MR-NET – SVD Mission Research Networks

- Support the professional development of SVD mission researchers.
- Promote the interdisciplinary study of SVD missionary activities.
- Encourage researchers to consistently and concretely pose the question: "what contribution to mission can the SVD make in this place?"

Networking among mission researchers has a long tradition in the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). The Anthropos Institute was founded in Vienna in 1931 to promote the study of cultures and religions. The Monumenta Serica Institute for the study of Chinese culture has its roots in Beijing in 1934. The Steyler Missionswissenschaftliches Institute at St. Augustine’s was originally organized in 1962 in order to coordinate the missiological work of confreres around the world. Since then the situation of our Society and of the Church have changed radically. It has become ever more apparent that while collaboration in missionary research is more necessary than ever, it cannot be coordinated from one center in Europe.

For more than 20 years now, an alternative manner of coordination has been emerging. Beginning in the Asia Pacific region in the early 1980’s SVD missiologists and social scientists have been developing a network to keep in contact with one another. The SVD MR-Net was formally organized in October 1999 to encourage and coordinate the developments in Asia Pacific and to encourage similar efforts elsewhere. Four mission research coordinators (for Asia-Pacific, AFRAM, Europe, and Panamerica) together with the SVD Mission Secretary in Rome seek to keep the network animated and growing.

The network encompasses three types of entities,

1) several international specialized networks:
   - Anthropos (36 members) for Culture and Religious Studies.
   - Monumenta Serica (12 members) for Sinological Studies.
   - ASPAMIR (approximately 40 members) Asia Pacific Mission Researchers.
   - Project Europe (15 members) to help develop a vision for SVD Mission in Europe.
   - Islam Contact Group (5 members) to encourage Islamic studies in the SVD.

2) a number of local institutes, large and small, established by the SVD and/or in which we collaborate:
   - India - Ishvani Kendra, Pune; Institute of Indian Culture, Mumbai; Sanskriti, Indore; Sadbhavana Dialogue Center, Delhi; Gyan Ashram; Mumbai.
   - Indonesia - Candradiitya, Maumere; Aditya Wacana, Malang; Widya Wahan Library, Tuka.
   - Japan - Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, and Nanzan Anthropological Institute; Nagoya.
   - PNG - Melanesian Institute, Goroka.
   - Poland - Centrum Dialogu Kultur i Religii, Olsztyn.
   - Ghana - TICCS (Tamale Institute for Cross Cultural Studies), Tamale.
   - Austria - RTI (Religionstheologischen Instituts), Mödling.
   - Germany - Anthropos Institute-St. Augustin, Monumenta Serica-St. Augustin, Steyler Missionswissenchaftliches Institute; all at St. Augustin.
   - Taiwan - Monumenta Serica, Taipei.

3) a large number of individual SVDs in many disciplines professionally committed to research and education relating to missionary theory and praxis. There are currently about 650 members with a doctorate or masters in a field related to mission studies.


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Thomas J. Ascheman SVD
Mission Secretary - Society of the Divine Word
svd.missec@verbodivino.it