used to illustrate the teaching of Christianity (Figure 100), there was also a tendency to pose Africans, such as Bulawayo, on, or near "natural" props, such as tree trunks (Figure 96), or occasionally palm branches. Tree trunks, however, are not necessarily "exoticising" props *per se*, even if they may have been often interpreted as such in conjunction with the displayed African fashion. Also European studios at the time used such "rustic" or "romantic" props in combination with decorative furniture.[391] Once more, the impression of the "exotic" is related to the colonial backdrop and the situation of viewing. For all these reasons, backdrops can be regarded as part of the theatrical props available at Mariannhill's studio: these were mobile, interchangeable, and locally produced objects, which changed meaning according to how they were combined and viewed. The props of a photographic studio generally fused the backdrop's two-dimensional artificiality with the space of the studio. After 1900, Müller however restricted himself to a basic repertoire of props: the tree trunk, a rustic bench, chairs, a simple table, and occasionally books (see above and Chapter Six). Photographs in the studio of Mariannhill were thus determined by the specific arrangement of various components: architecture, specific lighting, locally painted backdrops, an array of props, as well as conventional poses involving these props. As the photographs' meaning was adaptable, depending on the respective audience and respective captions, Müller could photograph

[390] When I discussed photographic prints with people around Mariannhill during my fieldwork, not everyone immediately realised that they had been made in a photographic studio.

[391] The studio of Nikolaus Leyendecker (the father of Mariannhill's photographer Fr. Isembard) in Bernkastel an der Mosel is one example (cf. Chapter One).

European and African sitters using the same backdrops and props.

In particular those studio photographs intended for propaganda purposes, not only depict sitters in standard poses of full body or portrait photographs, but also include more complex sceneries. According to the convention of genre photographs, as I explained them in Chapter One, the internal narrative of a photograph was supposed to be grasped instantly by the audience. A good example is the performance of three African women in a photograph from one of the albums which would have been on display in the photographic studio (Figure 101). According to the photograph's caption, the women are entrusting four children to the care of a CPS sister. The intended narrative is simply set up by the gazes of the members of each party, the positioning of the bodies towards each other, and the Black woman's gesture of pointing at the children. The Black women and the White CPS sister look at each other, while two of the children look towards the lens, possibly addressing a potential audience of benefactors (cf. Chapter Two).

The woman pointing at the children was one of Müller's regular sitters and models, not only in the studio, but also at her home close to Mariannhill. Like in only few other cases, Müller noted the woman's personal Zulu name, Unyembezi, on respective negatives. In one way or another Unyembezi was related to Umdamane, as his name appears on at least one of her portraits. As a result, Unyembezi was experienced with various photographic formats. She clearly understood the staging of the scene as the creation of a narrative, and accordingly consciously acted her part. Unyembezi and the other involved models reenacted a social interaction in the interior space of the studio, which the photographer imagined to have taken place outside of the mission ground, or at least at the mission's gate. In terms of Webb's (1992) terminology, a "generic field photograph" was recreated as a "studio photograph".

The studio thus may be considered once more as a theatrical stage, and in conjunction with the museum even as a "display cabinet" of the mission network at large. At the time, studio and museum were conveniently located next to each other, and were thus often visited in succession at the end of the guided tour. The photographic studio makes the working of the mission as a heterogenous space and exhibitionary complex even more explicit, as it renders and reveals every photographed gesture to be, per definition, a performance. As suggested by Appadurai, various imaginations are brought together in the studio, fusing physical and imagined backdrops. The latter were additionally fuelled by the imagery present in the studio itself, as I described it in the last chapter. The imagery presented and performed in the studio thus fused various spaces, the monastic world, the diversity of a colonial society, "native life", as well as steps towards conversion, as shown in Figure 101. All these images and discourses were accessible and visible to Black and White sitters of Mariannhill's studio in form of coffee table books, the mission's own photographic albums, and periodicals and journals. Possibly these images thus in turn influenced new poses and performances.



Figure 101: original caption: "Ü*bergabe v*[on] *Heidenkindern z*[*ur*] *Schule*"—"Transfer of heathen children for school". The children and the sister are the same protagonists as in Figure 45 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

Conclusion

After introducing Mariannhill's own African historiography, I discussed four specific contact zones, which allowed for specific photographic performances, some involving particular objects, shifting back and forth between being everyday objects and theatrical props. According to the nature of each zone, these photographic occasions allowed for the production of particular knowledge, in the distant past, as well as during my fieldwork. Some of these occasions will play a role once more in the following chapters.

Even though we are not always able to pinpoint the exact historical circumstances of a photographic occasion, photographs have the potential to trigger important historical information. The double identification of a photographic portrait as both the *Amakholwa induna* Umpathwa and the *Amanganga induna* Umdamane allowed for situating both communities in their relationships to each other, and both to the Trappist community. Such an analysis shows why some individuals chose to be photographed while others avoided it, and why the photographer chose to identify some individuals while leaving others in anonymity. Also the episodes involving Mariannhill's mill and Chief Lokothwayo, the magistrates Farrer and Clark at Centocow, and the general situation at the monastery's photographic studio, allows to better understand why people approached spaces and institutions to engage in photographic occasions.

Accounts, such as those in the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht*, in combination with the baptism registers, are the most concrete available sources describing the relationship of Trappists and Africans. They can also be linked to other accounts via the coordinates of personal names, and accordingly to official government correspondences and records. This is impossible in the case of anonymised Africans in photographs and stories, as I presented them in Chapter One. Even the presentation of only their baptismal names often makes individuals untraceable in the colonial archive. The missionaries no longer reproduced memories of the early relationships with African individuals after the 1950s. On the one hand, White missionaries did not have any reason to revive them, and on the other hand, African members of the CMM community often lacked the interest and ability to read the available German scripts and letters.

The missionaries sold photographs at the studio as commodities, but also employed them as mimetic capital; capital that they invested in, and that was supposed to pay off in various forms. Without doubt, Fr. Emanuel Hanisch presented photographs to the magistrates Clark and Farrer as part of the "ovation" devoted to them at Centocow in 1912. As allies, both missionaries and magistrates were committed to a common project. The missionaries furthermore involved their benefactors by promoting the same photographic occasion in their periodical as a shared experience. The official information network of colonial Natal, constituted by such figures as Clark and Farrer, is hard to reconstruct because the exact nature and organisation of the area's administrative landscape is still under-researched, partially due to the nature of the available sources in archival repositories. Not much information is available on the biographies and careers of the various magistrates of the districts where Mariannhill Missionaries were present.

This view is confirmed through my correspondence with South African historians like John Wright and John Lambert. The episode at Centocow Mission nevertheless serves as a first impression of the involved social complexities of the involved relationships.

The photographic occasions I discussed were partially influenced by non-human actors, such as the photographic camera, (the anticipation of) photographic objects as commodities, as well as other objects and their constitution in social interactions. Apart from their role in Mariannhill's museum, several objects also had a prior use-value and thus a "backstory" (Hamilton 2011) running counter to the common museum narratives they would evoke during later parts of their biography (cf. Chapter Five). The difference between an "authentic" original and an appropriation only achieves meaning when it can be embedded in a social occasion. Photographic protagonists employed and performed both the snuff spoons and the fly whisk as explicitly social objects during photographic occasions. Trooper Terblanche, for example, employed his fly whisk as a power symbol to indicate his social position. As part of a photographic occasion, the fly whisk is continuously shifting between being a prop within a performance, a genuinely African object, and an appropriation in a situation of domination.

The social relationships presented in Chapters Three and Four also allow us to reposition the propaganda narratives presented in Chapters One and Two. We may for example conclude that the strong presence of children in the propaganda effort needs to be balanced by considering the Trappists' even stronger focus of establishing positive relationships with the outside world in South Africa (Chapter Three) and political interlocutors such as magistrates and chiefs (Chapter Four). Part Two made an attempt to place a selection of photographs in this historical social environment, rather than in the propaganda narratives presented in Part One. Some of the photographs in Mariannhill's oeuvre can be situated in time and space, not only production-wise, but also content-wise. This allows to connect the collection to a historical non-photographic situation. In their textual accounts, the Trappists often described African authorities like Lokothwayo as naive manifestations of inveterate paganism, while actual encounters on a grass roots level involved friendly conventional sociability, such as the consumption of snuff tobacco.

In a similar way, the next part deals with museum artefacts and photographs as commodities in the process of crossing between a religious and a scientific visual economy. In the process the missionaries established a similar rhetoric of cooperation. While many objects and photographs explicitly functioned within the particular space of Mariannhill's museum and exhibitions (Chapter Five), I discuss them separately within an international economy of ethnographic objects and photographs (Chapter Six). As much as it was necessary to perceive the photographs as constituting image spaces in Part One, and as locating them within the spaces of production in Part Two, in Part Three we now follow their constitution and certification while circulating between South Africa and Europe.

PART THREE

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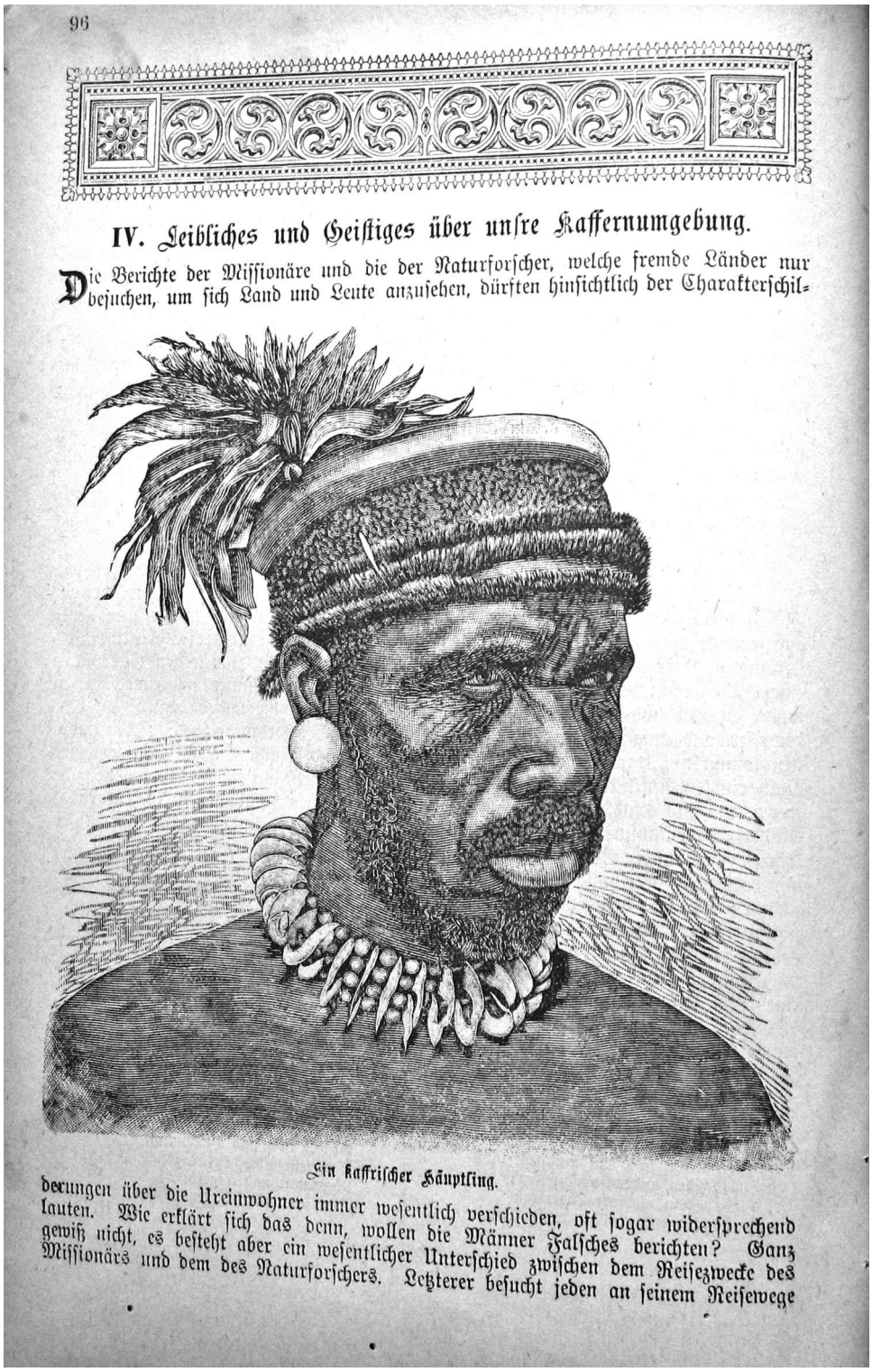
Photographs and Objects

CHAPTER FIVE

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Curating Relationships

Introduction: Entangled (in) Images



96

IV. Leibliches und Geiſtiges über unſre Kaffernumgebung.

Die Berichte der Miſſionäre und die der Naturforſcher, welche fremde Länder nur beſuchen, um ſich Land und Leute anzuſehen, dürften hinſichtlich der Charakterſchil-

Ein kaffriſcher Häuptling.

derungen über die Ureinwohner immer weſentlich verſchieden, oft ſogar widerſprechend lauten. Wie erklärt ſich das denn, wollen die Männer Falſches berichten? Ganz gewiß nicht, es beſteht aber ein weſentlicher Unterſchied zwiſchen dem Reiſezwecke des Miſſionärs und dem des Naturforſchers. Letzterer beſucht jeden an ſeinem Reiſewege

Figure 102: original caption: "*Ein Kaffrischer Häuptling*"—"A Kafir Chief". Mirror-inverted engraving (as published in *Mariannhiller Kalender* 1893:96).

The reports of the missionary and the one of the natural scientist [*Naturforscher*]—the latter only visiting foreign countries in order to study the land and the people—are probably rather different, even contradictory, considering their descriptions of the natives' character. But how can this be explained? Do these men want to give false accounts? Certainly not, however, there is an essential difference between the purpose of the missionary's travels, and the one of the natural scientist. The latter visits every tribe along his way only for a short time; at the most he stays for a few days or weeks on a superfluous and businesslike basis, without succeeding to study the character of the people. It is different in the case of the missionary. He came to the heathen countries to sacrifice himself for the instruction of the native. Here is his new home; the heathens shall become his new students and brothers. In order to influence them in a salutary way he has to study their character intensively. This is demanded by his profession and his Christian intelligence. For these reasons the accounts given by missionaries probably come closer to reality than the ones of the travelling natural scientists. The Catholic missionary, as psychologist and priest, does certainly get to know spiritual life of people much better than anyone else in the world. Just think about the priest's interaction with his newly acquainted parishioners. […][392] (Anon., *Mariannhiller Kalender*, 1893:96-97)

Once more I invoke the portrait photograph of Manzini's *induna*, Umdamane Zungu. It provides us with an ideal entry point to the central question of the following two chapters, how the circulations of images and objects—at times referred to as "ethnographic"—constituted intentional and unintentional relationships with desirable and undesirable consequences.[393] Transcending the original intention to create definite knowledge, the photograph of Umdamane in particular provoked repeated "objectifications" (Miller 1987, 2005a)—the mutual constitution of subjects and objects—rather than being a once inscribed ("ethnographic") fact. Through its buoyancy and its entanglement with the life of people around Mariannhill, the photograph became involved in ongoing conversations amongst various interlocutors.

The very first publication of Umdamane's photograph was a relatively well-made, but mirror-inverted engraving in the *Mariannhiller Kalender* of 1893 (Figure 102).[394] The image is framed by the above quoted anonymous text, titled "*Leibliches und Geistiges aus unserer Kaffernumgebung*".[395] Even though the engraving is not referred to in the text, Umdamane is made to stand in as the mentioned "heathen", to whom both missionary and the "natural scientist" directed their attention. It is not my aim to judge whether missionaries, or instead

[392] My own translation from the German original.

[393] Objects collected by ethnographic museums have been inconsistently referred to as either "ethnographic" or "ethnological", as well as either "objects" or "artefacts". Some accounts argued that the latter term is appropriate to stress the epistemological production process in the line of collection by Westerners and their consequent construction as either "art" or merely "artefacts", ie. "skilfully made" (eg. Fabian 2004, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, Vogel 1988). For the sake of consistency I settle for the contemporary adequate term "ethnographic objects". Being aware that also photographs may be "objects [/artefacts] of ethnography" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:30), I use "objects" and "photographs" next to each other for practical reasons. While indeed granting objectness to photographs, this separation appears necessary to focus on the capacities of photographs as images.

[394] As the *Mariannhiller Kalender* for the year 1893 had to be both written and printed by mid-1892, the photograph was likely taken in 1891. At this time, Fr. Isembard Leyendecker, Fr. Theoderich Sonnen and Fr. Desiderius Fresen made their first extensive tours to take photographs outside of the monastery compound. While the missionaries produced this print with the availability of still limited technology and expertise at Mariannhill Monastery, from 1895 they had the Kalender and its images printed professionally with much higher accuracy and quality in Germany. The original printing block of this image is still stored in the museum at Mariannhill Monastery.

[395] My own translation from the German original: "About the Physical and Mental Features of our Kafir Environment".

secular scholars were the "better" ethnographers, but rather to specify what their particular interests were in people and how both interpretative communities hoped to produce knowledge about them by collecting, exhibiting, curating, and circulating both objects and photographs. In this chapter I will explain how Mariannhill Missionaries dealt with both objects and photographs in the material practice and social performance that is the curation of museums and exhibitions.[396] I argue that they employed the knowledge produced in the process of curation to construct relationships with their subjects, and thereby attempted to establish lasting relationships with benefactors and other allies.

In Chapter Six I shall explain how Mariannhill Missionaries became auxiliary, yet important contributors to the ethnological discourse on South Africa. Amongst those just-mentioned allies were also European ethnologists and anthropologists, such as Henry Balfour, Alfred C. Haddon, and Felix von Luschan, who, like Gustav Fritsch and Wilhelm Joest several decades earlier, indeed visited South Africa, Natal, and even Mariannhill Monastery. However, they experienced South Africa mostly through organised tours, which allowed only for brief encounters with Black South Africans. Furthermore, they relied on the mediation by either missionaries, government officials, and object dealers, all providing pre-arranged experiences, as well as pre-selected objects and photographs. Accordingly, the evaluations by both professional scholars and missionaries were equally jumbled and always depended on the oral and textual accounts produced during respective occasions of object collection and photographic production.

In this sense, missionaries and ethnologists belonged to interlinked communities, but have been generally diagnosed with an uneasy relationship and mutually ambivalent evaluations regarding their (textual) ethnographic work. Reevaluations of this relationship have taken place more consistently since missionaries joined professional ethnology and anthropology in the years before the First World War, once more in postcolonial and postmodern reflections in the early 1980s, and again in the early 1990s.[397] But as these previous attempts foremost focused on texts, we still need to evaluate more clearly missionaries' perspectives on those objects and photographs deemed "ethnographic".[398] Scholars have indeed considered how missionaries employed objects in what Bennett has called an "exhibitionary complex" (1995), but so far not addressed the crucial importance of photographs in the process of exhibition-making by

[396] The noun "curation" and the verb "to curate" are employed in their conventional sense of organising and taking care of a permanent museum collection. I furthermore use it for the practice of temporary exhibition-making. See Hamilton and Skotnes (2014) for recent case studies situated in South Africa and extended applications of this practice, as well as related problems and uncertainties.

[397] For overviews by scholars with backgrounds in both mission and anthropology, see for example Bonsen et al. (1990), Van der Geest (1990), Pels (1994, 1999), Burton and Burton (2007). An ongoing problem with the construction of a dichotomy between the two groups is that both are still stereotyped in popular, but also in academic evaluations (Pels 2009, Rapoport 1991:741). Also in my own experience, positions, motivations and convictions of both are too varied to be generalised, and must therefore be discussed within their contemporary circumstances. Over the past years, a flood of studies has appeared on the involvement of missionaries in the production on colonial knowledge more generally (see footnote below).

[398] In particular confessional differences in perspective on objects and materiality, need more research, such as those between Catholics and Protestants.

missionaries (Coombes 1994, Hasinoff 2011, Jensz 2012, Wingfield 2012).[399]

In particular, we still need to learn more about how German ethnologists and missionaries interacted just before and after 1900, especially regarding the circulation of objects and photographs from Africa. While ethnologists often criticised the textual, thus *ethno-graphic* work of missionaries, objects and photographs provided by missionaries seemed to be much less of a problem: In the cases I discuss, ethnologists regarded objects and photographs provided by missionaries as being free of previous interpretations and prejudice (see below, also see Griffiths 2002:109-111, 118). Even though there are analyses of ethnologists' viewpoints, so far there have been no detailed grass roots studies on missionaries' actual practice of collecting ethnographic objects and the related production of photographs. Mariannhill was an important participant in this expanding community for several decades. Furthermore, at the monastery we have an exceptional perspective on photographic authorship within the situated production of images, and at the same time a concrete situation of a localisable and connected practice of object collection and curation. This allows us to better comprehend the interactions of clearly situated historical actors with images and objects in processes of entanglement.

The archaeologist Ian Hodder describes the process of human-thing entanglement in so far "[…] that humans get caught up in a double bind, depending on things that depend on humans" (2011:164, 2016:4). This also applies to ethnographic objects and photographs, which eventually depended on humans to attain and maintain the status of the "ethnographic", not only in a classificatory sense, but equally in material terms (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, Edwards 2007). These material dimensions seem crucial in addition to the insights already provided by Miller regarding "objectification". These material terms are eventually curatorial and conservational, leading to an authorisation of particular objects through processes of selecting, storing, arranging, presenting, preserving, and, if necessary, fixing them. A crucial part of these activities—which allows us to study them after all—was the common practice of photographing objects in their own right (cf. Edwards 2001). As we have already seen in the previous chapters, the same applies to the missionaries' treatment of photographs as physical objects, for example by inscribing, coating, and retouching glass plate negatives.

Throughout this study, I successively build up the idea that photographs are entangled with (ie. depend on) other media, such as paintings and their narratives, theatre, writing, film, ethnographic objects, paintings, and eventually people in their "distributed" form. Also, all of these media depend on photographs, in order to be employed more successfully. I have already shown that the success of Mariannhill's photographs depended on radical interventions by Br. Aegidius Müller. Next to providing the infrastructure and material framework of the

[399] The literature on knowledge networks in the natural and social sciences involving missionaries has grown immensely for many regions worldwide over the past few years and cannot be fully evaluated here. But see Gosden and Larson (2007), Habermas (2008, 2010), Habermas and Przyrembel (2013), Habermas and Hölzl (2014), Harries (2007), Harries and Maxwell (2012), Van der Heyden and Feldtkeller (2012). For various histories of scholarly work and networks in Natal and beyond see Hamilton and Leibhammer (2016). See Harries (2007, 2012) for an attempt at comparing early Catholic efforts in the natural sciences to those of other missionaries.

photographic studio, he had to retouch, crop, and preserve the negatives and prints, all involving the considerable effort of procuring equipment, skills, and expertise from Germany. In this chapter I suggest that the same is the case for the curation of various kinds of objects, in their relation to photographs, and particularly in the process of being photographed. This chapter's anchoring topic therefore is the process of how Mariannhill Missionaries accumulated and curated both objects and photographs as inter-dependent "mimetic capital" in order to establish, represent and maintain relationships. As a result, the involved people, objects, and photographs developed certain forms of dependence and dependency.[400]

Neither Coombes, Hasinoff, Jensz or Wingfield regarding missions, nor Hodder, Thomas (1991), or Wendl (2001) specifically address the exceptional role images or photographs may have in entanglement situations.[401] The exceptional status of photographs in such circumstances is based on claims to both their iconicity and indexicality, while at the same time being highly reproducible. As I have explained already, we therefore need to write a photograph's biography not only for the material object, but at the same time for the image (cf. Edwards 2007:48). The relationships and networks established in this process not only point to the material aspects of photographs in relation to objects, but even more to the changing ideas on their ontological and evidentiary status. Photographs and people therefore were, and still are entangled at Mariannhill. Initially, the missionaries depended on the circulation of photographs in order to anticipate an ideal future for benefactors and attract novices. Today, they still depend on their circulation with the same audiences in order to maintain, or rather to re-evoke the congregation's past, amongst other things for the ongoing beatification process of the mission's founder (Chapter Eight).

A better analysis of the historical intersection of photographs and objects may be facilitated in the following way. In the main introduction I discussed the advantages to analyse a photograph's biography by distinguishing its provenance, as well as its provenience.[402] This

[400] Despite Hodder's primary background in archaeology, his discussion of "entanglement" is the most sophisticated and interdisciplinary yet. According to him, entanglement may occur between things and humans, between humans, and between things. But also humans turn into things when they die. The other way round, objects such as relics, or portrait photographs may be treated as near-human, and as such re-enter social interactions (Chapter Eight). Instead of only focusing on how people rely on things, Hodder investigates how things rely on the maintenance by people (2011, 2012, 2016). He thus distinguishes between "dependence" and "dependency". The first means an enabling reliance between the participants in a relationship, while the latter indicates an entrapment, or constraining reliance. This *asymmetry* between human-thing relationships, as he argues, distinguishes his approach from the one of Latour's "actor network theory", which relies on considering objects as actors in *symmetric* relationships. Even if Hodder's claim to universalism may be unjustified, his thoughts provide a useful entry-point.

[401] The respective authors use the term "entanglement" differently, and theorise it to varying degrees. For example, Thomas never used the expression "entangled traditions", as claimed by Wendl, who himself only uses the term to denote a certain connectedness between phenomena. Also Thomas rather writes about processes of appropriation and exchange. Hodder is the only author who actually identifies an "entanglement theory" outside of the natural sciences. This can be closely related to recent reformulations of "exchange theory" in anthropology (cf. Myers 2001). Hevia's (2009) "photography complex" also resonates with Hodder's ideas on "entanglement" (Hodder 2016:6).

[402] The ethical relevance of researching the "provenance" of ethnological museum objects from the colonial period, as well as their potential restitution, is currently hotly debated, in particular in France and Germany (eg. Förster et al. 2018). Despite the fact that such research has been carried out already for several decades (with indeed less

allows to track the "extended archive" of Mariannhill's photographs back to various origins. Due to the different ontological nature of objects and photographs, a more nuanced understanding of the situations, processes, and effects of storage and curation in related museums and archives is necessary, when the social biographies of both objects and photographs intersect. This may be facilitated by Hamilton's use of the concepts "archival biography" and "backstory" (Hamilton 2011; Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016b). Hamilton suggests to make this distinction for the analysis of archival repositories and the documents and objects they contain. While the first begins with the moment an archival object enters a repository, the latter describes the period before the moment of its collection. "Archival biography" in this sense has to be understood as the vantage point from which an object's "backstory" was recollected and then told or written up. Any information on an object deriving from a moment of time prior to the moment of the object's integration into an archive or collection, generally does not exist independently of the archival context, periphery, collector, and infrastructure. Hamilton and Leibhammer argue that "backstory" thus allows to analyse objects beyond what is commonly referred to as their "provenance", the moment and place of their collection (ibid.:235-236). The moment where a collector first puts eyes or hands on an object is however much harder to reconstruct, once compared to the case of photographs. In the latter case we often have the advantage of the photograph's indexical potential, thus the concrete relationship to a spatial environment. This "provenience", as I explained in the introduction, can hardly ever be reconstructed with absolute certainty in the case of a museum object. "Backstory" may thus be considered as the artificially crafted "provenience", thus the excavation or material conditions of an object's coming or returning into the social world.

Applied to the intersection of photographs and objects, the concept of "backstory" thus allows another perspective on their accumulation and social involvements: "[t]he concept of backstory alerts us to the change involved when a view of the past is drawn into a particular preservatory script, […]" (Hamilton 2011:9). This allows us to reassemble multiple media from the perspective of the archive (cf. Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016b:423), a view that becomes pertinent when I describe the movement of objects into storage at Mariannhill's museum, exhibitions, and photographic studio. In these spaces, the missionaries not only stored objects, but they exhibited them together with photographs showing how people used these objects. In order to document such accumulations as extraordinary arrangements of mimetic capital, they once more photographed such displays containing both photographs and objects. It was precisely an object's alleged "backstory" the missionaries were interested in, and which photographs allowed to tell more efficiently. Narrating an object's alleged "backstory" to benefactors, enabled the missionaries to literally materialise the relationships with their subjects by turning these objects into "converted artifacts" (Thomas 1991). Often, it is only the missionaries' backstories

intensity and structure), it has hardly ever been explicitly referred to as "provenance" research (But see Gosden and Larson 2007, Plankensteiner 1998). Only during the past few years this term has been appropriated from the art historical discourse on looted art and its restitution in the context of the NS-Regime.

we can recover, in order to research provenance and provenience. In some cases, however, photographs present an alternative perspective on the presentation and curation of objects. It is therefore crucial to distinguish the related concepts, in order to better understand how particular subject, images, and object developed agency within networks and to scrutinise the stories about them. It is, however, also this double edge that makes photographs and objects in combination ambivalent today: on the one hand, they serve as evidence for alternative histories, which colonialism may have muted or excluded. On the other hand, there is a "public wariness" about the colonial power relations from which these object-image constellations evolved (cf. Hamilton 2011:21).

First, I shall explain these dynamics related to the particular subject-object-image-nexus involving Umdamane. Then I describe the following three interconnected practices at Mariannhill in the given order: the collection of objects in the vicinity of Mariannhill Monastery and its missions; their accumulation in a permanent museum at the monastery; and eventually their curation in combination with photographs, which had become necessary for exhibitions away from the monastery. While these three practices cannot be neatly kept apart analytically, I analyse them in relation to how they were dealt with and represented in specific back- and frontstage scenarios. This will allow us to understand how the missionaries consciously positioned objects and photographs in social space to further relationships with people they hoped to win as allies.

Umdamane's Choker

In 1899, Br. Aegidius Müller produced a catalogue with descriptions of photographs for Felix von Luschan, curator at the ethnographic museum of Berlin, where he identified Umdamane's adornments—exactly five objects—including their names in Zulu: "A choker [*Halsband*] made of leopard claws (*umgexo wamazipo engwe*), a headband, made of animal fur (*imisinto*), a 'wedding ring' [head ring] (*isigcogco*), a tuft of feathers (*isidhlodhlo*), as well as earrings made of porcelain (*isitshaza*)" (Müller 1899:19). A small white pin—stuck into the hair above the visible ear—goes unnoticed in the description. Before I turn to the conversation between Müller and Von Luschan in Chapter Six, I want to use the photograph, as well as the subject and objects it displays, as a starting point to consider the mission's practice of collection and curation. We already met Umdamane several times. So far, however, we have payed no attention to his extraordinary necklace. Doing this for its past and present significance will allow us to better understand the process of musealisation, the transition between reconstructions of the photographic occasions I described in the last chapter, the use of objects within them, and eventually the function of the same or similar objects once they have entered the museum space, understood as both repository and exhibition. This process is of course complicated once we involve photographs as intermediary representations.

During my meeting with the current *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga* in 2007 (cf. Chapter Four), the convened entourage investigated the presented photograph of Umdamane and focused on the necklace with a particular interest (Rippe 2007). According to them, this specific type of necklace was only reserved for the family of a chief, or even Zulu royalty. In order to understand this statement we will have to reconsider the intersecting biographies I described above. As in many other regions of the world, teeth and claws of large predators have been used in adornment to represent rank and status (Pickenpaugh 1997, 2005). Even if Umdamane's "choker" no longer exists, very similar objects do, most of them supposedly originating from the Natal region. The definition of the object, however, as either "choker" or "necklace", depends on the way it is worn, and accordingly performed during a photographic occasion.[403]

Items from the late 19th century, exactly like the one of Umdamane, are still circulating on the secondary art market today:[404] they are present in private and public art collections, as well as ethnographic museums. Some are also still in the possession of, and publicly worn by South African dignitaries. This particular type of adornment was made almost exclusively of red beads and allegedly with either leopard or lion claws.[405] But as contemporary accounts confirm, at least

[403] The OED defines a choker as "a necklace or decorative band worn close up against the throat". This definition is also more adequate to the German term "*Halsband*", as used by Müller. Contemporary translations of the Zulu term "*umgexo*" are rather vague: "String of beadwork worn encircling the neck" (Bryant 1905:182), or "String of beads worn on the neck, or, if long, thrown over one shoulder and under the arm" (Colenso 1905:170).

[404] For almost identical items in European, South African, and American art collections see for example Kennedy (1978:14), Klopper, Nel and Conru (2002:178-179, 223), Stevenson and Graham-Stewart (2005).

[405] Pickenpaugh (1997, 2005) observes that red is the colour used worldwide most often together with claws or teeth of large predators in adornments, in order to signify (political) power.

since the late 1870s such claws have been carved exclusively from bone (Mayr 1907b:637, also see Davison 1976:125).[406] Also Henry Balfour, curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, stated this fact on the label of a similar specimen in the museum's collection.[407] According to his entry in the museum records, he had purchased this "necklet" on his first trip to South Africa in 1899, somewhere in or around Durban, where it was described to him as having been "worn by witch-doctors". During the same trip, Balfour also visited Mariannhill Monastery and purchased a print of Umdamane's portrait photograph, amongst many others. It is very unlikely that he missed the resemblance between photograph and object. It may even be that his encounter with the one influenced the purchase of the other. Another example of the same kind is exhibited in Durban's "Mashu Museum of Ethnology", as part of the Killie Campbell Africana Library, and even three items are stored at the KwaZulu-Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg. Yet another one can be found at the ethnological museum L. Pigorini in Rome. This is only a small selection of the more than 25 highly similar items I located so far, and I hope to follow up on this topic more specifically elsewhere.

These examples must suffice to show the diversity of origins, collectors, and ideas ascribed to the very same type of object. The piece at the KCAL for example, is said to have been collected during the Zulu War in 1879, as a trophy of war. The second one was collected to the South of Natal in Pondoland, and was attributed to a female witchdoctor. The third was collected by an Italian Waldesian missionary, without further specifications. Mayr (1907b:634) referred to this type of "circlet", as he called it, as *amazipo ezilo*: this literally means "claws of a wild beast": in some instances translated as "leopard", in others as "lion". *Isilo* is also the *isibongo* (praise name) of the Zulu King. However, it has been suggested that body parts of leopards did not have the same signifying power in the 19th century, which they accrued during the 20th century. Claw necklaces appear to have been more and more appropriated exclusively as signs of Zulu royalty only after the Second World War (Papini 1996:193-194; Klopper 1992 cited in Papini 1996; Klopper 1996, 1999).

A crucial turning point in the use, performance, and perception of "Zulu" material culture as mimetic capital appears to have been the year 1954. During the unveiling of the King Shaka memorial at Stanger, Zulu Royals, including the future Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, wore the kind of adornment we are concerned with. Its performance has been well recorded photographically (see Klopper 1996). Uses of the "Zulu" past by Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom

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[406] One reason may have been over-hunting in coastal areas. But the popular tourist guide *Brown's South Africa* (1893) still advertises an abundance of leopards, which South Africa's White population considered as "vermin" until later decades of the 20th century, for them preying on livestock (Brooks 2001:148). Also Mariannhill Missionaries hunted leopards at the time, and so did the monastery's tannery process leopard hides at least until the 1920s. They even prepared them taxidermically to be shown at propaganda exhibitions, or in their museums (cf. Chapter One). A decline in wildlife may have eventually been a reality, which however did not stop Europeans to hunt. Africans instead faced legal restrictions to hunt from the 1880s onwards (Lambert 1995:112), and may thus have been forced to resort to substitute materials, such as bovine bone (cf. Papini 1996).

[407] PRM: 1899.75.4. accessioning book, entry by Henry Balfour, Oct 5. 1899: "Kaffir necklet of imitation (bone) claws & red beads, worn by witch-doctors, 4/6".

Party (IFP) has been a topic of public and academic concern since the late 1980s (Forsyth 1992, Golan 1991, Hamilton 1998, Harries 1993, Marks 1986), and can best be understood as an ongoing fusion process of oral history and colonial sources. But only Klopper (1996, 1999) has explored this political history in relation to the employment of concrete historical objects. As she explains, the performance of cultural symbols during the event in 1954 was an ambivalent reaction to the introduction of the Bantu Authorities Act in 1951, just after the victory of the National Party in 1948, and thus the beginning of the Apartheid period. Despite the furthering of segregation, this legal act also meant more power and jurisdiction for the Zulu Royal House (Klopper 1996:60) and therefore seems to have asked for a performative reconfirmation of its particular national and cultural past. Zulu Royals re-appropriated material culture as exclusive cultural property for the means of ethnic nation building (cf. Handler 1985, 2003). When the later prime minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, was photographed during his inauguration as chief of the Buthelezi in 1958, he too wore a very similar item to the one of Umdamane (see Klopper 1999:40). Also chief Albert Luthuli wore a variant in 1961, when receiving the Nobel Peace Price in Norway, and so did Zulu Royals once more as a widely received political statement in 1994 (see photographs in Klopper 1996:57, 59, 62). Also in the more recent past, Buthelezi, Zwelithini and Prince Gideon Zulu have regularly worn versions of the necklace, also with white beads, for important official occasions or photographs.

Besides its immediate role in politics, the item has also been appropriated on a fictional and artistic level. Impersonating his maternal great-great uncle and Zulu King Cetshwayo, Mangosutho Buthelezi can be seen with a version of the item in the famous 1964 feature film *Zulu*, which recollects events of the so-called Anglo-Zulu War in 1879. Henry Cele, the actor performing as King Shaka Zulu in the highly popular 1986 TV mini series of the same name, wore a variant with black beads. In 1999, the same type of adornment was eventually reproduced as an oversized monument at the Isandlwana Battlefield, at a site commemorating the 1879 war. The responsible artist, Gert Swart, combined it (consciously or unconsciously) with other loaded items of material culture into one installation (Marschall 2008:257). Here the claws became mixed up with "*iziqu*", a kind of "war honour badge" (cf. Guy 2009:211, Knight 1995:18-20). Historically, however, both objects were not related. In its multiple manifestations, the choker has therefore been repeatedly transformed from a rather uncertain "original" status as power object, to being an "ethnographic object" with multiple attributions, a widely valued art object, a post-apartheid monument, possibly via the detour of a movie prop through the popularity of the films *Zulu* and *Shaka Zulu* (cf. Hamilton 1998).

These examples show that this kind of adornment has constituted mimetic capital for a considerable time. As such, is was available for current re-interpretations, such as the recent one by *Inkhosi* Shozi and the necklace's explicit political framing as "royal". Due to these parallel biographies, it is crucial to delineate the *historical* interpretations of such items, and differentiate them from "modern recollections" of objects (cf. Clifford 1988b:247). Just like photographs, they may have precursors coming from particular moments in time (cf. Pinney 2005). First, this

can be indicated by the way how the item has been worn more recently as "necklace" by politicians and movie actors: all mentioned examples of the second half of the 20th century show only one single row of claws and beads, which are exclusively worn loosely around the neck. In particular in the case of the two historical films, depicting events taking place in the 1820s and 1870s, a particular style of wearing material culture was projected back in time.

Made in 1891, the photograph of Umdamane allows us to review these representations of history. It is the earliest photograph I am aware of that shows a person wearing such adornment. However, according to how it was worn by Umdamane, it must indeed be referred to as a "choker", instead of a "necklace". Furthermore, Umdamane is wearing two chokers above each other, with the claws facing inwards. This seems to have been the common style at the time, as one compares the photograph of Umdamane to other photographic evidence. In 1905, the earlier-mentioned Henry Balfour photographed Chief Laduma ka Tetelegu of the *Mphumuza*, as well as another unidentified man during his second trip to South Africa[408], as part of a visit by the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS). Together with several other well-known ethnologists, such as Alfred C. Haddon from Cambridge, and Felix von Luschan from Berlin[409], Balfour had been invited by the Natal Government on an outing to attend wedding festivities at Laduma's homestead in the Swartkop Reserve, not far North of Mariannhill.[410] Both photographed men wear chokers, very similar to the one of Umdamane. The photographs of both Umdamane and Laduma therefore confirm that the chokers were not simply replicas for the tourist market at the time. Even while using bone replicas, instead of real claws, they were considered as appropriate adornment for important (photographic) occasions.

But after all, we can still not determine the chokers' exact historical meaning in daily use, that is to say *in between* the moments of their initial creation, the historical photographic occasions in 1891 and 1905, and perceptions mediated by photographs today. During other occasions of collection they were attributed to either chiefs or witch doctors, and over time received a status as collectables, either as ethnographica, tourist curios, or art objects. During the photographic occasions in 1891 and 1905, both Umdamane and Laduma wore them for social performances in front of a partially White audience. Considering the fact that a second man at Laduma's homestead wore such a choker in Laduma's presence, the two photographs at the Pitt Rivers Museum allow us to ponder the possibility that the choker may have indeed been allowed to *indunas* of higher ranks, unless the second man was also a chief.[411]

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408 PRM: 1999.11.19 and 1999.11.20. I am grateful to Nessa Leibhammer for directing me to these photographs.

409 Both curators, just like Balfour, purchased photographs from Mariannhill for their collections through different channels. All three would thus have had the chance to compare ideas on photographs and objects. Again, it is unlikely that Balfour missed the resemblance of the chokers he himself photographed in 1905, if he had already established a resemblance in 1899 through both purchased object and photograph.

410 For other analyses of this event see Hamilton and Leibhammer (2014, 2016b), Morton (1999). Laduma's father Tetelegu had been a particularly trusted *induna* of Theophilus Shepstone, first SNA of Natal (Guy 2013), a tradition which may have facilitated this meeting. For an account on the 1905 BAAS visit to South Africa in a wider context of scientific culture see Dubow (2006).

411 Whatever the situation was, it is definitely not the case that this type of choker was "very rare" in the late 19th century, as stated by Klopper (1999:40). It was only the case that there were apparently few chokers made of real

And this brings us to the question of a second kind of authenticity. Not only do we have to consider the claims to authenticity through material (bone vs. real claw), but also the claims to authenticity through performance. Since the 1950s, the chokers were only worn in single-row, and as a much looser necklace. Even if the use of material culture may legitimately change over time and still be "authentic" (Handler 2003:355-357), the different ways how this particular item has been worn, suggest a break with "tradition" at some point between the 1910s and 1940s (cf. Hamilton 1998). As Zulu royalty employed the adornment since 1954 explicitly to reference the object's precolonial use, the new way of wearing it as *necklace* instead of as *choker*, suggests a re-appropriation, instead of a continuity. We may nevertheless consider all kinds of chokers in museums and art collections as "authentically" African-made. Just like with European art and its copyists, South Africans re-evaluated available mimetic capital, not only around 1900 when the chokers were worn during photographic occasions, but also when they were re-appropriated as necklaces in the 1950s. In both timeframes, practices and interpretations relied on particular circulating prototypes, as well as the logic of demand and supply of the required raw materials, such as beads, claws, and bones. While the cases I described are not "invented traditions" in the sense of Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), particular practices formed around supposedly traditional objects, the interpretation of which is influenced and bound by the traces they related to over time (Hamilton 1998).

Due to the distinct history of leopard claw chokers as powerful mimetic capital, the photographs of the choker worn by Umdamane, became material evidence to *Inkhosi* Shozi's assumption in 2007 that Umdamane had illegitimate aspirations to question Manzini's power. The creation of power (and more importantly the opposition to it), worked through the imitation and replication of claws of a powerful animal. This, for all involved, convincingly grounded the narrative of Umdamane's grandson in visual, but at the same time in material terms (cf. Chapter Four). The photograph had thus been repeatedly transformed through various ethnographic stereotypes and colonial classifications, and finally became a valued and inalienable family photograph, as well as a photograph potentially instrumental in current local micro-politics.

When first published in the *Mariannhill Kalender* in 1893, the photograph of Umdamane was titled a "Kafir Chief [*Kaffer Häuptling*]".[412] In the above-mentioned booklet explaining photographed objects for European museums, Müller framed Umdamane as an "*induna*" (1899). When he sent the same photograph to the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum of Cologne in 1910, he instead privileged the person's identity as "a rainmaker and doctor". Even if Müller had not taken

claws. The item worn by Buthelezi in 1958 may thus indeed have been an authentic "heirloom" made of real leopard claws, as described by Klopper. While all the chokers I mentioned so far had been collected during, or after the defeat of the Zulu Kingdom in 1879, the British Museum houses a range of similar items made of real claws, however without red beads. According to the accession records, these have been collected prior to the defeat, and may thus confirm the hypothesis that hunting restrictions where not yet in place at the time. Another interpretation may be that the chokers with replicated claws were not restricted to the Zulu royal family alone, but that historically the royal family claimed the real claws.

412 Whether the author translated the German title "*Häuptling*" from the Zulu term "*inkhosi*" or "*induna*" remains unclear. The term "*Häuptling*" was often used as a gloss for higher hierarchical positions.

the photograph of Umdamane himself in the first place, he nevertheless engineered several stages of the photograph's biography in relation to his own evolving understanding of the social world around him. He had various ethnographic guidelines and literature at his disposal, but he also had to react to fluctuations in the visual economy Mariannhill was involved in. I will analyse both dimensions in the course of this chapter and the next.

As ambivalent as the biography ascribed to Umdamane in relation to his photograph, so is the one of the type of choker he is wearing. While it is generally associated with "Zulu royalty", Balfour and Bowden described it to be worn by "witch-doctors". Balfour may have been given this information wherever he purchased the item, either in or around Durban in 1899. Also the choker at the KwaZulu-Natal Museum was allegedly worn by a "diviner" and collected in Pondoland. Only when catalogued, it was labelled as "Zulu" by the respective curator. And so did Müller and his confreres ascribe separate (not cumulative) identities to Umdamane, as either "*Häuptling*" (1892), "*induna*" (1899), or as "rainmaker" and "doctor" (1910). Nevertheless, I do not attribute these ascriptions to intentional acts of faking, but due to the respective stories about Umdamane, which concerned Müller and his predecessors at the respective points in time.

The photograph of Umdamane and the idea of the choker as powerful object interacted in the establishment of the authenticities of both photograph and choker. During the historical photographic occasion, the object may have been in "authentic" use as perceived by its wearer Umdamane, despite its seriality and replicated materials. During our conversation in 2007, the *inkhosi* himself applied an abstract and mediated imagination of the choker to the photograph, while stating that "real" leopard items would be far too expensive for him to purchase. Through the repeated interactions and influences between photographs and objects throughout the 20th century, the idea of the choker/necklace as mimetic capital thus acquired reproductive power.

Once approached diachronically, however, provenances multiply due to the manifold versions of the same object, backstories abound due to the number of historical interpretations, and clear proveniences are rarely to be found, unless we are lucky enough to have photographs of objects being worn, such as the one of Umdamane. The social life of any object I discuss from hereon can thus never be deduced from its alleged symbolic characteristics. However, after being musealised, the items do not become devoid of "meaning" and practical use: rather the use value they accrue, differs according to the intentions of the curator. Similar to photographic portraits of people (Chapter One), photographs of objects can suggest resemblances between objects, which too easily lead to the attribution of identical origins, ethnic identities, or social meanings. But already at the time when most ethnographic collections were created, curators realised that resemblance between objects in form was not a good indication to trace their origin and distribution, due to the subjective perceptions of curators (Graebner 1911:63).

Photographs are as much "entangled objects" as the ones they depict, such as in the case of Umdamane's choker. Photographs and objects are therefore "not what they were made to be, but what they have become" (Thomas 1991:4). Umdamane's photograph and his choker are particular cases, however, due to their seriality. Like a photograph more generally, the particular

category of the choker was a "successful" object in so far that it has been reproduced and circulated excessively in a very similar form, despite repeated claims to its exclusiveness. It is this ambivalence that distinguishes it from the snuff spoons and fly whisks of the last chapter, which are rather functional items, to be used in particular ways during particular occasions. As such, spoons and snuff could be appropriated as catalysers in situations of negotiating power relations between Africans and missionaries, and a fly whisk was appropriated by a White policeman while disciplining Black civilians.[413]

With photographs, as much as with objects, we are therefore confronted with similar questions concerning authenticity. As I explained in Chapter One for the case of photographs, collected objects too provoke the question whether they were "taken from real life", or instead made or chosen explicitly in anticipation of the moment of collection or a photographic occasion (cf. Graebner 1911, Isaac 2011). Objects deemed "ethnographic", such as chokers, snuff spoons, and fly whisks, and in particular their allegedly "true" native names, functions and ethnic identities, were the key interests of ethnologists. The objects' alternative functions, and their often complex backstories, were never inscribed on the labels that we find attached to objects in ethnological museums today. In order to study how Mariannhill Missionaries positioned these media, it is exactly the triangulation of objects, text, and photographs in particular moments of time that can provide us with an idea beyond this apparent limitation.

[413] The alternative employments of fly whisks as either power symbol or *isangoma* paraphernalia of course complicates the matter.

Collecting Things "Worthy of Exhibition"

Many chokers, such as Umdamane's, have been photographed, collected and described, but their backstories before entering a collection so far remained highly uncertain, ambivalent, and unstable. According to a powerful master narrative postdating the moment of collection, they are too easily re-connected to the Zulu royal house alone. In the last chapter I already explored how snuff spoons and a fly whisk played an ambivalent role in the social relationships between Trappists, magistrates, and African subjects close to the missions; how they were part of performances and appropriations; how the Trappists indeed photographed them, but never involved them into narratives individually. Textual descriptions, however, became crucial for particular other kinds of objects, to which I now turn. I argue that the missionaries collected particular objects because they were especially suited to describe their relationship with Africans to benefactors. When recollecting objects, it is important, however, to bear in mind the intentions of such "ethnographic" narratives, as well as the particular materiality of the related objects. The possibilities objects provided through both their prior social use and their materiality made them either likely or unlikely to be picked up by the missionaries for inclusion in their museum.

While snuff spoons and the fly whisk apparently had a use value for Europeans too, there were other objects, which could not be appropriated by Europeans in the same way, but still served the purpose of relating to, and defining one's relationship for both Trappists and Africans. In the following I will show how such objects were actually acquired, but also why and how the acquisition process itself was represented, textually, as well as photographically. Next, I will describe the process from collecting towards exhibition and curation at Mariannhill, and how the missionaries eventually began to construct and present objects in more sophisticated terms, as either "ethnographic", "african art", or "material culture", depending on who was involved in the conversation, and at what time.

Public, artistic, and academic discourses beginning to separate these categories, started to evolve more clearly in the decade before the First World War. Of course all objects may have been deemed "*ethno-graphic*" at the time, in case they allowed for defining the "Other" in explanatory and comparative writing, and thus to distinguish them from European material culture as different and exotic. However, we will see that while indicating differences, the missionaries also pointed out similarities in objects to make them digestible for benefactor audiences. As we shall see, yet other objects in the missionaries' museum, such as sticks, pots, and even postal stamps, have been circulated and traded, but never received extensive backstories due to their lacking potential to explain relationships between missionaries and their subjects. It is therefore impossible to trace the latters' provenance or even provenience. The mission's trade in objects for means of propaganda is, like with the photographs I described in Chapter One, often impossible to trace.

It will indeed be possible, however, to re-trace global collection and distribution networks on a market of "ethnographic" objects and photographs in Chapter Six. The network and

identities of all of Mariannhill's collectors on the ground, however, remain unknown. Only few of the combined more than 400 members of Mariannhill's both male and female communities around 1900, can still be identified for their involvement with scientific studies. Still, many must have been actively engaged with collecting objects and specimens for the museum. At least since 1894, the museum's first curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, repeatedly encouraged all members to collect. He also asked his confreres and the sisters to motivate their converts and school children to do the same. Considerable manpower, the great number of Trappist mission stations located all over Natal and East Griqualand, and the resulting stable collection network, explains Mariannhill's clear advantage over other missions. The monastery apparently was the only mission station in the region, able to devote time to collect extensively, to establish a museum, and even to redistribute surplus material to Europe, as well as locally. Mariannhill's earliest collection activities were random, eclectic, and opportunistic. By the late 1880s, however, the monks collected African objects intentionally, systematically stored and presented them at the monastery, and redistributed them in form of travelling exhibitions to Europe. Even before becoming a photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller had been one of the foremost collectors of local objects since 1890. He and his confreres established an awareness of, and reacted to prominent European discourses that were both scientific and popular.

Two years after the Trappist's arrival in late 1882, Prior Franz Pfanner was the first at Mariannhill to write empirically and in a distinctly "ethnological" way about an African object, in so far that he approached it comparatively to what he considered as a European equivalent. In 1885, Pfanner described the chain of production, collection, social relevance, as well as the intended circulation of a male Zulu head ring. He anticipated to send this object to Europe, in order to exhibit it there as a "trophy" of conversion. Two years later, Alfred T. Bryant re-narrated the same occasion in English. As the accounts differ regarding focus and detail, it is worthwhile discussing both. In his history of the early days of Mariannhill, *Roman Legion on Libyan Fields* (1887), Bryant recounted the story of the "intermediary" Fotsholo, whom I already introduced in Chapter Four. Like Umdamane, Fotsholo was a former *induna* of *Inkhosi* Manzini. When publicly denouncing him, Fotsholo fell foul of his chief, and, instead fraternised with the Trappists. In order to performatively distance himself from Manzini, Fotsholo willingly let a missionary cut off his head ring. According to Kidd (1904:33)[414], any affront afflicted to a head ring, was also an affliction caused to the chief, who had granted the ring to the respective man as a token of social standing. Bryant recounted this story as follows:

> Be it known that there is nothing of which the Zulu is more proud than his head ring. This it is that makes the Zulu a Zulu, a man a man. And to be without it is regarded as being effeminate, which to a savage whose highest virtue consists in an exterior valour, is a disgrace and a shame. Fotsholo had often been requested to remove that harbour of filth and lice, but, despite his intimate connection with the missionaries, he could never be got to do so—he would just as soon have allowed them to take his life as his head ring. […] So on the morning after the fray, before the Chief's arrival, Fotsholo wended his early way towards the Monastery; and before an hour had flown by, a pair of cruel scissors had completed the painful and nauseous operation of removing from his woolly cranium the crown of

[414] Also see Mayr (1907c), who probably copied from Kidd.

filthy gum that had stuck there for unnumbered years. It was resolved to send this Zulu crown to Europe as a curiosity worthy of exhibition, but it baffled all attempts to remove from it the fatty dirt and dispel its fetid smell; for with cold water it was impossible to obtain the slightest effect, and, when warm was employed, a speedy dissolution of parts took place, the firm ebony-like ring gradually lost its consistency and soon resembled the black 'stick-jaw' of our childhood. (Bryant 1887:144-148)

The same story had already been presented in German two years earlier by (then Prior) Pfanner in the periodical *Ein Vergißmeinnicht aus Mariannhill* (Pfanner 1885). This is the case for several of the stories that Bryant recounted in *Roman Legion,* suggesting that the booklet had in fact been co-authored by both men. In the earlier German version, Pfanner gave a very detailed description of what he called the "*Ehering* [wedding ring]".[415] Pfanner wrote that he had acquired his knowledge about the ring through "various investigations", and had his informants show him the "*umschluschluo*" plant, of which the red berry "*ungiane*" was harvested when the maize was ripe. Its resin was then boiled and formed into a ring that was attached to a man's head, on a framework of stabilising plant fibres.[416] The South African historian Vukile Khumalo explains that it required the attendance of a particularly skilled expert to prepare, apply, and maintain the head rings, which in fact had to be restored on a regular basis (2001:36-3[417]).[418]

In Pfanner's description, a chief granted the ring to the respective man, which functioned as a sign of loyalty. Pfanner compared this exchange to the formality of European civil marriage, and the related application of the wedding ring.[419] In order to break this bond of "heathen memory", Pfanner obliged all men who were about to be baptised to remove their rings. According to Pfanner, it was ridiculous to wear the ring any longer after the assimilation of European clothing, as it would not allow to wear a hat.[420] He also would "not consult the chief [Manzini] in this matter, as on the Farm Zeekoegat, [*he*] was chief". This was a title, which Pfanner claimed by the trophy of the head ring, the separation of which was at the same time an insult to Chief Manzini. Then he recounted the story of Fotsholo, who had brought him his head

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415 Also see the descriptions collected by James Stuart, cited by Khumalo (2001:40-41), and in the JSA more generally.

416 Also Doke and Vilakazi (1948) define *ungiyane* as "[g]um exuded by mimosa trees". But according to texts published some 20 years after Pfanner's ethnography by Kidd (1904) and Mayr (1906), the most common material to constitute a head ring's substance was a framework of either tendons or plant-fibres, coated with the secretion of certain small insects, referred to as *ungiyane* (Mayr 1907b, 1907c and 1908). Rather than being produced by the plant itself, the lac-insects that inhabit these particular plants appear to be the origin of the shellac substance used to create the shiny appearance of the polished head ring. This appears to be a classic case of ethnographic and linguistic subject-confusion (ie. insect/plant). This is once more confirmed in Bryant's late writing (1948:141-145).

417 An extended caption to a photograph of the three men who can be seen in Figure 14, explicitly attributes this expertise to women instead, "who keep the preparation of the used ingredients, as well as their mixture as a great secret" (*Vergißmeinnicht* 25, October 1907:219).

418 An extended caption to a photograph of the three men who can be seen in Figure 14, explicitly attributes this expertise to women instead, "who keep the preparation of the used ingredients, as well as their mixture as a great secret" (*Vergißmeinnicht,* 25 October 1907:219).

419 As he used this metaphor, he may also have been aware of the fact that the granting of the head ring by a chief to a commoner, at the same time included the right of marriage (cf. Khumalo 2001).

420 Zulu Royalty at the time however combined both styles—head rings and top hats—without problems (Khumalo 2001:37).

ring "like a trophy of the victory, which the latter himself had achieved". In the course of this story, the man himself—but also the object, which had been actively detached from him—were converted: "An indigenous object became an artifact of history for missionary discourse, an artifact made to speak at once of its original purpose and the transaction through which it had been detached from that purpose" (Thomas 1991:156).

Nevertheless, Africans countered this perceived threat at least in one recorded occasion before 1898, when Mariannhill Missionaries at the station Einsiedeln told their subjects to get rid of their head rings. While pointing at the Trappists' tonsures[421]—the remaining circle of hair on their shorn heads—they called out in return: "But you yourselves are wearing the head ring" (Anon. 1897a:84). The tonsure was in fact—like the head ring—a visible sign of initiation. Even if the story was like the one of Fotsholo re-narrated for the entertainment of European readers, it shows that the situation of encounter was embedded in processes of mutual translations, negotiations, and imagined imitations of involved materialities. Like Pfanner had earlier compared head ring and wedding ring, Africans compared the head ring to the closest equivalent at hand.

Just like Bryant called the head ring a "curiosity worthy of exhibition", Pfanner considered it "a good sign that one broke with these things", and planned to "ship the ring to Europe for an exhibition". The several stages of the head ring's appropriation were thus a display of power and contestation of the chief's authority: first its association with the familiar concept of the "wedding ring", and second the appropriation by separating it from the wearer, attempts of "cleansing" it, as described by Bryant, and eventually the plan to exhibit it in Europe as a "trophy". Likewise, Pfanner wrote during the 1880s about various instances when newly baptised women discarded their bead ornaments voluntarily, at the moment they received clothing from the mission. He described such moments as conscious alterations of opinions, while such acts may indeed have also involved other economic motivations, and indeed may have been intentions to barter beadwork for other goods.

Missionaries elsewhere used "idols" in order to symbolise and condense their subjects' "anti-Christian" attitude (eg. Thomas 1991:153). In Natal, the range of objects available to Mariannhill Missionaries for the appropriation by image and text was apparently limited. This may have been due to the lack of figurative objects in the area, which I discuss below. Objects that may have come close to the ones described by Thomas were the paraphernalia of *izangoma*, also referred to as diviners or "witch doctors". Since the 1920s, the Mariannhill Priest Fr. Gregory Zier collected objects that formerly had belonged to *izangoma*, whom he had "successfully" converted. Among these were for example fly whisks, which he exhibited in the

[421] The so-called "tonsure" (lat. *tondere*, "to shear") was a "sacred rite instituted by the Church by which a baptized and confirmed Christian is received into the clerical order by the shearing of his hair and the investment with the surplice [clerical vestment]. The person thus tonsured becomes a partaker of the common privileges and obligations of the clerical state and is prepared for the reception of orders. […]". Of the three kinds of monastic tonsures, the one received by the Trappists was "the Roman, or that of St. Peter, when all the head is shaved except a circle of hair; […]" (Fanning 1912:779).

style of hunting trophies on the walls of his "museum" (cf. Chapter Eight). CPS sisters destroyed big parts of this collection in the 1970s, after the organic material had been infested with an insect pest. Apparently they had lost their status as important mimetic capital, which would have made them "worthy of exhibition", and thus equally worthy to be treated and preserved.

Even though the missionaries photographed such objects in the hands of practitioners or in museum setups, they never described them in texts. As I explained in the last chapter, fly whisks had a considerable range of usage, but they lacked an appropriate or convenient European equivalent, in order to serve as ideal "converted artifacts". Therefore the missionaries had to objectify the relationship with their subjects in other ways: Pfanner described the head ring as "trophy", as well as "wedding ring", and thus created a similarity with an European object, which benefactors were able to recognise. The same representative strategy had earlier been applied when the Trappists appropriated the landscape around the monastery with a Germano-Austrian topography (Chapter Three). Fabian (2002, 2004) described a similar mode of writing for German travelogues and ethnographies, where authors compared phenomena encountered abroad to familiar landscapes, fauna, flora and objects, despite the explicit notion in academic ethnology against such comparisons.[422]

Another example will help to illustrate this establishment of a relation between texts and objects. In 1894 and 1896, anonymous articles appeared in the *Vergißmeinnicht*, which described the explicit "confiscation" of what the authors described as "pocket pharmacies [*Taschenapotheken*]". One such item had been taken from a student, whose father was a known "Kafir doctor". Once these bundles had been "incorporated [*einverleibt*]" into the museum and thoroughly described in the articles, they were compared—as likewise powerless—to "Matthei's 'homeopathic' *Zuckerstreukügelchen"* (Anon. 1894a and 1896).[423] The author once more connected the South African objects to a European popular discourse, and therefore converted them in order to make them commensurable and comprehensible for European audiences. The process of artefact conversion is therefore closely connected to translation. At this stage, head rings and pocket pharmacies had not yet been presented in photographs. This happened only in a separate effort, which I explore in later sections.

By collecting particular objects, the missionaries deprived them of their use value, excluded them purposefully from circulation, and exhibited them. Accordingly, from the perspective in the mission's museum, they described an object with an argument, which relied on a backstory that directly led up to the object's collection. Like with the head ring, the pocket pharmacy's backstory built on the very social interactions that had led to the object's acquisition. Scholars have earlier described objects collected by missionaries and other colonial actors as trophies (Coombes 1994:71, Nettleton 1988:51). These had however often not been described as

[422] Fabian distinguishes the "ethnographic object" from the "ethnic artefact". The latter goes back to the writings of the Austrian Alois Riegl (1894), and denotes folkloristic artefacts, made by European peasants, as opposed to "modern" European fine art (Moravánszky 2002). See my discussion below, as well as of the "genre scenes" in Chapter One.

[423] The medical efficacy of homeopathic "sugar-granules" was just as much debated around 1900, as it is today.

such by historical actors themselves (but see Thomas 1991:153, Stevenson 2005:15). Therefore we should be careful in using this particular term, unless it formed an explicit part of a historical relationship and narrative.[424] During the 1930s, Pentecostal missionaries in the Congo even went as far as describing converted chiefs, their bodies, or better their photographic representations in periodicals, as "trophies" (Maxwell 2011:63). These efforts suggest that the gathering of objects, bodies, and souls, was closely connected; at least in the practice of representation for the end of propaganda.

But the collection of such items also had material limitations. Other than beadwork and necklaces, head rings, fly whisks, and medicine bundles apparently were hard to acquire and even harder to preserve. Partially for this reason, these objects had been selected as "converted artefacts" and their material features even became an essential part of the objects' backstory.[425] Furthermore, the latter objects did not lend themselves as easily to long-term preservation, or even to wide circulation on the secondary art market. Mariannhill's Museum still holds three head rings of unknown provenance, and also Henry Balfour bought at least two rings during his trips in 1899 and 1907 for the collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum. An array of South African head rings can also be found at the British Museum. In all three collections the rings have disintegrated considerably. While still being worn on the head, the rings had to be restored on a regular basis to preserve their shiny appearance (Khumalo 2001). After all, it was an object's aesthetic presence, which made them valuable, not only for their original purpose, but also in circulation, collection, exhibitionary presentation, and during photographic occasions. A dull, black and cracked ring (Bryant's "stick-jaw") may not have drawn as much attention with collectors in the first place, and later with museum audiences, once it is compared to a flashy necklace with claws and bright red beads. Some object categories where thus simply more "collectable", therefore in higher demand, and thus started circulating in greater numbers than others. Some of these objects were even re-produced explicitly for the tourist market around Durban since the early 1880s (Joest 1886:147).

Objects which were rare and hard to acquire due to their social and material status, were likely to be employed with a more complex backstory, if only this backstory provided qualities that allowed to turn the respective object into a "converted artifact". But also objects available in abundance, like those beads presented to Pfanner allegedly on the occasion of conversion, had already been entangled in relationships of exchange and appropriation as commodities since the missionaries' arrival in the early 1880s. In his annual report for 1884 under the section "Trade and Barter", the magistrate of the Umlazi Division, W.P. Jackson, enlisted the commodities dealt with at the district's trade stores: "There are 50 stores at which goods in demand by natives can

[424] For the particular tradition of (photographing) "trophy displays", derived from the arrangement of weapon arsenals, see Edwards (2001:66-67). The term may thus be understood as a rhetorical, as well as a particular style of material and visual framing.

[425] Just like Pfanner, Bryant, and Kidd, Wilhelm Joest (1886:147) reported that a head ring he acquired in Natal in 1883 (and presented to the ethnographic museum in Berlin on his return) had been difficult to get hold of. The fact that "it had been cut from the head of an executed man", suggests that it could not have been acquired otherwise.

be procured. These may be described as clothing of different kinds, woollen and cotton blankets, sheets, Sallinpore, colored Calicat […], Shawls, Bells, Beeds [sic], Knives, Rings, Brass Buttons, Hoes, Picks, Ploughs etc".[426] Imported from Europe, beads were thus widely available in the area. Manufactured into colourful adornment by South African women, they became the most typical category of "Zulu" objects and are today most often represented in museum collections worldwide.

Pfanner instead used beads at least in one case to invoke a problematic relationship with other colonial actors, just like the head ring suggested a relationship of its wearer to his chief. Three years after the head-ring-incident involving Fotsholo, Pfanner wrote in 1888 about beads as part of a disagreement with one of the stores for "trade and barter": in the *St. Josephs Blättchen*, an addendum to the *Vergißmeinnicht*, Pfanner ranted about complaints by the White population around Mariannhill (in particular complaints by certain Ex-Trappists) about the monastery's buying in bulk, their cheap sales to Africans, and the distribution of clothing. Part of the accusations was that the monastery had ruined one of those above mentioned traders. Pfanner retorted:

> This "businessman" could play his game with the Kafirs, as long as they remained naked. He had his store packed with glass beads and strings. For a lot of money he sold these pearls to them, to cover their naked bodies. We in turn bought those pearl strings from them, or traded them against clothing. Then the man had no more business, he was ruined as a matter of fact—he went looking for honest work.[427] (Pfanner 1888a:13)

Pfanner argued towards European audiences that the *primary* bead trade between Europe, the stores, and their African customers eventually became obsolete,[428] because the missionaries were clothing their African subjects. What he did not mention was the resulting scarcity of raw material for more beadwork objects to be produced. This meant that while the Trappists collected beadwork from Africans in a *secondary* trade situation, and thereby produced them as "converted artifacts", a *tertiary* bead trade back to Europe (this time as "ethnographic" objects) was hampered at the same time. Even though motivations to collect and ways to narrate objects changed over time, we cannot reconstruct whether, or how, the missionaries tried to regulate the bead trade. However, as I describe in the following section, from the next year, 1889, the missionaries started to realise the value of local objects with exhibitions travelling to Europe.

[426] DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/4-1885-86: draft of the year report for the Umlazi Division, by W.P. Jackson.
[427] My own translation from the German original.
[428] Most of the beads available in Southern Africa at the time were imported from Eastern European countries or Italy.

Only one year later, in 1889, Müller crafted the first extensive description of a considerable object collection, which eventually appeared in the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* (Müller 1890). This collection of some 200 pieces was still intentionally mobile as a travelling exhibition, and therefore had not yet taken the form of a stationary and permanent museum. As will become clear below, the missionaries nevertheless perceived it as a bound and "complete" entity, which was defined by the objects' common origin and makers. Initially, the Trappists framed objects as "curiosities" or "rarities [*Raritäten*[429]]", but in 1890 the editors of the periodical *Vergißmeinnicht* also introduced an awareness for scientific discourses, by adding the line "informal paper for ethnology (*Völkerkunde*)[430] and church history" to the periodical's subtitle (Figure 103). The term "curiosity" was nevertheless upheld in formal registers, as well as in colloquial use, at least for the next 20 years.[431]

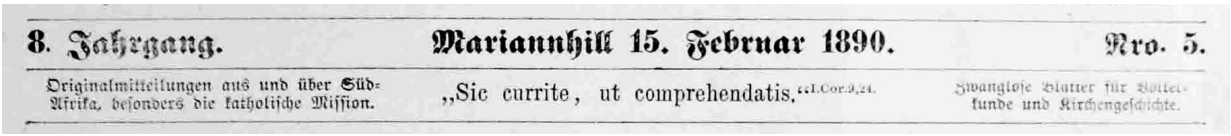

8. Jahrgang. Mariannhill 15. Februar 1890. Nro. 5.
Originalmitteilungen aus und über Süd-Afrika, besonders die katholische Mission. „Sic currite, ut comprehendatis." (I.Cor.9,24. Zwanglose Blätter für Völkerkunde und Kirchengeschichte.

Figure 103: header of the *Vergißmeinnicht* 1890: "*Originalmitteilungen aus und über Süd-Afrika, besonders die Katholische Mission.—Sic currite, ut comprehendatis.' (I.Cor.9.24.)—Zwanglose Blätter für Völkerkunde und Kirchengeschichte.*"—"Original reports from and about South Africa, in particular about the Catholic Mission. —'run, so that you may win [the price]' (I.Cor.9.24)—informal paper for ethnology and church history."

A few months after his arrival in 1889, and probably due to his previous experience as an accountant, Müller was appointed as the monastery's *Equipierungsrat*.[432] He was therefore responsible for the management of the monastery's in- and out-going assets, as well as those of the by then ten outstations. This would have included the transfer of "Kafir products", occasionally brought in by his confreres on return from the stations. A few months later, in 1890, Müller recounted the following details in an article about a forthcoming mission exhibition, which was about to tour in Europe:

[429] The German term "*Raritäten"* (sing.: *Rarität*) may be translated with "curiosities", especially in relation to the contemporary institution of the "*Raritätenkabinet*". Here, things that where considered rare, strange, or special, but not necessarily foreign, where collected.

[430] German "*Völkerkunde*" was generally divided into "*beschreibende Völkerkunde*" (ethnography) and "*vergleichende Völkerkunde*" (ethnology). It is unclear why a move to Völkerkunde was made at Mariannhill in 1890, as active engagements with ethnologists only took place several years later (cf. Chapter Six).

[431] The term was common with colonial actors when missionaries started selling objects to the ethnographic museum of Berlin in the 1870s, but later avoided at museums in both Germany and England (Stelzig 2004: 240, Coombes 1994:113). South African museum professionals still employed the term after 1900 (cf. Warren 1906).

[432] The *Vergißmeinnicht* of 1 February 1890 mentioned the transfer of the duties of the "*Equippierungsrat"* to Fr. Ludgerus and Br. Aegidius (Anon. 1890:15). While the translation "cellarer" would foremost refer to the distribution of food and drink, the "*Equipierungsrat"* dealt with the monks' other daily essential needs, such as clothing.

A collection of Kafir products [*kaffrische Erzeugnisse*] has been compiled by our *Equipierungsrat* Fr. Severin Grimm, consisting of weapons, clothing, adornment- and luxury articles, as well as house and kitchenware. As we speak, it is on its way from Mariannhill to Europe. Soon it will be exhibited in Germany's major cities.

Still about two years ago it would have been a rather difficult undertaking to assemble such a reasonably complete [*vollständig*] collection. Back then, one could only convince the Kafir with a high degree of eloquence and hard cashffffffff to hand over the bead strings from his breast, neck, ears and head. But for no money would he have sold his loin fur (*Umutsha*) or his head ring (*Inkehla Isigcogco*), not even to speak of the war shields and spears (*Assagay* [sic]) or the bridal ornaments of a Kafir woman. Nevertheless, we are now in possession of a comprehensive [*reichhaltig*] collection of Kafir objects [*Gegenstände*]. What the Kafir in former times would never have given into the hands of a White man, he now offers us for sale, or in exchange for clothing. It is thus a great demonstration of trust by the Kafirs. Once we send them to the English with these things, they reply: "*Ka*, (No) We rather endure the greatest needs and even starvation before delivering our belts and weapons to the Englishmen".

The collection conveys interesting insights into the cultural state [*Kulturzustand*] of the Kafirs. The war shields, made from the hide of oxen, have different meanings according to their size and the colour of the hide. For example, a war shield made from black Ox-hide with a nice round spot in the centre may only be carried by a chief (*inKosi*). The spears (*Assagay*) are used as projectiles, or for stabbing. With their tips dipped into poison they become a terrible weapon in the skilful hand of the Kafir. If the shields and assegays of our collection could talk, some of them would be able to tell horrifying stories about the Zulu wars under Tshaka's tyrannic rule from their own experience. Also the many clubs and sticks made from ironwood, which the Kafir carries next to his spear while travelling, do testify to the Kafir's readiness for war. However, if not provoked, he is a good-natured and affable human being. Strange horns for smoking, pots for drinking, snuff boxes and requisites for dancing, do tease an involuntary smile with the European beholder. The straw and grass weaving, as well as the great amount of beadwork do attest to good taste and a skilful hand; it is a pity that not all aptitudes are so well developed. The Kafir people pay special attention to the dressing of hair. With his primitive curling tongues the Kafir forces the black curly wool of his head into manyfold curlicues and geometrical figures; he puts feathers of both Emu and birds of prey into these high constructions as decorations, just like snuff spoons, inflated bladders of sheep and the like.—a strange fashion, which after all demands the sacrifice to sleep at night with one's neck on a wooden block, so that the head may hover freely and the hairdo won't be damaged. We succeeded in acquiring two female and three male hairdos for our collection, including the complete and strange accessories, made from real Kafir-hair, and prepared by Kafir hands. Especially the ladies may be pleased to know that the goddess by the name of fashion also unleashed her strange moods upon the Kafir womanhood. The latter do not miss their fair share of Eve's inherited trait. The copper-, brass- and iron-rings for the feet, lower and upper arms, the adornment for a kafir bride, as well as the big and strange wooden earrings attest to this opinion. Strange indeed are the self-made earthen pots and the wooden spoons, which have been carved with the help of a piece of broken glass. For the lovers of music we need to mention the three peculiar string instruments, which the Kafirs play along with their wedding dances. This is enough from this extensive collection. A detailed catalogue will give the necessary explanations for the approximately 200 exhibition objects. The newspapers will soon report about the opening of the exhibition and in the interest of our mission we expect a lively attendance. (Müller 1890:15-16)[433]

Like his Protestant colleagues and museum curators in Europe at the time, Müller indicated in this quote that the missionaries of Mariannhill tried to achieve the paradox of compiling an exemplary, but at the same time "complete" collection. But neither Müller, nor other European collectors ever specified what exactly justified his claim, and therefore never defined "completeness". In order to approximate what such a complete array of items ideally looked like, I compare this article in the next section to the accession list, which had been compiled for shipping these same items to Europe in December 1889.[434] In a second step, I compare the claim to completeness to similar efforts at Berlin's ethnographic museum in the next chapter.

In particular in the article's second half, Müller stressed the objects' strangeness, their

[433] My own translation of the german original.

[434] It is uncertain whether the planned exhibition was ever realised, as no reports—or the mentioned catalogue—appear in any of Mariannhill's periodicals.

comical potential and their status as evidence for Africans' remaining readiness for violence. He pointed out the artistic potential of some objects, but at the same time stressed that such excellence does not apply in other (probably moral) areas. He thus explores how the objects may work as exotic curiosities in capturing the attention of the mission's benefactor audiences. Once the missionaries narrated objects as a single collection unit, it was much more difficult to point out their resemblances to European objects. The overall exotic ambience of an entire collection of curiosities becomes more dominant than singular processes of transformation and conversion. It is thus impossible to maintain that "converted artifacts" were the dominant representational strategy employed by missionaries. As we shall see in many more instances, the mode of presentation always depended on both the writing or talking missionary's own inclination, the interest and knowledge of the respective interlocutors, as well as the market and modes of exchange that brought them together.

Some 15 years after this article, Müller was still involved in maintaining the supply of ethnographic objects, beadwork in particular, as can be seen in Figure 104. A Stuttgart industrialist by the name of Adolf Mayer had personal contacts at Mariannhill and donated this photograph to the ethnographic Museum of Stuttgart, as part of a bigger collection of objects and photographs between 1904 and 1912 (cf. Chapter Six). The acquired collection contains many photographs, but also a selection of objects, foremost beadwork, some collected around Centocow Mission. The photograph was not made by any of Mariannhill's photographers, but by an unknown acquaintance of Adolf Mayer, whom Müller took on a tour to nearby homesteads on horseback. One of the visitors' mounts is visible in the background. It is thus not one of Müller's genre composition, but rather a snapshot, of which he seems to have been unaware while being distracted by bartering for beadwork.



Figure 104: Br. Aegidius inspecting beadwork. Approx. 1904. Unknown photographer (Linden Museum Stuttgart).

As the photograph shows, not all objects were offered to the missionaries in the process of conversion (ie. became "converted artifacts"), but the missionaries also actively collected, and more importantly *selected* objects at peoples' homesteads. An entry in Mariannhill's accounting books of 15 August 1906 registered the payment of one Shilling "*für Kaffernschmucksachen* [for Kafir adornments]", while in 1911 "*15 Kaffernstöcke* [15 Kafir sticks]" where bought for £1 in one transaction. When missionaries embarked on longer journeys in the same year, they received money in advance "*zum Ankauf von Couriositäten* [for the purchase of curiosities]". In September 1911, Mariannhill's General Council eventually ordered every station superior to put up one suitable person to collect for the museum. An overall £20 was set aside for this purpose *per annum*. At the same time, the protocol stated that objects may only be resold at their actual cost price (*Selbstkostenpreis*), meaning without profit.[435] This renewed collection effort may have been established due to Fr. Alexander's observation in 1910 that other missions had already surpassed them by now (see below). Ledochowska's St. Peter Claver Society in Austria, for example, had established small museums at their houses in Europe (cf. Gütl 2004). Competition

[435] CMMA-GR: Unpublished research notes of Fr. Dietmar Seubert.

with other mission congregations and societies thus became another driving force behind collecting.

In accordance with Müller's history of collecting (1890), the accounting books I just described show the regular *acquisition* of "objects for the museum", which are rarely defined in detail. At the same time, the books also show the regular *selling* of "Kafir sticks and pots" during the 1890s and the first years of the 20th century. These two object categories were apparently of interest for a local consumer market, or as gifts to benefactors of the mission.[436] The above-mentioned official order of 1911 to sell without revenue, makes it likely that the practice had previously indeed been profit-oriented. In their simple, practical, and universal form as container and stick, they may thus have been re-invested with a use value for both Black and White customers. The South African historian Hlonipha Mokoena, for example, speculates about such re-appropriations for Zulu *knobkerries* into swagger sticks as used by White members of Natal's police force (Mokoena 2016, also see Chapter Four). Regarding pots, Mariannhill's architect Br. Nivard Streicher wrote in 1904 to his confrere Fr. Pius at Mariannhill's house in Würzburg:

> Some weeks ago I sent a crate with curiosities to Würzburg. In it you will find a small box with Kafir pots and a bag of *Amabele* [South African grain]. Please send these things to the given address in Erding. My friend Michl had earlier conveyed to me an expensive model of a modern baking oven for terracotta and pottery from the *Keramische Fachschule Landshut*. In return I am sending him some Kafir pots, which Patwa had procured for me.[437]

The intermediary in this case seems to have been the *Amakholwa Induna* Umpathwa Phewa (cf. Chapter Four), known well enough to both correspondents to be mentioned casually with only his first name. Six years earlier, "Umpatwa, *induna* in charge at Mariannhill" had had to deal with yet another, rather drastic method of object acquisition. On 10 October 1898, Umpatwa reported to the magistrate's office of Umlazi that a "European constable" had taken four *Assegais* from his son's house.[438] The magistrate's office then inquired with the Pinetown police station, only to discover that the alleged "constable" had instead been a "holidaymaker from Durban", who had claimed before Umpatwa to be "a policeman in plain clothes".[439] He may have been a stray tourist, who had done the tour at Mariannhill, but was still in need of souvenirs before returning to Durban.

As we could see, Africans near Mariannhill experienced multiple ways in which their objects were "collected". These ways differed considerably, and ranged from Africans' voluntary offerings at the mission, acquisition tours by the missionaries, acquisitions through African intermediaries, "confiscations" by the missionaries, and eventually plain theft by tourists. Crucial

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436 Already in August 1889, during a meeting of the monastery council, the superior of Centocow, Fr. Gerard Wolpert, complained about the selling of big "*Utshwala* [Zulu: beer] *Häfen* [Austrian-German: pots]" at the mission stations, and asked to call this practice off. For unspecified reasons his request was rejected by the council (Zürrlein 1999:29). With all likelihood, Wolpert considered it unjustifiable to sell receptacles for alcohol at a mission station.

437 Letter, Br. Nivard Streicher to Fr. Pius Rudlof, 19.10. 1904, in Seubert and Streicher (2003).

438 DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/11-98, memorandum, mag. office Umlazi to Natal Police Pinetown, 10.10.1898.

439 DAR: 1_UMB-3/1/11-98, letter, Bertram Rodius to J.R. Currie, Umlazi Court, Durban, 14.12.1898.

for all cases is that Africans' own experience of these moments cannot be recovered in any detail. They certainly differed from the narratives presented by the missionaries or colonial officials, which I presented here. It is therefore only the mode of presentation by White colonial actors, which I analysed here. The missionaries only represented the mode of "voluntary" offerings in the context of conversion, as well as the "confiscation" legitimised by objects' allegedly "superstitious" nature. It was thus only these latter objects that could become "converted artifacts" in the mission's periodicals.

The missionaries recollected their own practice of collecting in textual form, in order to create effective backstories for European readers. This practice of collection was however only photographed once by an outsider (Figure 104). We realise that missionaries and other colonial actors did not collect every existing "African" object, which had been in daily use at the time. Clothing and utensils of Western import were not included, unless they had been sufficiently transformed and inscribed with a certain degree of alterity, such as in the case of glass beads turned into beadwork.[440] Imported goods must nevertheless have been present in equal amount and co-constituted all Africans' lifeworlds, as suggested by the magistrate's list for "trade and barter" of 1884, which I quoted in the last section.

In case Mariannhill Missionaries photographed entire homesteads displaying imported goods, these were usually identified as "Christian" through image captions. Those homesteads with no imported goods instead were identified as "heathen" (cf. Chapter One). Effectually, this created an unreal dichotomy for overseas audiences at the time, as much as for historians today. Whenever an object entered Mariannhill's museum, the chain of events leading to this moment not only depended on selection processes based on social relations, but also on an objects's social function, its materiality, aesthetic potential, and its resulting collectability. An object's social and material ontologies were thus entangled with its potential for establishing agency (cf. Chapter Eight). The reproductive power of mimetic capital was already constituted in social relations during the process of collection. The resulting eminence of particular objects through their *collectibility*, eventually influenced not only their inclusion in ethnographic collections and narratives, but also their *photographability* for this purpose, which I discuss in the last two sections. In the following two sections I deal with Mariannhill's collection at large in an institutional setting, once it had been transformed into a permanent museum, and curators furthermore started to include "non-African" objects.

[440] Also see the definition by Gustav Fritsch (1888, 1906) for "ethnographic" objects and photographs in Chapter Six.

Mariannhill's Museum and its Categorisations

> Their museum is a sight worth seeing, the collection, although smaller than most public museums contain, has in some individual collections perhaps a more numerous and varied selection than a good many of them. Their stock of native curios, amongst which were many rare and valuable articles, is an exceptionally good one. There were a number of antique things from all parts of the world, obtained from the other monasteries scattered throughout Europe. A fancy glass bottle of the year 1650 is said to have its sister reposing in the museum at Munich. There was an old piece of Vienna chinaware for which the monkish curator stated he refused £25, considering its value to be twice that sum. The collection of entomological specimens was far in advance of that in the museum in Pietermaritzburg. In the way of coins this little museum contained as complete a stock as could be imagined, their weight in silver and gold alone making them of considerable value, to say nothing of their antiquity.
>
> H.O. Andrews, *The Monks of Natal* (1909:51-52).

> The miscellaneous collection accumulated in the museum defies description. An enormous number of large frogs reposing in spirit jars, dreadful snakes, including the deadly "Black Mamba," a golden mole, small fox mice, dozens of scorpions—yellowy brown and black, with their elongated tail and tiny tip from which they exude their poison—all are there. Lovely birds are splendidly mounted; and Kaffir curios in very-well-done bead work. Some pieces of rock with Bushmen painting I found most interesting, the colours of the dark red men on brown stone striking me as unlike anything I had ever seen before.
>
> Charlotte Cameron, *A Woman's Winter in Africa* (1913:158).

At least in their descriptions and calls for collections, Mariannhill's museum curators attempted to cover the various stages of the world's "art" and "artefacts" that were thought to constitute civilisation. In addition they collected specimens of the local South African fauna and flora. As I explore in this section, the "monkish curator", Fr. Alexander Hanisch, at least claimed a connection to such European and American metropolitan museums as an ideal, which had been inspired by the contemporary popular notion of what Duncan and Wallach once termed the "universal survey museum" (2004 [1980]). Thereby Hanisch attempted to strategically position Mariannhill internationally in relation to other museum institutions, nations, and religions. While he promoted scientifically inspired ideas of universality, I suggest that he instead considered the museum's main purpose as propaganda and commerce based on the attraction of the curiosity cabinet: his main focus was to curate relationships with potential allies, rather than object collections in order to create scientific knowledge.

For the first time in 1894, the monastery opened a permanent museum space, which was referred to as "*Naturalien und ethnographische Sammlung*". This space was first inside the monastic enclosure. Once the collection had grown significantly by 1900, it was successively relocated to various spaces outside of the enclosure. Next to "home missionary museums", Chris Wingfield has identified museums in the missionaries' field of action as "mission field museums". So far, only very few examples of the latter kind from either India or China are known[441] (Wingfield 2017). Mariannhill's museum is therefore exceptional in this regard: it was established in the field of action because the monastery itself was considered as the

[441] No comparative study of mission museums exists (either diachronic or synchronic), but one unpublished thesis for the case of Germany, which I have not been able to access (Schlegel 1997).

administrative centre, resulting in a less clearly defined distinction between "home" and "field".

At the same time as European ethnographic museums around 1900, the museums in the South African colonies experienced an excessive overcrowding with objects. Similar to European, and in particular German ethnographic museums (cf. Penny 2002, Zimmermann 2001), they followed the 19th century salvaging paradigm until the First World War. Just like these museums far and near, also Mariannhill Monastery became entangled in an international and local market pressure, which made repeated expansions and relocations of its museum necessary. In the sense of Hodder, the dependency on objects and photographs turned into an inconvenient entrapment, which necessitated other repeated material interventions.

As a result of such developments, also the public collections in Natal's biggest cities Durban and Pietermaritzburg were rehoused around 1900. Müller and other members sold and exchanged collectables, including photographs with these museums, as well as the South African Museum in Cape Town. The two former members of Mariannhill, Fr. Franz Mayr and Fr. Alfred T. Bryant, as well as Mariannhill's second museum curator, Fr. Paschalis Boneberg, even exchanged ethnographic, botanical, and zoological information and specimens more regularly after 1900 with these two museums (Guest 2004:35). Mayr and Bryant also published in the journal of the Natal Museum.[442]

These national and international settings of institutions were connected in a particular way. Bennett (1995 [1988]) describes the development of an "exhibitionary complex" in the second half of the 19th century, in which the available knowledge of the world was related to particular institutions, such as "history and natural science museums, dioramas and panoramas, national and, later, international exhibitions, arcades and department stores". According to Bennett, these spaces "served as linked sites for the development and circulation of new disciplines (history, biology, art history, anthropology) and their discursive formations (the past, evolution, aesthetics, man) as well as for the development of new technologies of vision" (Bennett 1995:59). He goes on to argue that it was anthropology that connected "the histories of Western nations and civilisations to those of other people" (ibid:77), and that "[t]he space of representation constituted in the relations between the disciplinary knowledges deployed within the exhibitionary complex thus permitted the construction of a temporally organized order of things and peoples" (ibid:79). According to Bennett, in particular the world exhibitions introduced two shifts: one from process to products, which was again subordinated to "the dominating influence of principles of classification based on nations and the supra-national constructs of empires and races" (ibid:81). In this constellation, White audiences were supposedly able to reflect and adapt by actively experiencing their own situation in the exhibition.

While Bennet's notion of the "exhibitionary complex" may be used to understand

[442] It is impossible to deal with Mariannhill's entire museum history here. As it was almost exclusively the collection of local material culture that was involved in photographic practices, I will exclude a detailed discussion of the collection concerning natural history, geology, zoology and related personalities.

Mariannhill's institutional setup, Bennet's notion of a "civilising museum" may only have limited analytical value for the case of Natalian museums. It is nevertheless helpful to clarify the differences between museums in Europe, Pietermaritzburg, Durban, and the one of Mariannhill. First, Penny (2002:206) argues against Bennett for the case of German museums that the displays' overcrowding made them useless as sophisticated social and political tools, and therefore the same may be said for Natal museums just before 1900. Second, MacKenzie (2010) argues that the situation with "colonial museums"[443] (also see Sheets-Pyenson 1988), such as those in the South African metropoles, was rather different from those in Europe. While Bennett's idea was that elites attempted to educate the working class during the 19th century through the engineering of museum architecture and displays, Black South Africans were hardly to be counted amongst the regular audiences of South African museums around 1900.

But other than the two museums in Cape Town and Grahamstown that Mackenzie studied, the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg did indeed welcome the "coloured races" (Natives, Indians, and Arabs); however, only on Sunday afternoon,[444] only if properly dressed, and only under the supervision of a native constable, or a native attendant (Guest 2006:28, also see Warren 1906:28-29). Statistical numbers of such "Coloured" visitors are however unknown for either Pietermaritzburg, Durban, or Mariannhill.[445] In general, it can be stated that Africans indeed rarely constituted (or provided) parts of the narratives on the museum as visitors (cf. MacKenzie 2010:96). But as I showed in the last chapter, Africans indeed visited Mariannhill Monastery for various reasons. The visit and tour of Chief Lokothwayo, for example, was at least presented as a civilising measure, regardless whether he himself had indeed experienced it as such.

Africans nevertheless must have consciously followed the trajectories of their objects, once they had been collected by Mariannhill Missionaries, other colonial actors, or tourists around Mariannhill. Next to the earlier-mentioned occasion involving *Induna* Pathwa Phewa, this can be shown for several cases. Therefore, both the (re-narrated) mission space, and its own museum can be considered as "contact zones" in the sense of Clifford (1997), in which missionaries, other colonial actors, and Africans physically and intellectually engaged with objects and the *préterrain* of the colonial world at large, and which thus brought forth particular statements other than the missionaries'. We may further consider the situation at Mariannhill itself as a specific "exhibitionary complex" in the sense of Bennett (1995): the monastery's

[443] I will later distinguish museums *situated* in the colonies from those in European metropoles *concerned* with the colonies. In Germany the latter were referred to as either *Kolonialmuseen* or *Handelsmuseen* (trade museums). The *Kolonialmuseum* of Berlin (1899-1915) even included designated sections for both Protestant and Catholic Missionaries, while the objects of mission origin in ethnographic museums were no longer displayed in order to show this relationship. It was thus only at Berlin's *Kolonialmuseum* that missionaries were publicly involved in co-representing the colonies together with other colonial lobbyists.

[444] It is unclear whether this was indeed a restriction based on colour, or a necessity due to Africans' occupation through work.

[445] The visitor books at Mariannhill from 1908 onwards mostly show European names with few exceptions in the early years. This does not mean that no Africans visited Mariannhill, as many were illiterate and therefore would not have signed in.

workshops, the store for Africans, the church, the archive, the library, the museum, temporary exhibitions, the photographic studio, as well as events like Catholic holidays and theatre performances, all constituted institutions that facilitated the storage, display, and distribution of the mission's work and products towards the outside world. These institutions were also reproduced textually as perceived during tours, or reported on by outside correspondence otherwise. They not only fulfilled the role of production and storage, but had performative qualities and were therefore connected in between themselves. At the same time, these institutions connected Mariannhill's entire network of mission stations to Europe in an effort to promote the project of mission. Mariannhill's photographs play a particularly important role historically, as both objects and images; but through their image content they also allow for the reconstruction of other histories for institutions and objects.

In order to make the situation of Mariannhill's museum and the objects it contained comprehensible within the Euro-American discourse on "foreign" objects in general, I need to briefly discuss some of the relevant scholarship. This is necessary, because we already learned in Parts One and Two that Mariannhill tapped into every source possible in order to improve their media landscape. This awareness also influenced the missionaries' ideas about the collectability and photographability of objects. By way of connecting to local and international institutions, as well as popular and scientific discourses, Mariannhill's museum curators simultaneously used conceptions like "Kafir curios", as well as "art". The same objects would alternatively be labelled "ethnographic", once they had been transferred to European museum collections. A division between non-European "ethnographic" objects and European "art" objects existed in Europe until the first decade of the 20th century.

Since about 1900, "ethnographic" objects were either scientifically perceived as cultural artefacts, or aesthetically as works of art (Clifford 1988b:222). This division indeed became very ambivalent when European artists "discovered" African "art" as inspiration for their own (cf. Flam and Deutch 2003). But at the same time, this process furthered a divide of "modernism" and "primitivism" as categories within the art discourse itself (Antliff and Leighten 2003, Clifford 1988a:198). It has been argued that it was curators of ethnographic museums who prepared this change of view by stockpiling the necessary "mimetic capital" since the 1870s (cf. Williams 1985:159). Penny (2002) and Stelzig (2004) show that a move towards the art paradigm eventually also took place in several German ethnographic museums just after 1900, for example by re-designing exhibitions.[446]

In South Africa, however, the division between Western "art" on the one hand, and "ethnographic" objects, "crafts", or "curios" on the other, existed much longer (Leibhammer 2011:51-52). As I will further explore in Chapter Seven, also just before 1900, German ethnologists began to indulge a certain form of reflexivity, by analysing commissioned "native

[446] When the city of Munich, for example, made municipal funding available for art, the ethnographic museum's curator Scherman reshaped the exhibition accordingly (Penny 2002). This was an effort that apparently persisted until the end of the 20th century (Clifford 1988a:206) and beyond (also see below).

drawings" in order to consider the mimetic faculties and psychological abilities of non-Europeans through their visual expressions. It was only since the mid-1920s that the White South African art world encouraged Black South African artists to express themselves professionally in the form of figurative art, painting, and drawing in the European tradition. While this had been done previously foremost in the educational realm, by the late 1920s Black artists eventually were granted space within exhibitions and the public art scene. Even though this approach took place within the European tradition of fine art painting and sculpture, White art lobbyists and patrons curated segregated exhibitions, so to retain an exotic inflection of "African" style. Anitra Nettleton suggests that this development was inspired and paralleled by the tendency in the USA to promote a distinct Black identity (2011:143).

For the first time during the 1930s, figurative and pictorial art by Black South Africans fully entered the Euro-American art market and discourse in its own right (cf. Shaw 1949). South African artefacts, however, were excluded in this perception, as they had not been inspirational to European artists (Leibhammer 2011:53). At least until the 1970s, artefacts such as listed by Müller above (1890), were framed as either "material culture" or "crafts" in anthropology, and not much desired within the secondary art market (Klopper 2004:18). In the transitional era of the 1970s and 1980s, texts and photographs by Mariannhill in particular served as sources for a reevaluation of Natal's material culture, as systematic depictions of historical artefacts accompanied by descriptions were otherwise scarce.[447]

Eventually, since the 1970s, art dealers and art historians (re-)collected South African historical objects locally and internationally as "art" (cf. Nettleton 1988:51, Stevenson 2005), which then started circulating within, out of, and eventually also back to South Africa. The post-1980s and post-apartheid discourse continued to re-frame South African historical objects more generally as "art", partially to promote an emerging nation (cf. Leibhammer 2016:59-60, 72), partially in order to create value on the secondary art market. With these material circulations *retrospective* writing on "South African art" also intensified. The German ethnologist Katesa Schlosser (Schlosser 1975, also see Kennedy 1978, Vogel 1981:239, 241, Stevenson 2005:33), like her South African colleague Ella Shaw during the first wave of appropriation in the 1930s and 1940s,[448] retrospectively diagnosed a general lack of "traditional art" and especially a lack of "figurative art" in South African material culture:

> Ethnology considers the Bantu-areas of South Africa as lacking in art. There is no court art as such, in so far that chiefs support artists. There is no traditional religious art with depictions of deity- or ancestor figures. Totemistic art is developed vaguely. Free-standing sculpture is rare. Singular carvings are used with the Venda and northern *Suthu* as demonstration-objects in "bush-schools" [for initiation]. Otherwise sculptures foremost appear as toys: clay-sculptures of cattle and people. Artistic craftwork [*Kunsthandwerk*] and ornamental work dominate. They serve the

[447] For example essays in the *Annals of the South African Museum* used material culled from a purchase of Mariannhill photographs in 1899, as well as Müller's article from 1917/18.

[448] "Every object of art that was made was primarily an object of use, whether it was a household utensil elaborately decorated, an object connected with religious or magical practices, or a toy (the nearest to 'art for art's sake'). It is possibly this fact, coupled with traditional conservatism, that lies behind the absence of pictorial art not only in South Africa but throughout Bantu Africa" (Shaw 1949:629).

adornment of the human body, of homesteads and utensils[449] (Schlosser 1975:38).

Europeans promoted these ideas retrospectively, and it is therefore questionable whether this indeed was the perception of Africans, as well as of local Europeans at the time.[450] Below and in Chapter Eight, I show instead that conversations between Africans and Europeans indeed showed a considerable sophistication regarding the perception of images:[451] already before the First World War, Mariannhill Missionaries constructed—however unstable—a dichotomy between "art" ("art objects") and "artefacts" ("non-art objects") and associated valuations, either as distinguished objects worthy of appreciation, or as mere functional objects.[452]

As pointed out critically for the first time by Nettleton (1988), Black South Africans did indeed produce figurative wood carvings, but related ethnic identifications have often been applied indiscriminately. According to Nettleton, a "Zulu" identity has in fact been applied incorrectly to sculptures in several cases, probably because of the general dominance of the Zulu identity in the colonial discourse. Even if scarce, "figurative" expressions were thus indeed present in South Africa before 1900. Nevertheless, before the 1920s, neither Black South Africans nor White collectors engaged with them through art fora, institutions, and discourses, which could promote them as "art". Also Mariannhill Missionaries indeed collected and photographed sophisticated clay sculptures. These, however, did not allow for their construction as "superstitious idols", and the missionaries therefore could not use them as "converted artifacts" like the head rings and medicine bundles described above. Because the missionaries could not circulate such clay sculptures for propaganda purposes, and because they were generally most fragile, it is likely that they never entered trading circuits.

Contemporary documentation of what the museum at Mariannhill contained exactly at particular points in time does not exist. The curators apparently kept no records of what they accumulated successively between the 1880s and today. Likewise, there are no records of what they eventually de-accessioned, sold, gave away, or of what was in fact stolen. It is therefore difficult to evaluate the missionaries' contemporary categorisations of objects. As I explained in the main introduction, the missionaries did not keep an official archive until the separation from the Trappist order in 1909. Today, only three accessioning lists of objects *leaving* to Europe can be found, one of them related to the touring exhibition described by Müller above[453] (Müller

[449] My own translation from the German original.

[450] At least A.T. Bryant does confirm this view in a letter to the Natal Museum's director Ernest Warren in 1908, however, by supporting one cliché with another: "Being essentially a warlike tribe, the Zulus were exceptionally poor in all that pertains to the arts & crafts of peace" (KZNM: letter, Bryant to Warren, 18.11.1908).

[451] Also see the introduction of Chapter Two.

[452] For a discussion of the "art/artefact" dichotomy, see Vogel (1988, 1991). The definition of the term "artefact" may of course be drawn much wider in its meaning as "human-made". Despite furthering the discussion about the conceptual division between "art" and "artefacts" in Western museums, Vogel's work remains partially polarising and stereotyping. For an overview of critiques see Jones (1993).

[453] The second one is undated, but must also have been drawn up in the 1890s. The third one was put together for the 1925 Vatican exhibition. The earliest lists are crafted in sloppy *kurrent* handwriting (both Zulu and German) and have been perforated considerably by the earlier mentioned insect plague.

1890). These lists mostly name African artefacts, as well as print matter and photographs, but none of the other exhibits from the permanent museum. An accession list for the museum itself was eventually created for the centenary in 1982, but holds no information about the objects' provenance, or when they entered the collection. Therefore, the only way to produce new knowledge about the different layers of processed and unprocessed information on the museum and the archive, is to relate photographs, texts, objects, as well as the people who are referenced through these sources. This not only brings us closer to the knowledge single objects were thought to convey initially, but provides ideas on how they came to be in their current configuration in between the entities labelled as Mariannhill's various "archives" and "museums" (cf. Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016b).

We have various examples of photographed objects from Mariannhill's museum collection. The curators and photographers presented them either in exhibition settings, or in arrangements that had been set up especially to be photographed. Nevertheless, only few explicit indications survive as to how Mariannhill Missionaries dealt with objects in the museum, after they had registered them visually and textually. We also know very little of people other than Br. Aegidius Müller at Mariannhill, who had an interest in the collection of objects, such as the museum's first keeper, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, or the short-term member Fr. Franz Mayr (but see Gütl 2004). Unlike with Müller and Mayr, I could only discover few texts authored by Hanisch.

In previous sections I looked at how the propaganda periodicals narrated objects before they had entered the collection. In the next section I follow the practices promoted by Mariannhill's museum curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, in the permanent museum space on a public exhibitionary frontstage towards visitors. Here he positioned artefacts in various ways to establish relationships between Africans, missionaries, and the wider colonial society. In the following three sections I furthermore present curatorial practices involving photographs *of* exhibited artefacts, but also *as* exhibited objects. This process of photographic aesthetification also contributed to the later presentation, circulation, and perception of Mariannhill's object collection as "art".

We will thus be able to observe a shift from "curiosities" towards the further inclusion of ideas on science and art, which indicates that both the photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller, and the museum curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, followed the developments in European ethnology, popular culture, and the art world. Over the remaining sections I will discuss moments when Müller and Hanisch were involved in crafting statements on African people and their objects in documents dated to 1889/90, 1894, 1898/99, 1904, 1906/07, 1910, 1911/12, and 1917/18. The general assemblage of the types of collected objects did not change drastically throughout these years. The terminologies both Müller and Hanisch employed, however, did undergo a transformation: in 1889, Müller referred to objects as "rarities" and in 1890 as "Kafir products". In 1894, Fr. Alexander exclusively described "Kafir things, such as curiosities", but already in the same year, the museum was referred to as "ethnographic". In 1899, eventually, Müller explicitly labelled his photographs as "ethnographic" when addressing the ethnographic museum

of Berlin. In 1904, Fr. Alexander used “natural produce or curiosities”, which he pitted against the general idea of Western art. For the first time in 1907, and later in 1912, Müller explicitly applied the idea of “art” to South African objects. By 1910, eventually, Fr. Alexander used the term “ethnological things” next to “Kafir things”. For the first time in 1917, Müller employed the term “material culture”, while at the same time having further refined his ideas on South African “art”. We shall see that these wordings must be analysed according to the involved correspondents and their interests.

Mariannhill's "African Museum" as Frontstage



Figure 105: original caption on verso: "*P. Alexander Hanisch, Museums-Kustos, in 1898*" (CMM Archives).

In one of the archival rooms at Mariannhill Monastery, an old-fashioned writing desk holds a multitude of letters, photographs, and other documents. In a drawer labelled "museum" I found a battered photograph depicting Fr. Alexander Hanisch (1868-1937), who was the keeper of Mariannhill's museum from approximately 1894. The inscription on the verso refers to him as "*Museums-Kustos*" (Figure 105). His glasses resting on his forehead and apparelled with an Arabic Fez, he examines an embroidered piece of cloth. He is further surrounded by a multitude of objects: several large tomes of unknown subjects, a painting of the crucified Christ, a Chinese vase, and the skin of a scaly anteater at his feet. This photographed arrangement shows some of the objects, which were stored in the museum at the time. The seemingly eclectic collection however excluded objects referencing local people.

The photograph must have been taken approximately at the same time as the orientalist performance of the photographer Br. Aegidius Müller (Figure 15). It is therefore worth pointing out that this particular *mise en scène* resembles classic portraiture of explorers engaging in tactile contact with their collected curios, such as Joseph Banks (cf. Thomas 1991:142). At the same time, the photograph bears striking resemblance to the arrangement of Spitzweg's orientalist painting *Schleich und Odaliske*, in a monastic setting obviously without the odalisque (cf. Ronnefahrt 1960:301). Despite this performance of an intimate relationship with museum objects, it remains unclear what Hanisch's curatorial skills and expertise were, other than a training-by-doing. Before his arrival at Mariannhill in 1891, Hanisch had been a baker in the secular world.

The photograph's purpose for the museum curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, may thus have been to fashion himself, the museum's collection, and the mission at large as a "cultured" institution, which was in consequence capable of "en-culturing" others. The necessity of such self-fashioning had once more been provoked by the earlier mentioned Europe-wide "Culture War": the Jesuits, for example, a congregation of Catholic missionaries known for their early scientific efforts and collections, had been banned, in particular in Germany since 1872 (Gross 1998, 2004). The idea of "*Kultur*" held by the Protestant Bismarckian regime appeared not to be compatible with the one represented by Catholics, especially once the Papacy had declared its infallibility in 1870. But the following repression, accusations of ultramontanism, and the announcement of a "Catholic backwardness", "[…] only reinforced the existence of a separate Catholic subculture" (Blackbourn 2003:195-203). As we shall see, this also expressed itself in a catholic culture of collecting.

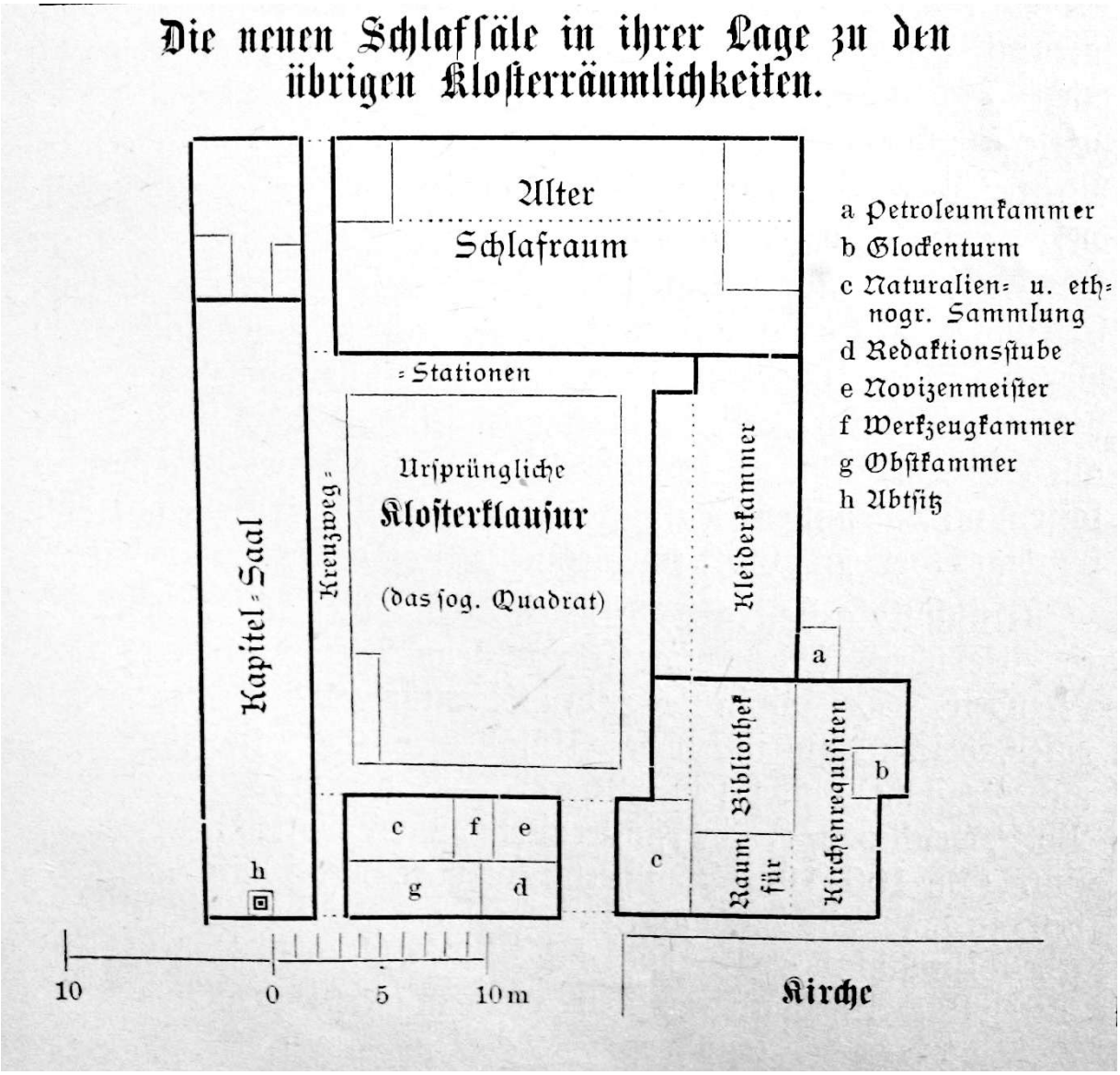


Figure 106: original caption: "*Klosterräumlichkeiten*"—"Premises of the monastery". Layout of Mariannhill Monastery in 1894 (published in *Vergißmeinnicht* 1894:44).

The objects, which Müller and his confreres collected during trips, were initially sent to Europe, but at least since 1894 primarily accumulated at the monastery: in the same year as the photographic studio was built, Mariannhill opened a "*Naturalistisches Museum* [natural science museum]" (Anon. 1894b:49).[454] These concerted efforts indicate a necessity to intensify a local representative agency. This first instalment of the museum was located within the monastery's enclosure, and on a contemporary map referred to as "*Naturalien- u. ethnogr.*[aphische]

[454] The term "natural history museum" may not be adequate here as the term "*Naturalien*" only refers to "natural produce". The term "*Naturalistisches Museum*" however rarely occurs in the contemporary literature, and one may wonder whether the author was not indeed thinking of a "*Naturhistorisches Museum*".

Sammlung".[455] While it was still referred to as "*Sammlung* [collection]", and not yet strictly as "museum", it was housed in the same building as the "*Bibliothek* [library]", and the storage room for "*Kirchenrequisiten* [church paraphernalia]" (Figure 106).[456] Approximately in 1900, the collection was moved into a small circular building next to the compound's entrance gate[457], and before 1910 the collection was once more moved to a more extensive room on the second floor of the former hospital, right behind the photographic studio (Vorspel et al. 1921-1989:216). In 1932, for the third time, the installation was moved into the newly purpose-built eastern wing of the monastery; and eventually for the last time in 1981, to its fifth and present location in the old tannery.

When Fr. Amandus Schölzig became the second Abbot of Mariannhill in 1894, he could look back at his experience of 30 years at the Augustinian Monastery of Klosterneuburg in Austria between 1858 and 1888. This monastery had a renowned collection of religious art and antiquities, dating back to the 18th century.[458] As novice master and lecturer of Oriental languages, amongst other tasks, Schölzig would have been familiar, not only with the collections of several other nearby monasteries, but also with those of secular museums (Ludwig and Reitterer 1995:29). At the time, not only state-funded ethnographic and natural history museums, but also German and Austrian monastic museums housed extensive collections of "curiosities", zoological, petrological, and botanical specimens (Schrott 2010). Schölzig was therefore well-situated to direct the installation of the museum at Mariannhill, which addressed both South African and European audiences. Together with the museum's opening in 1894, Schölzig circulated the first internal "*Filialverordnung*" as an official order "to collect as much as possible for the 'African Museum' at Mariannhill". This directive gave specific details for collecting "native kafir items, such as curiosities ec.", "all kinds of postage stamps",[459] mammals, insects, "all kinds of stones", and eventually "also other kinds of "*Naturalien*", such as "special plants".

At the time, similar collections existed close-by at the Natal Government Museum in Pietermaritzburg, as well as the Durban Museum. When a correspondent of the local newspaper, *The Natal Witness*, visited Mariannhill in December 1904,[460] he implied that Mariannhill's museum, at least regarding parts of the natural history collection, surpassed those of the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg: "There were cases upon cases of exquisitely tinted butterflies, the like of which it is doubtful if we have in Maritzburg" (Anon. 1904). And indeed, just like the museums in Pietermaritzburg and Durban, Mariannhill's own museum grew enormously in the

[455] As the letter "h", indicating the office of the Abbot (*Abtsitz*) cannot be found anywhere on the map, I assume that the second "c" indicates not a second museum-collection, but is rather a misprint, which should instead read "h". This would also make sense within the order of letters from right to left.

[456] The German term "*Requisite*" means "prop" as in "theatre-property". I employ the same term for objects used in the photographic studio.

[457] CMM-MM: unaccessioned panorama map, 1901.

[458] The "*Kunstkammer*" of Klosterneuburg Monastery housed religious art, paintings and paraphernalia (Röhrig 1982).

[459] The curators attempted to create a philatelist collection, to exchange with outsiders and eventually to sell off for revenue.

[460] Also see the above quotes from 1909 and 1913.

years just before and after 1900.[461] The museum's expansion was paralleled by reiterations of urges to collect within the congregation, but also beyond. In 1894, 1904, and 1910, the Abbots Schölzig and Wolpert released circulars asking both confreres and benefactors to collect.[462] They released these appeals at the moments of the museum's instalment, and whenever the museum was expanded and relocated. Every time the museum moved to a bigger premises, more space had to be filled. While in 1894 the call focused more on natural specimens, the one of 1904 stressed that "African natural specimens and curiosities" have priority, but also European objects would be of interest. Accordingly, the instructions indicated the confreres' obligation to collect African artefacts, and asked for the benefactors' generosity to donate non-African artefacts. The circulars also suggested that both categories could be bartered for one another, in case the monastery had doubles of the African "curiosities".[463]

Other than the circulars of 1894 and 1910, the one of 1904 was meant to address a wider public, why the editors added it to the *Mariannhill-Kalender* of the same year. For this reason, the request also had a more elaborate, explanatory, and inclusive tone. Fr. Alexander Hanisch formulated parts of the motivation to collect in 1904 as follows:

> Amongst other things, the mission-monastery Mariannhill has been labouring for several years now to install a modest museum. Its purpose and usefulness should not be in need of detailed reasoning. Artefacts of all areas of human knowledge, which used to be generally only in the possession of a few, become—through collections like this—common property. Things that are commonly only known through books, do here appear *in natura*, or at least in faithful illustrations. The peoples of the present, and the tribes of all countries and areas, become known through products of their agency and creation, and in so far, they are brought together in closer proximity; achievements of different culture periods are thus passed down to the marvelling posterity by mute, but nevertheless eloquent witnesses. After all, and this remains the main reason, the human spirit is lead up to the creator and the source of all things through the contemplation of the creatures and their works.[464]

The circulars indicated even more detailed reasons for the accumulation of objects in the museum: to impress visitors; to acquire artefacts as illustrative material for Mariannhill's schools, as well as for the priest seminar at the monastery; but also to create a repository of gifts for benefactors. However, unlike other Catholic congregations and Protestant societies at the time, Mariannhill did not establish permanent museums at European dependancies before the mid-20th century (cf. Chapter One). Even though the Trappist Generalate was in Europe, Mariannhill took an afrocentric perspective by first establishing a museum in South Africa. This was realised as a shortcoming by Fr. Alexander in the circular of 1910, which he, however, did not explain. The museum also did not explicitly represent Trappist Missions in other places, like those congregations and societies with multiple localities presented objects of their various

[461] I further discuss the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg in Chapter Eight. It was impossible to retrieve more information on the Durban Museum in the time given, as today even the curators themselves have immense difficulties to reconstruct the historical collections.

[462] CMM-GA: All three circulars are present, but unaccessioned in Mariannhill's Roman Generalate archive.

[463] Also see the correspondence between Fr. Mayr and his benefactor Ledochowska on these forms of exchange (Gütl 2004).

[464] CMM-GA: unaccessioned circular "Das Museum Mariannhill", 1904. My own translation from the German original.

houses.[465]

In 1904, Fr. Alexander wrote further that the museum cannot compete with the "great public museums in Europe and America", but that, as Trappists, they "merely wanted to collect for art and the sciences after the example of their forefathers". He stressed a "desired universality [*gewünschte Allseitigkeit*]", and accordingly listed required objects from natural history, various art objects, to coins and stamps. Hanisch here implied institutions such as the American Metropolitan Museum, the French Louvre, and the British Museum. It is unclear whom Hanisch addressed with the appellation "forefathers", but it is very likely that he indicated the general collection efforts by monastic museums, such as the one of the "*Kunstkammer*" at Klosterneuburg. Hanisch may even have referred to the encyclopaedic attempts at collecting by earlier generations of Catholic Jesuit missionaries (cf. Findlen 1989). Rosemary Seton adds for the case of the London Missionary Society that they were at the same time as Mariannhill influenced by "universalist ideas" in vogue at the British Museum, and reflecting an Enlightenment curiosity (Seton 2012:99). In order to compare the narrative directed at benefactors to the actual museum and exhibitions, we must now turn to photographs and other descriptions.

[465] See for example Seton (2012) and Wingfield (2012a) on the London Missionary Society [LMS]. Mariannhill's museum did in fact house artefacts from East Africa and Zimbabwe, which however came from its own foundations.

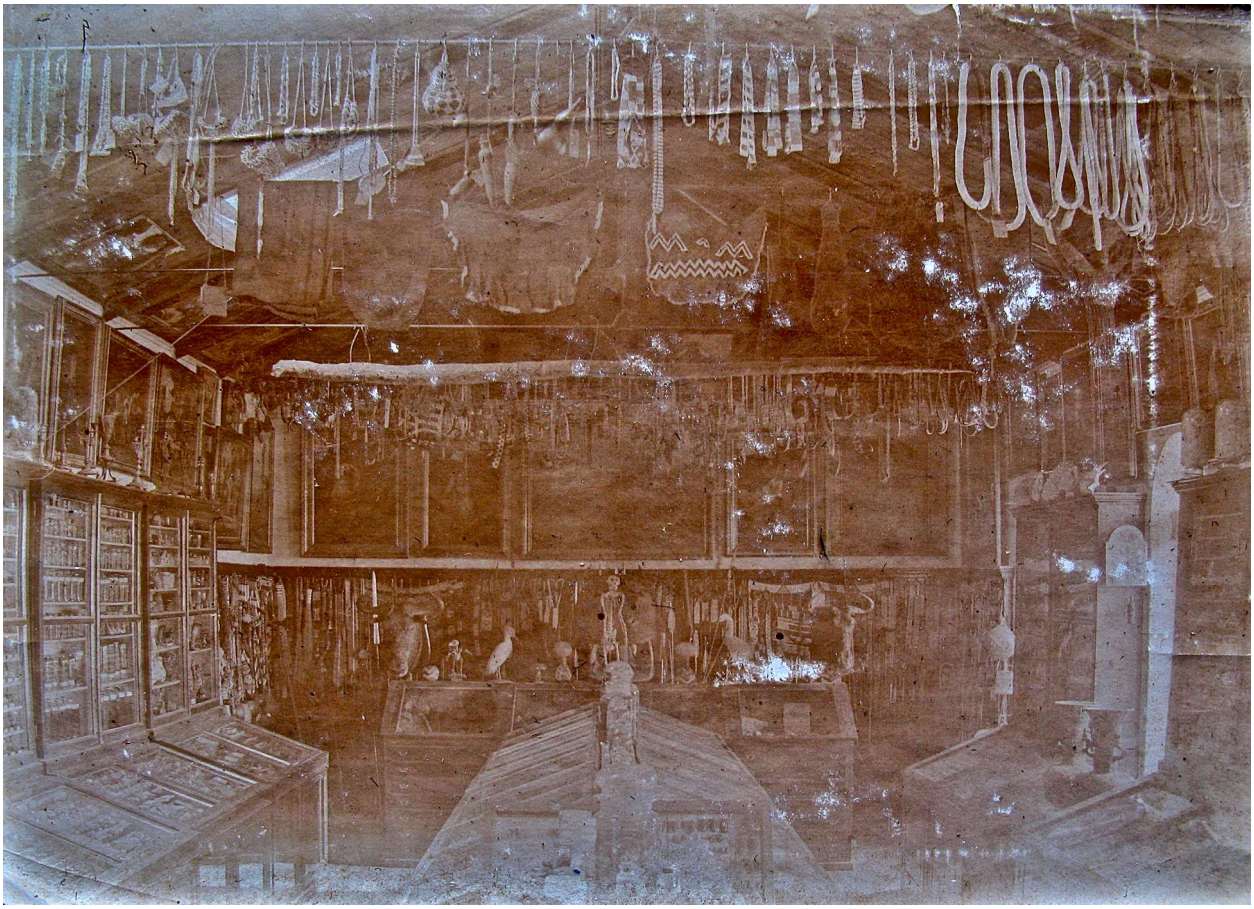


Figure 107: Mariannhill museum interior. Approx. 1900-1910 (CMM Archives). Two photographs of this particular space exist, taken from different angles. The number of objects and the architecture make it likely that this is the museum's third instalment, and that the photographs have been taken at a point close to 1910. The bad physical condition of both photographic prints as compared to others of the time, may speak for an earlier date.

In a photograph of the museum's setup after 1900 (Figure 107), we see that objects were displayed in a mode of *horror vacui* (Corbey 2000:55), a "fear of the open space". This dense presentation may have been an attempt to stun and impress, rather than to neatly file and reference objects for the creation of detailed understanding. Another reason must have been the lack of available space, due to the rapid increase of objects. As I explained, the collection was moved repeatedly into larger buildings, initially each time after approximately 10 years. At the same time, the museums in Durban and Pietermaritzburg faced the same problem of growing collections and shortage of space (Quickelberge and Campbell 1987, Guest 2004). As I will show in the next chapter for museums in Germany, most contemporary museums followed the paradigm of a "salvage anthropology". This repeated utterance of a panic claimed that African people and their material culture were becoming extinct, at such a rate that the remaining objects needed to be collected and preserved as quickly as possible.

But despite the density of display in Mariannhill's museum, the photograph shows that objects were still clearly divided into sections: zoology (mammals, birds, butterflies and

amphibians in formaldehyde), geology, as well as local material culture. As can be seen in Figure 107, the objects referred to by visitors as either "native" or "Kafir curios" are draped from rafters in three long rows under the ceiling, as well as at the room's far end behind the last cupboard holding zoological specimens. Most of these items are very hard to discern and distinguish, but according to heir shape and patterns, a majority appears to be beadwork and adornment. We may get a better sense what kinds of artefacts have been collected from Müller's earlier description (1890) and the shipping list of the same collection. Even if the production of the texts and the photograph of the museum space are approximately 15 years apart, there is some continuity nevertheless. In the next sections we will eventually see that the classifications of these objects also match with objects extracted from the museum in order to be photographed in approximately 1896 and 1906.

The above mentioned handwritten list is dated December 1889 and explores the collection described by Müller's article (1890) in more detail. It is headed with the title "*Raritäten Verzeichnis* [catalogue of rarities]". This catalogue groups 122 objects with names in Zulu into four larger categories:[466] 5 (34) "*Amahau*" (Shields), 17 "*Umutsha*" (men's loincloths made of fur), 16 "*Umqele*" (head and neck rings made of fur), and 84 "*Perlenschmuck u. andere Geräthschaften* [pearl adornments and other utensils]". Constituting the majority of the 84 items, the adornments (mostly beadwork) are distinguished by gender and age group, as well as where on the body and how they were worn. The other utensils include receptacles and utensils for eating and drinking, decorative bags, tobacco boxes and snuff spoons, instruments for the styling of hair (as well as entire shorn-off hair pieces), medicines (*umuti*) in various containers, sticks and spears, musical instruments, a headrest, as well as one single head ring. Apart from the shields of considerable size, this distribution of objects could match those visible in the photograph of the exhibition space (Figure 107), as well as the ones arranged specifically to be photographed in more detail in 1896 and 1906 (see below).

Comparing this collection with the one of the Protestant London Missionary Society, which held "heathen images, curios, artefacts, and natural history specimens" (Seton 2012:98, also see Coombes 1994:169), Mariannhill's museum may appear as a common mission collection. But displayed on top of the specimen shelves were European artefacts, such as clocks, chalices, and candleholders. In even greater number the photograph shows paintings, mounted all along the upper walls and even against the roof. As far as they can be recognised, the paintings in Mariannhill's museum show classic religious motives, such as Maria with child.

Although a direct influence is unlikely, the setup of paintings above the natural history specimens resonates with the arrangement, as well as the attempted implications of hierarchies of civilisation, in Peale's "Philadelphia Museum" around 1800 (cf. Hart and Ward 1988:394-395). Another commonality can be found between Hanisch's announcement and the presentation of Peale's collection as the "divine design of the universe" (Schofield 1989:25, Kirshenblatt-

[466] Many of the listed objects, such as the shields, consist of multiple sub-items. This fact may have brought up Müller's count of "almost 200 items" in his published report on the collection (Müller 1890).

Gimblett 1998:23, 27). As Müller already announced in 1890, there was the idea that the collection could be somehow "complete". According to Hanisch in 1904, the museum collection at Mariannhill showed "god's creation" and could therefore represent—like Peale's—"a world in miniature" (Schofield 1989:24). Even if the arrangement on the walls shows a hierarchy between "natural" and "cultural" objects, the "native curios" hanging from the rafters on the same level as the paintings contradict this hierarchy. The additional use of the rafters may be explained by the fact that the museum became increasingly overcrowded with the years. Attempts at "hierarchy", "completeness", and in particular "universality" may have been an attempt in the narratives of both Müller and Hanisch, but were never transferred into actual practice (cf. Pels 2014:221).

In front of the museum's window, we can observe a pair of Chinese vases (Figure 107), of which one also appears next to Fr. Alexander in Figure 105. In the 1904 circular, Fr. Alexander had asked for "antiquities and art objects of any kind, as far as they are fit for marine transport", without any preference for a national origin. In addition, benefactors were also approached individually: after a German-speaking visitor by the name of Barth had visited Mariannhill and the museum in 1905, Br. Nivard requested a contribution to the museum with him a while later: "[…] you could send him [Fr. Alexander] something interesting for his museum, maybe stamps, or any kind of curiosity, if something like this may fall into your hands. I am happy to hear that your visit to Mariannhill has satisfied you […].[467] Requests like these evolved after the experience of touring Mariannhill's grounds and a visit to the museum. Ensuing negotiations for objects could apparently be very unfocused and utterly eclectic. This speaks for the assumption that at least until the first decade of the 20th century, the efforts of collecting at Mariannhill did not take place according to academic standards (cf. Chapter Six), but rather attempted to curate social relationships with benefactors by exchanging various kinds of "curios", rather than scientific objects.

Several other Mariannhill Missionaries nevertheless developed serious research interests and specialisations, in particular after the 1910s. Some published in scientific journals with some acclaim, such as the before mentioned painter Br. Otto Mäder, Br. Aegidius Müller, Fr. Paschalis Boneberg and Fr. Willibald Wanger. Mäder received some recognition for his rock art studies and especially his artistic copies. Boneberg eventually followed Hanisch as museum curator, and, in 1912, named the "Natal Frog" or "Kloof Frog" (*Natalobatrachus Bonebergi*). In 1914, Boneberg was sent to study palaeontology, zoology, botany, geology, and biology at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, apparently to increase the knowledge and skills necessary to perform as museum curator.[468] Other researchers of note, working mostly after the First World War, were Fr. Albert Schweiger and Fr. Bernard Huss. Like Mäder, Schweiger mostly worked on rock art. Huss was more widely concerned with educational, economical, and sociological studies of African communities (also see Chapters Two and Seven). Especially the contributions

[467] Letter, Streicher to Barth, 19.11.1905, in Seubert and Streicher (2009). It is unknown whether Mr. Barth ever delivered any of the items he was asked for.

[468] CMM-GA: the unaccessioned personalia of Fr. Paschalis Boneberg include parts of his university records.

by Boneberg still require more research.[469] As these lay scholars mostly worked after 1914, and none ever engaged with photography or material culture to an extent as Müller and Hanisch, I will not deal with them here.

As became clear during my description of the guided tour at Mariannhill in Chapter Three, visitors were usually taken along the same route, often with the museum as final destination. I explained that Mariannhill itself often appeared as an exotic, austere, and inward-looking phenomenon to some South Africans, and was also burdened with an "anti-cultural" image in Europe. Therefore, Fr. Alexander indicated in the circulars of 1904 and 1910 that he felt a need to fight (especially Protestant) visitors' "traditional prejudice regarding the Catholic church's—and in particular the monasteries—hostility towards culture". Through the museum it was possible to counter such opinions, so he wrote, "not only with words, but with loudly speaking facts". As already alluded to in Müller's earlier description (Müller 1890), Hanisch measured Mariannhill's overall standing through their success in competing with non-Germans and non-Catholics. In such narratives, the missionaries positioned themselves against local English-speaking communities, as well as other non-Catholic missionaries. Hanisch hoped to support such textual narratives in the periodicals with the object collection in the museum. Before the background of the aftermath of the "Culture Wars" in Europe, this seemingly nationalistic attitude has to be understood foremost as a representational and rhetoric effort towards German-speaking benefactors (cf. Chapters One and Two).

Representations directed at South African White communities instead had to be more appeasing in their tone, especially with the beginning of the First World War. In 1915, a pamphlet sanctioned by Provost Gerard Wolpert and intended for local circulation in South Africa, eventually attempted to re-position Mariannhill as "wholly and solely a South African institution":

> Bound no longer by any ties of affiliation to the parent Order of La Trappe, in France, the Missionary Congregation of Mariannhill is now independent of all European connection and control. It is now wholly and solely a South African institution. Speaking in a general sense, no atom of the products of its labour, no penny of its funds, will leave these shores for other lands. South-Africa alone is its only home and headquarters; there alone are all its means and energy expended; therein alone does all its future lie. (Anonymous 1915:9)

Even if many of Mariannhill's first-generation members either came from Austria or Germany, several individuals also hailed from non-German-speaking countries, such as Ireland, England, Australia, the USA, and Poland. Nevertheless, holding a very "German" reputation, most members—since 1914 enemies of the state—faced considerable antagonism from the nearby English communities. Therefore the non-German members often worked as stewards at the monastery's gate during these times.[470]

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[469] Among other things, Boneberg was responsible for Mariannhill's exhibition at the 1925 Mission Exhibition in Rome, which was later transformed into the founding stock of objects for the Vatican Museum's ethnographic section. For an analysis of the collection's development see Wates (2006).

[470] For example, the American Fr. Benno Pierson (1867-1941), who worked at Centocow, in Rhodesia, and at

Similar to how Duncan and Wallach (2004) describe visitors' social experience of the Louvre, the collected objects in their particular constellation at Mariannhill worked as reflexive "culture documents". As Fr. Alexander phrased it, they not only "spoke" about the particular "culture" they had been extracted from, but likewise helped to construct the Trappists' own "culture" by publicly staging the monks' appreciation of objects in the museum. For example, the photograph depicting Fr. Alexander (Figure 105) performs his "cultured" interaction with objects as the "monkish curator", referred to in the quote above. Together with the photograph of the museum interior (Figure 107), it also shows that the paintings in the museum were mostly of religious nature. While Mariannhill Missionaries needed to mediate an exotic image to Europe and America with the help of stereotyped Africans, they also saw it fit to maintain a modern cosmopolitan image of themselves towards the South African contemporaries through the museum. Mariannhill's museum was arranged to have an impact on, and to be experienced by visitors as representations of what the missionaries had to tell about their new, but equally about their old lifeworld. Either way, in Fr. Alexander's words, they needed "loudly speaking facts", in order to show that they were "having a culture" (Handler 1985, 2003). They eventually also used photographs to visualise this connection between subjects and objects.

As evident in the travelogues presented in Chapter Three, visitors never entered the museum without its curator. As there are no labels visible in photographs of the displays, the objects needed a narrator. Just like in the periodicals, he would regularly have pointed out the objects' relationship to the process of conversion (Thomas 1991, and above). Due to the close spatial proximity of African and European objects in the museum, missionaries could use them as mnemonic devices and individual reference, in order to illustrate their narratives about the civilising process when guiding visitors, tourists, and customers over their premises (also see Pels 1999:59-60). Only in few accounts by outsiders these voices are disentangled and thus reveal the one of the narrating visitor on the one hand, and the one of the guiding missionary on the other. For example, in 1904, a correspondent of *The Natal Witness* commented only briefly on African artefacts, by glossing over them as "a number of Kafir curios". Instead, he praised the rareness and monetary value of particular European items at length. Once the correspondent explicitly followed the missionary's narrative, the opposition between the two worlds emerged:

> Then we were shown a number of savage and civilised war weapons, side by side. There are a variety of Assegais, some with a barbed blade; some with the broad, flat blade; others with a blade quite 3 feet long, and beside them were a selection of bows and arrows from German East Africa. Several flint-lock guns stood near to these, and one old piece had, we were told, killed many tigers[471] and a few lions. This had been the property of an old missionary. Some natives, who once formed a high opinion of the value of those assegais, broke in and stole a number, but they were recovered.[472]

Mariannhill Monastery from 1903 until 1941 (cf. Welzel 1951:171). The situation was again slightly different at Centocow Mission, where superiors could build lasting positive relationships with the surrounding White community and the magistracy, despite parallel antagonisms (see Chapter Three).

[471] Leopards are still today sometimes referred to as "tigers" in South Africa, due to a tradition of confusion, dating back to the arrival of the Dutch.

[472] Anonymous author in *The Natal Witness*, Saturday, 03.12.1904.

Like in the stories of the periodicals, the anonymous guide—probably Fr. Alexander—provided the visitor with "backstories" to particular objects from the perspective of the museum collection and the script it enabled (cf. Hamilton 2011, also see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:26). The guide was likely to have refined these stories whenever he told them.[473] The one backstory portrayed the missionaries as adventurous, because they not only fought wild beasts, but also collected and even recovered spears. The latter backstory described Africans as being wrongly nostalgic about objects—in this case spears, which referenced past warfare. Concrete placements of artefacts in the museum space and their routine repetition allowed for narratives creating antagonistic and thus more powerful evocations. Mariannhill's "African Museum" was a repository, able to provide mimetic capital, not only for religious and propagandistic narratives, for nationalistic and commercial ends, but also for scientific and "cultural" interests. In so far, the monastic guides could position Mariannhill as an influential institution in all these regards. In the two remaining sections I explore how the missionaries curated objects and photographs in combination, in order to further improve their reproductive power in this regard.

[473] Many of the formulations in the text by Andrews (1909) quoted above are very similar to the text in *The Natal Witness* (1904). This either means that Andrews plagiarised fragments from the *Witness*, or that Mariannhill's guide and curator repeated his stories almost verbatim five years later and that both writers quoted him directly. I consider the last option as less likely.

Curating Objects and Photographs in South Africa

The practice of curation in museums involves activities such as selecting, registering, classifying, displaying, arranging and conserving both objects and photographs.[474] Being a curator also means to simply know stories about objects and photographs that legitimate their presence in storage and the exhibition space. Mariannhill Missionaries expressed such alleged familiarity with objects through narratives during the guided tour. These were then once more reproduced in visitors' reports and travelogues. The missionaries further distinguished objects for example in the making of accessioning lists. In effect, the practice of curation produced similar documents to the practice of ministry: as I explained in the last chapter, baptism brought forth registers categorising people and relating them spatially to the mission's land as either "Christians" or "heathens". Acquisitions and sales relating to Mariannhill's museum produced lists that categorised objects accordingly.

At the same time, the physical process of museum curation and the making of exhibitions both distinguished and grouped objects physically. Such spatial arrangements can partially be reconstructed through photographs. However, like with the human sitters in Br. Aegidius Müller's studio, we have to consider the possibility that he arranged objects specifically for the photographic occasion. Initially, value was created narratively in periodicals or during tours for the spectacle of exhibitions. Only when Müller listed photographs and depicted objects for European ethnologists since 1898 as explicitly "ethnographic", their value production in circulation was based on certification according to academic standards. I will turn to this process in the next chapter.

The effort of collecting and curating "Kafir curios" at Mariannhill was furthermore entangled with efforts of procuring, but also of producing other kinds of objects. In order to understand these efforts and the role of photographs, I analyse their epistemic construction against each other. Apart from natural science specimens, Mariannhill's curators distinguished five other object categories. Next to "artefacts" produced by Africans, and "art" and "artefacts" from non-European as well as European countries, the missionaries regularly displayed "crafts" produced by African converts, who were employed at the monastery's workshops. They presented the latter kind of objects in exhibitions held separately from the museum, but also in photographs placed in the mission's propaganda periodicals. The periodicals also employed the three media—objects, photographs and exhibitions—in various combinations, such as in the following examples.[475]

In April 1912, an article appeared in the mission's periodical *Vergißmeinnicht*, stating that in July 1911 Mariannhill had been invited to Durban by American Board Missionaries from nearby Amanzimtoti, to participate in a mission exhibition. All other invited participants were

[474] See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998:18), Vogel (1991) and Lidchi (2013) for the case of objects, and Edwards (2001, 2007) for the case of photographs.

[475] As an assemblage of photographs and objects, an exhibitions (permanent or not) may become a special kind of medium, which may be once more represented through text and image, also in combination.

Protestant mission societies (Müller 1912:80). The article's author is not identified, but I suspect that it was Br. Aegidius Müller, as he displayed a detailed understanding of the difficulties with indoor photography relating to the one photograph illustrating the article (Figure 108). The author first created a clear division between Protestants and Catholics ("we" and "they"), and further wrote that all Protestant participants presented mainly the "Kafirs' folk art [*Heimatkunst*]",[476] which consisted of "woven furniture and other items, such as sticks, knobkerries, headrests, pots, containers, animal figurines, shields, and finally beadwork in form of bead adornment, earrings, necklaces and bracelets, tobacco containers etc.".[477] Even if the term is not used in the article, the items described would have been labeled "ethnographic", if sold to an ethnographic museum at the time. Müller instead explicitly considered these objects as "art", even if this was of a "lesser" kind—similar to the one of European peasants—and not "fine art". Four years earlier, he had published photographs of objects, which he simply referred to as "adornment objects [*Schmuckgegenstände*]", "house- and kitchen utensils [*Haus- und Küchengeräte*]", and goods such as "wickerworks and clayworks [*Flechtwaren und Tonwaren*]" (Frey 1907:123-131). Six years later, in the title of an article for the journal *Anthropos* (1917/18 [1907]), Müller clustered the very same object categories explicitly as "Zulu material culture" and distinguished those with a use value from those with artistic value. As I will go on to show in Chapter Six, between 1906 and 1917 he was writing for different audiences, had had more correspondences, read more literature, and therefore included various discourses on objects along the way.

Unlike their Protestant colleagues at the Durban exhibition in 1911, Mariannhill instead decided *not* to exhibit any "folk art", but to show only "industrial works [*industrielle Arbeiten*]" produced by their African converts from Mariannhill, Centocow, and Reichenau. These goods were sold commercially with much success during the exhibition, and also received several awards. The author, whom I believe to be Br. Aegidius Müller, emphasised that these could not be matched by the Protestants' "few poor embroideries" and sewing works, "neither in quantity, nor in quality". As illustrated in the accompanying photograph, Mariannhill instead presented "rather practical articles for daily use, such as tables, chairs, suitcases, washing tables, pushcarts, rakes, watering cans, works of a stonemason, artistically painted door signs, horse harnesses, shoes, clothing, book covers, book printing etc.". This enumeration of "industrial" objects in few cases equalled the "Kafir" objects in purpose and function in a typological sense. But, by their order, number, and foremost their functionality (indicative of "civilised" occupations), the author presented the "industrial" objects as reducing the "(folk) art" to fancy, thus rendering them less useful. The author eventually mentioned that in addition to the objects on exhibition, "about 150 photographs showed what the Mariannhill Mission had achieved so far".

[476] Müller further specified this definition by saying that "the Kafirs possess an equally original and tasteful decorative style, which is indeed their own and not borrowed" (anon. 1912:80).

[477] My own translation from the German original: (anon. 1912:80).

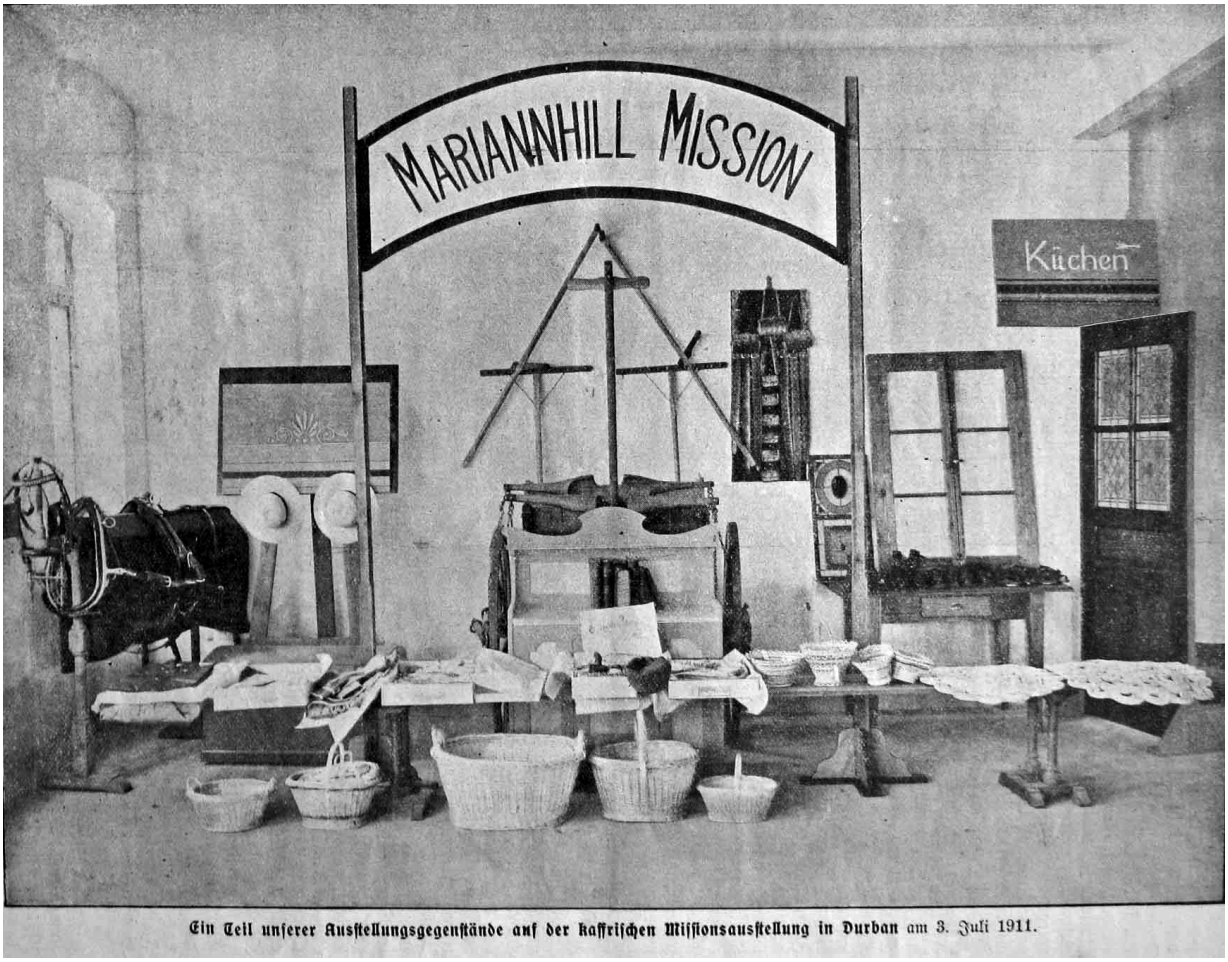


Figure 108: original caption: "*Ein Teil unserer Ausstellungsgegenstände auf der kaffrischen Missionsausstellung in Durban am 3. Juli 1911*"—"Parts of our exhibition objects at the Kafir mission exhibition in Durban, on 3 July 1911". Published in *Vergißmeinnicht*, 1912:28. According to the author, this arrangement had been set up exclusively for the photograph, while the material presented in the exhibition itself was much more extensive.

The author thus presented—through a conscious curatorial decision—not only the argument for the just mentioned dichotomy between African and European objects, but also in logical consequence a divide between Catholic and Protestant missionaries in their capabilities (or lack thereof) to educate and animate Africans to produce "better" goods. This curatorial strategy also implicitly criticised the Protestants' capabilities to *mediate* these differences to audiences, effectively exposing the Protestants as bad curators. Pitting "folk art [*Heimatkunst*]" against "industrial objects" would have also resonated with German audiences, who may have drawn comparisons to rural peasantry at home through the specific (generally positive) connotations of the contemporary notion of "*Heimatkunst*" (cf. Jäger 2009, also see Fabian 2002, 2004). I now briefly explore two earlier exhibitions, one in 1867 Paris, and one in 1896 Berlin. This will show that this curatorial strategy was neither related to a specific time period, nor related to Catholics as such, but an often-used mode to create differences between confessions.

In fact, Protestant missionaries had employed similar curatorial strategies of

distinguishing confessions already twice on much larger scales. In 1867, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society organised an "Evangelical Missionary Museum" at the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris, where they hoped to challenge their Catholic peers with a better presentation of objects. 19 Protestant societies presented material allegedly representing their subjects' state before and after conversion. By opposing particular objects according to the common "before/after" dichotomy (cf. Chapter One), they attempted to show the change brought about (Jensz 2012:68-70). In the case of 1867, however, it remains unclear how exactly Protestants positioned themselves against Catholics, and how the latter reacted. There is also no mention of photographs being used in the effort.

Almost 30 years later, in 1896, both Protestant and Catholic missions working in the German colonies had booths at the first colonial exhibition (*Kolonialausstellung*), as a part of Berlin's great trade exhibition (*Gewerbeausstellung*). The first were championed by the Berlin Mission, the latter by the Steyl Mission (SVD).[478] Similar to Müller in 1911, it was Alexander Merensky of the Protestant Berlin Mission, who argued that it was unnecessary to exhibit "ethnographic" objects— like their Catholic peers did in their booth:

> While setting up the plan it was decided to do without the exhibition of ethnographic curiosities [*Curiosa*], on the one hand because it could be assumed that other exhibitioners would present these in sufficient amounts, on the other hand because they do not illustrate the mission enterprise as such.[479] An exception should only be made for those objects, which have a recognisable relationship to the religious life of the respective heathen peoples![480] (Merensky 1897:121)

Most important to Merensky was the print matter, periodicals and dictionaries produced by Protestant missionaries. The only non-European and non-Christian objects that Merensky described as being exhibited were indeed those identified with "idols", "magic", and those related to "divination". With Thomas (1991) we already identified such items as "converted artifacts", used by missionaries to reveal their subjects' alleged superstitions existing prior to the missionaries' arrival. Much more than the Catholic colleagues, who indiscriminately presented "ethnographic objects" (Janssen 1897:127), and an "ethnological collection" (Linckens 1897:131), Merensky also emphasised the use of photographs. In particular Moravian missionaries in German New Guinea had provided photographs of both Christian and heathen "natives' habitations, life, and endeavours". Merensky claimed that "this collection of photographs is of a high value and was not surpassed by any similar collection at the exhibition" (Merensky 1897:127)[481]. Like Müller, Merensky had evaluated the quality of different media in order to define relationships with both the mission's subjects and competitors. The preferences I just described for three scenarios are therefore not confessionally specific, but as curatorial

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478 SVD: *Societas Verbi Divini*, also known as "Congregation of the Divine Word" or "Steyler Missionare".

479 "[…] *weil sie den Missionsbetrieb nicht veranschaulichen*".

480 My own translation from the German original.

481 For a general overview of Berlin's 1896 colonial exhibition in relation to missionaries, as well as their relation to the 1897 Transvaal exhibition in Berlin see Van der Heyden (1996).

strategies rather related to particular exhibitionary situations and media. In Chapter Six we return to such developments parallel to other denominations and ethnographic museums, in order to understand and position Mariannhill's curatorial decisions.

In the permanent setup of the museum at Mariannhill Monastery, however, Fr. Alexander Hanisch excluded the "industrial" artisan products. These were unnecessary because they were already present in their proper environment of production at the workshops, or presented infrequently in separate local exhibitions on the mission's premises. As I explained in Chapter Three, Mariannhill's compound in its entirety can be thought of as a curated exhibition space—not unlike an "exhibitionary complex" of its own (Bennett 1995)—which visitors always toured in the same order. Whenever visitors received a tour, they would have been guided through the workshops first, and then to the photographic studio and the museum. Accordingly, they received a narrative that emphasised similar distinctions as the narrative of the mission exhibitions in Berlin and Durban, although within a situated live performance by African artisans.

The museum was a central institution in Mariannhill's globally oriented propaganda and media machinery. Therefore, it contained next to the "typical" local produce also items that would be universally perceived as "exceptional" or "rare". Thus the museum's exhibition space upheld a divide between "foreign" and "European" objects, by spatial separation. Within the museum itself, as well as in between the workshops and the museum, Self and Other were brought *closer*, but not made *same*. In texts on, and photographs of the workshops, the production of "proper" objects was always presented as dependent on the presence, supervision, and instruction of a Trappist lay brother (Figures 109 and 110). Fully *independent* African production of "modern" industrial objects—similar to the production of photographs I discussed in Chapter Two—was thus never represented through photographs.

In separately held exhibitions, the Trappists presented agricultural products or functional items manufactured by African apprentices at the workshops either as "native produce" or "native handicraft". They presented both during the tour to visitors, held exhibitions at Mariannhill, the stations, or when attending agricultural price competitions. Additionally, they presented agricultural or artisan goods in re-staged setups in the photographic studio until the 1930s (Figure 110). Other than the "converted artifacts" (Thomas 1991), the Trappists presented industrial artisan products as artefacts of conversion. They presented the latter as a product, as well as a part of the process towards a successful conversion. Such objects further distanced their producers from their own material past.



Figure 109: shoemaker's workshop, photographed on location at Mariannhill Monastery. Approximately 1900 (CMM Archives).



Figure 110: original caption in the image centre: "Wagonbuilding Mariannhill—Native Produce Exhibition 1925." Employees of Mariannhill's wagon building workshop in the monastery's photographic studio (CMM Archives).

Mariannhill's curators created meaning in the visitor's experience by pointing out relations between objects and photographs within a spatial setting (cf. Edwards 2001:67). Duncan and Wallach (2004) see the early European museum visitor's relationship to aristocracy and the state being constituted through their exhibition experiences. Such a situation may also be observed for experiences within mission spaces, as described by visitors taking guided tours at Mariannhill (Chapter Three). Mariannhill's museum even evoked more nuanced narratives on relationships: not only were the missionaries involved as both curators and guides, but also as actors in their own narratives. This resulted in a complex entanglement with the presented objects. The multi-faceted relationships of missionaries, visiting benefactors, but also of converts and those-to-be-converted, were here performed through objects, as well as photographs. During the actual tour, visitors could purchase photographs of mission activities at the studio, and group portraits together with the missionaries were even presented as gifts to more illustrious guests. Exhibitions external to the mission station, mission periodicals, or albums and series of photographs, instead reconstituted these relationships for spectators outside of the mission space.

Curating for and at Home

We now leave the space of Mariannhill Monastery and South Africa. Instead, we follow how the missionaries and mission sisters extracted objects from Mariannhill and how they presented them, on the one hand by photographing arrangements in display setups, and on the other hand in exhibitions abroad, which they photographed in addition. Photographs provided the possibility to present objects from the museum collection or the artisan workshops by mobilising them in a convenient format for circulation amongst stakeholders. At the same time this entailed the *necessity* to re-arrange objects according to established aesthetic standards and proper lighting, like in the case of the Durban exhibition (Figure 108), or in the photographic studio (Figure 110). I consider these new photographic arrangements and positionings as a crucial part of the curatorial practice and thus the entanglement process.

For the first time in approximately 1896, the studio at Mariannhill photographed five display setups of objects, which were however not organised according to strict object categories. Two of these displays combined earthenware, beadwork, wickerwork, kitchenware, mats, and domestic utensils, such as a headrest (Figure 111). These photographed displays eventually became part of a photographic set—possibly even explicitly created for it—which Müller marketed to ethnographic museums since 1898 (cf. Chapter Six).



Figure 111: example of object display, approx. 1896. See Müller (1899:3-4) for a description (NMVW-A15-1).

In 1906, Müller made yet another, but more structured, sophisticated, and aestheticised attempt to arrange objects photographically; this time on a vertical display surface. He numbered this assemblage and described it meticulously with denominations in Zulu. The set was eventually published two times, first in the publication for Mariannhill's 25. anniversary (Frey 1907), and again in the journal *Anthropos* (Müller 1917/18). In his photographic arrangements, Müller presented clear distinctions between four object classes in seven displays: 1.-4. clothing and adornment; 5. wickerwork; 6. woodwork; and 7. earthenware. The photographs published in 1907 were part of a longer article, titled "*Ein Blick ins volle Kaffernleben*".[482] The photographs did not relate to the article as such, but were only supported by extended captions. Müller instead titled his 1917 stand-alone version in *Anthropos* "*Zur Materiellen Kultur der Kaffern*".[483] It provides additional reflections and modifications of the captions, and indicated that otherwise important issues had already been covered in the *Anthropos* articles by Fr. Franz Mayr (1906, 1907).[484] Here, Müller not only defined the photographed objects as "material culture", but he once more adds the information that "some of the presented specimens of beadwork indicate artistic taste [*künstlerischen Geschmack*]" (Müller 1917/18:852).

The third display is labelled "dress and adornment of the Kafirs" (Figure 112), and also features a detached head ring. Of all the displays, this head ring is the only object with an attached label. The information provided on the label still reiterates the ascription "wedding ring [*Ehering*]", the materials it was made of, and the fact that it had once been a permanent attachment to someone's head (Figure 113). This description is clearly reminiscent of Pfanner's 1885 analysis of the head ring, which I described above. Also, the head ring's photograph reminds us of Bryant's 1887 description, for it displays a considerable deformation, several major dents, as well as substantial cracks in at least four places. The biggest of these cracks to the centre-right clearly shows a shiny coating all along both sides of its line of fracture. This may indicate a failed attempt at mending the fracture with a transparent adhesive. The head rings thus not only depended on appropriate maintenance by experts while they were actually worn (Khumalo 2001:37), but also once displayed either in exhibitions or photographs. The head ring had once more been singled out, first to be described textually and now to be photographed. Apparently, it was the only object in need of additional labelling due to its indistinct form.

[482] "A View on Kafir Life".

[483] "Concerning the Material Culture of the Kafirs".

[484] Müller's original correspondence with the editors of the journal *Anthropos* no longer exists. The historical archive of the Anthropos Institute has been "lost" during a relocation in 1962, from Fribourg, Switzerland, to St. Augustin, Germany (Personal communication with Fr. Joachim Piepke SVD, March 2008). This is also relevant for Müller's earlier *Anthropos* articles of 1906 and 1907, which I discuss in Chapter Eight.

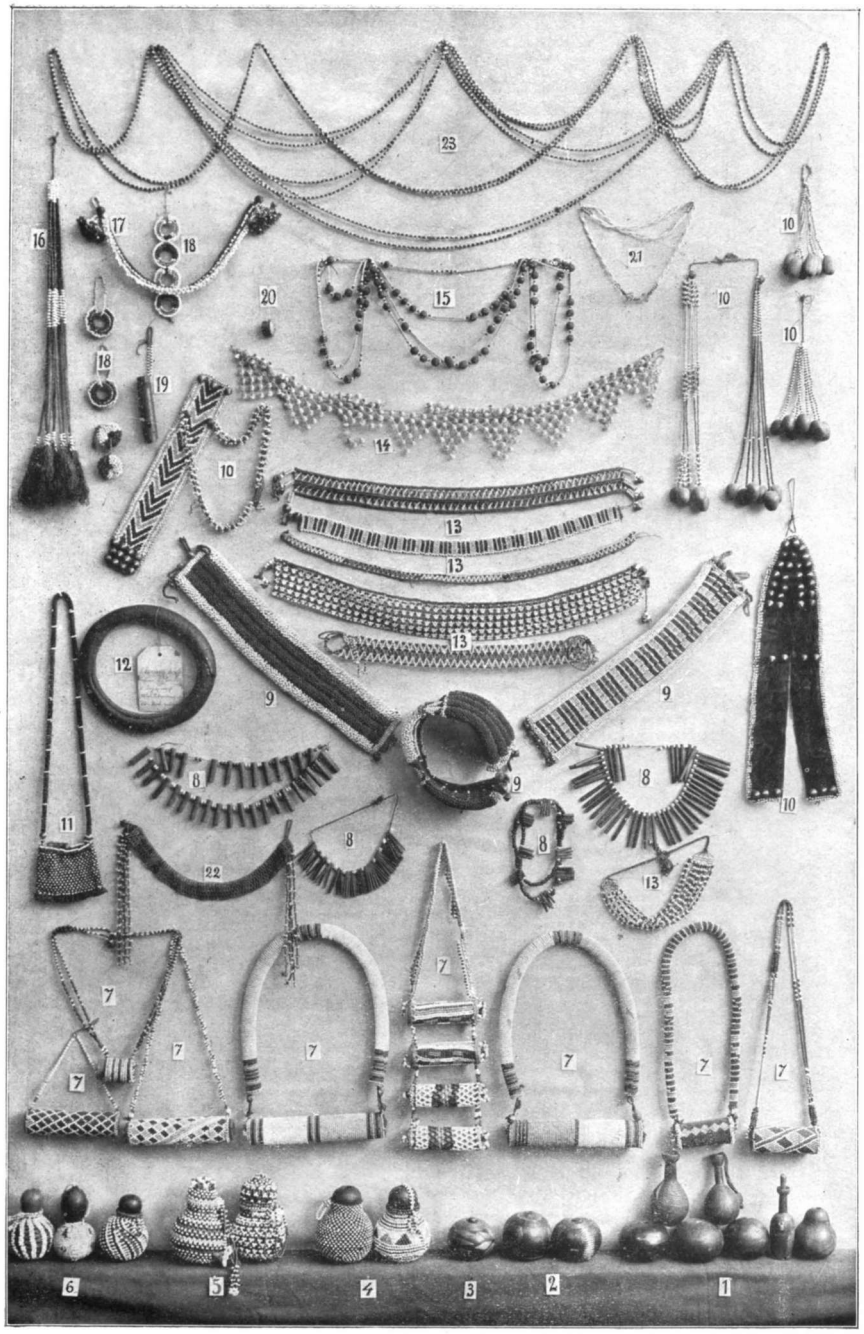


Photo von Br. Müller. Anthropos XII—XIII.

Tafel III:

Kleidung und Schmuck der Kaffern.

Figure 112: one object display produced in 1906 (as published in Frey 1907 and Müller 1917/18).



Figure 113: detail of Figure 112: original inscription on label: "*Ehering der Kaffern aus Gras & Pech gemacht. Wird lebenslang auf dem Kopf getragen*"—"Kafir wedding ring, made from gras and resin [*Pech*]. It is worn on the head for a lifetime".

While Müller draped the clothing and adornments on a vertical surface, he neatly arranged the last three object categories (wickerwork, woodwork and earthenware) on multi-storey benches (Figure 114).[485] In the article's second version of 1917, Müller even added one photograph

[485] As suggested in the instruction for collecting produced by the ethnographic museum of Berlin (Seidel 1897:21, see below).

showing a scene of the earthen pots' production close to Mariannhill. This may indicate that the items were produced on demand, as several of the unbaked pots "in production" match the shape of the baked ones in the display. Other than the head ring, the objects in most of the displays generally show little signs of use. This is another indication that they may have been collected, or even been commissioned for the displays' photographic occasion.[486] Vogel's (1988, 1991) statement that museum objects were usually never made with the intention of being exhibited, thus stands and falls with such observations.

Müller closes his 1917 article by stressing that he presented the adornments' names as they were commonly used near Mariannhill Monastery. As we shall see, his accuracy in regard to such details as local names, authorship, and provenance, is likely to have originated from earlier correspondences with German ethnologists: first in 1898-99 with the ethnographic museum of Berlin, and in 1910 with the ethnological museum of Cologne. The first preceded the attention to "native names" in 1907. The second preceded a rewriting of Müller's last article for a professional audience of ethnologists in 1917. In the second version, Müller stressed (and tried to capture photographically) the agency of the pots' makers.



Figure 114: original caption: "*Tafel VII, Tonwaren der Kaffern*"—"Figure VII. Earthenware of the Kafirs" (CMM Archives, photographed in 1906, published in Frey 1907, Müller 1917/18).

[486] I thank Catherine Elliot for pointing me into this direction. Elliot has extensive research experience with the Natal collection of the British Museum, and compared it to the discussed photographs.

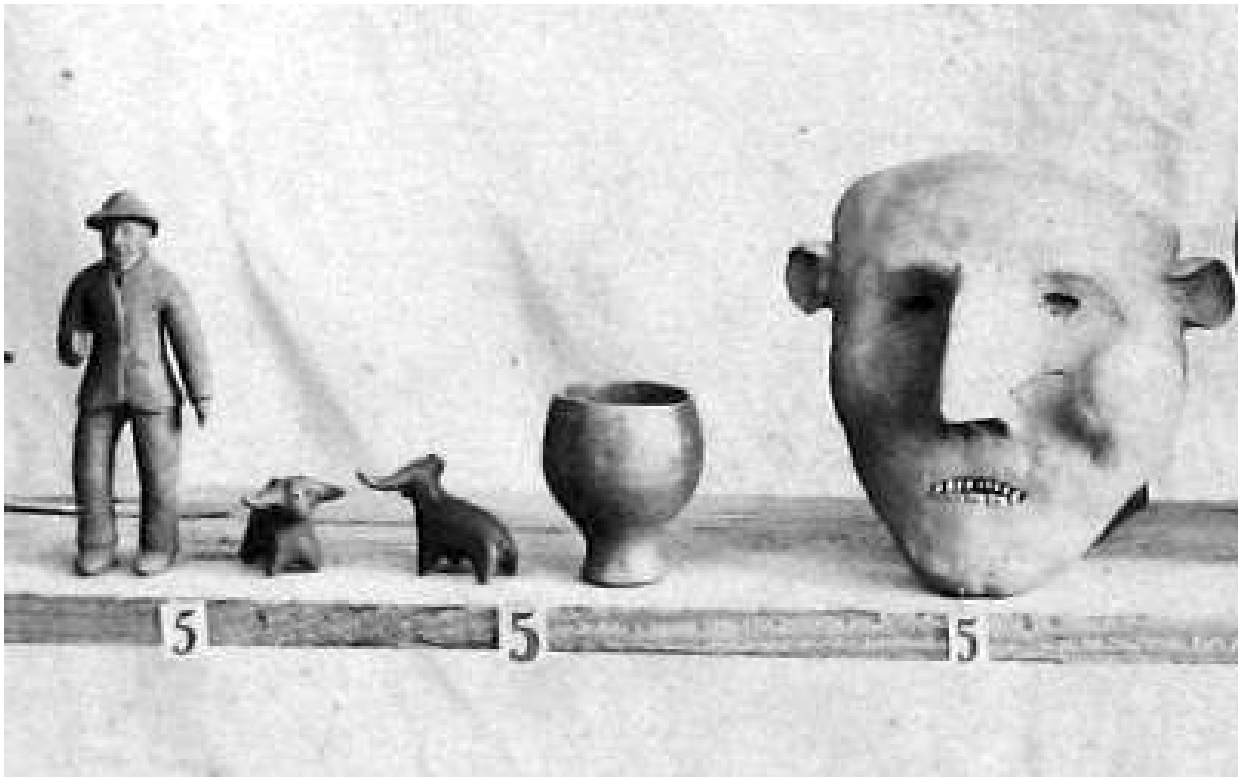


Figure 115: detail of Figure 114.

Another photograph of the displays arranged in 1906 contains a detail I wish to discuss, as it refers to the linguistic construction of both photographs and figurative art (Figures 114 and 115). Five objects are displayed as nr. "5" in "*Tafel VII*" on the central level to the very left. Müller labelled all of these as "*Umfanekiso* (image[*Bild*]): objects [*Gegenstände*] made by small boys of unbaked clay, the face of an *umlungu* (White person), a small cup, oxen, and one image representing a *boer*" (Müller 1917/18:858). Müller did not discuss these five objects in any more detail, but obviously considered them as typical local objects, all going under the category of "*Tonwaren* [earthenware]", like the other objects in the same display. Even though he considered some of the dresses and adornments as artistic, he did not describe these five images as "figurative art". Instead, he infantilised them as toys for children. He nevertheless labelled them —after consultation with Zulu-speakers—as *umfanekiso*. *Umfanekiso*—next to *isithombe*—was a term used in Zulu to describe any two- or three-dimensional image that showed likeness or resemblance to something else.[487] Despite the fact that they have supposedly been made by children, this is apparently one of the very few—if not the only—contemporary known example of freestanding figurative sculpture of the area, as observed by Anitra Nettleton (1988:48). It is furthermore exceptional that the article links a photograph of such sculptures to the term Zulu-speakers in the area would have used for it at the time. Nevertheless, these sculptures did not

[487] Both terms were also used to refer to photographs. I discuss the etymological history of these and related terms in more detail in Chapter Eight.

play any role in religious practices, and could therefore not be used to explain and promote the relationship between missionaries and their subjects, like the "idols" discussed by Merensky (1897) and Thomas (1991). As I will explain in Chapter Seven, only by the 1920s a discourse and lobby evolved that allowed Mariannhill Missionaries and their associates to effectively position and promote their subject's creations as "figurative art".

After these two moments, in which displays were captured photographically (1896 and 1906), the missionaries used both objects and photographs cumulatively in exhibitions: they presented objects together with photographs showing people, who used such objects. In several cases, these exhibition displays were then photographed once more. Figure 116 shows Mariannhill's booth at a mission exhibition in Trier in 1927, and is representative for mission exhibitions held in Europe at least since 1896 (see above and below). Unlike the museum at Mariannhill Monastery or at the exhibition held in Durban in 1911, Mariannhill's exhibitions in Europe primarily showed South Africans objects, excluding the previously discussed "industrial" products made by converts. At the same exhibition in 1927, however, the booth of Mariannhill's female congregation, the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood,[488] was indeed set up with some of the above-mentioned mission-made products, such as wickerwork, basketry, and embroidery (Figure 116). This constellation apparently represented the perceived ideal relationships with African subjects: active mission work and encounter on the one hand, and education and the training of household skills on the other. Some of the exhibitions in Europe where thus additionally gendered, once more as a curatorial strategy to establish the familiar dichotomy of before/after or already/but still. At the 1927 exhibition in Trier, however, only Catholic missions were present, why Mariannhill missionaries and sisters did not have to position themselves against Protestants. Nevertheless, the two congregations created a similar divide between themselves, in order to make the idea of transformation more prominent.

[488] It is unclear why the display uses the superlative "Missionsschwestern vom *kostbarsten* Blut", ie. "most precious".



Figure 116: original caption: "*Mariannhiller Mission*". Booth of the Mariannhill Missionaries at mission exhibition, Trier 1927 (CMM Archives).



Figure 117: original caption: "*Missionsschwestern vom Kostbarsten Blut*". Booth of CPS at mission exhibition, Trier 1927 (CMM Archives).

The two photographs placed in Mariannhill's booth above the miniature hut, date back to the mid-1890s (Figure 116). They show a Zulu man bedecked with the paraphernalia of a "warrior" to the left, and a woman engaged in the domestic labour of carrying water to the right. Originally, the two photographs were part of a collection tailored for ethnographic museums in 1898 (Chapter Six). Like the exhibition in 19227, also Mariannhill's periodicals used these early photographs of African individuals in non-European dress from before 1914 as representations of a contemporary reality until the 1960s; however, without mentioning their temporal origins (also see Arnoldi 1999). In both cases, editors and curators thus consciously reiterated stereotypes. In the case of the 1927 exhibition, the curators even enhanced the opposition by presenting Africans and their objects on the left wall of the booth, while contrasting these with the congregation's dignitaries, churches, converts, and scenes of encounter between missionaries and potential converts on the right wall. Still more than three decades after the photograph's original production in the 1890s, this assemblage and opposition conjured a photographic quasi-presence of "traditional" people.

The booth of the CPS sisters, instead showed the complementary situation almost throughout, involving the mentioned handicrafts produced by converts, as well as related photographs of dressed converts in situations of schooling, or otherwise engaged with the sisters (Figure 117). Nevertheless, some few "pre-industrial" objects had still slipped in, and also a photograph of the very same female diviner, who is present at the booth of the male congregation, and whom we shall later get to know as the *Isangoma* Ugitschigitschi (cf. Chapters Three and Eight). By having historical photographs stand in for a contemporary situation, the exhibition and its photographs inscribed a temporal, as well as a spatial distance between Christianity and "heathendom": "everything but coeval with the Western observer", as Fabian notes for the history regarding the representation of Bali, which may be considered similar to the one of Natal (Fabian 2003:135). Even in cases where the missionaries and sisters included themselves in the photographic illustrations as part of the displays—appearing as observers and bringers of change in co-presence with their subjects—this does not add up to coevalness.

As we can see in the display setup of bead adornment at the back wall in Figure 116, the aesthetic rendering of objects, their isolation from people, as well as their repetition within one frame, amplified their presence. The mounted frames made objects highly transportable, comparable, and in combination with similar objects shown "in use" within photographs, they were also easier to "think with" for visitors. This intention became even more explicit with a photograph of an exceptional display case made at Mariannhill in 1906 (Figure 118). The display is titled within the image itself as "Zulu-bride's outfit" and exists in at least four different variations. In the most literal sense like a fashion model, the "bride" poses within a picture frame set into a vertical surface. Mounted on this surface are such adornments, which are supposedly distinct to the bride's new marital status. In all four versions, the bride displays varying degrees of gestural coquetry, however always with stern looks.[489] The adornments she was supposed to

[489] One version is published in Frey (1907) another in Johnston (1906). Yet another version can be found in Theye

wear as bride, are instead exploded around her onto display. At the same time, they are explored through reference with an indexed information board at the bottom. Once more, Zulu names are presented for each item. Just like the title of the arrangement, this board is integrated into the image frame. Müller repeatedly used this mode of "breaking" real and representational space with the use of a picture frame to create entertaining arrangements, mostly involving children. Like with other ideas for arranging photographs, he may have been inspired by contemporary popular photographic advice literature for entertainment purposes, copies of which can still be found in the archive at Mariannhill Monastery (see Parzer-Mühlbacher 1905:78).

One photograph of the "bride" was once more used 19 years later as the centre piece in one of Mariannhill's display cases at the 1925 Vatican mission exhibition (Figure 119). In a style similar to the exhibited photograph itself (geometrically creating a balanced impression of display), objects are surrounding the "bride" on yet a second level. This time, however, the assemblage no longer represents gender divisions. Instead, it mixes various kinds of adornment, snuff spoons, and as a second centrepiece just above the photograph of the "bride", another male head ring.[490]

(1989), sourced from the collection of the Weltkulturen Museum in Basel.

[490] It is untraceable, and even unlikely that the curator saw their connection in terms of marriage.



Figure 118: original caption: "Zulu-bride's outfit". One of at least four variations, all made in 1906 (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

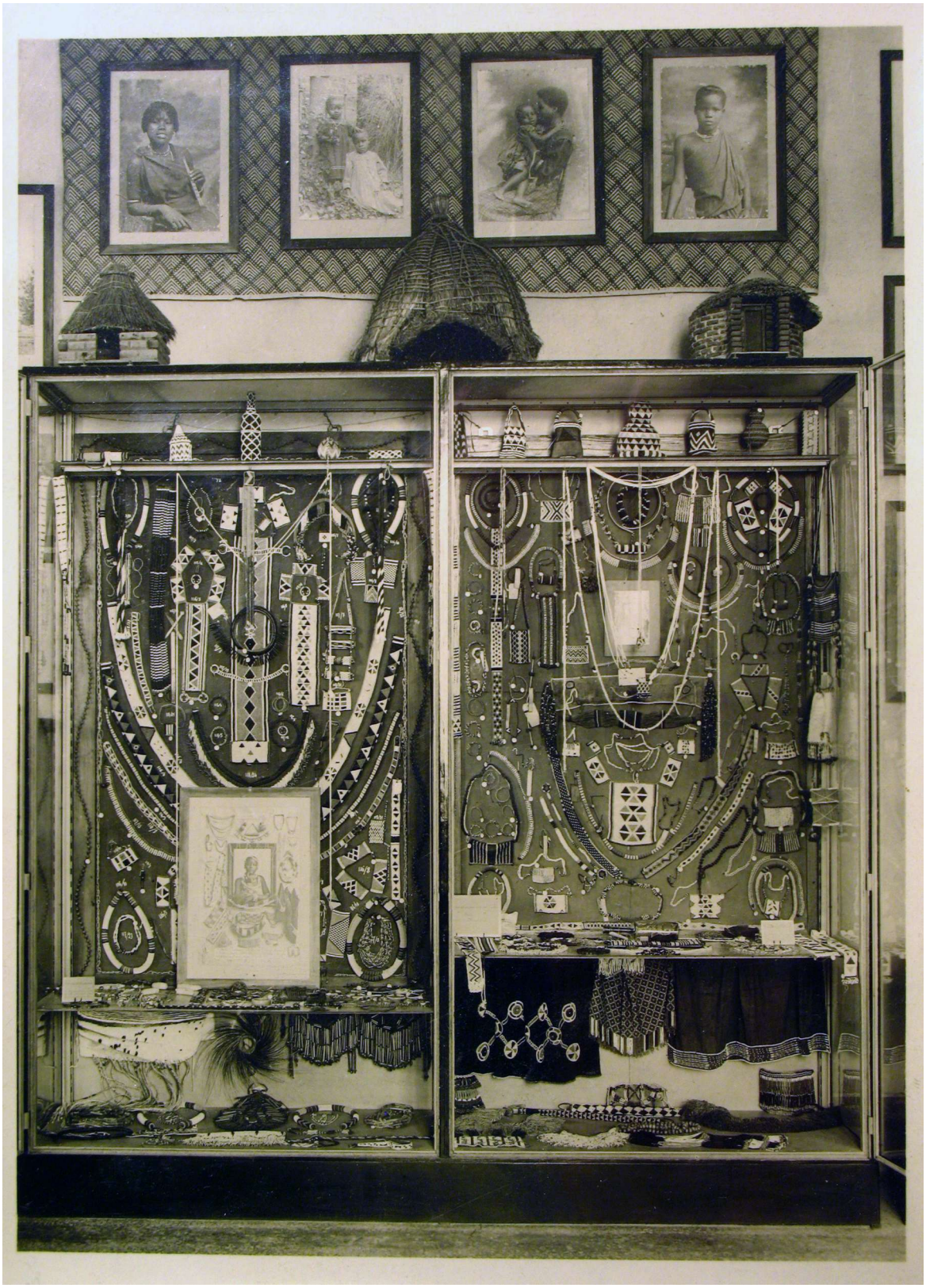


Figure 119: one of the photographed displays of Mariannhill's collection at the Vatican Mission exhibition in 1925, including a version of Figure 118 (CMM Archives).

While the display cases in the exhibition spaces at Trier (1927) and Rome (1925) showed real objects, Müller's just described photographic arrangements of objects had become *like* display cases (Frey 1907, Müller 1917/18). It is difficult to trace additional inspirations to the publication by Parzer-Mühlbacher (1905), which Müller had for these display photographs. I will make some suggestions in the next chapter. Mariannhill's curators showed African objects within photographs as they were used by Africans.[491] At the same time these photographs were presented next to objects, similar to the ones they depicted. Like with contemporary ethnographic museum displays, audiences were thus able to experience foreign people, even in their absence. Objects could be presented as supposedly more "real" and "objective", by being exhibited in conjunction with photographs showing them in their allegedly "natural" environment. In this way objects were simultaneously presented in a combination of "in situ" and "in context" (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998): on the one hand attempting to simulate the original destination, on the other hand describing the exhibited object through labels and oral explanations. By mutually enhancing each other's alleged authenticities towards the visitor, images and objects—even more so if they belonged to those "converted objects" I discussed above—could more convincingly fulfil their role as evidence of the mission encounter, in few cases even explicitly as "trophies".[492] In so far, the exhibitions could serve as more effective mimetic capital than they could have been through textual descriptions, or as objects could have been by themselves. This idea was explicitly expressed in the review of a mission exhibition, held 1896 in Budapest. Amongst many others, the exhibition notably showed objects and photographs from Mariannhill:

> Of a special interest from a culture-historical standpoint is the consignment of the mission school of the Trappists at Marianhill [sic], handicraft, drawings, and paintings by the pupils, which are all evidence of the savages' significant cultural progress. […] Apart from the photographs of anthropological types, these images complement the collection of objects in the most instructive way; they teach us about those peoples, whose industrial products we could contemplate already; they present the biological moments [*biologische Momente*] of the collection, by showing these peoples' objects [*Gegenstände*] according to the ways and manners of their use; in this way they certify [*beglaubigen*] them. (Bátky 1896:33-35)

The same form of presentation was employed—and written about—vigorously by missionaries like Merensky during the colonial exhibition at Berlin's great trade exhibition of the same year. In particular during this colonial exhibition, German ethnologists interacted with popular exhibition styles for representing both the human sciences and the German colonies (cf. Zimmerman 2001). But as I will show in the next chapter, German ethnographic museums started to employ such popular exhibition formats only several years later, thus combining objects with other media like photographs, moving images and other media (Chapters Six and Eight, also see Griffiths 2002, Edwards and Lien 2014). As the last two sections showed,

[491] The same may be said for the displays of many other Catholic congregations, as can be seen in an album showing other booths at the 1927 Trier exhibition (unpublished collection of photographs in the CMM archives).

[492] As I mentioned above, Pfanner used the term "trophy" at least in one case as a sign of, reference to and artefact of success in the accomplishment of the conversion narrative's goals and promises.

exhibition formats involving objects labeled either as “industrial”, “artistic”, “curios” or “ethnographic”, related to the positioning and creation of the curators’ social relationships, rather than to the creation of knowledge about the mission’s subjects and their objects.

Conclusion

Mariannhill's museum and the monks' general engagement with South African and Western "material culture" served multiple purposes. Next to exoticising propaganda for Europe, its second dimension was the missionaries' own self-fashioning as open-minded cosmopolitans in Natal. Through this effort the museum had a strong emphasis on a Catholic tradition of collecting *as culture*. As I showed, the collection, curation, and the re-distribution of African, European, but also of "material culture" from other parts of the world, presented one way for Mariannhill Missionaries to manifest, perform, and therefore to reconfirm their own "culturedness" towards various audiences. Mariannhill Missionaries established their own "exhibitionary complex", which allowed them to position objects and images in order to build relationships and attract allies. Much more than scientific intentions, this complex involved propagandistic and commercial motivations towards a local and international market. Mariannhill's museum and exhibitions presented objects as material evidence of their subjects' conversion, as well as proof of Mariannhill's own "culture" against accusations during the "Culture Wars" to European audiences. Eventually, the effort of curation was not simply about the creation, maintenance, and distribution of object collections for the sake of creating knowledge, but even more so about establishing and maintaining subject relationships. Photographs played a particular role in this effort by mediating in between subjects, objects, exhibition spaces, and the mission's potential allies.

Influences on the constitution and development of Mariannhill's museum and photographic practices regarding material culture can thus be traced back to at least three different conventions and disciplines. Being embedded within a colonial experience, these conventions influenced each other: first, collection practices inspired by a Catholic monastic tradition (cf. Schrott 2010), and possibly even a mission tradition of science and collecting, as exemplified by the Jesuits (cf. Findlen 1989); second, the parallel development of several South African and especially Natalian "colonial museums"; and third, the engagement with European and foremost German curators of ethnographic museums, to which we now turn in the next chapter. We shall see that ethnologists after 1900 learned to restructure their exhibitions in the same way, in order to attract benefactors, object donors, and visitors (cf. Penny 2002, 2003).

Mariannhill Missionaries were deeply involved with the circulation of mimetic capital from Natal over a long period of time, in particular through photographs. But neither the staged photographs, the accounts describing Mariannhill's museum and exhibitions (just like those in Europe), or the arrangements of objects in exhibitions themselves, can be equalised with certainty to a historical situation where these objects had actually constituted an authentic and exclusive "material culture". Nevertheless, missionaries and ethnologists used photographs to strengthen exactly this claim (cf. Mitchell 1992:298). Photographs thus played a mediating role for Mariannhill's exhibitions, just as they did during and after the guided tour at the monastery. Visitors at all times experienced the tour as a narrated walk with a steward along the same

course, culminating at the museum and photographic studio. As I already showed in Chapter Three, to many visitors the monastery appeared as an assemblage of European industrialism, "where the real world, as at the exhibition, was something organized by the representation of its commodities" (ibid.:299). Not only White visitors recalled this in their travelogues, but according to the story of Fr. Emanuel, also Africans like Chief Lokothwayo had similar perceptions.

Other than the representations of Egypt described by Mitchell, Mariannhill Missionaries not only had to create a version of South Africa for Europeans, but they also had to create a version of Europe in South Africa. In the latter case, European objects at the museum, as well as "industrial objects" produced by Mariannhill's converts, were presented as a success of Germano-Austrian industrialism against the odds of non-Catholics and non-German-speakers in South Africa. The construction of both European and African material cultures—in particular their polarisation—were concerted efforts to position Mariannhill in social space.

Mission, museum, press, and photographic practice at Mariannhill Monastery were thus closely connected. As the missionaries argued themselves, all efforts to circulate and curate both photographs and objects should financially benefit the "civilising process" of the very people whom these photographs and objects referenced in the first place. In order to achieve the best financial return from the printing press, the photographic studio, and the museum, the mission's modes of presenting subjects and objects through these institutions had to be finely attuned and optimised in relation to a religious visual economy. This economy not only involved information, money, and people, but as I have shown, also specific constellations of objects and images. The missionaries informed potential benefactors why they should donate in the first place, and those who were already involved, were kept informed how their donations contributed to the work of the mission (cf. Chapter One). In the next chapter we shall see how this economy involving both objects and photographs, by the second half of the 1890s connected to an already existing market established by Euro-American ethnographic museums.

Regarding the combined presentation of objects and photographs, we thus have to distinguish three exhibitionary settings for Mariannhill: the museum at the monastery, "industrial" exhibitions at or near to it, and eventually exhibitions held in Europe. In all three situations curators positioned South African objects against Western ones in specific constellations, in order to create and reference two specific kinds of people: *potential* converts and *converted* subjects. Especially in exhibitionary situations away from the mission, the mission's curators needed photographs to manifest the supposed fact that subjects and objects of the same category mutually constituted each other: particular people produced particular objects, but eventually the (photographed) objects defined people as either "civilised" or "primitive" in the first place (cf. Pinney 1990).

Once the mission's subjects had passed the process of conversion, the missionaries represented them as dressed and settled Christians, who had become not only consumers, but also producers of allegedly more "refined" and "civilised" products, made with skills acquired at

the mission's workshops and schools. Photographs depict African settlements, including clothed people, more "advanced" architecture, and the fact that people were seated on European chairs. The missionaries envisioned the facts that their subjects could walk through their own doorway upright, and sit on chairs, as the appropriate life-world of a Christian (Gütl 2005:297, also see Ross 2008:95). Mariannhill's photographers instead had avoided such "modern" objects or people in those photographs they captioned as "heathen". At times, they even retouched or cropped them, as we could see in the photograph of Umdamane's homestead.

Even if Müller explicitly claimed the "completeness" of Mariannhill's collection of "Kafir products" already by 1890, we realised that this arrangement was at the same time highly selective and haphazardly "local". The missionaries produced descriptions including backstories of acquisition only for objects like head rings or medicine bundles. These could serve the purpose of making a clear statement about the missionaries' relationship to their subjects, and thus became "converted artifacts" in the narration of the acquisition process (Thomas 1991). The missionaries presented local artefacts as analogies, commensurable with objects familiar to Europeans, so that they could become part of the same visual economy (Poole 1998, also see Edwards 2001:58). Objects like the head ring and the medicine bundle therefore served as "tangible metonyms" for both Zulu and European culture (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:30). At the same time, a dependency evolved, as missionaries had to repeatedly identify and collect such entangled artefacts (cf. Thomas 1991, Hodder 2016). Furthermore, they had to maintain them materially, narratively, and photographically. In Chapters Seven and Eight I explain that other images in Mariannhill's visual economy depended on even more material and narrative fiddling and enhancement, in order to become and remain mimetically effective.

CHAPTER SIX

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Circulating Images

Introduction: Circulating and Certifying Knowledge

Even before Br. Aegidius Müller started to take photographs in 1897, his predecessors had produced photographs of their subjects' "economic life" (cf. Pels 1994:341), activities in the homestead, architecture, agriculture etc. Despite the fact that they had been originally produced for the purpose of enticing benefactors, such potentially exotic photographs suddenly carried an interest for ethnographic museums, when Müller started targeting them as an additional market in 1898. Already in Chapter One I argued that many of these photographs were inspired by genre paintings and photographs, and could therefore be easily sold as "ethnographic" photographs because both intended to depict "daily life". We shall see that—despite such ambivalences—museum-based scholars in the evolving transnational network of ethnology during the last quarter of the 19th century and beyond, heavily relied on knowledge, object collections, and photographs provided by missionaries.

Depending on the individual perspective of either ethnologists or missionaries, the ways how both groups recorded, processed, interpreted, and discussed information, were at times arbitrary. Evaluations of the relationship between representations (such as photographs and texts) and what had actually happened on the ground, were thus heavily layered and troubled by uncertainties. Even though both missionaries and ethnologists thought photographs could solve some of the uncertainties in knowledge production, photographs indeed also introduced new ones. Few ethnologists and missionaries, however, considered these uncertainties in published accounts. Pinpointing some of these uncertainties can help us to reassemble the network constituted by ethnologists, missionaries, objects, and photographs.

In Chapters One to Four I showed that there were indeed discontinuities between Mariannhill's photographic record and the historical situation established through other sources: despite the overall intention to convert people, Mariannhill Missionaries employed photographs to visually maintain the divide between "uncivilised" and "civilised", "traditional" and "modern", "heathen" and "Christian" for propaganda purposes. Ethnologists instead had already argued by the early 1870s that "traditional" life in the colonies had started to dissolve irretrievably due to colonial contacts, and therefore had to be salvaged in form of objects and photographs. In order to increase their stocks of these, museum ethnologists had to "muster allies" (cf. Latour 1990, 2005). This they hoped to do—just like missionaries—by staging a crisis.

While Mariannhill Missionaries regularly invoked the devil at work in South Africa to impress their benefactors, ethnologists claimed that the influx of Western "modernity" in the colonies threatened "traditional" life and its material manifestations. For this reason, so they argued, also European lay people in the colonies should engage in what has often been referred to as a "salvage anthropology" (eg. Clifford 1988b:231, also see below). After the establishment of anthropological and ethnological societies and museums in Europe since already before the mid-19th century, such societies took renewed structured measures since the early 1870s to bring

missionaries, administrators, and other colonial actors into the fold.[493] For example, they provided them with questionnaires and written instructions on how to collect specimens, as well as additional knowledge on them. Similar to the "problem of resemblance" and the "native problem" I described in earlier chapters, "salvage anthropology" can be retraced even more clearly as an intentionally constructed scenario, supposed to entice others to join in the project of securing "complete" ethnographic collections.

Ethnologists considered objects, photographs, and texts provided by missionaries as potential source material for their studies. At the same time, however, they had to scrutinise the providing missionaries as sources themselves. Even if ethnologists were thus critical about missionaries, they nevertheless had to maintain and educate them as important allies, in order to secure and maintain the flow of material. Before both Catholic and Protestant missionaries became active participants in the ethnological discipline during the early 1900s, they were explicitly considered as auxiliary to trained scholars. Also the self-perception of German-speaking Catholic missionaries as providers of valuable knowledge only started to solidify during the 1890s, as exemplified in the last chapter's opening quote. This phase of increasing activity and exchange between approximately 1896 and 1906 was also the most active period in the career of Br. Aegidius Müller. Along with the rise of a Catholic ethnology during the first decades of the 20th century, active scholarly work also started to develop at Mariannhill. I already mentioned some of the monastery's most active members in previous chapters. Once South African social anthropology had been professionalised academically and administratively during the 1920s (cf. Geest and Kirby 1996, Hammond-Tooke 1997, also see Chapter Seven), scientific work at Mariannhill Monastery eventually ceased along with the passing of the last individuals of the Trappist generation during the 1930s.

Like missionaries, ethnologists attempted to use photographs, not only to bridge the distance between centre and periphery, but also to fix the perceived problem of representation: until the late 1880s, it was a constraint—not a choice—to use engravings in publications instead of photographs. Even before the 1890s, many ethnologists and in particular physical anthropologists like Gustav Fritsch, preferred photographs above engravings and drawings. Fritsch argued that photographs are more accurate and thus more "objective", compared to the subjectivity of paintings, drawings, and engravings (Broeckmann 2008:146; Theye 1989a:15; also see Ankermann 1914:14; Graebner 1911:54; Im Thurn 1893:185, 189; Schlaginhaufen 1915:54). Next to the factor of visual accuracy, there was the factor of time: according to Fritsch, it simply took travelling artists far too long to finish their work adequately (Fritsch 1906:761). As far as photography was concerned, Fritsch mentioned the lack of colour as its only downside. As a starting point, we must assume that the idea of a "mechanical objectivity" with photographs made ethnologists and anthropologists prefer the medium above others (cf. Daston and Galison 2007). Nevertheless, we shall see in this chapter and the next that there were indeed arguments

[493] On the history of research instructions during the first half of the 19th century and before, see for example Urry (1993:17-40).

for the use of drawings and paintings in the sciences until the 1920s and beyond (also see Geismar 2014). It is important to note that such preferences cannot always be generalised, but often simply depended, first, on the interest and subject of study, and second, on the artistic capability of the respective scientist, or the availability of a capable collaborator (cf. Chapter Seven).

"Ethnographic" objects were, next to bodily specimens, the raw material for ethnologists to study colonial subjects from a distance. Objects and body parts from far-away places initially served as documentary evidence. German scholars referred to both as either "*Belegmaterial*" or "*Belegstücke*" and accordingly treated them as documents (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:23). As such, in particular German museum ethnologists used them for an explicitly inductive approach to the study of an imagined periphery (cf. Hoffmann 2012, Penny 2002, Zimmerman 2001).[494] In combination with basic textual information, photographs therefore constituted the ideal medium that could bring bodies and objects together, in order to show how the latter had been employed by their makers.

As we already established in Chapter One, photographic "objectivity", in particular as "mechanical objectivity" was never a given, but always had to be established through arguments. In this chapter I follow how photographs evolved through the exchanges between Mariannhill Missionaries and ethnologists—not so much as scientific "evidence" (cf. Tucker 2005)—but rather as "working objects". Daston and Galison employ this term for documents that enabled scientists to perform "collective empiricism" over great distances (cf. Daston and Galison 2007:19-22; Daston 2015; also see Edwards 2001:56). "Working objects" are surrogate objects allowing scientists to practice empirical discernment in the absence of original specimens or subjects. Photographs can therefore only be understood as "working objects" in between the specific spaces and actors that (re-)constituted and employed them (cf. Tagg 1993). To study the working of photographs through time, one therefore has to trace with them the parallel biographies and traditions of related iconographies, objects, texts, and individuals. If we now conceive of ethnographic objects and photographs as being equal in constituting subjects within actor-network relationships (cf. Hevia 2009, Latour 2005), photographs in particular become interesting because they allow us to consider both objects and subjects, before and behind the camera.

In order to better understand why ethnologists required photographs at the time and how they used them, we must distinguish yet another mode of employment. First, they were used in the just mentioned way as either "working objects" for research, or evidence and illustration for publication, either depicting isolated objects, bodies, or objects in use while being handled by a person. Second, ethnologists also used photographs of objects in co-presence with the actual objects in public exhibition displays, as developed for example at Cologne's Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum. This circumstance entailed the then popular, but today rarely acknowledged genre of

[494] For a closer, however oversimplified analysis of a German "anthropological vision" before 1900, see Zimmerman (2001b).

exhibition- and object-photographs (but see Edwards 2001). We already followed this practice for the case of Mariannhill's exhibitions after 1900 in the last chapter. In similar ways, exhibition photography was also practiced, for example at the ethnographic museums of Cologne, Stuttgart, and Pietermaritzburg, in order to attract, educate, and maintain relationships with both visitors and benefactors. I will delineate these developments by following Mariannhill's photographs to these and other museums, such as in Munich, Leiden, Vienna, and Oxford. In particular the museums of Berlin and Cologne allow us to observe a shift in approaches to objects and photographs, and how curators used them as both "working objects" and exhibits. Müller actively marketed his photographs as "ethnographic" and formulated ideas in close correspondence with European and South African museum ethnologists. His personal correspondences with Felix von Luschan (1854-1924) in Berlin and Fritz Graebner (1877-1934) in Cologne will show that he closely followed related developments in the museum world.

Müller's engagement with ethnological networks was triggered by the already mentioned instructions and questionnaires for the collection of objects, photographs, and ethnographic descriptions. In particular Von Luschan advocated the publication of such instructions since 1896 at the ethnographic museum of Berlin, to which Müller eventually replied in 1898. It is neither possible nor desirable to trace all potential connections of the contemporary scholarly network here (but see Rippe 2016). Nevertheless, I want to indicate at least some of its crucial nodes, which facilitated the circulation of Mariannhill's photographs. These nodes were constituted by particular people, events, and institutions. Müller facilitated most sales directly through the photographic studio, and alternatively through lay intermediaries. It will therefore be necessary to consider the cross-connections between the involved anthropologists and ethnologists, as well as the respective intermediaries.

The perceived scientific value of "ethnographic" objects for German ethnologists was increased through their proper documentation and contextualisation (Penny 2002:84). Glen Penny stated that "aesthetic, economic and scientific value of artefacts are neither mutually exclusive nor interdependent. They are potentially interdependent" (ibid.:70). As I showed, the same may be said for photographs, in particular regarding their potential interdependence with objects. The physical, pictorial, and rhetorical construction of objects thus depended on a "culture of circulation" (Lee and LiPuma 2002) in a limited timeframe and involved a fairly narrow network of people. This network was made up of the object producers, missionaries, ethnologists, and occasionally intermediaries, in Africa as well as in Europe. How objects were photographed, modified, and described within this "culture of circulation", determined the construction of the very "culture", from which the objects had been derived (cf. Edwards 2001:52). Like in preceding chapters, I will show how this culture of circulation involved the creation of particular image traditions, the materialities and limitations of a South African photographic studio, and the relations of both to the fluctuations of the European photographic market. This market must therefore be considered as being both commercial and academic, both popularising and scientific.

In the previous chapter I showed how Mariannhill's curatorial work included moments of collection, the exhibitionary situation at Mariannhill's museum, and eventually the combined curation of both objects and photographs in South Africa and Europe. In this chapter I further trace Mariannhill's photographic production and circulation in interaction with German and British ethnologists. The first three sections analyse methodological and epistemological questions regarding photographs and objects as discussed by European ethnologists, at Mariannhill, and by other missionaries. The last three sections attempt to follow the pulse of Mariannhill's photographs as closely as possible once they were in the hands and minds of European ethnologists.

Instructing Allies

Around 1900, Berlin's ethnographic museum was the biggest of its kind in Germany and many scholars even considered it the biggest in the world in terms of the sheer number of accumulated objects (eg. Dalton 1898,[495] Juynboll 1905:6, Foy 1910:21). The number of objects was so great that attempts to make sense of the collection eventually drowned within it. South Africa, and the "Zulu" in particular, were well represented in the public exhibition, however only with a fraction of the material stored in the museum's depot. By 1911, Natal and Zululand were counted amongst the areas rated as "entirely or almost complete collections".[496] In fact, the coastal region from Port Elizabeth to Maputo was next to the Sudan and the German colonies Togo, Cameroon, German South West Africa, and German East Africa, the only area on the African continent described as such (Krieger 1973:112). But just like at Mariannhill, there was no explanation of how an object collection from one particular region could ever be "complete". Like other racial classifications as claims to objectivity (cf. Chapter One), a collection of objects said to represent an actual situation, must rather be considered as an ideal, not a practice (cf. Pels 2014:221). Eventually, striving towards "completeness" (by collecting as many objects as possible) undermined the original attempt of inductive analysis, as envisioned by Adolf Bastian, the museum's first director (Zimmerman 2001:190). As we shall see, in order to amass objects and basic information, ethnologists relied on missionaries as allies, who had to be instructed for this purpose.

The "Zulu" had first appeared on Berlin's ethnographic museum stage in the early 1870s, when Bastian described them in the guide book of the Royal Museum's ethnographic section as "wild barbaric hordes, having re-appropriated the weapon-trade" (Bastian 1872:50). This identification did not change after the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, and the guidebook only added the event by identifying "objects of the Zulu arranged from the spoils of war [*Kriegsbeute*]" (Bastian 1881:26).[497] Once the ethnographic collection had received its own building in 1886, the description was much expanded, but the context of the recent war no longer mentioned (Generalverwaltung 1887:98-99). The edition of 1890 listed even more objects, but again no characterisation of the people who made them (Generalverwaltung 1890:63). Then, at least between the guide's seventh edition of 1898 and the 18th edition of 1926, the "Zulu's" general description and the one of objects ascribed to them, remained almost unchanged in the museum's public guide books for a period of approximately 30 years:[498]

b) The Sulu (Zulu) in Natal and in Sululand. They are the most warlike and best organised of all Kafir tribes. With their regular wars against the whites they take up a lot of space in the history of South Africa. Amongst them are also the Matabele and Amaswasi.[499]

[495] Cited in Penny (2002:1).
[496] My own translation from the German original: "*ganz oder nahezu vollständige Sammlungen*".
[497] These objects had been donated by the German consul in South Africa, Dr. Keller (Stelzig 2004:291).
[498] I did not have access to the fifth (1892) and sixth (1895) edition.
[499] Generalverwaltung (1911:63): My own translation from the German original. The text quoted here is identical

Even if narrating "history", the guide books remain in the present tense when referring explicitly to the objects on display. From the presence, quality, and quantity of a certain arrangement of particular objects—not based on statistics *in situ*, but based on objects *selected from the collection*—the catalogue draws the conclusion that

> [i]n accordance with their inclination to war, weapons take up the first place within their cultural possessions, such as evident from the many weapons for attack and protection. Next to the strange clothing of fur, the incredibly rich adornments are remarkable; furthermore there are the artistic carvings (snuff boxes, sticks) of the Sulu, the magic dices of the Amakosa and the water-containers made from ostrich eggs.

By 1911, the catalogue explicitly mentioned for this section that only "selected samples" were exhibited and that the "by far biggest part of the collection" had to be "stacked away" due to the restrictions in space. In contrast to the judgmental presentation of the "Zulu" as warlike in Berlin, Cologne's Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum presented "Zulu" objects from the very first museum guidebook of 1906 onwards without any connotations. Nevertheless, the ethnographic museum in the German capital dominated the scene. Because *guided* tours were not yet a common practice, and even discontinued after 1900 in the Berlin Museum, we must assume that the guidebooks had a considerable impact on visitors. They put visitors' views on Africans into context, when gazing at African objects.[500]

A "temporal incoherence", which Clifford (1988a:202) observed for the exhibition of alterity in the 1980s, was already in place before 1900. Already for cases of this earlier period, "[t]he time and order of the collection erase the concrete social labor of its making" (Stewart quoted in Clifford 1988b:220). In the case of Berlin, the backstories of "ethnographic" objects were likewise overridden. However, even if equally biased, the curator at Mariannhill's museum could make less distanced claims for the present "Kafir curios". He considered them in a more contemporary idiom due to his access to directly related backstories. Such temporal distortions only appeared in Mariannhill's exhibitions and publications several decades later, as I described them in the last chapter for the 1927 exhibition in Trier.

Despite the fact that photographs neither appeared in Berlin's contemporary exhibition, nor in the museum's guidebooks, curators still sought them, apparently only for research and publication purposes. Once Müller had taken on the position of photographer at Mariannhill in late 1897, he soon conceived of the idea to actively approach curators of museums in Europe and South Africa as a potential sales market. On 20 July 1898, from his studio in South Africa, he composed a letter to the ethnographic museum of Berlin, part of which reads:

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throughout the fourth (1898) and seventh (1911) edition. The one of 1926 is abbreviated, but only differs little in its formulation.

[500] See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) on the difference between "*in situ*" and "in context" presentations. The use of "*in situ*" in the case above, however, refers to the actual geographical place where objects have been supposedly collected or photographed, as used by Im Thurn (1893:195). Also see below.

We herewith allow ourselves to offer you the delivery of an album of photographic images from South Africa. These images depict groups, entire figures, portraits, homesteads, house-ware tools, weapons of different Zulu tribes and Basuto, as well as rock paintings of Basuto and Bushmen. There are beautiful and characteristic portraits, dresses and hairstyles in their diverse ways. Such an album would present a vivid and truthful image of the Kafirs' peculiarities, the heathen aboriginals of South Africa. Considering the busy work of missionaries, one might no longer be able to capture such images in 50 years to come.[501]

Müller clearly distinguished photographs of people and photographs of objects. Even if he referred to "different Zulu tribes [*verschiedene Zulustämme*]" in the letter, this common designation is not repeated once in the catalogue he should soon prepare. After being motivated by the ensuing correspondence with the museum, he compiled detailed descriptions to each of the photographs on offer (Müller 1899). A "Zulu" identity only appears in a short introduction to the "Zulu language [*Zulusprache*]" at the outset. Instead, his text glosses over all photographed individuals either with the designation "Kafir [*Kaffer*]" or "Basuto". Only a few individuals he identified separately as "Kafirs" of the "*Amaswazi*", "*Amabaca*" and "*Amatembu*" tribes. Other than that, Müller used the term "Kafir" without specification, in order to denote Africans living near Mariannhill. This is one more indication that a "Zulu" identity was not all-pervasive in Natal at the time (cf. Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016a, Mahoney 2012).

Also the "*Amagwabe*" of the Transvaal are included in the catalogue, but the respective photographs had not been taken by the monastery's photographers. Mariannhill did not have stations in the Transvaal, and instead Müller had copied the respective nine photographs from the 1888 publication *Picturesque Aspects of the Transvaal* by the Swiss photographer H.F. Gros. He even covered up the original captions and presented the photographs amongst his own. As we already learned in Chapter One, copyright issues for photographs were not yet formulated as clearly as today, and at the same time photographers, publishers, and consumers were often not fully aware of their legal rights and obligations.

Despite being directed explicitly at museum ethnologists,[502] Müller's published text is spiced with ironic allusions to the still non-Christian state of some of the depicted individuals. Furthermore, several photographs depict missionaries in transformatory activities, such as baptisms, or the recruiting of children for school. The inherent civilising mission is thus still very present in the mission's "ethnographic" mode as Christian observers (cf. Harries 2005). The excerpt from Müller's letter to Berlin even shows his awareness of an apparent contradiction: on the one hand, his profession's modifying impact on Africans, and on the other hand, museums' efforts to document and preserve "cultures" in the vein of a "salvage anthropology". His formulations, the enumeration of various image categories, as well as the explicit antagonistic relational logic between missionaries and museum interests, all suggest that he had earlier received inspiration from German ethnologists. For the remainder of this section I shall discuss potential forms of motivation, the specific networks creating them, and the generally shared methodological considerations between 1896 and 1906, which influenced Müller's decision to

[501] EMB: letter, Müller to MfV, 20.07.1898.
[502] *"Den wohllöblichen Direktoren der Museen, ethnographischen Sammlungen ec."*.

participate in the scientific projects of ethnology and physical anthropology.

German ethnologists and anthropologists of the Berliner Gesellschaft für Ethnologie, Anthropologie und Urgeschichte (BGAEU) issued instructions for travellers, missionaries, and other colonial actors on how to collect zoological, botanical, geographic, as well as ethnographic data in the colonies as early as 1872, initially for use in the German Navy[503] (also see Neumayer 1875).[504] These instructions related to all sciences more generally and were developed, published, and disseminated in a holistic effort. Adolf Bastian, director of Berlin's ethnographic museum, wrote the contribution on the "general concepts of ethnology"[505] since the first edition in 1875, and most likely also in the first draft of 1872.[506] But it was only in 1896 that Felix von Luschan, the assistant curator for Oceania and Africa, started to issue a small booklet with the request to collect information, objects, and photographs specifically for Berlin's ethnographic museum.[507] Due to their very small format, as compared to the British *Notes and Queries*, or Neumayer's *Anleitung*, Von Luschan could liberally distribute his instructions amongst potential collectors free of charge (cf. Melk-Koch 2009:87). The instructions had the format of questionnaires, which were refined, expanded, and further specified with every new issue. They had a handy size to be carried into the field, with every second page left empty to be filled with notes.

The crucial importance of these widely circulated instructions—in particular from the perspective of those colonial actors and missionaries who provided objects, drawings, photographs, and descriptions—has only been vaguely acknowledged in previous studies of German (museum-) ethnology and photography (Zimmerman 2001, Von Briskorn 2000, Wiener 1990), or even been completely ignored (Penny 2002, Smith 1991, Kohl 2016, Stappert 2009). Even accounts dealing explicitly with German ethnographic research instructions only cover limited time periods or desired media, with some being either incomplete, or incorrect regarding the publication dates (Broeckmann 2008, Buschmann 2009, Hoffmann 2012, Krautwurst 2009 [2002], Melk-Koch 2009, Sarreiter 2012, Schneider 2009, Schindlbeck 1993, Theye 1989, Westphal-Hellbusch 1973).[508] While Von Luschan wrote and also advocated these instructions and questionnaires for lay people (1904, 1905), his former student and colleague Fritz Graebner

[503] The first draft appeared in a special issue of the BGAEU's *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* in 1972. See Schneider (2009) and especially Stelzig (2004) for a detailed analysis on the situation concerning scientific instructions for ethnographic collecting in German since the 1870s. The German instructions preceded the similar effort of the British *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* for some years.

[504] Like the British *Notes and Queries*, Neumayer's *Anleitung* was updated repeatedly (1888, 1906).

[505] "*Allgemeine Begriffe der Ethnologie*".

[506] Rudolf Virchow instead wrote the contribution on physical anthropology. Gustav Fritsch added a separate contribution on the use of photography (see below). Bastian's essay on ethnology did not yet mention photography as useful to his concerns.

[507] The five issues of instructions for collecting released by the ethnographic museum of Berlin are in chronological order: Von Luschan (1896); Seidel (1897); Von Luschan (1899); Von Luschan (1904); Ankermann (1914). A full discussion of all instructions cannot be provided here. In addition one may nevertheless mention Von Luschan's instructions in Neumayer's *Anleitungen* (1906).

[508] But see Stelzig (2004) for an excellent overview. Read in conjunction, these accounts provide most valuable insights, and Theye's (1989a, 1989b) account must still be considered as the best introduction to the early discourse on photography in German ethnology. For discussions of the development of the British *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* see Stocking (2001a) and Urry (1993).

in Cologne repeatedly criticised them. According to Graebner, questionnaires could not replace the training and experience of a professional ethnologist (Graebner 1908) and indeed made lay researchers biased (Graebner 1911:44).[509]

I already discussed how Mariannhill's museum curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, distributed his own instructions for collecting objects between 1894 and 1910, directed at confreres and benefactors alike. Now I will discuss Von Luschan's instructions in relation to the circulation of Mariannhill's photographs within the network of contemporary ethnology, the network's developing and differing attitudes, and its role in the discourse on the epistemological value of photographs for ethnological study; in other words, I consider what value Mariannhill's photographs had for ethnologists in the production of knowledge, and what the latter hoped to learn or gain from them. So far, scholars have only explored the early history of photographic epistemologies for German ethnology during the 1870s and 80s (Schneider 2009, 2011; Theye 1989, 2004), but not the continuities and ruptures beyond 1900, which I just mentioned.

In accordance with archaeology, Rudolf Virchow and Adolf Bastian[510] had considered collections of objects as an archive of historical "texts", which could be "read" *independently* of the lived situations they emerged from (Penny 2002:26, 36; Zimmerman 2000:75, 2001:49).[511] The object's exact "backstory" (Hamilton 2011), before it had arrived at the museum, was not of interest, as in many instances it could not be recovered anyway. Often ethnologists were not in a position to collect themselves, and thus had to rely on others. The kind of information they requested from the providers of objects and photographs was an object's "ethnicity", its indigenous name, and its function, but not the personal and social identity of its maker. This holds true for both objects as ethnological evidence, as well as for photographs as representations of the latter: thus neither the African producer of an object, nor the missionary making a photograph were considered crucial agents, due to the assumed inherent "objectivity" of both objects and photographs. Even though ideas on African "authorship" were already present (cf. Chapter One), these would only change radically during the 1920s (cf. Chapter Seven).

In the second half of the 19th century, ethnologists distanced themselves increasingly from the uncertainties of paintings and drawings by claiming a "photographic [mechanical] objectivity", which was thought to close "[…] the space between the site of observation on the colonial periphery and the site of metropolitan interpretation" (Edwards 2001:31-32, also see Daston and Galison 2007, Hempel 2009, Schneider 2009:61). Müller had become aware of this situation by 1898, and started to present some of Mariannhill's available stock of photographs as "ethnographic" source material, which had previously been framed as depictions of potential

[509] Also see Ernst Grosse (1896) and Oswald Richter (1908), who spoke out against collecting by amateurs. See Coombes (1994:166) on the contemporary discourse in England regarding the need of "anthropological training" for missionaries.

[510] Virchow was considered as one of the main authorities on physical anthropology, and Bastian as the father of German ethnography and ethnology. Other members of the BGAEU's authoring committee were Braun, Hartmann, Fritsch, Kuhn, and Deegen.

[511] The same may be said for the case of representations of people in form of photographic "types". Also see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998:31) on Goode's "textualised objects" at about the same time.

converts. While the first were supposed to follow scientific rigour, the latter were only bound by the aesthetic principles I described in Chapter One. But despite (or as I suggest, exactly because) being based on painterly conventions and aesthetics, Mariannhill's photographs were well accepted by contemporary ethnologists. This was even the case for Graebner, who had previously criticised missionaries for their lack of training.

The initial 1872 statement by a committee headed by Rudolf Virchow and Adolf Bastian on who would be eligible to carry out research, suggested that

> while the collections of zoological, botanical, mineralogical and geological specimens always depend on some expert studies, the engagement with ethnology and anthropology—even if alleviated by medical knowledge—is generally within the range of possibilities of every refined person. Especially these two branches of knowledge need most addition, as they have been totally neglected so far and have only at this moment in time come to full advantage. This particular moment in time can be called opportune due to easier means of communication. At the same time it is also the last [chance], because through these very same means of communication and the absorbing progress of civilising influences, the primitive types, which we demand to fixate [*die primitiven Typen, deren Fixierung verlangt wird*], are in a state of swift disintegration. (Virchow et al. 1872:325-326)

In 1886, Wilhelm Joest donated objects to Berlin's ethnographic museum from his South African journey in 1883. At this time, so Joest, it was still possible to acquire "ethnographic objects". He went on to complain, however, that "soon the point would come that every originality is gone", since "the British had taken away shields, clubs, and assegais in the hundreds as loot or memorabilia" during the Anglo-Zulu war, and Africans had already started to *imitate* and *forge*, and to produce "Zulu curios [Engl. in original]" to sell to passing foreigners for horrendous prices (Joest 1886:147). But still 18 years after Joest's warning, Felix von Luschan (1904) pleaded for the "careful and monographic treatment of every single tribe [*Stamm*]". He explicitly mentioned in the very first lines of the third edition of his instructions for collecting that

> [m]odern traffic circulation is a dreadful and relentless enemy of all situations primitive; whatever we cannot safeguard and salvage for posterity within the next years will be heading towards total demise and can never be obtained again. Situations and institutions that developed over the course of thousands of years in their specific ways, do change under the influence of the White man almost from one day to the other. This necessitates to get hold of things quickly [*da heißt es rasch zugreifen*], before it is too late.[512] (Von Luschan 1904:3)

Von Luschan closed his introduction with the remark that the "faithful collaboration" by missionaries and the "warm goodwill" of colonial government and society towards his museum, were a result of ethnology's practical value for political success and the creation of economic markets in the colonies (cf. Six-Hohenbalken 2009:17[513]).[514] At least in public, Von Luschan was particularly fond of contributions by missionaries, as they spent considerable time in the respective countries and often mastered the local languages (ibid.:181, also see Stelzig 2004). In the remainder of this chapter I argue that this was a strategy of recruiting allies, in order to build

[512] My own translation from the German original.
[513] For a similar analysis for the British context, see Urry (1993).
[514] For a similar analysis for the British context, see Urry (1993).

collections in times of fierce competition.

In the form of questionnaires, Von Luschan's instructions gave directions to describe social situations ethnographically, to collect objects, to draw, photograph, and to provide models of architectural structures. Müller's choice was apparently photography, and it is therefore necessary to further survey the contemporary epistemological conventions within the disciplines of physical anthropology and ethnology. Most instrumental in creating the first standards for photographs in German physical anthropology and ethnology was Gustav Fritsch, even before the above-mentioned instructive literature issued by Berlin's ethnographic museum in 1896. As I showed in Chapter One, Fritsch closely collaborated with Hermann Vogel during the late 1860s. Vogel also presented at meetings of the BGAEU in the 1970s, and taught photography to other ethnologists, like Franz Boas in the 1880s. Fritsch therefore was well-versed in photographic technology and practice.

Fritsch first developed and applied his photographic standards during his travels in South Africa between 1863 and 1866.[515] A few years later, he contributed the earliest articles on photography for German research instructions (1872) and thus introduced a canon that distinguished between "physiognomic" photographs and "ethnographic" ones (cf. Broeckmann 2008:145, also see Schneider 2009).[516] The first category represents a person's clear frontal portrait, and at least one profile view. "Ethnographic" photographs, after Fritsch, instead focused on a person's "general impression", circumstances of life, clothing, weapons and tools: "To this category belongs any image that relates to man or his environment, as long as he has modified the latter by his own action" (Fritsch 1888:562). For Fritsch, the ethnographic category was definitely the one less scientific, less difficult to take or purchase, and more likely to "leave more space for the artistic ambitions of the photographer" (ibid.:571). In his view, they were only complementary to the physiognomic images. Eventually, it would have been unlikely for photographers who only established themselves within the scientific project to produce proper physiognomic portraits. Especially for Catholic missionaries it would have been morally impossible to publicly undress the photographic subject, in order to study physiognomic detail. Müller therefore took the liberty to employ the "artistic freedom", which Fritsch had suggested for ethnographic portraits. As the correspondences about Mariannhill's photographs suggests, they were initially considered most relevant within Fritsch's second category, "ethnography". In order to fully understand these correspondences, I now turn to the related events leading to the publication of Luschan's instructions and the establishment of Catholic missionaries in the academic field.

[515] See Dietrich and Bank (2008) for a wide-ranging discussion of Fritsch's photographic oeuvre from South Africa.

[516] As Broeckmann observes, the changes in Fritsch's instructions between the 1875, 1988, and 1906 versions were only minor (2008:146).

Missionaries' Objects and Photographs in Auxiliary Ethnography

In 1922, Felix von Luschan recalled that when he first arrived at the ethnographic museum of Berlin in 1885, others "held the opinion that 'the mission' was the greatest enemy of ethnology [*Völkerkunde*] and therefore one had to fight it by all means" (Von Luschan 1922:VII).[517] But over time, Von Luschan himself became fond of missionaries as a source for objects, and legitimised their contributions with their long presence and experience in the respective country (Stelzig 2004:199-201). According to him, ethnologists and missionaries depended on each other, a fact he stressed publicly with increasing urgency between 1896 and 1904.[518] We shall soon explore the reasons for this strategy.

Despite their reservations, even ethnologists and museum curators of Adolf Bastian's generation had early on identified missionaries as potential sources for objects, photographs, and related textual data. Bastian, who was Von Luschan's predecessors as curator in Berlin, had indeed been in contact with missionaries before, such as the Protestant Moravians:[519] in the late 1870s, they were rather uncooperative and instead concerned about the economic value of their collections, thus treating them as mimetic capital. They focused on their task of proselytising and considered contacts to European museums as competition and leakage of their own propaganda resources (Jensz 2012:73). However, the Protestant Basel Mission's help to the museum in 1875 with the acquisition of ethnographic objects (Unseld 1996:186), or interactions with the Berlin Mission in the 1880s (Stelzig 2004:251), shows that missionaries' resistance to cooperate with museum ethnologists cannot be regarded as a distinctly Protestant characteristic. While Von Luschan—at least publicly—had favoured missionaries as informants more and more, the

[517] The main point of criticism was the missionaries' iconoclastic attitude towards their subjects' "*Götzenbilder*" and "fetishes" (cf. Von Luschan 1922:VII). Still in 1899, Von Luschan tried to intervene with the German foreign office against the destruction of such "idols" by the Protestant Basel mission in Cameroon. The mission replied that they must not appear as "collectors" in the eyes of their subjects, for otherwise these objects would attain a "trade value" in the latters' eyes. But eventually the mission gave in to the request (Krieger 1973:115; also see Thomas 1991:157). The questions of whether Catholic missionaries were more likely than Protestants to collect objects (and photographs), due to their own traditions of embracing materiality in ritual, and whether their Protestant colleagues were more prone to have iconoclastic tendencies, cannot be generalised and is in need of more comparative case studies. I am not aware that Mariannhill missionaries ever destroyed objects on purpose. Existing research on collections of Protestant missionaries indeed indicates that divisions about this question existed even amongst Protestants (Corbey 2000, 2003; Thomas 1991:155).

[518] Some missionaries also reported on their research during meetings of the BGAEU (Stelzig 2004:357). Also British ethnologists, such as Henry Balfour at Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum relied on objects, as well as contextualising information from Protestant missionaries (Edwards 2001, Coombes 1994:148). To the contrary, at the same time in Vienna opinions were again very different: in the journal *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* of 1900, the Austrian ethnologist Wilhelm Hein criticised an exhibition of the Catholic St. Petrus Claver Sodality in Vienna: "[…] The other collections from South Africa (Namaqua- and Zululand, Natal) contain a great number of objects, which bear unmistakable European influences, and will thus not be reviewed here. Of the 231 photographs, which the museum owns, none are usable from an ethnological standpoint, as they concern mission life in most cases" (Hein 1900:170). Several of these objects and photographs may have been supplied by Fr. Franz Mayr (cf. Gütl 2004). His patron Maria Ledochowska was the founder of the St. Petrus Claver Sodality, and is considered as the foundation patron of Mariannhill's station Centocow.

[519] Also known as the Herrenhuter Brüdergemeinde.

London-based Bronislaw Malinowski at the same time (1922), more similar to Graebner's position after 1908, played down administrators, missionaries, and traders as "biased" and "prejudiced […] practical men", however with "a few delightful exceptions" (Malinowski 1922 quoted in Pels 2014:211-212).

As we shall see in the course of this chapter and the next, even if positions changed towards cooperation, the relationship between ethnologists and missionaries remained ambivalent and often instrumental, even after the First World War. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, and as the quote at the very beginning of Chapter Five indicates, missionaries actively claimed expertise in a distinct field of knowledge production, which was based on their prolonged presence in the field. But this claim nevertheless remained entangled with efforts of propaganda, and therefore was never without its critics as far as the missionaries' ethnographic texts were concerned. Missionaries had nevertheless always been accepted as providers of objects, photographs, as well as related documentary information.

However, Catholic missionaries were only able to institutionalise their ethnographic efforts once a considerable number of them had established themselves as ethnologists under Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt SVD (1868-1954) in Vienna by the 1920s as the so-called "*Wiener Schule*". Missionaries of both denominations also became officially involved in the anthropological discourse on Africa, in particular as members of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IIALC). Therefore, since the arrival of Schmidt in Vienna, and the linguists Meinhof and Westermann in Hamburg with their background in Protestant theology, it is necessary to further divide missionaries into trained and untrained interlocutors in the ethnological project (cf. Harries 2005; Marchand 2003; Pels 1990, 1999; Pugach 2012). Such a division is at least possible with Mariannhill, as I showed for some members in Chapter Five.

Retrospectively, missionaries of all denominations can therefore no longer be considered as "*Randfiguren*" (Fischer 2003, also see Cox 2005:7), as marginal figures or background actors to the history of the anthropological discipline's foundation period, or to the writing of colonial histories more generally (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994 and 1999).[520] Missionaries have been considered as "incidental ethnographers" (Michaud 2007), or as "handmaidens" of European anthropologists (Harries 2005), who themselves have been retrospectively considered handmaidens to the colonial project. But of course also missionaries were actively involved in German colonial efforts at a political level (Marchand 2003, Schubert 2003), and therefore participated in major colonial exhibitions, such as the one of 1896 in Berlin, which I already introduced in the previous chapter.

Even before Felix von Luschan formulated the first edition of his instructions in late 1896,[521] Catholics had already started an initiative to motivate their missionaries to collect

[520] In South Africa they were retrospectively "equalised" in several instances, such as in the 1921 editorial to the first edition of the journal *Bantu Studies*. Later, the South African government-ethnologist Jacobus van Warmelo (cf. Chapter Seven) included the writings of missionaries of all denominations in his *Anthropology of Southern Africa in Periodicals to 1950: An Analysis and Index* (1977).

[521] Von Luschan's first instructions appeared in the *Mittheilungen von Forschungsreisenden und Gelehrten aus den*

objects *systematically*.[522] It is even very likely that both initiatives were directly related. The SVD historian Karl Rivinius suggests that the project of Fr. Johannes Bumüller[523] (1873-1936) was the pivotal foray by Catholics towards professional anthropology and ethnology (Rivinius 2005:106-108).[524] But other than mentioning some of Bumüller's efforts to popularise missionary writing, Rivinius does not follow up on Bumüller's investigations. However, there is more to it. In early 1896, after consulting with the Mission Benedictines of St. Ottilien[525] near Munich, Bumüller requested with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte (DGAEU)[526] to supply missionaries with instructions for collecting in the colonies. By mid-1896, Johannes Ranke,[527] professor for physical anthropology at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, indeed presented Bumüller's request during the society's annual meeting. Eventually, he promised to form a committee for the compilation of adequate instructions (Ranke 1896).

In a letter to Ranke, Bumüller had expressed that "German missionaries would surely be well-suited to engage in anthropological studies, and that they indeed would like to carry out such studies, if only they would be given the necessary instructions to do so". Without giving an explicit reason, Ranke added that "taking this opportunity, I would like to remark that the accounts, which missionaries could provide, would be less related to the measurement of bodies, but surely lie closer to questions of an actual ethnological nature" (Ranke 1896:144-148).[528] As this view was later confirmed by Bumüller himself, it is clear that at this point in time Catholic missionaries did not yet consider themselves as fully qualified providers of scientific knowledge, but still maintained an auxiliary position (cf. Ranke 1897). Rivinius states that Bumüller now started spreading articles on the scientific importance of the work by missionaries in mission periodicals.[529] By late 1897, Bumüller had also extracted "anthropological-ethnological" writings

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Schutzgebieten, which was an addendum (*Wissenschaftliche Beihefte*) to the *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*. The editorial office of the *Mittheilungen* closed on 8 December 1896. Von Luschan's instructions would therefore have first circulated individually in the course of 1897. Von Luschan had special separate prints made to supply potential collectors.

522 Already in 1883 the Vatican had motivated presumably rather *unsystematic* efforts to collect (cf. Colini 1886:2). Also see Wates (2006), who discusses the wider context, but not this specific initiative.

523 In 1896 Bumüller was Stadtkaplan in Neuburg an der Donau.

524 Like Brandewie, Rivinius is a member of SVD, the same congregation Janssen (its founder) and Schmidt belonged to. Like CMM, SVD have a tradition of academic publishing on their own history. While these may indeed show greater familiarity with the internal sources of the congregation, some also have selective and hagiographic tendencies. This is not to say that today's anthropologists would never idealise their professional ancestors.

525 The Archabbey of St. Ottilien was relatively close to Neuburg and Munich. It still maintains a "*Missionsmuseum*" today (cf. Chapter Seven).

526 The DGAEU was the national umbrella organisation of the BGAEU and other local societies. It was founded in 1870, one year after the BGAEU.

527 Bumüller studied physical anthropology in Munich between 1897 and 1899. He wrote his dissertation under Ranke, who was a co-founding member of the DGAEU and also edited its journals. In 1902, Bumüller became Ranke's assistant (cf. Weiß 1995:232).

528 My own translation from the German original.

529 Rivinius, however, did not follow up on respective anthropological/ethnological journals and the involvement of the DGAEU and BGAEU (cf. Ranke 1896, 1897).

from mission periodicals, and had forwarded these to Ranke, who then consulted with Rudolf Virchow and Max Bartels in Berlin,[530] both members of the BGAEU. Virchow replied that such reports by missionaries may indeed be published in the BGAEU's *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, and also Bartels reported on his previous positive interactions with the Protestant Berlin Mission (Ranke 1897:165).

From May to October 1896, the first colonial exhibition was held as a part of the Berlin trade fair. Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries had representative booths, SVD missionaries being main actors (cf. Meinecke 1897:118-131, also see Chapter Five). Also Felix von Luschan was involved to a considerable extent, by carrying out anthropological measurements on the present African performers, and by contributing the section on anthropology and ethnography in the exhibition publication (ibid:203-269, also see Zimmerman 2001). During the same event, Von Luschan also tapped the stock of the SVD's "ethnographic objects" from Togo, which the congregation's founder Janssen "left to the museum willingly" (Janssen 1897:127-128). As I explained in the previous chapter, also the 1896 ethnographic mission exhibition in Budapest[531] acquired objects and photographs from Mariannhill, as well as other missionaries. According to Hegedüs (2001), ethnologists and anthropologists from Berlin (Virchow and Ehrenreich) and from Vienna (Heger and Hein) were involved in the evaluation of the material. At one point in 1895, instructions regarding desired items must have been sent out to Catholic congregations—including Mariannhill—but are no longer in existence today (Fogarasi 2001:142, also see Bátky 1896).[532]

Suddenly, in 1896, a multiplicity of intersecting conversations took place between colonial lobbyists, professional anthropologists, ethnologists, and several mission congregations in German-speaking countries. It was also in 1896 that Mariannhill's Abbot Amandus Schölzig entered colonial politics, when Catholic missionaries were performing on a colonial stage such as the Berlin trade fair, as equals next to their Protestant peers. Schölzig applied for mission land in German East Africa, hoping that such a "patriotic" act may open the possibility to establish a noviciate in Germany, where the relationship between Catholics and the state still suffered from the aftermath of the anti-Catholic "Culture War" (Stirnimann 1969, Wendl 1998).[533] These interactions opened up many possible conduits how ethnographic research instructions from Germany could have reached Br. Aegidius Müller, either at the end of 1897 or in early 1898. It is yet unclear whether Von Luschan's (1896) instructions were indeed a direct outcome of Bumüller's initiative. But Virchow's and Bartels' involvement, as well as Von Luschan's

[530] At the time, Bartels was responsible for the BGAEU's photographic collection, and would purchase a set of Mariannhill's photographs only two years later.

[531] As a part of the 1896 "Hungarian Millennial Exhibition".

[532] The makers' initial motivation for the ethnological exhibition in Budapest apparently came from a visit to the Vatican in 1895, where curators were in the process of sorting out existing collections at the Lateran Museum (Hegedüs 2001:133).

[533] Mariannhill Monastery eventually established mission stations in German East Africa in 1897, but due to internal conflicts had to transfer these to the Spiritans in 1907. A noviciate was only opened in 1911 in the Netherlands.

interactions with missionaries at Berlin's colonial exhibition in 1896, make a connection very plausible.

In a next step in 1899, both Protestants and Catholics were granted permanent niches in Berlin's Kolonialmuseum, which had evolved from the colonial section at Berlin's 1896 trade exhibition (Van der Heyden 1996, 2012). Here the exhibitionary situation differed crucially from the presentation of mission-collected objects in ethnographic museums: in the Kolonialmuseum missionaries themselves were able to curate their own objects on a prominent public stage. Even though missionaries initially fulfilled an auxiliary role in relation to professional ethnology, mission congregations now became increasingly aware of their own potential role as interlocutors between colonial governments, their subjects, the European public, and the European academic community (cf. Gardner and Philp 2006:185, and below). Mariannhill Missionaries therefore engaged in the collection, curation, and study of material culture for several decades. Their efforts in this particular regard, nevertheless, remained short-lived, and as I show, indeed auxiliary to professional practice in Europe. Their activities were nevertheless far from "incidental", as Michaud (2007) would have it for the case of Catholic missionaries in Papua.

Rivinius speculates that these intense interactions between missionaries, anthropologists, and ethnologists since 1896 also stimulated Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt SVD to engage with the disciplines (2005:108). Schmidt started his initiative to publish an ethnological journal in 1900, which finally culminated in the foundation of the journal *Anthropos* in 1905. Schmidt's ultimate goal was to prove his theory of an ancient and universal monotheism (cf. Brandewie 1990). The motivation for *Anthropos* was thus the collection of material, but also the justification of missionary writing about non-Europeans, explicitly positioned against anthropologists, ethnologists, and Protestants. Schmidt wanted *Anthropos* to be an inter-congregational, academic propaganda publication, providing a continuously updated archive of knowledge on best conduct and practice, thus a *vade mecum* for Catholic missionaries (ibid:118, 125-127). In the years to come, Schmidt indeed considered himself a "mobiliser of auxiliary troops" in order to reintroduce the interests of Catholicism into science (quoted in Marchand 2003:306). The first issue of *Anthropos* in 1906 was preceded by a call for papers in 1905, containing a list of questions, just like the ones produced by the ethnographic museum of Berlin.[534] In fact, this list is an adaptation of Von Luschan's third edition of the *Anleitung für Ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika und Oceanien* (1904). But apparently also the previous editions of 1896 and 1897 had already entered missionary networks, for example at Mariannhill.

Fr. Franz Mayr and Br. Aegidius Müller were the only missionaries from South Africa to respond to Schmidt's invitation in 1905. They may have discussed amongst themselves who would contribute to which questions of Schmidt's list. Both published three articles each in

[534] See Rivinus (2005) for a complete facsimile reproduction.

Anthropos until 1918 (Mayr 1906, 1907a, 1907b; Müller 1906, 1907, 1917/18).[535] But in fact both merely recycled earlier articles for this purpose: Müller used segments, which he had previously written for Mariannhill's own propaganda periodicals and publications (cf. Chapters Five and Eight). Mayr had used identical material for his articles in the *Annals of the Natal Government Museum* (1907c).

Mayr clearly followed Schmidt's suggestions by separating his essay into the sections "dwellings and their disposition", "food", "luxuries", "medicines and charms", and "clothing and ornaments". Müller instead partially replicated these categories photographically in form of the arranged displays in his last article on "material culture" (Müller 1917/18, also see Frey 1907). Of Schmidt's 25 suggested topics, Mayr only picked five and adapted them to the local particularities of Natal. For his first two articles in *Anthropos*, Müller instead only picked the topic "divination", which would fall under Schmidt's heading "Religion".[536]

I will discuss Müller's two *Anthropos* articles on divination in Chapter Eight. Here it suffices to say that Catholic missionaries promoted similarly practical reasons for doing ethnography and couched them in religious motivations, as suggested by Felix von Luschan above in economic and colonial terms. Both stated a crisis, in order to motivate allies. But while Schmidt was outspokenly critical of secular anthropologists, some scholars like Von Luschan seemed to contently consume what missionaries had to offer (at least publicly). Others, like Fritz Graebner in Cologne, were rather critical of missionaries, even in public. We therefore still need to provide a more nuanced picture of missionaries' and ethnologists' mutual perceptions.

Andrew Zimmermann mentioned that German-speaking anthropologists, like Fritsch and even Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt, judged missionaries as producing "idealised" and "trivialised" accounts, due to their extended contact with local people, what would no longer allow them to recognise differences to their own society (2001:218-219). Von Luschan, in fact, used the exact same argument to point out the value of contributions by missionaries. Zimmermann's evaluation is in fact incorrect, as Schmidt made this statement only retrospectively for the early days of ethnographic work by missionaries in the 19th century (Schmidt 1906:494). While acknowledging that inaccuracies have previously been the case, he apparently wanted to advance the project with the foundation of *Anthropos* in 1906. Five years later, he even re-evaluated the missionary influences on Frazer's *Golden Bough*, whom he accused of not having acknowledged contributions by missionaries adequately (Schmidt 1911). Schmidt also had similar arguments about the competence of missionaries with British colleagues (Pels 1990:85), saying that they excelled precisely because of their extended sojourns and competence of local languages. But like their German colleagues Graebner and Fritsch, British anthropologists nevertheless considered it dangerous to rely on ethnographic data presented by untrained researchers, especially missionaries (Urry 1993:28, 39). The still existing journal *Anthropos*, however, started

[535] Several years later, also Br. Otto Mäder, Fr. Albert Schweiger, and Fr. Willibald Wanger published articles in *Anthropos*, mostly related to either linguistic or archaeological issues, "bushmanpaintings", "superstitions", or ethnographic topics, such as circumcision. Only Mayr and Müller published on objects.

[536] Schmidt never used derogative expressions like "superstition" in his pamphlet.

an era for the involvement and integration of Catholic missionaries in the professional anthropological project, which eventually culminated during the 1920s, when Schmidt was able to establish his own school of thought at the university of Vienna (Brandewie 1990, Rivinus 2005, Michaud 2007).

On 8 October 1908, Fritz Graebner published an article in the popular weekly journal *Globus—Illustrierte Zeitschrift für Länder- und Völkerkunde* (Graebner 1908). Next to the necessity of a new building for Berlin's ethnographic museum due to the rapid increase of its collections, Graebner discussed general problems he saw in the current practice of German ethnology, such as who should carry out research, and how. Even though Fritz Graebner and the director of the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Willy Foy, were in an ongoing conversation with the Catholic priest and emerging ethnologist Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt at the time, and also published in the latter's journal *Anthropos*, Graebner clearly indicated in his article that he generally considered missionaries to be lay people, menial labour to the *trained* ethnologist, and therefore auxiliary to the professional sciences. Still years later, Graebner considered Schmidt as subjectively biased and accused him repeatedly of criticising those sources, which did not fit his theory (eg. Graebner 1911:39, 125). This disdain was indeed a mutual one, but apparently held at bay to maintain a working relationship (Marchand 2003:297, 302).

I suggest that unlike their texts, at least photographs and objects made and provided by missionaries were often evaluated positively by the wider scientific community. This hypothesis may be supported by a review in the issue of the journal *Globus*, preceding Graebner's earlier-mentioned article (1 October 1908). This anonymous review considered the publication compiled by Mariannhill's editors for its 25th anniversary in a very positive light (Frey 1907, cf. Chapter One). The author praised the "many exceptionally well-reproduced Kafir types" and indicated the value of those photographs depicting objects for ethnological study. These are in fact the vertical object displays Müller had photographed in 1906, and which he eventually republished once more in *Anthropos* in 1917/18 (cf. Chapter Five).

It is likely that Graebner came across this review while browsing issues preceding his own article.[537] As it was his opinion that ethnologists could not take on the great challenge of surveying all ethnographically relevant areas by themselves, they still had to rely—critically—on objects, testimonies, and photographs provided by missionaries and other colonial actors (Graebner 1908:215). Inspired by the review, Graebner must have ordered Mariannhill's jubilee publication for the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, which is still present in its library today.[538] He then must have approached Mariannhill explicitly for photographs. The museum's archive still holds one single letter, written by Br. Aegidius Müller to Fritz Graebner on 21 January 1910.[539]

[537] When read in the bound volume of 1908, the review precedes Graebner's article by only three pages.

[538] Graebner may also have read Müller's articles with photographs in *Anthropos* (1906, 1907), or even may have followed Von Luschan's correspondence with Müller between 1898 and 1899, while he had been assistant in Berlin.

[539] As noted on Müller's letter, Graebner had received it on 18. February and replied on 21. But no correspondence ever received by Müller remains in Mariannhill's archives. Their correspondence must have started in the course of 1909, considering that letters between South Africa and central Europe could travel for more than a month,

Next to 128 photographs[540], Müller also supplied Graebner with a printed catalogue for a collection of photographs, which he had originally compiled for Felix von Luschan more than ten years earlier.[541] Many of the photographs sent to Cologne, however, were produced after 1900 and differed considerably from the set that Von Luschan and several other museum ethnologists, such as Johannes D.E. Schmeltz in Leiden, or Henry Balfour in Oxford, had bought and partially used between 1898 and 1899. Including the acquisition of Mariannhill's photographs after 1904 by Stuttgart's Linden Museum, I will explore these occasions throughout this chapter, in order to evaluate the indicated shifts in the production, perception, and use of Mariannhill's photographs.

We realise that the arguments for and against the work of missionaries at times contradicted each other. It is therefore crucial to realise that the criticism listed here referred to missionaries' *ethnographic* work, not to their contributions in form of object collections and photographs. After all, these arguments were part of a discourse on the *quality* of knowledge that could be produced from either objects or photographs, or their combinations. While some missionaries thus eagerly embraced the ethnological and anthropological disciplines around 1900, Müller was satisfied with supplying material. He may have returned from Germany in 1897 with Von Luschan's (1896), or, more likely, with Seidel's (1897)[542] "instructions" to Mariannhill. Alternatively, they may have been sent by mail, in particular because Mariannhill was expanding into German East Africa by 1896. In fact, Von Luschan had written the first version of 1896 explicitly for research in German East Africa. These instructions must have also been the reason why Müller contacted the ethnographic museum of Berlin first.[543] He did not attend to every section of the instructions, but, as suggested in his letter to Von Luschan in 1898, he appropriated those categories which were easiest to depict in photographs. Before fully turning to Müller's and Von Luschan's correspondence, we need to evaluate the epistemological turn around 1900 within German ethnology regarding the interpretation of objects and photographs.

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and correspondents did usually not answer right away.

[540] RJM: letter, Müller to Graebner, 21.01.1910: Müller initially sent 196 photographs. Graebner only selected and payed for 128, and returned the rest. Today only 123 photographs remain in the archive of the RJM.

[541] The Mariannhill collection at the RJM was therefore not a part of the Küppers-Loosen collection, and was therefore not donated to the RJM in 1911, as stated by Edwards. Also the date provided by Edwards for Balfour's purchase of the Mariannhill collection is incorrect, which must have been 1899, not 1896 (see Edwards 2001:41).

[542] This is an elaboration of Von Luschan's first attempt of 1896, and at least in its title geared for use in the German colony of Togo.

[543] In his first letter to Von Luschan, Müller used the exact same postal address as suggested in Seidel (1897).

New Source Criticism between South Africa and Europe

In 1921, Mariannhill's Br. Otto Mäder published an essay titled "A Plea for More Method", as the very first article in the first issue of the new journal *Bantu Studies*.[544] His former confreres, Fr. Alfred T. Bryant and Fr. Willibald Wanger, had just unsuccessfully applied for the newly created chair of social anthropology in Cape Town, which was eventually given to Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (Schapera 1990:7).[545] The latter wrote the final article in the third issue of the same volume of *Bantu Studies* on "Problems with Bantu Sociology", as carried out in South Africa at the time (Radcliffe-Brown 1922). But unlike Mäder, Radcliffe-Brown disapproved of what he simply referred to as "the ethnological method",[546] and instead favoured a sociological and psychological approach, useful to ruling over South Africa's native population (1922:39). This apparent divide between Mäder, advertising pre-war German diffusionism and "*Kulturkreislehre*", and Radcliffe-Brown, proposing what would become structural-functionalism, can be seen as the first South African diversion of new directions in research and the sources they would rely on (cf. Stocking 1995, Zimmerman 2001). Photographs may still have had a clear purpose in the study of ethnology with a focus on "material culture" and "art", but social anthropology, sociology, and psychology with a focus on social relationships, had no explicit need for photographic visualisation.[547]

A part of Mäder's article was in fact a review of Fritz Graebner's study *Die Methode der Ethnologie* (1911). After it had immediately stirred some interest and critique in the international scientific community, Graebner's *Methode* eventually was read at Mariannhill, surely not only by Mäder. In the 1917/18 double volume of the journal *Anthropos*, Müller had re-published his

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544 We already know Mäder as painter of photographic studio backdrops, as linguist, as well as scholar of Bushman paintings from the last chapters. The journal *Bantu Studies and General South African Anthropology* was founded in 1921 and renamed *African Studies* in 1942. Mäder's contribution may have come about through introduction by A.T. Bryant, who was a member of the journal's "publication committee" (In 1940 Max Gluckman published his article "Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand" in this journal).

545 The report stated that "[t]he others were dismissed briefly. Bryant and Wanger, although authorities on the Zulu language and people, had had no training in anthropology" (paraphrased in Schapera 1990:7).

546 He considered the ethnological method as a "co-ordinated study of physical characters, language, and the various elements of culture, and with the help of such archaeological knowledge as is available, to reconstruct hypothetically the past history of a people in its main outlines". He considered this method as "interesting", but so far it had, according to him, also "attracted the dilettante and the speculator", while furthermore "this ethnological method does not often provide, and does not seem likely to provide, results that will be of any assistance to the administrator or the educator in the solution of the practical problems with which he is faced". He added that unlike the sociological and psychological methods, knowledge about the transfer and migration of culture elements "would give little help to the missionary who is wondering what will be the effect on the moral life of a Bantu people of an attempt to get rid of the custom of lobola" (Radcliffe-Brown 1922:39). As we shall see below, similar arguments about the political importance of ethnology and its usefulness for the colonial project have been made by German ethnologists around 1900. Radcliffe-Brown's aversion against the German *Kulturkreislehre* and Catholic missionaries may have been rooted in earlier quarrels with Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt in 1910 (Marchand 2003:302-303).

547 Br. Otto Mäder, for example, illustrated his articles on Bushmanpaintings in *Anthropos* with photographs, which had most likely been taken by Müller. Also see Haddon (1910) below on the national differences in research on material culture before the First World War. See Griffiths (2002) on Haddon's and Spencer's cinematic work.

annotated series of photographs with the new title "*Zur Materiellen Kultur der Kaffern*". As I explained in the last chapter, this new title focusing explicitly on "material culture", the additional photograph showing the act of production, the consideration of "art", as well as several modified captions, indicate Müller's thinking process since 1907 in relation to both his photographs and the objects they show.[548] Even if Müller did not rely on a close study of Graebner's work, he nevertheless followed the shift taking place in German ethnology. As a matter of fact, Müller and Graebner did carry out personal correspondence during the years 1909 and 1910, and indeed exchanged literature references. It is thus very likely that Graebner also informed Müller about the book he was about to publish.

In his 1921 review, Br. Otto Mäder considered Graebner as "the leading authority on ethnological questions", but also wrote that his method "might be adopted and developed", especially for Mäder's own interests in archaeology, comparative philology, and "bushman paintings". Following Graebner, Mäder suggested to consider the "strata" of ethnological material in their vertical and horizontal, thus temporal and spatial extensions. Mäder went on to suggest that "[a] further method of eliminating errors is the use of several independent series of observation". According to the general purpose of *Bantu Studies*, as stated in its first editorial,[549] Mäder proposed a form of "peer review", in order to improve cooperation between South African scholars. Co-publications by scholars working in the same region, so he thought, would generate better academic results.

As I will show in Chapter Seven, still by the late 1920s, the South African ethnologist Jacobus van Warmelo considered the research done on the ground as insufficient. As a consequence he mined earlier "ethnographic" work by missionaries, and also called upon non-professionals, such as Max Kohler at Centocow. In order to better comprehend the role played by missionaries and their photographs within the project of ethnology until this point in time, we now turn to the beginning of Graebner's career. It is an apt starting point, as it indicated not only an even earlier crucial shift in German ethnology regarding the use of photographs, but also a shift in the production of Mariannhill's photographs.

In April 1906, Fritz Graebner left his position as assistant under Felix von Luschan at the ethnographic museum of Berlin, where he had accessioned the object collection from Oceania since early 1899. Instead, he relocated to the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in Cologne (RJM), which opened the doors of its new building to the public in November 1906. Here he was eventually employed as assistant curator in April 1907.[550] The museum was named after the

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[548] According to Hicks (2010:37), the term "material culture" was first employed in British social anthropology at about the same time and indicated a shift from the term "technology".

[549] "A considerable amount of information of a very valuable kind has been collected by missionaries, administrators and others. But the inadequacy of their training, which is often none other than that to be obtained from personal application and long residence in native areas, frequently results in the collection of data which need careful co-ordination by trained workers. It is intended that the publication of Bantu Studies shall serve as a clearing agency for this work".

[550] Trained as a historian, Graebner was an exception to his many colleagues of the previous generation, who had been trained as medical doctors (eg. Bastian, Virchow, Fritsch, Joest, Von Luschan etc.). Graebner became

explorer Wilhelm Joest—whom we already know from his visit to Mariannhill Monastery in 1883—and his sister Adele Rautenstrauch (cf. Chapter Three). After Joest's death in 1897, his sister had bequeathed his ethnographic collection to the city of Cologne, in combination with a substantial sum to build the museum and to employ a director. By 1909, the first director, Willy Foy (1873-1929), considered it to be the "most modern ethnological museum in entire Europe" (Foy 1909:4).[551]

In the eyes of Foy, part of this "modernity" was constituted by the use of the visual media he established in form of slide projections, and especially film projections during presentations,[552] picture postcards of the exhibition displays on sale for visitors, as well as photographs, drawings, maps, and especially stereoscopic images as illustrations in the exhibition (Foy 1909:63). Just after 1900, this development was enabled by the earlier mentioned shifts in popular photographic aesthetics and technology, reproduction and printing technologies, but also in the international photographic economy and related copyright laws. Foy hoped that these images would help to illustrate how non-Europeans used particular kinds of objects in their original environment (Foy 1910:109).[553] At the same time, images were virtually absent from the displays in the ethnographic museum of Berlin,[554] as its collection was notoriously overcrowded, partially due to the museum's monopoly in acquiring objects from the German colonies. Nevertheless, even beyond 1900, due to its size, many contemporary scholars considered the ethnographic museum of Berlin to be the most important museum of its kind worldwide.

Some curators at the time hoped to find a solution for the problem of space by separating the object collection into a "*Schausammlung*" for common visitors, and a "*wissenschaftliche Sammlung*" for local and visiting scientists.[555] In opposition to Berlin's jumble, accumulated over several decades, Cologne initially had far lesser objects. This was also due to the fact that it was explicitly designed as an *ethnological* museum, unlike the museum in Berlin, which also included archaeological and European collections. Cologne's objects were thus easier to present in an accessible and visitor-friendly exhibition. While Von Luschan in Berlin was at least theoretically and reluctantly considering possible forms of a "*Schausammlung*" that would only contain a few replicas and photographs (Von Luschan 1905), Foy and Graebner strongly opposed the idea of spatial separation (Graebner 1908, Foy 1909). Instead, they arranged objects of each continent according to an alleged hierarchy of "development", beginning with Australia, along New Guinea, Oceania, Northern America, Africa, the Near East, India, Indonesia, eventually culminating in East-Asia as being equal to Europe. As Penny argued, this brought the displays in close proximity to evolutionist ideals, despite Graebner's outspoken anti-evolutionary stance

director of the RJM in 1925, but had to retire already by 1928, due to a chronic illness (Leser 1977).

551 For the only exisitng (but somewhat sketchy) history of the RJM's beginnings, see Pützstück (1995).

552 Apart from images, phonographic recordings and film screenings were presented to interested visitors during particular days of the week.

553 See Coombes (1994:146-147) for a similar contemporary practice by Balfour at the Pitt Rivers Museum.

554 See the various photographs of pre- and post-1918 exhibition-spaces in Krieger and Koch (1973).

555 This division was only realised with new museum buildings after 1923 in Berlin-Dahlem (Saalmann 2016, Westphal-Hellbusch 1973:32).

(Penny 2003:112-114).

Occurring between the two museums in Berlin and Cologne, Penny (2002, 2003), Smith (1991) and Zimmerman (2001) diagnosed a shift in Germany's institutionalised ethnology, which emerged with the new generation of ethnologists by the first years of the 20th century. This shift was initiated by the papers presented by Fritz Graebner and Bernhard Ankermann at a meeting of the Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte (BGAEU) in 1904.[556] The generation of Graebner, Foy, and the africanist Ankermann in Berlin started to approach their sources in a different way. Instead of continuing to collect as many objects as possible, and leaving the *inductive* analysis to later generations, as suggested by the first director of Berlin's ethnographic museum, Adolf Bastian (Penny 2002:164), Graebner and his colleagues heralded the idea to eventually form theories, which turned towards *deduction*. As Zimmerman puts it:

> The new method allowed curators to situate artifacts in historical narratives, rather than cataloguing them, and to organize displays that communicated with the public more effectively than the simple massing of material in glass cases that Bastian had advocated. […] In fact, only when the public returned to anthropology by visiting the museum of ethnology did anthropologists receive impetus to reground their discipline and transform it from a fact-collecting to a knowledge-producing enterprise (2001:213).

In addition, Penny (2002, 2003) stresses the growing importance of ideas on prestige and education within municipal strategies, which also motivated museum directors to make their exhibitions more accessible and visitor-friendly. As I have already shown in the last chapter, a similar development occurred at Mariannhill's museum, from its setup in 1894, to exhibitions held at and near Mariannhill, just before and after the First World War. While the museum at Mariannhill grew and became overcrowded, exhibitions held elsewhere could be curated much easier and more effectively.

This change also clearly expressed itself in the use of terminology. The German-speaking discourse employed the terms "*ethnographisch*", "*ethnologisch*", and "*völkerkundlich*" inconsistently before and after 1900, in order to address the profession at large and museums in particular. Even before 1900, "*Ethnographie*" was rendered as "*beschreibende* [descriptive] *Völkerkunde*", and "*Ethnologie*" as "*vergleichende* [comparative] *Völkerkunde*". Nevertheless, eminent scholars like Adolf Bastian (eg. 1894) and still Fritz Graebner (eg. 1908) used the terms "*ethnographische Museen*" and "*ethnologische Museen*" alternately—even within the very same essay.[557] These terms were applied synonymously with "*völkerkundliche Museen*". Some scholars at the time addressed this confusion of terminology explicitly (eg. Richter 1906-1910, Winternitz 1900). After the foundation of Cologne's Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in 1906, Willy Foy, thus explicitly considered his museum as "*ethnological*", as he had introduced didactic exhibition

[556] Only after a few years it was referred to as a "systematically planned revolution" (Schmidt 1911:1010). Graebner himself claimed this shift retrospectively in his own "History of Ethnology" (1923).

[557] Also Gustav Fritsch used both "*ethnologische Photographie*" and "*ethnographische Photographie*" inconsistently in his instructions (1875, 1888, 1906).

with the intention to *theorise* on collections (Foy 1909:V, 53).[558]

During the time of his correspondence with Mariannhill, Graebner was working on his book *Die Methode der Ethnologie*, which was eventually published in 1911 in close collaboration with, and an introduction by the museum's director Willy Foy.[559] The book was immediately criticised internationally (eg. Boas 1911, Haberlandt 1912), but also appreciated by others (eg. Haddon 1912, Hartland 1914). Still recently it was considered as the first serious attempt to supply the emerging discipline of ethnology with a structured and foremost a critical approach to its materials and sources (Striedter 2001, Johansen 1992). Retrospectively, some still consider it "a classic" (Barnard 2000:51) or even as the "bible of German diffusionism" (Gaillard 2004:44). In 1910, Alfred C. Haddon in Cambridge evaluated the state of research by saying that "the objects made by man have only recently been subjected to critical study. In this the archaeologists have been in advance of the ethnologists. The distribution of objects and its significance have been studied more in Germany than elsewhere, and already afford promising results" (Haddon 1910:154).

Graebner and Foy, together with Ankermann in Berlin, developed a new agenda by applying the methodology of history to ethnology,[560] followed suit by Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt. They built on the work of Leo Frobenius and Friedrich Ratzel to develop the idea of the so-called "*Kulturkreislehre*" (cf. Zimmerman 2001:207), which posited clearly circumscribed "culture circles", characterised by particular manifestations of religious, economic and political features, as well as the use of particular objects. They argued that these "culture circles" could be mapped out by tracing the "diffusion" of such manifestations in space and eventually in time. Therefore, scholars following these ideas were usually referred to as "diffusionists" and the study itself also as "*Kulturgeschichte*" or "cultural history". The critics of Graebner's work concentrated on the differences in interpretation of evidence as referring to either the distribution and diffusion of cultural phenomena, or their parallel development independently in different places. The latter was commonly referred to as "convergence [*Konvergenz*]". Unlike Graebner, Felix von Luschan was known to have rooted for "convergence", and I will accordingly discuss his interpretation of Mariannhill's photographs within this divide in the next section.

Like Von Luschan, Graebner is one of the benchmarks[561] that allow us to better understand

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[558] I thus follow Penny (2002) in referring to the museums as "ethnographic" (due to their ongoing focus on collection and inventory) and to the practitioners dealing with objects as "ethnologists". Zimmerman instead glosses German institutions and practitioners as "anthropological" and "anthropologists". The latter approach may be misleading regarding the contemporary German discipline of "physical anthropology" (also see Penny and Bunzl 2003:1).

[559] Still in 1909/1910 Foy and Graebner had planned to co-author this very book with the much broader title *Begriff, Aufgaben und Methode der Ethnologie* (*Concept, Purposes and Method of Ethnology*) as the first issue of a massive publication series called *Ethnologische Bibliothek - Kulturgeschichtliche Bibliothek* (cf. Foy 1910:15). Only very few titles of this series were eventually published.

[560] Graebner (1911) often relied on Ernst Bernheim's *Lehrbuch der Historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie* (1908 [1889]).

[561] For an analysis of Graebner's position within contemporary ethnology see for example Zimmerman (2001:201-216).

the role of Mariannhill's photographs as source material for the ethnological community. Just like Von Luschan, Graebner never carried out long-term fieldwork. Nevertheless, he was not only involved in reshaping the public side of exhibition-making in ethnological museums, but also theorised on the use of sources in academic work. Under the rubric "source criticism [*Quellenkritik*]", § 11. of his *Methode der Ethnologie*, Graebner discussed the value of photographs together with phonographic recordings as a "special group of sources" for ethnological research, which I here translate in its entirety:

> § 11. A special group of sources, a product exceptional to the modern time, is constituted by phono-, and photographic recordings and the reproductions based on them. They do not represent the appearances themselves, but replace the medium of the human psyche with the medium of the lifeless apparatus and therefore cannot be conceptually considered as immediate witnesses. They nevertheless approximate the latter methodologically in terms of the objectivity of representation. This approximation is made apparent through a comparison with the ways of recording in earlier times, such as melodies being jotted down from hearing, or hand-drawings and -paintings. Regarding the latter category I can only remind you of those Polynesians, whom the travel writings of Cook and his contemporaries presented in a classical way through the way how they drew the bodily stature and the arrangement of the clothing's folds. Of course, also in the presentation of phono- and photographic recordings, the mental element cannot be entirely excluded. It shows itself particularly through the possibility of retouching, and with phonograms in potential mistakes when choosing the correct rotational speed. This may cause errors not only with the absolute pitch, but even more importantly, with the tempo. The most crucial errors, however, exist with the nature of the recording devices themselves: the photographic camera may often represent the form of objects with a considerable distortion, and even the best of today's phonographs and gramophones are not capable of reproducing the phonetic value and the tone colour in an entirely correct manner. All these errors and possibilities for mistakes have to be taken into consideration in a critical way, and they have to be deducted if necessary, in order to make the correct essence of the sources emerge [*um…herauszuschälen*]. (Graebner 1911:54)

Photographs and phonographic recordings appear in the book's index under the heading "objectivity". Like written accounts, Graebner considered photographs as "mediate [*mittelbar*] witnesses", as opposed to "immediate [*unmittelbar*] witnesses", such as ethnographic objects (also see Zimmerman 2001:209). In the former case, Graebner perceived an object or subject as being *mediated* by a photograph. In the latter case, he considered an object as a *direct* expression, thus an actual part of the culture under study. Like the practitioner and guiding intellectual force in the field of photography, Hermann Vogel (cf. Chapter One), Graebner as historian, ethnologist, and museum curator was apparently aware of a photograph's constructed nature, and accordingly pointed out its pitfalls.

Like most of his colleagues at the time, Graebner recognised the medium's technological shortcomings, such as potential distortions and the possibility of retouching, but he did not explicitly acknowledge or question the epistemic quality and value of photographs in his writings, as far as their "theatricality" was concerned (cf. Chapters One and Two). Graebner also does not consider that photographs are as much an expression of the social relationship of photographers and their subjects, as much as the objects produced or collected during their interactions. What Graebner suggested instead as an approach to photographs approximated a "mechanical objectivity" (photographs being superior to drawings). But at the same time he

incorporated what Daston and Galison (2007) termed "trained judgement".[562] As I explained in Chapter One with Br. Aegidius Müller, these "epistemic virtues" could well exist next to each other (ibid.:318). Therefore, according to Graebner and others, a particular ethnological training was considered necessary to *analyse* photographs after 1900, but apparently no ethnographic training was considered necessary to *produce* them in field situations.

In *theory* this meant for Graebner that, despite the lack of ethnographic training with missionaries,[563] their photographic observations could still be trusted and used: Graebner considered a big part of the interpretation to be with the judgement of the trained ethnologist. In his *Methode*, Graebner wrote many pages about the fact that ethnographic objects could be forged, and what skills were needed to recognise the forgery. But he did not discuss the possibility whether the same could apply to photographs. As accounts like Graebner's are mainly theoretical, without concrete examples, we need to ask how ethnologists and missionaries approached photographs in *practice*; for example in relation to their preferences for either "diffusion" or "convergence".[564] We need to know, not only how they discussed epistemic qualities of photographs, but also how they facilitated and reasoned their use in either publications or exhibitions, in correspondence, and even beyond this, as a part of public and academic social relationships.

Pels (2014) tracks a parallel transition for the development of intersubjectivity in British social anthropology, following Daston and Galison's "epistemic virtues". Around 1900, anthropologists invoked "native categories" to establish ethnographic authority, while after the 1970s, a self-reflexive stance towards scholarly authority became essential part of anthropological practice. Apparently, at the same time around 1900, expertise, training, and skills became an issue in the conversations between German ethnologists and missionaries. Ethnologists indeed urged missionaries and other colonial actors in the earlier-mentioned instructions not only to record phenomena, but also to provide designations in local languages, as well as to explain and position them against each other in their most "typical" forms. At the same time, they hardly considered the social relationships missionaries had with their subjects (intersubjectivity), which after all preconditioned the collection of information. This could express itself in the kinds of objects that were selected, or the people who were chosen (or chose) to be photographed (cf. Pels 2014:217). However, missionaries' main interest was in the conversion of people, and not in the conservation of all of these peoples' objects. Instead they often focused on those, which could service their own arguments, such as the ones we have identified earlier as "converted artifacts" (Chapter Five).

We already know from the previous chapters how missionaries depended on photographs.

[562] Hicks apparently observes a more drastic shift in this regard in the study of "technology" towards "material culture" in British social anthropology (2010:37).

[563] A training which was demanded, but still hard to facilitate, as ethnology was marginalised at the universities until the 1920s (Grosse 1896, Westphal-Hellbusch 1969). Also Graebner himself, a historian by training, had gathered his expertise in practice at Berlin's ethnographic Museum under Von Luschan.

[564] The same opinion had already been expressed in the 1892 edition of the British *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* (Stocking 2001a:178).

In the next section I further explore if and how ethnologists depended on both missionaries and their photographs. Through a description of this relationship I hope to show that the ethnographic activities of Mariannhill Missionaries around 1900 were indeed intentional and never incidental, but must still be considered as auxiliary to the work of ethnologists.

Working Objects

It is only against the backdrop of the previous three sections that we can understand the changes in perception occurring in the scientific arena around 1900. In the remaining three sections I shall describe such perceptions and how users of Mariannhill's photographs employed them in concrete situations, either in direct correspondence with the monastery, or independently.

On 23 August 1898, Albert Grünwedel (1856-1935), at the time assistant director of Berlin's ethnographic museum, eventually replied to Müller's letter by stating that he should send "preferably whole figures, generally entire image bodies, but not of singular objects (houseware, weapons), which are not handled or treated by people, and which are therefore only photographed as 'still lifes'. Such things would be of little use to us, […]".[565] Müller countered by responding that "we have to remark that especially with these images [bust-length portraits], physiognomic features of the face come to the fore".[566] He thus knowingly indicated their value for studies in physical anthropology, once more showing awareness of potential expectations in Germany. As curator of an ethnographic museum, however, Grünwedel demanded photographs that focused on the use of objects.[567] He therefore did not want photographs of either bodies or objects in isolation. Apart from the publications by Fritsch, German and British instructions for photographing ethnographic and anthropological specimens at the time, usually did not discriminate between ethnography and physical anthropology (cf. in chronological order: Im Thurn 1893:195, Neuhauss 1894:18, Portman 1896:77, Haddon 1899:239-240). Even if not excluding photographs of isolated objects, all authors preferred "objects-in-use", or photographs of objects "*in situ*", as Im Thurn called it.[568] One reason for Grünwedel's request may thus have been that the museum already had many South African objects in storage. Therefore one already thought to know what the majority of objects looked like. Now one needed to know how they were used after all.

After Müller had sent seven images as a preview, it was Felix von Luschan, Berlin's assistant Africa curator,[569] who replied instead of Grünwedel. He stated that only with proper descriptions of the depicted objects, the collection would be of any value to him. He then went on to probe for information in several of the seven photographs in relation to the purpose and names of weapons, instruments, and adornment. Objects—not physiognomic characteristics—seemed to be his only interest. He contrasted the visual details he could gather from Müller's photographs to his own previous knowledge—testing the information: apart from asking for the indigenous name of a small shield held by a man posing with it in addition to a spear in a

[565] EMB: letter, Grünwedel to Müller, 23.08.1898. Original underscore.

[566] EMB: letter, Müller to Grünwedel, 08.10.1898.

[567] Grünwedel's regions of expertise were India and Tibet. His requests to Müller were therefore likely based on a common policy regarding photographs handled at the museum, not on a personal interest.

[568] By focusing on the British *Notes and Queries*, Stocking (2001a:181) dates this shift only to the edition of 1912.

[569] Von Luschan was "*Directorial-Assistent*" for Africa and Oceania between 1886 and 1904, when he became director for the same department (Stelzig 2004:89). For a comprehensive evaluation of Von Luschan's biography and work see the edited volume by Ruggendorfer and Szemethy (2009).

fighting position, he inquired whether it "was indeed part of the typical war equipment [*Kriegsausrüstung*] of most Kafirs". "Previously", so he wrote, "one only has described such small shields to us as toys for children". He then inquired whether the spear was used for stabbing or for throwing. In a second case he wanted to know whether "the musical instrument in the hand of a women indeed appears often in Natal, or whether it may have been only displaced [*verschleppt*] there occasionally". He again supported this claim with background information, writing that "until now, similar [instruments] are only known to us from Madagascar and from the area North of the Zambezi". He repeated the need for the exact indigenous names for each photographed item several times, and in a third case complained about the overexposure of a photograph. As the received one made it impossible to study details properly, Von Luschan asked for a brighter copy. Regarding yet a fourth photograph, he asked for the specific material of long reeds, which the depicted man wore as adornment through his pierced ears.

Von Luschan's questions thus related to five distinct object ontologies: their indigenous designations; their authenticity (the "real thing" or a replica as toy?); their origins and distribution; the exact modes of their use; and the materials they were made of. In addition to his goal to collect as much material as possible, Von Luschan at the same time indeed attempted more than basic documentation. In regard to the third point, he was apparently concerned about where particular objects originated, and considered the possibility of a parallel development in different places. Even if he was not known to have ever theorised extensively, like his younger colleagues in Cologne, he employed the idea of "convergence [*Konvergenz*]" to the occurrence of particular object classes throughout his publications between 1902, 1910, and eventually most explicitly in 1918 (Six-Hohenbalken 2009:165). Apparently, also in this case he was interested whether an item may have been brought in from elsewhere, or occurred there independently. He considered photographs as an opportunity to tackle such questions, however, only by using them as "working objects" in the correspondence with the maker of the photographs (cf. Introduction Chapter Six). The identity and agency of photographed users and makers of objects was not important to Von Luschan, and neither was the relation of both to the missionaries. He was not interested in the photographs' "backstories" prior to entering his archive, but considered both photographed subjects and objects as objective types.

Eventually, Von Luschan ordered the entire photographic set on offer, under the condition that he should be able to return those photographs "without any ethnographic interest". In response, Müller insisted that "all images have an ethnographic interest, at the most one could criticise that some objects are repeated throughout the images in yet another form".[570] In the explanations, which he eventually provided in his catalogue for each image, he wrote that the small shields indeed were not only used by boys, but also by young men, when going for a walk or when courting. Regarding the distribution of the musical instrument, he replied that it indeed appears in entire Natal. Also for the adornment of the ear, he noted that it is in fact a cornstalk. He presented such details for most of the altogether 113 descriptions, as a direct response to Von

[570] EMB: letter, Müller to Von Luschan, 02.03.1899. My own translation from the German original.

Luschan's inquiry (Müller 1899). Effectively, Müller and Von Luschan *negotiated* what it meant for objects and photographs to be "ethnographic".

The photographs in the final compilation sent to Berlin had been taken between 1891 and 1897, while nine of these had been culled from a foreign collection compiled during the 1870s and 1880s (Gros 1888). The remaining 104 photographs can be distinguished as 29 full-length portraits of individuals and groups, 25 bust portraits of single individuals, 30 photographs of distinct activities (either posed or unposed)[571], nine landscape views, six displays of museum objects, and five photographs of rock art.[572] Of the 48 portraits[573] with less than four sitters, 26 are of women, 19 are of men, and three of children. Eight photographs show interactions with either a Trappist brother or priest. Despite all previous concerns, Von Luschan apparently accepted all of these photographs as "ethnographic", as he did not return any of them. This even included photographs showing mission activities, such as an emergency baptism (Figure 47), or the photograph of a father handing his child to a Trappist lay brother for education. Without further questions, Von Luschan even ordered 16 additional photographs of the harvest feast in East Griqualand, which I discussed in Chapter One (Figures 33 and 34).

Von Luschan and Müller carried out a conversation as interlocutors with particular expertise, resources, and interests: the scholarly anthropologist/ethnologist and museum curator with financial resources obtained photographs and related data from the mission's photographer/"ethnographer"[574] in dire need of money, but with access to interesting material and a perceived experience to contextualise it. This conversation took place over a great spatial, as well as professional distance, which did not seem to allow in-depth discussion. Just like Graebner in 1910, Von Luschan never inquired about the circumstances of photographic production. The question whether the photographs were staged or snapshots did apparently not matter to him. It seems that both could pass as "authentic" representations. Nevertheless, he indeed scrutinised the depicted objects' "authenticity" in terms of their "ethnographic" value, either in relation to their employment and use, or in relation to their origin.

However, as we learned in Chapter One, the question of the photographs' authenticity did indeed come up in the correspondence regarding an extended series of "snapshots [*Momentaufnahmen*]", depicting the visit to a first-fruits festival. Here, Müller explicitly indicated that these snapshots differed from his other photographs regarding their epistemological value. But we also know that Von Luschan himself staged photographs for the

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571 These can therefore also be considered as genre scenes (cf. Chapter One).

572 While none of these can be dated exactly, at least one of the paintings is applied on the inside wall of a mud-plastered hut ("*Löwen in einer Basutohütte*"), and must therefore have been of a more recent date.

573 Of which nine had been taken inside the photographic studio.

574 Strictly speaking one may question Müller's identity as either "missionary" or "ethnographer/ethnologist". He held no religious title by 1899 (in fact, he was not even a lay brother any longer, despite the fact that he kept his religious title and name) and had no academic education. Therefore he was neither in a position to either actively convert people (eg. by baptising them), nor was he in a position, as Graebner and others would have it, to describe them ethnographically in an adequate way. But apparently—in practice—even lay people could carry out an emergency baptism, and even lay people were accepted as providers of ethnographic information, objects, and photographs, given these were then evaluated adequately by a trained ethnologist.

sake of presenting particular objects with the help of models (cf. Zimmerman 2001, Stelzig 2004:335). Even though Von Luschan's successor, Bernhard Ankermann, was against this practice (Stelzig 2004:229), it was still accepted, and even encouraged in German ethnological literature after the Second World War, if necessary (Bernatzik 1947:33-34). It thus appears that ethnologists at the time did not mind a staged photograph, as long as it allowed to perceive the "typical" way of how objects were used, and where they came from. Once more, like with Fritsch and Graebner, the "trained judgement", based on comparative evidence and earlier experience, thus seems to have been sufficient to ethnologists at the time, in order to tell these things apart.

Even though Von Luschan was a medical doctor and a proponent of physical anthropology, as the curator of an ethnographic collection he never broached the subject of physiognomic images, perhaps understanding the reason for their absence at Mariannhill. The photographers of Mariannhill initially never followed the contemporary aesthetics of physiognomic photography in the first half of the 1890s, but rather engaged semi-profiles in accordance with contemporary portrait conventions in European photo studios, which however resembled the physiognomic styles (cf. Figure 79). Even if Müller indicated the photographs' potential to be used in physiognomic analysis to Grünwedel, it remains open whether this was initially a conscious decision taken by his predecessors Leyendecker and Fresen. They had made several of the photographs, which Müller sold to museums in 1899.[575]

The semi-profile view thus had the advantage that it could be put to multiple uses: among others, the image of Umdamane (Figure 79) was eventually used in works such as the *Naturgeschichte des Menschen: Grundriss der Somatischen Anthropologie* by Carl H. Stratz (1904:341).[576] Stratz, who sourced several photographs from the ethnographic museum of Leiden, obviously considered it suitable to illustrate his descriptions of the physiognomy of Natal Africans, and thus to "fixate types", as demanded by Virchow and Bastian since 1872 (see above). Umdamane's portrait is identified as "the head of an elderly Kafir", as a "typical Negro face", with a "broad and clearly circumscribed nose, bulging and raised lips, dark, smooth skin, and frizzy hair, which feels hard to the touch" (Stratz 1904:340). This is an astoundingly

[575] The portrait convention of close-up semi-profiles ("*en face*"), can for example be traced back to the studio of Leyendecker's father in Bernkastel during the 1870s and 80s (cf. Chapter One).

[576] Stratz (1858-1924) was a widely-travelled Russian-German gynaecologist turned anthropologist. He lived in The Hague since the 1880s, and was in frequent correspondence with Schmeltz in Leiden and Fritsch in Berlin. Since 1902, he was a member of the BGAEU. He eventually became (in-)famous for his many publications, all heavily illustrated with photographs of nude women. For discussions and critiques of Stratz's work, see for example Theye (1989b:98-99) and Stoler (1995). Also see my discussion below. Not all curators who bought Mariannhill's photographs did eventually use them for their own purposes and projects. Schmeltz for example only created encyclopaedic stocks of photographs, where others—like Stratz—would draw from (cf. Edwards 1992:4 and 2001). Stratz considered photographs as straightforward "objective evidence": "[Physical] anthropology [*Anthropologie*] is a very young discipline. It received a mighty support through the high development of photography in the last decades, so that the discipline is now in a better position to collect material as objective evidence [*objektives Beweismaterial zu sammeln*]. In this book, great emphasis has been given to work with photographs as much as possible. The competent editor Mr. Alfred Enke conscientiously took care of their reproduction" (Stratz 1904, preface).

deductive observation and generalisation based merely on a photograph, considering the fact that Stratz himself had never touched Umdamane's skin or hair. But eventually, the flexibility of this photograph—in contrast to a rigid, frontal or profile portrait "à la Fritsch"—allowed it to be published at the same time next to romantic mission stories in Mariannhill's propaganda periodicals (Figure 102).

While Mariannhill's photographers produced a considerable number of bust portraits in semi-profile ("*en face*") during the 1890s, there is not one to be found in the photographic collection of Mariannhill that was made after 1900.[577] Depicting sitters at full- or sometimes half-length instead, Müller's photographs acquired even greater potential for flexibility and narrative quality. This allowed him to better present visual narratives in form of conventional "genre photographs" (cf. Chapter One), according to his study of German photographic instructions and journals. Due to compositions of an aesthetic tradition, comparable to genre photographs involving the earlier described *tableaux vivants,* these photographs could accommodate even more interpretations for different interests.

Figure 120, for example, was described in one of the mission's albums plainly as "two men in native dress". Alternatively, Müller captioned the same photograph as "two spies" on the outlook for enemies, playing on the stereotype of the Zulu's warlike nature. In the first instance of inscription, however, Müller had presented the true identity of the two men on various glass plate negatives: they were Bulawayo, whom he had earlier photographed in his studio (Figure 96), and Umviyane, both two younger brothers of *Inkhosi* Lokothwayo, photographed around 1905. Possibly in order to provide "ethnographic" content, Müller used the anonymous identification of the two men as "spies" when sending the image to Fritz Graebner in 1910. This general shift, from half-length to full-length portraits, was an outcome of Müller's reception of contemporary pictorial photography and genre painting and photography, and possibly also of his conversations with Von Luschan and other ethnologists around 1899. Both photographic conventions, "genre photography" and "ethnographic photography", were highly compatible in their attempt to portray a scenic and particularly "typical" version of "[t]he daily life of the natives".[578]

[577] In case they were published as such after 1900, they had often been cropped.

[578] "*Das tägliche Leben der Eingeborenen*", as demanded by Seidel with the heading of one subsection in his instructions for collection (1897:12).



Figure 120: original caption: "*Zwei Spione*"—"Two Spies", approx. 1905 (Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum, Cologne, 2235).

The production of photographic knowledge at Mariannhill was thus once more closely connected to textual instructions, like those of photographic aesthetics in Part One, and tourist guidebooks in Part Two. Through the preliminary reading of research instructions, the missionaries adjusted knowledge to the needs of German ethnologists in an auxiliary mode. Photographs of people and objects were easy to produce and—other than material "ethnographic" objects—they were even easier to re-produce. For scholars like Von Luschan in Europe, they could at times literally re-place objects and subjects for scientific inquiry (cf. Theye 1989b:67, also see Edwards 2001) as "working objects". The claim that the photographs conveyed either "ethnographic" or "anthropological" information could also be made once the image had already been taken, even if it had originally been made to constitute an exotic experience for the purpose of Catholic propaganda.

Within this particular "culture of circulation" (Lee and LiPuma 2002), Mariannhill's photographs thus gathered value, partially as authenticating illustrations, but also as "working objects" (Daston and Galison 2007). Müller even explicitly compiled the photographs in his ethnographic set in order to be used as such. He advised both Von Luschan in Berlin and Schmeltz in Leiden that the photographs would have to be properly mounted on a carrier, and only by a professional photographer. Only in such a way, he argued, they could develop their full potential for the production of knowledge. He also indicated that he had designed the accompanying booklet (1899) in such a way that the respective descriptions could be cut out and pasted onto the back or underneath the mounted photographs. In this way, each photograph could be used and handled as an individual object that contained both visual and textual information. Schmeltz did indeed follow this advice.

Eventually, it had been the photographs' initial purpose for propaganda, which prompted their high aesthetic quality. This had been achieved through careful posing of sitters, the arrangement and lighting of objects, retouching of negatives, as well as a composition according to contemporary aesthetic principles. As a consequence, the photographs were also successful in enticing museum curators, who generally praised the images in their reply letters. Even though Müller's ethnographic set eventually contained several of the bust portraits and object displays, which Grünwedel had hoped to avoid, Von Luschan wrote to Müller that "[…] these images surpassed our expectations by far. They are indeed very instructive, and constitute an important supplement to every great ethnographic collection".[579] When offering his photographs to Schmeltz in Leiden, Müller even used the positive feedback he had received from Von Luschan, as well as the one by Max Bartels, secretary of the BGAEU and archivist of the societies photographic collection. Müller introduced both feedbacks with the headline "competent judgements on our photographs":[580] Bartels had written that "[…] after I had presented my collection of your photographs during yesterday's board meeting, we decided to ask you to send

[579] EMB: letter, Von Luschan to Müller, 04.11.1898.
[580] "*Urteile über unsere Bilder von competenter Seite*".

your entire collection".[581] Either because Schmeltz knew his two Berlin colleagues well, and trusted their judgement, or because he indeed saw value in the photographs himself, he too bought the entire set without further questions. Müller had by now turned his offer into a standardised letter—handwritten and then lithographed—with the same two recommendations from Berlin on the verso. The fact that he had made the effort to reproduce his letter mechanically indicates that he intended a wide distribution. While thus referencing the already traversed part of the newly established network, he advertised his set with other potential buyers:[582] Müller was in the process of making Von Luschan's network into his own.

Once the photographs entered storage in the archive, both at Berlin and Leiden, they were once more evaluated and considered with praise (and in fact certified scientifically) in the annual reports, as "of great importance for ethnography"[583] in Leiden, and as "very important" in Berlin.[584] It was however never argued why they were considered important and potentially exceptional at the time, neither in the letters to Müller, nor in the published annual reports. As the second public evaluations were as positive as the original ones directed at Müller personally, it appears unlikely that Von Luschan, Bartels, and Schmeltz only attempted to flatter Mariannhill's photographer, and so to maintain a contact and source in South Africa. On first impression, all curators were truly convinced of the photographs' quality, regarding both their appearance and content. However, Christine Stelzig indeed identified such enthusiastic formulations in Berlin's annual reports as being at least in part a justification for new acquisitions in a competition for funds with other Berlin museums (2004:253). Professional judgements and evaluations of Mariannhill's photographs must therefore be considered with this information in mind.

Mariannhill's photographers used styles that enabled the easy employment of their photographs in different contexts, and therefore produced what I would call multi-purpose photographs. In this regard it is possible to draw a comparison with Mariannhill's museum: the photographic collection and the museum collection were both very diverse regarding the audiences they addressed; both were also highly eclectic in terms of the materials they collected, as well as the methods they employed to do so; eventually both collections experienced very opportunistic ways of employment. While photographs may have been intended to constitute something like "immutable mobiles" in the sense of Latour (1990), some were indeed rather mutable: as I shall explain in the next section, some photographs were mutable not only regarding interpretations applied to them historically, but also in their form and materiality. Once certain cultural markers were established, however, photographs could indeed establish photographic traditions.

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581 NMVW: letter, Müller to Schmeltz, 11.07.1899. My own translation from the German original.

582 A letter identical to the one sent to Leiden can for example be found at the University Library of Jena, pasted into one of Müller's booklets (1899). He may have sent it to the curator of the University's ethnographic collection at the time.

583 "*Van groot belang voor de etnografie*" (Schmeltz 1899).

584 "*Ferner wurde eine sehr wichtige, über 100 Nummern betragende Sammlung von den Trappisten in Mariannhill in Natal käuflich erworben*" (Virchow 1899:742).

Photographic Traditions and Transformations

It is apparent that there were many uncertainties in the process of knowledge production based on Mariannhill's photographs. Indeed, the missionaries initially had rather little expert knowledge of the objects they collected and the people they portrayed. Whenever the photographs became disconnected from the knowledge of the original occasion, the respective user needed to source knowledge on the photographs elsewhere, and occasionally introduced photographically established ethnographic traditions. In the remaining two sections I will retrace some of these traditions.

Only after von Luschan's request to provide written explanations, Müller replied that he had returned to respective homesteads in early 1899. As he and his predecessors had taken some of the photographs several years earlier, he had to research the names and nature of the depicted objects:

> For the reason of his manifold obligations, the signed photographer could only devote a minor part of his time to the necessary investigations; and it required several visits to the kraal huts of knowledgeable Kafirs, in order to finally separate the generally correct from the often contradictory information. The reason for this is the fact that even the most extensive dictionaries of the Kafir language contain only few designations for the beadwork adornments of the Kafir; and even for these few words, a precise and correct definition is lacking.
> […] The price we demand is in fact so low (50 M for 100 images) that one cannot speak of an actual profit [*Verdienst*], considering the expenses for the production of such photographs. We are content if only we come out even, especially in the interest of our extensive mission, which has recently also founded filial stations in East Africa. Once your excellency [*Hochwohlgeboren*] has received the images and the commentary, you will be assured that the signed [photographer] considers it as an honour to support scientific endeavours, as far as it is in the range of his weak powers […].[585]

Müller claimed not to be in for the profit while dealing on this academic market. Instead, he claimed to have devoted his time and labour to science freely as an auxiliary. However, as I have shown in Chapter Three, the prices handled at Mariannhill—and likewise demanded in this instance—were well in tune with the increasing prices on the commercial market for photographs in Europe at the time. Müller also did not present his research on and with the photographs as an outcome of mission work, but as a special and independent effort. He created value by expanding the transaction beyond the direct exchange with Von Luschan, by involving the non-commercial idea of science. He more or less disguised the photographs as gifts, thus inducing Von Luschan to compensate. At the same time, Müller used the opportunity to point to the mission's activities and its recent expansion to German East Africa between 1896 and 1897. As I already explained, Abbot Amandus Schölzig made this initiative to foster positive relationships with colonial lobbyists. Also Von Luschan's original instructions (1896) had been crafted for this particular German colony, thus showing his particular interest at the time.

Unlike other Catholic missionaries in the years to come, Müller never became a full member of the scientific community. The correspondence clearly shows that Müller and his

[585] EMB: letter, Müller to von Luschan, 02.03.1899. My own translation from the German original.

predecessors had not taken the photographs with either scholarly interest or method. The exchanges he participated in were effectually commercially directed, and initially not motivated by a personal interest in the creation of ethnographic knowledge beyond the mere exotic. He therefore only discovered the Zulu name of, for example, Umdamane's choker of beads and leopard claws (*umgexo wamazipo engwe*), as well as Umdamane's social identity and place of residence during his inquiries in early 1899 (cf. Chapter Five). Eventually, in response to Von Luschan's request, Müller produced the aforementioned booklet (1899) with concise descriptions of all photographs. Later he also provided it as added value to other buyers, such as Schmeltz, Balfour, and Graebner.

As Müller told Von Luschan, he had elicited information by interviewing "knowledgable Kafirs", either the photographic subjects themselves, or people close to them. Only by taking along the 113 photographs in question could he have referenced details of their content and discussed these with his informants; in case the real objects or subjects could no longer be traced. "Photographic elicitation" would only much later become an established research methodology (to start with Collier and Collier 1986 [1967]). As Umdamane had died in the meantime, Müller was no longer able to interview him in person, or to reference the actual objects of his adornment. During his tour of interviews in 1899, Müller still gathered the Zulu names for Umdamane's adornment, his exact social position, as well as the location of his former residence. Therefore, it is likely that with Umdamane's photograph in hand, he also elicited narratives on the circumstances of the latter's death (cf. Chapter Four).

Unlike any other photograph in the entire ethnographic set of 1899, Umdamane's high social profile motivated the photograph's exceptional description including rank and residence. Accordingly, it also influenced the photograph's wide circulation after 1899 and its prominence during my interviews in 2007. As I have already suggested in Chapters Four and Five, various identities accumulated around Umdamane's personality. Based on these and previous identities, Mariannhill's photographers successively attached at least three identities to Umdamane's portrait photograph, first the "*Kaffrischer Häuptling*" in 1893, then the "*induna*" in 1899, and eventually the "*doctor*" in 1910. Accordingly, these identities constitute different *potential* "photographic traditions" by grounding and authorising textual information through its attachment to photographs in form of captions. Even though they are very different identities, all are "traditions" because all are based on Müller's experiences during "occasions" involving a photograph that somehow directly related to the respective occasion. However, during my interviews in 2007, it was only the identity of the "*induna*" which evolved as persistent, due to its evidentiary potential in current micro-politics (cf. Chapter Four). Even though Figure 120, identified by Müller as "two spies", may likewise be considered a photographic tradition, it differs from the case of Umdamane's photograph. The applied identity was derived from the Zulu stereotype as warlike, and Müller's imagination and creation of genre scenes, rather than a situated ethnographic or photographic occasion.

Another interpreter of Umdamane's photograph, the curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum,

Henry Balfour, first travelled to South Africa in September 1899. He purchased the same ethnographic set as Von Luschan, but apparently on the spot at Mariannhill's photographic studio.[586] Balfour engaged with Umdamane's portrait in more detail back in Oxford. The photograph's copy at the Pitt Rivers Museum bears two different captions: the caption "*Zulu*" in black pen was probably inscribed by Balfour. It may have been a later curator, who extended the original caption with a question mark and added the identity "*Shangaan*" with a pencil. Also known as "*BaThonga*" in the ethnographic record, this ethnic denomination was usually ascribed to people much further north, beyond Johannesburg in the Transvaal (cf. Junod 1912). As we already know, Umdamane was neither truly "Zulu" nor "Shangaan". Possibly this confusion came about because Müller's set also contains photographs by the Swiss photographer H.F. Gros (1888) from the Transvaal. The Swiss missionary Henri-Alexandre Junod, an early authority on this region, had used these same photographs by Gros as illustrations in his ethnography *The Life of a South African Tribe* (1912). Furthermore, Junod used yet another photograph showing a man with great resemblance to Umdamane, in particular regarding the exact same arrangement of his headdress (1912:408). The correlation of the photographs just described may thus have led to the identification of Umdamane as "*Shangaan*". We thus realise that ethnographic facts can be easily transmitted through the resemblance between photographs. Ethnographic and photographic traditions established photographically according to the material culture setup of certain ethnic identities are thus often no longer related to the original photographic occasion.

Once Mariannhill's photographs began to circulate, the link to knowledge about the photographs' original occasion easily broke. This applies to the identity of the sitter and photographer and thus to the circumstances of the photographic occasion. We saw this already with the interpretation of Umdamane's photograph by the physical anthropologist Stratz. In 1902, Balfour wrote an article on musical bows in Southern Africa (Balfour 1902). He used one of the set's photographs showing a woman playing a calabash string instrument (*imiqangala*) as an illustration (Balfour 1902:179, Müller 1899:15). It was likely Balfour himself who redrew the photograph for the article by hand. He was an able draughtsman, as many illustrations and caricatures in his travel diaries show. Balfour identified Mariannhill as the source of the photograph, but not Br. Aegidius Müller as the provider of the instrument's name and description. Balfour eventually used his illustrations as accumulative evidence: by showing four images of musicians holding the bow to their teeth, he argued that it was a common practice to use the human body for resonance, in order to increase the volume of sound.

In 1928, also the Austrian physical anthropologist Victor Lebzelter visited Mariannhill. Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt had sent him to South Africa to carry out research on a broad spectrum of topics.[587] Lebzelter used a variety of Mariannhill's photographs in the resulting publication

[586] Balfour was likely to have recognised the similarity of Umdamane's "choker" to the one he bought during the same trip, or to the one he saw and photographed five years later with Laduma, during the trip of the BAAS in 1905 (cf. Chapter Five). But one may also speculate that he went looking for one just like Umdamane's choker, once he had seen it in the photograph.

[587] For an account of Lebzelter's journey through South Africa see the study by his granddaughter (Lebzelter 2005).

(Lebzelter 1934).[588] While he had some photographs reproduced as drawings, others were printed in half-tone. The drawings are identified with the signature of the copyist "R.[osa] Koller", but no longer attributed to Mariannhill. The photographs, however, are identified as originating from the "Photostudio Marianhill [sic]". When Balfour used Mariannhill's photographs, only three years had passed since he purchased them. With Lebzelter it was more than 35 years that divided the photographs' production and their publication in 1934. This fact may either not have mattered to Lebzelter, or he was simply not aware of it. The drawings are set within a section on "Zulu tales" and do not relate to the text. Lebzelter presented these images selectively, as Koller only reproduced the heads in her drawings, possibly according to Lebzelter's general interest in physical anthropology. The reproduced photographs instead show ethnographic "scenes", such as domestic work, or a "rain incantation" by a diviner.

One possibility why Balfour and Lebzelter chose to reproduce photographs as drawings may have been to flatten and equalise different styles of photographs on the same page of their publications. Even more likely they intended to make particular features more prominent. While Balfour reproduced a sitting women playing an instrument, he excluded the entire background. Lebzelter's selection focused on the extraordinary hairstyles of women. Again, photographs appear as highly mobile and mutable, but not as fully "immutable" in the sense of Latour (1990); neither are they immutable in their appearances, nor in their capabilities of creating knowledge. Claims at "immutable mobiles" are thus an ideal to convince allies, hardly a reality. Even if a drawing can still be recognised as being derived from a photograph by its remaining resemblance, this is only possible with knowledge of the original photographic collection. The effort of reassembling the process of knowledge production thus relies on multiple layers of information, in particular the interactions between photographs, drawings, and captions. These layers came about through the participation of multiple actors and their varying intentions, as well as their specific knowledge, which had been created in particular places and moments in time. Once it is no longer possible to retrace the provenience to the photographic occasion, the creation of knowledge from such spatially, temporally, formally, and qualitatively removed images is therefore fundamentally different.

The next case of appropriations illustrates the competition and prestige involved with donations of objects and photographs for ethnographic museums, so to make them excel above others. Glenn Penny (2002) has earlier pointed to the importance of ethnographic collections within the agendas of municipal competition in Germany. The competition between Berlin and Stuttgart eventually became legendary in this regard. Founded in Stuttgart in 1882, the Würtembergischer Verein für Handelsgeographie und Förderung Deutscher Interessen im Ausland established a "*Handelsgeographisches Museum*" in 1884.[589] Other than most ethnographic museums, and with a history of being a "trade museum" or "colonial museum", the

[588] Lebzelter worked at the anthropological section of Vienna's Natural History Museum between 1923 and 1936. From here the photographs were later transferred to the ethnological museum of Vienna in 1972 (personal communication, Maria Teschler, 2009; Barbara Plankensteiner, 2011; also see Lebzelter 2005).

[589] Since the annual report of 1901 it was referred to as "*Museum für Völker- und Länderkunde*".

early collection efforts in Stuttgart focused even more explicitly on products relevant for colonial commerce (cf. Frese 1960:29-30). Headed by Count Karl von Linden since 1889, the project eventually developed into the establishment of a new building for a municipal ethnographic museum. The Linden Museum of Stuttgart opened in 1911.

With only a minor attempt at the creation of knowledge, the role of photographs in this case appears explicitly within the creation of relationships: like I argued In Chapter Five for the purpose of photographs and objects at Mariannhill Monastery, also for European scholars they were essential to create and maintain social, scientific, as well as political ties. It is thus crucial to acknowledge backstories of how photographs and objects entered repositories, in order to determine the quality and intentions of knowledge production through them and the ethnographic traditions they enabled. Like the Vatican, Mariannhill, the BGAEU, and the ethnographic museum of Berlin, also Von Linden's society encouraged its members and their networks of allies to collect objects and photographs by publishing calls for donations in the society's "*Jahresberichte"* (annual reports). These changed inconsiderably in their wording since 1884: the call published in the report for 1903-1904 (XL-XLI) asked for "mineral-ores; products of nature from the realms of animals and plants; industrial goods from foreign countries; samples of industrial goods as they are produced for the needs of the natives; tools of all kinds; musical instruments; original boats and models of such, as well as of buildings; idols and amulets; and eventually photographs and other depictions of landscapes, buildings, people and dresses".[590]

In October 1905, this call was answered by the Stuttgart industrialist Adolf Mayer (1870-1916), who had become a member of the society either in 1896 or 1897.[591] Mayer first offered photographs, which he had received from Mariannhill in 1905 and once more in 1909, apparently through a friendly business relationship. In his letter of gratitude Von Linden evaluated the photographs as "extraordinarily beautiful [*hübsch*] and clear, presenting a complete image of the respective tribes' body types [*Körpertypen*], as well as of their dresses". The only thing he criticised was that Mariannhill's museum keeper, "Br. Alexander [sic], who is apparently a capable worker in the matters of ethnology and anthropology, and also in full command of the art of photography, had refrained from labelling the types with the designation of the tribe". Von Linden nevertheless confirmed that "the photographs show the characteristic adornments and weapons so clearly and explicitly that there should hardly be any doubt about the tribal affiliation [*Stammeszugehörigkeit*]".[592]

However, Von Linden and Mayer never broached actual "tribal" names in their correspondence. In 1909, another batch of photographs from Mariannhill arrived in Stuttgart, some labelled "Basuto" by Br. Aegidius Müller. Von Linden inquired with Mayer whether he is correct to assume that the area of Mariannhill was mainly inhabited by "Basuto".[593] Mayer

[590] This is my summary of a much more detailed list, but the individual groups of objects remained stable over time.

[591] He is first listed in the register of members in the annual report of 1898.

[592] LMS: letter, Von Linden to Mayer, 21.10.1905. My own translation from the German original.

[593] LMS: letter, Von Linden to Mayer, 11.05.1909. My own translation from the German original.

confirmed this assumption,[594] even though the denomination "Basuto" was commonly only used to describe people of northern Natal close to the Drakensberg. Clearly, both men were unfamiliar with South African geography and ethnography. Von Linden was only interested to procure visual and indeed material references that would help him to cover a particular geographical area, in order to further the goal of making his collections more "complete".

Von Linden thus inquired insistently in 1905 and once more in 1909, whether Mayer would be able to negotiate with Mariannhill's museum for so-called "*Dubletten*".[595] Mayer then procured a selection of objects from Mariannhill in 1910, and eventually gifted them to the museum, as Von Linden claimed to be short of money due to the construction of the new museum building. The entire collection donated by Mayer contains approximately 97 objects and 140 photographs.[596] The object collection consists of mainly dress and pearl adornments, 13 weapons and sticks, a few musical instruments, tobacco containers and spoons. The origins were Mariannhill's station Triashill in Mashonaland,[597] Centocow Mission, and Mariannhill Monastery itself. Mayer had acquired all items through direct contact with the museum's curator, Fr. Alexander Hanisch, and indirectly with Fr. Emanuel Hanisch at Centocow.[598] Such an acquisition from missionaries was no exception in Stuttgart: as listed regularly in the yearly reports between 1882 and 1911, many missionaries of undefined confessions presented during the frequent lecture series of the Verein für Handelsgeographie, and also donated objects on a regular basis.[599]

As Penny (2002) and Buschmann (2009) have shown for early German ethnology, the economy of collecting and donating objects to ethnographic museums was entangled in a system of strong competition between curators. Within this economy, rewards were often given to donors in form of prestige and decorations, rather than money. At least since 1903, Von Linden quarrelled with Von Luschan over Berlin's privilege to receive the first pick from objects brought in from German colonies. This privilege had been established in the late 1880s through the so-called "*Bundesratsbeschluß*".[600] Acting against this official regulation, Von Linden directly

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[594] LMS: letter, Mayer to Von Linden, 12.05.1909. My own translation from the German original.

[595] A common term at the time to denote doubles of the same type of object, which were so similar to those already in a collection that they did not constitute valuable objects in themselves, and could therefore be bartered for more interesting items with other museums (cf. Hoffmann 2012).

[596] The exact number of photographs from Mariannhill can no longer be determined, as the collection has been rearranged several years ago and mixed up with other photographs from South Africa in a rather unclear manner. The Linden Museum is the only museum that has a substantial number of objects from Mariannhill. I could only confirm acquisitions and donations of objects from Mariannhill before 1914 in altogether three museums: The Linden Museum of Stuttgart, the Museum of World Cultures in Basel, and the Deutsches Museum in Munich. However, in all cases the transactions of objects were made by intermediaries, and were partially not collected around Mariannhill Monastery itself. Objects in the collection of the Basel museum were sent directly from Mariannhill's filial station in German East Africa (1897-1907).

[597] At the time Rhodesia, today Zimbabwe.

[598] Both are repeatedly mentioned in the correspondence and accessioning list. Fr. Alexander was the uncle of Fr. Emanuel.

[599] One of the collection's first curators during the 1890s was the retired missionary Adolf Mann, who probably worked either for the Basel Mission or the Church Missionary Society in Lagos (cf. http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll123/id/41503/rec/6, accessed 22.07.2016).

[600] The "*Bundesratsbeschluss*" was issued in 1889 and officially lifted only in 1911. It regulated Berlin's monopoly

requested donations of objects by appealing to the vanity of German colonists: he argued that in Stuttgart they would at least be on display and well presented, while they would instead disappear in the storage at Berlin (Krieger 1973:114).

A common way to reward donors was to arrange for decorations in the form of medals. This was possible at least for museum curators with the proper entitlement and the necessary social connections. Apparently, Von Linden was the most successful mediator amongst German curators in this regard, due to his good relationship with the Monarchy of Württemberg (Buschmann 2009:56). Even if Berlin's ethnologists considered Von Linden's practice as a violation of the *Bundesratsbeschluß*, the latter's connections provided him with a considerable leverage to counter Von Luschan's authority. In the fourth edition of his *Anleitungen* (1904), Von Luschan retorted that indeed "only with one single exception" all minor ethnographic museums in Germany complied with the *Bundesratsbeschluß* (Luschan 1904:5). Through this experience, Von Luschan became aware that he had to draw closer those allies that were not bound by the law, and eventually started to emphasise the importance of missionaries more generally, by praising their "indeed genuine scientific conviction", as well as the "mutual support and help between mission and ethnology" (ibid:101).

Likely through expectations raised by the reward system involving decorations and general prestige, Mayer was particularly keen on having his name connected to the South African objects from Mariannhill in the Linden Museum's public displays.[601] When visiting the exhibition in 1914, Mayer recognised the displayed photographs from Mariannhill, but he anxiously pointed out that he had not been able to identify any of the objects he had donated. At least, so he complained, these were not "labelled with the name of the donor".[602] Accordingly, he proclaimed that he would only be willing to provide "another selection of nice things" under the condition that they were well presented together with the earlier ones, and only if he was identified as donor. He then reiterated that it was indeed not unlikely that in time more allocations may follow. As Von Linden had died in 1910, it was the museum's new curator Heinrich Fischer who replied to Mayer's letter in 1914, and assured that the object collection would soon be in order, with name labels attached (cf. Figure 121). He further mentioned that also the photographic collection had recently been put in order. Therefore both collections were ready to be inspected by Mayer.[603] As part of the process, so Fischer wrote, the objects donated by Mayer had even been photographed, and copies would be sent to him soon.[604]

Eventually, neither Von Linden nor Fischer had been trained in either anthropology or ethnology, or had any clear regional specialisation.[605] Apparently, the two Stuttgart curators

to redistribute objects from the German colonies, which had been acquired either through official funds, colonial personnel, or through colonial military interventions, such as punitive raids (eg. Melk-Koch 2009:86).

601 Cf. Richter (1906-10, 10:48) on the common practice to label objects with the donor's name.

602 LMS: letter, Mayer to Fischer, 12.05.1914.

603 LMS: letter, Fischer to Mayer, 16.05.1914.

604 LMS: letter, Fischer to Mayer, 05.06.1914.

605 Von Linden had been an advocate before retiring in the 1880s, and Fischer had been a precision engineer and a hobby zoologist before joining the Linden Museum in 1910 (Kußmaul 1987:14).

accepted all objects and photographs that were gifted to them. Other than von Luschan in Berlin, they accepted them without any description other than the origin and ethnic denomination (cf. Buschmann 2009:56). For them, photographs served a double function: first, *in situ* photographs served as illustrations of objects, not unlike their original purpose in Cologne. But other than with Von Luschan's meticulous inductive investigations, in Stuttgart knowledge was attributed to photographs haphazardly. Secondly, once objects were in place within the exhibition displays of the Linden Museum, photographs made of such arrangements served as social capital to reconfirm benefactors' benevolence. Photographs thus did not always serve as scientific "working objects", but rather as catalysers between museums and audiences, and between museums and benefactors.



Figure 121: "*L 959, S.*[üd]*afrika. no. 31—Halsband, Centreow* [sic]*, Natal. 64118, Gesch.*[enk] *Fabr.*[ikant] *Ad.*[olf] *Mayer*". The label attached to a beadwork necklace indeed proves that it had been gifted by Mayer and originated from Centocow. Its origin as having been collected by Mariannhill Missionaries remained unmentioned.

As I already explained above, Fritz Graebner purchased 128 photographs directly from Mariannhill at the same time in 1910. But only for four of these can we trace any contemporary form of employment. At a yet undetermined moment in time—either before 1914, or in the early 1920s—four of the photographs were reproduced as positive glass slides for projection in the museum.[606] It is unclear who used these slides and also what kind of argument this user had in

[606] I am grateful to the photo curator of the RJM, Lucia Halder, for her efforts to trace these reproductions.

mind. It is nevertheless important to note that all four slides show "scenes from daily life"; those genre photographs I described in Chapter One. The four photographs depict: four children in a village carrying containers on their heads past huts in single file; five women posing for the camera, also with containers on their heads; children and two men (one with umbrella) herding cattle before the backdrop of a village; and a young woman and a girl pretending to be asleep on straw mats before a hut in bright daylight, apparently demonstrating how to position their heads on customary wooden head rests. In the last case, the staging of the event is most evident, but apparently was once more sufficient to demonstrate a "typical" situation. The development and employment of genre photographs at Mariannhill after 1900 thus paralleled the diffusionist idea to create narratives in exhibition spaces (cf. Penny 2003, 2008). Museum scholars apparently chose to present similar narratives in presentations with the help of slide projections.

As late as 1916, the director of the ethnographic Museum of Munich, Lucian Scherman (1864-1846) approached Mariannhill's house in Würzburg in order to acquire "ethnographically relevant photographs". He was following up on the booklet that Müller must have sent to Munich in about 1899. In this year, Scherman's predecessor, Max Buchner, had apparently not bothered to purchase the offered photographs. However, in 1916, Mariannhill's representative in Würzburg, Fr. Balduin Reiner[607] had never heard of the mentioned booklet.[608] The ethnological engagement at Mariannhill, especially regarding photographs and objects, was indeed short-lived and limited to initiatives of singular members, such as Br. Aegidius Müller. Nevertheless, as a result of the conversations with anthropologists and ethnologists, such as Von Luschan between 1898 and 1899, a more sophisticated engagement with objects and a general ethnographic interest in objects-in-use were gradually introduced into Müller's work. Photographs of ethnographic objects in their own right on the one hand (despite Grünwedel's dislike), as well as the photographic representations of people and their material culture on the other, became more and more complementary engagements of creating enticing imaginations for Europe. Over time, Müller photographed objects in increasingly sophisticated display setups at Mariannhill, while other photographers did the same in Europe. Also in Graebner's and Foy's project at Cologne, objects and photographs were cumulatively used in exhibitions and displays. Von Linden did the same in Stuttgart, however, here it was possible to reconstruct the additional motivation of fostering benefactor relationships through photographs of objects.

On the side of ethnologists we must therefore note that attitudes towards ethnographic objects and photographs were in fact more complex than they have been presented so far. Von Luschan had—contrary to his reputation—quite specific theoretical interests, while still approaching the image in a very inductive manner. It was in fact this conversation with Von Luschan that triggered Müller to rethink his photographic work accordingly. The physical anthropologist Stratz instead projected things he already thought to *know* (not to *see*) into Umdamane's portrait. Balfour, and later Lebzelter, in fact even manipulated and transformed

[607] Reiner had spent a considerable period of time in South Africa since 1889, partially at Centocow Mission.
[608] MFKM: correspondence, Scherman and Reiner, 1916.

Mariannhill's photographs to fit their own needs, either for comparison of how an object was used, or simply as a picturesque illustration. Eventually, it was only the "[un-]skilled judgement" of established scientists that legitimised these interventions. Other European museum curators instead mostly worked in a mode of accumulation and exchange. In particular Schmeltz at Leiden, in his capacity as editor of the journal *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, focused on the proper publication of illustrations, in order to make objects visible and accessible to colleagues. Like with Von Luschan, Schmeltz felt obliged to legitimise his expensive purchase of photographs in his annual report with extraordinary praise. Graebner and Foy in Cologne employed photographs not only in exhibitions, but also as slides in lecture series and as sophisticated reproductions in their house journal *Ethnologica*.[609] Evolving from the intentions of a "colonial museum", Von Linden and Fischer rather saw the importance of photographs in the creation of prestige and colonial propaganda. Even if Von Linden claimed that "there could be no doubt about the tribal affiliations" of the depicted, he clearly had no understanding of the subject matter, but nevertheless established Mariannhill's subjects exclusively as "Basuto". In the final section we shall see how such colonial fantasies in form of photographic traditions once more impacted the photographic production at Mariannhill in return.

[609] Like Schmeltz, Graebner and Foy were concerned with the question how to best represent objects photographically, and how to make them accessible to peers. For the purpose of photographing objects, the museum had an in-house photo studio.

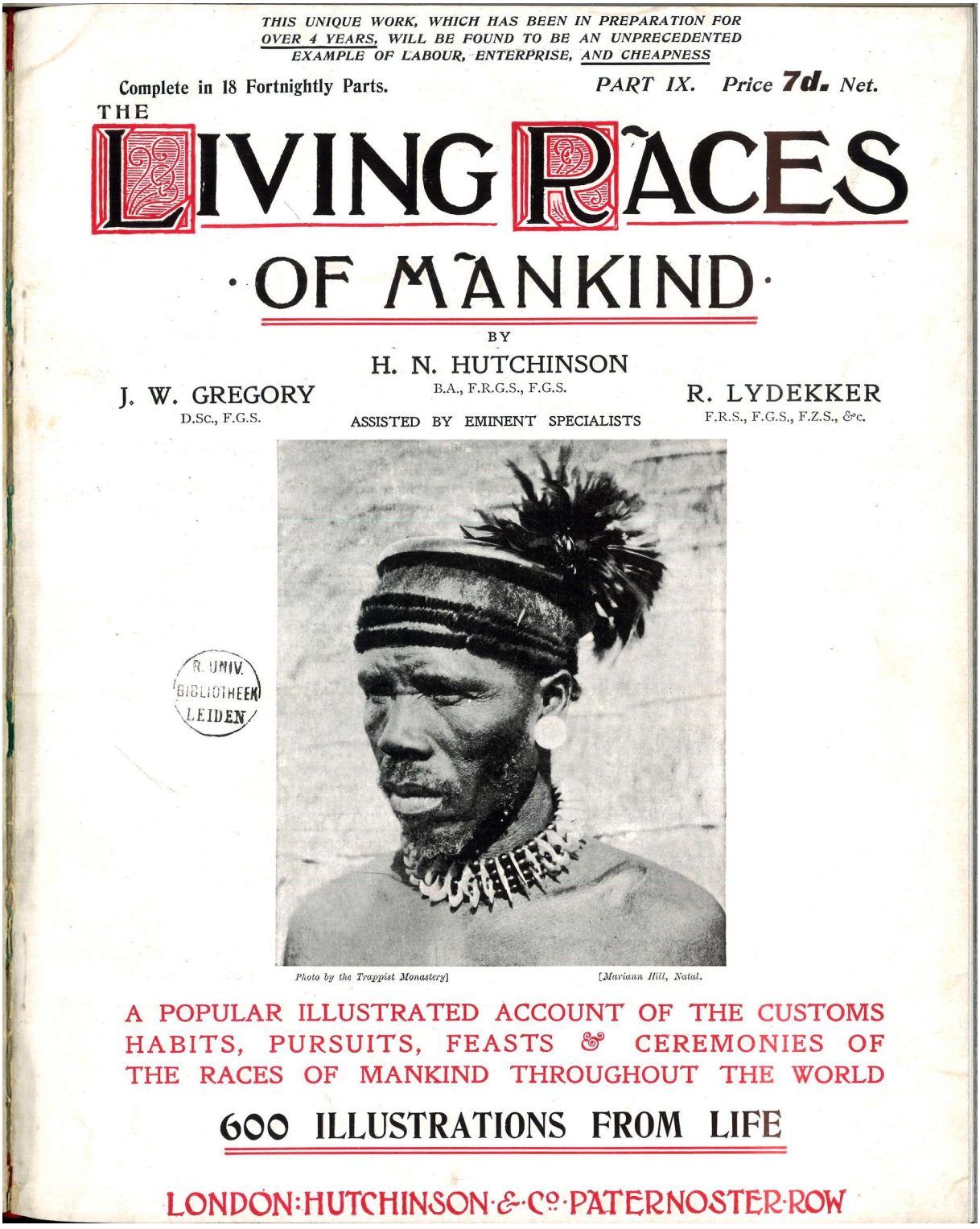


Figure 122: Frontispiece, part IX (of XVIII). *The Living Races of Mankind* (Hutchinson 1901a).

Around 1900, when the high points of European colonialism and new printing methods coincided, encyclopaedic overviews of the diversity of the world's population were revitalised. While the popular English translation of Friedrich Ratzel's *Völkerkunde* (1885), *History of Mankind* (1896), still used reproductions of photographs in the form of engravings and paintings, the following decade saw an abundance of popularising writings on otherness, using large quantities of "real" photographs as illustrations.[610] After their transit to German and British Museums, photographs from Mariannhill were used in several publications of this kind; prominent among them was the familiar portrait photograph of Umdamane (Figure 79). The most widely distributed example of such publications was *The Living Races of Mankind* by Rev. Henry Neville Hutchinson, first released in 18 fortnightly parts between 1900 and 1901 in the UK. The series was an instant success, which foremost depended on its photographic illustrations: "It was the first of the Hutchinson part works, which revolutionised the whole part-work market" (Harris 1991:163-164, also see Bowler 2009:151). Due to this success, it was republished in early 1901 as a bound volume (Harris 1991:163). But already before March and July 1901, the London-based company Hutchinson & Co[611] once more re-released the work unchanged in two volumes with altogether 24 chapters.[612] In 1906, a (probably) third, by now entirely rewritten edition followed (Johnston et al. 1906). The authors of the 1901 edition claimed it to be the first encyclopaedic attempt to cover all of the world's human groups, while illustrating them with "original photographs":

> In the illustration of this subject an entirely new departure has been taken, and the author and publishers claim to have produced a work which is unique. Pictures, or wood engravings may sometimes be prettier, but they can never be so absolutely trustworthy as the products of the camera, which show us the natives of other climes as they live in their natural surroundings, their dress (or want of it), their weapons, dwellings, and the tattoo-marks on their bodies, or the flesh-wounds and scars of which Australians—and some negroes—seem so proud. (Hutchinson 1901b:III-IV)

Similar to Mariannhill's propaganda publications, photographs are never referred to or discussed in the text, but merely provide visual stereotypes to the mentioned classifications. Within a year, foreign publishers nevertheless committed to a German (Lampert 1902), Dutch (Snelleman 1903, 1904), as well as a Spanish adaptation (Hutchinson et al. 1902). They used photographs in the same way, but made alterations to the text, as some of the original authors were not considered as fully accredited academics (Bowler 2009:151). Johannes F. Snelleman in Rotterdam even complained that "the English version of *The Living Races of Mankind* was not good enough to be translated into Dutch"; and that he, "to be honest, had not expected that there were so few usable

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[610] Cf. Edwards (2001:52). Also see Guy (2002) for an example of popularising compendia involving a photograph from South Africa in the 1860s.

[611] The identical name of author and publisher is incidental.

[612] See the reviews in *The Spectator*, issues March 16, 1901 (Volume I), and July 27, 1901 (Volume II). I herewith correct my earlier attempt at dating the publications (Rippe 2016). None of the editions is dated or numbered, and publication dates had to be reconstructed either through dates mentioned in the text itself, or through reviews. Also Harris (1991) and Bowler (2009) are inconsistent regarding dates and other details.

things in it" (Snelleman (1903:introduction).[613] He therefore felt the need to rewrite the entire text in Dutch. Even if other reviewers were not as negative, it appears that the publication was appreciated foremost as a stockpile of good images—thus an atlas of "working objects"—rather than for the quality of its texts. The Smithsonian's curator Otis T. Mason wrote in close accordance with the authors themselves that

> two characteristics of this sumptuous volume are most noteworthy: (1) the nearly seven hundred pictures are photogravures, far more trustworthy in ethnology than any drawing can be; and (2) since the authors regard these many peoples in all continents as coming patrons of British trade, they treat them fairly, not grotesquely, and present always fine types of each. (Mason 1902:306)

Johannes D.E. Schmeltz, the director of Leiden's ethnographic museum, appreciated Hutchinson's effort for making a journey along the museums of almost entire Europe (including Schmeltz's own) to acquire "illustrational material, as far as it was not available in England" (Schmeltz 1902:73). As indicated in the introduction of the English first edition (Hutchinson 1901), the Mariannhill images must have been sourced either from the museum in Leiden or the one in Oxford.[614] In the final notes, Hutchinson expressed his gratitude to Fritsch, Von Luschan, Schmeltz, and Balfour, amongst many others, for their assistance with procuring photographs.[615] At about the same time, the Natural History Section and Zoology Department of the British Museum in London launched a permanent exhibition by the same title, which continued at least until the early 1920s. The exhibition employed many portrait photographs, enlarged to almost real size in the physiognomic style (cf. Lydekker 1921 [1908]). Among them were several portraits from Mariannhill, confirming their acceptance in the context of physical anthropology.

Despite the huge popularity of the publication *The Living Races of Mankind*, neither during the time of publication, nor many decades later has it ever been accepted as integrate part of the "ethnological" and "anthropological" disciplines. Book projects like this did thus often only work as mere conduits for the photographs they contained. Retrospectively, Pinney frames the publication as "an early exercise" in "popular anthropology" (1990:279), and alternatively in "para-ethnography" (1992:84). Young goes as far as adding it to a genre of publications, which he considers as "ethno-porn" (1995:192). The volumes indeed hold many depictions of bare breasts, but are hardly "pornographic", as they contain no images of sexual intercourse, only

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613 My own translation from the Dutch original.

614 As the colophon of the third edition (Johnston 1906) indicates, the editors even contacted Mariannhill directly for more photographs after the success of the first two editions, and thanked "the Trappist Mission of Marienhill [sic], Natal, for some beautiful Zulu photographs". While the second edition (1901b) holds only 4 portrait photographs by Mariannhill (648 total), the third edition (1906) has altogether 20 photographs by Mariannhill alone (909 total). The additional photographs include village scenes and also some genre photographs. Several captions in both editions, however, are incorrect: they turn people into chiefs, who did not hold this status, and displace others to Zululand, where they did not live.

615 Already in 1899, Hutchinson had suggested to the Anthropological Society of Britain (today RAI) to create an even larger collection of photographs than the one he had accumulated for his publication. Having visited museums in "Paris, Leyden, Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, and Leipzig", he also advised to examine collections of "the principal missionary societies" (Hutchinson 1899 [not 1909, as cited by Coombes 1994:245]).

very few images of entirely naked men, and none of women.[616]

Also the earlier-mentioned physical anthropologist Carl H. Stratz did consider *The Living Races* as "important literature" (1904:208). In the case of Stratz's own publications, however, one has to consider the highly ambivalent illustrations. This holds true in particular for *Die Rassenschönheit des Weibes*, which also contains one portrait photograph by Mariannhill (1904[1901]:27). The term "pornography" has been used repeatedly to describe Stratz's highly popular publications (eg. Schick 1999, Stoler 1995). Even in the contemporary reception some considered this publication as "obscene [*unzüchtig*]". This resulted into several lawsuits for Stratz, in which Gustav Fritsch had to act as defender.[617] This also has to do with the fact that Stratz's style of writing can be considered as both sexist and racist, not only from today's standpoint. In his introductions he made it clear that his intention was to reach an audience as wide as possible—not only scholars.[618]

The ambivalence in the argumentations of both Stratz and Fritsch was that they attempted to legitimise the use of potentially voyeuristic photographs through their scientific goals and their capacity of "trained judgement". Both saw the need to mediate scientific knowledge about the female body in a popularising way to a lay-audience by using photographs, which they had culled from various sources that had originally not been produced for scientific purposes. According to the aesthetics of the photographs used in Stratz's work, they may be located within the artistic tradition of pictorialism during the 1890s, and more specifically artistic "nude photography [*Aktphotographie*]". Apparently, such photographs were perceived as easily shifting towards the "pornographic". Without the sexualised dimension, the same may be said for the *Living Races*, where artistic photographs were justified scientifically (cf. Edwards 2009).

The photographic traditions established through Mariannhill's photographic production had thus yet another dimension by being drawn repeatedly into the popularising and "pornographic" domain. The 1901 edition of *The Living Race* contains 4 photographs by Mariannhill, which are all portraits and may therefore hardly be sexualised. Hutchinson had the possibility to choose from a much wider array of Mariannhill's photographs at Leiden and Oxford, but did not do so. The team around Johnston and the 1906 edition, however, included 15 more photographs by Mariannhill, including full-body images. Among these is the

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[616] On the differences between "pornographic" and "erotic" photographs see for example Barthes (1993), and for an overview of "ethnopornographic" publications before and after 1900, see Schick (1999) and Zimmerman (2001). For overviews of racist and sexualised colonial imagery see Nederveen-Pieterse (1990) and Corbey (1989). For a critique of such "re-presentations" see Bal (1996). However, Bal herself fails to present a critical re-evaluation of colonial imagery involving (for example) the production process.

[617] In his obituary for Stratz (1923), Fritsch remembered that he had argued that "obscene are only those depictions, which somehow direct the attention of the beholder towards the genitals or their function". According to him, also a dressed person could therefore be obscene, either through behaviour, gestures or attributes etc. (Fritsch 1923:213). Here he repeated his Latin motto "*naturalia non sunt turpia* [what is natural is not dirty]", which he had already put forward in his instructions for photography (eg. 1888).

[618] At the time, apparently every public exposure of photographs showing either naked women or men was considered indecent. In particular those of "two unclothed Zulu" sitters caused public distress in 1879, as the public proclamation of a perceived "indecency" clashed with a public demand for information about the ongoing war in South Africa (Edwards 2007:55).

"traditionally"-clad Chief Lokothwayo, which was clearly composed to present African male physique (cf. Chapter Eight).[619] While the identification of sexual intentions is most often in the eye of the beholder (cf. Bal 1996), Mariannhill's studio in fact also produced more "explicit" photographs. The few of those that remain depict groups of African women in the monastery's studio while striking poses according to a European convention: raised arms crossed behind the head, however with covered torsos. This particular pose was common in the artistic tradition of classic nude painting and nude photography. Furthermore, it had been frequently adapted in colonial photographs of Africans, and those identified as "Zulu" in particular (cf. Blier 2014, Corbey 1989, Stratz 1904[1901]).[620] Versions of such photographs were nevertheless acceptable in contemporary photographic journals, such as *Das Atelier des Photographen* (cf. Peters 1979:248ff). We learned in Chapter One that Müller consulted this particular journal and also published in it. Even if these kinds of photographs were never used in Mariannhill's propaganda periodicals, they were apparently sold commercially at the studio, according to the demands of the male-dominated *préterrain* I described in the previous chapters.

Clearly, "sex sold" the many editions of Stratz's various publications beyond the 1920s, and it may also be that Müller indeed became part of a network of "naughty boys" (Bal 1996), involving Fritsch, Stratz, and several others. But further analysis—which I cannot provide here—would have to consider their engagement with these images within the wider context of the *Lebensreform* movement, to which at least Fritsch and Stratz had some proximity. One aspect of this movement was the "naturalisation" of nudity, in order to discipline and elevate body and mind. In so far, the movement functioned as a conduit for artistic ideas on "ideal beauty", which both men propagated in their (net)works after 1900 and thought to have found in the "European type" (Hau 2003, Lewerentz 2008). Thus we cannot simply call a singular photograph "pornographic", but must consider particular images, visual tropes, and conventions, while at the same time traversing the discourses of art, tourism photography, pornography, anthropological science, medicine, and even the production of a Catholic mission's photographic studio in Natal; not one-directionally, but circulating back and forth.[621] Like in the previous chapters, we realise that the process of images shifting across this wide terrain, both created and released "mimetic excess".

In their new and conspicuous vestments, such as the *Living Races*, Mariannhill's photographs indeed had new possibilities to circulate, and eventually "returned" to South Africa. As I explained in Chapters One and Two, Mariannhill's archive also contains many commissioned studio portraits of South African Whites and Europeans, a smaller number of Muslims and Indians, and also what seem to be either *Amakholwa,* or non-Christian Africans in

[619] Those photographs, which Johnston and his co-editors considered as particularly picturesque, were presented full-page and even hand-coloured. Photographs by Mariannhill apparently fulfilled these conditions more often than those by other photographers in the same volumes, and had therefore even been chosen for the frontispieces of both the 1901 and 1906 editions.

[620] Against Fritsch's judgement (1923) this pose clearly accentuates the breasts (cf. Blier 2014:84).

[621] As Blier (2014) speculates, Stratz's illustrations (1904[1901]) were instrumental in inspiring Picasso during his engagement with African themes after 1906, including those depicting Zulu women.

Western dress. These images of visitors, who either came for trading or had participated in the tour described in Chapter Three, were to great parts taken between 1900 and 1914. Sitters in the studio often posed with props, such as a rustic bench, a tree trunk, or a table. Many sitters can be seen handling objects. Books, however, are the only objects that can be ascertained as "props" in the strict sense of the term: as belonging to the studio's inventory over an extended period. A closer look at the spines and covers of these books reveals many of them as the 1901 two-volume edition of *The Living Races of Mankind*.





Figures 123 and 124: unidentified sitters in the Mariannhill Photographic Studio in front of the same backdrop, approx. 1904-14 (Linden Museum Stuttgart and CMM Archives).

While it is not clear what such a prop meant to the sitters, one can observe that some displayed it in a particular way, so that the title can be read easily. It may have been the case that the photographer equipped his sitters with the book; that it was the only book available in the studio; or that all sitters accidentally chose the same book to pose with. It may have been supposed to mediate an exotic, but also an intellectual ambience. Be that as it may, these photographs at least give evidence that Müller was cognisant of the circulation of Mariannhill's photographs through European publications, and as we will see, far beyond a scope he had expected initially.

Eventually, he was also proud enough to promote the book, and even made sitters aware of the included photographs from Mariannhill's studio. In one case, Müller even brought image and sitter into visual correspondence, when he photographed an Indian boy with the first volume of the *Living Races* on his lap—opened on page 186—showing "two Toda girls".[622]

The photograph of the two Toda girls is ascribed to "Edgar Thurston, Madras Museum". As Pinney explains for the construction of Indian castes and people (1990:279-80), in particular the Todas were often photographed and presented in a vein of European classical antiquity. One cannot but recognise the similarities to the photograph for which Müller received the first price in *The State* in 1909, and which was labelled as "The Naiads of Natal" (cf. Chapter One). Romanticised representations of the Todas were criticised for this reason by the British ethnologist Rivers. But as we saw, Mariannhill's photographs, with their similar tendencies, were generally appreciated by German ethnologists: when Von Luschan analysed similarly "romantic" photographs of Mariannhill's collection, he only focused on the depicted objects, and not on the performance of the subjects within their environment.

The *Living Races* also played a role in yet another group photograph, taken in the studio during a visit of the Governor of Natal, Sir Matthew Nathan, on 30 January 1909 (Figure 74). Here, Br. Nivard Streicher can be seen pointing out details in one of the volumes to one of Nathan's female companions, while Nathan himself is holding on to the second volume. Br. Nivard used the book in order to virtually extend the tour he had just given to the visitors. The two tomes thus became representative and inspiring "coffee table books" in the most literal sense. Unlike other props, these books are multi-referential objects. They include photographs that had been produced by the very same studio some ten years earlier: most prominently the one of Umdamane, which Müller had sold to Europe multiple times since 1898. Text is an integral part of such photographs, both visually and metaphorically: on the one hand, the visible title *The Living Races of Mankind*, as well as the book as such, could perform a supposedly superior knowledge about the colonial Other (Figure 123). On the other hand, it allowed to perform the alleged achievement of civilisation and the possession of literacy through the missionaries (Figure 124). Both perspectives of course depended on the beholder of the image and the context of publication and viewing.

Photographs of Africans with books (not necessarily the Bible) made by missionaries, are a recurring example of representing the desire for, the anxiety about, or the achievement of literacy and knowledge (cf. Krüger 2011, Webb 1992, Kriel and Fossey 2018, also see Figure 97).[623] Similar to the image of the photographer staging the staging of a photographic *mise en scène* in Chapter One, we can see a meta-referential instance, indicative of the missionary's consciousness—and boasting—about their own excessive use of "modern" media. The effect is

[622] Whether this was merely for the attention of the boy, or instead directed at the audience of the photograph, remains unclear.

[623] Also see Kaufhold (1986:99), and Starl (1991:33) on the use of books as photographic props for the German *Bildungsbürgertum*, or educated class. See Wendl (2001:90) for the appropriation of "modernity" through props in 20th century Ghanaian photographic practice.

in the case of the book even amplified through various media and materialities: text, image, and object are unified and doubled in the book, and again in the photograph itself. Similar to the situation of the museum, Mariannhill Missionaries visually stressed an awareness of intermediality towards their European audiences. In so far, the *Living Races* had become certified and authorised "mimetic capital" for Mariannhill, as the books had amplified the photographs' "reproductive power". As I explained in Chapter One, after a few years of experience with this particular publication, Müller eventually became confident enough to map out his very own version of the *Living Races* of South Africa (Müller 1909).

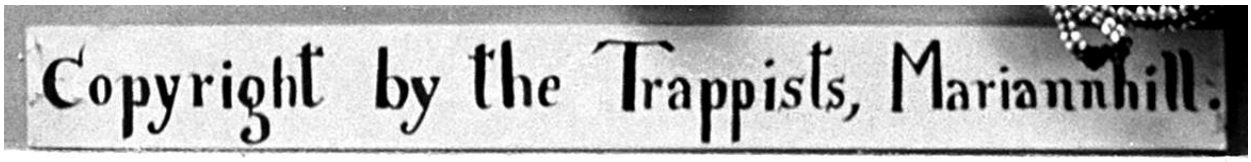


Figure 125: detail of digitally inverted glass plate negative: "Copyright by the Trappists, Mariannhill" (CMM Archives).

By 1906, Müller had experienced what it meant to take part in the ethnological project, and had also learned lessons what it meant to be a professional photographer. He had published in the journal *Anthropos* (Müller 1906b and 1907b), and also in several other German newspapers and popular magazines on Zulu "material culture", divination, and other cultural practices. Suddenly, from about this point in time, he started issuing several ethnographically relevant photographs with labels added at the bottom of the image frame: "Copyright by the Trappists, Mariannhill" (Figure 125). Assuming that he indeed had returned to Germany between 1895 and 1897, he was well acquainted with many German photographic periodicals, and henceforth regularly posted questions in the Q&A section of the periodicals *Photographische Chronik* and *Photographische Mitteilungen*.

In October 1906, he inquired anxiously with the editor of the *Photographische Chronik* about his legal rights in relation to a case of photo plagiarism by an unnamed German publisher, and his possibilities to sue and claim for compensation (Müller 1906a). "Some time ago" he had offered "an article on Kafir life with 12 photographs or more" to "a big publishing house in Stuttgart". Some time later, he discovered that some of the 20 photographs he had sent eventually, had been plagiarised by a French magazine, for which he identified neither name nor year. His concern was that once the photographs freely circulated in Europe without the label "Mariannhill", the mission would no longer have benefited exclusively.

A survey of early illustrated magazines showed that Müller's original article with 10 photographs had appeared in the highly popular *Über Land und Meer* in 1901, published by the *Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt* in Stuttgart (Müller 1901).[624] The mentioned plagiariser was very likely

[624] As I described in Chapter Two, this journal had already caused great distress in 1897, in particular with German professional photographers, for offering cheap reproductions of customers' portraits.

the French namesake *Journal des Voyages & des Aventures de Terre et de Mer*, which had published an article by André Charmelin with the title *Les Peuplades de L'Afrique Australe: Les Kaffirs*, in January 1906. Charmelin had used three unreferenced photographs by Müller, however not the same ones as the latter's 1901 article. These may have been taken from the 10 surplus images of the 20 he had initially sent to the German publisher, and which the latter had apparently sold on to the French publisher. In order to become aware of this plagiarism, Müller must either have read even beyond his already wide subscriptions to German popular periodicals, or more likely, he relied on a network of people who made him aware of the plagiarism.

While Müller had himself imitated art works—some concrete, others only in particular style—and even presented photographs of others (Gros 1888) as his own, he suddenly developed an anxiety about the unintended circulation of his own photographs; against reason, one may think, as it attested to the success and appreciation of his work. Nevertheless, after discovering the plagiarism in 1906, Müller took extra precautions, in addition to the copyright signs. He admonished museum curators, such as Fritz Graebner in 1910, that they would have to pay an extra fee for reproduction rights, in case they wanted to publish any of the photographs. The big question mark, which Graebner placed next to the respective underlined column of Müller's letter, indicates the fact that clear copyright regulations and laws for photography were still in a state of development:[625] only a few months after Müller's complaint, in January 1907, a new law ("*Kunstschutzgesetz*") was released in Germany. This regulation eventually brought rights of photographers and artists under a common "copyright [*Urheberrecht*]" (cf. Dommann 2006:362, also see Ricke 1998).

These new regulations of copyright were a direct outcome of the disturbances, which had upset the photographic market in Germany in the course of 1898 (cf. Chapters One and Four). In 1897, the Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft in Stuttgart had dumped prices for reproduction, causing professional photographers to lobby for their own rights in their journals. The publisher of *Über Land und Meer* had thus not only offered cheap reproductions of private photographs to the masses, but also resold its photographic stock to other publishers, such as in Müller's case. Especially photographs of "exotic" people and of people in "erotic" poses not only circulated widely, but they crossed both disciplinary and national borders easily. As they were widely desired and some of them appeared as offensive, both photographers and lawmakers saw a need to restrict their circulation. The first to protect their work and income, the latter to protect moral standards. In both cases, law crucially impacted production and circulation. Such articulations of several interlinked crisis, however, make these developments traceable after all.

[625] Also see Schindelbeck (1989), on how the BGAEU started to adjust its handling of legal issues concerning photographs at the same time.

Conclusion

The evolving needs of both missionaries and scientists led to an interdependence, which was both limiting and enabling. Missionaries needed scientific, public, and specifically colonial stages to promote their interests, and ethnologists often depended on the far greater number of missionaries all over the world as auxiliary providers of objects, photographs, and information. This manifested itself for example during the colonial exhibition at the 1896 Berlin trade fair, the later inclusion of missionaries in Berlin's colonial museum in 1899, as well as Abbot Amandus Schölzig's simultaneous efforts to establish filial stations for Mariannhill in German East Africa. Through efforts like those of Bumüller and Schmidt since 1896 and in particular 1906, some Catholic missionaries eventually moved from being auxiliary to the project of ethnology to fully participating in it. Most of them, however, remained just missionaries.

Missionaries and ethnologists considered the process of translating photographs and objects from "propaganda" to "ethnography" as both possible and feasible. This process nevertheless included many uncertainties and laborious correspondences. As we could see, the preparation of photographs as "working objects" depended on a considerable chain of decisions, including selections, modifications, as well as exclusions. This chain was however not, or rarely acknowledged in the final act of interpretation. Nevertheless, Mariannhill's photographs were successful, exactly because of their aesthetic and theatrical qualities, not despite of them. Entanglement situations involving subjects, objects, and images worked through their interconnectedness in material terms, within photographs, as well as rhetorically. In the introduction to the last chapter I explained that entanglement situations eventually necessitated the continuous adjustments and propping up of photographs, similar to the connections of different media in Chapter Two.

Despite of all these shortcomings, ethnologists considered photographs as a legitimate and "objective" way to determine the ethnic identities of people through depictions of their physique and material culture. By the early 1880s, however, Natal Africans South of the Tugela, who were not per definition "Zulu", had started to imitate "Zulu curios" from North of the Tugela, in order to serve an expanding market for tourists and other travellers (cf. Joest 1886:147). By negotiating supply and demand, Africans and various interest groups of colonial actors had thus joined in the creation of a particular "material culture" and a particular imagery commonly referred to as "Zulu". The indeed high demand for these objects had established an economy, which subverted ethnologists' demand for authenticity. This necessitated the establishment of professional skills to tell apart the supposedly "real" from the "forgery" (eg. Graebner 1911). Even if Graebner was indeed critical about photographic epistemology, there was no way of scrutinising them equally to scrutinising objects. As we saw for the copy of Umdamane's portrait at the Pitt Rivers Museum, once certain traditions based on photographs had been established, ethnic identities and their metonymic appearances through photographs served to identify other photographs. Nevertheless, one trusted the certification through ethnologists' skilled judgement.

Müller's own scholarly efforts, such as his catalogue (Müller 1899) and his publications in *Anthropos* (1906, 1907) came as a relatively short-lived spin-off project, but still left considerable traces in influential key studies on "Zulu" social life and material culture: Eileen Krige relied on several Mariannhill scholars in *The Social System of the Zulu* (1936). John W. Grossert (1968) studied objects in the Mariannhill Museum for his dissertation *Art Education and Zulu Crafts*. Object-related photographs also made reappearances in the *Annals of the South African Museum* during the 1970s and 80s. Also internationally, Müller's texts on, and photographs of diviners were used, for example, in the work of eminent—if popularising—scholars like Cesare Lombroso and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl.

I hope to have shown that the popularity of Mariannhill's photographs both in South Africa and Europe in fact relied on a considerable chain of certifications. With the *first* public release of the photographs for an ethnological audience in 1899, Müller employed several arguments to raise their value. He certified them as authentic representations by accompanying them with explanations based on scientific instructions, as provided by Felix von Luschan. Still, the photographs' content was, even to Müller himself, highly uncertain and constructed: some of the photographs Müller had not taken himself and he initially struggled to comprehend the function, attributes, and names of the depicted objects and subjects, even of those photographs he had indeed taken himself.[626] This is evident through his limited efforts to explain the photographs for Von Luschan. Müller indeed described 113 photographs of the entire collection for his catalogue (1899), but only once Von Luschan had strongly urged him to do so. Müller then provided a superficial description as certification with mainly a lexical analysis, so that his photographs—now with added scientific value—may enter museum collections for a monetary value.

Additionally, Müller tried to raise the value of his collection with Von Luschan by pointing out the photographs' rarity: to begin with, he stressed the destructive impact of European missionaries, the to-be-expected future scarcity of "ethnographic" objects, and thus the impossibility to photograph them any longer. Later, he authorised his photographs by stressing that he had reviewed their content with "knowledgeable Kafirs" and that the information gathered in this way could not be found in any Zulu dictionary. And indeed, several of the terms can neither be found in Bryant's (1905), nor in Colenso's (1905) dictionaries.[627] Furthermore, Müller pointed to the technological dimensions of his efforts with an exceptional series of snapshots (cf. Chapter One), in order to create an argument about the increase of photographic authenticity. Commercial dealers in "primitive art", like ethnologists before them, still create the value of collections in exactly the same way by folding objects into time, effort, and expertise (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:33). Like Müller, they publish descriptive catalogues, richly illustrated with artistic photographs of objects and authorise these with texts.

[626] Several of the photographs sold to ethnographic museums since 1898, such as the one of Umdamane, had been taken by either Fr. Isembard, Fr. Desiderius, or Anton Schmidt.

[627] These were even further expanded dictionaries than the ones Müller would have had access to in 1899 (cf. Chapter Eight).

Only one year later, in 1900, ethnographic museums in Oxford and Leiden initiated the *second* dispersal of Mariannhill's photographs to the publisher Hutchinson. The museums employed photographs with a certification that was now officially scientific, or as Griffiths put it, they had undergone a "process of decontamination" (2002:118). In the *third* release through publications, such as the popularising *Living Races of Mankind*, it was still scientific experts who authorised the photographs through their texts, even if many peers evaluated the publication as being of lesser academic quality. The umbilical cord via the museums, and back to the mission, at first remained intact through captions and the identification of Mariannhill as source institution. But eventually, Müller—initially much to his own distress—lost control over the commercial circulation of Mariannhill's images, as they were reproduced by the thousands within the public sphere.

In the course of these efforts, Müller nevertheless gathered skills and experiences, and learned to position himself within the international art world and the scientific world. This eventually allowed him to fabricate his own "atlas" of "South African Races" in 1909 (cf. Chapter One). Moments of crisis, such as the plagiarism of his photographs in Germany and France, forced him to actively claim legal authorship for his photographs as unique commercial products, rather than as artworks, or as scientific working objects. However, he himself plagiarised too, photographically in 1898 and textually in 1906, as we shall learn in Chapter Eight. As Edwards (2009) already pointed out for the British case, receptions of photographs shifted between the popular and the scientific realm. Müller was an accountant by training, but became a collector, writer, photographer, and somewhat of an ethnographer during his mission career. Due to his eclectic acquisition of various interests and skills related to scientific and popular spheres, he was able to engineer his photographs in a manner that made them highly successful. As a result, the photographs became entangled within a global visual economy, so that keeping them under control became exceedingly difficult and eventually impossible. Photographs as entangled objects are "unruly" and once in circulation their maintenance as "mimetic capital" became an entrapment of sorts (cf. Hodder 2016). A dependency had evolved, which even the employment of copyright signs could not resolve. The circulation of photographs of course included archival interludes, when museums and publishers stored and filed photographs in their archives. As mimetic capital, photographs are here still awaiting potential use for maybe totally different representational projects than those of missionaries and ethnologists.

This chapter then is one possible backstory to the photographs of the sitters in the Mariannhill Studio, who posed with a volume of *The Living Races of Mankind*. Once the photographs had circulated in, out of, and subsequently back to South Africa and onto Müller's desk, he continued to refine his photographic style. This was partially the result of his experiences with these different trajectories of circulation. The style he employed for photographs after 1900 moved away from bust portraits and towards the depiction of narrative sceneries and genre arrangements. This may partially be explained with Müller's adjustments to

the developments in photographic aesthetics in Europe (Part One) and developments on the German market (Part Two). Due to already existing economic pressure, professional photographers in Germany started turning to the employment of more "artistic" aesthetic models. In 1897, the "Stuttgart Case" had disturbed the market in photography with cheap reproductions of portraits, and photographic studios in department stores followed by offering even cheaper portraits. The trend to specialise in certain themes thus intensified with professional photographers (Kaufhold 1986:80-81, 217). As the respective professional discourse took place in the journals Müller had subscriptions to, he was apparently aware of these changes, and quickly adjusted to them.

The artistic genre photographs I explored in Chapters One and Two worked better in propaganda publications, and they also worked better for ethnologists who increasingly used photographs in order to illustrate how people employed objects. Ethnologists of the time thus readily accepted Mariannhill's photographs throughout their stages of development, because of their continuous high standards of aesthetic composition. Furthermore, they never questioned the circumstances or time of production. I therefore differ with Broeckmann's (2008) conclusion that photographs were theoretically devalued in European ethnology and anthropology after 1880. Maybe Fritsch's canon did not pay off for producing anthropological and ethnological knowledge through visual means in the way he intended. In fact, as Lewerentz (2008) points out, and as I elaborated in the previous section, after 1900 even Fritsch himself changed his attitude towards photographs of an explicitly artistic style. As I showed, both anthropologists and ethnologists still used and highly valued photographs as "working objects", evidence, and illustrations for many decades, while not even questioning their temporal, spatial, institutional, and aesthetic origins. This was despite the fact that the very same images simultaneously served in an increasing popularisation and legitimation of the colonial spectacle in all of its religious, scientific, and utterly mundane dimensions.

However, this particular culture of circulation did not yet involve or acknowledge Black Africans as either authors or artists: neither as object makers, photographic models, nor as photographers or painters. Also missionaries were initially only auxiliary providers, and only some of them gradually established themselves in the scientific community and its networks after 1900. As we shall learn in the next chapter, during the 1920s this situation changed considerably for some missionaries and their associates with scientific ambitions, as well as for some Black South Africans with artistic ambitions.

PART FOUR

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IMAGES AND SUBJECTS.

CHAPTER SEVEN

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The Art of Segregation, or
"[…] no European can draw what is in a native's mind"[628]

[628] Jacobus N. van Warmelo on the work of Gerard Bhengu in the introduction to Max Kohler's *The Isangoma Diviners* (1941:5).

Introduction: From "Disappearance" to "Creativity"

More than 40 years after their production, photographs like the "Naiads of Natal", for which Br. Aegidius Müller had received the first price from *The State's* photographic competition in 1909, were still much desired (cf. Chapter One). On 2 September 1946, the Durban-based attorney and art collector, A. de Charmoy, wrote to the superior of Mariannhill Monastery, Fr. Pius Rudloff:

> Some eight years ago I had bought from a shop in Mercury Lane, Durban, a number of large photo prints of natives and native scenes e.g. one of a forest glade with a stream running through and some native girls with pots standing by the stream. A friend passing through Durban was anxious to secure some of these. I gave him my collection relying on being able to buy them again. But I was told the father who used to take those photos had died and then the war scarcity of material intervened. Having often been approached for similar photos and desirous of having some myself I phoned your Monastery and was told that if I wrote to you you might be able to sell to me some prints (if still available) or to print some more from your negatives now that photographic material is more easily obtainable. Those photos I refer to were larger than post card size and were artistically produced. Realising that they are now scarce, I would be prepared to pay a special price for those that you may still have or for any new prints, particularly of the forest scene I have described above.[629]

Rudloff duly complied with the request and wrote in his reply that "[w]e trust that these photographs are suitable for the purpose for which you require them".[630]

Apparently, by the 1930s, Mariannhill's photographs were still actively distributed through secular commercial circuits. They were sold at shops in Durban, even without the monastery's involvement. Consumers nevertheless associated the photographs with Mariannhill, and still with Müller's reputation, even though he had already passed away in 1921. Also other people sent requests for photographs to Mariannhill after the Second World War, but were mostly turned down with brief lines, such as: "I regret that we cannot be of assistance to you in the above mentioned matter, since we had to close down our photo studio on account of shortage of staff".[631] The fact that the photographs were no longer produced at Mariannhill (and not even reproduced) made them even more valuable. Within only three decades, the original photographic prints had thus become scarce collectables, for which De Charmoy was "prepared to pay a special price". This price was settled for at S10 per photograph, ten times their "original" value.[632] After having received the photographs, De Charmoy replied on 20 September 1946:

> Your photographer is an artist. I was interested in that type of scenery photograph in order to suggest to Gerard Bengu [sic], the Zulu artist, a similar scene with native figures. Bengu is exceptionally talented as a portraitist and paints water colour scenery and trees very pleasingly. I happened to rescue him from two people who were exploiting him mercilessly and my friends and I have bought several of his pictures.[633]

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629 CMM-MM: letter, De Charmoy to Rudloff, 02.09.1946.

630 CMM-MM: letter (copy), Rudloff to De Charmoy, 06.09.1946.

631 CMM-MM: letter, Rudloff to East London Museum, 19.04.1948.

632 As opposed to S1, for which they were sold around 1900. Of course one must take a certain inflation into account. The price for the service of a Black ambulant street photographer in the Johannesburg township of Benoni during the 1940s was far less than S1, or the equivalent of a bottle of beer. The average monthly salary of a worker in the township was £2 S10 (Personal communication, Sophie Feyder, September 2014).

633 CMM-MM: letter, De Charmoy to Rudloff, 20.09.1946.

Gerard Anton Bhengu (1910-1990) was born on the Dronk Vlei Farm near Mariannhill's Centocow Mission in 1910, and was baptised, as well as educated at the mission. He was well known to many of the missionaries, for whom he had produced commissioned paintings since the late 1920s. His first long-term patron was the mission doctor of Centocow, Dr. Max Kohler (1886-1948). By the 1940s, Bhengu had become successful in the secular art world, but was also put "on display" as somewhat of a "curiosity" at Payne Brothers, Durban's largest department store at the time. It is unclear whether it were Bhengu's employers at Payne Brothers from whom De Charmoy had to "rescue" Bhengu, as he wrote to Rudloff in late 1946.[634] Be that as it may, in 1947 De Charmoy opened an exhibition at the Durban Art Gallery, where Bhengu presented his work next to the White artist Barbara Tyrell,[635] as well as other male "Bantu Artists", such as Hezekiel Ntuli, Simoni Mnguni, and George Pemba (Zaverdinos 1995:15-16). Since then, Bhengu's career had only one more high point during the 1960s. He eventually received most recognition posthumously.

I was not able to trace a painting by Bhengu that resembles Müller's photograph, which De Charmoy desired so much in 1946. Among other things this could either mean that De Charmoy never showed the photograph to Bhengu, or that Bhengu did not approve of the theme. Nevertheless, Bhengu indeed copied Müller's and also Br. Leonard Weber's photographs throughout his career, beginning with suggestions by his first patron Max Kohler. This was not intended as forgery or plagiarism, but rather a part of artistic education, despite its later contradiction with a "native authenticity". Mission education indeed played a considerable role in the process of fostering Black artists in South Africa, in particular after the 1940s. Especially since the 1950s, Sr. Pientia Selhorst CPS at Mariannhill played an important role in this regard (cf. Leeb-du Toit 1993, 1995, 2005). Before this point in time, Bhengu appears to have been the only successful case to emerge from such a scenario (cf. Shaw 1949:630).

At least since the early 1920s, Mariannhill's educational institutions at Lourdes Mission, and in particular at Centocow Mission, were at the very centre of the Natal Government's attention. As we know from Chapter Four, Centocow Mission has a history of providing access and logistics for governmental administrators. In the 1920s, once again a network of government representatives and missionaries with scientific inclinations promoted the area around Centocow as yet another "collection hotspot" (cf. Hamilton and Leibhammer 2016a). In this particular case, the situation was not only based on ethnographic research and the collection of objects for Mariannhill's museum, but also on what respective social actors considered as the production of exceptional art.

In March 2011, the architect Robert Brusse invited me to join his surveying team to a

[634] Bhengu worked for Payne Brothers at least until 1953. They paid him S2 D6 around 1940, and £4-8 by 1953 per painting (Schlosser 1971:146). The prices for which paintings were sold to the store's visitors are unknown.

[635] As Tyrell exclusively painted Africans, this may have been the reason why her work was exhibited along with those of African artists producing works on "native life". The presence of Tyrell as a White *female* artist makes even more apparent that the early Black painters were exclusively *male* (cf. Stevenson and Bosland 2008:11).

project site at Centocow Mission, near the small town of Ixopo in the Ingwe Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal's Sisonke District.[636] It was this trip that initiated my engagement with Bhengu and Kohler. Since 2003, the idea had grown between representatives of Ingwe Municipality and the Killie Campbell Africana Library (KCAL) in Durban to restore the mission's old church. With considerable financial effort the building was supposed to be turned into the "Gerard Bhengu Gallery & Museum" with the explicit aim to attract tourism in the area (cf. Kotze 2013). The relevance for both parties to invest into a gallery dedicated to Bhengu relied partially on the fact that, at least from the 1940s, Bhengu had gathered the reputation as a successful Black artist: at the time he was considered "prominent" among the "modern Bantu painters" (Shaw 1949:630-631). Still in the 1960s, Bhengu was known as an "outstanding painter using European techniques" (Gale 1971:868), and even established the reputation of being "the first Black South African artist, who earns his living as an artist in the European sense" (Schlosser 1971:121). This means that he did not depend on other sources of income for extended periods. The German ethnologist Katesa Schlosser further attested to Bhengu that he "inaugurated the profession of the artistic painter amongst the Bantu of South Africa" (Schlosser 1971:149).

The South African art historian Anitra Nettleton suspects that over the next twenty years after the 1960s, Bhengu was ignored in the art historical canon because his work did not lend itself to the anti-apartheid narratives of South Africa's political left, due to his early dependence on White patrons (Nettleton 1989:28). Olu Oguibe (2002), for example, portraits Bhengu as if he was not able to surpass the colonial dictum of assimilating to a distinctly "African style", and did therefore not develop a truly individual way of expressing resistance to colonial domination in both society and art. Furthermore, due to his romantic subjects and mimetic style, art historians and art dealers were not able to group Bhengu among the "modernist" African artists. Art historians writing after Schlosser thus instead identified other Black artists, like Moses Tladi, as "South Africa's First Black Artist working in the Western Tradition" (Caccia 1993, Lloyd 2013). Since the general (re-)establishment of South African Black artists since the late 1980s, and a retrospective solo exhibition at Pietermaritzburg's Tatham Art Gallery in 1995, Bhengu gained currency once more, in particular as a household name of the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban.

In previous chapters I already touched on the vexed question of African authorship in both photography and figurative art. In Chapters One and Two I showed that around 1900 "copying" and "imitation" were strong narratives in the White art discourse, in order to frame the artistic (non-)productivity of Black South Africans: this was the case with photography, the performative arts like theatre, as well as the production of adornment and craft objects for the tourist market. Commentators on objects produced by Black South Africans in Natal at the time observed the lack of a strong tradition of figurative art, such as sculpture. As I already discussed in Chapter Five, especially those people framed as "Zulu" were initially credited with the

[636] Known as "Polela District" until the end of Apartheid. After my fieldwork, in 2012, the district was renamed "Harry Gwala District".

production of "material culture" or "crafts", rather than a distinct "Zulu art" (Duffey 1999, Nettleton 1989, Sack 1988, Schlosser 1975). Especially portrait sculpture, even though there are examples, was not credited to the Zulu as "art" (Nettleton 1988:49, 2005:8). Nevertheless, just before the First World War, European popular perceptions of Africa more generally started to include figurative art, as well as paintings and drawings by Africans as representations of culture and history (cf. Chapters One and Five).

Research on Black South African individuals, who practiced photography either privately and/or professionally before the 1940s, or even before 1914, is still in its infancy (but see Feyder 2016, Chapter One of this study). Instead, the research on the development of Black South African fine art painters since the 1920s is more advanced. One reason is that contemporary White South African art patrons (including connoisseurs, educators, missionaries, and ethnologists) established a relatively well-documented discourse on the ingenuity of individual Black artists and the alleged authenticity of their work. Regarding a similar case in central Africa, Johannes Fabian tentatively asked: "Is it correct to say that the 'creative native' replaced the 'disappearing native'?" (Fabian 1998:26). This indeed seems to be the case in South Africa during the 1920s, once we compare it to the "salvage paradigm" of the previous decades, which I discussed in the last chapter. The correspondence between De Charmoy and Rudloff epitomises this situation, as the Black artist Gerard Bhengu was supposed to creatively appropriate a romanticised photograph of what Br. Aegidius Müller had earlier considered a "disappearing" people. Even if the act of interpreting a photograph through painting is not straightforward "creativity", White commentators nevertheless presented the ability of Africans to create fine art paintings in the European tradition as an achievement. De Charmoy apparently did not consider the possibility that Bhengu may have been able to paint the same scene with life models, possibly due to the assumption that such "scenes" had "disappeared" altogether. Like "disappearance" before it, "creativity" now became the new trope around which networks of those people formed, who had an interest in images of South Africa. In fact, at the same time yet another crisis developed around this trope.

We will see that indeed an ambivalent anxiety existed in the White South African art world about the paradox of the "unspoilt artist" (Sack 1988; Leeb-du Toit 1995; also see Stevenson and Bosland 2008:23, 28; Rankin 2011:105; Oguibe 2002). Despite the intention to employ European artistic formats and techniques, this "unspoilt artist" was supposed to develop an authentic and distinctly "African" style, free of European influence. I found this expressed most explicitly in a letter of recommendation by Mariannhill's Sr. Pientia Selhorst CPS for the sculptor Franz Hodi: "Franz is well ahead in his profession and given opportunity he will be able to serve the Xhosa people well. His style is primitive in the good sense of the word. He is not europeanised but expresses himself originally and African".[637] In order to work effectively, this "testimonial" had to address the South African art world with a distinct and familiar set of framings. The "art of segregation", as I use it in this chapter's title, therefore has the additional

[637] CPSA-GR: Selhorst, Sr. Pientia, 14.03.1966, "Testimonial for Franz Hodi".

meaning of an explicit and elaborate strategy to keep European and African art apart. Within the discourse of segregation, the production of knowledge about the Other aimed at establishing this difference artificially. "Primitive art" was coaxed into existence, first in Europe around 1900 and then in South Africa during the 1920s. Both developments were an effort to establish the "native mind" in the work of ethnologists, anthropologists, psychologists, art historians, and eventually the public common sense.

As Lize Robbroeck (2003, 2006) has shown, some South African art historians and anthropologists continued to *write* this essentialising segregation of two distinct art worlds throughout and even beyond Apartheid (also see Wolbert 1998b). In the previous chapter we realised that Africans and their material culture were certainly not "disappearing" and that the statement of a "salvage paradigm" was rather a strategy to motivate allies within an international competition about "ethnographic" objects. Also, Africans have always been creative in the same way as Europeans—as much as Europeans have always been copyists and imitators. Br. Aegidius Müller is only one immediate example for this fact. We now need to consider what "creativity" is in this particular case and that an extended understanding of authorship always relies on pre-existing images. We therefore always have to deal with multiple authors, who are equally distributed beyond their own oeuvres. De Charmoy's "suggestion of a similar scene" to Bhengu, is what Gell (1998) would have called a "weak protention", the anticipation of a later work in an oeuvre. Other than a "strong protention", a weak one had not been produced *explicitly* for this purpose. Moreover, De Charmoy did not know that Müller's creations had already been "weak", or even "strong retentions", which therefore incorporated, or even copied preexisting images.

Since the 1920s, Black South Africans were able to increase public awareness for their own artistic potential and creative agency, not least because they were acknowledged as individual artists within specific artistic fora. But at the same time, White educationalists and art patrons attempted to influence and control the outcome. In a rigidly segregationist society, they attempted to achieve the paradox of disentangling "Native artists" from "White artists". By making sure that Black artists remained uninfluenced by European artistic ideas, they hoped to maintain a clear perspective on "what is in a native's mind". With the establishment of academic social anthropology in South Africa and the increasing popularity of sociology and psychology by the early 1920s, various contemporary scholars, missionaries, and ethnologists alike, claimed that the "crisis" was no longer the looming loss of the authentic Other, but how to penetrate the "native mind" (eg. Huss 1931, Van Warmelo 1941, also see Grossert 1969, Schlosser 1952). To do so, new kinds of "working objects" were necessary, which could be interpreted even in the subject's absence (cf. Daston 2015, Daston and Galison 2007, cf. Chapter Six). Bhengu's paintings also appeared to be perfect "epistemic images" in the sense of Daston (2015): authentic manifestations of the authentic Other and thus by definition authentic representations of the Other's "daily life". Gerard Bhengu was the ideal medium to his first patron, Max Kohler, to produce such working objects in the form of paintings. However, while there was indeed the ideal of a simple and straightforward access route through these paintings to both the native mind

and lifeworld, we will realise that the actual practice of knowledge production through paintings, photographs, other objects, and texts at Centocow Mission was much more complex. It involved close cooperation and in fact the co-authorship of Gerard Bhengu and Max Kohler.

In the history of science and art, neither the medium of photography, nor the one of painting have ever been considered as absolutely objective evidence or as authentic representation. They must rather be scrutinised according to the epistemic regimes of very particular places, times, and relationships according to the potential intermingling of "epistemic virtues" (Daston and Galison 2007). I will show that there were at least six reasons for Kohler to stimulate Bhengu to paint. His primary intentions for both media were scientific, but at the same time they transgressed professional and private spheres. Kohler believed that due to Bhengu's "native" perception and exceptional artistic faculty, his paintings had the extraordinary capacity to mediate ideas for various interests. Kohler's intentions, the negotiations with Bhengu, and also unintended outcomes of these efforts, can be delineated by retracing the creation of several examples in concrete historical occasions.

The first four sections of this chapter explore Kohler's and Bhengu's relationship, as well as the epistemic premises for the paintings they co-produced. Sections five and six deal with the only traceable moment of Bhengu's painterly production, which can be related to a concrete occasion. First, I approach the occasion itself, and in a second step, I consider the post-production and publication process of the resulting paintings. The last two sections eventually look at the two men's painterly and photographic self-fashioning. These must be considered, not only according to the epistemic premises discussed in previous sections, but also through the extended social relationships of both men. Only in this way can we begin to understand art and segregation as connected efforts. Like photography before, it was now the medium of painting, which allowed colonial actors to even better represent Otherness, and to perform its production and producers at the same time.

Approaching Gerard Bhengu

My discussion will be restricted to the period of Gerard Bhengu's collaboration with Max Kohler up to 1931, when Bhengu moved away from Centocow Mission. This relationship brought forth some remarkable textual and visual works, which cannot be ascribed to merely one of them. Therefore we must analyse Kohler's texts, Bhengu's paintings, as well as the involved photographs in combination. In order to understand the cooperation of both individuals, I apply the extended notion of authorship, which I introduced in Chapter One. Kohler's published and unpublished texts and correspondence, as well as Bhengu's paintings at the archive of the Missionsärztliches Institut in Würzburg and the Killie Campbell Africana Library (KCAL) have so far not been evaluated in their entirety, and especially not in combination.[638] Max Kohler provided the first stockpile of artistic images to inspire Bhengu. Some of these he sourced through connections in Munich, one of the centres of the European fine art world at the time. In Chapters One and Two we realised that, next to Mariannhill Monastery, Centocow itself had a considerable stockpile of photographs in place by 1914. This collection of images had been made possible and created within the very particular local relationships between the missionaries, Africans, and government representatives. These exceptional relationships and their photographic outcome enabled some of Bhengu's paintings through his equally exceptional relationship to Kohler and the contemporary art lobby.

Acknowledging this early circulation and wide availability of images to Europeans and Africans alike, in this case preempts research projects framed as "visual repatriation" (see Introduction). I have earlier addressed this issue and instead suggested an approach of "reconnection" (Rippe 2007, 2015), which acknowledges the fact that photographs had been circulating in South Africa since their production, including a presence among Black South Africans. The above mentioned project of the "Gerard Bhengu Gallery & Museum" has in fact addressed this question by employing the term "heritage" (Kotze 2013), however without much reflection beyond a touristic level, and no direct involvement of Black South Africans living around Centocow. Due to the complexity of this situation, it cannot be fully addressed here. It must therefore suffice to say that in order to study claims to historical representation or heritage, we have to consider a much more complex assemblage of image traditions. Claims have indeed been made by "returning" Bhengu to Centocow in form of an exhibitionary institution dedicated solely to him. Images currently displayed in the Bhengu Gallery exhibition, or the *préterrain* discussed by current scholarship on Bhengu, do not do justice to these complex assemblages. I hope to provide such a historical basis in this chapter by presenting a nuanced perspective on the production of images at Centocow around 1930.

Scholarly work on Centocow, Kohler, and Bhengu has so far not included all relevant archives and thus not been sufficiently transnational. Research on the work of Bhengu from a perspective situated in South Africa (eg. Savory 1965; Schlosser 1971, 1975; Zaverdinos and

[638] But see Hölzl (2011, 2012) for an attempt to position Kohler within the wider culture of the AMI.

Leeb-du Toit 1995), or research on Kohler situated in Europe (Hölzl 2011, 2012), both did not follow important aspects of circulating mimetic capital between South Africa and Europe. Previous art historical works on Bhengu, for example by Leeb-du Toit, Nettleton, Savory and Zaverdinos, thus provide only a limited view on Bhengu's and Kohler's formative period at Centocow, and instead focus on his later work. By building on these authors, I explore the related production process against the data and theories of this study's previous chapters. In so far I hope to reassemble the intersecting networks of people, images, and objects, as well as the dependences and dependencies they created (cf. Hodder 2016).

Bhengu's own voice appears muted and passive in Kohler's published articles and private letters, because Kohler never addressed Bhengu directly and often refers to him only in passing. We have to consider the fact that Bhengu was only 16 years of age when meeting Kohler. Other than through his artwork, his possibilities to provide lasting commentary were thus limited. As these are the only available primary sources regarding the relationship of Bhengu and Kohler, the latter's person and perspective is dominant in my account. Indeed, there exists only one single textual ego-document by Bhengu, which I will address briefly below. Therefore, in order to understand Bhengu, we have to understand Kohler.[639] I begin by positioning Bhengu in the evolving South African art world. After recalling the few things we know about his childhood at Centocow Mission, we shall also have a clearer picture on the ethnical construction of Bhengu as either "Zulu" or "Bhaca". In the next section I explore several episodes of Kohler's biography that were crucial for his own intellectual formation and in consequence for his influence on Bhengu.

In the previous three parts, I discussed the complexity of photographic authorship and the general importance of (potentially) Black African intermediaries for missionaries, their linguists, collectors, and photographers. In the case of Mariannhill's photographic production, there was indeed an international network in place that enabled Müller to produce, reproduce, and disseminate his photographs. But with the medium of artistic painting, which concerns us here, more questions arise: these include patronage, as well as the singularity and authenticity of the artwork. Therefore, not only the painting's semiotic relationship to the depicted subject becomes an even greater concern, but also the involved social relationships and co-authorship. The importance of intense long-term collaborations between producers of art and their social

[639] See Wright (2011:345) for a similar argument on the role of interlocutors in the making of the James Stuart Archive. The only published sources on Kohler's and Bhengu's relationship, which are based directly on interviews, are the following: First, one article (1971, also see 1975) by the German ethnologist Katesa Schlosser (1920-2010). Schlosser interviewed Bhengu during visits to South Africa in 1953 and 1959, and also had contact with Kohler's widow Betty over the same time period. Second, a very short catalogue text by Phylis Savory (1965) based on interviews with Bhengu, as well as others. Third, the catalogue of an exhibition on Bhengu's work in 1995 by Annelies Zaverdinos and Juliette Leeb-du Toit (Zaverdinos 1995, also see Leeb-du Toit 1993 and 2003). Zaverdinos and Leeb-du Toit interviewed members of the extended Kohler Family in 1995. I complemented these sources through interviews with Kohler's daughter Elisabeth Weinberger and his grandson George Weinberger. Until 1932, Kohler and his wife had five children, of whom Elisabeth is the last surviving. The last surviving daughter of Gerard Bhengu was born in the early 1950s, and I only had a chance to meet her in passing.

networks (Becker 2008 [1982]), as well as between anthropologists and their subjects, have been widely acknowledged (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Lekgoathi 2009; Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999; Pels 2014; Sanjek 1993; Schumaker 2001; Tilley and Gordon 2007). The critique of the anthropological community against their predecessors was, however, that the contribution and even the presence of "native" collaborators had often been obscured in the published ethnography.

Following the work of Bronwen Douglas on indigenous agency in the creation of European art (1999), I ask how the relationships between co-producers shaped the processes of painting and writing. The "indigenous counter-signs", described by Douglas, may however be harder to identify, excavate, and decipher than she suggests. Even if Bhengu's paintings may be considered as what Douglas calls "ethno-historical texts" and therefore contain such signs, I rather scrutinise the influence of Kohler for traces of compromise between the two men. We may then be able to consider texts and images in combination as inscriptions in the process of their mobilisation for a particular purpose (cf. Latour 1990).

In stark contrast to this situation is the system of a European "art world" (Becker 2008), where the persona of the creative artist is the most prominent one. The fact that Bhengu was gradually drawn into this art world created excitement as well as resistance, and accordingly multiple traces. This allows us to study artistic production, as well as the production of anthropological knowledge as a process and social relationship. This was impossible in the case of Müller's photographs, as his interactions with potential intermediaries and contemporaries hardly left any traces, other than the photographs themselves. There simply was no adequate forum allowing for such manifestations. Mapping the scenario of an "art world" onto the collaboration between a European lay ethnographer and his African research-collaborator-cum-painter may appear forced. But in fact, for the first time in 1926, exactly such a scenario began to emerge at Centocow Mission.

On a global scale, the engagement of non-Europeans with figurative drawing was not only considered noteworthy in the context of mission-related education, media, and propaganda, but also in the realm of academic ethnology and psychology. In his professional relationship with Bhengu, Kohler thus followed a tradition of animating research subjects to craft texts and paintings, which could then be interpreted as "working objects". At least since the late 1880s, some ethnologists started analysing drawings by colonial subjects, in order to evaluate their representative capabilities. By requesting them to produce drawings of their surroundings, and then hearing their interpretations of them, ethnologists probed their capability to *perceive*, as well as to *re-produce* resemblances. During the early 1930s, Walter Benjamin referred to this two-sided process as "mimetic faculty" (1977a and 1977b). Ideally, these drawings were carried out in the ethnologist's presence, so that he could follow the process.[640] This often resulted in the

[640] Joachim Rees and Christopher Pinney suggest this was the case most of all in German-speaking countries (Rees 2007:234). However, also examples from other countries exist, such as the British Alfred C. Haddon (1904). The most commonly discussed examples are from South America, such as Von den Steinen (1894) and Koch-Grünberg (1905). Also see Weule (1909) and Vierkandt (1912). This list of examples could be extended

inclusion of the ethnologist within the drawing. In the years prior to the First World War, drawings by "primitives" became of particular interest to ethnology in conjunction with applied psychology. The latter discipline considered drawing as a medium, which supposedly allowed for the comparative study of how children, the "mentally insane", as well as the "primitive" processed information, and how they accordingly expressed the result visually. By 1914, this approach and the category of "primitive art" was also included in ethnographic research instructions directed towards non-professionals (Ankermann 1914). The scientific value of this methodology was only questioned explicitly by the 1930s (eg. Lips 1983 [1937]:48-49, also see Rampley 2000). The concern with "resemblances" in "primitive" art also entered the discussion of art history's concern with "resemblance" in portraiture (see Waetzoldt 1908, Albien 1911). As I suggested in Chapter Two, at about the same time this concern was also refracted in contemporary caricature dealing with colonial situations.

Eventually, during the early 20th century, European artists such as cubists and expressionists discovered African art as inspiration for their own. In 1925, when expressionist artists were firmly established in Germany, the ethnologist Karl Weule announced in the journal *Jahrbuch für Prähistorische und Ethnographische Kunst* that the related interest of artists in "primitive art" may legitimise its re-assessed presentation to an academic audience (Weule 1926:87). At the same time, in 1926, the Natal Society of Artists introduced the "Karl Gundelfinger Award". It animated the local White art scene to produce paintings or drawings "in any medium, descriptive of the domestic or tribal life, or the customs of South African Natives" (Natal Society of Artists 1926:31, also see Sack 1988:10). According to the South African art historian Alexander Duffey, the style on demand at the time was an "academic realism" (Duffey 1999:111). This was rather different from the modernism of the contemporary art scenes in the centres of Europe where one experimented with abstract arrangements and montages. But as a matter of fact, while maintaining a highly realistic style, Bhengu too created painterly montages by merging multiple images into one painting. Only few of the results can still be recognised as montages, and were never supposed to be recognised as such in the first place.

It was unavoidable that these contemporary artistic trends eventually influenced Kohler, and consequently Bhengu. Kohler had been immersed in the art scene of Munich between 1905 and 1922, which at the time was one of the centres of the expressionist movement and relied considerably on the inspiration through "primitive art". Also members of Kohler's wider academic circle, such as Richard Thurnwald, were ongoing proponents of studying non-European art from a psychological perspective. At least in one documented case Kohler analysed Bhengu's work—and thus Bhengu himself—in psychoanalytical terms (see below). But at the same time between 1928 and 1941, he employed Bhengu's paintings as illustrations and "objective" evidence for his medical and ethnographic writings. After the Second World War, the German ethnologist Katesa Schlosser was one of the first scholars to pick up the discourse on figurative art by Black South Africans (Schlosser 1952, 1971, 1975, 1977, also see Grossert

considerably.

1968, De Jager 1973).[641] With Bhengu being one of her prime examples, Schlosser still worked in the tradition of ethnological and psychological approaches of the early 1900s and 1920s, which distinguished European art from "naive" art. Analysing Bhengu's work accordingly, Schlosser stated that it showed "none of the mistakes of naive illustrative painting", such as misrepresentations of physical and spatial arrangements (Schlosser 1971:125).

Bhengu's success in the South African art world since the 1920s was considerable, but still predated by some others, such as Simoni Mnguni's inclusion in the annual exhibition of the Natal Society of Artists in Durban in 1925, or the creation of the new category "Special Exhibit by Native Artist" to accommodate Moses Tladi in the South African Academy exhibition in Johannesburg in 1930 (Sack 1988:12, also see Carman 2011:203). Already in 1928, Gerard Bhengu had his first solo exhibition at Mariannhill Monastery. But even if being credited as valuable art at the time, the work of Africans was still presented as if constituting a totally segregated art world. However, as we shall see, its boundaries were highly permeable.

While authorship had rarely been attributed to individual creators of "material culture", craft, or performance around 1900, authorship in the case of Bhengu became the very centre of the discourse, almost more central than his artworks. Due to a continuous engagement and a growing reputation under various patrons, Bhengu's painterly work became entangled in exactly the same chain of institutionalised discourses as the photographs of Mariannhill: mission propaganda, ethnology, and eventually art. In the process, his work was able to fulfil new claims to cultural authenticity, in particular for Bhengu's first patron, Max Kohler. Like Müller before him, Kohler consciously reflected on the representative value of his protégé's work, pondered its objectivity, engaged with certain modes of authentication, collected local material culture, and established and continued textual ethnographic traditions.

The South African art world considered Bhengu's work as exceptional for "Black art" and thus brought it rhetorically closer to European "fine art". Nevertheless, in practice, Bhengu's patrons acted contradictorily by refusing to provide him with institutional art education, while at the same time having him copy European "fine art". The medium of watercolour, which Bhengu employed exclusively, provided ample possibilities to freely assimilate available mimetic capital. Throughout her article on Bhengu, Schlosser used the German term "*zeichnen* [to draw]" alternately with "*malen* [to paint]". "Drawing" she distinguished from "painting" regarding the accentuation of outlines and detail. She diagnosed a development in Bhengu's work "*vom Zeichnerischen* [from the graphic] [...] *zum Malerischen* [to the pictorial]", which, so she wrote, were eventually in balance. This balance, so she claimed, made his work "more valuable for their purpose as documentary illustrations of Bantu life" (Schlosser 1971:125). In their correspondences, Kohler and his superior Becker in Germany generally referred to Bhengu's water colours as "*Zeichnungen* [drawings]". In one of the cases I discuss, Kohler further distinguished between "*Skizzen* [sketches]" and "*Bilder* [pictures]". In all cases, he referred to

[641] Mind that Grossert was an educationalist and De Jager an anthropologist. Apparently, the study of Black art was not yet deemed interesting by art historians at the time (cf. Van Robbroeck 2006).

Bhengu as "*mein Maler* [my painter]". Throughout the text, I will refer to Bhengu's works as paintings, as this seems to be most appropriate in the English language for the medium of watercolour. It may be that contemporary commentators generally tried to avoid the German honorific term "*Gemälde* [painting]", as this would have brought Bhengu's work too close to the alleged sophistication of Euro-American fine art painters. This relationship between "race" and "art" was established in the period of segregation, and became even more accentuated through the racial classifications under Apartheid.

With the acclaimed large format publication *Gerard Bhengu—Zulu Artist*[642] (Savory 1965), Bhengu eventually achieved the success that his first patron, Max Kohler, had envisioned for him in the late 1920s. In 1962, Phyllis Savory (née Willson) wrote to Bhengu's patron Killie Campbell that "[t]he publication of a BHENGU [sic] book should put him 'on the map', and make his name throughout Africa and the rest of the world".[643] When attempting to do a "'write up' of [Bhengu's] whole life from a small child" in early 1963, Savory did not consider Bhengu himself a sufficiently reliable source. In 1962 her preferred informant on Bhengu, "Danny" Malcolm, had died.[644] Killie Campbell then pointed out that Savory now would have to rely on Bhengu himself. Savory nevertheless continued to search for other people, who had known Bhengu since his youth. She found such a person in the former District Inspector of Native Education, S. R. Dent.[645]

Bhengu's promotion as "Zulu" had already been established when the collector De Charmoy referred to Bhengu as "the Zulu artist" in his letter to Mariannhill in 1946 (also see Shaw 1949:631). Only since Schlosser's work (1971), Bhengu was referred to as "Bhaca" instead. Consequently, other authors perpetuated that he had initially portrayed his own people in an auto-ethnographic attempt. However, Bhengu was not born in the so-called "Location 3" near Centocow Mission, which was predominantly inhabited by people identifying themselves as "Bhaca", but on the nearby Farm Dronkvlei.[646] His parents had converted to Christianity and associated themselves with the *Amakholwa* community at Esibomvini near Centocow only a few years earlier. According to Yvonne Winters, the Bhengu family has a complex migration history, which rather points to an origin near the Natal coast.[647] The ethnic construction of Bhengu as either "Zulu" or "Bhaca" (cf. Chapter Four) was a result of the increasing pressure for racial

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642 In the book the ascription reappears with the addition "the amazing self-taught Zulu artist". Savory had cooperated with Bhengu earlier for the less popular *Xhosa Fireside Tales* (1963).

643 KCAL: letter, Willson (Savory) to Campbell, 20.12.1962. In the same letter Savory explains that she explicitly attempted to model "a book of Bhengu's pictures on the same lines as the Tretchikoff book that Mr Timmins produced a few years ago. That book MADE Tretchikoff.".

644 Daniel McKinnon Malcolm was chief inspector of native education in Natal between 1920 and 1944.

645 KCAL: letter, Willson [Savory] to Campbell, 25.01.1963.

646 *Liber Baptisatorum*, Centocow Mission, 1910: The baptism register of Centocow recorded that he was born on Dronk Vlei Farm, to Timothy Bhengu and Eugenia Duma on 06. September 1910 (Nr. 1720), baptised on 26. September 1910 as "Gerard Anton" by Fr. Alanus [Weber]; confirmation on 03. XII. 1922. The name Gerard is exceptionally underscored with a wavy line. Bhengu's father had only been baptised two years prior to Bhengu's birth. Oral history around Centocow has it that Gerard Bhengu's baptismal name had been inspired by Fr. Gerard Wolpert, Centocow's first superior.

647 Personal communication Yvonne Winters, 2011. Also see Winters, cited in Leeb-du Toit (1995:40).

classification under Apartheid. Savory even considered it essential to consult the Chief Native Commissioner before publishing, as she did not "[…] want the Native Department to be left in the dark,—[as otherwise] they might not be too pleased!".[648] In the course of racial segregation, Apartheid, and the nostalgia for authenticity created for tourists and the general outside world, "Zulu" and "Bhaca" ethnicities became artistic brands. This segregated art world, however, did not attribute Black artists with the same inherent potential for artistic genius as accomplished White artists (cf. Robbroeck 2011).

Other than few marginal anecdotes about his parents and siblings, there is not much information about Bhengu's early life at Centocow.[649] After Bhengu's father had died in 1920, his mother and three younger siblings must have been living under economic hardship. Savory mentioned that the first people to acknowledge Bhengu's inclination to drawing—apart from his mother—were his teacher Adalbert Duma and the school inspector Harold Jowitt during a visitation in 1920. Both supplied him with drawing material, the first with crayon colours, the latter with water colours and a sketch book (Savory 1965:9).[650] The station's chronicle recorded that a teacher's summer course took place at Centocow from 14 to 30 January 1920. Next to approximately 120 African teachers, it was attended by the before mentioned H. Jowitt, the Chief Inspector of Native Education Charles T. Loram, the District Inspector S.R. Dent, Loram's successor D. McK. Malcolm, and the Mariannhill priest Fr. Bernard Huss. It may have been during this occasion that the department first became aware of Bhengu's artistic talent, as the courses generally engaged with teaching methods, and at least since 1928 featured arts and crafts exhibitions. At the time, the education of Black South Africans was still almost exclusively in the hands of missionaries. During the restructuring of their project, the Natal Education Department therefore had good reasons to draw missionaries close as allies.

In the publication of his Columbia-based dissertation, *The Education of the South African Native* (1917), Charles T. Loram[651] (1879-1940) set out to provide a description and improvement of the educational situation in South Africa.[652] He explicitly did so as a response to the South African "native question" and how the situation had been dealt with in the USA. Here one can get a glimpse of the role of "drawing" just before the 1920s as a school subject within the general curriculum relative to other subjects, in particular the industrial training of Africans: the intention of the educational system was not to provide Black pupils with training in the fine arts, but with just enough visual skills to enable their performance in industrial work. The

[648] KCAL: letter, Willson [Savory] to Campbell, 20.12.1962.

[649] Today's oral history around Centocow is mostly recollected from Bhengu's only published biography in the English language (Zaverdinos and Leeb-du Toit 1995).

[650] I took the liberty to correct Savory's spelling mistakes regarding names.

[651] Loram is generally acknowledged as being "South Africa's leading white authority on African education" at the time (Davis 1984:111). Between 1917 and 1920, he was the first Chief Inspector of Native Education in Natal. Between 1920 and 1928, he worked for the Union Native Affairs Commission. Since 1929, he once more served as Chief Inspector of Education and since 1930 Superintendent of Education, both at the Natal Education Department (Davis 1977:537).

[652] Once more it was A.T. Bryant, who had some impact on this situation as one of the three people commenting on the book's manuscript (cf. Loram 1917:XII).

establishment of a strictly segregated art world was already hinted at in Loram's comments on the teaching of history as a subject: "The native also has traditions and it would be of great cultural value not only to him, but also to all of us, if he could be encouraged to develop and adapt the half forgotten arts and crafts of his forefathers." (Loram 1917:99, quoted in Moore 1990:87).

Even though Loram never theorised on the topic, the fact that he at least paid attention to how the subject of drawing was taught in the course of African teacher training, shows that it was treated with considerable importance. Despite being often referred to as a "liberal", Loram advocated segregationist and paternalistic ideas (Heyman 1972, Davis 1984). The full impact of Loram's, and later Malcolm's direct interactions with Mariannhill Missionaries, such as Huss, require further research.[653] One departure point would be Loram's and Malcolm's frequent presence at both Centocow and Mariannhill during the 1920s. Even before and after 1920, members of the Native Education Department frequented Mariannhill Monastery, Centocow Mission, and Lourdes Mission for visitations and extended social courses. Loram, his family and entourage even spent their private holidays at Centocow Mission, on one occasion for almost three weeks over New Year 1921. The chronicle of Centocow Mission recorded visits by such influential government officials. It does not, however, contain information on Gerard Bhengu during his early formative period between 1920 and late 1925, when he eventually met his first long-term patron Max Kohler.

[653] But see Rich (1993). For Loram's interaction with Protestant missionaries and ideas of segregation see Elphick (2012).

The Artist and his Patron—The Ethnographer and his Amanuensis

On 23 January 1886, Maximilian Joseph Kohler was born in Würzburg, Germany. He studied natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaft*) and medicine at the universities of Würzburg and Munich from 1905, received his approbation in 1913, and then opened a medical practice in Massing (Upper Bavaria). Until the end of the First World War, he served as a military physician (*Unterarzt*).[654] During the war, he spent several months continuously in Munich between 1915 and 1916.[655] After the War, in 1918, he opened a medical practice near Massing, in the village Neumarkt an der Rott (today Neumarkt-Sankt Veit), approximately 100 km to the east of Munich. The fact that he was already the second practical physician in the village did not augur well in terms of financial prospects. Immediately after the First World War, Kohler unsuccessfully tried to affiliate himself with a mission in South America. His brother had already emigrated to Chile before the war, and worked as a pharmacist near Santiago. One of Kohler's incentives to aspire to the relative economic security of mission work was the glut of medical practitioners after the First World War, the insufficient revenue from health insurances, and the dramatic financial inflation of the early 1920s.[656] As a subsequent affiliation with a mission near Manila on the Philippines also failed, he eventually resorted to South Africa. In 1921, he married Betty Burger, and their first child Karl was born in 1922.

In the same year, Kohler contacted the newly-founded Catholic Missionsärztliches Institut in Würzburg, in response to a call for mission doctors by the institute's founder Fr. Christophorus Becker (Becker 1921). In 1922, the institute was established as a branch (*Ortsgruppe*) of the Katholischer Deutscher Verein für Missionsärztliche Fürsorge, which had been founded in 1921 in Aachen. German mission congregations, the Pontifical Mission Societies, the Catholic Diocese of Würzburg in cooperation with the hospital Juliusspital in Würzburg, expressed the need to have a European base for the training of Catholic lay mission doctors. One of the aims was to disentangle the responsibilities and expertise of missionary and mission doctor, which was not at all times compatible with the Catholic doctrines for the conduct of priests, especially regarding the interaction with female patients (cf. Hölzl 2011:60). Various articles in the first issue of the institute's yearbook (1924) mention the headway of Protestant missionaries in terms of medical practice, which nevertheless were seen as exemplary (also see Harries and Maxwell 2012:14). The writers also stressed that the presence of a professional doctor would clearly attract potential converts, as did the schools usually provided by mission stations (Essen 1991, Hölzl 2011:58-61, also see Egger 2012).

Fr. Christophorus Becker SDS[657] (1875-1937) was the institute's first director and made a

[654] There is no information on his war experience and whether he was involved in any combat operations. However, he is known to have earned the distinction of the "Iron Cross" (Olsen 1933:145).

[655] SM: PMB G/C/K 349, 13.XII.1915.

[656] Kohler reflected on these issues in considerable detail in the family's "*Hausbuch"*, which his daughter Elisabeth Weinberger and grandson George Weinberger kindly allowed me to read.

[657] *Societas Divini Salvatoris* (Society of the Divine Saviour).

particular effort to maintain regular contact with the mission doctors abroad. His extensive correspondence is still preserved in the institute's archive today. Through his letters he tried to provide moral support for his protégées and negotiated their material needs with suppliers in Europe. He also mediated other professional contacts for them in Europe and the USA. Furthermore, he made sure to receive the doctors' frequent contributions to the institute's yearbook in the form of informative and entertaining articles. The institute's yearbook was similar to Mariannhill's contemporary annual propaganda publication *Mariannhill-Kalender* in terms of layout and content. Becker aimed for topics that would be scientific, but at the same time exciting, not only for medical specialists and new mission doctors, but for a broader German audience of potential benefactors. Whenever Kohler indicated to Becker that he may not be able to deliver material for the next issue, Becker repeated that Kohler may present something on the influence of "magicians and medicine men", as, so he wrote, this would always find interest. Like Mariannhill's periodicals, the yearbook thus functioned as Catholic propaganda, with the aim to entertain, raise funds, and recruit medical professionals. Bhengu's paintings, which Kohler used as illustrations for his articles in the yearbook until the early 1930s, must therefore be analysed against this background. Emphasising the general importance of images for the periodical, Becker's successor Bosslet reminded Kohler in 1938 that "photographs are the best propaganda material".[658] We may therefore assume that Kohler's scientific interests, his approach to images, and his general publication efforts were at least in parts influenced by his early writings in the propaganda periodical.

Kohler's daughter Elisabeth told me that her father admired the Lutheran mission doctor Albert Schweitzer, who became popular in the 1920s through publications on his time in Guinea. Also the first issue of the institute's yearbook presented Schweitzer as exemplary. Kohler read Schweitzer's books, such as *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest: Experiences and Observations of a Doctor in Equatorial Africa* (1922).[659] He was thus not only inspired by Schweitzer's medical activity as missionary, but may have also seen him as an example of one who combined a career as professional writer. Before Kohler could consider following such a career and leave for South Africa eventually, he first had to master the English language, study for a diploma in tropical medicine in Hamburg, as well as for an English medical diploma in Dublin.[660]

Kohler eventually became one of the first ten doctors to be sent to different parts of the world, and the first to be sent to the African continent. Several other members of the institute were stationed in South Africa after Kohler, with whom he had infrequent contact over the years. As Mariannhill Monastery was already served by the locally recruited Dr. McMurtry, Kohler was eventually relocated to Centocow Mission. The formal work contract involved the religious vow

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658 AMI: letter, Bosslet to Kohler, 18.10.1938. My own translation from the German original.

659 Kohler owned a copy of the second edition's German translation (Schweitzer 1926).

660 These events and Kohler's time at Centocow are documented through regular correspondence with Becker since 1922. I thank the insititutes archivist, Sr. Elisabeth Mager; the *Stadtarchivpfleger* of Neumarkt-St-Veit, Walter Jani, for Information on Kohler's time thereat; as well as the *Ortschronist* of Massing, Albert Hüttner, on Kohler's time in the village.

to serve at Centocow for at least ten years. The spatial proximity of the Missionsärztliches Institut to Mariannhill's Pius Seminar in Würzburg enabled the close cooperation between these two organisations, in both Germany and South Africa.[661] In November 1925, at the age of 39, Max Kohler eventually left Würzburg for South Africa with his wife Betty and their three-year-old son Karl. After a few days at Mariannhill,[662] they arrived at Centocow Mission on 30 November.



Figure 126: text on verso of postcard: "[…] during consultation. The brother serves as interpreter for men, the sister as interpreter for women […]". Max and Betty Kohler after arrival, Easter 1926, unknown photographer (AMI).[663]

How exactly Kohler and Bhengu first met is unknown. According to Schlosser, it was approximately in March 1926 that Kohler discovered Bhengu's talent when he accepted one of his paintings of a football game in exchange for medicine (Schlosser 1971:123).[664] Kohler then employed Bhengu to paint for him privately, as well as for professional purposes. He provided Bhengu not only with art materials, but also with a working space in his office, as well as continuous advice on style and content. A page with four photographs in one of Kohler's scrapbooks attests that Bhengu's paintings had a particular presence at Centocow and thus held

[661] Mariannhill's Pius Seminar is located in an adjacent building to the institute, and appears in the film described in Chapter Two.

[662] The chronicle of Mariannhill Monastery wrongly recorded the arrival of Kohler and family with "*Mitte April 1928*".

[663] AMI: Postcard, Kohler to Becker, 12.04.1926. My own translation from the German original. Also see Mariannhill's *Vergißmeinnicht* (1926:21-22).

[664] According to other sources, Kohler treated Bhengu for tuberculosis (Jephson 1989, cited in Zaverdinos 1995).

considerable importance for Kohler. They not only decorated the interior of Kohler's office, but even its outside wall (Figure 127). In this environment and through a daily routine of office work, Kohler generally left Bhengu to work at his own pace. Perhaps this is the reason why Bhengu considered himself an autodidact. He also thought that Kohler could not show him much, because he was not an artist himself (Schlosser 1971:123-124).[665] Next to Bhengu, who also assisted with dispensary work, Kohler employed several women, as midwife, dispensary assistant, and consultation assistant respectively (cf. Figure 128). For whatever reason, he never mentioned these employees in his letters to the institute, other than Bhengu and occasionally Karl's (by now called Charley) nanny.

[665] Even before, Savory (1965:8), and later Leeb-du Toit (2003:75), wrote that Bhengu was "largely self-taught".



Figure 127: various photographs showing Kohler's office at Centocow. Page from one of Kohler's scrapbooks, titled "*Glückliche Reise*". Original captions: "[1] *Die vorderen 2 Fenster sind Office;* [2] *Eingang;* [3] *Schrank;* [4] *Bilder von der Arzt-Office in Centocow"*—"[1] The closest 2 windows belong to the office; [2] Entrance; [3] Cupboard; [4] Pictures of the doctor's office at Centocow" (KCAL).

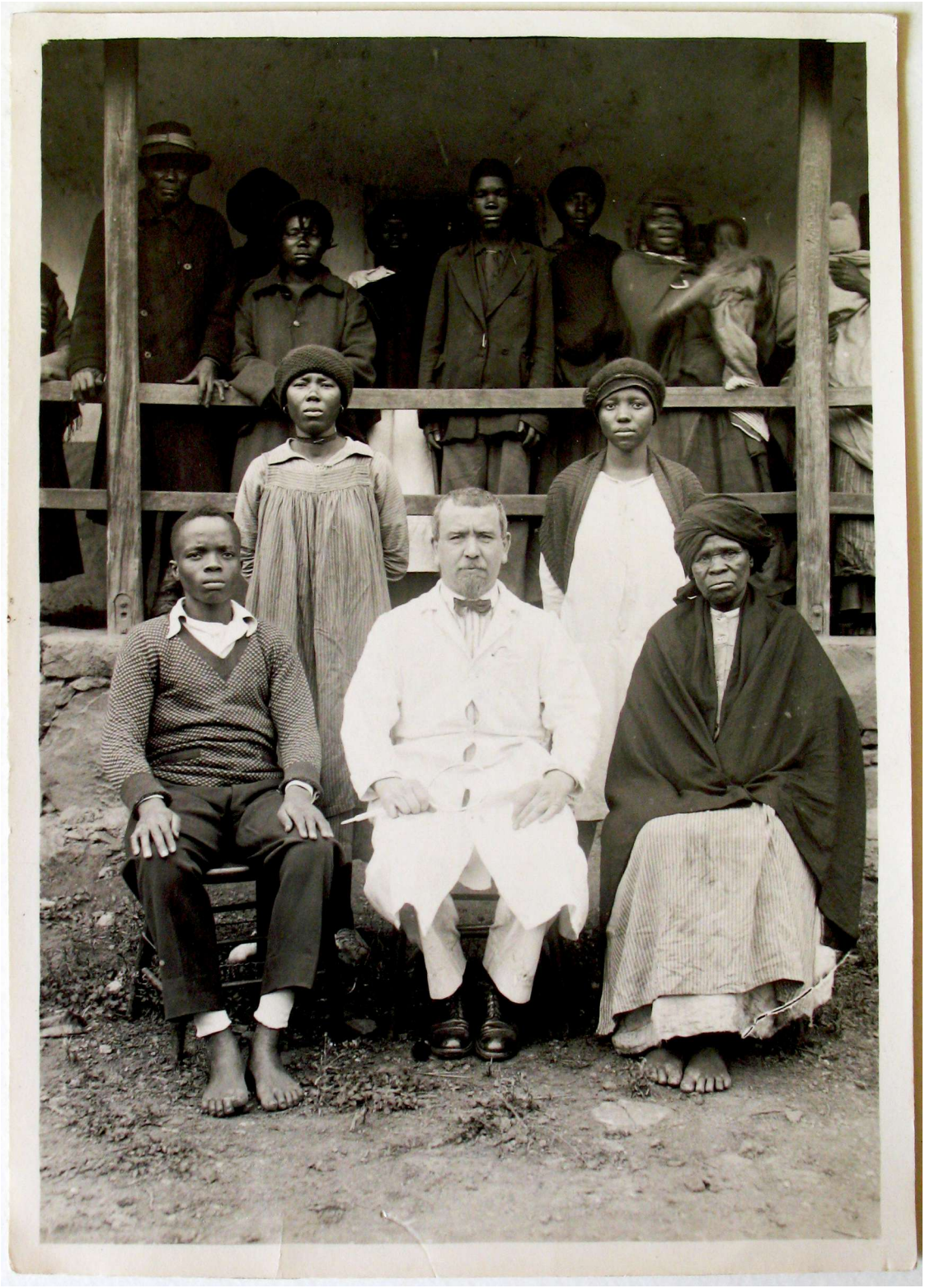


Figure 128: original caption: "*Dr. Kohler und sein schwarzes Personal: Maler (rechts sitzend), Hebamme (links), Apothekengehilfin und Sprechstundengehilfin (stehend)*"—"Dr. Kohler and his Black staff: painter (seated right), midwife (left), dispensary assistant and consultation assistant (standing)", unknown photographer (AMI, also published in Kohler 1930:19).

Kohler and Bhengu had an active working-relationship between 1926 and 1931, and less frequently up to 1934. Even though Schlosser (1971) stated that Bhengu worked for Kohler as early as 1926, it was only by October 1927 that Kohler started referring to him in his correspondence with Becker. Nevertheless, the accessioning book of Bhengu's work at KCAL dates the earliest works to February 1926.[666] According to Schlosser, Bhengu produced more than 150 works while at Centocow, of which not even one sixth was published at the time with Kohler's articles and books. One such unpublished example is the following painting, currently in the collection of the Johannesburg Art Gallery (Figure 129). It depicts a group of 21 women, children, and men encircling a standing man holding a book in his left hand, while raising the index finger of his right hand high into the air. According to the caption, applied by the registrator at JAG , the man is a preaching catechist and reciting from a Bible or catechism. The women to the right appear in local "Bhaca" fashion and hairstyle, as Bhengu would often depict them in his early work. The backdrop is constituted by a succession of three very distinct houses, as they would not have appeared together in the Centocow area at the time. The dome-shaped house was typical for the Mariannhill area around 1900, while the round house with thatched roof was indeed common around Centocow and Lourdes. Rectangular huts, like the one to the very right were commonly pointed out in photographs of both places as the more "advanced" architecture to be found in Christian settlements. The mountain range in the far background was again typical for Bhengu's correct depictions of the landscape around Centocow (see my discussion below).

Comparing this painting to a photograph taken by Br. Aegidius Müller near Mariannhill in 1909 (Figure 130), allows us to consider Bhengu's painting as a sophisticated adaptation in form of a montage. Using several of Müller's photographs as templates, Bhengu shifted elements and introduced new ones. He copied the postures of many protagonists, for example the sitting man to the very left. Also several of the women to the right are painted in the same postures, but redressed according to the local fashion associated with the "Bhaca". Müller instead had identified the people he photographed as Christian converts in an article (Müller 1910).[667] Bhengu furthermore replaced the beer receptacle with the preacher and thereby altered the image's main theme. On the one hand, Bhengu eclectically, yet creatively assimilated aspects of circulating images into his own painterly cosmos. On the other hand, he indeed painted mimetically "from life", as we will see in the next example. We no longer have access to all 150 works of Bhengu's oeuvre at Centocow and we also cannot provide photographic prototypes for all of Bhengu's paintings. The exact ratio of Bhengu's work regarding copies and montages on the one hand and mimetic depiction on the other, can therefore no longer be estimated. For the rest of this chapter, I shall thus describe Kohler's and Bhengu's co-productions of socially buoyant images.

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[666] This would have been not even three months after Kohler's arrival. While this may be the case, the listing also confuses an accession number applied by Kohler as "628" with the date "June 1928". This makes the accessioning book an unreliable source.

[667] I discuss the respective photographic occasion involving several other photographs elsewhere (Rippe 2018).

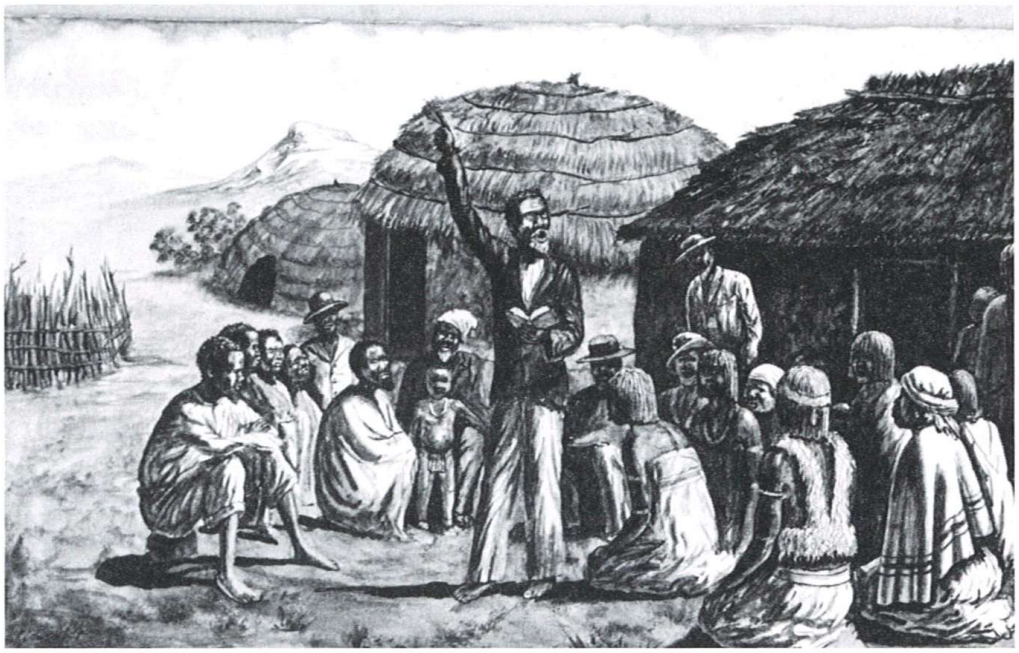


Figure 129: descriptive caption applied by the Johannesburg Art Gallery: “The Preacher” (Johannesburg Art Gallery, as published in Berman 1993:245).



Figure 130: original caption on glass plate negative: “*Kaffern beim Biertrunk, 10. September 1909*”—“Kafirs at a beer drink, 10 September 1909” (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).

For the first time in 1928, Kohler used 13 of Bhengu's paintings to illustrate an article for the institute's yearbook. According to Kohler's correspondence, Bhengu had produced these paintings before October 1927. Kohler's first illustrated articles were informative descriptions of the mission station and his medical practice to inform a German readership: "The office of the mission doctor [cf. Figures 127 and 131] is the centre of the entire endeavour. It consists of two rooms, which serve as counselling room, pharmacy, operation room, and as artistic studio [*Maleratelier*] for my assistant Gerard Bhengu" (Kohler 1928:18). In the same article, Kohler wrote about another painting by Bhengu that depicts the hospital where the sickest patients sleep:

> The European reader will laugh at the fact that I report about such a rudimentary condition at all. The missionary instead will think that it looks a bit too much like painterly order: 'natives will not have themselves housed like this, the doctor is not going to trick me!'

Kohler retorted to this imagined critique:

> The image is indeed faithful [*treu*]! After daybreak it does look like this. Even natives adjust to the hospital routine, even if, I do confess it, they have to be very sick to do so.[668] (Kohler 1928:23)

Initially, Kohler felt the need to defend the paintings' authenticity, as they were supposed to work as mimetic representations within his narrative on his immediate environment and work routine. Only one original painting of this published series is left in the archives of the institute in Würzburg today. All others were sent back to Centocow once they had been reproduced for the yearbook, because Kohler needed them for an exhibition at Mariannhill Monastery. From 1-20 July, 1928 the "First South African Vacation Course" took place at Mariannhill. It was the first of Mariannhill's teachers' vacation courses, which were organised by the various South African Native Departments, and for the first time included both national and international participants. Kohler himself gave a talk in the English language. At the beginning of the course, Bhengu's paintings were exhibited for the very first time, and, as Kohler proudly reported to Becker, with "good success".[669]

[668] My own translation from the German original.
[669] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 28.07.1928.



Figure 131: original caption: "*Bild. 2. Das Büro im Inneren. Schimmelbuchersatz* [sic]"[670]—"Figure 2. The interior of the office. Schimmelbusch replacement" (as published in Kohler 1928:19).

[670] Should be "*Schimmelbuschersatz"*. A replacement for a medical device to deliver an anaesthetic, conceived by the physician Curt Schimmelbusch.

Some of Kohler's articles eventually discussed medical problems at Centocow, and only by 1930 he started working on an article, which he himself considered as explicitly "ethnographic". This was a study of a so-called "first-fruits ceremony" for which Kohler and Bhengu carried out research together, and for which Bhengu produced several illustrations. It is the only documented occasion where Bhengu drew "from life" that can be localised in space and time. Before addressing this occasion, I discuss the background to ethnological studies in the next section, as well as Kohler's epistemological ideas bridging ethnology, medicine, and art.

Bhengu and Kohler had an intense working relationship of frequent conversations until 1931, when they parted for unknown reasons. Until 1935 they must have still met occasionally when Bhengu visited family at Centocow.[671] During their five years together at Centocow, the two men developed a particular form of interaction through artistic patronage and co-authorship: they interpreted and translated for each other their respective lifeworlds in regard to medical practice, religion, language, ethnography, and art. Kohler considered Bhengu as "his painter-boy" and introduced him to certain traditions of art, while Bhengu worked as his *amanuensis*:[672] his scribe, translator, Zulu teacher, "door opener", and informant for research. In this way, both men became indispensable intermediaries for each other, and both careers would have developed differently had this not been the case. In late February 1931, at the end of their cooperation, Kohler stated that Bhengu presented a "nice and stimulating avocation" to him, despite being "a lot of work at the same time, and a financial burden, which went into the thousands":[673] for years Kohler had been supporting Bhengu's mother and siblings financially.[674] On top of the school fees for his son Charley and the new car, this additional stress may have caused their separation in the course of 1931. Kohler payed £8 in total to his entire staff per month,[675] of which Bhengu alone received £3. Bhengu himself considered this an extraordinary salary (Schlosser 1971:123).[676]

Eventually, Kohler wrote to Becker in 1931 that "the gentlemen of the Education Department were very interested in Gerard", and that he had had several possibilities "to get rid of him to Protestant circles", but that "he did not do it". In particular he mentioned "the millionaire Mr. Pim from Johannesburg", whom he had acquainted through Charles T. Loram. Kohler had first met Loram during the before-mentioned vacation course at Mariannhill Monastery in 1928. Loram must have seen Bhengu's exhibition and eventually made Pim aware

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671 In this year, Kohler's ten-year-vow ended, and he was free to leave Centocow. Sketches at the KCAL, which were eventually used in Kohler's 1941 publication, are dated to 1934 and 1935. Thus all "ethnographic" cooperations, which are of interest to me here, can be limited to the timeframe of five years, between 1930 and 1935.

672 "A literary or artistic assistant, in particular one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts" (Stevenson and Lindberg 2010). This term was for example used by Van Warmelo to describe Kohler's research intermediaries (Kohler 1941:5).

673 Kohler probably counted in Shillings, not in Pounds.

674 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 20.02.1931. My own translation from the German original.

675 MIA: letter, Kohler to Becker, ??.05.31.

676 CMMA-GR: statistical sheets on Centocow indicate that senior teaching staff at the mission's school received £ 1-6 during the early 1920s.

of Bhengu and his work. James Howard Pim (1862-1934) was an accountant, Johannesburg politician, philanthropist, and art patron.[677] Since 1916, he had been on the committee of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, to which a part of his art collection was transferred after his death in 1934 (Gutsche 1968). By "getting rid" of Bhengu, Kohler seemed to suggest that he could have arranged for Pim to become Bhengu's main patron instead.[678] But Kohler had plans of his own for Bhengu at the time. He promoted him through exhibitions wherever he could, not only at Mariannhill, but also in Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. He even tried to establish contacts with the philanthropic Harmon Foundation in New York, in order to sell Bhengu's paintings commercially in the US.[679]

While Bhengu received advice, guidance, and material support from Kohler regarding his development as painter, also Kohler benefitted considerably from Bhengu's presence. Kohler kept notebooks on conversations in Zulu and had dedicated at least one of these remaining books to reflect on conversations with Bhengu. Even if his last-born daughter Elisabeth remembered that Kohler was not an active Zulu speaker, his research material and manuscripts at KCAL say otherwise. They point to a considerable effort to master the language. Kohler made extensive notes on Bryant's *Zulu Dictionary* (1905) and other authors, from which he excerpted medical terminology and ethnographically relevant material on the area. He kept his notebooks in German, English, Zulu, and in a particular kind of shorthand. This shorthand he may have adopted from his mentor Jacobus van Warmelo, who is known for a very idiosyncratic style (cf. Kohler 1941:5).[680] Kohler had started to learn Zulu within a few months after arriving at Centocow, as he wrote to Becker in March 1926.[681] By 1929 he mentioned that his son "Charley is a master of Zulu, but speaks lousy German. […] If necessary, he can already act as an interpreter for me. I myself study the language persistently and have some hope to master it one day".[682]

In letters to his friend and colleague Dr. Fritz Drexler in China, as well as to Fr. Becker, Kohler described Bhengu as "a gifted painter" and even "a genius".[683] Although Kohler was very fond of Bhengu, and probably also proud of having discovered his "painter boy", he generally described Africans according to the racist attitudes and terminology of the established contemporary pseudo-scientific discourse. Even if he did not explicitly place Africans on an evolutionary ladder, he regularly applied a spectrum from "un-civilised" to "civilised" in his publications and letters. In an article titled "*Die Ärztliche Versorgung von Negern*" (1935)[684],

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677 For the involvement of both Loram and Pim in the formation of South African racial politics see Dubow (1989) and Legassick (1995).

678 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 20.02.1931. My own translation of the German original: "*Ich hatte schon Gelegenheit ihn an Protestantische Kreise los zu bekommen*, […]".

679 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 07.12.1929. It is unclear whether this contact was ever established.

680 Also see the online documentation of the N.J. van Warmelo Collection, University of Johannesburg.

681 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 12.03.1926.

682 AMI: letter, Kohler to Drexler, 20.04.1929. My own translation from the German original.

683 AMI: letter, Kohler to Drexler, 26.06.1928.

684 "Medical Care for Negroes".

Kohler used no less than seven different nouns (most considered highly offensive, not only from today's perspective) interchangeably on one single page, in order to refer to Black South Africans: "savages [*Wilde*]", "inferior peoples [*tieferstehende Völker*]", "primitives [*Primitive*]", "negroes [*Neger*]", "Bantu negroes [*Bantuneger*]", "blacks [*Schwarze*]" and "natives [*Eingeborene*]". Judging from his earlier writings, he did so for the purpose of creating textual variety, and not in order to write in an exceptionally abusive way.

While Kohler commented on Africans at large, he focused on one specific group and occupation over the years: after the common tenets in contemporary science and religion, he considered the institution of the local African diviner and doctor as the central problem in what he thought to be a "primitive" society. While working at Centocow, Kohler had repeated encounters with such *izangoma* and *isinyanga*. As a medical practitioner he perceived them as competition to his own profession: the fact that many of the mission's subjects still consulted these African doctors in addition to his own services, repeatedly became part of Kohler's evaluations (eg. Kohler 1935:125). Nevertheless, he developed a strong fascination for them, which eventually resulted into a publications (Kohler 1941). In the process he developed ideas on authentic representations through the written word, but also on illustrating his texts with Bhengu's paintings.

In the following section I describe these ideas as they culminated towards 1931, when Kohler's interests in medical writing and illustration, propaganda, art, and ethnography began to overlap. Other than "photographic occasions", "painterly occasions" are by the medium's nature more complex to analyse. One reason is that we cannot know for sure whether a painting was indeed created in the co-presence of what it represents. In order to describe Bhengu's and Kohler's process of co-production over the next sections, I first analyse the experiences preceding the occasion, then the circumstances of one particular painterly occasion in 1930, and eventually the process of post-production of text and images for publication.

Reestablishing the "Native Mind"

This book did not convince me. It is an attempt to analyse the primitive mind psychologically. But essentially such an attempt is equal to a journey into outer space.

Max Kohler in an unpublished review of Lévy-Bruhl's *How Natives Think*, (1925 [1910]), approx. in 1940.[685]

Perhaps the greatest difficulty which Europeans meet in their efforts to know the native mind is their inability or rather unwillingness to think 'black', to 'slip' mentally into the situation of the native and then think from that point of view.

Fr. Bernhard Huss, "The Evolution of the South African Native Mind", in the journal *Africa* (1931:445).

These two quotes by Max Kohler and Mariannhill's Fr. Bernard Huss express an anxiety about the existence of an alternative logic in the lifeworld of colonised people; or as Tambiah put it, "multiple orderings of reality"; these were even thought to exist within one person (1990:84-110). The British intellectualist school of anthropologists, represented by Tylor and Frazer, started to psychologise "primitive" thought during the late nineteenth century as a construct of individualistic associative thinking, which, according to them, occurred with both colonial subjects and peasant Europeans alike. We may want to consider, however, that the notion first appeared in colonial practice, such as administration (cf. Pels and Salemink 1999). As Dubow explains for the South African case, the effort to explore the "native mind" increased as the perspective of anthropologists and psychologists converged during the first decades of the 20th century (1995:203). From the 1910s, the French Lucien Lévy-Bruhl developed the idea that "primitive" *collective* thinking had a logic, which was radically different from Western "civilised" thinking, but could nevertheless be understood as being coherent in itself.[686] The discourse about the Other's mind as specifically "primitive", "native", or "African" continued to be a concern in the administrative colonial discourse in other African colonies for several decades to come (Pels 2011).

In the quote above Kohler commented on Lévy-Bruhl's standpoint that the "primitive mind" and its logic was radically different from the one of the "civilised mind". While Kohler acknowledged the alleged existence of this radical difference, we shall see that he struggled with the possibilities to approach and thus comprehend it. Huss, instead, focused on the increasingly difficult relationships, which South African missionaries, academic "social anthropologists and ethnologists", as well as government representatives had with the "new native" (Huss 1931:446, also see Couzens 1985:32-37). This "new native", in Huss's account, wanted to partake in South African society and at the same time dared to talk back: by saying that in fact Black Africans themselves fully understood Europeans, while the latter in turn would never be able to fully

[685] KCAL: In a listing of his library's contents Kohler discussed the German translation *Das Denken der Naturvölker* (1921). My own translation from the German original.

[686] See Evans-Pritchard (1934) for a contemporary overview of critiques.

penetrate their thoughts (cf. Chapter One). South African anthropologists, missionaries, and educators envisioned things similarly to their European peers, but necessarily had to devise a more practical and instrumental approach in direct interaction with African subjects. While Huss considered a mutual understanding between Black and White—given sufficient effort—as truly possible, Kohler did not want to "journey into outer space" himself and thus ruled out the possibility for an empathetic approach to study his African contemporaries. Instead, he employed Bhengu to translate for him, in particular by creating "working objects" in the form of paintings, which could then be studied independently from the event they represent and the person who made them. Even if Kohler never had the chance to publish on this matter extensively, he leaned to Freudian psychoanalytical ideas.

In February 1931, when corresponding about exhibitions and new publications, Kohler told his superior in Würzburg with an ironic inflection that "some ethnographic sketches by Bhengu would be appropriate, as 'Bantu research' is becoming a fashion in South Africa these days".[687] Already by 1933, the entry on Max Kohler in the *Who's Who in Natal* mentioned only one single hobby: "Medical ethnology" (Olsen 1933:145). Kohler further wrote to Becker that—even though ethnographic writing may not be suited for the general audience of the institute's yearbook—the South African government had indeed purchased the yearbook, especially for his ethnographic articles. Undoubtedly he referred to the interest and work of Nicolaas Jacobus van Warmelo (1904-1989), who had been appointed as "government ethnologist" on 7 March 1930 within the Ethnological Section of the South African Native Affairs Department. Throughout the following decade, Kohler and Van Warmelo would collaborate on two books: *Marriage Customs in Southern Natal* (1933) and *The Izangoma Diviners* (1941) were published in Van Warmelo's series of short ethnological monographs, titled "Ethnological Publications".

This engagement involved collaboration almost as close as the one between Kohler and Bhengu. But as with Bhengu, it is yet unclear when, where, and how Kohler first met Van Warmelo.[688] There is a chance that they already had an encounter in Hamburg, when Kohler followed a course on tropical medicine at the Institut für Schiffs- und Tropenkrankheiten, from October to December 1924 (cf. Kohler 1925). Possibly with a temporal overlap, Van Warmelo studied under the linguist Carl Meinhof and Georg Thilenius[689] for his doctorate between 1925 and 1929 at the Hamburgisches Kolonialinstitut (Hammond-Tooke 1997:109). Later in South Africa, the working relationship between Van Warmelo and Kohler must have been intense. Despite the fact that Kohler was 20 years Van Warmelo's senior, the latter appears to have held the instructing position. Kohler's daughter Elisabeth told me that Van Warmelo visited the family at Centocow and also at their later home in Tabankulu (Eastern Cape), where Kohler became district surgeon in 1936. During an undated visit to Centocow, Van Warmelo took a series of photographs. It survived in the Van Warmelo Collection at the archives of the University of

[687] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 20.02.1931. My own translation from the German original.

[688] No original correspondence between the two has survived in Kohler-related archives, and Van Warmelo-related archives in Pretoria have yet to be evaluated.

[689] Thilenius was the director of Hamburg's ethnological museum between 1904 and 1935.

Johannesburg and consists of scenic shots of the mission, but also of several women and men identified as either *Amabhaca* or *Amakhuze*. Van Warmelo photographed some individuals in classic anthropological frontal and profile views with neutralised backdrops and used them for the co-publications with Kohler (1933, 1941). Kohler wrote the texts in German and Van Warmelo then translated and edited. The latter had a good command of German because he had studied in Hamburg and the family spoke the language at home. Even though Van Warmelo's wife was the daughter of a German missionary,[690] Van Warmelo himself was not a practicing Christian (Hammond-Tooke 1997:115). Whether for the reason of his own distance to religion, or only for the purpose to create a straightforward scientific account, Van Warmelo eventually rearranged Kohler's manuscripts. In the process of editing and translating, Van Warmelo deleted "psychological explanations and perspectives on the missionary aspects".[691] As Kohler expressed to Becker in Würzburg, he disapproved of these alterations. According to Hammond-Tooke, Van Warmelo wanted to keep the series "essentially descriptive and non-theoretical. They were also ideologically neutral […]" (1995:123-124).

In the same year, 1931, when Kohler first mentioned his interest in ethnography to his superior in Würzburg, he also published his only article in the journal *Anthropos* on a medical case study (Kohler 1931). At the same time he offered an ethnographic article to the popular German travel magazine *Atlantis*. Again three years later, in 1934, he hoped to publish an article on *iqondo*[692] in the London-based journal *Africa*. For this reason Kohler corresponded with the editor Diedrich Westermann, who had been, just like Van Warmelo, a student of Carl Meinhof. Despite these connections, both the popular and the academic publication never materialised. Kohler's writing career thus never developed any greater momentum, even though he was personally tutored by Van Warmelo. The constant quarrel with editors about his style of writing was summarised by Fr. Christophorus Becker: "One can see that you are not an innate writer [*Schriftsteller*], despite the valuable work as such, which you have delivered so far. […] The language is often incorrect, and its meaning can only be determined with difficulties".[693]

The encounter between Van Warmelo, Kohler, and Bhengu took place at a time when considerable changes regarding the practice of medicine, moral, and representations by missionaries coincided with changes in South African social anthropology. Compared to the institutionalisation of German ethnology and British social anthropology at the respective universities and museums during the last decades of the 19th century, social anthropology was only institutionalised in South Africa with the election of Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown for the first chair at the University of Cape Town in 1921 (Gordon 1990, Hammond-Tooke 1997, Kuper 1999, Stocking 1995). As we already know, two of his competitors had been the former

690 Hammond-Tooke only mentions that he had been a missionary to the Venda, and it is therefore likely that he was a Lutheran missionary of the Berlin Mission. This would mean that Van Warmelo was closely connected to the same religious milieu as Eiselen.

691 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 02.02.1934. My own translation from the German original.

692 A Zulu term related to the social construction of venereal diseases.

693 AMI: letter, Becker to Kohler, 15.06.1932. My own translation from the German original.

Mariannhill priests Fr. Alfred T. Bryant and Fr. Willibald Wanger (Schapera 1990:6-7). Even if both of them were dismissed as merely linguistic experts, Kohler and many other scholars still relied on their work for the history and ethnography of Natal and Zululand.[694]

In addition to its late start in South Africa, already by the mid-1920s the discipline further split into several branches. Next to the two academic schools of English-speaking social anthropology and Afrikaans-speaking *Volkekunde* at their respective universities, there appeared a more "instrumental" strain of anthropology, which was represented by Van Warmelo as "government ethnologist". British social anthropology in South Africa since Radcliffe-Brown increasingly promoted the study of Black and White within one social system (Gordon 1990:28-30). *Volkekunde*, as initiated by Werner Eiselen, instead maintained a study of separated cultures. Like Van Warmelo and Westermann, Eiselen had studied for a PhD in Hamburg with Carl Meinhof. Sarah Pugach (2004, 2012) shows how the German linguistic and ethnological tradition influenced this particular group of South African scholars, whose work eventually became crucial in the intellectual underpinning of apartheid (also see Bank 2015, Gordon 1988, Sharp 1981). Apparently, Kohler's mentor, Van Warmelo, "was not an Afrikaner in a cultural sense" (Hammond-Tooke 1997:115) and his work as government ethnologist may thus be regarded as an alternatively organised strain to the two nationalistic orientations. According to what has been said so far, we can nevertheless state that Kohler was leaning towards a German tradition of ethnology, rather than British social anthropology.

In 1920, when recommending Radcliffe-Brown for the position in Cape Town, Alfred C. Haddon explained in a letter to the South African Prime Minister Smuts how useful ethnographic research would be, not only as a scientific endeavour, but especially for managing the Black population.[695] In line with this assumption, the Department of Native Affairs founded an "Ethnological Section" in 1925 under Gérard Paul Lestrade, which Van Warmelo took over on 7 March 1930. He alone directed it for the first fifteen years (Hammond-Tooke 1997:109). Even though the section was "innocent of any clear policy", the collection of ethnographic data was apparently useful for the formulation of "native law" and for resolving succession disputes (ibid. 1997:111). In his publication *A Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa* (1935) Van Warmelo eventually provided a manifestation of South African political entities regarding their ethnicities ("classification"), locations ("distribution"), and numbers. This study later served as a template in creating the "African Homelands" or "Bantustans" during Apartheid (Pugach 2004, 2012).[696] According to Hammond-Tooke, who worked under Van Warmelo, the latter saw

[694] Wanger returned to Germany immediately after applying at UCT, while Bryant stayed on and returned to England only in the course of the 1930s. I will further discuss their influence below.

[695] Haddon, cited in Schapera (1990:4): (1) "the advancement of scientific knowledge" and (2) "the advantage which would accrue to the Government for the purpose of administration in having authoritative information concerning the sociology, manners and customs, and religion of the various tribes". (Also see Stocking 1995:325, and Chapter Three of this study).

[696] Pugach (2004:838, 2012:181-184) attributes this observation to Hammond-Tooke (1995, 1997). The crucial role of Van Warmelo's publication (1935) is confirmed by Bank (2015). It remains nevertheless unclear how exactly the publication was eventually evaluated after the 1940s in an Apartheid context.

himself confronted with the problem that not many scholarly ethnographies were available by the late 1920s. Therefore he initiated the series of short and cheaply produced monographs called "Ethnological Publications". This pragmatic approach even justified the contribution of non-professionals to the project, such as Kohler.[697] Even though Van Warmelo lamented the lack of ethnographic work, he also considered earlier work by missionaries of all denominations as valuable data, including the articles by Br. Aegidius Müller and his confreres in *Anthropos* and even in Mariannhill's *Vergißmeinnicht*. He eventually mined such journals and periodicals in his *magnum opus*: *Anthropology of Southern Africa in Periodicals to 1950: An Analysis and Index* (1977).

Van Warmelo's focus on Centocow Mission already became evident in his 1935 *Preliminary Survey*. It is indeed the only mission station he indicated on the respective map for the entirety of the districts of Bulwer, Ixopo, and Umzimkulu. This was despite the existence of many other stations of various denominations in the area. The fact that he did not indicate them on his map does not mean that he did not visit or consult other mission workers, but at least it suggests the contemporary importance of Centocow. Once more a government representative made use of the already established social and scholarly network of Centocow as a logistic hub. Similar to the cooperation of Magistrate Clarke and Fr. Emanuel Hanisch 20 years earlier (cf. Chapter Four), this cooperation had a considerable outcome in the form of textual and visual documents.

On an international level, this development must be seen in relation to the foundation of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IIALC)[698] in 1926 and its journal *Africa,*[699] for which Kohler planned an article. This institute notably developed with the considerable involvement of Protestant and Catholic missionaries (L'Estoile 2007, Smith 1934). Once the South African Government had withdrawn funding for Africanist research in 1931, it was the institute that made funding available for South African anthropologists through the Rockefeller Foundation (Kuper 1999). It was therefore no coincidence that Van Warmelo worked with Kohler, and that Westermann asked Kohler to provide an article for the journal *Africa*. Already in the first issue of 1928, the institute's chairman (and architect of indirect rule) Frederick J.D. Lugard had pointed to the importance of missionary knowledge in Africa and its potential for the common interests of administration, education, and mission in Africa. Five out of 15 members of the institute's executive council were missionaries (three Catholic, one Methodist, one Protestant), amongst them Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt, the founder of the journal *Anthropos*. Next to several others, members also included Carl Meinhof, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, and Alfred Schachtzabel, the Africa curator of Berlin's ethnographic museum (Lugard 1928:2, 10-11).

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697 Also see the *Department of Native Affairs, Report, 1950–1957*, p. 15, cited in Lekhoathi (2009:74).

698 The institute still exists today as the International African Institute (IAI).

699 Also see van der Geest and Kirby (1992) for an analysis of the reception of mission influences in anthropological monographs between 1930 and 1965. They take the institute's foundation as a starting point.

In the course of 1931, Diedrich Westermann[700] and Richard Thurnwald followed with two articles providing advice explicitly for missionaries on how to conduct anthropological research.[701] Westermann introduced general problems of fieldwork and stressed the need for the cultivation of native intermediaries as informants, as well as the recording of texts in the vernacular (1931:168). Thurnwald further specified possible research in fields of economics, politics, family, social life, law, and personality. Both repeatedly suggested to study the respective changes in these fields of African contact with Europeans. Even if the relationship of missionaries and functionalist anthropologists at the time appears to have been still merely diplomatic (Pels 1990:87), there was no open antagonism to missionaries. A common tenet with actors of mission, anthropology, and administration was that "old traditions must not be pushed on one side and ignored, on the contrary they should be carefully studied to see if there is not embedded in them something that can be incorporated in the new order, or something that has to be transformed" (Westermann 1931:164). At least since 1931, also Kohler's home institution, the Missionsärztliches Institut in Würzburg, included an "introduction to ethnology" in the preparatory courses for mission doctors, which was provided by Fr. Meinulf Küsters OSB (Essen 1991:154).[702] Küsters had been a missionary in South Africa until 1926, and was at the time of the courses employed as an assistant at the ethnographic museum of Munich. We will hear more about him and his relation to Kohler later.

For a short period in the late 1920s and early 1930s, a multi-layered relationship evolved: Meinhof mentored Van Warmelo, who mentored Kohler, who again mentored Bhengu. This complex constellation through several institutional backgrounds was unlikely to be one-directional, and for this reason still requires more detailed research. Even if Kohler never realised a career as writer, his attempts in this direction created multiple traces that bring us closer to an understanding of how discourses in German ethnology, British social anthropology, mission propaganda, and the transnational art world overlapped in the creation of Bhengu's paintings. In order to find more such traces as entry points, we need to jump several years ahead, to a point when Kohler started reflecting on his time at Centocow, and the three kinds of collections he had created at the time: one of Bhengu's paintings, one of objects, and one of literature.

In the early 1940s, Kohler reported to the institute in Würzburg that his physical constitution was declining. Probably due to this condition, he began to review his past engagements and drew up a catalogue of what he called "Zuluana" and "Bantuana":[703] it contains detailed lists of (1) his collection of 118 watercolour paintings (*Aquarelle*) by Bhengu;[704] of (2) his museum collection of local objects; of (3) his library of ethnographic books; and eventually of (4) his own manuscripts, of which several had been published. Like the general term

[700] Westermann was the journal's editor, one of the institute's first directors and also a former Protestant missionary.

[701] Both articles where even republished together as a special print in 1932, to be further distributed amongst missionaries.

[702] By 1936 the institute's training even included photographic and cinematographic courses, provided by the photography company Agfa-Werke in Berlin (Essen 1991:27, 154).

[703] KCAL: unaccessioned Kohler-collection.

[704] Schlosser mentions that Betty Kohler's collection consisted of 134 paintings in 1953 (1971:128).

"Africana", the nouns "Zuluana" and "Bantuana" are idiosyncratic to the South African practice and discourse on collecting. They denote collectables of, or relating to African origin.[705]

In the accession list Kohler pointed out the general, personal, and monetary value of some items. Likely as a future guideline for his wife, he indicated that "the watercolour paintings should be sold off, as they are very difficult to store and preserve". For almost every of Bhengu's 118 paintings, Kohler drew up a monetary value in Shillings, ranging from S1 to S50. According to short descriptions, they depict foremost "rural" motives such as boys herding cattle, a mother with her child, or landscapes. Seven of the paintings, however, are marked with the symbol for infinity (∞), instead of a monetary value. Apparently, Kohler considered these paintings as invaluable. Two of these are the earliest of Bhengu's paintings and depict football players; three are unidentifiable; one is called "*Polltax*"; and one "*Selbstportrait* [self-portrait]".

After her husband's death in 1948, Betty Kohler indeed tried to sell the collection and also gave some as gifts to friends in Germany (Schlosser 1971:128). 15 paintings and 2 pencil sketches she sold to Katesa Schlosser in 1959, who gave most of them away before her death in 2010. Only six remain in Schlosser's inheritance.[706] Some paintings, however, remained with the Kohler family and some of these were eventually donated to the KCAL in the 1990s. Due to the dispersal of Bhengu's oeuvre, a complete reconstruction of the collection's biography is impossible at this point. I will therefore only discuss the two before-mentioned examples *Polltax* and *Selbstportrait* in the last two sections, as Kohler produced concrete statements on both paintings. Because they had a very specific value and meaning for Kohler, they will serve as statements on the relationship between patron and painter, but also on their social environment.

According to his catalogue, Kohler also collected objects, which he compiled in a "museum". Some of these he had additionally drawn by Bhengu. Unfortunately, the exact nature, location, and spatial arrangement of this museum is unknown. When the family moved away from Centocow in 1935, Kohler shipped a considerable part of this collection to Germany with his wife:[707] he had compiled a "Native Museum" for Becker. Therefore only 40 objects of the 128 objects of his original collection remained with him in the 1940s, and it is uncertain whether Kohler continued to collect at Tabankulu. The institute had not yet started a collection by 1935, other than a few objects from Brazil. Even though Becker remarked that Kohler's collection filled an entire cabinet at the institute,[708] these objects are no longer there today. According to the list of the remaining 40 items, Kohler's original Centocow collection included the full classic array of ethnographic objects, which we are already familiar with from Mariannhill: amongst these were snuff spoons, *isangoma* paraphernalia, adornment, and also one head ring.

Kohler's third area of collecting was literature. His awareness of particular modes of

[705] The OED defines "Africana" as: "books, artefacts, and other collectors' items connected with Africa, especially southern Africa". The "Killie Campbell Africana Library" thus indicates its historical collection profile in its name.

[706] Personal communication with Schlosser's second-cousin and heir, Michael Schlosser, February 2014.

[707] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 19.10.1935. Kohler mentioned "1 chest of cargo, 1 carton of cabin luggage, and 1 item of sacking". It appears that the latter was a "bundle of spears".

[708] AMI: letter, Becker to Kohler, 03.08.1935.

ethnographic writing was based on South African examples and a wide reading of other contemporary psychological and ethnological literature. His small library contained more than 70 publications, including authors such as Sigmund Freud (1913), Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1921), and Bronislaw Malinowski (1924), to mention but a few. At the same time, Kohler's imagination was fuelled by popular fiction, in particular Rider Haggard's novels. Apart from Catholic mission literature, Kohler also consumed Anglican and Lutheran mission periodicals.[709] Correspondence in his collection at KCAL shows that at one point he went to great efforts to find a copy of *The Religious System of the Zulu* (1870). This publication by the Anglican Bishop Henry Callaway (1817-1890) was extremely rare during the early 20th century. The Mariannhill priest Fr. Willibald Wanger therefore saw a need to re-publish it (partially) in 1918 at Mariannhill Mission Press. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the publication was that Callaway placed transcripts of original conversations in Zulu next to their translations into English. Once Kohler had received a copy, he started to emulate this format. He considered it as a mode of objective representation, which he shared with Van Warmelo, to "let the native speak for himself" (cf. Hammond-Tooke 1997:114, also see Lekgoathi 2009:68).

But soon Kohler's editor Fr. Becker in Würzburg criticised him for this approach, in addition to comments on his sloppy writing style. The Zulu-German comparison was not suitable for Becker's purposes and a non-professional German audience. Nevertheless, Kohler succeeded to have one article published in this presentation style in the 1931 edition of *Anthropos* and also applied it in his co-publications with Van Warmelo. Here, Kohler put forward the same argument as he did for Bhengu's paintings: an account in the "native's own words" was superior to the description by an ethnographer. Nevertheless, he failed to problematise the multilayered processes of dictation to a scribe,[710] as well as his own laborious translations of the resulting Zulu texts into German. Although he indicated their presence, Kohler never identified these informants by name. As an exception, the earlier mentioned first-fruits ceremony became the only instance where Kohler asked Bhengu to orally describe an event for him in words, while painting it at the same time. Before we move on to this occasion, I delineate the epistemological ideas we can find in their preceding collaboration. Once we have established these, we can approach the "painterly occasion" of the first-fruits ceremony.

[709] AMI: letter, Kohler to Drexler, 20.04.1929.
[710] Even if this scribe was "native" too, and both were left alone.

"Ethnographically Reliable Culture Documents"

Over time, Kohler developed more nuanced ideas in his articles and correspondences, why it was advantageous to have Bhengu's paintings as illustrations in his books, instead of only photographs. Kohler did take photographs himself, which he also used for his second major publication *The Isangoma Diviners* (1941). His daughter, Elisabeth Weinberger, told me that her father did not possess a camera on arrival at Centocow. The first photographs (eg. Figure 126) had indeed been taken by Mariannhill priests. On one occasion in 1926, Kohler jokingly framed their attempt as an ethno-pathology: "The 'Europeans' Rev. Fr. Ludwig Tremel and Meinrad visited Centocow; the latter had a severe attack of '*photographitis*'. In case these shots turn out well, I will soon send some pictures".[711] This also shows that by 1926 photography at Mariannhill Monastery was no longer merely in the hands of Br. Leonard Weber, who ran the photographic studio between 1923 and 1939. Even though Kohler must have acquired a camera in the early 1930s, no exclusively private photographs remain of the family's time at Centocow (cf. Geary 1991). Only rather formal portraits of family members exist, which were at the same time used in the yearbook and sent as postcards to Becker. Also from the time of the Kohler family at Tabankulu between 1936 and 1948 only rather formal family portraits remain, next to some few photographs of Kohler performing his work as district surgeon. At the same time, Kohler commissioned Bhengu to paint for the family privately, as I will show further below. It is therefore impossible to delineate which medium he preferred in the contexts of either family or work. For this reason I will focus only on those examples that can be reassembled in their historical occasions.

To this end I now consider some epistemological ideas behind the production and use of images for Kohler's writing. I suggest that there were at least six reasons why Kohler valued and employed Bhengu's paintings: first, a painting can represent fictional and unobservable phenomena, something a photograph can only provide with great artistic effort and manipulation; second, in the conventional tradition of scientific publications (botany/zoology/anatomy etc.) a painting was under certain circumstances considered more "objective" than a photograph; third, Bhengu's artistic skills as an African allegedly enabled him to represent his own lifeworld "authentically"; fourth, Bhengu had privileged social access to local communities in the area; the last two reasons were on the one hand Kohler's wish to provide a stage to promote Bhengu's work in the art world, and on the other hand his enjoyment to present himself on the same stage as a patron. The last two reasons would also find their expression in photographic, as well as painterly self-fashioning—not unlike what Müller had done more than two decades earlier. In the remainder of this section I delineate the first two points. I then dedicate the second part of this chapter to the latter four points.

In the introduction to the catalogue where Kohler described 118 of Bhengu's paintings, he stated that "they are no works of art, but are made very neatly and with inventive empathy

[711] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 12.03.1926. My own translation from the German original.

[*sind originell empfunden*] by a very talented Black man. They are ethnographically correct and show several things, which cannot be purchased in form of photographs".[712] Here Kohler thought of imaginative access on the one hand, and social access on the other. Some subjects of African life, Kohler did not even try to photograph: an *umthakati* (evil sorcerer) "doctoring" an *umkhovu* (golem-like creature) by boring a red hot awl into his head, Kohler would have considered as non-representable with the camera. Instead, he left this matter to the imagination and artistic skill of Gerard Bhengu (Figure 132). Colonial literature presented the *umkhovu* as a common phenomenon of South African folklore: a human corpse could be reanimated with the help of "bad magic" and thereafter function as a servant to the respective sorcerer (Kohler 1941: 35-36).

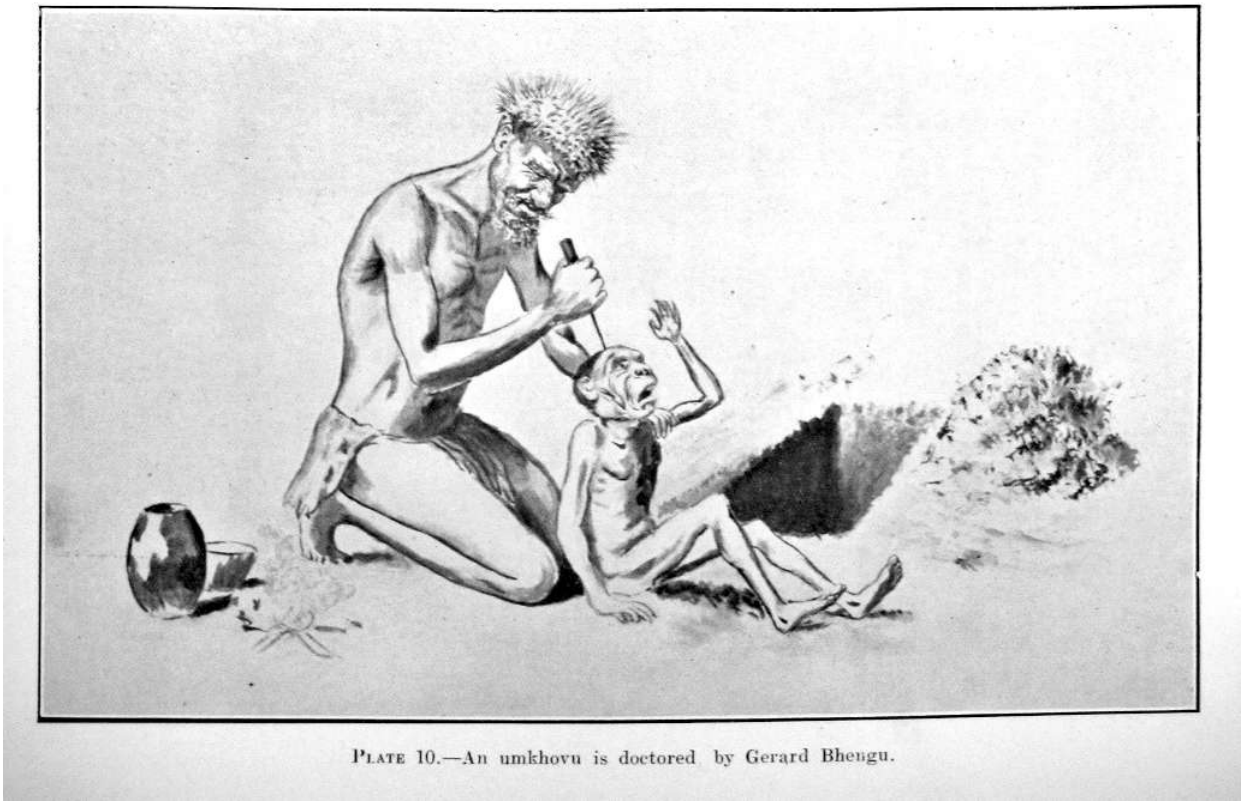


PLATE 10.—An umkhovu is doctored by Gerard Bhengu.

Figure 132: original caption: "Plate 10. An *umkhovu* is doctored, by Gerard Bhengu" (as published in Kohler 1941:74-75).

Similar to the *umkhovu*, Kohler discussed other phenomena in his medical work and writing, which were only partially visible: internal bodily symptoms are not representable photographically, other than in the case of an operation or dissection. But such illustrations would have been hardly suitable for a publication with a partially non-professional audience, such as the institute's yearbook.[713] Kohler had several plans to publish about medical issues, but

[712] KCAL: Kohler collection: list "*Aquarell Skizzen aus dem Nativeleben und Suedafrika. ca. 114 Nummern*." My own translation of the German original.

[713] Nevertheless, the yearbook occasionally presented considerably unsettling photographs of medical conditions

only one article could be realised in the yearbook with Bhengu's paintings. In the article "*Über Keloide bei Negern*" (1931a), he attempted to explain the pathology of extreme growth of skin tissue "ethnologically" through its potential dependance on local traditions of scarring and tattooing. He used photographs to show extreme keloid growth with two men sitting before white drapes, and instead two of Bhengu's paintings as examples for decorative scarring and tattooing (Figures 133 and 134).



Verzierungen im Gesicht,
die durch Einschnitte in die Haut angebracht werden

2*



Verzierungen im Gesicht,
die durch Einschnitte in die Haut angebracht werden

Figures 133 and 134: original captions: "*Verzierungen im Gesicht, die durch Einschnitte in die Haut angebracht werden*"—"decorations on the face, which are applied through incisions into the skin". Signed: *Gerard Bhengu* (as published in Kohler 1931a:15 and 17).

In both cases Bhengu maintained a very light skin tone, while drawing the scars in stark contrast. These subtle decorative incisions would have been hardly visible in monochrome photographs, first, because of the general problem of photographing dark skin, and second, because Kohler considered the quality of the yearbook's coarse photographic reproductions as generally very bad. Having studied both natural sciences and medicine, Kohler was familiar with the convention of using drawings and paintings to illustrate botanical, zoological, and anatomical descriptions. Drawing the bodies of plants, animals, and people allows for the easy manipulation of colouring, contours, lighting, shadows, and contrast. This influences the visual impression of surface, structure, and the general rendering of the subject. It also gives the opportunity to eliminate

and disfigured bodies.

supposedly unnecessary visual information, while accentuating other details. Even if this approach was a clear reaction to the insufficiency of photography and had thus already worked through the "mechanical objectivity" attributed to the medium since the 19th century, such interpretations were not based on mechanical photographs and thus "trained judgment" (Daston and Galison 2007). This created "ideal types", rather than mimetic copies. Daston and Galison describe this notion of image production as "truth-to-nature".[714]

This was the surface value of Bhengu's paintings, in order to process and create "objective" scientific knowledge. According to Kohler, there was also a depth to Bhengu's own "subjective" view and his particular vision through privileged social access. Kohler's evaluations of Bhengu's work may at first appear contradictory, but eventually show how he was torn between the racist conventions of the time, and his genuine appreciation of Bhengu's work. As I explained in the previous section, he considered Bhengu a genius during the late 1920s. Looking back from the 1940s, he judged his paintings as being "no works of art", but still having "inventive empathy". This view corresponds with the following text, written by Kohler's own mentor Van Warmelo as an introduction to *The Isangoma Diviners* in 1941. As a result of Kohler's and Van Warmelo's correspondence over ten years, it represents both mens' view regarding the value of textual and visual representations:

> The subject is one upon which full information is not easy to obtain. Reference to existing literature bears this out. The present collection also leaves many of the questions that occur to one still unanswered. But the collection has a value peculiarly its own, inasmuch as it presents the natives' own version of the matter. I believe that in preserving their own point of view one is avoiding a major source of anxiety to the anthropologist today, namely the anxiety that perhaps he is studying and collecting the wrong thing. But the very words of primitive man, talking about himself, are a source which can never lose its value.
>
> Of the illustrations the same may be said. Apart from the photographs taken by Dr. Kohler at a seance which he attended at considerable risk, the illustrations were drawn by a promising young native artist of Centocow. This was Gerard Bhengu, who first developed his talent under Dr. Kohler's eye and direction. He has illustrated certain conceptions familiar to all of his people, and has done in pictures what the other informants did in words. The best European artist could not have given us anything half as good, for no European can draw what is in a native's mind. (Van Warmelo in his introduction to Kohler's *The Isangoma Diviners*, 1941:5)

In this particular case, Van Warmelo and Kohler did not consider Bhengu's work as a mimetic representation of reality. They were not supposed to fulfil a "mechanical objectivity", as for example claimed by Müller when crafting his own racial atlas in 1909 (cf. Chapter One). Kohler and Van Warmelo rather saw Bhengu's work in a similar way of Müller's genre scenes, which presented a condensed and supposedly *typical* situation of "everyday life". They perceived Bhengu and his work as a medium, able to represent in a kind of "native objectivity". The two patrons suggested that Bhengu's paintings provided a certain amount of objectivity, accountable for within the framework of Bhengu's own "Other" lifeworld. According to the contemporary perspectives I introduced in the last section, the two scholars suggested that Bhengu's paintings allowed them, if not to enter, at least to distinguish the "native mind".

[714] According to their analysis this "epistemic virtue" was joined in around 1860 by "mechanical objectivity", and in the early 20th century by "trained judgement". However, according to them all three can exist simultaneously.

Bhengu was born in the area and therefore able to access many subjects and social events, which he accordingly painted for Kohler.[715] In the early 1930s, Kohler tried to photograph certain events involving *izangoma* himself ("at a seance which he attended at considerable risk"), but described the immense difficulties he had in short captions to his photographic scrapbooks. In one case he noted that a photograph shows the unwillingness of the subject to be photographed. As the *isangoma* tried to avoid the camera, Kohler had to take the image at a great distance. Eventually, he could only make the person recognisable through considerable enlargement of the image. While this indicates the potential invasiveness on the part of Kohler and his photographic camera, Bhengu's presence with only pencil and paper was likely less suspicious. The same criteria for access are valid for the case of the first-fruits ceremony, which I discuss in the following section.

Three decades later, Katesa Schlosser still expressed a very similar opinion regarding Bhengu's capacity: in 1971, she wrote that his "lively Bantu portraits are painted with such great capacity of mental empathy [*psychisches Einfühlungsvermögen*], as could never be done by a white man" (Schlosser 1971:121). In particular Bhengu's earliest paintings under the mentorship of Kohler, Schlosser considered as "ethnographically reliable culture documents", owed to "his exact knowledge of the tiniest details of Bantu life". At the same time she insisted that "he never added ethnographically incorrect attributes" (1971:127).[716] It remains unclear, however, how she arrived at this conclusion and what she considered as "ethnographically incorrect". Six years earlier, also Savory had claimed that Bhengu's "delightful studies […] were taken from actual life" (1965). Despite this claim, several of Bhengu's portraits in her volume show appropriations of photographs from Mariannhill's studio. Even if all of these observers argued that Bhengu's works were authentic and thus objective representations, they did so for slightly different reasons. While Kohler and Van Warmelo considered the paintings as complex working objects relating to Bhengu as subject and his lifeworld, Schlosser indeed considered them as highly mimetic representations. Savory instead evaluated them within the contemporary art paradigm as skilfully made "from life", which only establishes aesthetic value, not necessarily correct representation.

It is nevertheless unclear in all of these cases whether Bhengu's paintings were either based on pre-exiting artwork, synthesised from general experience, painted from direct observation, or entirely of his own imagination. To clarify this situation for parts of Bhengu's oeuvre, I suggest that Bhengu and Kohler's image-producing relationship may thus be considered as showing characteristics of at least one of Daston and Galison's "epistemic virtues". Even though these cannot be applied one to one in a colonial, or rather a segregationist situation (cf. Pels 2014), there are similarities which are hard to ignore. First of all, the situation differed

[715] Bhengu may not have been able to access every event, especially due to his affiliation with the mission and his identity as *kholwa*.

[716] My own translation from the German original: "*Dank seiner genauen Kenntnis aller kleinsten Details des Bantulebens sind vor allem seine ersten Arbeiten völkerkundlich zuverlässige Kulturdokumente.* […] *Ethnographisch falsche Attribute hat Bhengu damals nicht hinzugefügt*" Schlosser (1971:127).

due to the fact that Kohler framed Bhengu explicitly as an exceptional image producer. Even where this was not the case, we can still retrace the intersubjective process. As I already indicated, some of Bhengu's paintings produced near Centocow can therefore be considered as what Daston and Galison call "reasoned images" (2007:42).

As such, Bhengu's paintings ranged on a spectrum between Bhengu's subjectivity on the one side and Kohler's on the other. In the rest of this chapter I develop the idea that Kohler and Bhengu occasionally worked in a fashion, which Daston and Galison call "four-eyed sight" (ibid.:84). They use this term to describe the cooperation of natural scientists and their illustrators in the 17th century, in which the mind of the scientist and the hand of the artist were supposed to coalesce. Daston and Galison explain for the case of typified ideal versions of botanical specimen drawings: "The reasoned image was authored: synthesized, typified, idealized by the intellect of the naturalist. In order to transfer that reasoned image to the page, the artist had to become something like a medium, not merely a subordinate" (ibid.:95). I am well aware that I address an epistemic virtue, which Daston and Galison discuss for a much earlier time period. But as they indicate themselves, epistemic virtues did not necessarily erase each other historically (ibid.:18). Unlike Müller and Von Luschan, who communicated over long distances in 1899, Kohler and Bhengu worked side by side. How they indeed influenced each other while writing and painting, we can only partially reconstruct for some examples, such as the case of a first-fruits ceremony, to which we now turn.

Re-tracing the *Ingcubhe*: From "Actual Life" to "Four-Eyed Sight"

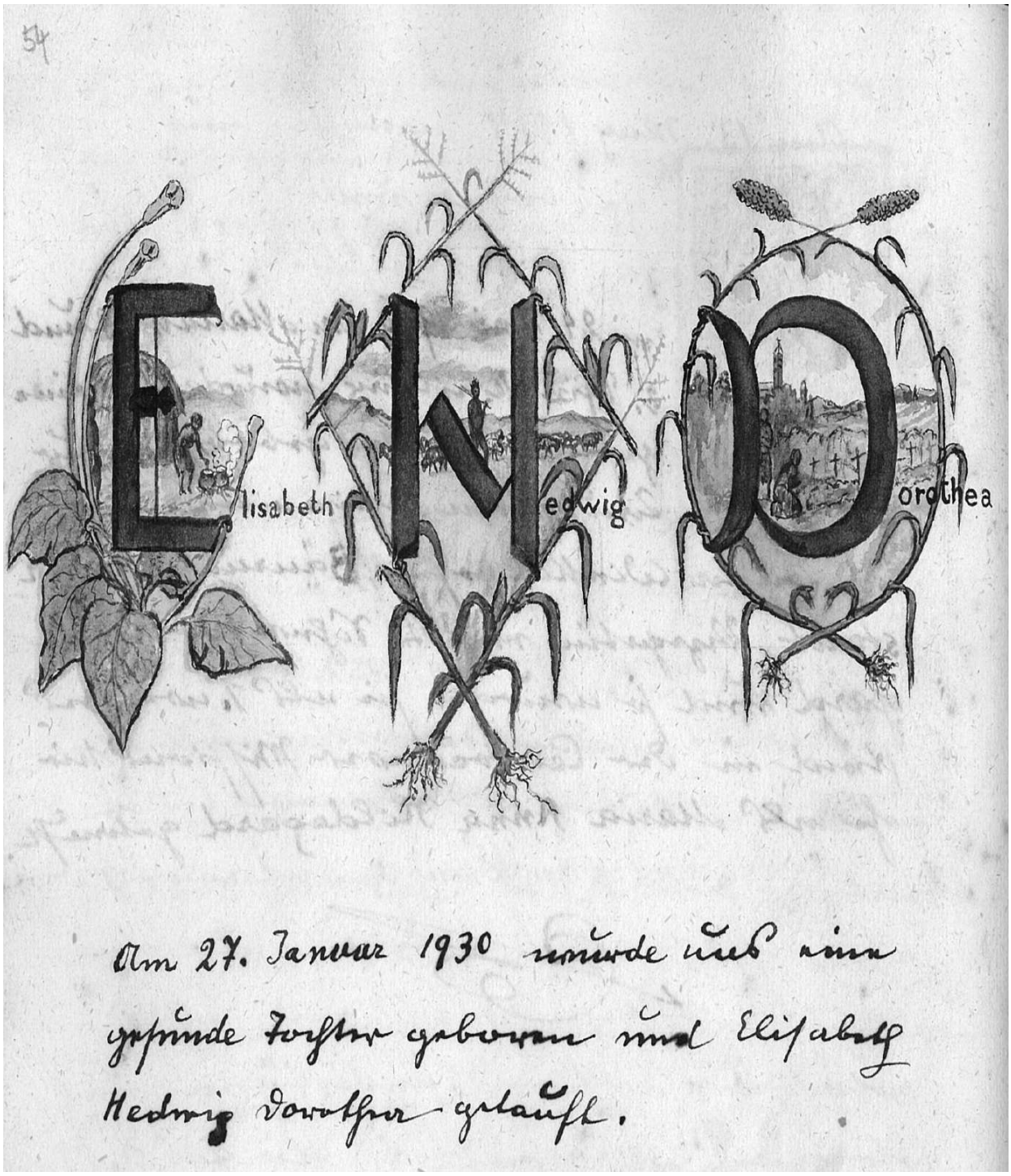


Figure 135: page from the "*Hausbuch*" of the Kohler family, showing the illuminated entry for the birth of Elisabeth Weinberger (née Kohler). Original in colour, 1930 (private collection, Kohler Family).

In June 2011 I met Elisabeth Weinberger and her son George for the first time. Elisabeth is the second daughter of Max Kohler and was born at Centocow Mission in January 1930. Once Max and Betty Kohler had died, Elisabeth and her family lived abroad for several years, but eventually resettled in Durban. I had contacted George several weeks earlier, and inquired whether he and his mother would be willing to speak about the family's time at Centocow and share whatever they knew about Max Kohler's work. During our conversations, Elisabeth was often concerned about the fact that she could not tell me much about her father: "We had a very Victorian relationship", she told me. Her father would discuss his work only with her older brother Karl (Charley), who was also training as a medical doctor. Elisabeth had never met Gerard Bhengu consciously, but they must have had several encounters during the short time both shared at Centocow.

The "*Hausbuch"* of the Kohler Family, for example, marks her birth with a painting by Gerard Bhengu.[717] Every first letter of Elisabeth's three names is illuminated with a different genre scene of life around the mission: a woman cooking, a man herding, another woman praying before burial crosses, with the new church of Centocow as a backdrop. It is the second image that Bhengu placed into the book (Figure 135).

Bhengu's illuminations are clearly mimicking those paintings in the Hausbuch predating 1925, including full-page colour images of religious figures. These paintings are signed by a "Konrad Maugsch", who must have been one of Kohler's acquaintances during his time in and near Munich, when he frequented the local art scene. From 1919 onwards, Maugsch was enrolled at Munich's Akademie der Bildenden Künste, one of the leading European art schools at the time.[718] According to Schlosser, Kohler even sent Bhengu's work to Munich, in order to receive professional commentary on how to advise his protégé (1971:124). And indeed, some of Bhengu's paintings bear short instructions in German on the verso, such as "one should have him work out details much better" (ibid.), or "more vividness for the colours / especially in the foreground".[719] Kohler also imported painting materials for Bhengu from Munich, together with the work of other Munich-based artist, such as Leo Samberger (cf. Leeb du Toit 2003:86) and possibly also Wilhelm Leibl.[720] As both had been connected to the Munich Art Academy in previous decades, their works were likely teaching material.[721] On the one hand, Kohler directed

[717] The Kohler's "*Hausbuch*" or "family book" contains a genealogy of both lineages, and important events in the biography of the family, beginning with their marriage.

[718] 05786 Konrad Maugsch, Matrikelbuch 1884-1920, http://matrikel.adbk.de/05ordner/mb_1884-1920/jahr_1919/matrikel-05786 (accessed 13.01.14). SM: Maugsch's identity as "artistic painter [*Kunstmaler*]" can also be ascertained through the contemporary *Polizeiliche Meldebögen* at the Munich City Archive (PMB-M 52-1919).

[719] "*Mehr Klang der Farben / besonders im Vordergrund*". This inscription can be found on one of the paintings in the Bhengu collection of Mariannhill Monastery.

[720] One sketchbook from the "purveyor of stationaries to the Bavarian court", Adrian Brugger exists at KCAL. It is however uncertain whether Kohler purchased these in larger quantities, or whether this was the only item. Bhengu is also known to have drawn on the versos of cheap advertisements. Also the content of the sketchbook cannot be clearly attributed to one single author. According to his daughter Elizabeth, Kohler himself was not an active artist.

[721] See entry "Ehrenmitglieder und Ehrensenatoren," http://www.adbk.de/en/archiv-historisches/professorenlisten.html (accessed 13.01.2014).

Bhengu towards the representation of the latter's own lifeworld, whether it was experienced by himself, or fictional folklore. On the other hand, he animated him to copy European art. The content of Bhengu's work had to be authentically African, while the form had to be conventionally Western.

In the same year that Elisabeth was born and Max Kohler became interested in ethnography (1930), the Kohlers also had their first crisis. This emerged in relation to the conflicting expectations regarding economic responsibilities between the missionaries, the CPS mission sisters, and the Kohlers; a phenomenon not uncommon with mission doctors of the Missionsärztliches Institut at the time (Essen 1991:127). As Max Kohler was not able to find alternative employment at any of the nearby missions, he was bound to his vow for another five years. Even though Bhengu left Centocow in the course of 1931, Kohler now turned to ethnographic work even more intensively with his mentor Van Warmelo, before he too left Centocow in 1935 for good.

In between his job, the births of four children, confrontations with the missionaries, and a heart condition, Kohler still found the time to explore the area together with Bhengu, and to write about it at the same time. According to Kohler's correspondence with his superior Becker in Würzburg, it must have been in either March or April 1930 that he and Bhengu attended the celebration of a so-called "*ingcubhe*", a "first-fruits ceremony" celebrated by a Bhaca community near Centocow. Some weeks after Bhengu had produced the illuminations for the birth of Kohler's daughter Elisabeth, he and Kohler visited the ceremony for only one day, even though it must have consisted of two more. In 1931, Kohler eventually published an article on this very experience in the institute's yearbook. It is titled "*Über Rythmus und Exaltierte Zustände am Fest der Ersten Früchte bei den Zulukaffern*".[722] The article comprises 14 pages in A5 format and is illustrated with two full-page monochrome reproductions of paintings by Gerard Bhengu. In the article Kohler did not identify his "native companion" by name. Only the remark that this companion produced several paintings of the occasion, identifies him as Gerard Bhengu.

Like with the occasion of the first-fruits festival in Chapter One, for reasons of space, it is not possible to discuss the full scope of these ceremonies in the 1930s, or the circumstances of this particular occasion. Briefly, *ingcubhe* ceremonies were—according to the ethnographic record—not only annual rituals to reinstate the chief, but also to ritually criticise him in order to generate catharsis. Additionally, the event served as platform for political debate, as well as general entertainment.[723] The ceremony is built up of consecutive performances with a clear script, all evolving around the chief. Other than in the coastal region of Natal, where the ceremony takes place in November or December, the *ingcubhe* in the Umzimkhulu district is held in either March or April, due to the later ripening of the crops.

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[722] "About Rhythm and Exalted States of Mind at the Feast of First Fruits with the Zulu Kafirs".

[723] For contemporary accounts on the *ingcubhe* see Hammond-Tooke (1953, 1962). For a more general account for the wider Natal area Gluckman (1938).

At least since the mid 19th century, this ceremony had attracted the attention of the colonial government, ethnographers, missionaries, and of the popular imagination at large. Early ethnographic accounts often framed first-fruits ceremonies as aligned to superstitions. Even though they were described in earlier popular South African ethnographic accounts, it was James G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* (1890) that brought it to greater attention and ascribed it to "primitive people" more generally (cf. Gluckman 1938:39). Building on Gluckman's work "Rituals of Rebellion" (1953), Hammond-Tooke held "that the *ingcubhe* is primarily a socio-political ritual closely associated with the well-being of the tribe and army" (1962:182).[724]

In 1891, the colonial government of Natal formally codified "native law and custom" in the *Natal Native Code*. Thereafter chiefs had to apply for permission with a district's magistrate, in order to hold an "*umkhosi*", as first-fruit ceremonies were referred to in the *Code*. The major fear of Europeans was that such gatherings may lead to the fomenting of violence, thought to be fuelled by the excessive consumption of alcohol. Especially after the 1906 Bambatha Rebellion, all large gatherings were deemed suspect, given the rise of emergent political dissidence, nationalism, and resistance. After the *Code's* amendment in 1932, the specification as "*umkhosi"* was dropped and merely referred to as "native unrest" (also see Hammond-Tooke 1962:179). Nevertheless, applications by the Bhaca chiefdoms near Centocow were generally granted, including the one under discussion here. However, up to the 1930s, it was not uncommon that native police surveilled the ceremonies near Centocow.[725]

Missionaries were divided about the ceremony. In the mid 19th century, the Anglican Bishop Colenso saw it as a platform to approach Africans on their own terms (Colenso 1855). The Catholic Missionaries at Centocow instead consistently disapproved of the ceremony, due to the participants' consumption of alcohol, dance, and alleged promiscuous sexual activities. One Mariannhill priest, possibly Fr. Willibald Wanger, even referred to it as the "devil's wedding", and accordingly demanded that African Christians and catechists be discouraged from attending (Anon. 1911). Kohler still shared this view two decades later (Kohler 1933:31). Despite these misgivings, Mariannhill missionaries at Centocow and the nearby Lourdes Mission visited celebrations of the ceremony throughout the 20th century and repeatedly recorded it in photographs and text. Kohler's and Bhengu's account of 1931 therefore emerged amidst western ethnography and psychology, the distrust of the missionaries, and the codified control of the Natal Government. While Bhengu must have grown up witnessing multiple celebrations of first-fruits ceremonies, Kohler collected contemporary newspaper reports on the ceremony and was influenced by colonial popular discourse. Earlier experiences and accounts of various kinds thus conditioned both mens' agendas, expectations, and references.

Kohler and Bhengu described the particular ceremony in 1930 as consisting of several

[724] Even if Hammond-Tooke studied first-fruits ceremonies with Bhaca communities in the Eastern Cape much further South, and almost two decades later, it may be the best material to compare to, due to its historical dimension (1953, 1962). Hammond-Tooke cited Kohler's article, but did not discuss it.

[725] PAR: 1/BLR-4_3_6-N1_9_2-1931-1934. The National Archives Repository in Pietermaritzburg still holds multiple applications and concessions concerning *ingcubhe* and *umkhosi* ceremonies for various regions of Natal.

continuous performances. But the resulting script only partially matches the historiography of ethnographic accounts dealing with first-fruits ceremonies. It misses crucial elements, such as the ritualised killing of a bull, which may have already taken place on one of the other days, when both men had not yet been present (cf. Hammond-Tooke 1962). Most parts of Kohler's and Bhengu's script involve the chief, who emerges and disappears in and out of the ceremonial cattle enclosure, the so-called "*isibaya senkosi"*.[726] As one of the climaxes, the chief is the first to consume the first fruits of the year,[727] prepared for him by an *inyanga*, a specialist for herbal medicines and concoctions. Even though we may be able to retrace a script through the comparison of the text and the paintings authored by Bhengu, we must realise that this only provides us with a limited perspective on the ceremony from the restricted temporal and spatial vantage point of the two ethnographers.

Kohler mentioned that his "native companion […] made various drawings of the occasion". They spent almost the entire time near the entrance of the *isibaya senkosi* and even inside of it—a privilege, which is usually only given to the entourage of the chief. Kohler considered the enclosure as the central stage, thus as "the focal point [*Brennpunkt*] of the entire feast" (Kohler 1931b:119). Even though they were granted such unconventionally privileged access, they may not have been allowed to take photographs.[728] Bhengu therefore not only functioned as "door opener" for Kohler, but also as his medium—a more appropriate replacement for a camera (cf. Daston and Galison 2007:346). In addition to being Kohler's painter, Bhengu was his amanuensis for the occasion: "whenever I gave him a nudge to the ribs he would write down the words sung" (Kohler 1931b:119). Kohler and Bhengu may have agreed on a similar sign to decide what should be captured in form of paintings, which Bhengu may have initially sketched with a pencil. Imagining him with watercolour equipment at the centre of a vibrant and crowded ceremony appears unlikely, even though it cannot be ruled out.

In the following paragraphs I briefly analyse the sketches and paintings by presenting several examples. Then I will relate the paintings to the experience as such, in order to scrutinise the accuracy of recording. Bhengu translated five consecutive scenes of the ceremony into 13 images: six initial sketches (or studies), and seven finished paintings based on the latter. Of the much cruder sketches three are in colour and three in sepia; of the more refined and detailed paintings, all seven are in sepia.[729] According to the narrative of the article, which is partially

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[726] The *isibaya senkosi* is custom-made for the occasion of eucalyptus-branches, and left to fall apart after the event. While Kohler refers to it as *isibaya senkosi*, Hammond-Tooke refers to it as *isibaya sencubhe.*

[727] The act is commonly referred to as *ukweshwama*.

[728] When I visited an *ingcubhe* ceremony in the area in 2012, I was asked not to approach the *isibaya* and not to take photographs near to it. Today the event's main performances are of course captured by many participants with cellphone cameras.

[729] Kohler prepared a summary of all images, and listed the respective differences of format and content. Eleven images were donated by the Kohler family to KCAL in the 1990s, while two originals are missing. Those are the ones that had been sent to Würzburg, and are reproduced in the yearbook. Kohler sent many of Bhengu's paintings to his editor Becker over the years, either for reproduction or as gifts. None remain at the Institute but one.

based on Bhengu's textual account,[730] the five scenes can be arranged according to a chronological script.

The first scene depicts the return of the people from a ritual cleansing at the nearby river, driving cattle before them (wcp2860, wcp2861); the second scene shows the chief circumventing his homestead and spraying it with protective "medicine" (Figure 138 [wcp2857], Figure 139); the third scene depicts a "dance of delight" by the chief (Figure 136 [wcp2854], Figure 137, wcp2855, wcp2856);[731] the fourth scene depicts the eating of the first fruits (*ukweshwama*), administered by an *inyanga* to a commoner in front of the *isibaya*. This scene exists once as a close-up (wcp2852, wcp2853) and once from a wide-angle perspective (wcp2851); the fifth and last scene eventually shows a dance by several women in distinct *ingcubhe* dress (wcp2859, wcp2858).

Only two of the 13 paintings were eventually chosen by the editor Becker for publication in Kohler's article: the first with the title "Dance of Delight at the Feast of the First Fruits" (Figure 137), and the second as the "Walk of the Headman around his Kraal" (Figures 139). The first image seems to depict the indicated "exaltation" of the article's title, which is expressed in dance. Kohler referred to the second image in the text, when he described the chief's walk in order to spray the fields of his *umuzi* (homestead) in the directions of all four cardinal points with frothy "medicine", which two attendants carry behind him in large pots. As Bhengu does not attribute much meaning to it in his own account, Kohler simply describes it as a "consecration of the fields" (Kohler 1931b:114).

730 KCAL: unaccessioned Kohler collection.

731 While the occasions of the "*Freudentanz*" and "*Felderweihe*" appear in Bhengu's narrative in the given order, the respective paintings were published in Kohler's article in the reverse order.



Figure 136: original caption on verso: "*Der Arzt des Festes schaut zur isibaya heraus*"—"The doctor of the feast peeking from the *isibaya*". Colour study to image in Figure 137, 18x23 cm (KCAL-wcp-2854).

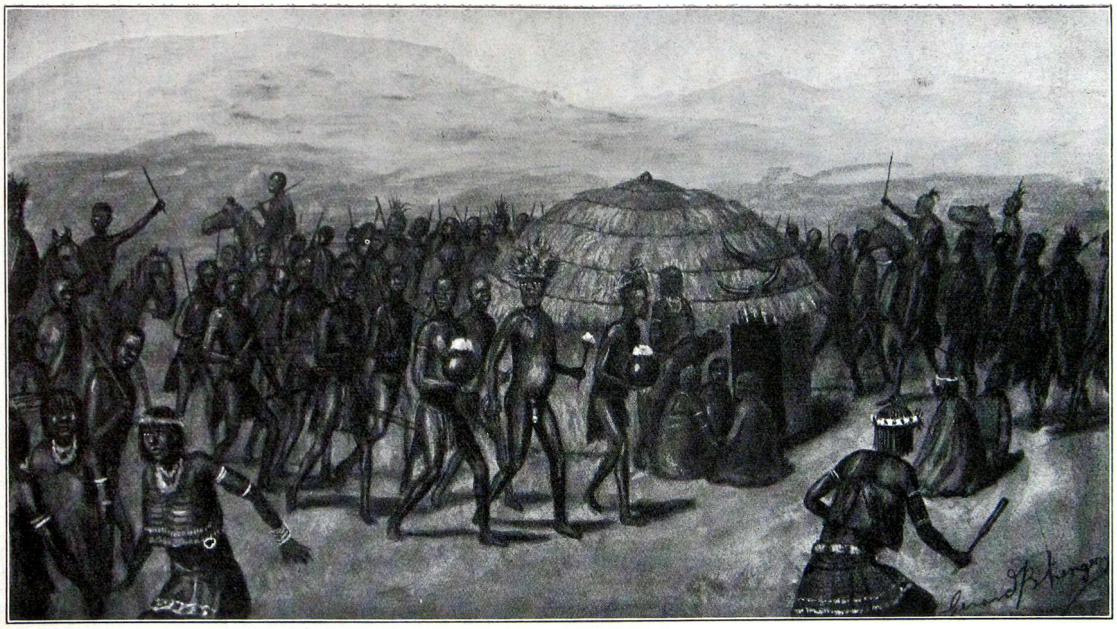


Freudentanz beim Feste der ersten Früchte
Diese Zeichnung wurde von dem Diener des Missionsarztes Dr. Kohler, einem ganz jungen Schwarzen, angefertigt

Figure 137: original caption: "*Freudentanz beim Feste der ersten Früchte. Diese Zeichnung wurde von dem Diener des Missionsarztes Dr. Kohler, einem ganz jungen Schwarzen angefertigt*"—"Dance of Delight at the Feast of First Fruits. This drawing was prepared by the servant of the mission doctor Dr. Kohler, a very young black man", 10,5x18,5 cm (as published in Kohler 1931b:113).



Figure 138: original caption on verso: "*Die Felderweihe beim Fest der ersten Früchte*"—"Consecration of the fields during the Feast of First Fruits". Sepia study to image in Figure 139, 18x23 cm (KCAL-wcp-2857).



Rundgang des Häuptlings um seinen Kral (S. 116)
Diese Zeichnung wurde von dem Diener des Missionsarztes Dr. Kohler, einem ganz jungen Schwarzen, angefertigt

Figure 139: original caption: "*Rundgang des Häuptlings um seinen Kral* […]"—"The chief walks around his Kraal […]". Signed "Gerard Bhenger", 10,5x18,5 cm (as published in Kohler 1931b:116).

The chief is the central Figure in six of the 13 paintings. Even if Kohler did not identify him by name, and he does not bear resemblance to existing photographs, it must have been Chief Nyongwane ka Bekukupiwa of the nearby Bhaca community. Kohler was on friendly terms with members of the chief's family, who were amongst his patients (Kohler 1931b:119). The relationship is further attested by several photographs Kohler collected, and also by the research he carried out in Nyongwane's "Location No. 3" for his first publication with Van Warmelo (Kohler 1933). The occasion of the *ingcubhe* in 1930 may thus have been the beginning of this relationship.

In order to confirm the chief's identity and to answer the question wether Bhengu had really drawn "from life", I attempted to compare Bhengu's paintings to the actual landscape around Centocow. Such an exercise allows to match an analysis of the paintings to a history of the landscape, and both to a social history. When I explored the area with Fr. David Dlamini and Themba Mgegeba of Centocow Mission in 2012, they showed me the former location of Nyongwane's homestead.[732] The site is on one of the last elevations before one crosses the Ngwangwane River, the historical borderline between Natal and East Griqualand. A historical railway line still follows the river's left bank towards the historical trading post Riverside, which had already been operational as a train station for some twenty years when the *ingcubhe* took

[732] The current events and politics around the *ingcubhe* are too complex to sketch here. Due to succession disputes Nyongwane's descendants have not held an *ingcubhe* in the recent past.

place in 1930. The railwayline is however not depicted in any of Bhengu's paintings. Almost on the same spot as the historical homestead, the Sonyongwana High School has been built, named after the former chief. Just behind the school's main building a circle of small boulders surrounds the chief's grave, indicating the approximate centre of the historical homestead.

Once I had repeatedly compared the four scenes showing distinct topographies to the actual landscape from various vantage points, it appeared that all four sceneries matched one of the views towards the four cardinal directions in the actual landscape. The two versions of each of the four themes (sketches and paintings) do differ, but they retain the very distinct shapes of the background's topographies.[733] There is thus an unmistakable resemblance between the actual landscape, the sketches, and the paintings. The fact that all four cardinal directions are matching, even more confirms this assumption. These circumstances attest to Bhengu's ability for accurate observation and his consequent attempt for mimetic representation *in situ*. The high degree of detail makes it likely that at least parts of the sketches were carried out on site, rather than from memory at a later point. Assuming that I am correct, this confirms that this particular ceremony took place in 1930 at the homestead of Nyongwane, only a few kilometres North from the *ingcubhe* of 1899 (Chapter One).

Schlosser mentioned that Bhengu used to make pencil sketches. While he generally attempted to create generic representations of people, he also created resemblances (*Portraitähnlichkeit*). During a conversation with Schlosser in the 1950s, Kohler's wife Betty stated that she had recognised such resemblances between Bhengu's paintings and people she knew. She also remarked that Bhengu produced correct paintings of actual landscapes at Centocow (Schlosser 1971:124). However, as I will go on to show, these mimetic accuracies were consciously selective. The ensuing production process after the event of the *ingcubhe* was established through several other occasions of interaction between text and image. The ethnographic occasion must be reconsidered carefully regarding the use of texts and paintings, which Kohler and Bhengu eventually produced by "four-eyed sight". Even though Bhengu's paintings may be seen as "less authentic" within photographic conventions, they do reflect how Kohler and Bhengu selectively expressed their experience in "four-eyed sight", between experience, production process, and the finalised and published paintings. The privilege of access through Bhengu was thus doubled in so far that it allowed to participate in the event on the one hand, and to represent it in a structured way through the medium of painting on the other hand. Kohler and Bhengu did not have the restriction of being associated with a camera, which would have been difficult to conceal. Other than with photography, the production of paintings was stretched out over a considerable period of time, far beyond the occasion of the *ingcubhe* itself. It is this process of post-production we now turn to.

[733] The proportions and distances between foreground and background, and the proportions between elements of the background are sufficiently similar to make this suggestion plausible.

"Drawing Things Together": "Four-Eyed-Sight" and the Process of Postproduction

After their visit to the *ingcubhe* festival, Bhengu not only produced at least 13 water colour paintings, but he also provided a textual account of the event in Zulu, probably by dictating it to Kohler.[734] Once they had returned to Kohler's office, part of which also functioned as Bhengu's studio, we may assume that they discussed and adapted the sketches and the text cooperatively. By doing so, they were able to establish parts of the *ingcubhe's* "script", something Müller's photographs of an *ingcubhe* in 1899 could not achieve (cf. Chapter One). Müller was not familiar with the area and its people, as he only visited the outstations for several days or weeks at a time from Mariannhill. It was much harder for him to negotiate adequate access to the event, and once there, he clearly had no structured plan which aspects of the ceremony to photograph. Additionally, the colonial discourse on African culture had already been carried on for another thirty years since the *ingcubhe* in 1899. This influenced Kohler's agenda, expectations, as well as available ethnographic traditions, of which I explore some below.

Kohler stated that he influenced all of Bhengu's paintings as far as possible "for the sake of good taste" and that he thought that Bhengu generally depended on his advise (Schlosser 1971:127). The art historian Joachim Rees sees a possible explanation for German ethnologists' preference for drawing as a research methodology in the strong emphasis on freehanded, yet accurate, mimetic drawing in the German educational system of the late 19th century. Void of technological support, freehanded drawing was considered as the most basic form of expression and representation. Asking the research subject to produce drawings, therefore allowed for an interpretation of the resulting drawings as evidence of the subject's particular intentions and potential to visualise knowledge. According to Rees, German ethnologists projected such attitudes on their research subjects, based on their own art education. They even felt inclined to follow a pedagogical impetus to intervene by correcting the drawings and present themselves as privileged interpreters (Rees 2007:235).

This description comes very close to a colonial version of what Daston and Galison (2007) describe as "four-eyed-sight", even if the intersubjectivity and its intricate details of cooperation in the field were rarely acknowledged in published ethnographies (cf. Pels 2014). Kohler, if not fully acknowledging Bhengu, nevertheless made allusions wherever he could to point out Bhengu's artistic agency. Presumably relying on basic skills of free-hand drawing, as well as his training in both natural sciences and medicine, Kohler took it upon himself to direct Bhengu's paintings. As this practice was not a direct reaction to the "mechanical objectivity" of photography, Kohler's involvement cannot be considered as "trained judgement" in this particular case (cf. Daston and Galison 2007:318, 347), but rather as "four-eyed-sight".

The production process of text and image took place between the occasion of the *ingcubhe* in March or April 1930, and December of the same year, when Kohler first offered his article to Becker. In this section I consider how the final images evolved in an ongoing process of

[734] The Kohler collection at KCAL contains a rough version of the account in shorthand, written up by Kohler.

correspondence and intersubjectivity between Bhengu, Kohler, Becker, Chief Nyongwane and his councellors, as well as between text and image (cf. Pels 2014:228).

Today, the original manuscript of Kohler's article, as well as Bhengu's original paintings are housed at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban. Here we can see that not only the paintings, but also the text exist in two different stages. Kohler's text exists as manuscript, as well as published article. Bhengu's drawings too exist in form of sketches, as well as elaborate paintings.[735] While the typed manuscript of Kohler's article does not contain illustrations, the published version features two paintings by Bhengu. All five scenes painted by Bhengu are also described in the article. But instead of the paintings, the manuscript contains a descriptive account of the *ingcubhe* by Bhengu, consisting of 32 short paragraphs. Kohler had made the effort to meticulously translate Bhengu's Zulu text into German. In order to peruse Kohler's account, I asked Bheki Ntuli to translate the Zulu original into English,[736] which confirms that Kohler's initial translation was indeed very accurate.[737]

During the course of the production, the images went through at least two, if not three stages of communal reviewing between ethnographer and artist: from the field sketches, probably in pencil, to the colour studies, and eventually to the finalised painting. In Würzburg two of the paintings were eventually processed for reproduction in the article. Between the studies and the paintings some modifications can be observed. In the sketch of the second painting for example (Figure 138), the chief is dressed with an *umutsha* (loincloth), but he is unclothed in the finalised published painting (Figure 139). In the article Kohler explicitly points to the detail of "nakedness" as immoral, but at the same time obscures this "obscene" content by writing in Latin, rather than German. Due to this explicit attention in the text, we can assume that both negotiated the adaptation from sketch to painting. Several less significant adjustments of detail, such as women's adornment can be traced in between both stages. Clear representational errors remain, such as peoples' shadows being projected in unrealistic directions.

Bhengu and Kohler must have also looked for inspiration in the photographs Müller had made of an *ingcubhe* celebration in 1899 (cf. Chapter One): as yet another element, Bhengu seems to have added the distinct dress, poses, and movements of women's dance choreographies captured in Müller's photographs (cf. wcp2859, wcp2858). As I have already shown with the example of the "beer drink" (Figure 129), Bhengu's appropriations were highly eclectic and combined minute details from various sources. I will provide more examples for this practice below. Through Kohler's and Bhengu's research cooperation, the medium of water colour, and a selection process during postproduction, they were able to selectively represent the ceremony's core elements involving the chief. In this process, Kohler and Bhengu established parts of the

[735] Kohler referred to these as "*Skizzen*" and "*Bilder*" in the previously mentioned listing.

[736] Bhengu's Zulu/Bhaca dialect today appears to be rather old-fashioned, so that a much younger translator, whom I had asked initially, was not confident to take on the task.

[737] It is unnecessary to recount Bhengu's entire report, as it merely narrates around the five scenes depicted in his drawings (see description in the previous section), or involves details, which are otherwise unimportant for our concerns.

ingcubhe's common narrative or "script". Even if Kohler thought of Bhengu's *ingcubhe* paintings as "artistically less interesting", he nevertheless considered them as "ethnographically faithful [*treu*]".[738] The painting's "faithfulness" to Kohler's final ethnographic text, however, was only established through the negotiations just described.

Kohler announced to Becker that the resulting article was intended to be "ethnographic", as well as "psychological".[739] In this context the use of "exaltation" in the title could best be rendered as "ecstasy", resulting from rhythmical movements during dance. As much as Mariannhill Missionaries before him had rejected and "(de)moralised" the *ingcubhe* in catechisms and propaganda stories, Kohler presented the bodily rhythm performed during the *ingcubhe* as an "atavism" of human culture. He considered dance, its rhythm, and the state of mind it produces, as an equivalent to a "primitive" practice of prayer. But according to Kohler, "other than in the Christian context, it is not the content, but the form, which is essential and important to people themselves" (Kohler 1931b:116). He supported his resulting hypothesis—that rhythm was a basic human constituent—with the work of the German psychologist Emil Kraepelin. Kohler was strongly inclined to interpret form, thus dance, the only thing he could see and understand independently of Bhengu. Other than Bhengu's explanations to set up the general script, as well as his own limited possibilities of "participant observation", Kohler relied on three other sources for things he could not "see" himself.

First, they inquired with other attendants of the ceremony, who had initially not been able to explain the ritual's "deeper meaning" during the ethnographic occasion itself: "Even the chief's *indunas* could not explain everything. Only months later […] the chief gave the final explanations" (Kohler 1931b:119). Kohler did not, however, indicate which explanations he had received from the chief. Secondly, Kohler relied on the work of former Mariannhill scholars, Fr. Alfred T. Bryant and Fr. Willibald Wanger. Both priests had spent considerable time in the same area during the 1890s, but also had dealt with the history of Zululand and Natal more generally. Bryant had been a resident at Centocow for one year during 1893, and Wanger for several more years at the nearby Lourdes mission. Bryant wrote about Zulu and Bhaca history in his *Zulu-English Dictionary* (1905) and eventually in his *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929). Wanger produced a compilation of ethnographic fragments between 1911 and 1912, titled *The Collector* (1913), which apparently circulated locally at the time, but today no longer features in any bibliographies.

When using these sources to analyse his own observations, Kohler was not entirely accurate with ethnographic detail. In the process he continued an "ethnographic tradition" (cf. Pels and Salemink 1994, 1999). He did this by transferring Bryant's general Zulu ethnography and Wanger's notes on first-fruits ceremonies under the heading "*umSizi*", from Zululand, North of Natal, to the *ingcubhe* of Natal's Polela District. Citing Wanger, Kohler stated that the *inkhosi* had already carried out "certain ritualised sexual practices" during the night previous to Kohler's

738 KCAL: unaccessioned Kohler Collection.
739 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 07.12.1930.

presence (1931b:112). The information provided by Wanger, however, referred to the "Zulu King" and did not speak of "ritualised" practices. Furthermore, Wanger himself had already taken this information from Bryant's *Zulu-English Dictionary*, verbatim, but unreferenced (see Bryant 1905:593-594, Wanger 1912:117-118).[740] Kohler thus applied knowledge, which had been originally derived from spatially and temporally distant occasions to his own observations in 1930. The yearbook's contemporary German audience would have been ignorant of such ethnographic detail. But the account later also entered more dominant ethnographic discourse, when Van Warmelo acquired the yearbooks in 1931, and Hammond-Tooke (1962) eventually certified Kohler's entire oeuvre as integral part of academic Bhaca ethnography.

Even if both Kohler and Bhengu only became amateur ethnographers at best, their genuine interest in the topic can not be disregarded. The article is therefore essential to learn more about the discursive space of the *ingcubhe* and about the discursive space that existed between Kohler and Bhengu. Both had ideas about the event, which they negotiated accordingly. Fr. Christoph Becker instead never fully embraced Kohler's enthusiasm about ethnography, art, and psychology, but considered the overtly elaborate bi-lingual accounts as unfit for the yearbook. At times, he strongly criticised Kohler's articles and re-edited them accordingly. In the case of the *ingcubhe* article, Becker integrated Bhengu's account indistinguishably into Kohler's text and merged it with the latter's annotations to Bhengu's text. Occasionally Becker expressed gratitude for Bhengu's paintings, which Kohler sent to him as gifts. Ultimately he was more concerned about filling the pages of his yearbook as quickly as possible. To Kohler's disappointment, Becker eventually only chose two of four paintings for publication.

Kohler himself never stopped at simply appreciating and supporting Bhengu's supposed ability to represent genuine information authentically. He went to great efforts to maintain, and even to improve upon the material form and appearance of Bhengu's paintings, in order to maximise their impact. Whenever he sent Bhengu's paintings to Germany, he tried to guarantee their safety and was particularly concerned as to how they were reproduced for publication. Repeatedly he mentioned that the printer must handle the originals with great care during the reproduction process. He also requested that they be sent back via "registered mail", as they were of "artistic value".[741]

In a handwritten note from the early 1940s, Kohler remarked that the published version of his *ingcubhe* article contained several spelling mistakes, which he attributed to Becker's editorship.[742] Kohler further noted that the title should actually have been "*Über Rythmus und Exaltation*…", thus merely "exaltation", and not "exalted states of mind".[743] But mostly he lamented the "bad and cheap reproductions" of Bhengu's paintings, which he would have preferred as "intaglio printing in copper [*Kupfertiefdruck*]". At the time, Kohler asked Becker to

[740] As pointed out by Bryant and Wanger, the term *umsizi* has multiple meanings, relating to both medicines, as well as sexual diseases.

[741] AMI: letters, Kohler to Becker, 27.11.1927, 07.12.1930.

[742] KCAL: unaccessioned Kohler Collection.

[743] Initial title: "*Rhythmus u. Exaltation beim Fest der Ersten Früchte bei den Amabhaca (Zulukaffern)*".

submit a shorter version of his *ingcubhe* article to the popular journal *Atlantis*, which had just been founded in 1929. Kohler argued that the publisher of *Atlantis* would have the facilities to reproduce Bhengu's paintings in much better quality. Once the shorter version had been published, so Kohler, the publisher of *Atlantis* may be willing to supply the print matrices to Becker, in order to use them for the yearbook. But the publication in *Atlantis* never appeared, and therefore the superior prints were never realised.

Kohler's general efforts, however, were not restricted to Germany. He also exhibited Bhengu's work at least three times in South Africa: in 1928 at Mariannhill and in 1931 at an art exhibition in Pietermaritzburg and at the "World Service Exhibition Johannesburg" under the auspices of the "South African Institute of Race Relations". Unfortunately no details about these exhibitions have yet come to light. As suggested by Nettleton (2011), the rise of the African-American art and cultural scene in New York, now commonly referred to as "Harlem Renaissance", also had its influence in South Africa. This connection is evident by the fact that in 1929 Kohler had attempted to make contact with the Harmon Foundation in New York through Becker, and hoped to explore it as a market for Bhengu's paintings.[744]





Figure 140: Bhengu's finger print. Detail from verso of WCP 2854 (KCAL).
Figure 141: Bhengu's signature, "*Gerard Bhenger*". Detail from the lower left corner of WCP 2853 (KCAL).

As this outlet eventually failed to materialise, Kohler hoped to promote the commercial value and potential of Bhengu's paintings otherwise on a local market. He attempted to transform Bhengu's identity as author by "authenticating" both person and work through two conventions of signature. All of Bhengu's paintings in the collections of the KCAL and Mariannhill Monastery bear a purple fingerprint on the verso (Figure 140). While the fingerprint certainly worked as an additional "signature",[745] Schlosser wrote that Kohler had suggested the fingerprint

[744] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 07.12.1929.

[745] As with many art historical studies, an artist's signature often serves as a way to authenticate his or her works. Bhengu is known to have signed with at least four different signatures: "GB", "Gerard Bengu", "Gerard

to Bhengu in order to stress and manifest the "appeal of the exceptional [*Reiz des Abnormen*]". This additional artefact was supposed to attract European buyers. As this did not work, Kohler motivated Bhengu to "europeanise" his signature into "*Gerard Bhenger*" (Figure 141), as "otherwise nobody would ever buy these paintings from a native". Even though Bhengu told Schlosser that he doubted the morality of this adaptation, he continued the practice for a while (Schlosser 1971:133).[746] As Nettleton (2005) points out, Black South African artists of the mid-20th century exclusively produced for a White market, a market which Kohler attempted to target. Nettleton however identifies Bhengu as being possibly the only exception, as in his post-Kohler period he painted for clients such as Rolfes R.R. Dhlomo,[747] an important early Black South African writer and nationalist (cf. Dhlomo 1947, also see Leeb-du Toit 1995, Zaverdinos 1995).

According to Katesa Schlosser, Kohler eventually claimed the "property rights [*Eigentumsrecht*]" for Bhengu's paintings in his possession (1971:123). This may be a confusion of terms however. In a notebook with a collection of depictions of *izangoma*, Kohler assigned and captioned photographic reproductions of Bhengu's paintings with "copyright Dr. M. Kohler, [eg.] 1934". At the same time he also assigned the very same caption to some of his own photographs of *izangoma*. He thus retained the right to reproduce Bhengu's work, being aware of others' growing interest, such as the South African Native Education Department.[748] On one occasion in 1930, the Chief Inspector of Native Education, Daniel McK. Malcolm "show[ed] some of Gerard Bhengu's pictures to various people", amongst them the Director of Native Agriculture, Russell W. Thornton. These pictures "seemed to strike Mr. Thornton […] very much", so much that he requested "a duplicate of an old native man's head".[749]

Bhengu's paintings were thus repeatedly propped up with additional artefacts of authenticity and mobilised for circulation on a commercial market, through professional networks, and through various levels of intermediation: first through Bhengu's alleged "mimetic faculty",[750] then through Kohler's and Becker's modifications, and eventually through Schlosser's interventions. Katesa Schlosser was indeed the only scholar who had interviewed not only Bhengu extensively, but also Kohler's widow Betty. As I described those interlocutors, we can follow their repeated inscriptions on, next to, and through Bhengu's paintings and drawings. "Drawing things together" may then here be understood as two activities, as two even more explicit moves of *drawing* as described by Latour (1990): first, as a form of co-operative *inscription*, and second as a *pulling together* of ideas, artefacts, and other inscriptions around Bhengu's paintings. Bhengu's works are thus not only things *seen*, but things *visualised* in a complex process of cooperations (also see Rees 2007, 2013:20-23).

The *ingcubhe* of 1930 is therefore the only occasion where the cooperation of Bhengu

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Bhenger" and eventually "Gerard Bhengu".

746 The idea must have come up in the course of 1930, as both "signatures" appear on the paintings of the *ingcubhe*.

747 Rolfes was the brother of the earlier mentioned Herbert I.E. Dhlomo (cf. Chapter One).

748 AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 07.12.1930.

749 KCAL: Kohler Collection: letter, Malcolm to Kohler, 15.06.1930.

750 I borrow this term of course from Walter Benjamin's essay of the same name (cf. Chapter One).

and Kohler can be related to one concrete occasion. Bhengu's sketches were developed, on the one hand into Bhengu's final paintings and on the other hand for Kohler's text. This particular event thus allowed to reveal several layers of a shared authorship: from Kohler's acquisition of additional expertise from Munich, his overall concern and care about reproduction of Bhengu's paintings, Bhengu's effort to maintain relative accuracy, the transitions from sketch to painting and the negotiation of content, the experimentation with colour and sepia, and eventually the selection and arrangement of motives, which mostly circle around the activities of the chief. In this particular case, both hands and minds were indeed entangled in a "four-eyed sight". In the last two sections I describe how Kohler and Bhengu expressed such experiences of collaboration through and against self-fashioning. This allows us to reconstruct how they consciously positioned the resulting images in order to influence and reflect upon their social relationships.

Bhengu's "*Selbstportrait*"

Before and after Bhengu's paintings were exhibited at Mariannhill Monastery in July 1928, Kohler had irregular correspondence with the monastery and occasionally he took Bhengu with him to the coast (Schlosser 1971:123). At the time, the monastery's photographic studio was still operational and Kohler had his portrait taken at least once by Br. Leonhard Weber, Müller's successor.[751] Kohler also selected particular photographs from the studio's pre-1914 production for his own collection and pasted them into his scrapbooks, which he kept next to the earlier-mentioned family book. Some of these he themed according to particular topics, such as *izangoma*,[752] or the general relationship between White and Black South Africans. Kohler thus kept a similar range of records as the mission. As I mentioned earlier, also the priests at Centocow kept a scrapbook and a photographic album. Both had been initiated by Fr. Emanuel Hanisch around 1908 and were continued by his successors until the 1950s. Bhengu therefore had a variety of possibilities to access photographic material and the pictorial landscape of the international art world. Either through the mentioned albums, through the Mariannhill Studio, or through publications illustrated with the studio's photographs. In this section I explore how Bhengu began early on to imagine himself as artist within the contemporary, if segregated art world.

It is common knowledge and a matter of countless art historical studies that Euro-American painters copied pre-existing artworks in various formats and even used photographs as "working objects". This practice nevertheless created discomfort about aesthetics and authenticity with artists and art critics alike. Particularly detailed studies do exist for the art scene of Munich in the late 19th century, involving the work of painters, such as Stuck and Lenbach (eg. Greif 2002). We already know that Bhengu was—just like Müller—a keen and good copyist. According to Savory, Kohler initially stimulated Bhengu to copy "a number of prints by the Old Masters", but stopped supplying these once he realised that Bhengu went as far as trying to emulate the appearance of oil paintings through his water colour technique. Deeming Bhengu too reliant on preexisting imagery, Kohler encouraged Bhengu "to seek his models from life in the villages of his own people, and also in the countryside around him" (Savory 1965:10). Bhengu only admitted hesitantly to his past attempts of copying when speaking to Katesa Schlosser in the 1950s, as these had even greater dimensions than suggested by Savory: he had copied from European art prints of religious motifs, alpine landscapes, (oatmeal) adverts (Schlosser 1971:124), and as I have already shown, from photographs (also see Zaverdinos 1995). In few cases, such as the ones of the *ingcubhe* described above, it is nevertheless obvious that parts of Bhengu's earliest work was indeed taken "from actual life" (Savory 1965:8). But also in the case of Bhengu's *ingcubhe* series, one may suspect that the last scene of dancing women is in fact

[751] Published for example in Schimlek (1950:72-73).

[752] The Kohler collection at KCAL contains several lists of Kohler's notebooks. Some of the mentioned items do not exist any longer. The scrapbook on *izangoma*, for example, is missing.

inspired by Müller's photographs of an *ingcubhe* ceremony in the same region held in 1899 (cf. Chapter One).

Once he had left missionary circles, Bhengu was refused art education by Professor O.J.P. Oxley at the Department of Fine Art at the Natal Technical College in Durban, who suggested "rather that he be encouraged to work in his own way and develop his own technique. This course was strictly adhered to and, pursuing his own methods, his distinctive style was not spoiled" (Savory 1964:9). Bhengu was apparently expected to remain an "unspoilt artist" and produce imagery in a style, which Leeb-du Toit identified as "ethnic realism" (1995:38-39). Instead, Bhengu's new temporary patrons, Dent and Malcolm, arranged for him to attend the Training College at Edendale in the mid 1930s. Paradoxically, his patrons at Edendale still stimulated him to copy from old Dutch masters (cf. Savory 1965:10, Schlosser 1971:134, Zaverdinos 1995:9). Art historian Steven Sack has pointed to this contradiction as holding true for the South African Black art scene of the 1930s more generally. Sack explains that it was influential members of the educational system like C.T. Loram, who advocated the separate development of Blacks through education (Sack 1988:11). As I explained above, Loram had close ties to Mariannhill and Centocow during the 1920s and thus not only influenced the art discourse in general, but also in specific places. Nevertheless, Bhengu continued to copy after the 1930s, not only other painters, photographs, and newspaper adverts, but also his own work. He also clearly copied faces and material culture items, such as diviners' paraphernalia from photographs such as those of Mariannhill.[753]

Remarkable in this relation is Bhengu's tendency—again very much like Müller—to produce self-portraits. This was of course a tendency and conventional genre of most artist and thus no surprise that also many Black African and South African artists aspired to it (cf. Stevenson and Bosland 2008). Bhengu not only intently portrayed himself, but he even imprinted parts of his own facial features and complexions—in particular his own smile—onto the male, as well as the female characters he portrayed. This goes in particular for the portraits compiled in Savory's 1965 edition (also see Nettleton 2005). Bhengu either worked with a mirror, or with photographs of himself. As I mentioned earlier, Katesa Schlosser bought several of Bhengu's paintings from Max Kohler's widow Betty in 1959. She eventually published three of these paintings as monochrome reproductions with her article in 1971.[754] One of these paintings is with certainty the very first of Bhengu's still existing self-portraits, and it may even be the earliest identified self-portrait of the first generation of Black South African painters. It is dated March 1927, when Bhengu was sixteen years old and had been under Kohler's tutelage for about one year. Bhengu depicted himself standing in front of a complex landscape backdrop while drawing on a sketchpad. The painting shows him with a slightly rotated torso and the head raised from the sketchpad, facing the beholder directly (Figure 142). One can clearly recognise the figure on the

[753] Compare, for example, the photograph of an *inyanga* near Mariannhill by Br. Leonard Weber in Schimlek (1950:88-89) to several of the images in Savory (1965).

[754] She does not mention whether she ever bought any paintings directly from Bhengu. As she indicated, she may have considered his later work as less "ethnographically correct".

sketchpad as a Black woman carrying a pot on her head. Consequently it is most striking that the model itself is nowhere to be seen.

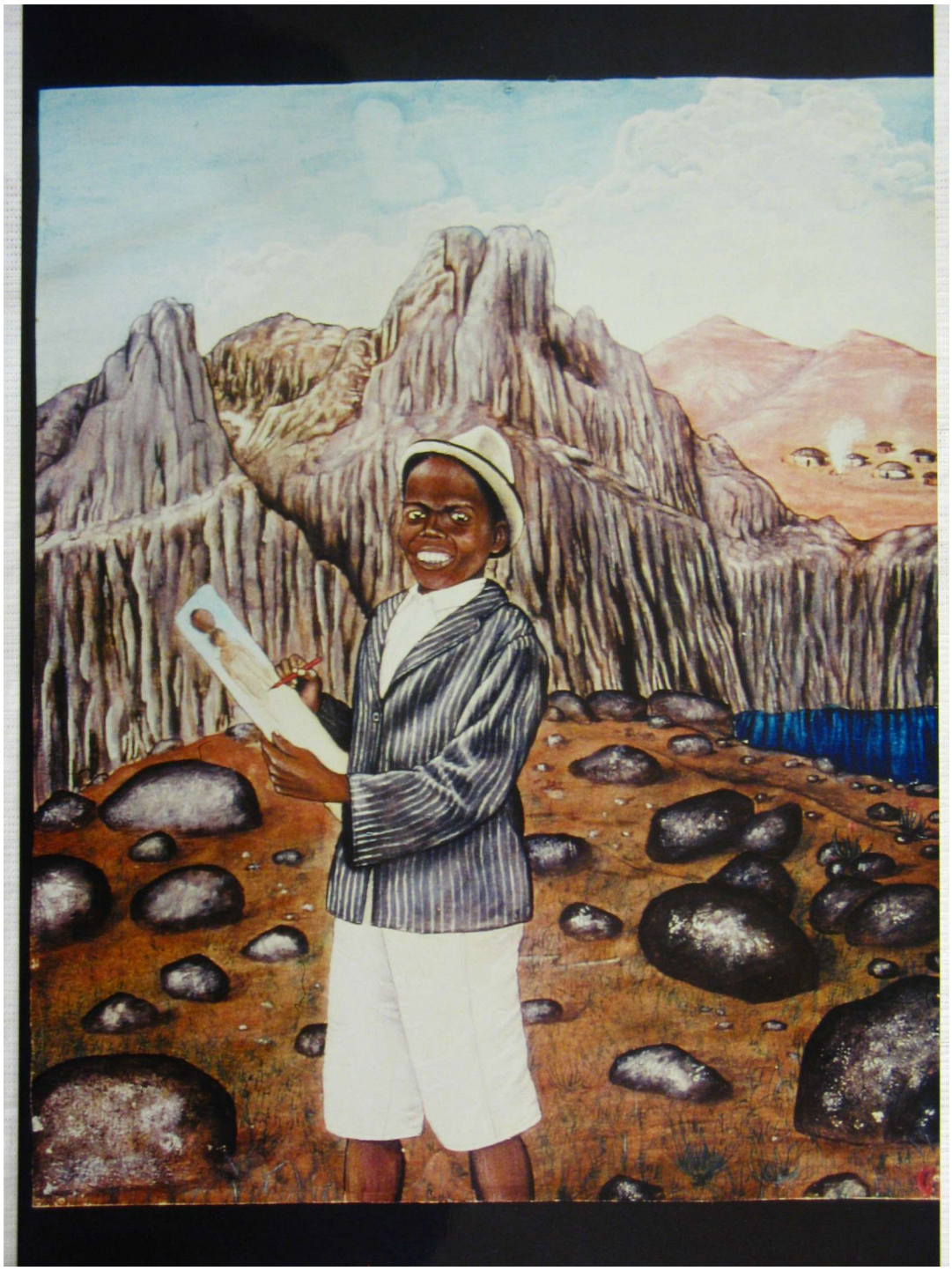


Figure 142: self-portrait by Gerard Bhengu, March 1927 (Schlosser Collection, British Museum, London. Published as a monochrome reproduction in Schlosser 1971:126-127).[755]

[755] The image reproduced here was made by Christoph Rippe from a photographic print at the British Museum

Together with the image, Schlosser received a handwritten "*Erklärung zum Selbstportrait*"[756] from Betty Kohler, which Max Kohler had compiled in approximately 1943. Already in February 1931, Kohler had written to Becker that "concerning his art, he [Bhengu] seems to require my guidance".[757] By 1943, Kohler stated retrospectively that he always made efforts to influence Bhengu's paintings "for the sake of good taste". But unlike all others, this self-portrait "was painted so quickly" that Kohler "came too late". For Kohler the painting was therefore exceptional, because "from a psychological standpoint [Bhengu] will never again create anything of such originality, something felt so deeply; certainly something of better quality" (Kohler cited in Schlosser 1971:127). According to its perceived high degree of "scientific" value, Kohler evaluated the painting with the infinity symbol in the list I described earlier.

Schlosser stated that Kohler "generally attempted to interpret Bhengu's work psychoanalytically" and that he explicitly did so in his "explanation of the self-portrait" (Schlosser 1971:127). She even praised this analysis as "a contribution to ethnic psychology [*Völkerpsychologie*]".[758] Kohler shared a general appreciation of Freudian ideas, such as dream interpretation, with contemporary missionaries at Mariannhill (cf. Schimlek 1952:92). Also the wider community of the IIALC, such as Meinhof (cf. Pugach 2004:830), Thurnwald (eg. 1928, 1929, 1931), and Van Warmelo considered psychoanalysis regarding art as valuable in the study of African society. But even if Van Warmelo may have been the one who made Kohler aware of Freud in the first place,[759] he erased some of Kohler's psychological explanations and mission-related commentaries during the editing process. As I already explained, German ethnologists before 1914 relied on the comparative analysis of drawings by "primitives", the "mentally insane", and children for their research. All of these components seem to come together in Kohler's interpretation of Bhengu's self-portrait.

As listed in his library catalogue, Kohler owned a copy of Freud's *Totem und Tabu: Einige Übereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker* (1913),[760] where Freud anticipated his later use of "the uncanny" and its occurrence through the confusion of experience with imagination (1950:107). In the chapter *Animism, Magic and the Omnipotence of Thought* in *Totem and Taboo*, Freud explored "primitive ideas" in this regard by using concepts of Frazerian magic to describe (neurotic) attempts to interpret and replicate the world around

(BM)—Anthropology Library and Research Centre, "Schlosser Collection". The collection consists of prints made from colour-slide positives, which Schlosser donated to the BM in 2001. The original slide may still be in a collection at the University of Kiel, while the location of the original painting is unknown. It may have been given away by Schlosser to an unknown relative.

[756] "Explanations regarding the self-portrait".

[757] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 20.02.1931.

[758] The term is commonly associated with the work of Steinthal, Lazarus, and Wundt (eg. Zimmerman 2001:52), but also embraced by Freud in *Totem and Taboo*. It is either not translated, or alternatively framed as "social psychology", "folk psychology", or "ethnic psychology".

[759] In his introduction to Kohler's book, Van Warmelo points to the author's contribution in the field of psychology and dream interpretation, and indicates its value for future research (Kohler 1941:7).

[760] First published in four parts in the journal *Imago - Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften* 1912-1913. First translated into English in 1918. I henceforth refer to the unaltered English version of 1950.

them. By 1943, when Kohler wrote the "explanation" of Bhengu's painting, he also may have been aware of Freud's later work "*Das Unheimliche*" (1919).[761] His analysis of Bhengu's painting eventually led him to such a psychological tension: Kohler payed no attention to Bhengu's self-depiction as such, but instead dissected the painting's backdrop according to the symbolism of form and colour.

Kohler distinguished altogether three elements of importance and suggested that they were expressions of Bhengu's subconscious mind: the stones, the dark-blue lake, and the kraal on a soft pink ground. He wrote that the stones represent "the native's alienation from the land and its dispossession by Whites, who only left them the stony patches". According to Kohler, the stones are thus "monsters threatening the native". He further stated that the blue lake represents a harbour of mystical creatures and that water constitutes a "phylogenetic dream symbol (according to Freud)". Kohler remembered that "[he] once had to protect the painter from a water sheep[762] (a particularly frightening one), when he was painting *en plein air* near a solitary lake". Kohler continued to describe the self-portrait by explaining that "[Bhengu] places a lake and a mountain range hard and inartistically between background and foreground: this is the world of magic [*Zauberei*], where the evil powers and sorcerers live, the delusion, which indeed splits his people and their souls". Eventually, the kraal ("on a subtle pink"), in stark contrast and in a far distance, represented "the native's *Heimat*" (Kohler quoted in Schlosser 1971:127-28).

For Kohler, the tension between these three elements evoked something similar to Freud's "uncanny". Even if he did not employ the term, he described its logic, which at the same time attracts *and* repels, due to the estranged familiarity of an experience or imagination (Freud 1919:319). Bhengu's painting appeared not necessarily uncanny to Kohler himself, but nevertheless startling. Instead, Kohler suggested that it was Bhengu who had manifested experiences in the painting, the logic of which may be considered as uncanny. "The uncanny", as Freud described it, is aroused by associations that appear as magical to a perceiver, in the sense of Frazer (Freud 1950). While Freud described such perceptions for the case of neurotics, also Kohler used the term neurosis to describe the behaviour of Africans and their belief in magic (Kohler 1941:75-76). In the particular case of the self-portrait, Kohler described the very same behaviour as being carried out by Bhengu.

Freud described the production of the power of art as follows: "Only in art does it still happen that a man who is consumed by desires performs something resembling the accomplishment of those desires and that what he does in play produces emotional effects—thanks to artistic illusion—just as though it were something real. People speak with justice of the 'magic of art' and compare artists to magicians" (1950:113).[763] Apparently, Kohler did not rely

[761] First translated into English in 1925 (cf. Freud 1955).

[762] German: "*Wasserschaf*", or Zulu: "*imvu yamanzi"* (Schlosser and Madela 1971:22).

[763] Projection or not, citing Yvonne Winters in a comment from 1984, Elza Miles wrote that "old people especially seemed reluctant to pose for Bhengu. They feared he would *tagathi* them by taking something from them in his image and using it for witchcraft" (1997:32). I will further explore the multidirectional and "magical" aspects of images in Chapter Eight.

on Bhengu's own commentary on his self-portrait, but interpreted the painting itself as Bhengu's mental expression. For Kohler, Bhengu's art was a materialisation of, and thus an entry-point into the "native mind". In his "*Erklärung zum Selbstportrait*", Kohler then projected his own perception of the painting onto Bhengu by asking: "What would be most appropriate to the actual situation? To impute such thoughts [psychoanalytical interpretations] onto a simple native boy, or to leave a composition [painting] like this to itself by considering it futile?" (Kohler quoted in Schlosser 1971:127). When Kohler discussed general ethnographic questions regarding sexuality with his editor, Fr. Christoph Becker in Würzburg, he polemically wondered "whether one should indeed leave those questions to the atheist [*ungläubigen*] ethnographers, who read into these things whatever they want".[764] Despite such critique on others, Kohler himself freely read into Bhengu's self-portrait that it showed the artist's supposed division from "home" (the kraal on a subtle pink) by "interracial fear" (the stones), while at the same time still struggling with "superstition" (the dark lake). Kohler claimed that certain culturally established symbols embedded in the landscape inspired Bhengu to artistically manifest his experiences, which may be considered "uncanny".

Katesa Schlosser instead applied a rather uplifting interpretation. According to her, this and other self-portraits show Bhengu "striving towards social ascension" (1971:127). In her tracks, other scholars have considered Bhengu's self-portrait as an attempt to distinguish himself through "stylish western clothing" from the "traditional" subjects he portrayed, such as the woman on the sketchpad (Miles 1997:29, Van Robbroeck 2011:129). Others have framed this distinction in terms of "rural" and "urban" (Zaverdinos 1995:6, Jephson 1989:80 quoted in Zaverdinos 1995), despite the fact that Bhengu had had no "urban" experience by 1927, other than through print media. All authors apparently wanted to describe a supposed dichotomy and situate Bhengu within a world to which the profession of the "artist" supposedly related at the time: a "White", "European", "Western", and eventually "modern" art world that Bhengu may have aspired to.

Furthermore, all authors (except Zaverdinos) did not address Kohler's interpretation and the production of Bhengu's paintings more generally. But also Zaverdinos considered Kohler's interpretation as a historical account and missed that it presents a Freudian interpretation of a painting and Bhengu's subconscious mind. In his text, Kohler was not concerned with Bhengu's "mimetic faculty" of naturalistic and realistic observation, copying, and objective representation, but exactly with the opposite: his capacity to *genuinely* express and materialise his subjective—however unconscious—fears and fascinations. It can therefore be doubted whether Bhengu attempted to portray himself as "modern", as argued by the above authors. The depicted dress may have indeed been his daily outfit, possibly with improvements of the colour scheme. Eventually, we do not know what Bhengu himself thought or intended at the time. It is nevertheless likely that instead of merely "striving towards social ascension" or "modernity", he rather aspired the membership of an artistic community by imitation (cf. Ferguson 2002), as

[764] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 04.05.30.

indicated by the classic pose of the painter.

Like with Mariannhill's photographs showing the production process of photographs in Chapter Two, Bhengu's self-portrait attracted scholars' fascination with the phenomenon of "meta pictures". Like in the correspondence between Von Luschan and Br. Aegidius, an additional text in the form of Kohler's "explanation" had further certified the image as a "working object" for the discernment of information that could be analysed psychoanalytically. Katesa Schlosser was the first to refer to it as such. After all, she had selected and purchased this particular painting from a much larger collection. Eventually, she decided to publish it along with Kohler's account and thereby once more certified both text and image. The image was then chosen once more and reproduced from Schlosser's publication for the first major retrospective exhibition of Bhengu's work in 1995 at the Tatham Art Gallery in Pietermaritzburg. Also Miles encountered the portrait in Schlosser's article and Van Robbroeck found it again in the account of Miles. Scholars had long lost sight of the initial occasion of 1927 in which Bhengu created the painting, or the occasion of 1943 in which Kohler created his interpretation some 16 years later. Instead, they relied on established traditions of aspirations to modernism. But in fact, there had been yet another occasion, which even preceded the painting's production in early 1927.



Figure 143: Photograph of Gerard Bhengu, 1926/1927 (KCAL).

Kohler was well aware that Bhengu had copied his own portrait from a photograph, which can be found in one of Kohler's scrapbooks (Figure 143). Like Bhengu's sketches for the *ingcubhe*, this portrait photograph of Bhengu may have been intentionally created as a "strong protention" (Gell 1998). As such, it may have been made with the explicit idea to serve as a study for the painting, which Kohler later called "*Selbstportrait*". But being a mimetic copy of a photograph, Bhengu's figure as part of the painting did not constitute an expression of Bhengu's unconscious mind to Kohler. Therefore he did not include Bhengu's self-depiction in his analysis. The photographer is unknown, and also whether it was Bhengu's own decision to strike a pose as artistic painter. Other photographs in the same album show other people, similarly framed in front of the very same rock. This suggests that the pose was directed by Kohler, for example to promote "his painter" at work. One of the photographs in the same spot shows both Bhengu and Kohler together, two years later in 1929. Bhengu is dressed in a white coat, posing as if in the process of painting before an easel. One of Kohler's medical coats here serves as artist's dress for Bhengu. The doctor is posing as if commenting on Bhengu's work, reference material in hand, while both gaze towards the camera contentedly (Figure 144).



Figure 144: original caption: "*Dr. Kohler und sein schwarzer Maler*"—"Dr. Kohler and his black painter". Bhengu and Kohler in front of the same rock where Bhengu's photograph was taken (cf. Figure 143). Centocow, 1928 or 1929 (AMI, also published in Kohler 1930:18).

This photograph is not only a genre photograph through which Kohler and Bhengu perform the ideal of "four-eyed sight" (Daston and Galison 2007), it also shows the same kind of reflectivity as Mariannhill's "meta photographs" (Chapter Two).[765] The "native photographer" of the 1890s is likely to have been intended as a caricature. Bhengu's performance as a "Black painter" or "Zulu artist" during the late 1920s, instead was an outcome of the very same discourse on African "imitation vs. creativity", but of a branch that had developed in a different key. Between the 1890s and 1910s, the idea of the "native artist" had still been expressed polemically and ambivalently in popular culture. Nevertheless, in some cases German ethnologists considered "native drawings" as valuable "working objects", even if they did not promote the producers as genuine artists. It was only in the 1920s that Black African authorship could be manifested in the South African art world with a focus on one single named individual, who was even supposed to have a prolonged career as professional artist. This was due to the fact that German ethnology, British social anthropology, psychology, medical practice, the South African educational system, mission education and patronage, the South African art world, and of course the two individuals Kohler and Bhengu, had all coalesced just before 1930 at Centocow Mission.

Bhengu's career started in 1927 with the very idea of *making* him an "exceptional" artist. Br. Aegidius instead had only become an artist late in life, and even posthumously, as attested for example by the Natal pioneer farmer Baynes in 1901, the jury member of *The State* Ussher in 1909, as well as the collector De Charmoy in 1946. Like Müller's self-fashioning was central to his photographic work, Bhengu was at the centre of Kohler's imagination. At times, Kohler was more interested in the promotion of Bhengu as a person than in his painterly products. In specific cases, as the one discussed here, Kohler also used the paintings as entry points to Bhengu's mind as a subject of "scientific" study. For example, Kohler thought of Bhengu's self-portrait as an artwork of lesser quality: "the technique is raw, poor, and childish" (Kohler cited in Schlosser 1971:127). At the same time, he considered the portrait as a scientific object, in order to access Bhengu's subconscious. Kohler nevertheless went to considerable efforts to promote Bhengu as an exceptional artist, either by lobbying for his paintings, or by adding particular forms of authentication to his paintings through his name and signature. It is crucial to observe, however, that this exceptionality was (and still is) based on the work of racial distinction: once this had been established as a fact, it served as context for Bhengu's exceptional status in the first place.

Like the missionaries at Mariannhill had to perform together with their apprentices for photographs at the workshops, Kohler had to prop up Bhengu's presence as artist through his own presence in his capacity as Bhengu's patron. As such, "four-eyed sight" in fact became a performance of an ideal relationship. After all, Kohler was a medical doctor and considered ethnology, art, and also his project with Bhengu merely as hobbies. In the same way as Kohler presented Bhengu as ("his") painter, he himself performed publicly and with delight as patron and even as tutor. Within the segregated art world, their relationship was necessarily expressed

[765] In fact, Figures 142 and 144 stand in similar relation to each other as Figures 35 and 36.

and situated through concrete articulations of racial difference. Through these simultaneous articulations of exceptionality, which may have excited and even irritated some participants in the South African art world at the time, Bhengu's self-portrait appeared as an act of mimicry: Kohler's suggestion to introduce the signature "*Bhenger*" is one indication. Bhengu intended to become a professional artist "in the European sense" and therefore imitated what conventional imaginations of European artists looked like at the time. Kohler and several other contemporaries supported him in this effort, but within a segregated society they could only do so within the newly bracketed art world for Black South Africans. As the contemporary White art world only granted Bhengu very limited access at the time, his painterly social imitation generated even more reproductive power in later years. In order to comprehend the full complexity of this creative process between Bhengu and Kohler, I will close this chapter in the next section by acknowledging the flip side to this scenario of imitation.

Kohler's "*Exlibris*"



Figure 145: four photographs showing Max Kohler posing in the garb of Chief Nyongwane, 1930 or 1931 (AMI).

Like the previous section, this final scenario deals with an explicit performance of photographic self-fashioning. In a way, it may be thought of as something like a counter-image-act to Bhengu's self-portrait. As an intentional photographic performance it allows us to explore a formation of even more images that clustered around it historically. Thereby we can even further retrace an extensive network of relationships cutting across the private, professional, and public spheres of Kohler's and Bhengu's shared lifeworld.

About one year after the *ingcubhe,* in May 1931, Max Kohler sent a series of four photographs to Fr. Christoph Becker in Würzburg. All four show him posing in front of a beehive hut together with an African man. The first photograph shows Kohler standing in *contrapposto*, resting his left fist on his hip and the right hand on a *knobkerrie*. The Black man reclines against the hut, while holding on to a shield and spear. The second photograph depicts the two men acting out a fight with the same weapons. For the occasion, Kohler only wore an *umutsha* made of animal tails and a head ring. For the third and fourth photograph, however, he put on a pair of sandals, in addition to a shield and a spear. When I presented copies of these photographs to Kohler's daughter Elisabeth in early 2012, she commented with a smile that he would never have shown himself like this to her or her siblings; not even the photographs. While presenting himself rather authoritarian and closed within the family, Kohler showed a particular kind of humour in his letters to the institute in Würzburg and in the commentaries in his notebooks. This humour ranged from mild irony to strong sarcasm. In the letter accompanying these photographs, he wrote:

The enclosed photographs, which show me in the becoming garb of a Zulu Chief, will hopefully not offend you. The umutsha is indeed the one of a Chief, Nyongwana ka Zulu. The picture has been made by a Herz Jesu Priest.[766] My

[766] This name may have two origins: *"Herz Jesu",* or "Sacred Heart", is the name of the mission congregation Herz-Jesu-Priester (SCJ), who had a presence in South Africa since 1923 (cf. Essen 2010:89). "*Herz Jesu*" is also an alternative name for Inkamana Abbey, near Vryheid. It belongs to the Benedictine Mission of St. Ottilien (Missionsbenediktiner, a branch of the *Ordo Sancti Benedicti,* OSB). The Mission Benedictines settled in South Africa in 1922, once they had been expelled from East Africa after the First World War.

ex libris has been criticised from the standpoint of shamefacedness. It is not supposed to be published, because the "colour bar feelings" [Engl. in orig.] would go up in flames. To Fr. Meinulf Küster [sic] OSB I sent them with the comment: 'an albino with the Amabaca'. Will he believe it?[767]

Kohler did not identify the Black man sitting next to him. A comparison to available photographs reveals that it is not Chief Nyongwane.[768] Kohler's relationship with Nyongwane was the intimate one of doctor and patient, which apparently allowed for the equally intimate gift or loan of the *umutsha*. According to photographs showing Nyongwane several years apart, Nyongwane himself never wore a head ring. He also was much stockier and at least in later years grew his facial hair. As a second potential identity, it may come to mind that this person was Gerard Bhengu. But also this assumption does not withstand comparison with identified photographs of a young Bhengu.

The letter and the photographs nevertheless bear various leads that help us to position Kohler next to his relation to Bhengu, within a wider social field. The four photographs constitute a node around which at least five other image occasions can be situated and which become comprehensible only in relation to each other. These occasions will explain this photographic occasion as an intentional performance, *in* the images and *of* the images. As I argued earlier, most of the topics in Kohler's and Bhengu's cooperation evolved from Kohler's private and professional projects, rather than from Bhengu's. Some were directed either at the yearbook's scientific or popular audiences, while others were clearly private. The following extended case shows how Kohler's use of images wove through relationships and thus connected him and Bhengu to various other people. Unlike with Müller's orientalistic portrait, where it was not possible to recover any motivation regarding its production, Kohler's performance allows for a multitude of connections. Similar to the biography of Umdamane's portrait, we can take the above photographic series as a vantage point to perceive a genealogy of statements (cf. Gell 1998:242). By tracing their interconnectedness, we can clarify some aspects of Kohler's and Bhengu's agency in relation to these statements. In this way, we also find more retentions of Müller's work, which served as convenient "quotes" to both Kohler and Bhengu.

To begin with, as Kohler indicated in his letter, he indeed had several ideas on the "colour bar" and its various manifestations and implications. He repeatedly evoked these, for example in 1929 in a letter to his colleague and friend Fritz Drexler in China:

I am well and enjoy myself increasingly. Eventually, I have some solace, because also the number of my patients—all Blacks—increases by the day. White farmers I eliminated politely and gently. Nobody can serve two masters at the same time, and the Whites in this country do not want any contact with the Blacks. This is called "colour bar" [Engl. in orig.]. But entire South Africa relies on the Blacks, and that is called "native problem" [Engl. in orig.].[769]

[767] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, ??.05.1931.

[768] Nyongwane was photographed by Mariannhill Missionaries during festivities in 1937, as well as by the professional photographer Alfred M. Duggan-Cronin, also during the late 1930s.

[769] AMI: letter, Kohler to Drexler, 20.04.1929.



Figure 146: One of four versions showing a "court hearing"/"tax collection". Gerard Bhengu, approx. 1930 (KCAL, wcp2935).

The most distinct visual expression of Kohler's ongoing concern about racial contact is Figure 146. I suggest that this painting by Bhengu is an interpretation of Müller's photographs showing a "court hearing", which I discussed in Chapter Four. At least four different versions exist of Bhengu's interpretations in various archives.[770] Bhengu and Kohler not only had access to Mariannhill's various periodicals and to the photographic studio at Mariannhill itself, but in particular to one photographic album at the house of Centocow's superior.[771] Yet again, Bhengu took the liberty to create a montage, culled together from various of the earliest photographs in this album, in particular those arranged around the three depictions of the 1912 court hearing. The general *mise en scène*, the position of the Africans, the gestures of the man behind the desk, the posture of the policemen and especially the most sophisticated details of the embroidered tablecloth resemble the photographs to a high degree (cf. Figure 90). Bhengu instead took the

[770] One in the Kohler Family private Collection (published in Zaverdinos 1995), one in the Mariannhill Monastery Archives, and two at KCAL.

[771] The album has been transferred to the archives at Mariannhill Monastery after the Second World War and contains photographs taken at and near Centocow from approximately 1900 to 1944.

backdrop showing two very distinct forms of architecture from photographs on the album's preceding pages. He was still creative with several aspects of composition: he replicated the colonial trope of a "court hearing", but at the same time dramatised the original photograph's narrative. Adjusting Müller's statuesque *tableau vivant* of 1912, Bhengu placed one of the African men on his knees, pleading to the magistrate behind the table with one raised arm.

Kohler pasted another version of Bhengu's painting into one of his scrapbooks and captioned it as follows:

> The proud Zulu before the authorities. Like this he goes to pay taxes or to court. He is not that smart; he is the *inja* (Zulu: "dog") of his own chief. However, [this attitude] wears off towards both sides [chief and government] with the progress of civilisation.[772]

Being aware that the 1912 photographs show a court hearing, Kohler nevertheless blurred the line between the common topic of the "court hearing" and the one of the "poll/hut tax collection". He thus used Bhengu's painting to illustrate his perception of the social situation at large. The "tax collection" in particular had accumulated political significance since the so-called Bambatha Rebellion in 1906 and 1907, which was a reaction to the implementation of poll taxes. As Bhengu reproduced the kneeling man in at least four different versions, it is likely that he attempted to conform to Kohler's narrative, instead of Kohler merely commenting on something that Bhengu had indeed experienced and painted accordingly. The "colour bar", as conjured by Kohler in this case, is epitomised in the very moment where White ruled over Black in separate courts from their own, and administered "justice". Kohler was aware that by performing "in the garb of a Zulu Chief", he himself had crossed this "colour bar", which is represented by the magistrate's table in Bhengu's painting. Kohler positioned himself consciously against political and religious authorities, and as we shall soon see, he refused to beg like the protagonist in Bhengu's painting.

In the course of the 1930s, Kohler temporarily changed his mind about the earlier concern regarding the "colour bar", as he had expressed it in his letter to Becker. He planned to publish the first of the four photographs in his book *The Izangoma Diviners* (1941) with the caption "The author of the book in the garb of Chief Nyongwane".[773] He placed this caption under the photograph in a scrapbook with a preliminary choice of images for the publication. In his scrapbooks he compiled photographed paintings, photographs, and newspaper clippings as potential inspiration and raw material for future publications. Eventually, the photograph was not included in the published version, perhaps because his editor Van Warmelo re-confirmed Kohler's initial anxiety about the "colour bar" and accordingly censored it.

In his letter to Fr. Christoph Becker, Kohler described his appearance as "Zulu Chief" in the accompanying photographs as an "*ex libris*". Becker would have understood this as a reference relating to a conversation they had earlier. The term "*exlibris*" (Latin: "from the books

[772] KCAL: Kohler collection, album "*Glückliche Reise*". My own translation from the German original.
[773] KCAL: Kohler collection, "Album 116".

of…") commonly denotes a "bookplate": a personalised book marker indicating a book's owner, often with an individually themed illustration. During the 1920s and earlier, *exlibri* often featured explicit female and male nudity, although often couched in figures of classic appearance (eg. Braungart 1922). In between the event of the *ingcubhe* and the letter to Becker, Kohler had commissioned Bhengu to draw him his own personalised bookplate, which he titled "*Exlibris Africanis*" (Figure 147). It is illustrated with a depiction of six African men dancing in *umutsha*, while holding shields, spears, and *knobkerries*. They appear almost like a pre-study to Bhengu's depictions of Chief Nyongwane during the performance of the *ingcubhe* and not unlike Kohler's own appearance in the four photographs above. In September 1930, Kohler had sent a prototype of this bookplate to Becker, in order to have it printed (1000 copies) with the university printer Stürtz in Würzburg.[774] As a repeated and explicit emphasis of Bhengu's ingenious versatility as painter, Kohler eagerly pointed out that the separation lines beneath the painting are in fact writing, which had been "painted by a black boy with a brush and without a magnifying glass".

[774] AMI: letter, Kohler to Becker, 09.09.1930.

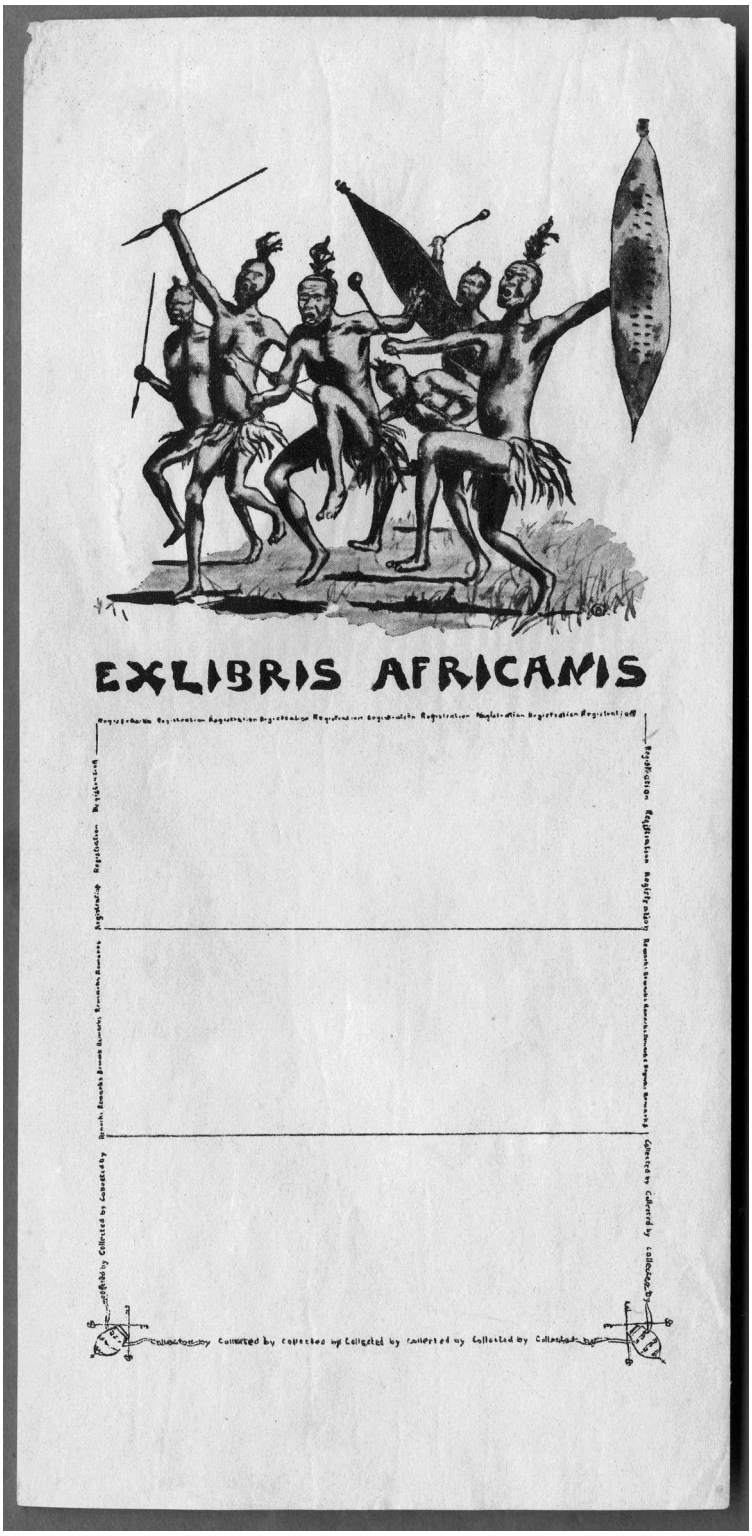


Figure 147: "*Exlibris Africanis*" (KCAL). Each box is constituted by the repeated words (1) "registration", (2) "remarks", and (3) "collected by". The ornaments at the lower corners appear to be shields with crossed spears, but are actually the papal coat of arms (consisting of a mitra and two crossed keys), turned upside down.

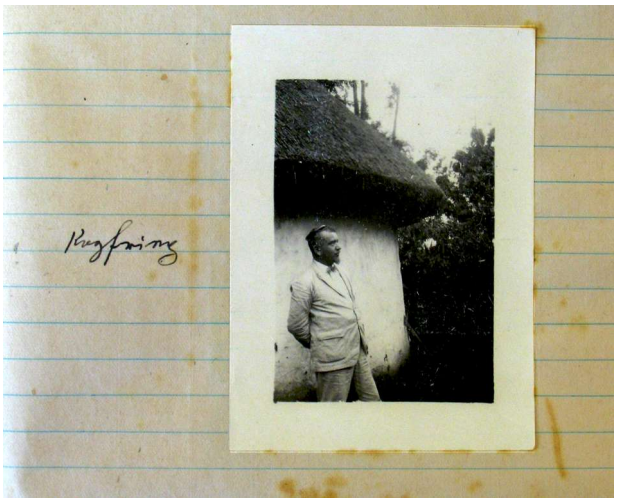
Kohler's attitude towards African stereotypes was therefore highly ambivalent: he considered the male African martial stereotypes of the "chief" or "warrior" as an iconic image that he associated with his literary endeavours. As such he considered it as an illustration for his own publication, as well as an *exlibris* for the books in his library. At the same time, he lamented the generally submissive attitude, which he believed to observe in his male African contemporaries towards Black, as well as White authorities. He expressed this explicitly in his interpretation of Bhengu's painting of the court hearing. Both portrait conventions, the "honorific" and the "repressive" (Sekula 1986) were present in Kohler's and Bhengu's repertoire, intersecting with experiences on the ground, literary fiction such as Rider Haggard, as well as specific concerns in administration and ethnography.

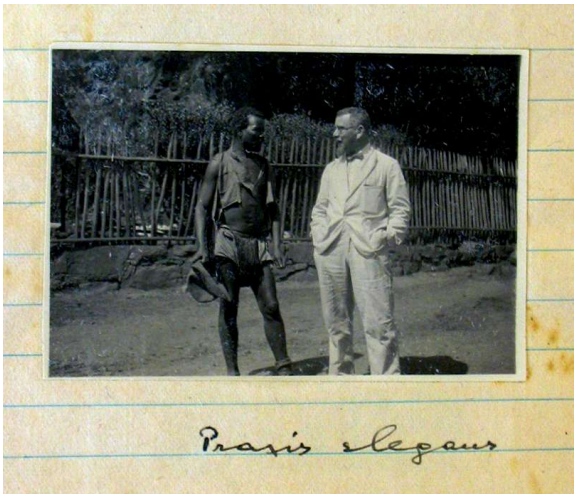
Kohler addressed the "colour bar" in relation to ethnographic concerns in two more instances. In his letter he referred to Fr. Meinulf Küsters OSB (1890-1947), whom he likely considered as a colleague in relation to his own ethnographic attempts. Kohler teased Küsters directly by sending the photograph of himself in 1931, and also mocked him indirectly via his letter to Becker. An unknown confrere of Küsters from Inkamana Abbey near Vrijheid (a "*Herz Jesu* Priest") may have taken the photographs of Kohler. Also Küsters was a member of the Benedictine Missionaries and had worked at Inkamana between 1923 and 1926. Between 1928 and 1932, he was assistant curator at the African section of the ethnographic museum of Munich under Lucian Scherman. The proximity between the museum in Munich and the Archabbey of St. Ottilien allowed for close cooperation (Weigelt 2003:114, Kecskési 1990, 2000). Like Kohler, Küsters published in the yearbook of the Missionsärztliches Institut in Würzburg, gave lectures on ethnology at the institute, and co-published with Scherman in Munich (Scherman and Küsters 1931).[775] The network connecting Kohler to European ethnologists via Becker, Küsters, and Scherman, eventually allowed for the transfer of an unspecified object collection from Centocow to the ethnographic museum of Munich in 1934, as well as several others to the institute in Würzburg.[776] Becker also facilitated other collection opportunities for Kohler, such as for the Austrian anthropologist Viktor Lebzelter (cf. Chapter Six). In 1930, Lebzelter requested missionaries to supply him with human skulls for anthropometric analysis. Even though Kohler acknowledged this opportunity, it is uncertain whether he ever sent skulls to Vienna.[777] Like Müller before him, Kohler thus partook in a transnational network that was scientific, religious, as well as popularising. This network nevertheless seemed to allow for the injection of "inappropriate" images that attempted to undermine its very goal of creating both authoritative knowledge and "civilised" people. This exceptional scenario thus requires further explanation.

[775] I was not yet able to reconstruct the exact nature of his relationship with Kohler, as there are no remaining correspondences in any of the relevant archives.

[776] AMI: letter, Becker to Kohler, 28.02.34. Even if sent by Kohler, and delivered by Becker, the objects are not registered with the Museum today (Personal communication with the museum's Africa curator, Stefan Eisenhofer, August 2012).

[777] The anthropological section of Vienna's Natural History Museum never replied to my repeated inquiries.





Figures 148 and 149: original captions: "*Kopfring*" and "*Praxis Elegans*" (KCAL).

Kohler also collected ethnographic objects for himself, apparently as a hobby. We could already see that he had a performative inclination, as well as a keen sense of dress and style, which brought him to employ some of these objects in his collection as props for his performances. In another photograph from Kohler's scrapbooks,[778] he can be seen balancing a head ring, just like he did in the photographs above. The photograph is captioned as "*Kopfring*" (Figure 148). It appears that the object was equally fascinating for him as it had been for Abbot Franz Pfanner some 45 years earlier. For both, the presence and exhibition of the head ring—detached from its original owner—signified a social change. According to Kohler, head rings were no longer a common part of African male dress by 1930:

> By now, this sign of dignity has long been taken away from the Kafirs. […] Instead they dress after "European" fashion. They have gradually lost their tribal consciousness [*Stammesbewußtsein*]. They have been uprooted. And eventually a world traveller passes by and studies how they have been affected by Christianity".[779] (Kohler 1931a:19)

Like with Bhengu's self-portrait and his painting of the court hearing, Kohler once more commented on a society, which was, according to him, in a deep crisis of its own making. By repeatedly including a head ring in his dress-up performances, Kohler thus created his own idealised version of a Zulu stereotype.[780] Also for Bhengu, the head ring became an important token in his later work, in order to "traditionalise" his paintings, and to make them even more

778 KCAL: Kohler Collection, Album "*Glückliche Reise*".

779 My own translation of the German original.

780 But Nyongwane, like his contemporary Lokothwayo (cf. Chapters Two and Five), have never been photographed with a head ring. As I explained earlier, head rings symbolised a bond between chiefs and commoners, but were at the same time worn by chiefs themselves. Members of the Zulu Royal House, such as Cetshwayo ka Mpande were commonly photographed with head rings (cf. Mokoena 2013). Still, some chiefs and their commoners, for uncertain reasons, chose not to wear them, or may not have been able to do so, due to balding heads.

interesting for the tourist market (cf. Miles 1997:23, Schlosser 1971:146).

Figure 149 (from the same album) shows Kohler wearing a smart white dress, standing next to a Black man wearing a beige vest in combination with an *umuthsa*. The image is captioned "*Praxis Elegans"*. In yet another photograph, Kohler described the same man as "dressed in two styles: European and primordial". Kohler played a simple pun according to the logic of colonial humour we are already familiar with since Chapter One: within the contrast of fashion in the encounter between doctor and patient, his medical practice (*Praxis*) was fashionable (*elegans*). Just like his own dress-up, such humour never appeared in the yearbook of the institute in Würzburg, which was very conservative when compared to Mariannhill's periodicals before the First World War. Therefore this humour has to be considered as Kohler's private endeavour with a very particular audience, involving individuals such as Küsters and Becker.

Becker eventually replied to Kohler's letter in June 1931: "I enjoyed your photographs very much. […] They show that you acclimatised very well, and even perform well in the role of a Zulu Chief".[781] But Kohler had not acclimatised well at all, and Becker had apparently misinterpreted Kohler's climactic reference at the very end of the same letter: here Kohler recounted that he had recently been in contact with Bishop Fleischer at Mariannhill. Within the institutional hierarchy, Fleischer was above Centocow's superior, Fr. Appolinaris Schwamberger. For some years, Kohler had negotiated with the superior about improving the family's conditions under the general difficulties of living in a remote area, in particular with the growing number of children. As I explained earlier, Kohler already had plans to leave Centocow by 1930. Severe friction with the missionaries and missionary sisters at the station, but also with Bishop Fleischer at Mariannhill, had built up over the years. Kohler generally lamented lacking support of the mission, materially and idealistically. As negotiations with Schwamberger eventually failed, Kohler had turned to Fleischer instead and requested that he should build him a "native kraal, with doors and windows". However, the request was rhetorical, he added, as he could have built the kraal himself—even against the will of the missionaries. This textual narrative after all corresponds with the four photographs depicting Kohler "in the garb of a Zulu Chief" in front of a "native kraal". Sending along the photographs with the letter thus appears as a sullen protest on the complicated interpersonal situation: Kohler thought that his family was being under-developed by the mission. As he could not find any other job opportunity and was at the same time morally bound by his religious vow, he decided to stay for the remaining five years of his ten-year contract.

Kohler's pose "in the garb of a Zulu Chief" thus expresses several relationships. Unlike with Müller's portrait as "orientalist", or Bhengu as "Black painter", it is possible to situate this series of four photographic performances within Kohler's biography. The multiple other documents and traces that can be reassembled around it allow for the conclusion that the performance and its photographs is not simply a caricature of Africans in general, like the ones I

[781] AMI: letter, Becker to Kohler, 05.06.1931.

presented in Chapter One. It is also not a parody of Nyongwane, as Kohler never stated that he attempted to imitate the person Nyongwane, but merely that he dressed *like* Nyongwane. Instead, I suggest that Kohler hoped to draw on the potential power of mimicry, not by imitating the real Nyongwane, but by imitating a variety of circulating imagery: for example the *exlibris* Bhengu had painted for him, or the photograph, which Kohler had pasted into the same scrapbook as his own portrait as chief, preceding it only by a few pages (Figure 145). This photograph shows Chief Lokothwayo ka Manzini of the *Amanganga* at Mariannhill, whom we already know from Chapter Two. I will discuss this photograph in more detail in the next chapter.

As suggested by Bate, the warrior was, next to the despot, a common theme in White colonial mimicry (cf. Chapter One). In Kohler's case we find arms and dress, as well as the "casual 'slothful' pose" as indicative of these Figures (cf. Bate 1993:90). Both Kohler's and Lokothwayo's portraits also resemble classic ruler poses as they were conventional since the 18th century, beginning with Louis XIV. of France: a clear accentuation of supporting and non-supporting leg (*contrapposto*), the left arm akimbo, while the right hand rests on a ceremonial staff or other regalia (cf. Bikker 2018, Burke 2001:29). In his performance, Kohler appears to have fused both stereotypes, the African and the European royal, the despot, as well as the warrior. Especially with the decline of the German monarchy by the 1920s, the latter form of portraiture would have been de-glorified. At least for Kohler, it served as a repertoire for a pose in his photographic performance. Together with general associations of promiscuity and in consequence miscegenation, Kohler's photographs would have offended a general South African society and probably were indeed intended to offend.[782]

As a singular occasion, Kohler's performance is clearly not an attempt of "going native". Rather it is a statement, infused with colonial humour, as I described it in Chapter One. As such, it was enacted explicitly in order to be photographed. But as I already pointed out, the intended pun is not directed against the referenced colonised subject. Kohler employed certain objects like an *umutsha*, a head ring, a *knobkerrie* and shield as props for his performance, in order to speak to other interlocutors. Also Bhengu repeatedly included objects such as the head ring or the *umutsha* in his contemporary paintings. As I showed, he must even have discussed with Kohler whether to include the chief's *umutsha* in the case of the *ingcubhe* paintings. In so far, these objects accumulated concrete personal meaning for Kohler, which differed from the contemporary colonial common sense. An *umutsha* generally implied nudity, and the head ring hierarchical relationships. These connotations could change, however, according to the interlocutors Kohler addressed at a certain moment: the connotations had potentials, according to how Kohler supposedly could, or could not pose with particular objects; and accordingly how he could speak about, or through them. His pose was not an act of undirected imitation, but intended to mock and criticise colleagues and superiors. To this end Kohler introduced the photograph into

[782] See Hölzl (2012) for an alternative and isolated analysis of one photograph of the series. While Hölzl denies the relevance of mimicry, I consider the respective interpretation regarding Kohler's photographic practice (and those of Kohler's colleagues) as problematic in several regards: partially due to wrong transcriptions, the limited use of relevant sources, and a resulting over-interpretation of the photographs.

several already existing conversations with particular interlocutors, as well as with other photographs and paintings.

All of these interconnected images give us a better perspective on Kohler's privately and professionally motivated agency behind Bhengu's paintings, and how Kohler articulated his ideas through them. These images were thus not only meant to represent, but to act on Kohler's interlocutors. In this case, Kohler had no intention of creating authentic representations, but used cultural mimicry as a mode of critique, which was not even directed against the colonial subjects themselves. Kohler instead presented himself as a "colonial subject", who had been disadvantaged by the missionaries. He did this not to parody the (in his eyes) even more disadvantaged Black African Chief Nyongwane, but rather to speak to his superior Becker, as well as his colleague Fr. Meinulf Küsters. In both cases, Kohler even invoked the registers of race and colour by describing himself as an "Albino *Amabhaca*". In doing so, he undermined the stability of his own "White" identity and thus the status quo of the "colour bar" including his own scientific work. While Virchow, Bastian, and their colleagues literally had asked for "fixing types" as early as 1872,[783] Kohler was busy un-fixing them in 1931. As a result, he expected and indeed received critique. This image occasion thus appears as a telling expression of Kohler's often irritated commentary on the social situation around him, and the stereotypes it produced. He was well aware that his performance was considered ambivalent and therefore inappropriate within the South African discourse of the "colour bar". As a result, the statement was very powerful in its mobile photographic form, and eventually discouraged for exactly this reason.

The South African government claimed the right to rule by maintaining and (re-)creating racial differences. By appropriating and performing some of these differences, Kohler transgressed them in at least two cases. Next to the figure of the chief, Kohler refracted yet another colonial stereotype by wedging himself in between the unstable positions held by government and Africans:

> Whenever a [Black] patient persists and inquires without end about the reason for his sickness, I play a joke on him. He does not want a pastoral explanation from the doctor. He loves the priest doctor in the black skin, but not the one in the white skin. I cannot give him a philosophical explanation, because I do not have a full grasp of the language. [Instead], like a sorcerer [*Zauberer*], I rattle with medicine-horns and whistle like the "*imilozi*". The Zulu possesses humour and understands me. But even as a white mission doctor, I was suspected by authoritative institutions to abet heathendom". (Kohler 1935:129)[784]

"*Imilozi*" are ancestral spirits, channelled by a diviner (*isangoma*), so that they may give advice to his or her clients. Kohler thus not only performed in the garb of an African chief, but also with the paraphernalia of an *isangoma*, whom he describes as a "sorcerer". In both cases, he pointed out to a White European audience how he expected and experienced resistance from the White South African society. Despite the fact that he presented both stereotypes with an ironic attitude, there are nevertheless epistemological differences. The role of the chief was a performance

[783] See the ethnographic instructions issued since the 1870s, which I discussed in Chapter Six.
[784] My own translation from the German original.

during a photographic occasion, the one of the *isangoma* was the re-narration of an actual act of mimicry in the course of Kohler's profession. Nevertheless, both were interventions across the "colour bar".

Kohler's attempts at imitating Africans and the intended humorous effects may become even clearer once we acknowledge that he ruled out the possibility of full assimilation and identity between Whites and Blacks. According to Bhabha (1984), this mere approximation always entails doubt about identity, and thus irritation and anxiety. Kohler's opinion on the impossibility to fully assimilate and transform the colonised was probably best expressed in the conclusion to his article on the *ingcubhe*:

> We can provide them with many beneficial things, we can free them of their magic frenzy, we can bring to them the light of Christendom. But we should not attempt too much. We can never transform them into civilised Europeans. This is impossible, as much as it is impossible to paint their skin; unless we colour them through bastardisation from the inside out.
>
> They are children, not because they are not yet as old as we Europeans, or because they have not yet climbed as high on the "ladder of evolution". They do appear as children, because they are employed with a raw, primitive, and naive mind [*Gemüt*]. If we ever want to earn their trust, we must not only call them up, but climb down towards them.[785] (Kohler 1931:127)

Like Müller on the "native question" in 1909, Kohler expressed a public concern about interracial relationships and miscegenation. But instead of Müller's physiognomic interpretations of portraits, I showed that Kohler eventually based his assumptions on psychoanalytical readings of social action and in particular Bhengu's paintings. He not only analysed some of Bhengu's paintings in this regard, but also commissioned other paintings in order to express his views. Even though Kohler opposed segregation, his opinion echoes a speech of the same year by Van Warmelo's predecessor as government ethnologist, Gérard Paul Lestrade. Lestrade provided a deterministic view on "cultural adaptationism", which denied the possibility of total assimilation, and instead suggested only to select from European culture what was appropriate for Africans (cf. Dubow 1989:36, Kuper 1999:151-152). Kohler's above "anti-evolutionary" musings nevertheless remain obscure, as he immediately contradicts himself in the next sentence. His ideas still appear moderate when compared to other racist narratives employed by fellow mission doctors in the institute's yearbook (cf. Hölzl 2011, 2012). In order to position Bhengu and Kohler within such discourses and relationships concerning race, I showed how they positioned themselves in and through photographs and paintings. This allowed Kohler to place images into relationships and to collapse various spaces into each other, as he did with Bhengu's self-portrait. Kohler also experimented with ambivalent inversions and performances of racial identities. For example, he attempted mimicries of the figures of the native chief and the *isangoma*. At the same time, Kohler temporarily tried to pass Bhengu off as a White painter with the help of a Europeanised signature.

By following the circulation of the photographs showing Kohler in the garb of Chief

[785] My own translation from the German original.

Nyongwane, we could see that the tense situation at Centocow Mission briefly escalated in 1930. This tension only ended in 1935, when the Kohlers indeed left Centocow for good. Betty Kohler departed for a long holiday to Germany with four of the children, while Max Kohler and his son Charley stayed behind to find a new home. After trying his luck at Edendale College in Pietermaritzburg for several months, Kohler eventually became district surgeon in Tabankulu, a small town in the Eastern Cape. Between 1925 and his death in 1948, he never returned to Europe. Either in 1930, when he first considered quitting, or in 1935, he expressed some of his frustrations about the situation at Centocow through an assignment for Bhengu, which he then sent to Würzburg in form of a photographic copy (Figure 150). The painting shows Max Kohler descending down the staircase of Centocow's mission house with flying coat, hat, and stethoscope. To the far right, we see a priest's robe and foot; otherwise, the painting speaks for itself. With the end of Kohler's contract and vow, and also due to the death of Kohler's main interlocutor, Fr. Christoph Becker, the frequent correspondence with the institute in Würzburg stopped in 1937.



Figure 150: monochrome photograph of an untitled painting by Gerard Bhengu, approx. 1931-1935 (AMI).

Conclusion

From Chapters One to Seven we followed the European engagement with African authorship and agency, ranging from satires, theatre plays, the participation in guided tours and photographic occasions, the "salvaging" of African objects before the First World War, and eventually the active encouragement of African *artistic* production since the 1920s. During the 1890s, Mariannhill Missionaries had argued that Black South Africans were not yet fit to produce artistic work, such as fine art painting and photography (cf. Chapter One). Eventually, by the second half of the 1920s, the White South African art world encouraged Black artists to adapt the European mimetic art tradition, or, rather to adapt to it. Beginning at Centocow Mission in 1927, a group of White patrons promoted Gerard Bhengu within South Africa's religious propaganda, ethnology, and eventually in the South African art world. Bhengu in particular produced genre paintings and portraits, which appear to be mimetic in the sense of copying faithfully from nature through skilful observation. But like Müller, Bhengu also created montages of preexisting images, eclectic compilations of people, objects, and architecture. In the process, he pulled together localities far apart in both time and space. Like its sources, also Bhengu's oeuvre is very dispersed today. It is therefore impossible to reassemble it in its entirety and to determine the full scope of its inspirations.

Like Müller before him, Bhengu began his career as an illustrator for a religious cause, became an opportunistic ethnographer, as well as an acknowledged artist during his lifetime, but even more so posthumously. At the same time, both men were exuberant, eclectic, yet creative copyists with commercial intentions. In both cases, it was possible to trace the exchange of ideas and image prototypes through a study of intercontinental networks. Müller and Bhengu drew parts of their artistic inspiration from examples acquired in Germany and also applied related aesthetics to ethnographic studies. The conventions of German genre photography thus not only entered the South African ethnographic discourse around 1900 through Müller, but once more manifested themselves in Bhengu's work around 1930. These movements were only one element in a complex chain of intermediality: paintings had earlier served as inspirations for Müller's photographic *tableaux vivants*. Similarly romanticised themes once more reappeared in statues, murals, church-windows, as well as Gerard Bhengu's paintings. Multiple artists became distributed within and even beyond their oeuvres, which can be traced as either "protentions" or "retentions" (Gell 1998). The fact that both Bhengu and Müller relied on other images for their own work was more obvious to contemporary audiences. Intermediality can therefore only be fully understood as a situated historical experience.

Like Müller's correspondence with German photographers and ethnologists, and his reading of various kinds of instructive literature (photographic, touristic, ethnographic), Bhengu's early work was partially shaped by correspondences with Kohler's superior in Würzburg, his artistic relation in Munich, as well as the tutelage by Van Warmelo and his network of the IIALC. Like Müller's photographic project, also Kohler's and Bhengu's painterly

project became involved in the same four discourses of production and interpretation: they evolved in relation to missionary propaganda, some images were then directed towards the discourse of ethnographic representation, and most images of both oeuvres have been appreciated and exhibited as art. Both oeuvres are today equally discussed in terms of history and heritage production. This trajectory from construction to historicity (epitomised by Bryant's and Sr. Adelgisa's quotes in this study's main introduction) becomes clearer when we recall both Müller's and Kohler's claims to objectivity for the respective sets of images. Even though their claims to objectivity were contradicted by the practices of artistic poses and montages, their motivations can be understood once considered in relation to the epistemic regimes and audiences they addressed.

In his correspondence with Von Luschan in 1899 and in his article of 1909, Müller framed his work in a way similar to a "mechanical objectivity" (cf. Chapter One). He stressed his "snap shot" photographs as even more authentic, pointed to the future value of his photographs due to the alleged vanishing of "primitive people", and created, if reluctantly, an additional booklet for Von Luschan. Several decades later, Kohler authenticated his own and Bhengu's work for and within ethnographic, medical, psychoanalytical, and artistic discourses. He accompanied ethnographic descriptions with original textual statements by informants in Zulu. Employing the "native's point of view" this approach can be understood as "trained judgement" (cf. Pels 2014). In the case of the *ingcubhe,* he hoped to back up his account with an original text and paintings by Bhengu, which they had negotiated through a "four-eyed sight". Kohler complemented his medical texts with both photographs and Bhengu's paintings. Furthermore, in at least one known case, he interpreted Bhengu's self-portrait as a "working object": by dissecting it within the evidential paradigm of psychoanalysis, he attempted to define it as an authentic emanation of the latter's subconscious, in order to penetrate the "native mind". It was in the art world, however, that Kohler considered it necessary to support the artistic value of Bhengu's paintings with additional improvements to the artist's "signatures": the "germanification" of the artist's surname to "Bhenger", as well as his fingerprint.

Based on interviews with Kohler's widow and Bhengu during the 1950s, Schlosser concluded that Kohler's interest in Bhengu had from the beginning relieved Bhengu of the choice for a different career. Their relationship was also predetermined by Kohler's failure to interest Centocow's superior, Fr. Appolinaris Schwamberger, for Bhengu's artistic training (Schlosser 1971:123). Strictly speaking, we can therefore not count Bhengu among the mission-educated artists, but rather have to take into account Kohler's particular and independent agency as a mission associate. From the outset, Bhengu was set on a path to become an "exceptional" artist: "exceptional" as compared to his Black contemporaries, but nevertheless set apart from his White peers. Bhengu thus became hyper-visible as an individual in a social and artistic sense: his authorship and identity as "Black artist" was the very point of Kohler's efforts in some moments. In the effort of selling Bhengu's work on the art market, however, Kohler temporarily tried to subdue Bhengu's racial identity as "Black", by attempting to pass his work off as that of a White

man through the adjustment of his signature.

Like Müller, Bhengu developed an inclination for self-portraiture. In both cases we must acknowledge the various forms and layers these performances involved. When posing as painter for his self-portrait, Bhengu imitated a very conventional pose that aspired to the status of the artistic painter, not necessarily to the status of being "White" or "Modern". Nevertheless, Bhengu aspired to the membership of a specific community. Kohler instead, when performing in the garb of Chief Nyongwane, indeed imitated yet another conventional pose, however with the clear intention to subvert. It is crucial to observe that this subversion was no longer intended as a parody of the "native" (cf. Chapter One), but instead a persiflage that allowed Kohler to comment powerfully on a segregated society. Through an intentionally imperfect impersonation or mimicry of the other side of segregation, he indeed refracted both sides. Mimicry is a form of imitation that is by definition never perfect, and in Kohler's case clearly supposed to be recognised as such. The outcome and consequences of such a social performance can therefore never be fully anticipated or controlled.

In consequence, both Bhengu and Kohler at times appeared as inappropriate within the segregationist society of Natal, if not even as threats to the status quo. Bhengu's art was not recognisable as "African" per se, why Kohler suggested to adjust Bhengu's signature, in order to disguise the fact even more. Only in self-portraits showing the act of painting, the identity of the "Black painter" became obvious. As a figure of discourse, "authorship" thus posed a potential problem for the success of Bhengu's work. This was at least Kohler's fear around 1930. After all, Kohler felt that Bhengu's work needed his advice, as well as his presence: either through psychoanalytical commentary, or through his own performance as tutor, together with Bhengu before the easel (Figure 144). Also Natal's educational authorities—even if appreciative—deemed it necessary to control Bhengu's artistic creativity. Apparently, his art was becoming too "European" in the eyes of, for example, the professor for art history O.J.P. Oxley. According to Oxley, Bhengu's work had to be redirected once more towards his own "African" style in order to guarantee a segregated art world. Still in the early 1960s, the production process of Bhengu's first and only publication together with Phyllis Savory was not easy going. Savory considered it necessary to first consult with the Native Department before publication, in order to avoid a confrontation with racial policy.

Kohler documented his own transgressions of the "colour bar" in a humorous, yet bitter way. These transgressions were perceived as a threat to Natal society in at least two cases. First, through reflections on his photographic performance in the garb of Chief Nyongwane, and second, through his performance with the paraphernalia of an *isangoma*. Even more than with Müller in the last chapters, it becomes apparent with Kohler how he adjusted his voice and rhetorics in a segregated environment, depending on whom he addressed and what topic he brought up accordingly: his superior, a general or professional public in Germany, the local mission superior or Bishop, the buddy in China, members of his family, and eventually his "Black painter". After all, Kohler was a medical doctor and only entertained his roles as art

patron and ethnologist as hobbies. Just like Müller, he perceived himself—and was perceived by others—as auxiliary to these fields of interest. Like Müller and Bhengu, Kohler nevertheless became an influential "trans-disciplinary subject" on a global scale (cf. Schneider 2011).

By comparing Müller's general photographic practice and oeuvre to Bhengu's painterly practice and oeuvre across disciplines, we can see that there were both commonalities and differences. The specific circumstances of Bhengu's and Kohler's extended social relationships connected by the medium of painting, made their cooperation possible, necessary, and visible. However, as we saw in Chapter One, also photography could be employed in a painterly manner, given the photographer's patience and skills to stage models and a well-equipped studio to perform retouching. Both media indeed had a painterly potential, in so far that they *took time* to compose the motive. Contrary to Berger's suggestion, there is thus not necessarily such a great difference between painting and photography. By taking time to prepare, rehearse, and repeat the sceneries for his genre photographs, Müller—just like a painter—indeed "encompassed time" (cf. Berger 1976, also see Taussig 2011). While Bhengu as painter could condense what he had observed, and thereby could create "identity" instead of mere "resemblance", the photographer Müller had to evoke poses by social interaction with his models (cf. Albien 1911:5, Chapter One). As we could see throughout the previous chapters, both painting and photography could accumulate moments of past experiences, or as Berger put it: "This is how the act of drawing refuses the process of disappearances and proposes the simultaneity of a multitude of moments" (Berger 1976:82).

The combination of allegedly creative yet authentic—but nevertheless controlled—representations, initially made Bhengu's paintings successful within a complex visual economy. The complexity of this economy entails that it changed over time. As I indicated in the introduction, Bhengu's work was eventually devaluated both on the art market and in art history due to his initial reliance on White patrons and the ongoing adherence to romantic genre scenes. Unlike some of his colleagues, he never made the transition to a modernist style that spoke to the struggle narratives of an anti-apartheid lobby in need of Black artists as strong figures of resistance. Nevertheless, after the end of Apartheid, Bhengu and Kohler reemerged within the same fora due to the exceptionality of their cooperation as artist and patron, ethnographer, and amanuensis. Through their work, they contributed in a crucial way to the establishment of other social figures, which gained increasing prominence until today. Three of these figures we shall meet in the final chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

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Photographs, Personhood and Power

Introduction: The Missionary, the Diviner, and the Chief

One morning in April 2011, I met Fr. Henry Ratering CMM at the car park of Mariannhill Monastery. Until his death in 2015, Fr. Henry, despite his advanced age, had served as Mariannhill's organist and tour guide; and, as often as he could spare the time, as historian, translator, archivist, librarian, as well as the keeper of the museum. Already from a distance I saw him resting next to the back of a car and blowing his nose. Meanwhile, he had placed a picture frame on the car's boot, which was still wet from the morning rain. Once we had greeted each other, he presented the framed painting, which, so he told me with a smile and an apologetic wink towards the wet car boot, was a "real Bhengu". It depicted Abbot Franz Pfanner, the founder of Mariannhill Monastery, in full regalia. Holding the abbot's staff with the left, and touching the abbot's cross with the right, Pfanner is standing at the entrance to the monastery's church (Figure 152). Fr. Henry explained to me that he was on his way to take the painting from his study back to Mariannhill's museum; he had had to "touch it up a bit", as some areas had faded out, while others had been affected by the museum's damp microclimate.

After our conversation, Fr. Henry in fact did not return the painting to the museum, but installed it in the "first abbey". This colloquial name is commonly applied to the small corrugated iron hut in front of the museum, being a replica of Abbot Pfanner's first dwelling. The original hut had been on the other side of the monastery, and was temporarily used as a shed for garden utensils once Pfanner had died in 1909. At one point after 1938, the hut's interior was recreated according to its original form. In 1954, it eventually had to be taken down in order to make space for more important building projects. After repeated, but failed attempts during the 1960s, the hut was eventually rebuilt entirely in 1982 from a photograph in front of the present museum for the centenary festivities and the related opening of the museum. The present first abbey's interior, including a bed and office table, next to others of Pfanner's supposedly original belongings, was redesigned according to historical descriptions and memories of the last interior before 1954, which itself had already been a replica.[786]

Today, the building is one of the most important stops during the guided tour around the monastery, which Fr. Henry used to give, and others still give when welcoming visitors and tourists. During the course of the tour, the hut is portrayed as the most intimate space relating to the founder's presence. By putting Bhengu's painting up on the first abbey's wall after our meeting, Fr. Henry attributed considerable importance to both Pfanner and Bhengu. His emphasis on the fact that he was dealing with a "real Bhengu" had partially been triggered by his embarrassment of having placed a valuable artwork on a wet car boot. Despite this *faux pas*, he was well aware of Bhengu's role in the South African art historical canon. The painting's instalment in the first abbey may therefore be considered as a gesture of reverence to both individuals.

[786] CMMA-MM: letter, Fr. Pius Rudloff to Sr. Adelgisa Hermann, 16.11.1982. Also see Vorspel et al. (1921-1989:341, entry for 1982).

As I was able to observe myself several months later, most visitors did not even recognise Bhengu's work as a painting, due to its photo-realistic quality. It is indeed an interpretation of a photograph, taken between 1886 and 1892[787]—most likely during the festivities for Pfanner's jubilee in 1888, which I described earlier. It is yet unclear when exactly Bhengu produced the copy, and for what exact purpose. Employed by Bishop Fleischer of Mariannhill during the years 1932 and 1933, Bhengu moved to Mariannhill's station Mariathal near Ixopo, in order to "paint pictures 'for the saints', as Bhengu himself put it, as well as 'some ordinary pictures'" (Schlosser 1971:133). According to Juliette Leeb-du Toit, it was most likely here that he was commissioned to reproduce Pfanner's photograph. Already by 1925, CMM Missionaries and CPS sisters had started to "record everything remarkable" about Abbot Franz Pfanner, either in terms of material remains, or in terms of stories about his deeds.[788] I suggest that this was possibly already with the idea in mind to initiate the process of Pfanner's beatification. As I shall explain later in this chapter, beatification is one of the first steps in the Catholic Church's institutionalised trajectory towards canonisation, or put differently, in the process of "creating" a saint. Possibly it was this fact that Bhengu himself referred to when speaking to Schlosser.[789] These circumstances indeed make it plausible that Bishop Fleischer commissioned Bhengu's work as part of the anticipated beatification project.

Leeb-du Toit suggests that Bhengu was probably assisted in producing this work, due to "[its] unprecedented complexity and scale" (2003:89). Bhengu created this "pen and ink drawing"[790] from a photographic print, which at the time circulated as a memorial card. This card had been reproduced in such great numbers that Fr. Alexander Ultsch CMM in Cologne could still provide me with a spare one in 2012. The print, mounted on cardboard, measures 6.6 by 10.2 centimetres. Bhengu's drawing therefore is a considerable enlargement by an approximate factor of 20. He translated a photograph, which had already been reproduced many times and was circulating widely, into a singular and unique painting. In so doing he re-authenticated Pfanner's presence. In the previous chapter we have seen how Bhengu had earlier appropriated other photographs and turned them into anonymised ethnographic paintings. In this case, however, he produced a singular artwork in the form of an identifiable portrait, the power of which is derived from the combined personhood of both Pfanner and Bhengu. Eventually, the painting was installed in the first abbey, a space that likewise had been replicated in supposedly authentic fashion in order to reestablish Pfanner's presence and personhood.

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787 Mariannhill ascended to the state of an abbey in 1886 and Abbot Franz left Mariannhill in 1892.

788 CMMA-MM: letter, Fr. Salesius Esser to Fr. Paschalis Boneberg, 15.12.1925.

789 It therefore appears to be significant that Bhengu said "for" and not "of" the saints. Nevertheless, we have to take into account that Schlosser translated to the German from a conversation she had with Bhengu in English. This may already have introduced a shift in meaning: "[…] *einige Bilder 'für die Heiligen', wie Bhengu sich ausdrückte,* […]" (Schlosser 1971:133).

790 The technique is identified as such in a label accompanying the picture in the first abbey. The label must have been produced by the museum's curatorial staff during the 1980s.



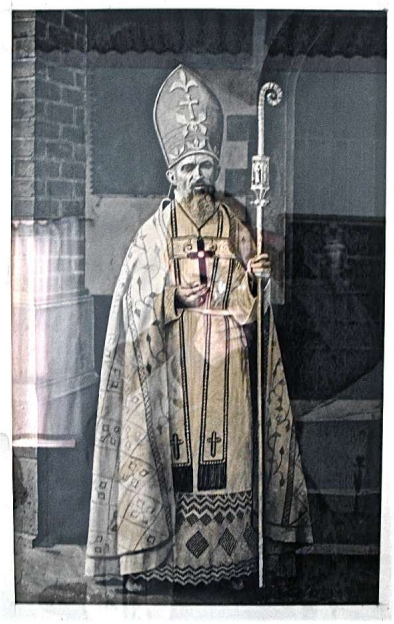


Figure 151 and Figure 152: original caption: "*R.R.D. P.*[791] *Franz Pfanner, Abt von Mariannhill, Süd-Afrika*". Original photographic print mounted on cardboard, approx. 1920s. 6.6 x 10.2 cm. The photograph had most likely been taken in 1888 (collection of the author); Gerard Bhengu's interpretation of the photograph in Figure 152, early 1930s. Resized to match Figure 151 (photograph by the author, 2011).

This episode serves to introduce the final chapter's first building block, as well as its general theme. Relying on what we have learned so far about photographs, objects, social actors, as well as respective environments of production, exhibition, and circulation, we may now deal with the effects and affects of the resulting compounded entities. By intentionally compounding images, objects, and the persons represented by them, the missionaries created particular assemblages.[792] Within out-of-the-ordinary performances these were thought to better serve the purpose of convincing others of particular projects.

One may think of objects as "acting" independently of, and on humans (cf. Latour 2005). In this view, the material deterioration of Bhengu's painting induced Fr. Henry to fix it in a rather desperate effort (cf. Hodder 2016). But how do we indeed account for, and trace back the agency of intentionally engineered subject-image-object compounds, such as Bhengu's painting? Such

[791] R.R.D. = (lat.) *Reverendissimus Dominus* = The Very Reverend Monsignor.

[792] On the idea of assemblages (derived from Deleuze and Guattari) as agentive combinations of objects also see Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* (2010).

compounds have to be empowered—and constantly re-empowered—by people, before they can act themselves, or in turn act on and empower other people. The Cambridge anthropologist Alfred Gell referred to such processes of empowerment as "secondary agency" (1998).[793] In order to explore different kinds of image-object-subject relationships, I discuss the recollection of the "distributed personhood" of three interconnected social figures: the missionary, the diviner, and the chief.[794] Even though they can also be considered professions and social institutions, the tension between individual personhood and social figures as manifested through the lens of photography, provides a resonance that allows for the study of the figures' active social involvement.

These three popular social figures allow us to consider the ongoing eminence of related mimetic capital in KZN today, and to chart instances of related appropriations. Since the beginning of the encounter between Mariannhill Missionaries and African communities in the 1880s, these three figures had been mutually constitutive and evolved in interdependence. As we saw with Kohler's social and photographic performances as both chief and diviner in the last section, they still played an important role in the public sphere during the early 1930s, and even today. The respective discourses regarding each figure produced, and at the same time questioned particular material objects, which, together with the photographs I discuss, were able to redistribute personhood. Still during the 1930s, we saw the triangulation of power relations between mission, healing, and divination, as well as political authorities. These relationships have been established in interdependence since the 19th century; their visualisation in form of photographs at Mariannhill, however, can be located around 1900.

Mariannhill's jubilee publication of 1907, which I introduced in the first chapter, opens with yet another photographic portrait of Abbot Franz Pfanner. As part of the success story since the Trappist's arrival in South Africa in 1880, this portrait became one of the most reproduced depictions of the first abbot, to an extent that it still has an iconic effect of recognition with the people involved with the mission today. African chiefs and diviners had a similar presence in the mission's periodicals since the 1880s, however, only through textual descriptions. They only

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[793] In my analysis of "personhood" and "agency" within subject-image-object relationships I only rely on a limited number of scholars, prominently Gell. Such ideas, like the subject being transcended and expanded by objects (which are then granted agency within this relationship) are preceded by a range of works by other anthropologists, amongst them Nancy Munn and Marilyn Strathern. For analysis and critique of their theories, as well as their influences on Gell, see for example Hoskins (1998, 2006) and Keurs (2006).

[794] In the following I use the term "(social) figure" in the sense of an abstract and stereotypical, yet socially embedded actor (cf. Moebius and Schroer 2010). Between the 19th and 21st century, such figures sedimented in narratives of the Afro-European public sphere. As Barker and Lindquist explain for the Indonesian case, "key figures […] as particular sites […] allow access to ideological formations and their contestations" (2009:36). Associations in society with such figures naturally change over time. Missionaries and other colonial actors initially applied temporal connotations in order to construct the "heathen" diviner and the "traditional" chief as "backwards" and as to-be-surpassed. Instead, the missionary, the convert, and the indigenous priest were supposed to represent a European "modernity", implemented to achieve exactly this transformation. In recent decades, however, this constellation has turned into the exact opposite, in which privately and publicly expressed opinions consider especially the White Catholic missionary as obsolete. For an introduction to a "relational study of modernity" in Africa, see Geschiere, Meyer and Pels (2008).

emerged in and through photographs with the arrival of Br. Aegidius Müller at the photographic studio after 1898. In the years just prior to the jubilee, and culminating in its publication, the diviner and the chief became part of a profile delineating the essential themes of "mission life" (cf. Chapter One), where they constituted a crucial narrative component as antagonists to the common protagonists such as missionaries and converts.

The chief and the diviner are portrayed in the same publication as adversaries to the ideals of the mission: in the fourth chapter, titled "From rich Kafir life [*Aus dem vollen Kaffernleben*]", two photographs stick out for displaying institutions of African society: one depicts a female "Kafir diviner [*Kaffrische Wahrsagerin*]" during a consultation, and the other shows the portrait of a "Kafir chief [*Kaffernhäuptling*]". In the respective captions the first is presented as "scheming" and the latter as "superstitious". While most of the Trappist missionaries, as well as (potential) converts, are identified in portraits by name as active protagonists, the diviner and the chief remain nameless in the publication. In the previous year, however, Müller had published two articles in the mission-ethnology journal *Anthropos* (Müller 1906, 1907), where he discussed several encounters with a female diviner by the name of Ugitschigitschi, the very same diviner he anonymised in the jubilee publication. This is also the very same female diviner, who still appeared in the studio's post card rag during the 1930s (Figure 78) and the two exhibition stalls at the 1927 mission exhibition in Triest (Figures 116 and 117). While studying the collection of original glass plate negatives in the archives of Mariannhill, I also found several negatives to the image of the "Kafir Chief", which Müller labelled with the person's title in Zulu: "*'Nkosi*". I came to know the *inkhosi's* personal name, Lokothwayo, through a detour.

The fact that the names of all three depicted individuals had been inscribed in the periphery of the photographs around 1900 made it possible for particular African and European social actors to re-establish the identity of these individuals many decades later. In the process they invested the photographs with a "secondary agency" (Gell 1998) and accordingly a particular power. It is therefore necessary to acknowledge photographs as actors in their own right, which accordingly make a difference in social relationships (also see Edwards 2001:17). In the case of my study, the secondary agency of photographs needs to be explored in relation to how social actors intentionally engineered them as image-objects, so that these image-objects could develop agency in order to convince allies of their projects.

Gell (re-)introduced ideas about "the power of images" to anthropological studies, amongst other authors, through the work of the art historian David Freedberg (1989),[795] who

[795] Even though the "agency" of images has been introduced as a topic to art history by Freedberg (1989), recent overviews of the discipline (Nelson and Shiff 2003, Preziosi 2009) do not acknowledge agency as a theoretical concept. Neither the work of Gell, Latour, or even Freedberg are mentioned. Prominent art historians working on similar topics, such as the German Hans Belting (2001) and the American William J.T. Mitchell (2005) have taken no extensive notice of the specifically anthropological discourse on, and ethnographies of the agency of (art) objects, and Gell's work in particular. However, Mitchell briefly mentions in a footnote that he thinks Gell's theories are "quite compatible" with his own, and also pays marginal tribute to the work of Latour.

explores various forms of how people invested images with power throughout history.[796] In the late 19th and early 20th century, Euro-American travellers and scholars often described their subjects' ideas on first encountering photographic technology as "magical" thinking. After Susan Sontag still upheld this notion in her 1977 book *On Photography*, by saying that "[a]s everyone knows, primitive people fear that the camera will rob them of some part of their being" (Sontag 1977:158), Freedberg was the first in recent scholarship to suggest that the previously posed inclination of "non-western" people to "irrationally" perceive images and image-making-technologies as *independently* powerful, must be reviewed by including an analysis of "Western" ideas and practices (Freedberg 1989:XXI). Following Roland Barthes (1993 [1980]), Freedberg argued that the *studium* and the *punctum*, thus objective and subjective/affective interpretations of photographs, must be applied conjointly to all kinds of images, not only two-dimensional ones (Freedberg 1989:430). While the figures of the missionary, the chief, and the diviner were over time associated with theories of magic, these theories have prototypes in social action and relationships. Still, missionaries and ethnologists often represented them as stereotypical reductions in the space between lived experience, image, text, and object. By exploring the occasions and traditions behind such thinking, I hope to show that in all three cases, part of the mechanism to create power relies on the simple binary of the initial concealment of an image or object, and their later revelation or exposure, as suggested by Taussig (2006).

In several innovative accounts, Heike Behrend (2000, 2002, 2003) has compared the agency and efficacy of photographs with those of relics, fetishes, and the Eucharist in Eastern Africa, leading to the reactivated presence of individuals.[797] She did not, however, draw these observations from one coherent ethnographic setting, where these phenomena were connected. I will do exactly this, and broaden the explorations of Chua (2009), Smith (2003, 2008), and Edwards (2005) into the distribution of personhood through photographs. These authors consider photographs as agentive objects, giving material presence to the people they relate to, or represent. I further suggest that in order for social actors to re-establish the personhood of the three figures, and in order to tap into their powers, the inclusion of compounded image-object ontologies was essential. Furthermore, to locate the historical moments when such assemblages were created, I retrace the historical networks that enabled the constitution and distribution of these powers.

Perceptions of photography (or rather the descriptions of such perceptions) did certainly not evolve in an evolutionary way, as suggested by the anthropologists Tylor and Frazer, from "primitive" to "civilised" or "modern". Instead, as Tylor proved himself by engaging with "spirit photographs" (Pinney 2011:33-35), photographs may be "re-enchanted" at any time (cf. Gell 1998, Pels 2003). This is also addressed by W.J.T. Mitchell (2005), by asking "what do images want?", or, rather "what claim they make upon us, and what is it that we want from pictures"

[796] For other studies on the power and social life of religious images, see for example Belting (1990), Morgan (1998), as well as Roberts and Nooter Roberts (2008 [2003]).

[797] Wendl to the contrary claims for the case of Ghana that "photos are not used in magic and sorcery practices" (2001:87).

(ibid.:XV). He uses the term "want" not only in the sense of desire, but also regarding what images may lack or miss (ibid.:10, 50). For the case of Mariannhill, I suggest that it is a sense of materiality that photographs in circulation "wanted" in the eyes of those who employed them, in order to convince better. Accordingly, social actors over time supplied particular photographs with material prostheses, either in a material or in a narrative sense. The social figures of the missionary, the diviner, and the chief constituted a substantial part of Mariannhill's narrative repertoire, as much as they were involved in the discourse entertained by many colonial actors in Natal and elsewhere. All three figures had multiple manifestations in texts and images, but also in the form of particular—often "musealised"—objects, which ethnographic descriptions and exhibitions established in a highly generic way.

Since their arrival in the 1880s, Mariannhill Missionaries attempted to take on the responsibility and the control of spirituality, healing, schooling, as well as land and labour distribution for their subjects. These spheres of influence, however, created spaces of competition, as these spheres had previously been controlled by both diviners and chiefs.[798] Like African non-Christians addressed Manzini and later his son Lokothwayo as *inkhosi* (chief), African converts addressed Pfanner as the *inkhosi* of Mariannhill (Bryant 1887). Also his followers Schölzig and Wolpert were addressed in the same way. Prior to the introduction of mission doctors, such as Kohler in the 1920s, Mariannhill had not only provided spiritual, but also limited medical support since the first years of arrival. These positions were not only based on the legitimation and authority to dispense benefits and restrictions, but also on the claim to the expert knowledge of how to do this most effectively.

With the help of text, image, and objects in their periodicals and museum, Mariannhill missionaries thus represented the diviner and the chief as incapable of adequately dispensing the services of leadership, medical and spiritual support. In the eyes of the missionaries, this legitimised their efforts to weaken the chief's and the diviner's status. As Kohler's superiors Becker and Boslet still reminded him time and again during the 1920s and 30s, it was stories about such characters, and in particular photographs of them that would always find interest with readers. Due to the inherent relationship of conflict with missionaries, these two figures produced the most entertaining and thrilling stories for European readers, and as a result revenue and recruits. As a counterpoint, the missionaries intentionally inscribed their own presence in the photographic record. They did this either in the form of hagiographic figures, such as Abbot Pfanner, or in form of the mission's photographer, in order to prove their own influence on competing subjects like diviners and chiefs. All three—as both generic figures and as historical individuals—remain prominent to this day. For this reason, they remain important constituents of the local society. Because these figures were historically co-dependent and their personhood and power is re-produced in similar ways, the respective processes need to be analysed in

[798] Also Adam Kuper (1987) and in particular Paul Landau (1991) observed such triangular relationships of competition between missionaries, diviners and chiefs, but not their representational construction through material and photographic artefacts (also see Maxwell 2011).

conjunction. To do so, this final chapter dedicates two sections to each of the three figures. First, the use of images and relics within the Catholic religious imagination in relation to Pfanner's beatification; second, the performance of a colonial magic through photographs of the diviner Ugitschigitschi; in the third part, I will eventually deal with the politics and poetics around photographs and paraphernalia of Chief Lokothwayo.

Image and Body of the First Missionary

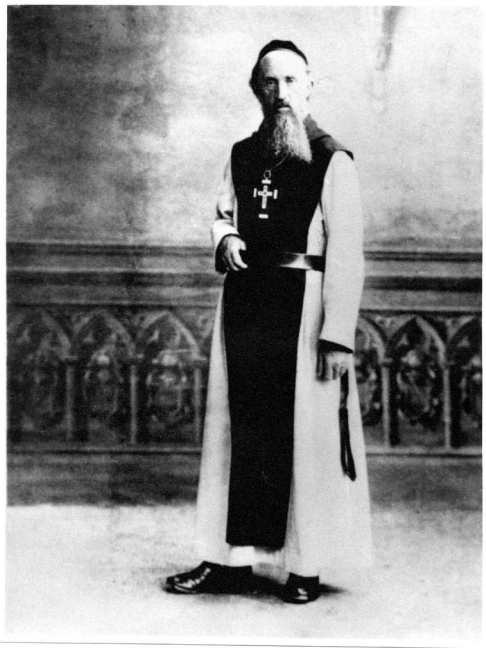
Abbot Franz Pfanner was the single most photographed person in the history of Mariannhill before 1909. His photographs have even been preserved since his student times, and the number peaks in the late 1880s and early 1890s, while he was Abbot of Mariannhill. They also do not cease after 1892, once he retired to the outstation Emaus. The occasions are mostly feast days, jubilees, or whenever the photographer came to visit Emaus. Many of Pfanner's photographs had initially been taken to promote the mission project and continue to be used for the same purpose until today. Photographs, but also paintings, busts and statues of Pfanner are virtually present in every public and private space at Mariannhill today. They can therefore be seen as iconic images that carry much more than only Pfanner's identity. Most insiders and outsiders to the monastery equate them with the identity and charisma of Mariannhill at large. In this section and the next, I hope to show that the missionaries considered the compounding of images and bodily traces as the most effective and affective way to achieve the goal of further promoting this equation. In order to explore the importance of intermediality in this effort, I discuss three examples, even if several more would be available: the first two concern the repeated translation process between photography, sculpture, and painting; the third the interdependence of photography and bodily remnants.

In 1947, Mariannhill Missionaries initiated the first official, but unsuccessful attempt to beatify Abbot Franz Pfanner, in order to develop his image as the congregation's altruistic figurehead.[799] As I suggested in the introduction of this chapter, preparations for the beatification are likely to have started already in the mid-1920s. In the 1930s, confreres who still knew him were also consulted regarding their opinion on the success of beatification. Circulating ambivalent narratives about Pfanner's activist, but nevertheless choleric and disobedient character seemed to make a successful beatification unlikely at the time. Pfanner's portrayal as a difficult character in Mariannhill's oral tradition, disobedient to church authorities and a rather "un-saintly" person, were for example referred to with the paradox "obedient rebel" (eg. Hünermann 1959). Over time, the congregation portrayed him as an essentially practical person, who did what had to be done, in order to achieve the goals of the mission, while by bare necessity neglecting the obligation of contemplation and submission to the Trappist authorities. Today, the congregation employs this narrative to explain Mariannhill's separation from the Trappist order in 1909.

As the initial effort for Pfanner's beatification between the 1960s and 1980s was deemed unsuccessful due to historical inaccuracies of the congregation's researchers, the initiative remained dormant for another 20 years. In 2004, the case was once more reopened and in 2007 the Missionaries of Mariannhill celebrated the monastery's 125th anniversary. In 2009, a twofold

[799] (1) First attempt in 1947. (2) Formal opening of the process (by the CMM General Council) in 1963. Lapsed after a few years. (3) Reopened by the Bishop of Umzimkhulu, Stanley Dzjuba in 2004 (Personal communication with Philippe Denis, member of Mariannhill's beatification committee).

centenary followed: the 100th anniversary of both Pfanner's death and the foundation of a congregation, which had evolved out of the encounter of a contemplative society with a complex mission field. Since the last centenary in 1982, and the official end of Apartheid in 1991, the congregation had developed a heightened awareness for certain layers of its own past. Images, in form of photographs and paintings, always played a crucial role, either in the initial moment when the photographs were taken for use as propaganda, or at a later moment, when they were re-used with ideas such as hagiography or "heritage" in mind.[800] Today, editors still use photographs to illustrate historical accounts of the foundation period, essentially still as propaganda, but in a nostalgic key.





Figures 153 and 154: undated photograph of Abbot Franz Pfanner, 1880s, unknown studio in central Europe (CMM Archives); statue of Abbot Franz Pfanner at the cemetery of Mariannhill (photograph by the author, 2011).

In 1909, Abbot Franz Pfanner was buried at Mariannhill's cemetery next to his successor as Mariannhill's Abbot, Amandus Schölzig, who had already passed away in 1900. Three years after Pfanner's burial, a more than life-size statue was erected in 1912 on his tomb, created by the brother of Br. Nivard Streicher in Aachen, Germany. The statue is modelled mirror-inverted after a photographic portrait of Pfanner. After the re-opening of Pfanner's beatification process in

[800] Mariannhill Missionaries have established Pfanner's last domicile at the mission station Emaus near Kokstad as the "Emaus Heritage Centre". The centre also distributes the "Emaus Heritage Papers", a small booklet published irregularly on aspects of Mariannhill's history.

2004, a signboard was installed on his tomb bearing a bilingual inscription: "*Sikhulekela ukuba ibe ngobusisiweyo inceku kankulunkulu U-Francis Pfanner*—We pray for the beatification of the servant of God Francis Pfanner". It presents a direct invitation for visitors of the cemetery to join the communal prayer for Pfanner's beatification on his way towards sainthood. In the same vein, the Mariannhill Monastery Repository—renowned in South Africa for selling Catholic paraphernalia—has installed an altar-like table with devotional items of Abbot Franz. These include for example pins with his image, as well as old and new hagiographies. The congregation's effort of "creating" a saint by investing in a member's beatification and eventually his canonisation, ultimately hopes to establish him as social capital in order to draw members and not least funds (cf. Hartel 2006). At the beginning of this process, in the early 1960s, Pfanner has so far been elevated to the first level in the Catholic hierarchy of canonisation: he became a so-called "Servant of God [*Diener Gottes*]". To progress towards beatification it must be plausibly proven to a committee of the Vatican that active veneration of the candidate caused at least one miracle, for example in the form of curing illness. Since Pope Jean Paul II, one miracle is needed for beatification and one more for canonisation. However, up to today no evidence for a miracle has been produced.

During his lifetime, Pfanner was the main figure in external representations of the monastery's endeavours, as he is again today. However, "backstage" he was treated ambivalently after the visitation of 1892 (cf. Denis 2014). The male community of Mariannhill rather avoided Pfanner after his death. The female community of CPS sisters, however, still cherished him strongly as their founder. Only with the release of hagiographies since the 1930s for the purpose of Pfanner's beatification have these representations been reconsidered. Due to an illustrated translation of Mariannhill's grand narrative into Zulu, photographs of Pfanner have had a wider circulation in the local African communities since the early 1980s (Balling and Khumalo 1983). But Pfanner's legacy never seems to have caught great interest with Africans outside of the two congregations (CMM and CPS), not even in the local parish. While the memories and records of the earliest contacts with Africans disappeared in Mariannhill's archives once the first generation of Trappists had passed away, the missionaries reinforced the focus on their own identity, which became embodied in the person of Abbot Franz.

Like in many parts of Europe during the second half of the 19th century, Catholics in South Africa were not exactly desired subjects, but nevertheless tolerated citizens (cf. Brain 1982, Brown 1960). Some of the hagiographic stories around exploration, administrative negotiations, or the purchase of land, therefore involve Mariannhill Missionaries travelling incognito in civil dress, and even explicitly in disguise (cf. Gütl 2005, 2017). Pfanner reported in the chronicle of his first foundation, Mariastern Monastery in Bosnia (Kempf 1981:474), that in the year 1873 he was forced to travel to Sarajevo disguised as a "Turkish Beg",[801] for the dangers of being mugged (cf. Frey 1909:223). Not unlike Richard Burton journeying to Mecca in disguise, Pfanner arrived in Sarajevo and had his portrait taken in this fashion at a local

[801] "*Beg*": A Turkish squire or landowner.

photographic studio (Figure 155).

In 1888, the Mariannhill associate Anton Schmidt (cf. Chapter One) reproduced the portrait photograph as a painting to be presented to Pfanner at the occasion of his 25th jubilee as Trappist priest (Gross 1888). Fr. Thimotheus Kempf CMM (1981), who collected evidence for Pfanner's beatification during the 1960s and 70s, argued that due to Pfanner's unpopularity after his resignation/deposition in 1892, all of his public visual and material traces at Mariannhill were erased. And thus the portrait of Pfanner as "Turkish Beg" was intentionally overpainted with an image of the crucified Christ (Kempf 1981:491). Nevertheless, another reproduction of the photograph as engraving was still used in 1909 (Figure 156), when the *Vergißmeinnicht* reported on Pfanner's death and recounted important episodes of his life, such as those in Bosnia (Frey 1909).





Figures 155 and 156: original *carte de visite* of Abbot Franz Pfanner, dressed as "Turkish Beg" (1873), unknown studio in Sarajevo (mounted in the "Pfanner Museum", CPS Generalate, Rome); reproduction of Figure 155 as engraving (published in *Vergißmeinnicht* 1909:222).



Figure 157: The painting of Pfanner as "Turkish Beg" being restored by the artist Willy Jakob, Würzburg, 1960s (CPS Generalate Archives, Rome).

During the opening years of the first beatification process in the 1960s, CMM rediscovered the original painting of Pfanner dressed as a Turkish Beg (allegedly by chance) and had it restored at considerable efforts by the Würzburg artist Willi Jakob (Figure 157). If both interventions (the overpainting in the 1890s and the re[dis]covery in the 1960s) had not been embedded in specific *institutionalised* social processes, they would not have been purposefully recorded in textual and photographic form. Both Pfanner's resignation/deposition and his beatification process therefore were orchestrated and engineered efforts involving physical manipulations of images. The missionaries thus intentionally documented these interventions and their consequences, factually

resulting in the erasure of an image of Christ. Today, the rediscovered painting is placed near the entrance of the CMM/CPS Generalate's chapel in Rome, accompanied by the respective photograph showing its recovery. The particular effort of recording the paintings's recovery photographically, shows the importance given to the event at the time. The conjoined exhibition of both painting and photograph shows their ongoing importance today. The process of Pfanner's resignation in 1892, as well as his beatification process since the 1960s, were strong enough to first de-mobilise and later to re-mobilise Pfanner's image in a more general sense. Both moments anticipating the beatification—Bhengu's copy in the 1930s and Jacob's restoration in the 1960s—brought forth singularised appropriations of photographs in the form of paintings, both embedded in revelatory stories, which therefore promised even more powerful experiences for potential adorers, necessary for the success of the beatification process.

The missionaries and sisters also complemented the performances of paintings and photographs showing Pfanner with other strategies. They hoped to retain Pfanner's presence even more successfully by preserving parts of his very body. Immediately after Pfanner's death at Emaus Mission on 24 May 1909, his material presence was secured. A cult of his bodily remains and material belongings (ranging from garments to locks of hair) evolved and was mediated in various histories of Mariannhill. For example, Michael Green's novel *For the Sake of Silence* (2008) resonates with this past in its opening section, vividly describing Sr. Angela Michel excising Pfanner's heart immediately after his death, to remain with the community at Emaus, while the body itself was transferred to Mariannhill. Right after the release of the first edition of Green's book in 2008, a rather rational discussion evolved around the question where exactly the heart had been buried. Was it really the hill behind the mission, where Pfanner went for his daily stations of the cross, as Green suggests, or was it instead the cemetery behind the mission house, where the heart was buried in a glass of formaldehyde, as Sr. Annette Buschgerd (2009) insists? Oral history at the missions has it that the latter was the case and that the glass jar with the heart was exhumed several years ago, finding the jar broken and the heart gone. CPS sisters, rather than CMM priests and brothers, anticipated that one day Pfanner's physical remains might serve his reestablishment as a figure representing Mariannhill. Accordingly, they preserved things that belonged to the founder. CPS sisters today point to the contemporary status of Pfanner as a reason for preserving his remains, as former Abbot and founder of Mariannhill Monastery, but especially as founder of CPS. For both communities, Pfanner today represents something like an archetypal figure and a role model: the first missionary of Mariannhill, who initiated the transformation from contemplative monk to active missionary.



Figure 158: memorabilia ("*Andenken" an Vater Stifter*) of Abbot Franz Pfanner in a display case at the former CPS motherhouse in Aarle-Rixtel, Netherlands (photograph by the author, 2010).

The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood (CPS) took on the stewardship of preserving and compiling every material trace that could be found in relation to their founding father, Abbot Franz Pfanner. This process of preservation performed Pfanner's corporeality on various levels. Before his body was buried, the head must have been shorn, or at least a considerable amount of locks been removed. These items have since been stored at the former CPS motherhouse Heilig Bloed in Aarle-Rixtel (Netherlands), as well as at the CPS Generalate in Rome. A variety of remains, sometimes referred to as "relics", sometimes as "memorabilia [Andenken]", is presented in an illuminated display case at Aarle-Rixtel, in a hall that serves as exhibition and community space, as well as archive (Figure 158). The paper envelope to the centre left contains some of Pfanner's hair locks and is labelled: "scalp hair of the venerable father founder blessed (Sr. M. Angela)". These items are approached for private devotions, or shown to the occasional visitor, like myself. The exhibition spaces in both repositories also contain much of Pfanner's wardrobe, from liturgical vestments to undergarments, as well as personal items, from the abbot's staff to a pocket watch.

The Catholic Church learned early on how to bind followers to the most virtuous, and

thus most saintly of their representatives, by developing and institutionalising a particular material culture around human remains, commonly referred to as "relics" (Angenendt 1994; Brown 1981; Geary 1986, 1990; Hirn 1957 [1912, 1909]; Kohl 2003).[802] A relic would establish a saint's presence ("*praesentia*") and thus mediate his or her miraculous powers ("*potentia*") by touch, or even by sight alone (Brown 1981:82, also see Morgan 1998:60). Relics were, and still are either shown permanently inside churches, or annually presented outside to the religious community in processions. Indeed, as Patrick Geary points out, on occasion a relic needed to circulate socially, in order to remain powerful. After a relic's initial installation in an altar, its so-called "invention", any further transfer to another church is usually referred to as a "translation" (Brown 1981, Geary 1986). As Geary explains, it is particular stories of how relics had been acquired that give them their power (Geary 1986:186). Thus the story of how a relic entered its destined place of storage may be likened to the "backstories" of museum objects, which I explored in previous chapters (cf. Hamilton 2010).

Similar to the case of saintly relics in medieval times, narratives describing the process of an initial loss and a consequent rediscovery are still often part of an effort to bind allies to a religious community. Geary explains for the case of the remains of St. Mark, a major patron of Venice since the ninth century: "His remains were rediscovered in the eleventh century in the course of restoration of the Basilica of St. Mark—an orchestrated revitalization ritual that enhanced the value and importance of the saint in the community" (Geary 1986:178). As I showed for the case of Pfanner's images, the logic of such "translations" still applies in the 20th century. After briefly sketching ideas on relics in general and at Mariannhill in particular, I establish how Mariannhill Missionaries engineered even more powerful objects by compounding a photograph with the materiality of its human prototype.

In previous centuries, relics constituted another way of dealing with biographies of saints, which were more effective than textual accounts and closer to the understanding of illiterate people. In the middle ages, the relic was even a medium that was easier to reproduce and circulate than paintings in the form of religious icons. Paintings were more laborious and expensive to produce, while one could instead just claim any bone to be an authentic relic. For this reason relics saw an immense inflation during the middle ages. Because of the supposed powers of relics and their potential to circulate, fraud was common, and their authenticity frequently disputed. Therefore, the Catholic church had to find ways of certifying relics (Geary 1986:177), which they achieved by introducing a canon and register of existing saints.

The transfer of power from a relic to the adorer can occur long after a saint's death, either in the form of healing or general protection. Even if the investment with power was never argued in the cases I explore, there nevertheless exists a contemporary and often-cited edifice of ideas how relics actually worked by an academic outsider:

[802] These studies describe the rise and early forms of Catholic relic cults in Europe. For works covering more recent 20th century practices, also from interdisciplinary perspectives, see Geisbusch (2007), Hartel (2006), and especially Angenendt (1994), Cordez (2007) and Walsham (2010). The first explicitly "ethnological" study of Catholic relics was published by Yrjö Hirn, 1909 in Swedish and 1912 in English.

> […] the Catholic manufacture of relics is more interesting than anyone of the magical customs of primitive men. It demonstrates with unsurpassable clearness how materialistic was the conception of the effects of relics. It was, as already mentioned, through a bodily radiation that the magic vehicle assumed a part of its subject's being. This radiation could not be seen, for it was an *invisibile*; but it was not an *imponderable*. Therefore, when so important a matter as the procuring of holy relics was in question, people wished to be quite sure that the magical transference had really taken place. The small pieces of cloth were weighed before and after their rest on the sacred coffins; and when they were lifted up it was found that they had increased in weight—a thing, indeed, that is not entirely incredible, if we take into consideration the damp air down in the sepulchral chambers. According to the believer's interpretation the increase in weight corresponded to the miracle-working power added to the piece of stuff by the contact. (Hirn 1957 [1912]:43)[803]

By this principle of exposure ("*brandea*"), an endless array of a single saint's relics could be produced. Not unlike photographic negatives, holy images, such as in "the Christian legend of Veronica's napkin [or veil]", could reproduce by imprinting themselves by their own agency onto other objects (Hirn 1957[1912]:45). Hirn further suggested that the magical principal regarding the co-presence of imitation (iconicity) and contagion (indexicality) is useful to understand the working of relics (also see Crossland 2009). In the next section, following the "translations" and related backstories of relics, these eventually allow me to explore how a relic of Pfanner became purposefully entangled with one of his photographs.

Catholic canon distinguishes at least three types of relics in the descending order of desirability, according to their capability to mediate power (Hirn 1957:42, Kohl 2003:50-51): those consisting of organic material of a venerated person; objects that have been in immediate contact with the person; and objects that have been in indirect contact, or merely in the saint's presence. All three kinds exist at Mariannhill's houses, in South Africa as well as in Europe. Few, however, are actively venerated. Old relic display cases with a multitude of small relic fragments ascribed to individual saints are still preserved and exhibited at one of the monastery's libraries, as well as at its museum. It is undetermined whether these minuscule fragments are first- or second-degree relics. Furthermore, in the library and museum they are presented as things of the past, and no longer in an explicitly religious context of veneration. The church of Mariannhill Monastery is even said to contain a full body relic of a Roman martyr (cf. Pfanner 1889), which is however no longer venerated due to failed attempts at confirming the relic's authenticity. The glass case at Aarle-Rixtl and the museum in Rome also contain second-degree-relics of Pfanner. These are objects, which had been touched or even been worn by a venerated person for a prolonged period. Such items obviously exist in much greater numbers than first-degree-relics. Therefore they are not only stored and displayed, but at the same time were meant to circulate widely (cf. Geisbusch 2007). This also means that they may undergo the desired process of a "translation" much easier (cf. Geary 1986), as we shall see in the next section.

[803] As the cited source by Gregory of Tours goes back to the 6th century, the weighing of relics may not have been a common practice any longer when Hirn wrote the book during the first years of the 20th century. It nevertheless serves him well to support his Epicurean theory. Note that Gregory of Tours is also the source for Brown (1981), and probably Kohl (2003) on "*brandea*".

Photographs as Reliquaries

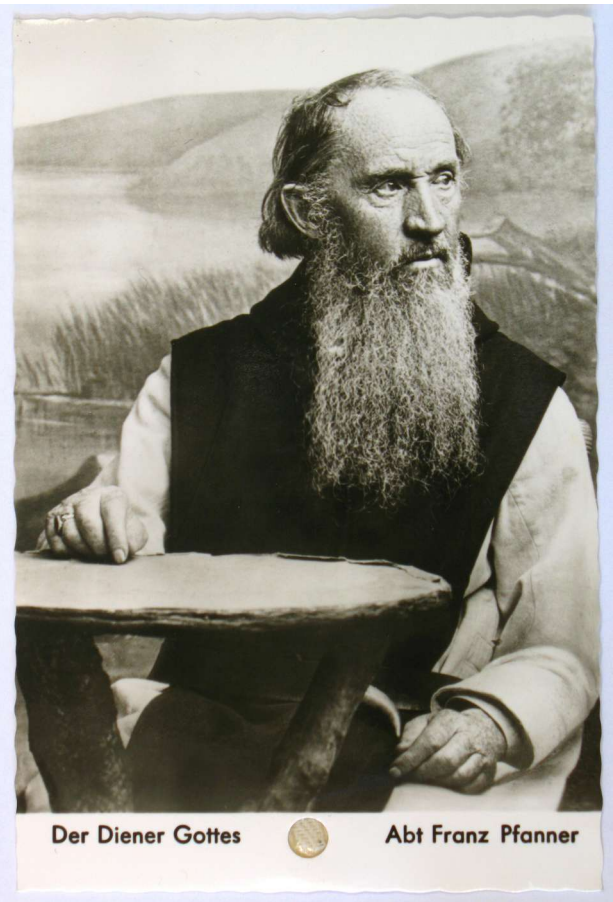
Besides the creation of permanent images, such as the church window of Centocow Mission, or the statue on his tombstone, Pfanner's legacy has been manifested through the wide circulation of mobile texts, images, as well as through religious relics. In particular the intermediality at play is essential: the missionaries modelled statues after photographs; combined photographs with relics, and illustrated biographies with photographs. Conversely, textual narratives and oral descriptions are often consciously or unconsciously inspired by photographs. In combination, they eventually performed positive connotations of Pfanner's moral and physical prowess. Starting with Bhengu's interpretation of Pfanner's portrait in the 1930s, and even more so since the official attempt for beatification in 1964, the congregation actively engineered Pfanner's photographs, as well as his body, in order to work as means of veneration.

From the 1840s, photography provided a possibility to return a seemingly realistic corporeality to dismembered body parts, also in combination as memorabilia in a non-religious context (Batchen 2004). Figures 159 and 160 show the front and verso of a devotional card, which technically belongs to the second class of religious relics, those that achieved power by contact. The front is a heavily cropped photograph of Abbot Franz, which originally included three of the first brothers who went with him to South Africa in 1880. It must have been taken between 1900 and 1905.[804] A tiny piece of cloth has been embedded at the card's bottom and is explicitly identified as a "relic from his garment" on the verso. The verso also bears the church authority's seal of authentication in the position where the piece of garment is placed,[805] as well as the approval in Latin: "*imprimi potest* [it may be printed]". By applying the seal, the CMM General Superior, Fr. Ferdinand Holzner, granted permission for reproduction.

This type of object is unique in so far that it combines image and body of a venerable person in a highly transportable way, making him accessible in a visual, as well as tactile way. It is unclear when this type of devotional cards first appeared, but they were at least not uncommon during the first and second half of the 20th century. Mariannhill's archive in South Africa holds several other cards of this kind: for example of Pope Pius X. (1835-1914) and of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina (1887-1968), who were both canonised in 1954 and 2002 respectively. Like with these two successful saints, the project of distributing Pfanner's "relics" seemed to be so important that it legitimised the destruction of one of his garments, which the CPS sisters had consciously stockpiled as "mimetic capital", or in this case maybe rather as "contagious capital".

[804] The image may be located near a wider Christian artistic tradition of an "aesthetic of disinterestedness": the distracted eyes, commonly pointed to the right of the image, were supposed to represent selflessness and contemplation, ideal features of a saint. See Morgan (1998:26-29), who however discusses it closer to a Protestant context. Even if the photograph was not taken with this idea in mind, it may have been selected for these reasons.

[805] The seal bears Pfanner's coat of arms with the line "*P. Franciscus Abbas Mariannhill*".





Figures 159 and 160: front and verso of a devotional card of Abbot Franz Pfanner, including a "relic from his garment". Produced for the first beatification attempt in 1966. 8 cm x 12 cm (collection of the author).

In anticipation of Pfanner's successful beatification, CMM and CPS produced these cards in 1966 with an unknown number. The prayer on the card's verso asks for the "glorification" of Pfanner and the "awakening" of new missionaries. The cards were given to people as gifts, presumably mostly within CPS and CMM circles. In the same way I received an original card from the secretary and archivist of the CPS Generalate in Rome. When she gave me a tour to the archives, we still found a stack of some fifty cards. Unfortunately, members of both congregations have difficulties remembering the original circumstances of production and dissemination.

What makes this situation paradoxical, however, is that the circulation of images and relics is restricted by the Catholic Church's Canon Law under "Title IV. The veneration of the saints, sacred images, and relics (Cann. 1186-1190)".[806] Bodily remains and memorabilia of people who are neither beatified nor canonised cannot be called "relics", nor can they "work" as relics—at least not officially—according to the Catholic Canon. But the particular constellation I just described, at the same time anticipated and demanded Pfanner's beatification. It

[806] http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_INDEX.HTM, accessed 30.11.12.

consequentially also anticipated the object's own elevation, to be treated as a true relic. A recent case showed that opinions, as well as practices are indeed fluid and adaptable in this regard. In 2010, CPS sisters at the Austrian Kloster Wernberg wanted their newly installed convent altar to be equipped with a "relic" of Pfanner. The request was first turned down by the Mother Superior with the explanation that Pfanner was not yet beatified. Eventually, the request was still satisfied by diplomatically re-appropriating one small fragment of cloth from one of the devotional cards I just described. As every Catholic altar is usually inaugurated with the "installation" of a relic (Geary 1986:176, Kohl 2003:47), the local Bishop had negotiated a minuscule first-degree relic "*ex carne* [from the flesh]" of St. Maria de Mattias (1805-1866), who was canonised in 2003. The relic's relative scarcity is indicated by the number of equivalent pieces (1789) on the certificate next to it (Figure 161). This particular relic had been chosen because De Mattias was the founder of the female congregation of the "Adorers of the Blood of Christ" (ASC), who were with Pfanner during his time in Bosnia (cf. Kempf 1981:709-911).

Ideally, CPS would have only used "relics" of their own two founding members: Abbot Pfanner and Sr. Paula Edmund, the first CPS superior. However, the two were neither beatified nor canonised and could thus not have produced "relics" in the strict sense of the term. But the installation of Mattias' relic gave the opportunity to introduce "memorabilia" of both Pfanner and Edmund, thus forming a triptych with the relic proper. Even if a signboard near the church entrance indeed identifies all three objects as "relics" (as does the verso of Pfanner's memorial card), members of the wider church community are well aware of the canonical regulations, which denies this status, and forbids the dealing with the items as true relics. I was told by the local priest that he would thus rather consider them as "memorabilia [*Andenken*]". Apparently, even this status would still be able to inspire adoration, and ideally facilitate a miracle necessary for the process of Pfanner's beatification.

Next to their "relics", photographs of Pfanner and Edmund have been inserted into the triptych. As a gesture of affection, so the sister who designed the altar told me, she located the two pieces of cloth on the spots where the founders' hearts would have been on their photographs. All three "relics" exist in great numbers. In this case, however, they were "installed" by the local Bishop in a public ritual and in the process were appropriated as one unique and effective triptych or assemblage with multiple intersecting backstories. What Geary explained for the "translations" of medieval relics thus holds true for our case: "When a relic moved from one community to another, whether by gift, purchase, or theft, it was impossible to transfer simultaneously or reliably the function or meaning it had enjoyed in its old location. It had to undergo some sort of cultural transformation so that it could acquire status and meaning within its new context" (Geary 1986:181).



Figure 161: the relic triptych in the altar of the CPS Convent Church at Castle Wernberg, Austria (photograph by the author, 2013).

Pfanner's devotional card, combining a photograph with inscriptions had thus served as what Hirn called a "topical reliquary"—an iconic container that certified the identity of the relic's indexical referent (Hirn 1957[1912]:56, also see Brilliant 1991:127-128, Freedberg 1989:93ff, Geary 1986:177, Kohl 2003:57). This encasement enabled the "relic" to circulate outside the boundaries of a church or archive. In return, the supposed "relic" gave value to one particular photograph, one out of many depictions of Pfanner. The combination of photograph and relic resulted in a very particular type of object, the effects and affects of which exceeded the sum of its parts, forged together by explanatory text and a seal by an interpretive authority of the church. One could also say that an imitative and contagious bond was established between image and relic through the icono-indexical quality of the image and the even stronger mimetic capacities of the (second-degree) relic. Or as Hirn put it: "Contact had, to use the terminology of magic, allied itself with similarity" (1957 [1912]:57). As it is not an image itself, the relic could only develop these mimetic capacities through identification and authentication by image, text and seal. In turn, by the definition of contagion and the logic of "*brandea*", the photograph of Pfanner itself became a secondary relic (cf. Belting 1990:73, 336).

In the first two parts of this study I described the setup of an international "image world" (Poole 1997). In the third part, as well as in the previous chapter I analysed more localised "art worlds" (Becker 2010). This now allows us to turn to the even more minute interactions between subjects and objects, in what Gell (1998) called the "art nexus". This is a process in which an "artist (photographer)" intentionally invests an "index (photograph)" with the personhood of a "prototype (sitter/model)", in order to exert agency upon a "patient" or "recipient". The agency exerted by the index onto the patient is thus a "secondary agency". The patient, in our case, would be the intended consumer of the produced photograph. Of course we have to take into account that a photograph may be re-employed by other actors than the original photographer, and that a photograph may also be re-engineered with the inclusion of additional indexes, such as a relic. The moments in which secondary agency affects the patient is when the latter "abducts", or infers meaning from the index. There is of course no guarantee that these inferences are indeed identical with the one originally intended by the index's maker. Instead of anthropomorphising objects, what interests us here are people's ideas about what (or who) causes a photograph to act (cf. Gell 1998:17). In order to abduct meaning, social actors must actually *recognise* indexes. Only once an index bears resemblance to a familiar prototype, it may develop agency (ibid.:26).

In this orchestrated process of adoration, Pfanner thus became a "distributed person" (Gell 1998). His body and his garments had been dismembered, even dissected in a very literal sense, and accordingly stockpiled, so that his descendants may benefit from this "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991). Beginning with the separation of his heart and hair from his body, the process involved the production of various types of "relics", photographs, paintings and statues. Gell described this phenomenon as "personhood distributed in the milieu, beyond the body-boundary" (1998:104). In Gell's terms the items in question, images and relics, are "indexes" of

the "prototype" Pfanner, engineered by Mariannhill Missionaries with textual inscriptions, so that they may work instead of him.

While Pfanner is clearly present in the minds of people in Europe and South Africa, the beatification case demands active veneration and adoration (see the prayer imprinted on the back of the devotional card). Nevertheless, even some members of the congregation have doubts that the ongoing process of beatification will be successful. The photograph in combination with a relic does still work as an aspiration, as it already provides possibilities for veneration, which otherwise only a person would be given, who is already raised within the spiritual hierarchy. Photographs have so far not been considered as evidence for the beatification cause, other than potentially being part of the historical report.[807] They still have been very much involved in the practice of veneration and beatification, at least on the side of the White community. Pfanner's veneration within the Black community today is still uncertain. People I engaged with did not openly display any devotional attitudes. The same experience is reported by Mariannhill priests, who engage in ministry. In contradiction to the idea that Pfanner was Mariannhill's first and ideal missionary, not one single photograph shows Pfanner in active mission work outside of the mission stations, like many of his confreres. There is no clear evidence that Pfanner spoke Zulu (or English) fluently, but rather that he confined himself to administration and the communication with the European world. Still, due to similarities in dress and facial hair, Africans near Mariannhill identified many Trappists in the photographs I showed as Abbot Franz Pfanner. Furthermore, the common hagiographies evoked the expectation that he *must* have been present amongst the people, because he is the main protagonist in stories, and also has a conspicuous photographic presence all over Mariannhill (Rippe 2007).

Depending on these precepts, in particular through the perceived iconic and indexical qualities of photographs, the agency of a historical person can be mediated and re-distributed through his or her image. In combination with a bodily "relic", as in the case of the memorial card, the effects and affects of the resulting compounded object can be multiplied beyond the mere addition of these two parts. Mariannhill Missionaries engineered the card for the particular end of Pfanner's beatification cause. They employed both parts in question with a "secondary agency" (Gell 1998) of both themselves as makers and of Pfanner as a person. Independently of its makers, the image-object then became an agent with the specific intention of Pfanner's beatification. Pfanner's memorial cards as circulating reliquaries still undergo a transformation alongside Pfanner's personhood. Social actors abducted and thus established personhood by oscillating between the cards and their referent—Pfanner, the person they virtually embody. The photo-relic-cards of Pfanner are supposed to instil veneration and provide space for prayer. By doing so, the cards at the same time open the possibility of Pfanner's beatification, should a prayer be deemed successful, for example through a related miraculous healing. Eventually, in case the beatification would be granted, the beatified personhood of Pfanner would be transferred to the cards and they would rise along with the person. According to Catholic canon, they would

[807] Personal communication with Philippe Denis, 2012.

then eventually be certified to be addressed and used as true relics. The card compounded of Pfanner's image and body was thus not thought of as *bearing* potential evidence for the beatification cause, but rather to *produce* evidence in form of a miracle.

Photographing the Diviner

Br. Aegidius Müller progressively introduced the figure of the diviner to the photographic canon of Mariannhill once he had taken over the photographic studio in late 1897. Before this date—even if photographs had been taken at Mariannhill already for more than one decade—no depictions of diviners can be traced, neither in the periodicals, nor in the archive. The figure of the diviner had indeed already been present, but only in rather anecdotal textual accounts. The visual establishment of the figure is thus closely related to Müller's interest, as well as his skills of approaching, dealing, and conversing with various diviners. Also his success in photographing, while at the same time writing about diviners, is crucial to acknowledge. In this section I turn to a set of photographs, taken at about the same time as the one of Pfanner's devotional card. I describe the encounter of—and more importantly argue a reciprocal constitution by—two institutions and practices through the lens of text and photography: the missionary photographer and the Zulu diviner. In order to do so, it will be necessary to explore the respective historical establishment of the terms used to refer to the two figures in Zulu—*mathwebula* and *isangoma*—within the specific situation at Mariannhill. In the process, both individuals established the social role and power of photographs, depending on the available collateral knowledge. I shall further explore the idea of "expertise" and how it affected the relationship of the *isangoma,* Ugitschigitschi, and the photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller, through the very practice of photography. This will eventually show a similar empowerment of a photograph as in the case of Pfanner.

In 1906 and 1907, Müller published two articles on divination in the Austrian-based mission-ethnology journal *Anthropos*. Four of the eight published photographs show the female diviner, whom I mentioned earlier in relation to the jubilee publication. The diviner is here introduced as the *Isangoma* Ugitschigitschi.[808] According to inscriptions on glass plate negatives, several of the photographs show Ugitschigitschi together with her partner, the *Inyanga* "Dr. Pika" at their homestead, which is set before the backdrop of a table mountain. The institutions of both *isangoma* and *inyanga* have complex social histories, which I can here only sketch briefly. While colonial writers referred to *izinyanga* also as "native doctors", they alternatively referred to *izangoma* as "witch-doctors", due to their occupation of identifying malevolent "witches". Because chiefs were said to employ *izangoma* to liquidate their adversaries, *izangoma* eventually became a problem for the colonial administration during the 19th century (cf. Flint 2008:101, McClendon 2010:61). Before the *inyanga* was licensed, and, as a result, the *isangoma* was criminalised by law through the introduction of the *Natal Native Code* in 1891, both institutions—*isangoma* and *inyanga*—had constituted a system of healing (Flint 2008:129, also

[808] The name Ugitschigitschi, I was told by people around Mariannhill, may be an onomatopoeic expression for a squeaking sound similar to the one produced when creating friction between layers of rubber material. In so far it could be related to the high-pitched "whistling" sounds, which some *izangoma* produced during practice. Allegedly these sounds came about when the *isangoma* ventriloquised the spirits possessing her during a consultation (cf. Bryant 1917, Kohler 1941).

see Rüther 2006). Despite these restrictions, Ugitschigitschi and her partner apparently still practised in cooperation beyond 1910.[809] More commonly after their criminalisation, the trade of *izangoma* was to identify illnesses and locate lost objects. In the following I suggest that the construction of this figure has to be reconsidered by involving the ethnographic and photographic traditions in the work of missionaries. As we will see, photographing the diviner thus involved a host of other practices.

In their re-narrated conversations Müller addressed Ugitschigitschi as *isangoma*, and also had her define herself as *isangoma*. The term "*isangoma"* was most likely introduced into the ethnographic and linguistic discourse (superseding the term "*isanusi"*) by Bryant (1905), at the very same time and in the same place where Müller was writing his articles. Müller's photographs were therefore with some probability amongst the first, if not indeed the first ones, to be captioned with this term. The term "*inyanga*", instead, is often translated as "healer/doctor", but actually denotes the root word for the "expert" in a particular trade. Also the *isangoma* is an expert, and therefore "*inyanga yokubula"*[810] was an early alternative term (cf. Callaway 1870). To my knowledge, Bryant's unpublished *A Larger English-Zulu Dictionary* (1914)[811] is the only text, which also framed photographers as "*izi-nyanga yoku photograph"*, or later as "*izi-nyanga yokuthatha amaFotho"*[812] (Bryant 1953:214).[813]

After 1900, Müller produced photographic portraits of at least ten individuals, whom he identified as diviners, and whom he named individually at the same time. In Mariannhill's photographic collection, however, only Ugitschigitschi recurs repeatedly. Müller visited her at least four times over a period of more than ten years, from about 1900 to at least 1913. Müller referred directly to her photographs in his articles, pointing out the *isangoma'*s use of clapping hands as performative element, or her preference for white body paint. Ugitschigitschi is either portrayed in frontal full body portraits, or—likewise posed—while performing her profession. On the backside of an original photographic print showing Ugitschigitschi during a consultation, Müller wrote that it shows a diviner at Mariannhill "exactly as the photographer found her as she performed eagerly in full action".[814] Due to the existence of different glass plate negatives, showing people in almost exactly the same poses, it is evident once more that Müller arranged the scene as one of his *tableaux vivants*.

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[809] Even in later years, the cooperation of cohabiting *izangoma* and *izinyanga* was not an uncommon phenomenon (cf. Kohler 1941).

[810] Someone who divines through the beating (*uku-bhula*) of sticks as a performative element.

[811] This extended version of Bryant's *A Larger English-Zulu Dictionary* only exists as a handwritten manuscript of three volumes at KCAL in the "Alfred Thomas Bryant Papers", Files 18-20.

[812] "Experts in taking photographs".

[813] The first edition of this *Abridged English-Zulu Dictionary* must have been published at Mariannhill before 1920. Bryant's unpublished *A Larger English-Zulu Dictionary* (1914) provides the same translation.

[814] My own translation from the German original.



Nach einer Photographie der Trappisten-Mission Mariannhill 2248a.

Fig. 3. Wahrsagerin Uyitshigitshi bei Mariannhill in ihrer vollen Amtstracht.

Figure 162: original caption: "Fig. 3. *Wahrsagerin Uyitshigitshi* [sic] *bei Mariannhill in ihrer vollen Amtstracht"*—"Kafir Diviner Ugitschigitschi in her full official attire" (as published in Müller 1906, between pp. 771-772).



Nach einer Photographie der Trappisten-Mission Mariannhill 2248a.

Fig. 6. **Kaffrische Wahrsagerin in voller Amtstracht,**
Beine, Arme uud Brust weiß bemalt.

Figure 163: original caption: "*Fig. 6. Kaffrische Wahrsagerin in voller Amtstracht, Beine, Arme und Brust weiß bemalt*"—"Kafir Diviner in full official attire—legs, arms and breast painted white" (as published in Müller 1907b, between pp. 49-50).

In his letter to Fritz Graebner at the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum of Cologne in 1910 (cf. Chapter Six), Müller recommended *The Essential Kafir* by Dudley Kidd (1904) as "the best book on the Kafirs".[815] Kidd (1863-1921) was a British missionary, who had travelled widely through South Africa in the 1890s while being affiliated to the South African General Mission. After having returned to England in 1905, he published several other popular accounts related to the South African "native question" (Maxwell-Mahon 1977). A comparison of the section on "The Witchdoctor" in Kidd's *The Essential Kafir* to Müller's articles on divination in *Anthropos*, shows that Müller had translated and plagiarised verbatim and extensively from the English to the German.[816] Only where he referred directly to the surroundings of Mariannhill and his own photographs, he used his own empirical data. But after all, it seems that this plagiarism was common and unproblematic knowledge amongst Mariannhill-related priests at the time. Fr. Franz Mayr casually mentioned in a letter to his benefactor Maria Ledochowska in 1905 that an article in the *Vergißmeinnicht* (an earlier version of Müller's *Anthropos* articles) "had been taken from" Kidd's book (Gütl 2004:203-4). The fact that Müller had extracted most of the contextualising information on *izangoma* unmentioned from another author may be explained by his own embarrassment:

> Since the British Government strictly persecutes divination, gross excesses, such as murder do occur rarely. However, divination in secret is indeed flourishing. Not less than six diviners—mostly women—are practicing their dark trade in the ambit of one and a half hours around Mariannhill. Of course they deny their business when speaking to Whites, so that it becomes difficult to take photographs, and is even harder to collect information on their arcane practices.[817] (Müller 1907b:49)

Missionaries are commonly attributed with presenting the figure of the diviner in negative terms, until the general tendency to exoticise ceased in the 1960s (cf. Kuper 1987, Pels 1999). According to Müller, the South African *isangoma* was aware that his or her powers were not real, and thus consciously tricked his or her customers. After first describing the usual way of an *isangoma*'s initiation in his article, Müller presented the argument that the powers of the *isangoma* are never real, and that the effect or success is generally achieved by the *isangoma's* good performance, trickery, good observation, and eventually the client's imagination. Müller presented such good performance in trickery as the *actual* expertise of the *isangoma*. He also likened the *isangoma* to the figure of the detective, as he/she is able to read obvious signs by observing their clients well, in order to draw divinatory conclusions (1907:57).

In his descriptions Müller eventually maintained a clear division of the *isangoma* as actor on the one side, and her audience on the other. He presented superstition and irrationality as

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[815] Some 30 years later, Max Kohler still commented on the book's second edition of 1925 in a similar, but more considered manner: "With the eyes of an artist, with the feather of a writer, with the humour of a philanthropist, with the intuition of the prejudiced: the most entertaining description of the Kafirs". My own translations from the German original. KCAL, uncatalogued Kohler Collection.

[816] Müller took some of his claims, but not his terminologies from Kidd. Kidd himself did not use any Zulu words to identify his subjects, but only the English term "witchdoctor".

[817] My own translation from the German original.

existing with the African layperson on the one hand, and with the *isangoma*, as the expert of the transcendental on the other hand. While authors like Müller attempted to keep religion and technology apart from magic by presenting them as two incompatible systems, Kuper shows that practices indeed overlapped and ran parallel (Kuper 1987:160). Therefore, in a similar way, photographers and missionaries in colonial situations have often been presented (and presented themselves) as tricking their subjects into taking their photograph (cf. Behrend 2003). However, we only know about statements evoked by such confrontations through the descriptions by those colonial actors. One challenge of analysing this relationship is that the *isangoma* is a textual and illustrational construct by the missionary (cf. Taussig 2006:135). In his *Anthropos* article Müller mentioned the generally held assumption by some Europeans living in Natal that particular diviners (not all) were indeed genuine. Two of these "believers"—despite their academic ambitions—were Müller's former confreres, Fr. Willibald Wanger and Rev. A.T. Bryant (cf. Chapter Three). Müller's own high expectations in this regard had so far always been disappointed, he wrote, and he thus declared all diviners as frauds. As I shall explain, these two sides of opinions contributed to the effect of the exposure attempted by Müller.

Even with the inclusion of contemporary evaluations of photographs in the same area during my fieldwork, it is impossible to reconstruct how Africans around Mariannhill Monastery and its outstations experienced photography as both a social act and as a medium around 1900. It is thus impossible to reconstruct what ideas they held about being photographed and if and how they tried to influence the outcome. Accounts of these perceptions are only available to us through inflections by European writers, and especially the Zulu and Xhosa dictionaries compiled by missionaries. In this oeuvre we find at least some indications that photography was perceived (by missionaries through the accounts of their subjects) as a "magic" practice in its "contagious" form. Here it is important to ask what the intentions behind such framings were, and on what particular encounters they were based. Missionary thinking and writing, translation and representation, as I analysed them in Chapter One, were—next to spreading the gospel—explicitly produced for the information and entertainment of a European audience (cf. Behrend 2003, Strother 2013). At the same time, we cannot state off-hand that missionaries and Africans invented each other's perceptions of the photographic medium from scratch (cf. Pinney 2011:75-76). Keeping this in mind, I discuss several studies analysing the nature of photographic understandings in colonial contact zones (Behrend 2003, Pinney 2011, Strother 2013, Wright 2013) against the evidence that photographic practice produced in Natal and the Eastern Cape around 1900 during conversations between missionaries and their subjects.

In the process of translation, three distinct word groups emerged that denoted, first, the image-object or photograph in a material sense, second the process of transferring the image onto the photograph, and third the transient *image* itself. I will deal with them consecutively. Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries made great efforts to translate the Bible into local languages. In the course of this work they had to come up with various renditions of "images". The Bible does indeed not prohibit the making of images or representations of God himself, but

rather the worship of quotidian objects, thus idols *as* gods. The following quotes from the Bible in English and Zulu show only one example of many for this prohibition:

> Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth, or in the sea under the earth.
> (Exodus 20:4, The Bible, Contemporary English Version).

> Ungazenzeli izithombe ezibaziweyo, namfanekiso wokusezulwini ngaphezulu, nowokusemhlabeni phansi, nowukusemanzini phansi komhlaba.
> (Exodus 20:4, *Ibhayibheli* 1959)[818]

Only by the 1890s, the two terms used in the first complete (Protestant) Zulu translation of the Bible (1883) for "idol [*isithombe*]" and "image [*umfanekiso*]" were applied in dictionaries to denote "photograph". To my best knowledge, for the very first time in 1891 a German-Zulu dictionary translated "photograph" as "*umfanekiso*". This dictionary was co-edited by a Mariannhill sister, Sr. Philippine Treumund, and a Mariannhill priest, Fr. Ambrosius Hartes. It was published under the pseudonym "*Phil. Mate*" (Mate 1891). The same dictionary instead translated "*isitombe*" with "figure [*figur*]", "effigy [*Bildnis*]" and "copy [*Abbild*]". The dictionary also employed both terms synonymously for "image [*Bildnis*]" or "painting [*Gemälde*]". In 1899, the term "photograph" first appeared in a Xhosa dictionary (Kropf 1899) as *umfanekiso*, while *isi-tomo* was again rendered as three-dimensional figure. While *isithombe* was thus closely associated with the idea of a three-dimensionally modelled image or figure, *umfanekiso* instead implied two-dimensional images, but also the idea of copying, imitation, resemblance, and likeness.[819] Bryant (1905) and Colenso (1905) still upheld the same ontological division.[820]

After 1905, several other terms have been used in relation to photography. During my conversations with Zulu speakers, explanations of differences were either very imprecise, or when in doubt, people themselves often referred back to the available historical Zulu-English dictionaries. The most extensive and conventional bi-directional dictionaries (Doke, Malcolm, Sikakana and Vilakazi 1990; Dent and Nyembezi 1995) are fusions of much earlier works: Doke and Vilakazi 1948 (Zulu-English) and Doke, Malcolm and Sikakana 1958 (English-Zulu). These

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[818] Consistent since 1883: "*U nga zenzeli isitombe esibaziweyo, namfanekiso woluto oli sezulwini pezulu; nolu semhlabeni pansi, nolu semanziui pansi komhlaba*". (*Ibaible, Eksodusi* 20 *Isahluko* 4. 1883). Translation by Ndu Makhanya, 2013: "Do not make **images** [*isitombe*] that are hand-made or an **image** [*-fanekiso*] of what is in heaven above, what is on earth below and what is in the water underneath the earth".

[819] Bryant (1905): "Fanekisa (s. k.), v. Make a likeness of a thing (acc.), actually (as by a picture), or mentally (as by a comparison or imagination). Comp. *linganisa*".

[820] "*umfanekiso*": **Colenso** (1905): "Fanekiso (Isi), n. Image or figure, such as an idol. Fanekiso (Um), n. Image, picture, likeness, resemblance. [in the section "Hybrid-Words" - "isipiki"] Fanekiso (isi), n. Picture, photograph". Bryant (1905): "isi, or um-Fanekiso (s.k.),n.5. Likeness of anything, actually or mentally drawn; hence, statue, image, doll, picture, photograph. Cp. *isi-Tombe"*. *"isithombe"*: Colenso (1905): "TOMBE (isi), n. Figure of a man, &c, carved or moulded of clay, doll, puppet, *idol. **Bryant** (1905): "isi-Tombe (*Thombhe*), n. Image or small clay model of a man, ox, etc., such as are made by Native children; hence, doll, image, statue of any kind; sometimes applied also to a picture of a man or beast (not of a house or landscape - see *um-Fanekiso*) [Gr. tupos, image]".

dictionaries again explicitly employed Bryant's Dictionary (1905) and we may also assume that Bryant too had borrowed from others. The translations from Zulu to English in these cases do not distinguish between *isithombe* and *umfanekiso*; both refer to two- and three-dimensional images, and both are translated as "photograph". The English-Zulu sections, however, clearly prefer *isithombe* in its verb-form (*uku-thatha isithombe*: to take a photograph). Zulu speakers indeed confirmed to me that the standard terms for photograph today are *i-fotho, isi-thombe* and *pic*, but no longer *um-fanekiso*. *Ifotho* and *pic* obviously are zulufications of English terms. For the case of *isithombe* and *umfanekiso* I was unanimously informed that only the first is used for photographs, but not the latter. *Umfanekiso* is only applied to painted portraits, as well as statues, or carvings. Apparently the original preference for *umfanekiso* over *isithombe* to denote "photograph" has been reversed since the 19th century.

In order to explain this, we may briefly consider possible underlying etymologies. Döhne (1857) claimed that *isi-dumbu*, the "corpse", is etymologically "allied with" *isithombe*. *Isidumbu*, so the Swedish missionary Berglund (1976:83) explicated, is strictly related to the corpse that is not yet buried, and has not yet decomposed; it is therefore still *recognisable*. A likely reason for the association of the terms may be that a corpse and a photograph resemble the living person most realistically (cf. Crossland 2009:73). This is one possibility why *isithombe* was accordingly favoured to denote "photograph".[821] The term *isithombe* has thus indeed a close association with notions of photographic realism—and indeed "identity"—through its comparison with the human body (cf. Bryant 1905).

The recent preference for *umfanekiso* to denote images that are not photo-realistic, and therefore are obvious copies of something and not "identical", can be explained with the term's meaning of "similarity", "resemblance", and "imitation". Bryant (1905) also saw a link between the verb *uku-fanekisa* and the verb *uku-lingisa*, which he translated with "[to] imitate a person (acc), as in dress, action, gesture, talk, etc.". Variations of the root imply notions of *attempting* to do something. Bryant further presented the noun *um-lingo* as "any unusually strange, awe-inspiring, preternatural, magical performance, as done by an *inyanga* when treating his patients by certain peculiar practices, or by a conjurer; might be used in plur. for 'magic' generally". This means that the only identified Zulu noun for "magic", like the older term for photograph (*umfanekiso*), are both based on the notion of performance through imitation, resemblance, and similarity, rather than identity or sameness.

Other than the two Mariannhill publications (Phil. Mate. 1891, Bryant 1905), earlier 19th century Zulu and Xhosa dictionaries were written by either Protestant, Wesleyan, or Anglican missionaries. One may therefore assume that they were developed in close connection to translations of catechisms or the Bible. In the case of Mariannhill this had the consequence that translators officially tried to avoid Zulu ideas with negatively charged supernatural connotations

[821] Other attempts at explaining related etymology within socio-cultural contexts appear to be unfounded: without referring to any sources Ashforths explains *isithombe* and *umfanekiso* by relating them to the word groups of *intombi* (girl) and *umfana* (boy) respectively (2005:236).

—as related to divination or healing—into crucial passages of the Catholic Canon (cf. Mettler 1967). Instead, such terms were used to create contestable entities, such as *izangoma*.

While Müller established the *isangoma* in Mariannhill's periodicals and *Anthropos*, he established himself as an equally ambiguous figure alongside of it. He indicated that Africans at times perceived him as "*umthakathi*",[822] as in their perception he performed the respective characteristic actions with the help of his camera (Müller 1910:84, also see Müller 1906). This Zulu term for "wizard" or "witch" bears very negative connotations and is still used pejoratively today. It is commonly associated with harmful magic and witchcraft (Doke et al. 1990:454). Furthermore, over the years of collecting experience, language skills, and reputation as photographer, Müller may have been given the personalised name *Madwebula* by his African contemporaries (cf. Chapter One). He eventually adopted this name in his own practice of self-fashioning, by inscribing it on glass plate negatives showing himself (cf. Chapter One).[823] The verb form *uku-thwebula* is what an *umthakati* can do to a person: to extract a certain essence or life force from the body, and accordingly bring the person under his or her control. As I mentioned in the last chapter, similar stories exist about Gerard Bhengu: "old people especially seemed reluctant to pose for Bhengu. They feared he would *tagathi* them by taking something from them in his image and using it for witchcraft" (Miles 1997:32).[824]

The noun "*madwebula*", as used by Müller, is derived from the verb "*uku-thwebula*". In Xhosa, and Zulu (*uku-xwebula*), the term has been translated as the "peeling of barks" and the "flaying of hides" (eg. Ayliff 1846, and still in Kropf 1915, also see Bryant 1905). Kropf translated *uku-twebula* with "v.i. to tear from a hide the pieces of flesh that are still adhering to it after the animal has been flayed; to tear, strip bark from trees, or the thin fibrous parts from a thong; to cut a slice off". The aspect of spatial transfer was always stressed when I asked Zulu speakers about the word: the professional translator Nduduzo Makhanya suggested to me that the root "-*ula*" indicates "removing something", while the prefix "*thwe*-" refers to "that you help someone carry something". Others explained the term to me as "taking something away, and using it elsewhere".[825] Again other Zulu speakers had difficulties deconstructing any etymologies at all, especially for how the word would have been used more than 100 years ago.

Similar to the translation of *umfanekiso*, it was only in 1905 that the verb *ukuthwebula* entered a Zulu dictionary with an explicitly "magical" connotation. Predating Müller's articles for only one year, A.T. Bryant had published his *Zulu-English Dictionary* in 1905 at the Mariannhill Mission Press. He translated *ukuthwebula* as "to spirit or conjure away, remove by

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[822] Bryant (1905:607): "um-Takati (Thakathi), u. I. Person habitually given to secret poisoning, bewitching, etc., as above (see takata); surprisingly clever or skilful person; […]". Colenso (1905:569): "TAKATI (Um), n. Miscreant, villain, poisoner, wizard, witch; surprisingly clever person; an aching tooth".

[823] These plates can be dated to the timespan between approx. 1905-1910, due to Müller's appearance. The habit thus began most likely when he worked on his divination articles.

[824] Elza Miles quoting an oral statement by Yvonne Winters from 1984. When Winters was a librarian at the Killie Campbell Africana Library, Bhengu regularly visited to sell his paintings.

[825] As a European comparative it may be noted that also the etymology of the term "portrait" is often explained with the Latin *protrahere*, meaning "to draw away" (cf. Wendl 2001:93).

some magical process, the *isi-Tunzi* of a person or thing". Bryant translated *isitunzi* in the same work with "shadow, of man or animal, or any small object e.g. a stick; the living principle in man, spirit", but also with the "likeness or photograph of a person on paper". In the same year, the third edition of Bishop Colenso's *Zulu-English Dictionary* (1905) was published by his daughter Harriette Colenso. Like Bryant (and with a conspicuously similar formulation), she suddenly introduced an additional, apparently supernatural meaning to the verb "*ukuthwebula*": "to spirit away or change by a sort of conjuring or magical process; change oneself or another into some animal, and back again, for good or evil purpose; a power for which the *amaTonga* are specially noted".[826] It appears that in this instance *ukuthwebula* was a derogative ascription to Tonga-speakers by Zulu-speakers. Colenso added the aspect of transitively or intransitively "changing (someone) into something (someone) else". This can alternatively be read as "becoming", or as "imitating" someone's appearance and personality through the process of photography.

It is unclear whether the noun *mathwebula* was employed widely to denote "photographer"[827] before Müller started using it in such a way around 1905. None of the common missionary dictionaries refer to it in this sense (but see Berglund 1976:88). Over the past decades it has eventually also been adopted to describe more recent technologies of reproduction, such as (photo-)copying (Kotzé and Wela 1991), as well as (digital) downloading.[828] Eventually it appears that the verb *ukuthwebula* today serves widely for the description of both supernatural and technological practices in South Africa. Its meanings may vary regionally, also depending on urban and rural contexts.[829]

Similar to the Lucretian emanation theory (eg. Gell 1998; Hirn 1900, 1957; Taussig 1993), these imaginations of photographic technology and practice tried to capture the separation of an object's outer segment, while leaving the remainder or original with less substance.[830] The photographic image thus appeared as so "realistic" that Zulu speakers, and consequently missionaries established a connection between photograph and original, which oscillated between being physical and non-physical. This imagination thus collapsed material and image trace, icon and index, or put differently, imitative and contagious magic. The iconic and the indexical qualities of photographs, as conceived by Charles S. Peirce during the 1890s, match the principles used to explain sympathetic magic, which Richard Andree, James G. Frazer, Yrjö Hirn and other contemporary scholars thought to have found in ethnographic texts at about the same

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826 After Bishop Colenso's death in 1883, his daughter Harriette only left the Pietermaritzburg area by 1888 for King Dinuzulu's trial at Eshowe in Zululand. She may have picked up the new meaning there from Zulu-oriented Africans from the Northern borders (Personal communication Jeff Guy, July 2014).

827 Dent and Nyembezi's *Scholar's Zulu Dictionary* (1995) is the only dictionary to translate "to take a photograph" with "*thwebula ifotho"*.

828 Personal communication Bheki Ntuli, March 2014.

829 I thank Hlonipha Mokoena for some general explanations on this matter (Personal communication, August 2012).

830 See Warner (2006) for similar framings in Northern America.

time.[831] Various scholars have realised this equivalence, but did not trace it historically, and hardly applied it analytically (Crossland 2009:73, Pinney 2011:66, also see Batchen 2004, Gell 1998:104, Taussig 1993, Wright 2013:136).

Around 1900, Frazer became the most prominent, but was not the only scholar theorising about "magic" (cf. Stocking 2001b). He also developed his ideas in reaction to others over time (eg. Hirn). His process of thinking between 1890 and 1911 has been rarely acknowledged, but will be crucial for the situation at Mariannhill (but see Fraser 1990). Frazer indeed refined his thoughts about "sympathetic magic" between the first (1890) and second edition (1900) of his work *The Golden Bough*. For the first time in 1900, he further separated "sympathetic magic", by making a distinction between two relations of cause and effect. But only in the publication's third edition (1911) did he eventually call this division "homeopathic" (or "imitative") magic and "contagious" magic (by contact). Translated into semiotics, imitative magic equals the iconic sign in so far that "same causes same". Things of a similar appearance are thought of as having reciprocal effects with their likenesses. Contagious magic instead shares principles with indexical signs, in so far that things that have been in contact, or were once one entity, still maintain an influence on each other after separation. Just like earlier explanations regarding iconicity and indexicality, these magical concpets are claims allegedly put forward in order to make sense of photographs.

Zoë Strother sketches a general history of ascriptions to photographs as being supernatural catalysers, as well as related ideas about "soul stealing" and the idea of photographic extraction. She concludes that photographs can not be considered indexical in the perceptions of the Central Africans (Pende) she studied, partially related to the missing collateral knowledge regarding technology (Strother 2013:200). To reach this conclusion, however, Strother transferred historical knowledge to her own research subjects. The icono-indexical perception described as *uku-thwebula*, which I traced for the case of historical Natal, however, can only be accounted for as a historical textual inscription. In this form it may therefore be considered as a literary construction, following earlier ethnographic traditions. By following relevant European conceptualisations in literature, and by taking into consideration the pervasive influence of missionaries, I now analyse the implications for the photographic occasion involving Müller and Ugitschigitschi.

[831] Many of the sources Frazer cited were missionaries, also for the case of South Africa.

Divining the Photograph

At the very end of his second article on divination in Natal (1907a), Müller lamented the evil of divination in South Africa by citing a passage from the Bible where "God warns the peoples of Israel, to beware of anyone amongst them, who asks the fortune tellers [*Wahrsager*] for help, who minds dreams or the screams of birds, or anyone who is a sorcerer [*Zauberer*], or even an enchanter [*Beschwörer*]; to beware of those who ask help of the devil enchanters [*Teufelsbeschwörer*], or who soothsay, or ask the truth from the dead: because all of this is an aversion to the Lord".[832] "And", Müller continued, "as diviners, sorcerers, consulters of the dead, all were a great evil thousands of years ago, so they are still today; amongst the Kafirs they are like an iron wall against everything that is new, progressive, pure, noble, Christian" (Müller 1907b:58). In other words, Müller described Christianity as a potentially perfect modernity, by projecting contemporary transcendent practices into biblical (European) history. But it was his very own "modern" attitude that produced the magic he described, while at the same time, as we shall see, he performed his own magic, in order to disprove the latter (cf. Pels 1998:201, Pels 2003).

In this section I explore two occasions in which social actors approached Ugitschigitschi's photographs after their production. This will help to trace connections between European and supposedly South African understandings of photographic ontologies and efficacies. As Michael Taussig (2006)[833] notes, the relation between anthropologists and individuals with supposed transcendental powers, such as healers, sorcerers, or diviners, has been produced by the ambiguous workings of the two binaries "faith" and "scepticism", as well as "revelation" and "concealment": the efficacy of magic seems to be strengthened by the exposure of its fraud, and often relies on "exceedingly curious objects" (ibid.:127), which are able to transgress bodily insides and outsides. One may here distinguish between *revelation* as "uncovering a viable perception of the world" and *exposure* as "unmasking false appearances" (Pels 2003:307).

The question in the case of Müller and Ugitschigitschi eventually is: who is working the "magic" and for what purpose? The relationship of missionaries and diviners becomes even more complex than the one involving anthropologists and diviners, because faith and scepticism as attitudes, as well as concealment, revelation, and exposure as skilled practices, are performed on both sides: when the Zulu diviner too finds him or herself in a situation where a foreign belief system is on offer and has therefore to be scrutinised (cf. Kuper 1987). Like the relics we already explored, also the performance given by a Catholic priest elevating the host during service, and its consequent transubstantiation into the body of Christ, is similar to a magical performance. The need for explanation is even greater once the missionary is a photographer, as an additional

[832] Müller here quotes the Fifth Book of Moses [Deuteronomy, Old Testament], chapter 18 [columns 10-11]. My own translation from the German original.

[833] This article has been published four times in crucially different variations in 1998, 2003, 2006, and 2013 in German translation. I here refer to the last English version of 2006.

system of knowledge and skills is introduced to the equation in form of the camera's technology. It may even be infused, as Gullestadt (2007) suggested, with the previous system, as a camera is easily blessed by a priest, in order to safeguard the production of—not necessarily better—photographs.

Even if the profession and technology of photography in 19th century Europe was not open and comprehensible to everyone either, photographers and missionaries in colonial situations were said to have occasionally used the optical technology to trick and dazzle their subjects, in order to "overpower the natives and furnish themselves with an aura of superhuman power" (Behrend 2003:132, also see Prins 1992:221, Strother 2013:186). As I already stated in the last section, it must be considered that this "power", as we perceive it, was indeed a narrative strategy in mission propaganda, as the act of "dazzling" was first of all represented to a benefactor audience via text. Within such texts photography helped to construct a distinctively modern notion of Christianity, not only as illustration, but also as a powerful narrative device and object.

Müller eventually attempted to prove his hypothesis about the non-existence of the *isangoma's* powers by performing his own experiment with a "magical" component. As I shall explain, Müller had acquired the necessary ingredients from both Bryant and Kidd. Of the common services provided by *izangoma*, the only legitimate way for Müller to establish a relationship with Ugitschigitschi in order to disprove her was via her skills of finding lost objects. He would not have motivated her to "smell out" witches, as it is unlikely that Ugitschigitschi had ever performed this skill. He would also not have approached her in case of sickness. At least he would not have mediated such a case to a European audience. He rather indicated in his article that the visit was for the main purpose of taking photographs: "One day my occupation as photographer brought me close to the diviner Ugitschigitschi, who lives one and a half hours from Mariannhill, and of whom the Kafirs have the greatest respect and immense fear, due to the alleged sinister powers she possesses" (1907a:49).[834] He interviewed the diviner about her occupation and tried to convince her of the advantages Christianity would have in comparison to her present beliefs. Then he used a photograph in a rather unusual attempt to reveal Ugitschigitschi's alleged fraud regarding her divinatory powers. Müller recollected parts of the conversation in direct speech:

"So, if you are really able to soothsay, tell us what is in this bag."

"It contains fruits and bread."

"This one you guessed; what else is in there?"

"There are other things as well."

"So, you do not know what it is. It is your picture inside, and—being a diviner—you should have known this" (I had taken a photographic image of her some time before). With the words: "Look, here are three pictures; which one is yours?" I pulled three closed envelopes out of the bag. She first guessed for a while—at least to observe the effect this had on me—and finally pointed to the one in the middle, however without having picked the right one. Now I opened the designated envelope with the words: "Do you see now that you are not capable of divination?" She did not show the slightest sign of embarrassment and even demanded one shilling, because she had to answer so many

[834] My own translation from the German original.

questions.[835] Müller (1907a:51-52)

According to Müller, Ugitschigitschi failed two times: first, to identify the concealed photograph as an object category; secondly, to identify it as a photograph of herself. I suggest that Figure 163 was the very photograph, which Müller used to test Ugitschigitschi.[836] If we assume that this event indeed took place as recollected by Müller, he must have planned the attempt beforehand, prepared the envelopes carefully, and may have even thought of writing about the experiment's results prior to his performance. The intriguing aspect of this retold conversation is the relationship, which Müller expected to exist between Ugitschigitschi and her photographic likeness ("this you should have known"): Ugitschigitschi appears in the story as both subject and object in form of a photograph, but Müller presented her as failing to emerge out of this semiotic relationship, which he only reveals to the article's readers (cf. Crossland 2009:74). Müller apparently postulated that Ugitschigitschi would have had a supernatural sense of perception, in case she was a real diviner.

Such a sense of perception, and thus "true" divination, indeed existed according to Müller's contemporaries Bryant and Wanger. In particular Bryant held this belief by elaborating on the earlier mentioned *isithunzi*, which can be "*twebulad"* from a person, but which also was an alternative Zulu term for "photograph". Bryant (1917) argued that the *isithunzi* forms part of the Zulu's perception of an individual. The term *isithunzi* in fact has a much more complex biography within Bryant's Zulu-body-cosmology, but he only translated it with "soul" in an uncertain major gloss in his *English-Zulu Dictionary* (1912). Many other contemporary ethnolinguists—most often missionaries—equalled terms applied to photographs and souls (cf. Ankermann 1918, also see Quack 1990, Wright 2013). These translations, however, may have been conflations (cf. Strother 2013). Missionaries were in most cases the first to produce dictionaries for African languages, and the idea and metaphor of "gathering souls" apparently was important to them.[837] Be that as it may, through the idea of the *isithunzi* the photographic object was equalised with something that Africans were familiar with as being an essential part of the body, and for which a convention of extraction (*ukuthwebula*) already existed. Bryant (1905) not only translated *isithunzi* with "living principle", "shadow", "likeness or photograph", but also as the

[…] quality in a thing which imposes, is commanding of respect, impresses with power or superiority (*i-nZimba*); hence, imposingness, impressiveness; moral weight, influence, prestige; nobleness, dignity of appearance or bearing;

[835] My own translation from the German original. It is likely that this conversation was originally carried out in Zulu.

[836] This is the earliest and only portrait of Ugitschigitschi predating the occasion under discussion.

[837] As an alternative form of "medium" Behrend and Wendl (2008:137) suggest that "in many African languages, the word for 'negative' is the same as for ghost or spirit, […]". While they do not provide any examples, Wendl (1999:294) in fact only gives evidence for two West-African languages, Fante and Ewe, where the same words for "negative" also denote "ghost or spirit of the dead".[1] This is however not the case in Zulu, and the idea has only been adapted with the anglification *i(li)nekethivu* (Doke et al. 1990). Also see Wright (2013) for a counter-example, where people did not actively engage with the idea of the negative.

inspiring with awe, dreadfulness, as of a dark deep pool or chasm;

In 1905, this translation, which could be framed as a part of an individual's personhood, was the one of the four meanings of *isithunzi*, which Bryant explored most extensively. Similar to how the shadow is drawn onto a surface, this "quality in a thing [or person]" imposes itself on a receiving mind. The basic meaning "shadow", which the body in its entirety produces as an indexical trace, is cast onto the ground by light, as a character impresses an interlocutor. More than a decade later, Bryant (1917:140) had developed his work by compiling an entire corporeal cosmology of the Zulu:

According to Zulu philosophy man is composed of two parts, the body (*umZimba*, pl. *imiZimba*) and the spirit or soul (*iDlozi*, pl. *amaDlozi*). Besides these, there are the *inTliziyo* (heart, feelings, mind), the *iKanda* or *inGqondo* (brain-power, intellect, understanding, memory, mind), as well as a hazily defined something called the *isiTunzi* (shadow, personality), which may have been originally one and the same thing as the *iDlozi* or spirit. But whether all these things are attributes of the body or of the soul, of the *umZimba*, or of the *iDlozi*; and whether at death they die with the former, or depart with the latter, does not seem clear to the Zulu, although the last hypothesis (that they accompany the departing spirit) would seem to be that which would most logically follow from other tenets of their belief.[838]

Here Bryant introduced an allegedly unified "Zulu philosophy", judging from his overall style with a certain ironic implication. He suddenly equals "soul" with "spirit", while the *isithunzi* is reduced to a "hazily defined something". Originally, Bryant had separated *isithunzi,* "the living principle in man, spirit" from *idhlozi*, "shade" the same principle, but after death. In the interaction between the ex-Trappist Bryant and his interlocutors and informants, the Zulu body became dissected into various parts, as well as moments of knowledge-production on Bryant's side. Eventually, Bryant himself, along with his informants, was no longer sure what it all "meant", and in the fifth edition of his abridged *English-Zulu Dictionary* (1953, the year Bryant died) he translated "soul" with no less than five terms: "*umOya (imi); iDlozi (ama); isiThunzi; inHliziyo; umuNtu (aba)"*. Despite the changes in Bryant's thinking about the *isithunzi*, I see no reason why Zulu-speakers around 1905 could not have understood the act of taking a photograph as an entirely non-magical act of "reproducing" (*ukuthwebula*) a person's "dignity" or "imposingness" (*isithunzi*) on paper, which would then equally constitute the expressed dignity as a photographic object (*isithunzi*).[839]

To better understand what Müller may have intended when writing about the trick he played on Ugitschigitschi, we need to follow back the tradition of involved publications. It is thus important to distinguish Müller's performance and the literary references it referred to on the one hand, from Ugitschigitschi's performance on the other. At the time of the encounter between Müller and Ugitschigitschi in approximately 1905, J.G. Frazer (1900) would have called Ugitschigitschi's performance (as described by Müller as a failed attempt) "sympathetic magic in

838 For an updated discussion of this cosmology see Berglund (1976).

839 For other translations and explanations of the concept "*isithunzi"* see Berglund (1976), Schweiger (1917) and Vilakazi (1962).

the strict sense of the term" (1900:10). This Frazer would call "contagious magic" only by 1911. In a more general sense, Frazer referred to this as "imitative magic", where same "causes"—or in the case of Ugitschigitschi rather evokes—"same".

Müller would have had immediate access to Bryant's *Zulu-English Dictionary*—even prior to publication—at Mariannhill's press in 1905.[840] As several of Müller's descriptions are very similar to Bryant's, it is likely that Müller had read Bryant's dictionary (1905) by 1906 and applied Bryant's new ("magical") translations for both *ukuthwebula* and *isithunzi* to the understanding of his own experiment with Ugitschigitschi. As a "*Nota Bene*" to his entry on the *isithunzi*, Bryant had added the following lines in 1905:

> N.B. The peculiar uses of this word would seem to indicate that the Natives possess a natural power, much stronger than our own, for perceiving or feeling an invisible presence, occult influences, etc., when working upon them.

It is very likely that Bryant himself had read Frazer's work when writing the dictionary. We do know that Bryant owned copies of the *Golden Bough*, and eventually possessed the third edition's entire 12-volume set, when he sold his personal library to Mariannhill Monastery in 1925 in anticipation of migrating back to England.[841] By 1917, Bryant explicitly mentioned the "sympathetic" quality of the mimetic faculty, which he thought to exist with some Africans (1917:144):

> Curious experiences that we have personally made in connection with the performances of these Native *abaNgoma*, and which would be inexplicable unless attributed to intuition or clairvoyance or some other such occult power; as well as other equally curious instances we have met with in many Natives, of a quite abnormal "sense of direction" (akin to that possessed by certain animals and birds), as also of a certain strange sense of "mutual sympathetic or telepathic feeling" existent between Natives (generally blood-related) distantly separated, and between Natives and the animals, all these things have sufficed to convince the present writer that our supposition is more than probable; that our Natives are really in natural possession, in a greater or lesser degree, of divers mental attributes which we lack wholly or in part.

Furthermore, Müller was also certainly inspired by the work of Dudley Kidd. Other than Bryant and Wanger, Müller and Kidd did not believe in the powers of diviners. Kidd even explicitly postulated a tradition of exposing diviners as frauds (especially by missionaries) and their incapability of detection (Kidd 1904:168, also see Flint 2008:101). Here Müller was also introduced directly to Frazer's ideas on magic, whom Kidd quoted (and praised) extensively. By 1908, Müller himself had translated, published, and once more plagiarised the section on the magical use of photography, which Kidd (1904:144) had directly quoted from Frazer (1900:295-297). As Müller's articles (1906, 1907) heavily relied on Kidd's text, Müller was likely to have already integrated these ideas in the description of his encounter with Ugitschigitschi in 1905. I

[840] As I explained in Chapter Six, Müller had studied the common Zulu dictionaries at least since 1898.

[841] This collection of books still exists, however mixed with other content of the "Mariannhill African Library" at the CMM Generalate in Rome. The collection was initiated by Fr. Salesius Esser in the early 1920s. Bryant transferred his collection to Mariannhill in 1928, and it was moved to Rome at an unknown later point in time after the 1960s. The Roman Archive contains a register of the purchased books, drawn up by Bryant himself.

therefore re-translated Müller's German rendering (1908) of Kidd's quotations (1904) of Frazer (1900) back into English, as Müller augmented it and took poetic license in various sections:

> It is further a widely held assumption that the shadow or the image of a person can be influenced magically [*magisch*], because these things were regarded equally as emanation [*Emanation*] or effluence [*Ausfluß*] of one's personality [*Persönlichkeit*]. The connection of the image and the person it depicts, is so close that even after the person's death, one can affect one with the other. It is thus understandable that many Kafirs are in great awe of the photographic apparatus. Even brave men run away or hide somewhere, once the white man approaches with the feared box in order to collect their image and to bewitch them for all times. It therefore has its own difficulties to acquire good photographs of heathen natives, or the inside of a Kafir hut. From this idea it is only a tiny step to another idea, namely that an object can be perceived as a symbol or representation of a person, and that everything one afflicts the symbol with, happens to the person at the same time.[842] (Müller 1908:203)

Müller eventually suggested to Ugitschigitschi that if she was a real diviner she would have been able to guess, or even been drawn to sense the presence of her own image within the envelope: through her mimetic faculty, as described by Müller, the person Ugitschigitschi was supposed to "correspond" with her photographic image.

The same photograph of Ugitschigitschi thus appeared twice in the article: once as an illustration next to the text, and once as a narrated, but initially concealed object. Accordingly, Müller thought to use the photograph in a twofold way to overcome superstition: first, appearing himself as a "witchdoctor", he so to speak "smelled out"[843] Ugitschigitschi by employing her photograph as a material object concealed in an envelope; second, he used the same photograph in his article to illustrate his argument: readers could see the photograph, while Ugitschigitschi herself could not. Evidence of Ugitschigitschi's fraud and the process of how she generally conjured "images" by divination, could not be found *in* the photographic image showing herself. Instead, Müller presented a photograph as an object which he introduced into the very *practice* of Ugitschigitschi's alleged fraud. For this purpose he required an object, which was somehow connected to Ugitschigitschi. No other kind of object than a photograph, however, would have allowed Müller to produce the necessary effect on both Ugitschigitschi and the article's audience. Also, any other object than a photograph, Müller would have had to purloin from Ugitschigitschi unknowingly. Only a photograph could have been taken with Ugitschigitschi's consent during a prior occasion and later be returned, in order to be first concealed and then revealed for the desired effect. Had Müller for example taken one of Ugitschigitschi's hairs, she could have simply claimed that it was not hers. Only a photograph provided the "mimesis" (iconicity) and "contagion" (indexicality) necessary to make Müller's "magic" work.

The fact that Ugitschigitschi consequently failed to pick the right envelope, as well as her resulting temporary exposure, had two consequences as recounted in Müller's article (Müller 1907b:52): first, it confirmed Müller's assumption that she was a fraud, which he thought to have

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[842] Müller, however, omitted one important line from Kidd, which may have questioned his own photographic practice: "It is this dread of witchcraft that makes it so difficult to obtain photographs of natives in their kraal, while it is quite easy to dress up some civilised native in a studio in a European town" (Kidd 1904:144).

[843] "*Ukunuka*": identifying "witches", one of the *isangoma's t*rades.

proven thereby not only to his own readership in Europe, but also to Ugitschigitschi's present customers and the people of her homestead. Second, Ugitschigitschi felt the need to respond that her skills of divination had not been successful, because Müller was a White man and thus did intentionally trick her, instead of trusting her like her other customers did. Müller again concluded that by saying this, Ugitschigitschi may have temporarily restored her credibility with her own customers. But eventually, so Müller, this very fact confirmed to him the general superstition amongst the African population, with both customers and practitioners of divination (ibid.).

According to Müller, Ugitschigitschi thus used his scepticism to keep her own magic intact (also see Kuper 1987, Taussig 2006). But eventually the trickery and suggestion of magic was not with the diviner, but entirely with the photographer: Müller was a self-fashioned witch (*umthakathi* and *mathwebula*) in his own textual universe, conjured (and indeed plagiarised) from the contemporary ethnographic record. Africans may have indeed perceived him as an *umthakati*, but he even more so presented this ambivalent identity to an European audience (Müller 1910), and additionally cultivated it privately by adopting the name *mathwebula* on his glass plate negatives. In the process of Müller's own self-fashioning and his simultaneous ethnographic construction of Ugitschigitschi, both he himself and Ugitschigitschi appeared as both "witch"[844] *and* "witch doctor"[845] at the same time. Both performed skilled concealments, revelations, and exposures.

As I explained in Chapter One, contemporary professional studio photography was supposed to reveal a customer's personhood by establishing an "identity", rather than recreating a mere "resemblance". Also African diviners catered for customers to reveal evidence and aspects of personhood, whether by detecting personal objects, origins of sickness, or criminal identity. Both commercial services were rewarded with the very same monetary value: one photograph[846] equalled one shilling and one divinatory sitting (cf. Bryant 1905, 1917; Müller 1907b). The photographer's technological products were a commodity, based on the exact employment of technological skills to reveal a portrait as an alleged factual situation, while in fact concealing parts of it; as much as the result of the consultation with a diviner emerged out of a commercial interaction, facilitated by skilled concealment and revelation. Both services were performances, which at the time were often questioned for their respective claims to authenticity by successfully translating resemblance into identity. Like I explained in Chapter One for the very subjective notion of "photographic resemblance", also the African diviner was supposed to sense his customers' identities (rather than resemblances), and to conjure them accordingly. Once the two service providers, photographer and diviner, met, the photographer, Müller, not only photographed the diviner, Ugitschigitschi, but he asked her to divine her own photograph. In so

[844] *Umthakathi*: "Miscreant, villain, poisoner, wizard, witch; surprisingly clever person; an aching tooth" (Colenso 1905:569).

[845] *Isangoma/isanusi:* someone who identifies "witches", for them to be prosecuted and eliminated.

[846] As I mentioned in Chapter Two, the photographic sitting as such may have been more expensive, but it can also be argued that the product that the diviner was paid for was a successfully conjured "image".

far, Müller claimed an ability to mediate truth objectively, superior to the one of Ugitschigitschi.

As we have seen, the situation in Natal differs from the one of Evans-Pritchard's Zande, as described by Taussig (2006). First, because the very particular object of a photograph was involved, which transgressed the article's narrative and its materiality. This is similar to a diviner's interaction with a patient's body, extracting a peculiar object by magical means from the body's interior, to be revealed as evidence for the successful healing of a sickness. Thus also Müller procured (partially concealed) photographs from the narrative's "inside" to its "outside" in the form of the article in the journal *Anthropos*. It was thus the performance of a particular and peculiar object on several levels that made Müller's magic work (cf. Taussig 2006:140). Second, one group of resident missionaries cum ethnologists (Bryant and Wanger) were outspoken believers and thus wilfully provided ethnographic material confirming the reality of divination. Even if Müller had worked through this material and used some of it for self-fashioning, he instead remained a sceptic and followed the tradition of exposing diviners, as suggested by Kidd. We may explain this by reconsidering the implications of Taussig's hypothesis (ibid.:123): in the case under discussion, Müller first performed a "skilled concealment" by preparing an envelope containing a photograph. This was necessary in order to make Müller's own magical experiment of exposure work.[847] The experiment's success eventually relied on the textually and photographically mediated colonial relationship. As I explicated in Chapter One, this relationship (already/but still) claimed in its narrative the resistance (or scepticism) to the Christian effort of assimilating others (cf. Taussig 2006:135), in order to retain the relevance of mission. Anthropology, and even more so Christian mission, therefore had their own established "shamanic rites" and forms of performances (ibid.:144).

Similar fault lines of interpreting photographic occasions occurred during an experience with Ugitschigitschi's photographs I had during my own fieldwork. As I had experienced with other topographic formations (cf. Introduction, Chapter One, Chapter Seven), I assumed it would be possible to locate Ugitschigitschi's homestead by comparing the historical photograph to the current landscape around Mariannhill. This exercise would enable the collection of more information on Ugitschigitschi by interviewing people living there today, or by tracing her in the colonial archive through the coordinates of her homestead. Müller had indicated in his article that she lived about one and a half hours from Mariannhill. Traveling south for the proposed time on horseback would have taken the photographer far into what was then the "Umlazi Native Reserve".

When I told my acquaintance S. about my plans to search for the cliff, he offered to accompany me. S. had been living in the area for years and therefore knew it well. Whenever he could spare time from his otherwise busy life, we explored some aspects of the past and present landscape together. Both of us took photographs as a form of visual field notes during these

[847] One may wonder what comes first anyway, and whether this constellation constitutes a repetitive cycle (cf. Taussig 2006:140). Müller elaborately staged the concealment of Ugitschigtischi's photograph. This photograph was their cooperative creation of a revelation. Ugitschigitschi in turn again attempted to reason that Müller was a fraud, etc.

occasions. After I had picked him up at his home, we drove towards the first cliff he had identified as a potential candidate for comparison. S. immediately announced that the search would not be successful, as his left eye was twitching, which according to him was a sign of bad luck. We checked several possible perspectives on the cliff, crossed a river and approached a hill. Eventually we realised that the photograph did not match the landscape. The car was also not able to climb the very steep hill, and we had to turn. At the bottom of the hill we showed the photographs to people living close-by, and discussed them at length. Two young men volunteered to take us to an area further southwest, where they thought there was another cliff to compare. I had just reversed the car and driven for a minute, when S. suddenly seemed to experience a seizure, bent over in the seat next to me and clasped his right shoulder as if in very great pain. I stopped the car, he got out and the pain slowly seemed to recede. The seizures occasionally came back, and S. showed continuous belching, combined with deep rolling groans, as we continued our search.

Only later during the day did S. explain to me what he thought had happened: in the past he had repeatedly been subject to invasions by *amadhlosi*, or ancestral spirits. In a way, he told me, the *isangoma* we carried around in the form of photographs had approached him to question the reason for our investigation. Consequently it seemed that Ugitschigitschi's *idhlosi* was not willing to reveal the whereabouts of her previous residence. I do not question whether this was a dismissive comment about an anthropologist's inquisitive research (my exposure), or indeed a supernatural intervention (a revelation); I merely consider it as a statement triggered by the material presence of a photograph. Either way, the occasion triggered S. to attribute power to Ugitschigitschi's photograph, as we physically moved it through the landscape it supposedly represented.

Similar to the past and present social mechanism related to relics and their "translations", the diviner and the photographer performed their relationship through repeated concealments, revelations, and exposures. Furthermore, just with the relic card of Abbot Franz Pfanner, it was essential to present audiences with a combination of a photograph and yet another specific material anchorage or prostheses, which was inherently related to the respective individual. In the case of the diviner Ugitschigitschi, this even more involved the idea of collapsing icon and index within the photo-object. More than 100 years after the photographs had been taken, my acquaintance S. performed, and if you so will divined, Ugitschigitschi's personhood through her photographs, while we attempted to move towards the location where they had allegedly been taken. But this time, Ugitschigitschi herself was said to have concealed her previous residence and prevented its exposure.

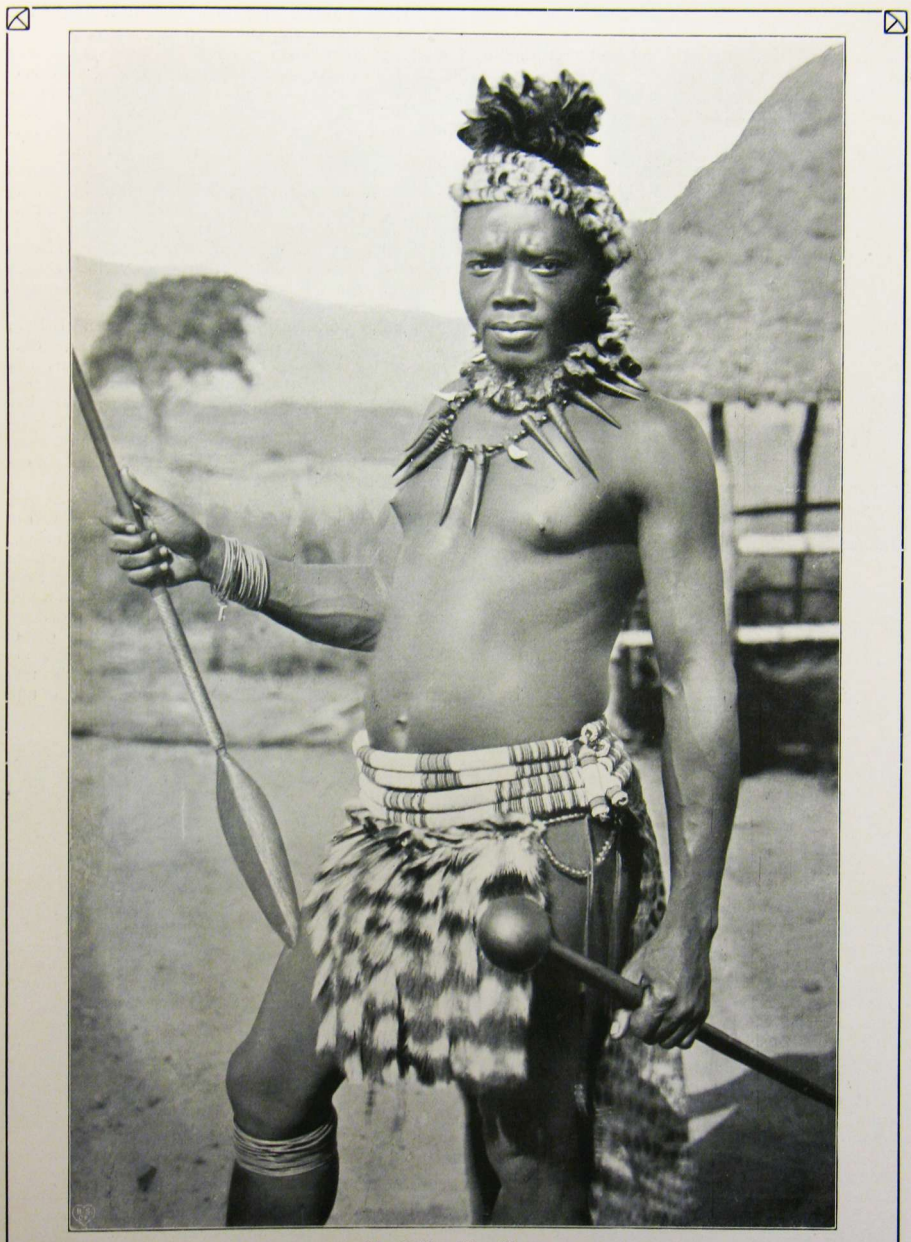
Re-connections

The *Amanganga* under the Shozi clan were the biggest African group living on the land where Mariannhill Monastery was built in 1882 (cf. Part Two). Following his father Manzini as *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga*, Lokothwayo was officially appointed by the Natal government on 1 February 1900. Other than his father, he was able to establish a reasonable relationship with the missionaries at Mariannhill soon after. The description of Lokothwayo's visit to Mariannhill in the course of 1902, which I analysed in Chapter Three, ends with the sentence: "Only in the evening the 'noble visitor' left us with the comment that he would send his children for education. For himself however, so he said, the time for conversion had not yet come" (Hanisch 1903:30).[848] The baptism register of Mariannhill Parish shows that 37 years later, in 1940, Lokothwayo died at Mariannhill's St. Mary's Hospital. He had been baptised one day prior to his death on the name Petrus, and was buried "at home".

The *Embo* under the Mkhize clan were close neighbours to the *Amanganga* from the mid-19th century onwards. Siyabonga Mkhize had published a history of the *Embo* in 2007, which became part of the ongoing dynamics of re-emerging, but also contested "traditional leadership" after the end of Apartheid (cf. Ntsebeza 2008, Oomen 2005, also see McNulty 2013). During my conversations with Siyabonga Mkhize about the photograph of the meeting between Trappist monks and Chief Lokothwayo (Chapter Four), I learned that the latter's mother originated from an *Embo* lineage (cf. Rippe 2007). Only one single original print of this image exists in the Roman Mariannhill archive (Figure 85), and it had only been published once in a very small format (Frey 1907:153).

With the photograph of Lokothwayo as a visual link between the two communities, Siyabonga and myself arranged to meet the present *inkhosi* of the *Amanganga*, E.B. Shozi. On entering the *inkhosi's* living room, Siyabonga and myself encountered a chronologically arranged ancestral photo gallery. I recognised the first and oldest image as a photograph taken by Br. Aegidius Müller (Figures 164 and 165). The depicted person was introduced as Chief Lokothwayo, the great-grandfather of the present *inkhosi*. Unlike Lokothwayo, the present *inkhosi* had been baptised as a Catholic in his childhood, but subsequently converted to the Nazareth Baptist Church, also known as Shembe. After his installation in 1989, he found the syncretist qualities of Shembe more compatible with his position, drawing ideas from Christianity and Zulu traditions alike. Since Shembe is not antagonistic to Christian symbols, but rather considers itself a part of Christianity, a crucifix accompanies the photograph on the wall. During the meeting, the *inkhosi* also called in an elderly woman, whom he introduced as Gogo Jingela, a daughter of Lokothwayo, who was born in the early 1930s. As she had known Lokothwayo only in old age, her ability was limited to recognise Lokothwayo in photographs made around 1900.

[848] My own translation from the German original.



Ein Kaffernhäuptling.
Die Hörnchen an der Halskette enthalten geheime, abergläubische Medizinen, meistens aber Pflanzengifte.

Figure 164: caption on glass plate negative: "403. Lokotwayo [sic]", approx. 1903 (CMM Archives); caption on published print: "*Ein Kaffernhäuptling. Die Hörnchen an der Halskette enthalten geheime, abergläubische Medizinen, meistens aber Pflanzengifte*".—"A Kafir Chief. The small horns on his necklace contain secret, superstitious medicines, but mostly plant toxins" (Frey 1907:141).

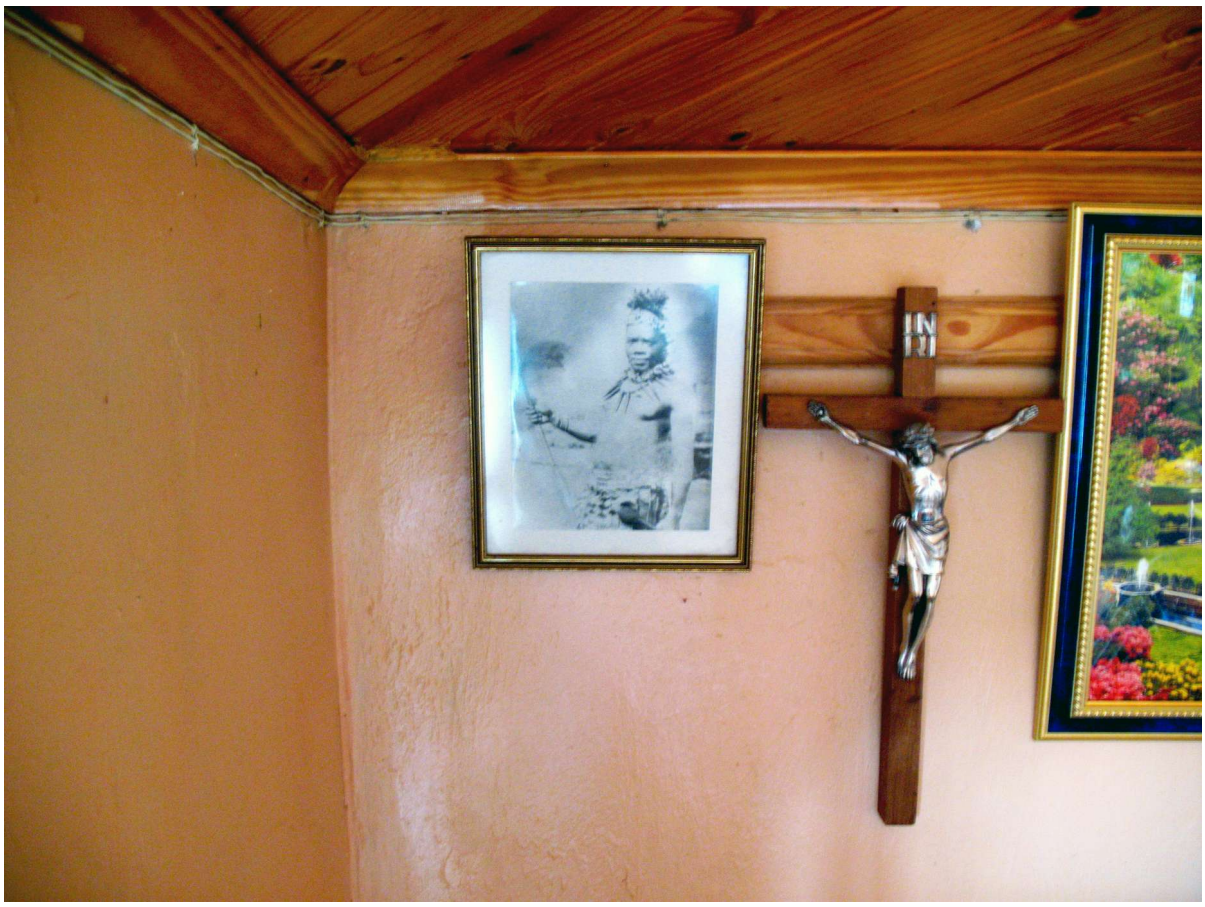


Figure 165: framed photograph of Chief Lokothwayo, home of *Inkhosi* E.B. Shozi (photograph by the author, 2007).

Müller took at least three more photographs during the same photographic occasion, but these had so far not been known to the Shozi Family. The additional photographs show Lokothwayo in very similar poses to the one in Figures 164 and 165. Müller only dated his photographs in few cases, but the glass plate negatives of this particular occasion are inscribed with the date 30 March 1903.[849] The account of Lokothwayo's tour over the premises of Mariannhill with Fr. Emanuel Hanisch had been published in the 3rd edition of the *Vergißmeinnicht* in 1903, dated 1 March (Hanisch 1903). Lokothwayo's visit therefore took place in late 1902, or early 1903. The photographic occasion resulting into Lokothwayo's four portraits was therefore likely a return visit by Müller to Lokothwayo's homestead, after only a short while.

Unlike the photograph on the wall of *Inkhosi* Shozi's living room, two of the photographs, which Siyabonga and myself brought along, reveal Lokothwayo's entire body including his feet. When I presented these photographs to *Inkhosi* Shozi, he embraced them as a more complete and thus more resemblant corporeal rendition of Lokothwayo than the one he

[849] Even if the plates bear the additional note that Müller treated them with two drops of "Ricinusöl [castor oil]", I believe that the date refers to the day of the plates' exposure, rather than the application of oil. The oil may have been applied in order to make certain parts of the negative more translucent and thus darker on the positive print.

already knew.[850] Feet are characteristic and recognisable with the Shozi family, so he told me. In all four portraits, Lokothwayo's feet are clearly positioned in conventional *contrapposto*, with his weight resting on the left leg, a typical feature of Greek classical statues and early European portraiture. In Figures 164 and 168, Lokothwayo's *assegai* is prominently resting tip-down on his right thigh. *Contrapposto*, the presentation of regalia in the right hand, and the left arm akimbo are all characteristics with common depictions of eminent rulers, as I already hinted at for Max Kohler's portrait in the last chapter.

When visiting Mariannhill in late 1902 or early 1903, Lokothwayo was decorated with a silver medal bearing the image of King Edward VII., who had been crowned only a few months earlier on 9 August 1902 (cf. Chapter Three). Also King Edward's official coronation photograph, in an almost identical pose to Lokothwayo's, must have circulated widely at the time. Even though it is very likely, it must nevertheless remain speculation whether Lokothwayo and Müller had indeed seen and restaged the popular coronation photograph of the British monarch. Lokothwayo nevertheless consciously performed a relationship with King Edward by wearing a silver medal showing the latter's image (also see Sagne 1998:117). Other African rulers, such as Samuel Maherero in Namibia and King Njoya Ibrahim in Cameroon at about the same time posed for photographs in similar fashion, even in uniform. Geary and Njoya (1985:25), as well as Gewald (1998:118-119) suggest that these rulers in German colonies were inspired by portraits of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. in the very same portrait tradition.[851] The fact that Müller also photographed other African men in similar poses suggests that he also directed Lokothwayo's pose.[852] It may also be that he only started doing so once the pose had been established by Lokothwayo. Even if a limited number of similar photographs showing African men exist in Mariannhill's collection, these never form a series of more than two images. Lokothwayo is thus the only individual in the entire collection of whom an extensive series of "dignitary" portraits exists (cf. Bank 2008, Sekula 1986). The negotiation of the photographic occasion would have been infused with particular notions of respect, dignity, and the performance of power from both sides, the African chief and the mission's photographer. For this reason, the photographs' composition apparently required particular poses, which were adequate to this particular occasion. Both photographic occasions involving Lokothwayo must have been formal visits, one on the ground of the Trappists (Figure 85) and one on the ground of Lokothwayo's homestead, which is under discussion here. This is plausible if we consider

[850] See Pinney (1997) and Wright (2013) on similar preferences for whole bodies in photographic portraiture in India and the Solomon Islands respectively. These are generally appreciated as more corporeally complete impressions.

[851] Portraits of Wilhelm II. can be related to the same tradition of "ruler portraits" as the one of King Edward VII., both referring back to portraits of Louis XIV. Prins (1992) and Milbourne (2012) even discuss the influence of a direct visit by the Zambian ruler Lewanika to King Edward's coronation ceremony in 1902 and Lewanika's approach to photographs in this regard. Also see Codell (2012) for other examples of "imperial crossdressing" from India and South Africa.

[852] See for example the studio portrait of an unidentified man, published in the third edition of *The Living Races of Mankind* (Johnston 1906:400-401).

Lokothwayo's entourage including two senior *izinduna* in the first occasion, and the very formal and elaborate series of poses in the second.



Figure 166: original caption: "H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, à la 'Knobkerrie.'" by Wilhelm Schröder (Cowen 1894:92 [1884]).

In 1884, while still Prince of Wales, King Edward himself had been presented in the dress of a "Zulu"-like native in the satirical magazine *The Knobkerrie*, edited by the well-known South African artist and caricaturist Wilhelm Schröder (Cowen 1894, also see Schoonraad and Schoonraad 1989:320-325). Schröder's drawing is captioned "H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, à la 'Knobkerrie.'" and shows the prince posing with the common regalia attributed to Zulu men at the time: an *umutsha*, a large oval cowhide shield, a stick, and a *knobkerrie.*[853] Prince Edward is wearing these in combination with his own cylinder, monocle, and overcoat; a sartorial trope we already saw in Chapters One and Seven. In the drawing's imagination, these items had been sent as a present from South Africa to England, as indicated on the wooden crate's label. With crossed legs and holding the regalia behind his head, Prince Edward appears in a highly casual pose and dandy-like fashion. According to the common stereotype of the "Zulu" at the time, the drawing may have been a comment on Edward's permissive and promiscuous lifestyle. The drawing thus resonates with the attention the illustrated press had given to Zulu King Cetshwayo's visit to London in 1882 and 1883. Multiple satirical papers presented Cetshwayo's success with British women, while at the same time being ambivalently dressed up either way: on the one hand in impeccable Victorian fashion, while still maintaining his head ring and his traditional "war paint" (Codell 2012:506-508). As I already discussed in Chapters One and Seven, this extended notion of a colonial mimicry performed and created a "Zulu" identity as caricature by rubbing it against its alleged inversion in form of a flamboyant European identity. Regalia and the poses they were presented with, were supposed to either reconfirm or question power. Like with Prince Edward's and Max Kohler's performances, the connotations preceding and succeeding Lokothwayo's portraits abound and must be considered relative to the beholder and the time in question. Only relative to the moment of their employment can the development of various forms of agency be analysed: the one of the photographed on the one hand, and the one of the photograph on the other.

Lokothwayo's four portraits can be arranged into a specific order with the help of the numbers inscribed by Müller, ranging from "402" to "406". Only one of the images ("1175") is inexplicably out of place.[854] Assuming that this is indeed the order in which the photographs were taken, we can conclude that Lokothwayo changed his dress during the occasion. In the very first image he can be seen with his two brothers Uviane and Bulawayo. We remember Bulawayo from his portrait in the photographic studio (Chapter Four). Lokothwayo here wears an *umuthsa* of thin segments of animal skin and a necklace of multiple buckhorns and at least two teeth, possibly of a leopard. For the following three images he upgraded not only the *umuthsa* to one of genet tails,[855] but also added two beaded belts, as well as a necklace of fur. This suggests that Lokothwayo was highly aware of dress and reconsidered it for his three solo portraits. We can

[853] Both are here transformed into large writing quills in the style of the journal *The Knobkerrie*.

[854] The fact that the photographer had to write on the glass plate negatives in reverse (for the writing to appear correctly in the positive) may explain this as a potential confusion of numbers. Such misspellings can be found on various other plates.

[855] A genet is a small feline with a very distinct tail pattern.

therefore assume that he was consciously performing particular objects, which he considered adequate to his status as chief and most appropriate for the occasion. Recalling my discussion of the social history of leopard claw chokers in Chapter Five, we realise that these chokers were indeed not the first choice of representative decorations for all chiefs at all times. Instead, there were also other kinds of necklaces with representative value, such as those made of buckhorns. They achieved their power by other means, as I will show in the rest of this section.



Figure 167: original caption on glass plate negative: "*402. Uviana u. Bulawayo fechtend"*—"Uviana [left] and Bulawayo [right] while fencing" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).



Figure 168: original caption on glass plate negative: "*1175. Lokotwayo* [sic] *'Nkosi*" (digitally inverted glass plate negative, CMM Archives).



Figure 169: original caption on photographic print: “406. Mariannhill” (CMM Archives).

Lokothwayo's portrait (Figure 164), as well as the group photograph (Figure 85) are featured in the anniversary publication (Frey 1907:141, 153). The group photograph showing Lokothwayo and his *izinduna* is presented under the title "Visit to a Kraal". The page includes three more photographs, all situated in rural homesteads. In addition to this misplacing (the encounter took place at the mission's mill) the photograph was retouched. The original caption reading "*391. Kafferchief Lokotwayo & Indunas.*" was eradicated, leaving behind a visibly blurred trace of the manipulation. The portrait of Lokothwayo (Figure 164) appears in the same publication, titled "A Kafir Chief" in combination with the above caption "The small horns on his necklace contain secret, superstitious medicines, but mostly plant toxins" (Frey 1907:141).[856] In summary, Lokothwayo is wearing a head garment, two necklaces, a belt consisting of four coloured bead rings, as well as a loincloth of genet fur. He also handles a spear and a *knobkerrie*. According to texts by the missionaries, only the necklace indicates his status. In the same publication Müller explained in a section on "Kafir dress and adornment" that such *umgexo wezimpondo* were made of goat- or buckhorns and filled with "medicine and poison, such that supposedly have the power to make girls fall in love with certain boys". Furthermore, they are worn by "chiefs, their advisors, doctors, diviners and sorcerers" (ibid.: 124). Here, a necklace similar to Lokothwayo's was shown in a photographed display of the monastery's museum collection, next to other objects, equally framed as "pagan", if not "superstitious" (Figure 170, also see Chapter Five).

[856] My own translation from the German original.

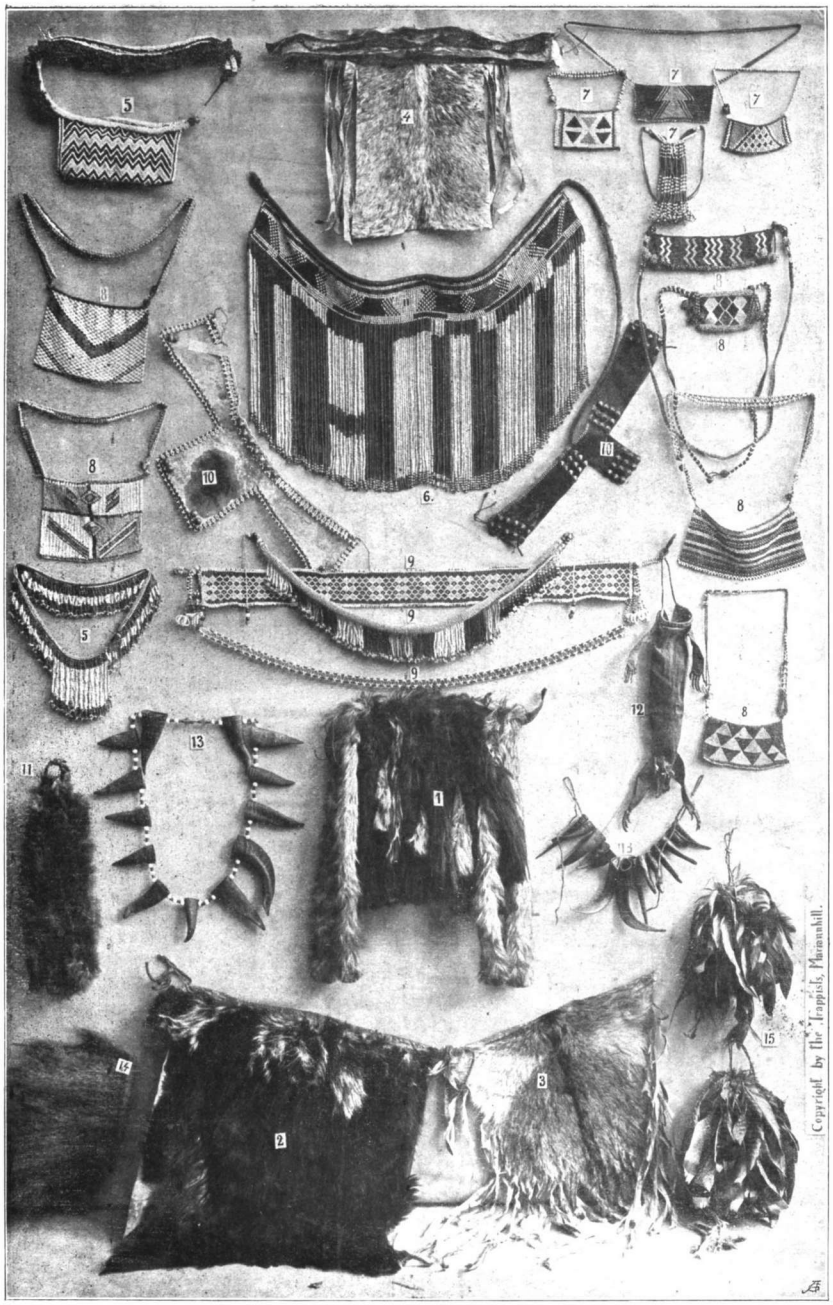


Photo von Br. Müller. Anthropos XII–XIII.

Tafel I:

Kleidung und Schmuck der Kaffern.

Figure 170: original caption: "*Kleidung und Schmuck der Kaffern*"—"Clothing and adornment of Kafirs" (photographed in 1906, published in Frey 1907, Müller 1917/18).

As I mentioned earlier, many Black South Africans I interviewed with the photograph Siyabonga and I brought along to the meeting with *Inkhosi* Shozi (Figure 85), indicated that the chief must be one of the two senior men, wearing head rings, signs of experience and seniority. Now that it was possible to compare this photograph with a confirmed portrait of Lokothwayo, the *inkhosi*, one of his *izinduna*, and Lokothwayo's daughter concluded that the central young man on the photograph must be the chief, because he wears the very same buckhorn necklace as Lokothwayo in the photograph they had (Figure 165). The group photograph (Figure 85) also shows a delicate metal chain, leading from the chief's coat buttons to his pocket, indicating a pocket watch. *Inkhosi* Shozi interpreted both the buckhorn necklace and the pocket watch as insignia that only a chief would have worn. Other than the Trappists in 1907, the present *inkhosi* identified the necklace as a symbol of power, which was instead charged positively. Once more, a necklace played a role in the identification of a historical person. Similar to the case of Umdamane, social actors adapted the necklace's meaning over time. Furthermore, the meaning applied to the two necklaces was reversed: according to the ethnographic record around 1900, the necklace worn by Umdamane was thought to be exclusively worn by chiefs (cf. Chapter Five), while the necklace worn by Lokothwayo was primarily associated with the *umuthi* employed by *izangoma* and *izinyanga*.

According to these confusions, concealments, and revelations, the photograph showing Umdamane with the leopard claw choker and the one showing Lokothwayo with the buckhorn necklace, developed evidentiary power during my fieldwork. Several traces, some laid out, others eradicated by Müller, were eventually reconsidered by the interpretative authority of the *inkhosi's* family. They overruled previous interpretations, such as the contemporary ones by the Phewa family (Chapter Four), as well as those historical ones by the Trappists. Chief Lokothwayo had, according to his descendants, a good relationship to Mariannhill Missionaries. Figure 85 was often quoted as visual evidence of this fact, as it showed Lokothwayo and the missionaries in friendly conversation. Lokothwayo also died as a Christian and was buried by a Mariannhill priest. Nevertheless, his photographs had been disconnected from the family within the public sphere of publication. Whether Müller had given a copy to Lokothwayo privately, or whether the family acquired a copy elsewhere is unclear.[857] In the latter case, this must have happened when people could still recognise Lokothwayo at first glance, as no caption relating an image to the name had ever been published. Only in one known case an identified photograph of Lokothwayo had been displayed publicly in the area, as I will show in the next section.

For the occasion of my interview with *Inkhosi* Shozi and his family in 2007, the presence of the photographed buckhorn necklace was able to connect both photographs. In turn, the portraits of Lokothwayo and the group photograph facilitated a re-connection working in two directions. On the one hand, they enabled his descendants to draw him closer and establish his personhood by reading visual traces. On the other hand, the photographs re-connected the

[857] *Inkhosi* Shozi only remembered that one of his late uncles had given copies to several members of the family, but he could not retrace how his uncle had obtained the photograph in the first place.

information about their own origin to the family: even though *Inkhosi* Shozi had been told by his uncle that the photograph on his wall was made by the "*Amathilaipisi*", he had not established the link to the "*Amaroma* [Roman Catholics]". Only now he realised that the etymological origin of "*Amathilaipisi*" was "Trappists".

Lokothwayo's personhood—similarly to that of Pfanner and Ugitschigitschi—is distributed across several images and objects. They signify him, but only once they had been reassembled in combination. As his portrait is not as widely known as Pfanner's, relations between photographs and objects within them became crucial in the identification of Lokothwayo as a historical person. During these efforts, the necklace connected several photographs: first, as a marker of superstition in the jubilee publication of 1907 and later as a status symbol, which was able to confirm and empower Lokothwayo's identity. Social actors recollected images and objects in order to solidify personhood.

We are now in a position to reconsider the authorship of colonial photographs as more multilayered. But how can we reconstruct photographic occasions as co-productions by photographer and sitter? How can we reconsider the agency of the African sitters and how they used "the creative potential of portraiture" (Garb 2013:42)? Merely for us as researchers to imagine a *desire* for agency of African sitters and models, as for example presented by Garb (2013) and Griffiths (2002:108), may not be enough. We may assume that Lokothwayo himself saw and handled his photographs at one point. But we do not know which of the four portraits he would have preferred above the others to better "resemble" himself, or to depict his desired "identity" as chief/*inkhosi*. We also do not know whether he would have considered the photographic image as an "*isithunzi*": either as a material object, or in terms of "imposingness" and "stature", and thus as a "honorary" portrait in the sense of Sekula (1986). As there often is a lack of evidence for the sitter's involvement in the decision-making-process during a photographic occasion, it is unclear what the exact nature of "agency" is after all. In most cases we are left with the possibility of a forensic analysis of the photographic image surface. The persuasiveness of photographs as surface is based on their quality as allegedly "magical" representations, constituted by a convincing illusion of a historical situation as undoubtedly "truthful". Depicted historical subjects and objects thus lay claim to historicity.

We may nevertheless distinguish between two kinds of agency enabled by the personhood of the depicted. First, the agency of the historical sitter involved in the production of a photograph, and second, the "secondary agency" a photograph itself may develop throughout its biography on the basis of the sitter's personhood within performances of the photographic portrait (also see Edwards 2015:241-242). In the process of analysis, I emphasised the role played by texts, artefacts, and photographs on the agency of subjects. All have their distinct and mutually influential ontologies, either in a material, or a supernatural sense. However, we realise that an object's potential for secondary agency multiplies exponentially when social actors consider and employ all three in combination.

Re-collections

The figures of the missionary, the diviner, and the chief are present in Mariannhill's jubilee publication of 1907, which relates the photographs to a textual narrative and the occasion of the mission's 25th anniversary. A photograph can be entirely disentangled from the space or context where it was taken or published originally. Instead, it can establish equally strong ties to the space where it is eventually stored, published, or exhibited for a particular purpose (cf. Edwards 2003:85): Abbot Franz Pfanner's first abbey is inherently related to his presence, as is the altar at Wernberg; the landscape around Mariannhill, which is visible in Ugitschigitschi's photograph, became a performative space, which my acquaintance S. and myself physically crossed when we tried to locate the photograph within the landscape; also the house of *Inkhosi* Shozi constitutes such a performative space, part of which is a chronologically arranged ancestor gallery, tracing and thus reconfirming a chiefly lineage.

All these spaces have an inherent relationship to the photographs that people performed in relation to them. Eventually, as antagonistic figures, who challenged, but also stabilised each other, portraits of Abbot Franz Pfanner, several "witch doctors", and an unidentified photograph of Lokothwayo, were still present within the public space of Mariannhill's museum when I first visited in 2007. Also the Natal Government Museum curated White settler history, chiefs, and diviners in a similar way, when it opened in 1904. In this final section I delineate both museums as spaces where figures have been curated in particular constellations, but also excluded through the selection, arrangement, and presentation of particular past and present relationships in form of photographs and objects.

For Mariannhill's centenary of 1982, CMM and CPS decided to rehouse and rearrange the museum collection once more. To do so, they could only draw on exhibits from earlier museum setups, or objects still in stock at other CMM mission stations. All items presented in the museum are generally termed "mission artefacts" in the only available pamphlet. The new exhibition, however, has a split setup, which none of the earlier installations had, as I described them in Chapter Five. Every of the museum's four pre-1982 instalments united all objects in one room, however excluding objects relating to church service or the workshops. As I explained, these were nevertheless presented to visitors as part of guided tours along the workshops and other institutions since the 1880s. In 1982, the involved CPS sisters and the architect Robert Brusse, who had renovated the former tannery building and transformed it into a museum, curated the new version with the available material at hand for the ethnographic section. Furthermore, they added a new section dedicated to the historical life at the monastery. This section is once more divided in two parts, one relating to religious material culture and one to objects relating to the historical workshops, all culled from the various mission stations. These two rooms are situated to the right of the museum's entrance. They contain, on the one hand, religious paraphernalia including relics, and on the other hand, old artisan's tools and farming equipment. A clear distinction is therefore established by spatially and thematically separating

the world of the historical Trappist monastery into prayer (*ora*) and work (*labora*). The first room thus represents the interior of the historical monastic compound and the second room its exterior.

The centenary museum exhibition had to be finalised before celebrations started in 1982. According to a late start of renovations, however, time pressure was extremely high. Therefore not much conceptual thought could be given to the installation of the ethnographic section. Since then, neither time, interest, or money has been available to change, or even improve the arrangement. On entering this section to the left side of the museum's entrance, one finds objects collected from the local population as early as the mid 1880s. Today, however, only a fraction of the great variety of objects I described in Chapter Five remains. Members of the congregation and supporting lay people commonly refer to this section as "ethnographic-", or "Zulu-" section.

Immediately to the right of the museum's entrance door, a relief bust of Abbot Franz Pfanner is integrated into the wall, towering above the busts of the second and third Abbot of Mariannhill, Schölzig and Wolpert. Whenever one of Mariannhill's guides gives a tour to visitors, the narrative therefore automatically starts with Pfanner. Either the visitors are drawn to the peculiar position and form of presentation themselves when signing the visitors book, or the guide embeds Pfanner in his story. Guides then usually proceed to the two rooms concerning the monastery, and only if time and interest remains, they conclude with the room on the local population.



Figure 171: photograph of Lokothwayo at the Mariannhill Museum (photograph by the author, 2007).



Figure 172: photograph of "witch doctors" on the wall to the left of the display showing *isangoma* whisks and wigs, as well as other paraphernalia (photograph by the author, 2007).

The collection of objects in this "ethnographic" section consists of numerous weapons, adornment, tools, and wooden household utensils. Above a table cluttered with axes, small spears, and other weaponry, we find the very same photograph of Lokothwayo as in the house of *Inkhosi* Shozi (Figure 171). Like the other exhibits it had been recollected from the previous setup. None of the former curators responsible for the the 1982 setup knew why and by whom it had been chosen to be enlarged and set into a frame. A newspaper article used to fix the photograph at the back of the frame, points to the first half of the 20th century. Very different from its presentation in the living room of *Inkhosi* Shozi, the photograph here depends on, and at the same time illustrates the objects surrounding it. The weapons amassed below, left and right to the photograph, deem the person in the photograph a "warrior", a generic figure, not a portrait. After our conversations in March 2007, the Mariannhill priest Fr. Peter Nkomazana CMM and myself arranged for *Inkhosi* E.B. Shozi to apply a caption underneath this mounted photograph. By applying this identification, he once more transformed the photograph into a true portrait, in the sense of an identified reference to a historical person (Brilliant 1991).

On the same wall further to the right, an entire corner is dedicated to the paraphernalia of

converted *izangoma* (Figure 172), such as decorated wigs with gall bladders of goats (*umyeko*), or ceremonial staffs and whisks (*ishoba*), such as the one we saw in the photographs of the "court hearing" (Chapter Four). One of the two photographs accompanying the object display is titled "two witch doctors in consultation". All other photographs in the museum not being captioned,[858] these two *izangoma* thus constitute the only labelled category of people, but are equally associated to a specific category of material culture. Lokothwayo instead, before the application of the label by *Inkhosi* Shozi, had only been related to the weaponry as "warrior", but not as "chief". While the stereotype of the warrior is self-explanatory, the figure of the *isangoma* and related material culture was apparently in need of explanation, especially for European visitors. Lokothwayo, the "witchdoctors" and related material culture are only presented within the historicised enclosure of the museum. Abbot Franz Pfanner, instead, is visible in almost every private and public space at Mariannhill. As an aspiring saint he appears as the only historical individual in the museum who is claiming a relevance in the present.

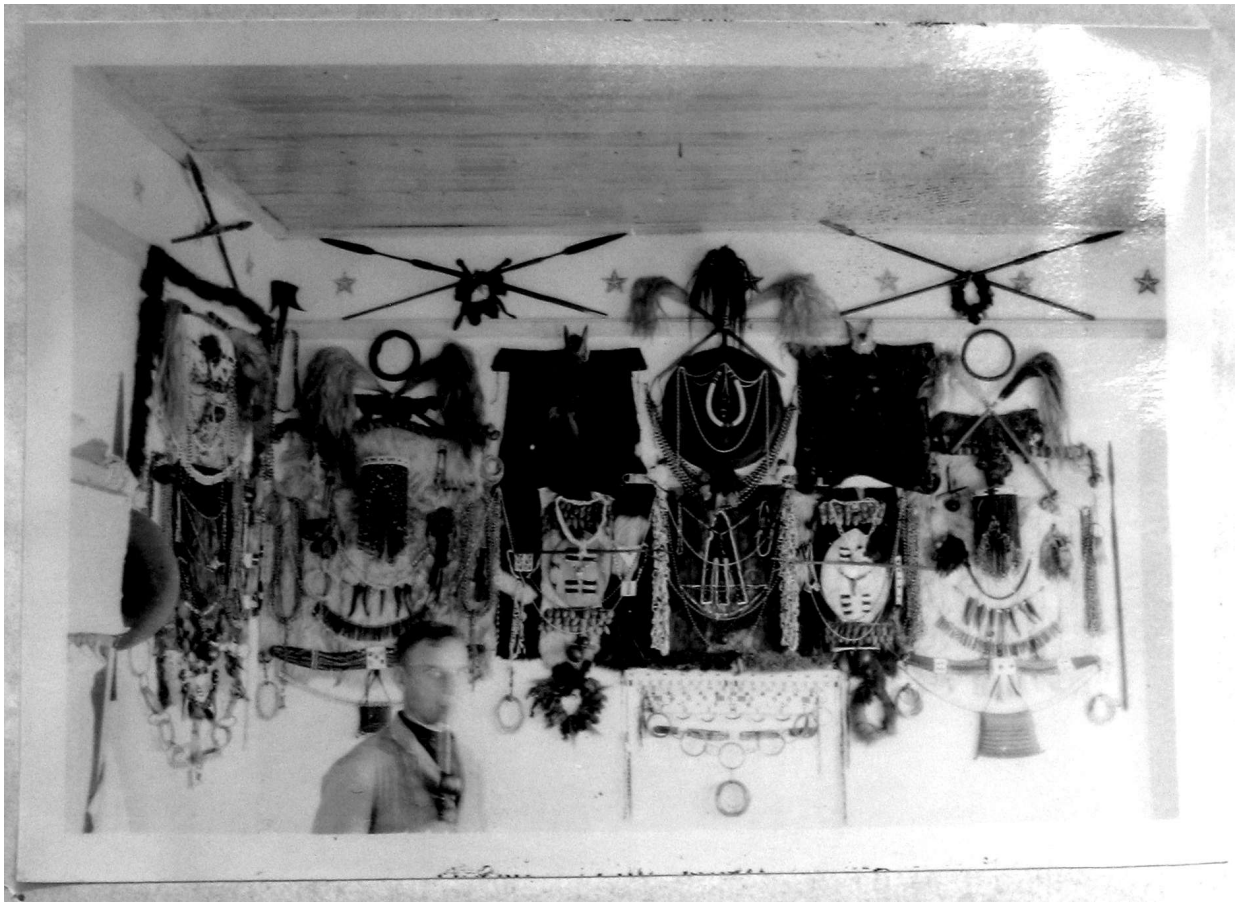


Figure 173: caption by Max Kohler: "The museum of Rev. Fr. G.[regory] Zier. […]. Phot. Rev. Fr. Fischer SCI." Exact historical location unknown, possibly Kevelaer Mission (KCAL).

[858] The second photograph on the display case (cf. Figure 172) had been published in the journal *Das Atelier des Photographen* in 1907 (Figure 18).

The present collection of *isangoma* paraphernalia is only a small part of what had originally been collected, foremost by the before-mentioned Fr. Gregory Zier during the late 1920s and 1930s.[859] Zier was a contemporary of Max Kohler at Centocow, who collected and exhibited these items in the style of trophies (Figure 173).[860] He himself can be seen smoking a pipe to the lower left. Zier had a particular reputation to focus on the conversion of *izangoma*. This reputation and Zier's adventures together with Max Kohler were recollected and used for Mariannhill's last wave of propaganda attempts in the early 1950s, which made use of exoticising topics (Schimlek 1950, 1953). Kohler, too, wrote about Zier and in particular about the photograph below: "The museum of Rev. Fr. G. Zier. […] when being converted the *izangoma* deliver their heathen garbs and cult objects. […] This is only a part of his yield [*Ausbeute*]".[861] Zier originally intended his "museum" to be an exhibition and performance of power regarding his ability to supersede the power of the *isangoma*. Kohler, for example, presented the collected objects as material evidence, thus "converted artifacts" (Thomas 1991, cf. Chapter Five). The collector, Fr. Gregory Zier, presented himself in front of his trophies for the particular reason of being photographed. The photograph is yet another performance of power, now involving and making visible Zier's own agency, first as successful collector and consequently as successful missionary. Through its circulation, the photograph also involves the appreciation of the photographer Fr. Fischer, as well as of Max Kohler in form of an explanatory caption. Both the collected objects, as well as the photograph are media pointing to particular occasions of collection. In the current museum, however, this backstory is excluded, and like with Lokothwayo, the identity of both collector and collected is concealed.

Since after the Second World War, earlier versions of the museum had been curated by inspired, but theoretically and practically untrained priests, sisters, or secular lay people, who had been called upon for help. Like with the earliest museum setups (Chapter Five), since the 1950s curators only made minor advances to properly preserve and analyse the material. As I was told by former curators working on the exhibition, superiors considered the museum to be only secondary to the main purpose of providing a ground to re-collect the history of Mariannhill. They considered objects to serve a concrete purpose, as means to an end, and not an end in themselves. When there was eventually a possibility for Black South Africans to reclaim land after 1994 by proving their historical rights with respective title deeds, the monastery received an unprecedented influx of requests to consult its archives. On top of this development, valuable objects had been lifted from the museum collection, and the archivist, Sr. Adelgisa Herman CPS, eventually died in 1995. The CMM and CPS communities therefore decided to temporarily close both institutions for public access in 1996. A policy of archival closure was upheld for more than ten years, while the museum was again opened in the late 1990s. While

[859] Mariannhill staff involved with the instalment and curation of the museum told me that several items of Zier's collection had been discarded of, due to the infestation with insect pests over the past decades.

[860] Whether Zier was inspired to mount the objects in particular ways, so to explicitly resemble hunting trophy displays, is unclear (cf. Chapter Five).

[861] KCAL: Kohler Collection, album 116. My own translation of the German original.

Mariannhill had no incentive to adapt its archival and curatorial approach after the first free elections in 1994, as well as neither financial means, nor sufficient staff to do so, the public museums of KwaZulu-Natal were under far greater public and political pressure and thus underwent greater transformations. In the process of wider re-collections of material and histories, at least the KwaZulu-Natal Museum (KZNM, formerly "Natal Government Museum") relied on its historical collection of photographs, parts of which had been sourced from Mariannhill in 1905.[862]

Even if Lokothwayo's photographs in publication (Frey 1907) or public exhibition at Mariannhill had never been named, one identified photograph of Lokothwayo and two of his *izinduna* were on display at the Natal Government Museum in Pietermaritzburg from late 1905 onwards. Rating among the earlier described "colonial museums", it opened its doors on 30 November 1904 (cf. Chapter Five).[863] In the second annual report for 1905, the director, Ernest Warren, payed exceptional attention to one purchase, which appears to have been the biggest from one single photographic studio: "Some fifty platinotype photographs, illustrating native customs, dress, weapons, etc., have recently been purchased from the Trappist Monastery, Mariann Hill [sic], and these are now being mounted for exhibition" (Warren 1907:8). The photographs were exhibited in the so-called "Ethnology Room", under the "Department of Ethnology and Antiquity". The room was relatively small, located on the ground floor, and not only contained objects from local African life, but also "of local interest" referring to the history of Europeans, as well as a small section dedicated to "Madagascar, Egypt and objects from Various Countries". The section including photographs was described as follows: "The various divisions of the wall-cases are devoted to African Ethnological objects classified under different headings. (1) *African Races*, include a series of mounted photographs of typical African Natives of the various tribes and races" (Warren 1906:13).

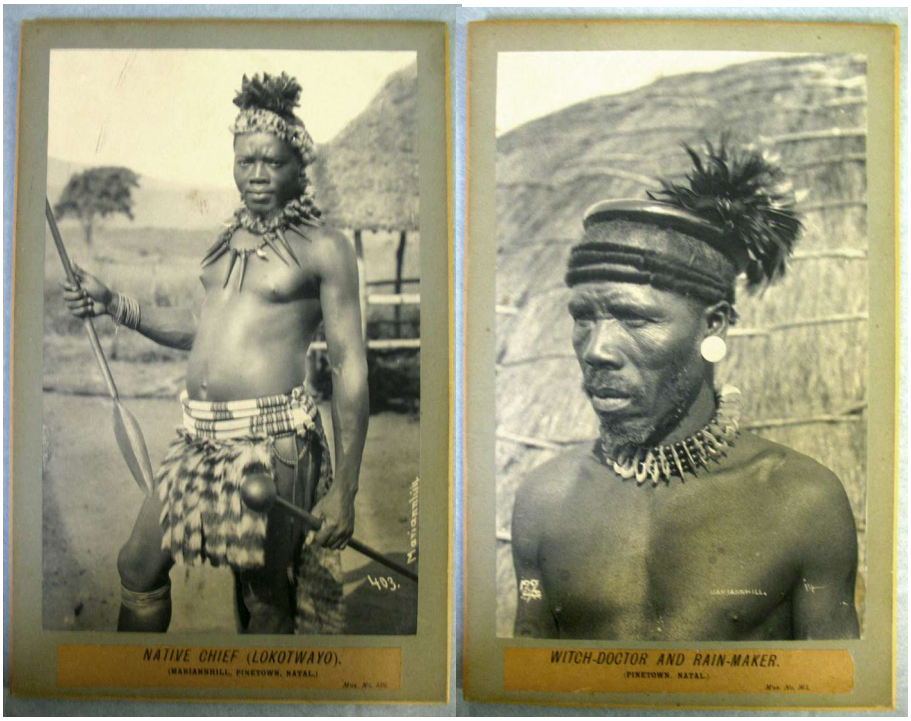
After the end of Apartheid, the institution was renamed "KwaZulu-Natal Museum" (KZNM). Of the 50 photographs purchased in 1905, only nine remain in the archival stock that can be attributed to Mariannhill. Among these, Lokothwayo's image is still pasted on a cardboard carrier with the caption "Native Chief (Lokotwayo). (Mariannhill, Pinetown, Natal.)". He is accompanied by Umdamane, labelled as "Witch-Doctor and Rain-Maker. (Pinetown, Natal.)", as well as Ugitschigitschi, referred to as a "Prophetess. (Natal.)". Müller provided this information in several letters, of which only one remains.[864] The latter two individuals are not identified by name, but it is still significant that Warren cared to distinguish their places of residence so accurately.

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862 When Mariannhill's photographs entered commercial circuits after 1900, to my knowledge only the South Africa Museum in Cape Town and the Natal Governmental Museum in Pietermaritzburg purchased selections. The Durban Museum may also have purchased Mariannhill's photographs, as it too had an ethnographic exhibition with elaborate photographic displays. The museum's current staff, however, was not able to locate either the historical photographic collection, or any collection of "ethnographic" objects.

863 Most rooms were dedicated to natural history, but also to ethnology and local settler history.

864 KZNM, uncatalogued correspondence collection: letter, Müller to Warren, 07.04.1906. There must have been more letters exchanged prior to this date as the bulk of photographs had already been purchased in 1905.





Figures 174, 175 and 176: original captions: “NATIVE CHIEF (LOKOTWAYO). (MARIANNHILL, PINETOWN, NATAL.) Mus. No. 559.”; “WITCH-DOCTOR AND RAIN-MAKER. (PINETOWN, NATAL) Mus. No. 561.”; “CONSULTING THE PROPHETESS (NATAL.) Mus. No. 556.” (KZNM, purchased approx. Between 1902 and 1906).

In 1998, the KZN Museum installed the so-called *Sisonke*[865] exhibition, which still existed as a permanent display during my fieldwork in 2011 (cf. Dlamini 2009; Rodéhn 2008, 2015).[866] While the production of the exhibition has been thoroughly studied, in particular by Rodéhn, both researchers did not consider how objects and in particular photographs had been dealt with in this process. Even though Rodéhn rightly stresses the importance to study the exhibition's production as a process, and in particular as a performance by the curators, I insist that it is equally important to study specific objects and images, in order to trace the mediation or suppression of both makers and models in the process of curation.

In 1997, the Department of Arts and Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) had diagnosed that the museum had "no displays of African culture relevant to contemporary KwaZulu-Natal" and thus urged for "a strategy to present history most relevant to museum visitors" (Dlamini 2009:478, also see Hamilton 2002:224). During Apartheid in the 1970s and 80s, museums in the province of Natal on the one hand, and in the Bantustan of KwaZulu on the other, had developed separately. Museums in Natal focused on constructing exhibitions on settler history up to the 1920s, while museums in Ulundi, KwaZulu's capital, showcased how the Bantustan directly evolved from the "Zulu Kingdom". The latter excluded colonial and apartheid influences (Wright and Mazel 1992).

Accordingly, in 1997, "the history and anthropology departments met and jointly combed through existing collections to see what could be utilised for this purpose, hoping to construct an exhibition that integrated objects that DACST would consider 'historical' and 'anthropological'". A White and a Black curator eventually came up with the objectives to overcome stereotypes and nostalgia related to "Zuluness", and also to show that "there was no rigid tie between Zulu ethnicity and membership of the [political parties] IFP, UDF, or ANC" (Dlamini 2009:478, also see Rodéhn 2015:177).[867] As the years prior to 1997, and in particular 1994, had been politically tense, involving violent conflicts between ANC and IFP supporters, the curators decided to avoid strong political statements. As a compromise they decided not to reference the Zulu royal house in the exhibit, or images of kings, which may have functioned as concrete political identification markers (Rodéhn 2008:216, 2015:179).

The exhibition's script eventually contained two lines of historical development: the display's top wall segment chronologically shows the development of weaponry from the late 19th century to the late 20th century, while the bottom segment displays the development of beadwork (Figure 177). Despite being strongly gendered, this setup was still considered as revolutionary, because it does not exoticise "Zuluness" as homogeneous and timeless, but instead as highly adaptable, fluctuating, and diverse within a development process. At the same time, this setup includes material culture of other ethnic groups, such as Bhaca (Rodéhn 2008:217). However, exactly because it did not reify "Zuluness" in form of clearly temporally and ethnically

[865] Zulu for "we are together".

[866] Despite repeated efforts to contact the two curators I did not succeed in interviewing them and therefore have to rely on the studies by Dlamini and Rodéhn.

[867] IFP=Inkatha Freedom Party; UDF=United Democratic Front; ANC=African National Congress.

attributed material culture, so Dlamini argues, the exhibition was incomprehensible and thus unpopular with both museum staff and visitors (Dlamini 2009:479).

For the exhibition in 1997, the curators reused three photographs from the Mariannhill purchase of 1905 in a considerably enlarged format, in order to illustrate weaponry and adornment of the 19th century. These included Lokothwayo, one of his *induna*, and an unidentified woman (Figure 177). The caption with Lokothwayo's name and the colonial title "native chief", as well as the location "Mariannhill" on the image itself and beneath it, have been cropped from the current display. Dlamini and Rodéhn showed that the newly exhibited enlargements avoided potential political friction by concealing personal and geopolitical identifications. As the caption is still present with the KZNM's original archival copy, the curators would have had all the information necessary to research the photographs' time and place of production, as well as the depicted individuals. Despite the curators' indicated objective for liberation, Lokothwayo had been once more reduced to a stereotype, a carrier of a spear in an exhibition on weaponry.

Through the very same photograph, Lokothwayo also became a model in the German Wikipedia entry for "*assegai"*. He is even presented as "Zulu King Dingiswayo"[868] on the official website of the oldest Game Reserve in Africa, the Hluhluwe Umfolozi Park in the North East of KZN. Like these other producers of history, the curators of the *Sisonke* exhibition had rediscovered and utilised Lokothwayo's photograph as mimetic capital, after literally having "combed through existing collections" (Dlamini 2009:478). Being given a name, Lokothwayo would have been too politically potent, just like the curators feared would have happened with involvement of members of the Zulu Royal house. Like in the case of relics, such a backstory would have made it possible to charge the photograph, materialise political history, and to transform it into actual power within an exhibitionary context of a state-funded institution.

[868] As Dingiswayo died before the 1820s, he could have hardly been photographed.



Figure 177: one display of the *Sisonke* exhibition at the KZNM, showing three enlargements of photographs purchased from the Mariannhill Studio (photograph by the author, 2011).

Lokothwayo's photograph, those of several unknown *izangoma,* their material traces, as well as Abbot Franz Pfanner as the first missionary of Mariannhill, are simultaneously present in the mission's museum. The missionaries initially emphasised tension and power relations between these figures for propaganda purposes, but clearly did not invent them from scratch. The fact that these presences are still very prominent in the current museum is not connected to the fact that missionaries today still need and want to uphold the same narrative oppositions. Curators rather relied on already existing mimetic capital, which eventually brought forth this constellation of figures. Next to the necessity to involve Pfanner in the museum narrative, depictions of Lokothwayo and two *izangoma* had been the only old photographs in historical picture frames available for the hasty setup of the 1982 centenary exhibition. Both at Mariannhill and the KZN Museum, weaponry, beadwork, and ceremonial paraphernalia constitute the bulk of the original collection, as these were the common objects stockpiled since the early "Zulu curio" economy I described in Part Three. In a mission museum with not much of a public profile or scientific reputation, the *isangoma* or "witchdoctor" still has a place. Even if *izangoma* are generally dressed with plenty of beadwork, it would have been difficult to fit them into the "modernising"

narrative of the 1997 *Sisonke* exhibition at the KZN Museum in Pietermaritzburg.

On the basis of a pre-selected and still available set of imagery as mimetic capital, the figures were not re-invented, but indeed re-collected in both the Mariannhill Museum and the KZN Museum.[869] As I showed throughout this chapter, this process of "recollection" is part of the process of "reconnection" by the figures' descendants during later photographic occasions. The term "re-collection" can thus be understood in two ways, either as culling existing mimetic capital, or as remembering something of the past. Similar to the mechanism of the "translation" of Pfanner's relics, and the exposure and revelation of Ugitschigitschi's photograph, Lokothwayo's personhood was revealed by *Inkhosi* Shozi at Mariannhill's museum for private and political empowerment, but for the very same reason had to remain concealed at the KZN Museum.

[869] Cf. Hamilton's (1998) argument about the construction of the image of Shaka Zulu and "the limits of historical invention" according to the available historical sources.

Conclusion

Mariannhill Missionaries established the abbot's presence by preserving his photographs, and especially his bodily remnants as potential future religious relics. In order to document their potential subjects' "heathen" nature, they attributed stereotypical material culture objects to the chief and the diviner in photographs, publications, and the museum. The establishment as social figures in photographic genre scenes provided them with aesthetic qualities, a certain buoyancy, and accordingly with reproductive power. This guaranteed the photographs' ongoing circulation and repeatedly motivated publishers and exhibition makers to select them above others.

Based on these visual, textual, and material traces, both Mariannhill Missionaries and nearby African communities created quasi-hagiographic discourses on historical individuals, even many decades later. Partially influenced by my agency as a researcher, these social actors re-assembled the personhood of the three figures, which had been distributed through photographs and objects in space and time (cf. Gell 1998). Accordingly, social dynamics during my research were still infused with reverberations of colonial and apartheid relationships. Each figure's persistent eminence and reproductive power thus evoked a potent mix of associations with emotional, moral, political, and supernatural powers. In the previous chapters I explained how specific media constellations involving photographs were used to muster allies (cf. Latour 1990, 2005). In this chapter, I expanded this idea by involving the establishment of personhood through such image-object assemblages.

Unlike many others of his African sitters, Müller considered Ugitschigitschi and Lokothwayo as important enough to account for the inscription of their names onto, or next to their photographs. Even more than for the intensity of their relationships, this accounted for their status as antagonistic dignitaries. Whenever Müller inscribed photographs with an equivalent of the title "diviner" or "chief", he also attributed a personal name. Through the power of naming, these photographs achieved a potent afterlife as true portraits, equal to those of Abbot Pfanner. All three individuals, however, had been rather unpopular during their lifetime, at least as contemporary reports by the missionaries indicate. Eventually, their descendants—biological or institutional—conjured all three individuals from the past by redeeming them from previous lapses.

Historicity accrued political value in post-apartheid South Africa, thus reinvigorating photographs and other material culture as mimetic capital. While some people indeed use them to write new histories, others simply position them within preconditioned pasts. Authorities of the *Amanganga* around *Inkhosi* Shozi have done their own research and have read their Bryant and Balling (cf. Chapters Four and Five). They compiled their own shadow archives of relevant references from various archival repositories, in order to re-establish rights to land and "traditional leadership". Accordingly, they placed the photographs partially within these preconditioned histories, at least to play them off against their own interpretations and oral histories. All three figures I discussed in this chapter eventually accrued reproductive power over

time: political, moral, and supernatural. In their own time, as well as posthumously, they accrued agency and performed as eminent protagonists in social narratives and actions.

It is therefore imperative to acknowledge the figures in a still ongoing situation of encounter between missionaries, religious, and non-religious communities around Mariannhill, as well as academic researchers. Even if the reestablished presence of Lokothwayo and Ugitschigitschi involved my own agency, I do not conceptualise it in terms of "repatriation" or "restitution". Without doubt there are past and present ethical issues regarding power relations involved. However, due to their reproducibility, the photographs had never been "expatriated" in the strict sense of the term and had long circulated in South Africa. One photograph had even made its way to the descendants of Lokothwayo a long time ago. As the photographs have always been accessible to people who were inquisitive enough, I prefer to employ the notion of "reconnection" instead (cf. Rippe 2007, 2015). This may be accomplished by conjoined oscillation between archive and field, as well as between the internal and external narratives of photographs (cf. Banks 2001).

Due to the distance in time, the re-assembling of "distributed personhood" was in need of additional anchorage. This was provided through the compounding of various media. The personhood of all three figures had been "distributed beyond the body boundary" in form of photographs and related objects. Later on, social actors reassembled them in different ways, thus investing them with a "secondary agency" for very specific purposes (Gell 1998). In the first place, this agency was the one of the missionaries, the photographer and editors of the journal, for the purpose to create mission propaganda. As far as the often-invoked agency of the photographic subject is concerned, and as I suggested earlier, these too can be divided into a primary and secondary agency. On the one hand, there is the alleged agency of the sitter, his or her range of possibilities to position himself in photographic space, and thus the way the image came to appear on paper. On the other hand, there is the agency of the depicted person, or rather the effect through the presence a portrait photograph may have in social situations, according to the photographically established personhood. In order to become effective evidence, social actors eventually had to "abduct" and re-perform personhood (Gell 1998). Within their state as photographic images, especially Pfanner and Ugitschigitschi, as aspiring saint and diviner, still developed mediumistic qualities by allegedly channeling divine will and *isidhlozi* respectively. Their photographs thus worked as mediumistic devices. At least Pfanner's photograph holding his "relic", can eventually be conceived of as a "reliquary". Eventually, also the photographs of the other two individuals are carriers for the imagination of objects, which provided them with additional power.

The fact that people socially employed image-object-compounds in various timeframes and environments thus created particular forms of power. A European tradition of saintly relics, an ethnographic tradition of African divination, and leadership symbolism, constituted three empirically derived explanatory frameworks. The relic in the case of Pfanner, the photograph of Ugitschigitschi, and the necklace of Lokothwayo are culturally specific and ethnographically

constructed objects. In so far, the objects are inherently related to the respective social figure, as well as to the depicted individual's personhood. A relic would only have been preserved and circulated if it was of a Catholic dignitary; a photograph can be considered as a statement of divination; and a buckhorn necklace containing *umuthi* can signify political power. Material and visual signs had thus been laid out in particular ways, redistributed, and reassembled: in all three cases, interpretive authorities took, preserved, evoked, identified, and combined the respective image and object during primary occasions. During secondary occasions, individuals once more claimed the right to determine the meaning of photographs and related objects, as well as how they related to the past.

The catalysts enabling these individual redemptions were particular combinations of images and objects, specific to each of the three figures. In the case of Pfanner, power evolved by compounding an image *and* an object; with Ugitschigitschi it appeared through an image *as* object, and for Lokothwayo through an object *in* an image. The powers released during moments of performance thus depended on two facts: first, that the photographs depict a historically traceable persona, and second, that a particular object was connected to the attributes of the respective social figure. In all three cases, image and object were employed in a conjoined way to effectively and affectively constitute personhood:

First, the spiritual descendants of Abbot Franz Pfanner still move him towards beatification, through and alongside his material, visual, but now mostly textual traces. Pfanner's "relic" in combination with a photograph reestablished his bodily presence in today's religious practice. Even though the photograph of Abbot Franz is endlessly reproducible, there is supposedly only a limited number of "relics" available. By compounding object and image, index and icon, Mariannhill Missionaries created a heightened authentic presence that can much more effectively manifest the abbot towards adorers than any single line of text, image, or piece of garment could ever achieve individually. The photograph identifies the person, while the relic is the actual carrier of power. As I explained in the introduction to this chapter, photographs have been considered to have both indexical and iconic qualities. But precisely the combination of tactility (piece of cloth) and sight (photograph), bound together by an authorising text and seal, produced mimetic excess, to the end that the artefact was installed as a "relic" in an altar.

Second, the mission's photographer Br. Aegidius Müller exposed the *isangoma* Ugitschigitschi as fraud by having her unsuccessfully divine her own photograph. The tension was doubled by a photograph being both an illustration, as well as the quintessential object of a narrative and performance in 1905. In a similar way, the photograph was the object of a much later counter-performance of Ugitschigitschi by/through my acquaintance S., preventing the exposure of her previous residence. The object of power in the case of Ugitschigitschi was her own photograph, which Müller used to confront her. He manifested Ugitschigitschi in the article as printed image and additionally described her photograph as a concealed object, which drew consequent power from its exposure. Müller's production and interpretation of Ugitschigitschi's photograph was similar to divination, because he revealed her fraud by attempting to perform an

act of "sympathetic magic". During the trip with my acquaintance S., the photograph of Ugitschigitschi also manifested the question of place in form of the table mountain depicted in its background. Our attempt to trace the location of Ugitschigitschi's previous residence, and thus the movement of the photographic object towards it, triggered my acquaintance S. (for whatever reason) to perform Ugitschigitschi's photograph (and consequently her personhood through himself).

Third, in 1907, Müller constructed Lokothwayo's image according to the conversion narrative as a depiction of embodied superstition. This he mediated through the necklace, which allegedly contained superstitious medicines. During my fieldwork, the photograph was on the contrary recognised in its potential to reconfirm a historical community leader. Aided by the depicted necklace, Lokothwayo's descendants transformed the photograph from an ethnographic stereotype into one of a politically and emotionally valued ancestor. While it is not an actual material object, Lokothwayo's photographed necklace connects two photographs. Initially, it had been deemed "superstitious" in the photograph's caption and in Müller's display case, but later it confirmed the identity of Lokothwayo in one image and reconfirmed it in the other. The necklace's repeated appearance made the photographs meaningful to each other and in a way established a relationship resulting in the strengthening of Lokothwayo's personhood.

In all three cases, historical social actors carried out performances of social relationships inside a text-image narrative. Also outside of it, social actors extracted and re-socialised respective artefacts in particular ways. I do not claim that all three cases employed the logic of Frazerian "magic" in equal measures. Nevertheless, all three cases can be compared on a spectrum between technological and magical principles. These can be compared to semiotic principles, as claims and explanations of how the transfer of power took place. On both levels (historical and contemporary) social actors expressed relationships between the prototypes, their photographs, the photographer, current descendants, and myself through qualities that can be described as "magic", either where contagious magic resembles the indexical quality of the image-object compound, or where mimetic magic resembles its iconic quality. As I showed, Frazer himself was present in Müller's imagination when writing about his encounter with Ugitschigitschi.

According to Michael Taussig (2006), many ethnographic descriptions of conjuring by healers and diviners in colonial situations worked on the basis that the practitioner extracted a harmful object from a patient's body. The practitioner *revealed* previously concealed objects within a performance before an audience, and thereby rendered a problem visible. With the same result ethnologists and missionaries documented and thus *exposed* such processes as fraud. The revealed objects were said to bridge the interior and exterior of the body, due to their particular tactile or visual quality. All three situations I described are characterised by a compounded image-object, while in each case the relationships are of characteristically different ontological qualities. In all three cases, both *revelations* and *exposures* took place historically, as well as during my fieldwork. Apparently, systems like canonisation, divination, and politics need both

the performance of public secrets and the occasional sceptic, in order to be reinvigorated (cf. ibid.:138).

The three individuals thus received their powers not despite, but exactly because their personhood had initially been concealed and contested. We may therefore wonder whether there is anything at all to be exposed behind the magical "skin of [photographic] appearance" (ibid.:151). Photographs developed agency through the revelation of personhood as religious, magical, and political mediators. People are often aware of photography's artificial nature, but as often prefer to maintain its illusion: the magic of realism. As I mentioned in the introduction, several authors have argued that photographs in fact conceal the past, instead of revealing it. The "translations" of relics, and respective image-objects in the other two cases, needed the revelation of backstories in order to be activated and to remain alive. But rarely do these established stories take account of the actual photographic occasion. Instead, a historical object that already had a presence with social actors through related collateral knowledge was necessary to connect the past and present of photographs.

EPILOGUE

After my failed attempt in 2012 to locate the homestead of the *Isangoma* Ugitschigitschi, I eventually came closer to it in 2013. Once I had found another early text in the mission's periodicals, it was unlikely that the diviner's homestead had been to the south of Mariannhill Monastery (cf. Müller 1906). Instead, it must have been to the north-west, at the foot of the nearby table mountain, which Br. Aegidius Müller had already described in his account of 1889. In the process, a realisation about the area's environmental changes suddenly struck me. Once I had scouted the table mountain from every possible direction for several days, it became evident that the vantage point of the historical photographs, and therefore the historical location of Ugitschigitschi's homestead, is by now many meters above today's ground level. Between 1982 and 1986, the major freeway A3 was built alongside the mountain's ridge to replace the older main road between Durban and Pietermaritzburg further north. In the 30 years since the incident, the drastically modified landscape has overgrown neatly with big trees. A contemporary article in an engineering journal describes this situation as follows:

> The project is one of the most extensive earthworks road projects ever completed in Southern Africa, if not in all Africa. Despite this the impact on the environment has been minimal as a result of the special attention given to this aspect, and the road harmonizes with its surroundings. (Anon. 1986:245)

While this may well be, the removal of a gigantic mass of rock and soil matter certainly does not "harmonise" with the landscapes in the photographs that concerned us in this study. We may think that at least mountains are stable coordinates connecting past and present, thus allowing us to "patriate", or to locate the provenience of historical photographs; obviously they are not. Photographic models and sitters eventually die and decay; and so do photographed objects; glass plate negatives, paper prints, correspondences and other texts, too, may decay or be destroyed either accidentally or purposefully; entire repositories, such as the city archive of Cologne in 2009, may unexpectedly collapse; and so do landscapes erode naturally, or are eroded artificially.

Archives, the photographs they contain, and the possible narratives about them are therefore only as stable as the extended material complex available to support them. In consequence, photographs are entangled far beyond their singular relationships to those people and objects they depict. Many more material dimensions—some of which I have explored in this study—are part of the extended "photography complex" (Hevia 2009) around Mariannhill's collection. Historically, this photography complex was related to a local "exhibitionary complex" (Bennett 1995) at the monastery. Mariannhill Missionaries eventually failed to maintain this extensive institutional structure after the Second World War. This holds true in particular for the historical mission press, the photographic studio, the museum, the library, and the archive. Without the original complex to position photographs it is difficult to reassemble historical photographic occasions and their related networks.

Initially, many of the monastery's members were involved with this complex. They prepared particular media in a laborious production process, positioned them in support of each other, in order to make them more effective for the purpose of attracting allies in form of novices

and benefactors. Photographs in particular changed effect over time and in relation to other media. In so far, we can follow how moments in time have been visualised, next to how they have been written about. I do not invoke a positivistic idea of how photographs recorded history here, but rather how the same images nested in specific spaces and successive points in time as objects, and how people engaged with them over time.

The missionaries represented situations of encounter with their subjects through photographs, texts, exhibitions, theatre, and objects. Even if they presented some objects as already "converted artifacts", these always implied both sides of the transition. Accordingly, the related subjects appeared as if in an intermediary state, neither as fully African, nor fully European. The missionaries thus translated a shared lifeworld into visual and material terms. Every representation positions a surrogate standing in for a reality. As I explained, a photograph is thus positioned between an onlooker and a historical situation, essentially rather blocking the past beyond the immediately visible. Accordingly, the beholder has to imagine the photographic occasion and its préterrain alongside the image, according to the available collateral knowledge. Between cultural similarity and difference, conversion and propaganda were eventually at odds, as they attempted to make same and keep different at the same time. As frozen time, photographs imply the transformation between states of being—"heathens" and "converts". This photographic state, however, had to be upheld and continually reinvigorated as a tradition, in order to legitimise mission work.

In a longterm perspective, Mariannhill Missionaries were thus entangled with their collections from the beginning: missionaries, their subjects, objects, and images depended on each other through the activities of conversion, curation, and conservation. In the four parts of this study I approached this conundrum of entanglement by considering photographs as things in between: in between other images, spaces, objects, as well as variously constituted subjects. While one can never analytically separate these dimensions, a reflexive focus allows us to reassemble historical traces by following practices of imagination, the production of spaces, the circulation of objects and images, and the subjectification of photographs and objects. I hope to have shown that the production and reception of these processes can best be approached as experiences of intermediality.

The photographic glass plate negatives (1880s-1915) had been properly varnished, labelled, coded, and protected since their production, so that they could be reproduced efficiently over many decades. They were valuable assets, quintessential mimetic capital for the purpose of propaganda. Preservation eventually gains even greater importance once the collection is reconsidered many decades later by academic and family researchers. In this process, the collection repeatedly became an uneasy and ambivalent remnant of a contested past. The old photographic collection remained a great asset for CMM even after the Second World War, but at the same time established itself as a burden. With Hodder (2016) one can think of the situation as both dependence and dependency: as an enabling asset, the photographic collection allows to illustrate the congregation's history, as hardly any other congregation has the possibility to do; as

an entrapment, the photographs have the potential to project the ambivalent colonial relationship of White missionaries and Black subjects into the present.

This parallel needs to be drawn more generally as a shared ground for missionaries, ethnologists, Africans, as well as artists and photographers; for the time of production on the one hand, and the past decades on the other. Around 1900, many technological improvements (intertwined with social developments) affected photographic practice, first in terms of technology and the photographic apparatus, and second in the available technologies of printing. These changes eventually furthered the possibilities to present ideas on Otherness and "race".

Similarly crucial changes have taken place over the past 40 years. With varying intensity have curators of ethnological museums and anthropologists pondered the ethics at stake for the often so-called "source communities" of collections acquired in colonial times, possibly under violent conditions. Currently, these stakeholders in the countries of origin may still have, or even develop emotional and material claims to objects, photographs, and even to human remains in Western repositories. Parallel to this, digital reproduction technologies have been refined and strategically implemented, making historical photographs and photographs of historical objects modifiable and readily available to be dealt with more efficiently. As a result, former "ethnological" museums are by now morally obliged to present their collections online. Accordingly, a discourse evolved regarding the digital online existence, ethics, presentation, and circulation of images. The ethical question remains, nevertheless, how images should be presented and contextualised, and which ones should remain offline—for example those of identified individuals, of exposed, mutilated, and dead bodies, or of other kinds of human remains.

The currently renewed public discourse on restitution and provenance research in Europe instead mainly deals with museum objects and human remains from former European colonies. I hope to have shown that, in order to understand (post-)colonial situations, we need to address photographs in their relationships to other images, museum objects, subjects, and situations beyond the obviously colonial. Not despite, but because of their aesthetic and artistic formats, Mariannhill's photographs remain handy mimetic capital for multiple interpretative communities. Curators have culled them repeatedly and conveniently from what I earlier identified as Mariannhill's "extended archive", in order to create unproblematic exhibitions. Most recently, this included, for example, the permanent *Sisonke* exhibition at the KwaZulu-Natal Museum (on show since 1998), and two temporary Dutch exhibitions in Rotterdam (2007) and Amsterdam (2017).

For missionaries and African stakeholders alike, photographs are the most efficient means to reconstitute their histories and in particular their genealogies. The same may be said about former "ethnological" museums, which in recent years started the process of reconsidering their institutional identities, names, and public roles. Once again, the role of photographs in such processes is never as clearly addressed as the one of objects and human remains. Mariannhill Missionaries still need to invest in historical assets as future aspirations, such as the beatification

of their founder. According to new requirements and possibilities, they also developed an interest in the upkeep of their photographic collection: this not only concerns the material conservation and digitisation, but also its reconsideration and reinterpretation. The intended integration of Mariannhill's photographic collection into the Internet Missionary Photography Archive (IMPA) will allow to systematically compare Mariannhill's photographs to other contemporary mission collections. At the same time, I work on the Namibia collection of photographs and object of the Linden Museum, Stuttgart. As part of the Namibia Initiative of Baden-Württemberg, an engagement with these collections is supposed to contribute to a rapprochement between Germany and its former colony.

The anxiety about the origins of colonial objects and photographs in the present cannot be fully understood unless we pay attention to the moments of their production in international relations of representation, by considering both provenance and provenience of subjects, objects, and images. Images can here function as mediators between objects and subjects through time. For their emotional capacities, photographs in particular may work as a special class of human remains between objects and subjects in the discourse on restitution. In the process of researching such relationships, we create genealogies involving historical subjects, objects, and images that ultimately connect to our own identities as academics or museum curators. This process therefore asks that we situate ourselves and take on partial responsibility for subjects, objects, and images. This not only relates to a responsibility to reconstruct how subjects acted, how objects have been acquired, and how photographs have been produced in the past. It also relates to a partial responsibility for their ongoing actions and effects in the present and future. Here lies a challenge of curatorial work with both objects and images, asking to let go of interpretative authority. As much as objects and images have been circulated and appropriated in the past, the same happened during my fieldwork, and will continue to happen, increasingly so with the heightened virtual presence of Mariannhill's photographs on the internet. This study will therefore not—and is not supposed to—change the fact that the effects of images and objects can only be constrained momentarily.

COLOUR REPRODUCTIONS



Figure 64: stained glass window at Centocow Mission, KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 68: map of Mariannhill's mission stations as active in 1907.

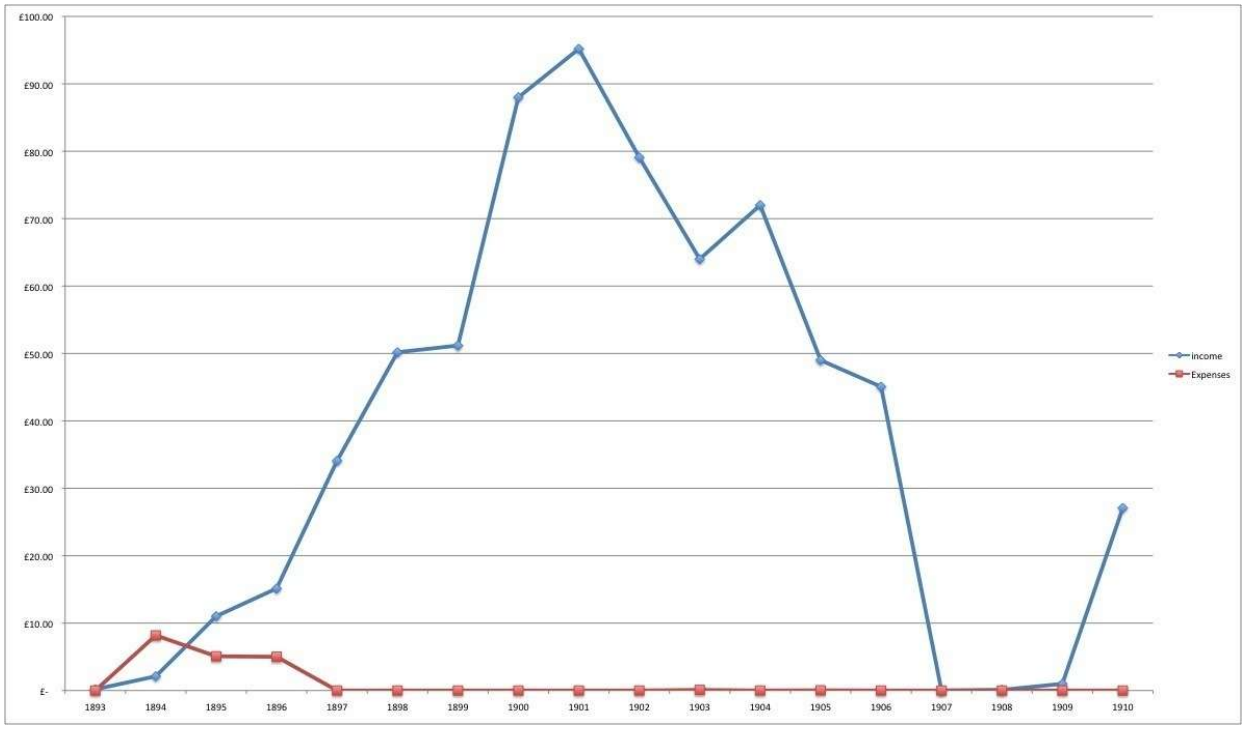


Figure 75: chart of the photography studio's income (blue), and expenses (red).



Figure 136: colour study to image in Figure 137.

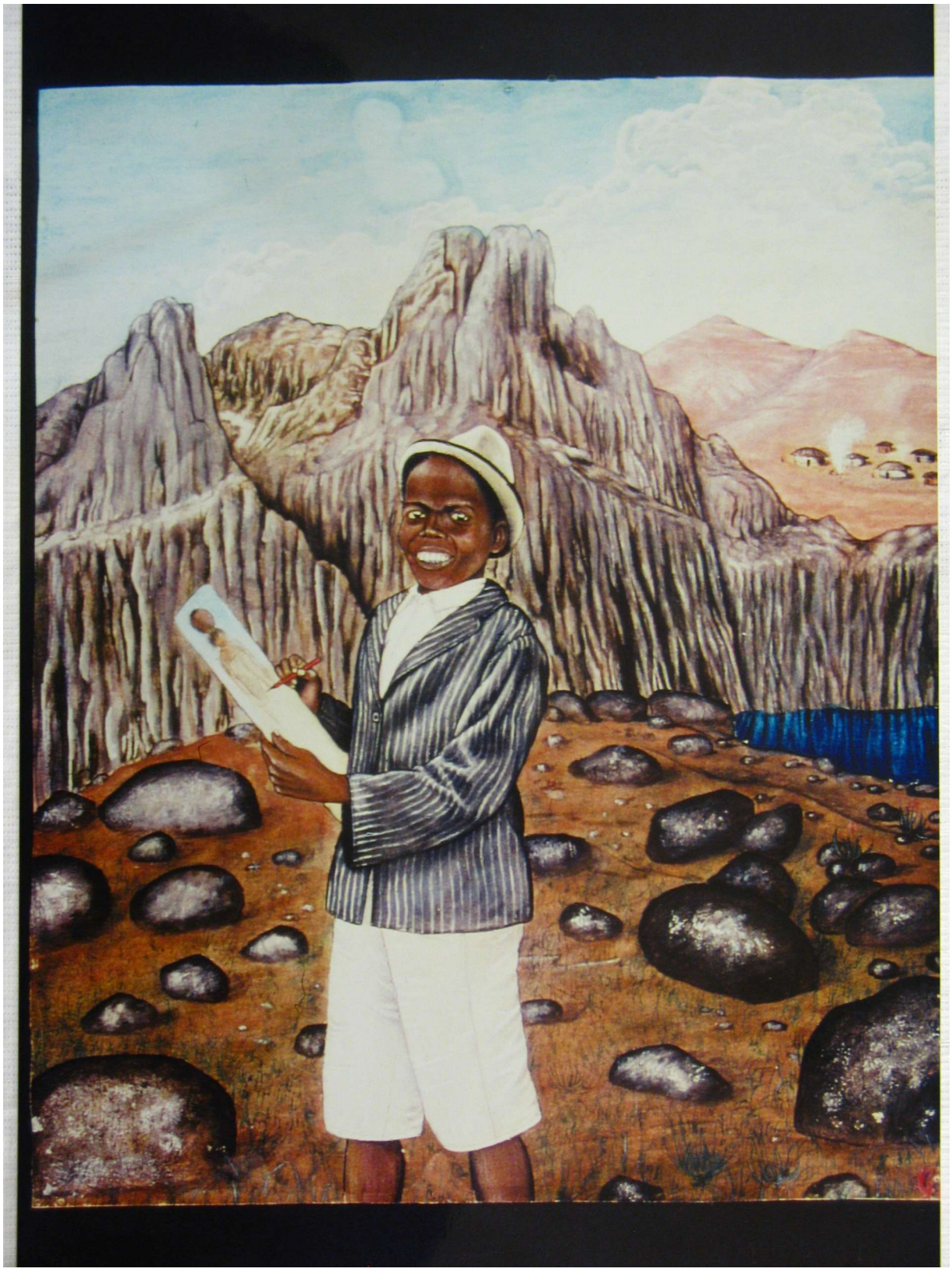


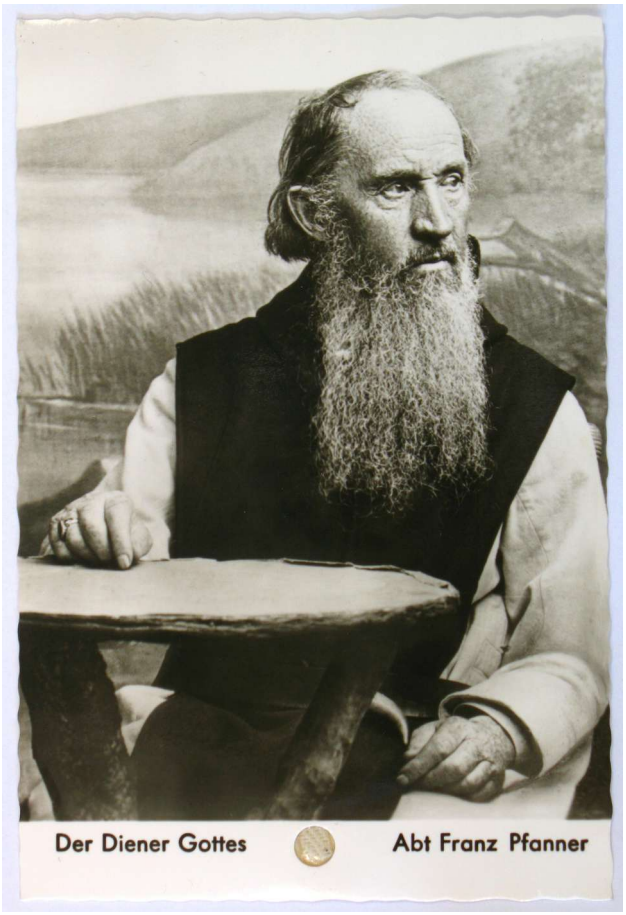
Figure 142: self-portrait by Gerard Bhengu, March 1927.



Figure 146: One of four paintings showing a “court hearing”/“tax collection” by Gerard Bhengu.



Figure 158: *memorabilia ("Andenken" an Vater Stifter*) of Abbot Franz Pfanner.





Figures 159 and 160: front and verso of a devotional card of Abbot Franz Pfanner.



Figure 161: the relic triptych in the altar of the CPS Convent Church at Castle Wernberg.



Figure 165: *photograph of Chief Lokothwayo, home of Inkhosi* E.B. Shozi.



Figure 171: photograph of Lokothwayo at the Mariannhill Museum.



Figure 172: photograph of “witch doctors”at the Mariannhill Museum.



Figure 177: one display of the *Sisonke* exhibition at the KZNM.FNMVW

CONSULTED ARCHIVES

CMM Archives, Mariannhill Monastery, Mariannhill	(CMMA-MM)
CMM Archives, Pius Seminar, Würzburg	(CMMA-PS)
CMM Archives, CMM Generalate, Rome	(CMMA-GR)
CPS Archives, CPS Convent, Mariannhill	(CPSA-CM)
CPS Archives, CPS Convent, Aarle-Rixtel	(CPSA-CAR)
CPS Archives, CPS Generalate, Rome	(CPSA-GR)
South African National Archives Repository, Pietermaritzburg	(PAR [NAB])
South African National Archives Repository, Cape Town	(CAR [KAB])
South African National Archives Repository, Durban	(DAR [TBD])
Staatsarchiv Augsburg	(SAA)
Stadtarchiv Bernkastel-Wittlich	(SABW)
Stadtarchiv Erkelenz	(SAE)
Kirchenarchiv St. Maria und Elisabeth, Lövenich bei Erkelenz	(KAL)
Stadtarchiv Munich	(SAM)
Archive of the Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich	(ALMU)
Archive of the Missionsärztliches Institut, Würzburg	(AMI)
Archive of the University of Würzburg	(AUW)
Museum der Kulturen, Basel	(MKB)
Ethnologisches Museum Berlin	(EMB)
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge	(MAA)
South African Museum, Cape Town	(SAMCT)
Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum, Cologne	(RJM)
Museum Africa, Johannesburg	(MAJ)
The Bergtheil Museum, Weatville	(BM)
Old House Museum, Durban	(OHM)
Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban	(KCAL)
Dutch National Museum of World Cultures (Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden)	(NMVW)
Natural History Museum, London	(NHM)
Museum Fünf Kontinente, Munich	(MFKM)
Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford	(PRM)
KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg	(KZNM)
Linden Museum Stuttgart	(LMS)
Weltmuseum, Vienna	(WMV)
Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna	(NHMV)

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SUMMARY

This study explores how the Missionaries of Mariannhill and their associates strategically positioned photographs—as well as other objects and media—in between themselves, their subjects, potential new recruits, their benefactors, and various other interlocutors. The study also shows that this did not exclusively happen for the purpose of propaganda between Natal (South Africa) and Europe. It thus explores the—often unexpected—consequences, as well as the limits of this strategy and its analysis.

In order to make photographs more effective, the missionaries propped them up with other media—and vice versa: "ethnographic" objects, exhibitions, theatre performances and *tableaux vivants*, texts, paintings, postcards, church decorations and paraphernalia, propaganda films, and even religious relics. In order to study how such media assemblages do this work, or instead work unexpectedly, this study considers various social processes of image transfer. For this purpose, it treats the mentioned media as "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991).

Colonial photographs in general may therefore best be understood through specific situations of intermediality, as experienced by the photographers, the photographed, as well as other consumers. In such situations, White colonial actors often presented Africans as "imitators", while they themselves consciously plagiarised images at the same time. In fact, various actors reproduced images bi-directionally between Natal and Europe. Not only did Europeans reproduce and engage with imagery depicting Africans, but also Africans engaged with related image conventions. The latter actively participated in the circulation of representations of "own" and "other", either in Africa or in Europe. In many cases, makers of media claimed such images to mirror an alleged reality, leading to a representational realism. The terms "mimesis" and "capital" therefore appear appropriate, as in combination they allow for the description of both the imitation and the employment of images, objects, textual narration, as well as conventions of bodily performances.

For the purpose of propaganda, Mariannhill Monastery established an exceptional complex of interlinked institutions, which provided media that the missionaries used in conjunction, either in temporary or permanent constellations. For almost 60 years since the 1880s, the monastery simultaneously ran a multiplicity of commercial workshops, a photographic studio, a museum, many churches, theatre performances, an archive, a library, as well as a printing press. This constellation can be referred to as a localised "exhibitionary complex" (Bennett 1995), which not only allowed images and objects to thrive, but especially the ideas on them. This study deals with this exceptional situation in four parts, by studying the historical production of knowledge on and through photographs, as well as their ongoing impact through the intersections of images, spaces, objects, and subjects.

The missionaries and their associates invested considerable effort to convince their benefactors and other allies to support their projects. These allies had to believe in both the quality and the truthfulness of these projects' representations. In the process of creating allegedly "truthful" knowledge, the photographers and journal editors at Mariannhill experienced "epistemic anxieties" (Stoler 2009), as they were well aware of the potential epistemological flaws in the media they employed. In order to balance these anxieties, the missionaries sought

ways to modify, enhance, certify, and authenticate the media they circulated. At the same time, they had to adjust them to particular social, technological, and not least aesthetic shifts taking place since the 1880s, both in South Africa and in Europe. Using their representations to mediate between an imagined Black society on the one hand, and an imagined White European society on the other, Mariannhill Missionaries eventually developed a considerable influence in the (re-)production of representations of Natal. By doing so, images, spaces, objects, and human actors became "entangled" in the sense that the work of propping up had to be continued perpetually, so that the construct would not collapse (Hodder 2016).

The image traditions influencing Mariannhill's photographs were European studio conventions and aesthetics; the South African photographic tradition established by coffee table books and tourist guides since the early 1860s; from the mid-1890s onwards "ethnographic" photographs; and foremost artistic "genre themes". The idea of "genre" weaves through all chapters of this study, as written instructions to capture typical "daily live" existed in all involved economies. Photographic, artistic, touristic, ethnological, and missionary lobbies all materialised their own desires and demands in the form of published journals, questionnaires, and instructions as to what the traveller outside of Europe should consider relevant, how and what to see, to describe, to photograph, and to collect. As these instructions were merely suggestions, this study takes a closer look at the actual grass-roots practices at Mariannhill. A critical analysis of colonial photographic practices must therefore take into account the combined inspirations by such manuals with the ongoing mutual influences between painting, photography, their extended materialities, and the respective photographer's actual perception and practice.

To achieve this, the study is divided into four parts, each focusing on one of the earlier-mentioned dimensions relating to media: images, spaces, objects, and subjects. At the same time, each of the four parts describes one of the above economies, which all had their own supply and demand systems, articulated by advice literature and publication organs. Within only a few years after 1897, Mariannhill's photographer, Br. Aegidius Müller, firmly established himself within the networks of these economies (mission propaganda, tourism, the popular printing press, photographic technology, museum ethnology, as well as the local and international art world). In order to understand either one of these economies, this study argues, they all have to be studied in conjunction. For example, what is commonly described as "colonial photography" or "ethnographic photography" has so far hardly been studied regarding the relations to contemporary photographic and artistic aesthetics.

Each chapter therefore discusses the ways how the Missionaries of Mariannhill positioned mimetic capital in relation to other interpretive communities and their networks. These networks eventually overlapped and became hybrid networks. As a cumulation, Part Four (Chapters Seven and Eight) address how images eventually transformed and how some were empowered as a consequence in later stages of their biographies. According to these networks, the photographic oeuvre of Mariannhill depended on a multitude of actors, themes, and genres, which cannot be easily categorised. For example, many images overlap in terms of content, narrative, and aesthetic conventions, but are at the same time unique, despite their repetition. In order to survey the many actors, as well as their respective interactions, this study provides a preliminary prosopography of the involved communities, such as missionaries, ethnologists, and African

communities.

In the first Part[1] (Chapters One and Two) I discuss how producers and consumers established Mariannhill's photographs as allegedly truthful representations. In Chapter One I argue that particularly in the years just after 1900, the mission's photographer modelled a considerable part of his photographs after genre scenes from the popular press. These photographs employed an extended conception of "photographic resemblance", as well as *tableau vivant*-like performances. I discuss this in relation to the photographer's attempts to visualise religious faith and its antagonisms. In Chapter Two I provide multiple related examples for the propping up of different media against each other.

Part Two (Chapters Three and Four) shows that Mariannhill Monastery and several of its outstations were highly popular tourist destinations, at least since the mid-1880s. Therefore the missionaries developed particular modes of presenting their assets and constructed the mission space through textual description and the positioning of photographs and objects. Chapter Three establishes how the missionaries set up the monastery's interior and exterior, and how it was constituted in the experience of guided tours by and for visitors. At the end of the guided tour across the monastery compound was the photographic studio, an economic institution like the mission's many other workshops. However, the studio was crucial for the visual reproduction of all other aspects of the mission; it even constituted a stage, where the space exterior to the mission could be recreated. Chapter Four then focuses on the specific relationships of objects and photographs in "contact zones" (Pratt 1992), in particular on the objecthood of photographs in such situations, and eventually on the roles objects played in photographic spaces as theatrical props.

Part Three[2] (Chapters Five and Six) deals with the objects in Mariannhill's museum and the multiple social functions they served; more specifically the processes of their collection and curation, as well as the photographic representation of these processes. By curating photographs together with other objects in various kinds of exhibitionary spaces, Mariannhill Missionaries established social relationships with their allies. They positioned their institution not only within South African society, but also in relation to European society. I explore how the missionaries presented particular objects of local material culture, as well as mission-produced goods as specific products of the mission encounter, either in a negative or a positive sense. Like the photographic pose in the form of the *tableau vivant*, objects like head rings, as well as the exhibitions they featured in, may be equally considered as media of the mission encounter. Chapter Six then follows the circulation of Mariannhill's photographs to European ethnographic museums, eventually back to Mariannhill, and their changing functions and meanings in the process. During the late 19th and early 20th century, ethnologists created the "disappearing native", not least in order to motivate allies to collect objects and other data as soon as possible. In response, Mariannhill Missionaries sold their propaganda photographs to European museums, thereby trying to maximise their commercial potential as multi-purpose photographs. Scientific and other communities continuously re-certified the photographs as "ethnographic", which therefore constantly shifted between viewpoints of propaganda, ethnology, and entertainment.

1 Sections of this Part have been published as Rippe 2014.

2 Sections of this Part have been published as Rippe 2016.

While Parts One to Three (Chapters One to Six) are in chronological order, as well as relatively coherent in space and time, I shift gears in Part Four. Unlike the previous chapters, Chapter Seven[3] is set at Mariannhill's filial station Centocow Mission, where the Black artistic painter Gerard Bhengu grew up between 1910 and 1931 while producing his early oeuvre. I show how this took place in close collaboration with his first patron, Dr. Max Kohler, partially in a mode that comes close to a "four-eyed-sight" (Daston and Galison 2007). This allows to delineate crucial developments in the South African history of image making, and the close epistemological interactions, commonalities, and differences to earlier and contemporary practices of photography and painting. Unlike in earlier chapters, this situation also allows to describe the production of images and the related creativity as a process and cooperation. As one of the very first successful Black South African figurative painters, Gerard Bhengu supposedly painted "from life". However, Bhengu and Kohler communally appropriated earlier popular imagery, such as Mariannhill's photographs. Only by relying on existing mimetic capital were they able to employ Bhengu's work as effective propaganda, scientific "working objects", as well as "art". Eventually they struggled to establish the full potential of Bhengu's work due to the restrictive racist social system. South African missionaries and educationalists constructed and controlled the ("modern") "creative native" against the ("traditional") "disappearing native". They both established and practised what might be called the "art of segregation".

Chapter Eight[4] shows how three particular image-object-body relationships developed over time, between the timeframe of their constitution and the research for this study. This involves three popular figures of the mission encounter, the "missionary", the "diviner", and the "chief". Contrary to the attempts to authenticate photographs as described in the previous chapters, this constellation allows to delineate consecutive photographic occasions in which social actors unleashed "mimetic excess" (Taussig 1993). They achieved this by compounding image-objects related to the three figures according to established principles, which even continued to function in a similar way during my own fieldwork. Photographic portraits in combination with historically charged objects related to the same depicted person, thus enabled people near Mariannhill to supply historical actors with a certain agency and thus to reconstitute their personhood (Gell 1998).

Only by studying historical and more recent constellations of media in a global setting, may we comprehend the ongoing claims put forward by social actors towards photographs and their extended materialities. Even if images became empowered one way or another, they became more entangled at the same time, and therefore less controllable. Comparing the perspectives of several image-object-subject constellations at very specific moments in space and time, eventually allows to perceive Mariannhill's oeuvre as a "distributed object" in time (Gell 1998). In so far, we not only better comprehend historical processes of creative image production, but also of the resulting impact, whether considered failure or success.

These interwoven material and immaterial, diachronic and synchronic clusters of images are never physically stable, but are continually rearranged and re-accumulated in particular moments of time and in relation to certain events. Nevertheless, often such constellations leave

3 Sections of this Chapter will be published in a forthcoming edited volume on Bhengu.

4 Sections of this Chapter have been published as Rippe 2015.

traces, which allow to reassemble them in relation to preceding moments. This eventually complicates, but also explains the importance of photographs as valuable conduits for postcolonial reflections and emotions. Therefore photographs are much more than simply historical sources, rather they are relational image-objects.

SAMENVATTING

Deze studie onderzoekt hoe de Missionarissen van Mariannhill en hun medewerkers foto's en andere objecten en media strategisch positioneerden tussen zichzelf, hun onderdanen, potentiële nieuwe rekruten, weldoeners en verschillende andere gesprekspartners. De studie laat ook zien dat dit niet alleen ten behoeve van propaganda tussen Natal (Zuid-Afrika) en Europa gebeurde. De studie verkent dus de vaak onverwachte gevolgen en beperkingen van deze strategie, als ook de grenzen van een mogelijke academische analyse ervan.

De missionarissen combineerden foto's met andere media en vice versa ten bate van een sterker effect: met "etnografische" objecten, tentoonstellingen, theatervoorstellingen, *tableaux vivants*, teksten, schilderijen, ansichtkaarten, kerkdecoraties, parafernalia, propagandafilms, en zelfs religieuze relikwieën. Om te bestuderen hoe dergelijke mediale assemblages werkten, en soms onverwachte effecten hadden, wordt in deze studie gekeken naar de verschillende sociale processen rondom beeldtransacties. Hiervoor worden de genoemde media beschouwd als "mimetic capital" (Greenblatt 1991).

Koloniale foto's kunnen daarom het best worden begrepen binnen specifieke situaties van intermedialiteit, zoals die worden ervaren door de fotografen, de gefotografeerden, en de consumenten van dergelijke foto's. In intermediale situaties presenteerden blanke koloniale actoren Afrikanen vaak als imitators terwijl zijzelf juist bewust beelden plagieerden. In feite reproduceerden verschillende actoren beelden tussen Natal en Europa. Niet alleen Europeanen bootsten de beelden van Afrikanen na, Afrikanen hielden zich ook bezig met Europese beeldconventies. Ze namen actief deel aan de verspreiding van voorstellingen van "eigen" en "ander", hetzij in Afrika, hetzij in Europa. Dergelijke beelden werden gespiegeld aan een vermeende werkelijkheid, wat leidde tot realisme in de representaties. De termen "mimesis" en "kapitaal" lijken dan ook gepast, want gecombineerd maken ze de beschrijving mogelijk van zowel de nabootsing als het gebruik van beelden, objecten, tekstuele vertellingen, en de conventies van lichamelijke prestaties.

Ten behoeve van propaganda heeft het klooster Mariannhill een uitzonderlijk complex van onderling verbonden instellingen opgericht, die de missionarissen in combinatie hebben gebruikt, hetzij in permanente, hetzij in tijdelijke constellaties. Gedurende bijna 60 jaar vanaf de jaren 1880 beheerde het klooster diverse commerciële werkplaatsen, een fotostudio, een museum, vele kerken, theatervoorstellingen, een archief, een bibliotheek en een drukpers. Binnen dit "exhibitionary complex" (Bennett 1995) groeiden niet alleen beelden en objecten, maar vooral de ideeën daarover. In vier delen behandelt deze studie deze uitzonderlijke situatie door het bestuderen van de historische kennisproductie over en door foto's, als ook de voortdurende invloeden ervan via de interacties tussen beelden, ruimtes, objecten en onderwerpen.

De missionarissen en hun medewerkers hebben veel moeite gedaan om hun weldoeners en andere bondgenoten te overtuigen hun projecten te steunen. Ze moesten deze bondgenoten laten geloven in de kwaliteit en de waarheidsgetrouwheid van de voorstellingen van deze

projecten. Tijdens het creëren van "waarheidsgetrouwe" kennis ervoeren de fotografen en tijdschriftredacteuren van Mariannhill "epistemic anxieties" (Stoler 2009) om dat zij zich wel bewust waren van de mogelijke epistemologische gebreken van de gebruikten media. Om deze angsten te bestrijden zochten de missionarissen naar manieren om de media die ze verspreidden te wijzigen, te verbeteren, te certificeren en te authenticiteren. Tegelijkertijd moesten ze deze media aanpassen aan bepaalde sociale, technologische en vooral esthetische verschuivingen die zich sinds de jaren 1880 voordeden, zowel in Zuid-Afrika als ook in Europa. Door het gebruik van hun representaties, en om te bemiddelen tussen een denkbeeldige zwarte samenleving aan de ene kant en een denkbeeldige blanke Europese samenleving aan de andere kant, ontwikkelden de missionarissen van Mariannhill uiteindelijk een aanzienlijke invloed ten aanzien van de (re)productie van de voorstellingen van Natal. Hierdoor raakten beelden, ruimtes, objecten en menselijke actoren "verstrikt", in die zin dat het werk aan de stutten voortdurend moest worden voortgezet, opdat de constructie niet in elkaar zou storten (Hodder 2016).

De foto's van Mariannhill werden beïnvloed door de Europese studioconventies en esthetiek, de Zuid-Afrikaanse fototraditie zoals die sinds de jaren 1860 door koffietafelboeken en toeristische gidsen werd gevestigd, de "etnografische" fotografie vanaf midden de jaren 1890, maar vooral door artistieke genrethema's. Het idee van "genre" is door alle hoofdstukken van deze studie geweven, aangezien er binnen alle betrokken economieën schriftelijke instructies bestonden voor het registreren van het typische "dagelijkse leven". De belanghebbenden in de fotografie, kunst, toerisme, etnologie en de zendelingen/missionarissen, materialiseerden allemaal hun eigen wensen en eisen in de vorm van gepubliceerde tijdschriften, vragenlijsten en instructies over wat de reiziger buiten Europa als relevant zou moeten beschouwen; wat en hoe hij of zij moest kijken, beschrijven, fotograferen en verzamelen. Omdat deze instructies slechts suggesties waren, wordt in deze studie nader ingegaan op de daadwerkelijke fotografische praktijken in Mariannhill. Een kritische analyse van de koloniale fotografische praktijk moet daarom blijk geven van de wisselwerking tussen schilderkunst, fotografie, de complexe materialiteit van fotografie en de feitelijke perceptie en praktijk van de fotograaf.

Om dit te bereiken is deze studie in vier delen verdeeld, die elk gericht zijn op een van de eerder genoemde dimensies met betrekking tot media: beelden, ruimtes, objecten en subjecten. Tegelijkertijd beschrijft elk van de vier delen een van de bovengenoemde economieën, die allemaal hun eigen systemen van vraag- en aanbod kenden alsmede hun eigen adviesliteratuur en publicatieorganen. Kort na 1897 nestelde de fotograaf van Mariannhill, Br. Aegidius Müller, zich stevig binnen de netwerken van deze economieën (missiepropaganda, toerisme, de populaire drukpers, fototechniek, museale etnologie, maar ook de lokale en internationale kunstwereld). Deze studie betoogt dat om een van deze economieën te begrijpen ze in hun onderlinge samenhang moeten worden bestudeerd. Wat gewoonlijk wordt omschreven als "koloniale fotografie" of "etnografische fotografie" is tot nu toe nauwelijks bestudeerd in relatie tot de toenmalige fotografische en artistieke esthetiek.

In elk hoofdstuk wordt daarom besproken hoe de Missionarissen van Mariannhill hun

mimetisch kapitaal positioneerden ten opzichte van andere interpretatieve gemeenschappen en hun netwerken. Deze netwerken overlapten elkaar uiteindelijk en werden hybride netwerken. In deel vier (de hoofdstukken zeven en acht) wordt ingegaan op de manier waarop beelden uiteindelijk getransformeerd zijn en hoe sommigen als gevolg daarvan in latere stadia van hun biografieën hun eigen effectieve kracht ontwikkelden. Het fotografische oeuvre van Mariannhill was dus afhankelijk van een veelheid aan actoren, thema's en genres die niet gemakkelijk te categoriseren zijn. Zo overlappen veel beelden elkaar qua inhoud, verhaal en esthetische conventies, maar zijn ze ondanks herhalingen tegelijkertijd uniek. Om de vele actoren en hun interacties in kaart te brengen, biedt deze studie een voorlopige prosopografie van de betrokken gemeenschappen, zoals missionarissen, etnologen en Afrikaanse gemeenschappen.

Deel één van deze studie[1] (hoofdstukken één en twee) bespreekt hoe producenten en consumenten de foto's van Mariannhill als zogenaamd waarheidsgetrouwe representaties hebben opgesteld. Hoofdstuk een laat zien dat de fotograaf van de missie zich in de jaren vlak na 1900 voor een aanzienlijk deel van zijn foto's richtte op genrescènes uit de populaire pers. Deze foto's richtten zich op toenmalige esthetische ideen zoals "fotografische gelijkenis" maar werden ook geïnspireerd op *tableau vivant*-achtige voorstellingen. Dit wordt in verband gebracht met de pogingen van de fotograaf om het religieuze geloof en zijn tegenstellingen in beeld te brengen. Hoofdstuk twee geeft meerdere verwante voorbeelden van het contrasteren van verschillende media.

Deel twee (hoofdstukken drie en vier) laat zien dat het klooster van Mariannhill en een aantal van de buitenposten populaire toeristische bestemmingen waren, in ieder geval sinds het midden van de jaren 1880. De missionarissen ontwikkelden bijzondere manieren om zich te presenteren en construeerden de zendingsruimte door middel van tekstuele beschrijving en de positionering van foto's en objecten. Hoofdstuk drie bespreekt hoe de missionarissen het interieur en exterieur van het klooster hebben ingericht en hoe de bezoekers de rondleidingen beleefden. Aan het einde van de rondleiding door het kloostercomplex bevond zich de fotostudio, een commerciële onderneming zoals de andere werkplaatsen van de missie. De fotostudio was cruciaal voor de visuele reproductie van alle andere aspecten van de missie en vormde eveneens een podium waarop de ruimte buiten de missie kon worden gereconstrueerd. Hoofdstuk vier richt zich vervolgens op de specifieke relaties tussen objecten en foto's in "contact zones" (Pratt 1992), in het bijzonder op de objectiviteit van foto's in dergelijke situaties, en tenslotte op de rollen die objecten als theatrale rekwisieten in fotografische ruimtes speelden.

Deel drie[2] (hoofdstukken vijf en zes) behandelt de objecten in het museum van Mariannhill en hun diverse sociale functies; in het bijzonder de processen van het verzamelen en curateren, en de fotografische representatie hiervan. Door foto's samen met andere objecten in verschillende soorten tentoonstellingsruimtes te curateren, bouwden de missionarissen van Mariannhill aan sociale relaties met hun bondgenoten. Ze positioneerden hun instituut zowel

1 Delen hiervan zijn gepubliceerd als Rippe 2014.

2 Delen hiervan zijn gepubliceerd als Rippe 2016.

binnen de Zuid-Afrikaanse samenleving alsook in relatie tot de Europese samenleving. Er wordt onderzocht hoe de missionarissen bepaalde objecten uit de lokale materiële cultuur presenteerden, maar ook hoe zij missieproducten als specifieke producten van de missie-ontmoeting presenteerden, hetzij in negatieve, hetzij in positieve zin. Net als de fotografische pose in de vorm van het *tableau vivant*, kunnen objecten zo als bijvoorbeeld hoofdringen (evenals de tentoonstellingen waarin ze te zien waren) evenzeer worden beschouwd als media van de missie-ontmoeting. Hoofdstuk zes beschouwd de circulatie van Mariannhills foto's naar Europese etnografische musea, hun terugkeer naar Mariannhill, en hun veranderende rol in dit proces. In de late 19e en vroege 20e eeuw spraken etnologen van "verdwijnende inboorlingen", niet in de laatste plaats om bondgenoten te motiveren om zo snel mogelijk objecten en andere gegevens te verzamelen. Als reactie daarop verkochten de missionarissen van Mariannhill hun propagandafoto's aan Europese musea. Er werd gepoogd aan de fotografie te verdienen en ze voor een zo breed mogelijk gebruik te verhandelen. Onder meer de wetenschappelijke wereld bestempelde de foto's voortdurend als 'etnografisch', waardoor de standpunten over propaganda, etnologie en vermaak regelmatig verschoven.

Waar de delen één tot en met drie (de hoofdstukken één tot en met zes) nog in chronologische volgorde staan en relatief coherent zijn in ruimte en tijd, schakelt deel vier naar een andere dimensie. In tegenstelling tot de voorgaande hoofdstukken speelt hoofdstuk zeven[3] zich af op Mariannhills buitenpost Centocow Mission, waar de zwarte kunstschilder Gerard Bhengu tussen 1910 en 1931 opgroeide en zijn vroege oeuvre produceerde. Dit hoofdstuk laat zien hoe dit gebeurde in nauwe samenwerking met zijn eerste mecenas, Dr. Max Kohler, deels in een modus die in de buurt komt van een "four-eyed-sight" (Daston en Galison 2007). Hierdoor kunnen cruciale ontwikkelingen in de Zuid-Afrikaanse geschiedenis van het maken van beelden worden waargenomen, evenals de nauwe epistemologische interacties, en de overeenkomsten en verschillen, met vroegere en hedendaagse fotografische en schilderkunstige praktijken. Anders dan in eerdere hoofdstukken maakt deze bijzondere situatie het mogelijk om de productie van beelden en de bijbehorende creativiteit als een proces te beschrijven. Als een van de allereerste succesvolle zwarte Zuid-Afrikaanse figuratieve schilders zou Gerard Bhengu "naar het leven" hebben geschilderd. Echter, Bhengu en Kohler eigenden zich eerdere populaire beelden toe, zoals de foto's van Mariannhill. Alleen door gebruik van al bestaand mimetisch kapitaal konden ze Bhengu's werk inzetten als effectieve propaganda, wetenschappelijke "working objects" en "kunst". Uiteindelijk hadden ze moeite om het volledige potentieel van Bhengu's werk te benutten vanwege het racistische sociale systeem. Zuid-Afrikaanse pedagogen construeerden en controleerden de ("moderne") "creatieve inboorling" als tegenhanger van de ("traditionele") "verdwijnende inboorling". Ze vestigden een werkwijze die de "kunst van de segregatie" genoemd zou kunnen worden.

Hoofdstuk acht[4] laat zien hoe drie bepaalde beeld-object-subject relaties zich in de loop

3 Delen van dit hoofdstuk zullen worden gepubliceerd in een bundel over Bhengu.

4 Delen van dit hoofdstuk zijn gepubliceerd als Rippe 2015.

van de tijd hebben ontwikkeld, tussen het tijdperk van hun ontstaan en de tijd van het onderzoek voor deze studie. Het gaat hierbij om drie populaire figuren van de missie-ontmoeting, de "missionaris", de "tovenaar" en de "kaptein". In tegenstelling tot pogingen om foto's te authenticeren zoals beschreven in de vorige hoofdstukken, is het hier mogelijk om opeenvolgende fotografische situaties af te bakenen, waarbij sociale actoren een "mimetic excess" ontketenden (Taussig 1993). Dit hebben ze bereikt door het samenstellen van beeldobjecten met betrekking tot de drie figuren volgens vastgelegde principes, die zelfs nog tijdens het veldwerk op vergelijkbare wijze functioneerden. Fotografische portretten die werden gecombineerd met historisch geladen objecten die betrekking hadden tot de afgebeelde persoon, stelden mensen in de buurt van Mariannhill dus in staat om historische actoren van een bepaalde werkingsmacht te voorzien en op deze manier de persoonlijkheid van de afgebeelde te reconstitueren (Gell 1998).

Alleen door het bestuderen van historische en recentere groeperingen van media in een globale setting, kunnen de voortdurende vorderingen van sociale actoren ten aanzien van foto's en hun complexe materialiteit begrepen worden. Ook al werden beelden op de een of andere manier geautoriseerd, ze raakten tegelijkertijd meer en meer verstrikt en daardoor minder controleerbaar. Door het vergelijken van de perspectieven van verschillende beeld-object-subject constellaties op specifieke momenten in ruimte en tijd, kan Mariannhill's oeuvre als een "distributed object" in de tijd begrepen worden (Gell 1998). Hierdoor kunnen niet alleen de historische processen van creatieve beeldproductie beter begrepen worden, maar ook de daaruit voortvloeiende invloeden, of die nu als mislukking of als succes worden beschouwd.

Deze verweven materiële en immateriële, diachrone en synchrone beeldclusters zijn voortdurend in ontwikkeling. Ze worden herschikt en opnieuw geaccumuleerd op bepaalde momenten en in relatie tot bepaalde gebeurtenissen. Dergelijke constellaties laten sporen na die het mogelijk maken om ze opnieuw samen te voegen in relatie tot voorgaande momenten. De foto's bieden de mogelijkheid voor een complexe maar waardevolle overdracht van postkoloniale reflecties en emoties. Ze zijn dus meer dan slechts historische bronnen. De foto's zijn voornamelijk relationele beeldobjecten.

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