

# **MISSION AND CHANGE IN EASTERN TURKESTAN**

An Authorised Translation of the Original Swedish Text

## **Mission och revolution i Centralasien**

Svenska Missionsförbundets mission  
i Ostturkestan 1892-1938

**John Hultvall,**

Gummessons, Stockholm, 1981

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to Mr. John Hultvall for giving his permission to translate some sections of chapters 5, 6 and 7 (covering the period of history from 1924-1938) of his book *Mission och Revolution i Centralasien*, originally published in Swedish in 1981. With the renewed concern for Central Asia on the part of the Church and the present "Open Door" policy of the People's Republic of China, his work is of great interest. Mr. Hultvall has done the Church a great service in recording the history of Christian missions in this remote part of the world. The Church at large must surely be indebted to him. His work is worthy for a complete translation, but in order to make these particular sections of his book more speedily available we had to settle for a compromise. We have also included his most valuable bibliography of source materials relating to this area of the world and Christian mission to its peoples.

We wish also to acknowledge the initiative of Miss Ruth Lyons in consulting with Mr. Hultvall to authorise this translation. The English text was initially translated by two Swedish friends whose work has been finalised by two native English speakers. We are grateful to all those concerned who have contributed their time and knowledge to make this work available to a wider English speaking readership.

We are indebted to Miss Ruth Fleetwood for the oversight of the printing and presentation of this work and for contributing her cartographic skills in producing the two maps that are included. We also acknowledge that what has been recorded is a significant work of a Sovereign God whose love extends to all men everywhere. It is our earnest prayer that He might call out for Himself a people, yet again, from among the Turkic Uighur nation through the atoning death of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of sinful men, by the power of His Holy Spirit who is at work and through the empowered witness of His Church.

Heart of Asia Ministries, 1987

## UPDATE

The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden (MCCS) worked in Eastern Turkestan (today known as the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region) from 1892 until the last 3 missionaries left the country in 1938. During this time the missionaries led many Turkic Uighur Muslims to Christ and established churches in Kashgar, Hancheng, Jarkend (Yarkand) and Jengi-Hessar (Yangihissar). In the preface to her book *The Steep Ascent* (published possibly in 1948; the book does not carry a publication date), Rachel O. Wingate informs the reader that the Swedish Mission work was “the most successful mission to Muslims ever carried out”.

Since the 1950's the People's Republic of China has undergone much transition. Xinjiang has been highly influenced by government policies and reforms. Rural programmes have seen drastic changes, and the policies of free marketing and de-collectivisation have been encouraged by Beijing. Along with the new policies and reforms, there has been an increase in the number of Han Chinese in the area. Ten years after the Swedish missionaries were expelled, the PRC government increased the resettlement of Han Chinese in Xinjiang. It was recorded in the Beijing Review (No. 8, 1982) that in 1978 the population of Xinjiang was over 13 million, whereas the population in 1953 was only 4,940,000 (see Journal, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 7, No. 1, Jan 1986). In some cities, such as Urumchi, the Han now well outnumber the Turkic Muslims.

Some of the Chinese who resettled in Xinjiang during this time were Christians and very evangelistic. The Chinese church was very active. With the advent of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 all religious freedom ceased and both Christians and Muslims faced great hardship and danger. Since 1981 religious freedom has been somewhat restored and individuals have gradually written letters and corresponded with their brothers and sisters in Sweden. Some of the family members, diplomats and close friends of the Swedish missionaries have visited Xinjiang to look for remaining evidence of the Mission's work. Though very few of the Muslim converts survive today, some widows are still living. By correspondence and personal contact in recent years, it has been established that their faith remains. Through the testimony of their lives and witness for Christ, a few second and third generation family members have been influenced to the Gospel.

During the 1980's the PRC government sought assistance from the West, particularly in their desire to develop Xinjiang. In 1984 Urumchi hosted a conference to discuss the economic development of Xinjiang. From this conference, contracts were made with numerous foreign enterprises. There are many opportunities to be exploited in the petrochemical, iron and steel, and textile industries, as well as in the areas of food processing, animal husbandry, agriculture, education and medical assistance.

Xinjiang is now more open and accessible to the world than ever before. In recent years Pakistanis and Uighurs have been travelling across a common border for business and the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. Since May 1986 tourists have also been allowed to enter China from Northern Pakistan, using the Karakoram Highway. Tourism into this region is bound to develop, as Urumchi is increasingly used as an international airport.

In the early 1890's the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden and China Inland Mission saw an open door to West China and took advantage of the opportunity. Missionaries went as representatives of Christ to serve the people in various ways. Their example and assistance provided social and material help in the region. Once again, God has opened the door of opportunity. It is now up to the Church to renew its commitment to meet the spiritual needs of the people of Xinjiang and make some contribution to the on-going development of the region.

Ruth Lyons  
1987

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE REVISED VERSION OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION FROM 1987 OF PARTS OF JOHN HULTVALL'S BOOK, *MISSION OCH REVOLUTION I CENTRALASIEN*.

Faced with the important and vast task of translating into English the book *Mission och Revolution i Centralasien*, written by John Hultvall and published in 1981, we decided to proceed step by step. So, as a first step, we decided to make available on the internet a revised version of sections already translated into English in 1987 and circulating in a limited number of paper copies entitled *Mission and Change in Eastern Turkestan*.

As found in the Acknowledgements, above, only parts of the original book were translated in this first instalment. However, the Bibliography is complete and is valid for the whole book. Our aim is to be able to continue this important work of making available Mr. Hultvall's book. As soon as the rest is finished, it will be added and incorporated in this first part.

#### **Some technical remarks concerning our revised version of the original English translation:**

- Apart from certain exceptions mentioned below, our aim has been to remain as true as possible to the original Swedish text.
- There are several instances where the writer says "as has been mentioned above" and where he uses concepts and ideas that are supposed to be known by the reader. As the whole text is not available here, the reader might sometimes feel confused, but will understand the context when the rest of the book is translated and available on the web.
- In the first English translation from 1987, all Swedish letters (å, ä and ö) were replaced by a, a and o, respectively. (E.g. the missionaries Högberg, Törnquist and Sjöholm are spelt Hogberg, Tornquist and Sjöholm). This usage has been retained in this version.
- The Swedish way of mentioning people without titles has been retained, although in an English text it may sometimes appear awkward. Thus missionaries are nearly all the time referred to by their surname, e.g. as "Törnquist" and not "Rev. Törnquist" or "Raquette"; only in some cases, for the sake of clarity, have persons been referred to as "Mrs. Andersson", etc.

- “The Swedish Mission” is an expression that is frequently used in this text. This expression, although not totally adequate, was the one accepted at the time and is retained in this version. However, a more accurate translation would have been the mission work organised by the “Mission Covenant Church of Sweden” or in short MCCS (Swedish: *Svenska Missionsförbundet*). This name is used whenever the author refers explicitly to the sending mission society in Sweden.
- Please consult the Glossary at the very end of the text for clarifications as to the use of all underlined words in the text!

In the hope of being able to publish the rest of the book on the web in a not to distant future, we recommend the present portion for reading and are thankful to the Lord for this means of sharing parts of the history of Central Asia seen through the eyes of Swedish missionaries and a Swedish author.

Birgitta Åhman, MCCS, 2004

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## **FOREWORD TO THE ORIGINAL BOOK**

The history of Swedish Mission covers many years and many parts of the world that were thought to be inaccessible and unreachable. The work and living conditions of the missionaries have never been easy. Often the journey to the mission field was full of hardship. Living conditions were very primitive and the climate was often tiring and bothersome to many. Illnesses and diseases of varying kinds were a daily experience.

In his historical account of the Mission's history in Eastern Turkestan, fulfilling all the criteria mentioned above, John Hultvall describes in detail the work of the Swedish Mission in Central Asia which began in 1892 in the southwest part of the province of Xinjiang, China's most westerly and inaccessible province. The work continued until 1938 when the last missionaries were forced to leave the country because of internal political turmoil.

John Hultvall's history of the Mission in Eastern Turkestan has been written with great insight on the basis of highly valuable sources with whose help he has been able to present an integrated picture of the unforgettable work of the Swedish Mission there. It was a difficult mission field, both physically and psychologically. The missionaries were confronted with a conservative, almost fanatical form of Islam. It would not be true to say that their work resulted in great numbers of people converting from Islam. Their main contribution was in meeting social needs in medical work, in education and giving general help. The Swedish missionaries were not only representatives of Christ but were serving the people in various ways. Their assistance provided technical help for an undeveloped country. Swedish Mission also made similar contributions in other parts of the world. In John Hultvall's book we have a well documented description of the contribution to Central Asia by the Swedish Mission - a contribution which was also a cultural one to far away Central Asia.

Gunnar Jarring  
Stockholm, September 1980

## 1 TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

In the bazaars, crowds would gather and listen, attracted by wandering musicians, storytellers and street-preachers, a fact exploited by the missionaries.<sup>1</sup>

At times at least, it was fairly easy to gather people for worship services at the Mission stations. A strange thing was that in this typically Muslim country, men and women arrived together at church, even though they sat down separately once in church, men on one side and women on the other.<sup>2</sup> In the late 1920's Rachel Wingate writes that even though less than a hundred people were Christians, a couple of hundred gathered for the services every Sunday, both in Kashgar and Jarkend.<sup>3</sup> When Mr. Nazaroff, a Russian, stayed in Jarkend for a week in 1924, he found it very interesting to see Christians and Muslims celebrating services together and listening attentively to the native preacher.<sup>4</sup> Also during the first years of the 1930's, church attendance was good.<sup>5</sup>

At other times, church attendance was low. Of course general unrest influenced worship service life. At such times people did not want to, or did not dare, go to church. At such times the Chinese mission in Hancheng was in special trouble. Miss Sigrid Larsson, a Swedish missionary stationed at Hancheng, often mentions in her diary that very few people were present at the services, noting that sometimes John Tornquist had only one single Chinese to preach to.<sup>6</sup>

The format of a Christian service was something new and unusual to a Muslim as neither songs nor preaching were incorporated in their own style of religious services. There were, however, many positive things to be found in a Muslim church-goer. For example, it was easy to achieve stillness and a spirit of worship as Muslims were used to taking part in prayer in the mosques, and when the pastor lifted his hands to pray, everyone did the same.<sup>7</sup>

Preaching to Muslims was a delicate matter. J.E. Lundahl, the Mission Secretary, makes a categorical statement in his book *World Missions* to the effect that preaching was not possible in Muslim countries.<sup>8</sup> This generalisation was strongly rejected by Rikard Nystrom, a missionary to Eastern Turkestan, who writes from his own experience: "...We are now able to preach to great crowds of Muslims in this country, Sunday after Sunday, year after year, in churches and, when possible, in bazaars... without being hindered..."<sup>9</sup>

The missionaries did not appear in public until they had a reasonable grasp of the language. Preaching in the bazaars was avoided until one had achieved a certain level of fluency. This decision was made to prevent any embarrassment or defeat in debates. However, the morning service in the hospital provided good opportunities to practice the language and witness to Muslims.

What is it then in the Christian message that particularly upsets Muslims and arouses opposition? "One could put it this way", writes George Roberntz, "that it is everything of importance to their salvation."<sup>10</sup> Space does not allow us to examine Muslim beliefs, even in a superficial way, but suffice it to say that the Islamic view of the Trinity, incarnation and resurrection of Jesus was very different from the Mission's beliefs. Disagreement in those areas led to a rejection of the central message of the Gospel.<sup>11</sup>

According to Raquette, one of the early Swedish missionaries, preaching to Muslims was an extremely delicate matter. It was necessary to find references in the Bible and in life which explained and led to Christ. The stories of the miracles in the Bible, for example, were very useful.<sup>12</sup> Raquette also praised one Swedish missionary who once started off his sermon by calling out the confession of Islam, “God is One, and apart from Him there is no God!” Another time Raquette mentioned the “stumbling blocks” a preacher should try to avoid.<sup>13</sup>

The Mission’s teaching about Jesus being the Son of God caused unrest and anger. The pupils at the Mission schools soon discovered how sensitive the Mullahs were on this point. The boys in the Islamic schools discovered this sensitivity, too, and Mrs. Moen says that when they wanted to tease their teachers, they would shout, “Jesus is the Son of God, Jesus the Son of God...!”<sup>14</sup>

After the printing press came into use in 1912 the missionaries published some booklets which, in a simple and logical way, attempted to explain some of the misunderstandings and stumbling blocks of the Gospel. L.E. Hogberg’s booklet *The Way of Life* was printed in 1914, and a couple of years later G. Raquette had his work *Simplified Christian Doctrines for Muslims* published. Some people, however, thought that Christian apologetics were questionable when working with Muslims. There was a fear that when Muslims realised how little evidence there was to support and explain Christian doctrine they would become even stronger in their own beliefs.<sup>15</sup>

The distribution of the booklets was an important supplement to the oral preaching of the Gospel. It is estimated that between 60,000 and 70,000 religious booklets of various kinds were sold or distributed free of charge during the mission era.<sup>16</sup>

Most important was the distribution of Bible portions. Over a period of time a notable change occurred in people’s attitude towards the Bible. One missionary writes, “Whereas people used to tear up the Gospels that were offered, or throw them into the fire, they now receive them gratefully, yes and are even happy to buy them. They are also showing them the same respect a Muslim usually shows to other holy writings.”<sup>17</sup>

Nystrom speaks about a man, a teacher, who had visited the Mission station in Jarkend for medical help. While he was there he bought a Scripture portion, the Gospel of Matthew, which he took home with him. Later, he began to read it with some of the other Mullahs. The first few chapters were accepted, but when they read the last verse of the third chapter where it says, “This is my beloved Son”, confusion started to reign among the Mullahs. Referring to Jesus as the Son of God is one of the most offensive things a Muslim can hear. When they read this they simply erased the word “Son” from the Bible portion. As they continued to read they were also shocked when they came across the word “Father” so “Father” was erased as well. When they reached the eleventh chapter where “Father” and “Son” appear several times they realised how dangerous the book really was. It was decided that the only thing to do was to burn it, but one of the Mullahs intervened, “We cannot do this! We ourselves confess that the Gospel has come from God.”<sup>18</sup> They mocked the man, but he was able to hide the book, and after some time he went to the Mission station with his “revised” copy and received a new one in return.

Private conversations with individuals were also a complement to the preaching in the services. Time spent by a missionary or a national Christian with a Muslim who was interested in spiritual matters generally provided an opportunity to lead the seeker, step by step, to Christ.<sup>19</sup> Sometimes the Christians fell into doubt and needed advice and counsel. Again, the opportunity to speak and share on a one-to-one basis was very effective. For example, a national evangelist came one day and expressed his doubts about the Trinity. With insight and warmth one of the missionaries explained the doctrine of the Trinity to him.<sup>20</sup> Home visits were often a valuable means of follow-up of thoughts aroused in church or in the bazaars. Anyone who had been contacted in the bazaar and was thought to be even slightly interested, or who had visited the church, received a home visit. The women missionaries were a tremendous asset in home visits and made a special point of visiting the sick.

Gradually, as the work progressed and expanded, the nationals took over such responsibilities as conducting the services and preaching, both in the church and in the bazaars. Sigrid Larsson mentions in her diary that the services in Hancheng were often conducted by Chinese who also preached at times. During times of unrest, however, it was unthinkable for the evangelists to preach in public places, such as the bazaars, as they would have been arrested.

## **2 BETWEEN COLLEAGUES ONLY**

In the course of a few years nineteen new missionaries arrived on the mission field. In 1924 John Norstedt, Ellen Soderberg, Gunnar and Adelia Hermansson and Rachel Wingate, an English woman, arrived.<sup>21</sup> Those who arrived the following year were Ruth Ahlbert (born Osterberg), Sigfrid Persson-Moen and Ester Aronsson, who were later married. In 1928 Maja Bergqvist and Naemi Ryden (who married Terning) arrived. A year later, Petrus and Ingrid Kangstrom, Ester Johansson., Lisa Gahns (who married Persson), Elin Jansson (who married Roberntz) and Dr. Kristian Hermanrud arrived to the field. In 1931 Mrs. Greta Hermanrud who was also a doctor, joined her husband. The same year, Ivar and Elisabeth Hook arrived to the field.

Many of these new missionaries remained in service until “the bitter end” in 1938. John Norstedt died of typhoid in 1932.<sup>22</sup> Another worker, Miss Ellen Soderberg, received her salary from the Teachers’ Mission Association.<sup>23</sup> The Hermanssons left already in 1930, and Rachel Wingate, who had been a voluntary worker with the Mission, left her duties in 1928. One couple in particular, Mr. and Mrs. Kangstrom, experienced many difficulties. On their journey out in 1929, Mrs. Kangstrom had an accident. She was not able to obtain adequate treatment in Kashgar for her serious injury, so after a short time, the couple was forced to return to Sweden for treatment. On their second journey to the field, Mr. Kangstrom became seriously ill in Aden and once again they were forced to return to Sweden. After his recovery he was assigned a pastoral post at home. In 1936 Lisa Gahns was married to Carl Persson. After only a couple of months she died. The Hermanruds returned home during the revolution in 1933.

At times, especially in the early years, there had been some friction between the missionaries in the field, but the disagreements seemed to be more or less over in the 1920’s. Both Hogberg and Raquette, who were Tornquist’s major antagonists, had returned to Sweden, but, unfortunately for Tornquist, both of them became advisors to the Mission leaders at headquarters. Whenever any questions arose about the Eastern Turkestan field, Hogberg and Raquette were consulted. Naturally, this irritated Tornquist and in 1924 he personally

informed headquarters in his letter to Mission Director Nyren, “We refuse to accept Hogberg and Raquette as authorities...”<sup>24</sup> Raquette, who was a member of the Mission Board from 1924-1936, was the one who was most often consulted about decisions concerning Eastern Turkestan. He advised in matters such as David Gustafsson’s request in 1928 to have his furlough extended so that he could attend the summer conference in which the MCCS would be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Mission Secretary, Mr. Lundahl, considered that there were no major reasons for extending his furlough but wrote to Raquette asking him what he thought about it.<sup>25</sup> On another occasion, the field consulted headquarters about one of the missionaries, Ivar Hook, who wanted to return home to receive some medical training. Raquette had to be asked before the decision could be made.<sup>26</sup> On yet another occasion, George Roberntz wrote to headquarters asking permission for his fiancée to join him in the field. Again Lundahl wrote to Raquette, “Bengtsson and I thought it best to ask for your advice.”<sup>27</sup>

On several occasions Tornquist expressed his disapproval that Raquette had been consulted by the Board with regard to decisions concerning Eastern Turkestan. Once Tornquist wrote home complaining that a colleague had not come to the field because Raquette had advised him to stay at home.<sup>28</sup> Another time Tornquist wrote to Mr. Lundahl, the Mission Secretary, expressing his concern that the Board in Stockholm was under the bad influence of Raquette. Lundahl in reply to Tornquist’s letter said that his criticism was “not quite proper... I have never been involved in any intrigues.”<sup>29</sup>

Many of the missionaries, as evidenced above, were determined and strong-willed people. This also had its advantages. Many times these strong and powerful personalities showed great compassion and care for others. Tornquist, especially, would support those who were in trouble. One example of his fairness was in 1915 when Mia Mobeck had to leave the field and Tornquist wrote to Sjöholm, explaining her situation. Even though she had failed in certain ways, Tornquist was very understanding and openly confessed that he had been unfair towards her earlier.<sup>30</sup> On another occasion Tornquist wrote a letter to Oskar Andersson, who had been forced to return to Sweden, asking forgiveness for his harsh words and warmly assuring him that he was welcome back to the field.<sup>31</sup>

Rikard Nystrom was a missionary who seemed to have a special gift of encouragement and speaking well of his colleagues. When, after numerous conflicts Gunnar Hermansson was all the same accepted to return to the field, Nystrom wrote to the couple, giving encouragement. It had been suggested that the Hermanssons should be given the responsibility for the boys’ orphanage. This suggestion pleased Nystrom and he adds, “People speak well of you”.<sup>32</sup> Another worker, Frida Lundell had, according to some missionaries, also lost her right to return to the field. Nystrom, however, defends her and when she died suddenly in 1934, he spoke in memory of her with sincerity and admiration.<sup>33</sup> He also wrote a letter of sympathy, full of appreciation and words of comfort, to her family in Dannemora.<sup>34</sup>

Raquette speaks about the strong fellowship between the workers; at its best it was a source of great strength. On one occasion Mr. Raquette was experiencing deep concern and despair because of his son’s severe illness. One night as he sat beside his little son’s bed, the situation appearing hopeless and his own faith in God seeming to be failing, words of comfort came. One of the female missionaries quietly opened the door, walked to his side and gently laying her hand on his shoulder whispered words of comfort, saying that in spite of everything, Jesus was there, and then she disappeared as silently as she had come. Raquette calls her “a messenger from Heaven”.<sup>35</sup>

Each of the missionaries desired the well-being of the others. The testimony of one of the female missionaries shows this in a simple but powerful way. She was a single missionary and had an open and friendly relationship with the other missionaries. Then “the older workers started to fear a scandal”. One other older female colleague, in particular, hurt her deeply. She described her reaction as “hurting like a thorn”. And yet she continued, “... as soon as it began to hurt, I prayed for my older colleague and in the end the bitterness passed.”<sup>36</sup>

Perseverance and faithfulness were other important features among the missionaries. Their firm determination and tenacious persistency gave them strength.

The missionaries also tried to encourage each other to be faithful and persevering. They always tried to remember birthdays and other special occasions – small, insignificant gestures under normal circumstances, but of great importance in their present situation. One person recalled comic strips being drawn and written by the missionaries themselves, then circulated around the group. It is touching to see how the missionaries tried to encourage their Norwegian colleague Otto Torvik. During his short visit to Eastern Turkestan, on his way north to explore the possibilities of developing a work there, he had his birthday. Having found out about this, the missionaries planned a party and many gifts were prepared for him: shoes, ties of the finest Chinese silk, sweets and boxes of biscuits. Torvik mentioned that among the givers “a couple of single female missionaries stood out”.<sup>37</sup> It appears from Sigrid Larsson’s diary that the missionaries in Kashgar and Hancheng frequently came together for fellowship. In Jarkend, and more particularly in Jengi-Hessar, the problem of loneliness was greater, as in these places the work was less well developed and there were fewer missionaries.

The longest serving missionary in the field was John Tornquist. For long periods he was the only one in the field working specifically among the Chinese. Actually the group of missionaries working among the Chinese was never big. Albert Andersson and his wife worked among the Chinese from 1903 to 1912, Carl Persson in the 1920’s, Ellen Tornquist from 1905 to 1923, Sigrid Larsson during the late 1920’s and John Tornquist from 1904 to 1937.<sup>38</sup>

In 1924 John Tornquist wrote the following to Mr. Nyren, the Mission Director:

“Of the 35 missionaries that have been working here so far, only three men and one woman have been fluent in the Chinese language. Out of the 22 years that the Chinese Mission has been in existence, I have been the only missionary to the Chinese for ten years.”<sup>39</sup>

In spite of all the difficulties and disappointments, Tornquist was totally fascinated by his task. In 1919 he addressed a group of young people in Sweden, saying, “If I were to start my life all over again, I would have no greater ambition than to be a missionary.”<sup>40</sup> In 1935, two years before his death, he writes in his diary on the way out to the field:

“If God the Father suddenly spoke to me in a human voice and said, ‘You have 30 years to live on earth, provided you stay in Europe. If, however, you prefer to go to Asia, you will only have ten years’, I would then gladly accept the ten years and continue on my journey to the field.”<sup>41</sup>

As late as in the early 1930’s “storms” once again broke out among the missionaries, and in 1932 Palmaer, the Mission Secretary, requested Tornquist to return to Stockholm to help sort

out the problems. Tornquist was then Field Leader and Nestor among the missionaries. Palmaer writes, “We have to clear up all the misunderstandings that have arisen among the missionaries recently. You have to come home and help us.”<sup>42</sup>

One of the “misunderstandings” that Palmaer was referring to was the unrest among the missionaries, for which Gunnar Hermansson was blamed. He arrived to the field in 1924, and within a short time had major disagreements with Tornquist. Tornquist, as Field Leader at that time, was responsible to ensure that new missionaries received their language training. Friction between the two colleagues began when Hermansson informed Tornquist that he refused to study Turkish. Hermansson explained his position by stating that language studies had no importance whatsoever. Matters became more complicated when Hermansson interfered in another colleague’s language study. Whenever Norstedt tried to follow the rules and study the language, Hermansson caused problems for him. The situation was shared with headquarters in Stockholm and the Board dealt with the problem. Concerning the handling of the matter, Tornquist writes: “But when such a man comes before the Board it is all reduced to a question of ‘personality’.”<sup>43</sup>

In 1930 the Hermanssons returned home, leaving behind them many bad relationships with different missionaries. In 1932 after their furlough was over and the time had come to return to the field, the Mission Board decided to allow them to return, although Mission Secretary Lundahl had received a letter of warning from Tornquist which read:

“The group of missionaries here have asked me to write and request that headquarters not allow Mr. and Mrs. Hermansson and Miss Frida Lundell to return to the field for another term. The work in Jarkend has been badly damaged as a result of their presence there. Ten years will not suffice to repair the damage that has been done. While the family was staying as guests in Kashgar, waiting to return home, they were impossible to please. The last words I heard from him were the worst I have ever heard... Before he left Eastern Turkestan he is said to have sworn that if he was not allowed to return to the field he would cause the end of the whole Mission... He is also extremely cowardly. In Jarkend he slept with a gun under his pillow.”<sup>44</sup>

In spite of this letter, the Board only gave a strict warning to Mr. and Mrs. Hermansson and they were then given permission to return to the field in 1932.<sup>45</sup> However, the Hermanssons decided to stay at home for a little longer, at least “until Tornquist returned home.”<sup>46</sup> As it turned out the couple never returned to the field. It would seem, though, that they were not entirely to blame. Carl Persson defended Mr. Hermansson, claiming that Hermansson justly took up certain injustices in the field. This criticism was, however, very badly viewed by some missionaries. Discharging him would have been unfair, says Persson.<sup>47</sup> Nystrom, as mentioned earlier, also sided with Mr. Hermansson on some issues.

### 3 ON THE BRIGHTER SIDE

During the 1920's different missions working with Muslims in various parts of the world were, in general, encouraged by the Muslims' changing attitude towards Christianity. Respect towards Christ and appreciation for Christian practices were on the increase. Samuel Zwemer went so far as to mention the "falling asunder of Islam" and foresaw "a new day" for the evangelisation of Muslims.<sup>48</sup> The same thoughts were expressed by one of the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan in 1930. He described the new era as being a step towards individualism "and when the Muslim begins to think as an individual he becomes easier to win for Christ."<sup>49</sup>

The church in Eastern Turkestan started to grow in the 1920's and in 1921 Tornquist could write the following in a newspaper article:

"Several years ago each station received a set of cups for the Lord's Supper. This could easily have been seen as an ironic reminder of how things ought to be as opposed to how things really were. At that time there were no churches here. Now the sets of cups are regularly used for their original purpose. We thank God for this with all our hearts."<sup>50</sup>

In the same article he described the annual missionary conference being held in Jarkend at the time. On two consecutive Sundays he had participated in the services held for Muslims. On both occasions, the roomy new church was full of Muslims who seemed both interested and attentive. Tornquist noticed that it was not only the poor who were present, but there also seemed to be well-to-do middle class people there.

In a report from 1925 Raquette says that the harvest time in Eastern Turkestan seemed to have finally come. It was believed that the Muslim world everywhere was open to receive the Gospel.<sup>51</sup> The following year Palmberg expressed the same opinion when the new church in Kashgar opened. Throughout the duration of the building project there had been no disturbances, which in itself was very unusual, considering what had happened earlier when the Mission was expanding. At that time the disturbances had been so hostile and threatening that the missionaries had feared for their lives.<sup>52</sup>

Tornquist sent the following greetings to the M CCS 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in Stockholm in 1928: "...the general situation in Eastern Turkestan for our Mission has never been better than it is now".<sup>53</sup> The Mission had been quite successful; more so than what was dreamed of just a decade ago, he adds. The Mission had, by God's grace, become one of the most important missions in the world. The whole missionary world acknowledged the importance of "our lonely outpost in the struggle for the coming of the Kingdom of God". After having given much praise and thanksgiving to God for the church buildings, the school work and the full hospitals at the Mission stations, Tornquist concludes: "There is a feeling of optimism and hopefulness among the M CCS missionaries in Eastern Turkestan."

Even though the atmosphere of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations enticed Tornquist into expressing himself far too subjectively, nobody, however, could deny what was actually happening with the Mission in Eastern Turkestan. Between the years 1928 and 1932, 86 people had been baptised. At the beginning of 1932, church registers showed that there were 56 members in the Kashgar church, 29 in Hancheng, 65 in Jarkend and 13 in Jengi-Hessar.



Altogether there were 163 members.<sup>54</sup> It is also recorded that in 1932 there were 22 missionaries in the field and approximately 30 national workers including both Turks and Chinese. Sunday School statistics show that 170 children were being taught the Scriptures, and in the thirteen “day schools” the attendance records show almost 300 pupils. The hospital and outpatient work was very encouraging too, providing a natural contact with people from all walks of life. During the same year (1932), 13,228 patients were treated and about 50 major operations performed. A new hospital was built in Kashgar by Dr. Hermanrud and at Jengi-Hessar a new church with a seating capacity of 200 was inaugurated.<sup>55</sup>

Otto Torvik, the Norwegian missionary visiting the mission field at that time, confirmed that the churches were full of people who wanted to hear the Word of God.<sup>56</sup> The China Inland missionaries, George Hunter and Mildred Cable, also referred positively to the valuable work done by the Swedish Mission.<sup>57</sup> In Stockholm, Lindeberg, a university lecturer, described the work in the field as “one of the very few ‘missionary enterprises’ achieving real success.”<sup>58</sup>

The revival had come to the mission field. Vendla Gustafsson relates how Christians in Kashgar had, for a long time, been praying for a spiritual revival. And now it was here. It started among the church members. When the Spirit began to work, some of the Christians confessed that they had secretly visited the mosques. During services people were openly testifying and confessing sin.<sup>59</sup> Torvik writes concerning his servant “... he was touched by the Spirit and has completely changed.”<sup>60</sup>

At that time, one of the national evangelists, Josef Khan (who later called himself Josef Ryehan) was working in Jarkend. The revival broke out there too and some young people became Christians.<sup>61</sup> When the revival broke out there were, however, some people in the church who were totally opposed to it. They felt it was not yet time for a spiritual harvest in Eastern Turkestan. Some even went as far as advising their friends not to become Christians, remarks Arell. Those who opposed the revival felt that it was no longer an honour to be a Christian. The Christians had become so numerous that the individual “disappeared” in the crowd. But during a series of revival meetings this opposition completely disappeared and more and more Christians were drawn into the revival. One after another came and confessed their sins. At the end of every meeting there were people asking for help in prayer and intercession. They confessed that they had been reading the Muslim prayers, had been keeping certain Islamic customs or been dishonest. One night a young woman confessed that she had regretted her Christian baptism. A young man confessed that he had stolen money and goods from Sven Hedin’s office when he had been working there some years earlier.<sup>62</sup>

Josef Khan says the following about the spiritual process in Eastern Turkestan:

“Many who say they want to become Christians, or who are nominal Christians, do not leave their old way of life; they still visit the graves of Muslim saints or sit at the feet of the Sufi leaders... Now a new period is coming, especially among the young men who have been brought up by the Mission. Many of them have now been filled by the power Christ and they have been able to cast off the oppression of old Muslim prejudices. They burn with the desire to preach the Word to their Muslim brothers and sisters...”<sup>63</sup>

The time had come for the Mission to think of expansion. Many places not yet reached by the Mission sent urgent invitations and requests for missionaries. Miss Lovisa Engvall, who was at that time working as a nurse in Kutja, about 700 kilometres northeast of Kashgar, wrote in January 1932:

“Today a Mullah came to us. He sat for a long time looking at a wall chart from the Bible and reading the first three chapters of Luke. He asked why we were not coming to build a hospital and a school...Write and ask them to come... I have already done that, I said to him, but there is nobody available...Write again and again until their heads ache and they will just have to send someone... Tell them this is a big city and that we are waiting for a hospital and a school here too.”<sup>64</sup>

The plans of the Mission concerning expansion did not, however, include Kutja but rather Khotan, south of the already established mission field. These plans were old. As early as 1897 the idea of establishing a Mission station in Khotan had been discussed.<sup>65</sup> Missionaries had visited the area now and then. However the establishment of a work was thwarted by the outbreak of the First World War and the economic problems following the war. Although it did not seem possible then for a work to be established in Khotan, the missionaries kept praying that somehow the door to Khotan would be opened. Amazingly enough, in 1920, Nystrom, then stationed in Jarkend, was asked by the Governor of Khotan to come for a visit.

The Governor wanted a doctor to save the life of two of his soldiers who were severely ill. Nystrom used this opportunity to mention his desire to see a Mission station established in Khotan. The Governor expressed his approval of these plans and promised to help the missionaries in every way possible. Shortly after that Hanna Andersson was asked to go and establish an immunisation programme since all the children in the town needed to be vaccinated. The Governor provided some troops to escort her to Khotan and she was his guest during the project.<sup>66</sup> In 1926 Nystrom was again asked to go to Khotan to help in an emergency. This time many people suggested he should stay or else send for one of his colleagues to come and start mission work there.<sup>67</sup>

No immediate action was taken but the issue was re-opened at the Eastern Turkestan Workers' Conference in 1932. At the conference there were two proposals: firstly, that the Mission should establish a clinic in Khotan with nurses and midwives, and secondly, that a course in evangelism for nationals should be offered. The course would be held in Jengi-Hessar during the spring of 1933. Maybe then national workers would be prepared to be sent to the new area.<sup>68</sup>

Carl Persson met with similar openness and friendliness while travelling in the northern part of the country in the summer of 1932. He was acting as guide and translator for Otto Torvik, the Norwegian missionary, who continued to explore the possibilities of a future work for Norwegian missionaries. Everywhere they went they met friendly people who listened readily as they witnessed about Jesus Christ, and who willingly bought Scripture portions and tracts.<sup>69</sup> Nystrom had similarly been impressed by the openness of the people while on a trip in the same area already in the 1920's. Some evangelists from Jarkend had made a 25 day long mission journey into the mountains. Everywhere in the villages they were heartily welcomed and during their trip they sold 45 Scripture portions and nearly 100 tracts.<sup>70</sup>

In Sweden, people were rejoicing. Gosta Raquette, who had returned to Sweden in the early 1920's, was especially encouraged by the openness, and in 1932 he wrote:

“Eastern Turkestan has been such a hard field, but it is no longer so. We have become used to describing it as a 'hard field' but this is not an accurate description any more, and we ought to stop using it. Where else in the world has the Christian missionary working among Muslims seen such results after only 40 years? We are thanking God for such advancements.”<sup>71</sup>

Such was the situation in November 1932 when the Mission celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was a simple celebration held in Kashgar. It was estimated that approximately 80 people, most of whom were national Christians, were present at the Communion service. Nystrom, unable to leave the work in Jarkend to go to the celebration, set aside time to commemorate it there. Old and young Christians told about times gone by. One man testified how he had led a double life for many years. He had remained a Muslim in his heart until he met Josef Khan who had helped him to be liberated from his old life.<sup>72</sup>

## **4 A SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH - SOME UNDERLYING CAUSES**

As has been described above, the Mission experienced a total breakthrough and there were many reasons for this breakthrough.

In the first place, the Mission methods were effective. Social welfare was a way for the Mission to try to assist people who needed help. The work of the Mission in this area also inspired the authorities to establish social institutions and help programmes.<sup>73</sup> Most important, however, was the social work among the children and women. On one occasion a Muslim, reading about the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, exclaimed that that was the most wonderful thing he had ever heard of. "Imagine Jesus talking to a woman!"<sup>74</sup> The efforts of the Mission were quite modest. Through the orphanages, however, many girls were helped. Home visits were also important, when women who never met anyone except their close relatives, had contact with the outside world. The missionary women usually brightened up the day for these women. "Harem wives" were sometimes interested in the Mission and were happy to see the women missionaries in their homes. Often when these women were invited to a service they were not, however, allowed to attend.<sup>75</sup> The mission work never had time to contribute to a change of the social structures of society. There were, however, some small signs in the change of attitude towards woman that could be observed. Consequently, Christian women were not veiled as a rule. They could wear a thin scarf, but were never entirely covered.<sup>76</sup> The Mission did manage to lead some women into a freer and happier world. One 20 year old Kashgar woman, for example, freed herself from her family's old conceptions and started to study. As a result of her decision her family considered her insane. When confronted by her family about her future, she replied, "Look at the Swedes, they remain single their whole lives if they want to."<sup>77</sup> In the 1930's, Nystrom managed to obtain a prohibition against child marriages from the Governor of Urumchi. No girl under 15 years of age could be married.<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately this prohibition was not strictly observed, but it did at least show that the authorities had begun to listen to the Mission.

Schools, medical care and literature work also produced good results. After visiting the field in 1929/1930, Gunnar Jarring, a Swedish Ambassador, had many positive things to say about the mission work. He gave prominence to the literature work and the possibilities offered by the printing office. Within the area of schools, the Mission had acted as an innovator and in describing the medical work in Kashgar, he adds: "The Swedish hospital has become a real model hospital..."<sup>79</sup> The medical work made the Mission known and respected throughout the country. In a lecture given in 1935, Sven Hedin describes the health care work carried out by the Mission in Kashgar where Turks, Mongols, Kirghiz and Chinese were treated. Hedin goes on to say, "The missionaries carried out works of charity among the natives which made their name so honoured and respected that I heard Turks praise the Swedish missionaries last year

thousands of kilometres from there...”<sup>80</sup> When Peter Fleming, a reporter for *The Times*, visited Eastern Turkestan in the 1930’s he made the same observation. He recalled meeting patients who were willing to travel for more than three weeks in order to be treated at the Mission hospital.<sup>81</sup> The medical work was allowed to operate until the “bitter end” in 1938. It is estimated that during the entire mission era approximately 400,000 patients received treatment through this ministry. One must not forget that 3 or 4 people usually accompanied each patient and so came into contact with the Mission. The numbers of people who came into contact with Christians through the medical work can thus be counted in the millions.<sup>82</sup> These people usually returned to their villages to tell others about the Mission. The literature work was appreciated by many as well. When the Mission first came to the country, there was scarcely any literature available there, apart from a few hand-written translations.<sup>83</sup>

The Mission methods bore fruit. “Institutional mission work” paved the way for the Gospel. Surely these methods were one of the roads leading to spiritual breakthrough. A long and painful road. Another factor was the missionaries themselves. Here the truth that the “influence of a patient Christian” leads up to the goal came true. The missionaries lived among the people and their lives were under constant observation from those among whom they were living and working. They taught the people many practical skills which improved their standard of living. As an example, when the missionaries were building their own houses the local builders and construction workers observed what they did, and then modelled their own houses after it. Carpenters, bricklayers, stove-builders, painters, tin-smiths, smiths and others soon learned to work like the missionaries. In areas where the Mission did not reach, the poor people lived on in traditions and customs from the days of their ancestors. This was also valid for agriculture.<sup>84</sup>

The missionaries’ way of life and behaviour also left their marks. So many years of patient loving kindness could not pass without result. Strangers visiting the Mission stations complimented the work of the missionaries. Hedin writes:

“... with admiration and emotion one reads between the lines about the courage, patience and faithfulness of the Swedish apostles in the most difficult conditions and one is proud to know that our people are represented in the heart of the largest continent of the world by such men and women.”<sup>85</sup>

Hedin also showed his appreciation of the missionaries’ work directly to them during his long stays in Eastern Turkestan. This can be clearly seen in a newly found, unpublished letter. The letter was sent from Urumchi where Hedin was stationed during the winter of 1928, intended for the missionaries in Kashgar. It started with “Dear fellow countrymen” and ended with “your sincere, close friend Sven Hedin”. The four page letter gave a very warm-hearted Christmas greeting. “It would have been nice meeting you, but I do not know if I will get as far as Kashgar. Therefore I just send my warmest greetings to the Swedish missionaries and wish you the blessing of God in your beautiful work. Peace, happiness and success, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.”<sup>86</sup>

Nils Ambolt, also part of the Sven Hedin expedition in the early 1930’s, got to know the Mission of Jarkend, where he also spent some time, especially well. He, too, was deeply moved by the missionaries’ self-sacrificing work. Before the expedition he had disapproved of the missionaries’ work, but when he saw the way they worked, he was softened and influenced by their example of love and dedication.<sup>87</sup> Ambolt in the end came to appreciate their stand and felt it was a joy to see people who believed so strongly and showed such convincing love. He writes in a letter:

“It was a great joy to see these people working for their high ideals. They cherished ...one principle that could best be expressed by one single, but very significant word, love... Such a struggle is worthy of the highest appreciation no matter if it is successful or not...”<sup>88</sup>

Rachel Wingate was similarly impressed by the Swedish missionaries' work and way of life. The Swedes stayed Swedish, she remarks. They did not try to imitate the Turks or the Chinese. They lived among the people as Swedes, to the extent that one could find a flagpole flying the blue and yellow Swedish flag in their gardens. They felt that the people should have the opportunity to get to know European Christians, and they did not keep people at a distance. Neighbours visited them freely. And Gunnar Jarring writes: “I met the sincere, tolerant and generous kind of faith that I believe is characteristic of the MCCA.”<sup>89</sup>

The long and patient work of the Mission led to a phase where people's attitudes towards the Mission were just about to undergo a radical change. At the end of 1931 Roberntz writes:

“Preaching, schoolwork, orphanage work and all other Mission activities can be carried out without restrictions.... It is also encouraging to observe that the Christians here are no longer without legal rights but enjoy the same legal protection as the Chinese and Muslims...”<sup>90</sup>

The same year Oskar Hermansson discusses the new Mission situation. The most important stronghold for the Christian faith in the country was no longer the small group of baptised Christians, but rather the respect gained by the Mission among ordinary people. During the last years, Muslims from very influential circles had stood up in defence of the Mission. During the unrest in 1923 Oskar Hermansson was nearly arrested and taken away. To prevent the missionary from being harmed the Kashgar people formed a protective circle around him and so he was not hit by one single blow.<sup>91</sup>

Another factor contributing to the breakthrough was the worship service format. Music and singing in the services had a positive influence on the people. In 1925 the Mission published a new songbook containing 193 songs.<sup>92</sup> Roberntz contributed with 29 songs and Hogberg with 20. Oskar Hermansson contributed with the major part, 61 songs, in translation or original compositions. Later 63 more songs by Hermansson, either specially composed or translated, were made into a supplement.<sup>93</sup> Before, all the music had been taken from several different hymnals. The music, almost without exception, consisted of Western tunes. The missionaries felt it best not to set religious lyrics to Asian folk tunes, since in many cases these original folk songs had original lyrics which were “indecent”.<sup>94</sup>

At the end of the 1920's a choir was started in Kashgar. The soprano and contralto parts, which would normally be sung by women, were sung by children as it was unacceptable for women to perform or sing in public.<sup>95</sup> The people greatly enjoyed music, and this is especially true of the Turks. The importance of the songbook for the churches and especially for the young Christians cannot be overemphasised, writes Roberntz, and he continues: "The Gospel was literally sung into their souls and caused many hearts to surrender, resulting in new birth or revival."<sup>96</sup> Palmberg also emphasises the great power the songs and music had at the end of the 1920's.

The Asian Christians had a key position in the breakthrough. Rachel Wingate writes that the Mission could now rejoice in seeing the fruit of “second generation Christians”. They were brought up within the church and had a strong moral influence on other Muslims.<sup>97</sup> Palmberg writes, “a new era has begun”. Young people brought up within the Mission were becoming Christians. Concerning the orphanage work, Roberntz says, “It has now started to give us

young men and women who were brought up in the Christian way, and, unlike the earlier Christians, they did not question the meaning of new birth and the Christian life. Now the fire of new birth and revival was lit and spreading. It was so strong that even some of the old Christians were caught up in the movement.”<sup>98</sup> Helena Nystrom writes that some of the young people in the Mission married each other. The boys and girls had both the Christian faith in common and the general education that the missionaries had given them.<sup>99</sup> John Andersson adds concerning the schoolgirls, “These were the first girls in the country to receive Western education.”<sup>100</sup>

The church was becoming really independent, something which had been the goal of the missionaries for many years. During the Mission Conference in 1921, the following was said:

“As much autonomy as possible should be given to the church. Self-responsibility is of the greatest importance. This will ensure that the church will develop according to its Eastern character.”<sup>101</sup>

In 1927 Ahlbert gives an accurate description of the development and the goal of the Mission. He points out the danger of the missionary forcing his own understanding of the Gospel on the native. And what else could he do? He has no other experience of the Gospel than his own. He continues:

“The result is that in many cases the first converts become, more or less, bad replicas of the missionaries. They are rootless and do not feel at home anywhere. But as the church grows... it becomes rooted in its own soil... and slowly the Christian in Eastern Turkestan starts to see with his own eyes... and discovers new aspects of the glory of Christ in the Gospel.”<sup>102</sup>

At the same time, the Mission Conference decided that the church should be represented by the nationals themselves before the authorities.<sup>103</sup>

The church was also on its way to becoming economically independent. The income from the medical work has been mentioned already, and a further source of revenue came from the printing press through orders carried out. This money was used by the Mission in various building and development projects.

The third part of the “Three-Self Principle”, self-propagation, was also becoming a reality. The Asian Christians were realising their responsibility to proclaim the Gospel. They preached in the bazaars and travelled throughout the country, holding meetings and selling Bible portions. When missionaries wanted to travel outside the towns they had to get permission from the authorities and sometimes the Mullahs would hinder them. The nationals, however, could travel wherever they wished.<sup>104</sup>

The number of national Christian co-workers increased during the years of the breakthrough. Roberntz speaks about Josef Ryehan, who was possibly the most successful national, saying that “He was the first to succeed in making Christianity real to Muslims. He made Christianity Eastern. Earlier, Christianity had been more or less considered a religion of Westerners”.<sup>105</sup> Roberntz also described Ryehan as being fanatically against Islam. During his period of work, independent local churches began to form as nationals gathered for prayer and Bible study without any missionary supervision.

Jacob Stephen has also been mentioned above. Ahlbert speaks well of his solid character. Jacob was a teacher at the girls' school. Although he met many "unveiled beauties" there, he remained strong and uninfluenced by them.<sup>106</sup>

At the end of the 1920's, Palmberg made a list of the national Christian workers at the Mission. He noted that nearly all the posts were held by Asian Christians who were not only employed in practical jobs, but who were also very much involved in the "spiritual work". Palmberg also praised the Christians' solidarity with the missionaries. The nationals, however, had many advantages over the missionaries, including a natural gift for preaching and witnessing.<sup>107</sup>

During the first years of the 1930's when the Mission found itself in front of a major spiritual breakthrough, potentially destructive political events were beginning to happen. Apparently the missionaries in Kashgar were not aware of the serious political developments and changes in Urumchi nor of the serious turn things had taken there. Unreliable and unbelievable stories were spreading, and it was difficult for the missionaries in Kashgar to know what to think. Even if they could have foreseen the terrible things that would happen to the Mission, what else could they have done but "wait and see"?

## 5 GOD'S STRANGE ARRANGEMENT

In view of the political upheaval and the end of the mission work, the question which comes to mind is: What happened to the Christians who survived the revolution? Is it at all possible to speak about the Church of Christ in Sinkiang? Information from the former mission field has been very sparse. There is some evidence, however, that not everything came to an end when the missionaries were forced to leave.

One thing concerning the first few years following the expulsion of the missionaries has been described by Mission Secretary Palmaer as "God's strange arrangement". This expression refers to Mrs. Sigrid Selvey<sup>108</sup> who stayed on after the last three missionaries had left Kashgar in August 1938.<sup>109</sup> The family lived in Kashgar until 1943 when Dr. Selvey was transferred to India. During those five "missionary-less" years up to 1943, Mrs. Selvey was a tremendous encouragement to many people especially those who were Christians or had been closely associated with the Mission.<sup>110</sup> Her sparse correspondence with Sweden reflected something of the political development and also gives glimpses of the fate of the remaining Christians.

In a letter dated January 1938, Mrs. Selvey describes recent events. She writes about her wedding in August 1937, first a civil ceremony led by the British Consul Major Packman, then a church wedding conducted by Sigfrid Moen in the Mission Church. "The Church was full", she writes.<sup>111</sup> "Hundreds of people were present and were unafraid. The Mission was still accepted and people were not threatened for going to Church." In the spring, however, the situation worsened. Mrs. Selvey recounts how both the Swedish Mission and the British Consulate were boycotted. The Swedes and the Consulate had lost all their national workers as many of them had been arrested. Only British citizens were safe to walk outside the walls of the Consulate compound.<sup>112</sup>

In August 1938 she describes her situation as being very precarious. All the Swedish missionaries had left the country, including the three who had remained after the revolution.

Before they left they had participated in the baptism ceremony for her daughter Anne. Ahlbert had baptised the child. Three China Inland missionaries from Urumchi had also attended the ceremony. They had been staying in Kashgar for a couple of weeks and were planning to travel overland via India with three Swedish missionaries to Europe. The Mission in Urumchi had met the same fate as the Swedish Mission and the three British missionaries were now on their way home after having received orders to leave the country. Mrs. Selvey also writes that the Swedish missionaries had left goods and money in her home to be distributed to any Christians who might possibly turn to her. She received additional money so that she could try to arrange travel to India for some children whose parents had already managed to get there. Mrs. Selvey writes that she hopes the children would be able to go to India; otherwise they would be in a very difficult situation. She continues, "None of the Christians have shown up, and I never go outside the Consulate compound."<sup>113</sup>

In November 1938 a new letter arrived giving some details from Kashgar where Major Johnson, the new Consul General, had recently been installed. On his journey out he had met the "three brothers". He sent greetings from them and said he was sorry the Mission had had to end in this way. The letter also says that some of the women from the Mission had shown up. In particular, Mrs. Selvey mentions a couple of widows who had received food and money. They had been coming regularly during the autumn to receive their "allowance". Mrs. Selvey mentions in the letter that some had even come from the country districts. She did not talk to them much because "you never know whom you can trust these days". News about other contacts was given as well; a servant, Jamal, whom the Consulate had taken over from the Mission, looked after the distribution of goods to those seeking help; Samuel, one of the young men from the Mission, had become an informant and guarded the entrance to the Consulate; Khan Sahib, a British Citizen, had travelled to India. The children mentioned previously had been able to travel with him to join their fathers. Right down to the last minute there had been doubts whether or not they would be able to go. "It feels like a great burden has been lifted now that they have gone", says Mrs. Selvey concerning the children's departure to India. The children's fathers were Josef Khan (Ryehan) the evangelist from Jarkend and his brother Peter. She continues: "May the children be fruitful sheaves from our Mission. I do not, however, have much confidence in Peter in this case." Thieves were vandalising the old Mission station property, she continues, and were selling whatever they found in the bazaar and on the street. Mrs. Selvey adds, "One day a man came to the Consulate peddling a water jug with a lace pattern and gold trim and which bore the Rorstrand trademark."<sup>114</sup> A letter from March 1939 mentions that the Mission station had been taken over by military personnel.<sup>115</sup>

The British Consulate was boycotted at this time. The British could no longer travel freely; their servants had difficulty shopping in the bazaars and nobody dared talk to them as they were under constant surveillance by spies.<sup>116</sup> In the spring of 1939, a law was issued ordering all foreigners in the southern part of the Province to hand over their belongings to the authorities and leave the country. The foreigners concerned were British citizens, especially Indians who for many years had been engaged in commerce across the Himalayas. If they did not leave quickly enough they were forcefully expelled. Such was the situation for 35 British Indians, including nine women and 12 children, who arrived in Gilgit in July, starving and bereaved. They had been forced to cross the mountains at the most unsuitable time. They had been driven out of Sinkiang accused of being involved in imperialistic activities. When this news reached Kashgar, the Consul General, Major Johnson, travelled to Urumchi to discuss the situation with Government officials there. The authorities were negative in their response



partly because they believed the British had supported the Muslim rebellion and given help to the Tungans.<sup>117</sup>

It is quite clear that if the missionaries had remained in the country until the summer of 1939 they, too, would have been expelled. The missionaries were criticised for their relationship with the British Consul in Kashgar. The Consulate had worked practically, if not formally, as a protecting power for the Mission during the last few years. The fact that the Mission was no longer formally under British protection is shown by the fact that in connection with the dismantling of the Mission work in 1938, there were orders from London, as has already been mentioned, that the Consulate should offer protection to the missionaries and their belongings. This proves that the British protection was not an obvious matter.

During the early years of the Second World War, Mrs. Selvey was almost totally isolated from her home country. Some brief messages came from her, but they were mostly sad ones. The Christians seemed to have been assigned to labour camps, and some did not survive because of the extremely poor conditions. A couple of thousand Kirghiz and Turks fled to India.<sup>118</sup> In a letter written in 1943 she writes about some women from the Mission who had come to the Consulate to receive a small amount of money. During all these years people had come from the Mission asking for help, not once does she mention a man.<sup>119</sup>

In another letter written in spring 1943 she describes the political developments after the great evacuation of all Russians. "We are now much freer," she writes, "People are no longer afraid of us." The situation seemed more relaxed and people were quite happy to come to the Consulate. In her letter she even mentions the possibility of the missionaries returning.<sup>120</sup> Coincidentally, the same thought was expressed in a letter from Mrs. Diana Shipton, the wife of Sir Eric Shipton, the Consul General in Kashgar. In her letter she says that during an official journey to Urumchi in the winter of 1942, the Consul was overwhelmed by the hospitality and friendliness he was shown.<sup>121</sup> Another fact adding to the changing political situation was the opening in 1943 of an American Consulate in Urumchi with Mr. Edmund O. Clubb as the first Consul. Later the same year, Britain also established a Consulate here with Mr. Holmes, the Consul, also working as a missionary.<sup>122</sup>

## **6 THE MISSION CONTINUES IN INDIA**

Through the sporadic contact with Sigrid Selvey the Mission leaders were able to obtain some information about the developments in Eastern Turkestan after 1938, but the question remained as to how the work should be continued since the missionaries had had to leave the field. Some were thinking of returning and, with this in mind, began to plan an exploratory trip. Meanwhile the natural thing to do was to follow the refugees who had fled to India in the late 1930's. There was a real desire to continue work among the many Muslims who had settled in India and to use the experience the Mission had gained among Turkic Muslims in Eastern Turkestan.

Already in 1939 the General Assembly of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden in Stockholm had decided to start mission work in India,<sup>123</sup> and the following year, the first missionaries travelled to the new field. Initially they planned a Mission station on the Indian

side of the border to Kashmir where the missionaries would be able to reach many refugees and help them. When the last three missionaries from Eastern Turkestan had been escorted to the border in August 1938, they had not travelled far into India before they began to explore the possibilities of developing a work there. Upon their arrival in Srinagar, a stop-over place on the traditional route between Eastern Turkestan and India, they were “reunited with many old friends from Kashgar, Jarkend and Jengi-Hessar.”<sup>124</sup> At the General Assembly in Stockholm in 1939 they presented a report supporting the idea of establishing a border Mission station.

The plans for a new mission among the Turks on the border between China and India seemed to be in line with what other missions were doing. Several missionaries from Tibet were already prepared at the border. There were several Mission societies in Kashmir on the border to Tibet, a country hitherto closed to Christian missions that were now waiting to come into the country, among them the Moravian Mission.<sup>125</sup> When Mr. and Mrs. Roberntz were in Kashmir in 1961 they heard that this Mission was having good results on Indian territory.<sup>126</sup> The Central Asia Mission was also working there in a similar manner. This Mission had been established by Rachel Wingate’s father, Colonel Wingate. Miss Wingate had often spoken of “my father’s mission” while working in Eastern Turkestan with the Swedish missionaries. This Mission society had no ties with the Moravian Mission.<sup>127</sup>

As it happened, the Swedish Mission never established a Mission station on the Indian border with Kashmir, partly because of the advice of Miss Wingate who was in Sweden while the Kashmir plans were discussed. She strongly discouraged them. She knew the situation well because of her father’s work there. One factor behind her advice was that the Muslim law against a person changing his religion was strongly enforced in that area and for non-British citizens it would be next to impossible to be accepted by the people there. Instead, she advised the Mission leaders to consider beginning work among Muslims further south. Another reason for the decision against mission work at the border was that Mission Director Andersson had made a journey to India in 1938. He suggested that new mission work should rather be established in Bombay. There was already one Swedish missionary, Mr. G. Westmo, who needed help, as he was working alone among 200,000-300,000 Muslims.<sup>128</sup>

Behind the M CCS General Assembly’s decision in 1939 concerning mission work in India, there was also a declaration made by the Eastern Turkestan missionaries. They had been gathered in Stockholm during spring 1939, and had sent the following suggestions to the Mission Board:

“...that for the time being, the M CCS should start work among the Turks and other Muslims in India;  
... that the Mission Board should allow all missionaries who had previously worked in Eastern Turkestan to remain available for the Eastern Turkestan Mission for a couple of years, and in the meantime, if possible, be given work in India;  
...that the Mission Board should send already this year an adequate number of missionaries to Bombay, Karachi and either Peshawar or Srinagar or both.”<sup>129</sup>

The M CCS agreed to start work in India and decided that its primary task was to “work among Turks and other Muslims in India, starting in Bombay through an adequate number of missionaries”.<sup>130</sup> The idea of continuing work among the refugees from Eastern Turkestan was, however, difficult to put into practice, because many of the refugees did not remain long in India. Most never managed to feel at home there, with a new culture, new languages and foreign conditions.<sup>131</sup> So India only became a transit place for them on their way to other

Muslim countries. For the time being, a number of Eastern Turkestan Muslims did remain in India and the Mission was able to help some of them. One example of the help provided was a reading room for the refugees, opened in Bombay. Turks went there too. Early in 1941, Ahlbert writes of the work in Bombay on the whole, saying: "Our personal work is mainly concentrated on the Eastern Turkestan Muslim refugees, from our old mission field there."<sup>132</sup> In and around Karachi there were many refugees as well with whom the Mission worked<sup>133</sup> but apart from that they were spread around the country and could not be reached easily by the Mission.<sup>134</sup>

Some of the refugees joined churches in India, and a few of them even started to work with the Mission there. Otto Torvik, the Norwegian missionary who had visited Eastern Turkestan in the 1930's, was working in India in the late 1940's and visited the Swedish missionaries there. He spoke about Turks he had known in Eastern Turkestan who had settled in Bombay and were members of the church there.<sup>135</sup> Mr. Moen mentions Rehmet Jan, who had been employed by the British Consulate in Kashgar. He was a devout Muslim, but a good friend of the missionaries. When they had had to leave the country he had accompanied them to the border, weeping bitterly at their parting. He was a British citizen and, therefore, had less to fear by remaining in Eastern Turkestan. He did not feel quite safe though and he left the country. In the autumn of 1940 John Andersson met him in Kashmir. Rehmet Jan accompanied Mr. Andersson to Bombay, where he became a cook at the Mission. Later, before he died, he became a Christian.<sup>136</sup> Another refugee was Jacob Stephen. When he was a child his mother had left him in the Mission's care because she was not able to provide for him, and "she knew of nothing better than to leave me in the care of the Swedish Mission," according to Mr. Stephen himself. He was educated by them and became a trained teacher, working at the girl's school in Jarkend until the Revolution in 1933. During the persecution he was arrested and imprisoned. After his release he was able, with the help of Lisa Gahns, to go to India, where he later contacted the Mission. In India he worked as a teacher of Turkish and English among the refugees from Eastern Turkestan.<sup>137</sup> Mr. Stephen continued his own studies with the support of some M CCS members from Uppsala, Sweden.<sup>138</sup> He also assisted E. Stanley Jones at his retreat centre in India. Later on he moved to Sweden, where he married a Swedish Christian and became an active member of the M CCS local church in Sundbyberg.

Ruth Ahlbert tells about two women, a mother and daughter from Jarkend who fled to India and sought out the Swedish missionaries there. They had not been Christians in Jarkend, but in Bombay they gladly took part in the services.

Josef Ryehan also fled to India. As has been said above, he had been arrested in Jarkend during the Muslim Revolution in 1933. He was badly tortured and sentenced to death. However, he managed to escape to India and the Mission arranged for his children to join him there later. In India he received an education with the support of the Mission and became a pastor. He made the promise that if it were ever possible, he would return to Eastern Turkestan. When the missionaries arrived in India in 1940 they immediately sought him out. By that time he had started to work among Muslims in Srinagar in Kashmir. A couple of Muslims had become Christians as a result of his influence, one of whom later worked for a while at the Mission in Bombay.<sup>139</sup> Ryehan continued his work in the area and in 1940 the Mission Board expressed great hopes concerning his work. His work was spread and well-known through the fact that during the cold season the Turks move to warmer areas, according to the Board.<sup>140</sup> The following year, the Mission Board again expressed their appreciation of Ryehan's work. "He is doing a perfect job, as good as any missionary."<sup>141</sup>

After a couple of years Ryehan was still working in the north. By then most of the refugees had moved on and settled elsewhere, so the Mission Board considered a move to a new location.<sup>142</sup> At his post in the north, he was able to assist people who had material and physical needs with means provided by the Mission. But this particular part of the work was more than he was capable of handling by himself. Now, afterwards, the missionaries admit how bad it was to station him all alone in this solitary work in the mountains. It was during his ministry in the mountains that he also experienced a great personal tragedy. While still in Eastern Turkestan his wife had left him and their children. After escaping to India, he remarried. His second wife was a British missionary. The marriage had many difficulties, and one day his wife disappeared. When they found her she was dead.<sup>143</sup> In the mid-1940's he left India and settled in Cyprus with his children. Later the family moved to England where Ryehan died in 1975.

Another refugee from Eastern Turkestan was Noor Muhammed from Khotan. As a boy he had his left arm crushed in an accident. Just at that time, Mr. Nystrom, one of the missionaries, was visiting Khotan. He took care of him and had to amputate the crushed part of the boy's arm so that the stump could heal. The young boy never forgot Nystrom, and from then on he too wanted to become a doctor.<sup>144</sup> When he arrived in India he explored the possibility of studying medicine, but his handicap was a hindrance. Instead he studied languages and later took a degree in Persian, Arabic and Urdu. He then began to study Islamic theology, and was finally accepted into medical school, receiving his Diploma four years later. One day he came across a copy of the Gospel of John. He found himself extremely fascinated with the booklet and read it right through. In Bombay he later met an old friend from Eastern Turkestan who introduced him to the Swedish missionaries there. They soon realised that he was a spiritual seeker, and, after some time of studying the Bible, he wanted to become a Christian and was baptised.<sup>145</sup> At his baptism he announced that his Christian name would be Luke, after Luke, the physician and evangelist. His baptism in 1941 brought great joy to the missionaries because he was the first to be baptised since the Mission had relocated in India.<sup>146</sup> After his baptism Luke was exposed to harsh attacks from his Muslim friends. They even tried to kill him. When the Muslim leaders could neither win him back for Islam nor dispose of him, they decided to cancel his diploma and withdraw his doctor's licence. Through his high degree of education and being widely read he was still an uncontested authority even for his opponents. The most distinguished of the Muslim teachers even came to him in secret for private lessons in Islamic law.<sup>147</sup> With his vast knowledge Luke was also to be a tremendous asset in the continuous work with the Bible translation.

## **7 EXPLORING OLD TERRITORY**

In the 1940's the missionaries cherished a dream that they would be able to return to Eastern Turkestan. When they made their declaration in 1939 concerning the new work in India, some important expressions were to be found in the suggestions. In the first "that" clause, the missionaries say "...for the time being..." and further down "... that the Mission Board should allow all missionaries who had previously worked in Eastern Turkestan to remain available for the Eastern Turkestan Mission for a couple of years..."<sup>148</sup> Most were more than willing to work along the border so that they would be ready for the reopening of the roads. In Sweden, this question was also discussed at conferences and meetings. In 1943 Ester and Sigfrid Moen (Sigfrid was then working in India), wrote to the Mission Board urging them to

train and prepare new missionaries for Eastern Turkestan. At that time they were fully convinced of the possibility to return to Eastern Turkestan referring to letters they had just received from there. These letters spoke of a new situation in China. People were now turning from the new “Gospel” back to the old one. The Red Star was disappearing and the white sun of China was shining. Some examples of the changes were that both an American and a British Consulate had already been established in Urumchi; many Russians had left the country; and the Christian Sunday had been made the day of rest instead of the Muslim Friday.<sup>149</sup> A few years earlier, Raquette also expressed hope that the missionaries would be able to return. In *The Muslim World* he writes that the last word concerning the Mission in Eastern Turkestan has not yet been spoken. The day is coming when the Mission will be able to return to a great harvest.<sup>150</sup>

It was decided that to begin with, two missionaries should make an exploratory trip into Eastern Turkestan to investigate the situation. A Swedish Christian morning paper states in January 1946:

“It remains a great desire in the hearts of our missionaries and the Mission leaders to continue the mission work in Eastern Turkestan, from which the missionaries were expelled in 1938. For a start, it has been decided to send a couple of missionaries presently based in India, to survey the situation, according to the Mission headquarters.”<sup>151</sup>

Plans for the trip materialised during the spring of 1946 and from the summer of 1946 to the summer of 1947 the trip was undertaken by Moen and Roberntz. Since the border in India was closed because of political unrest in China, the journey to Eastern Turkestan had to be made through Central China to Urumchi.

The China Inland Mission had been forced away from Urumchi in 1938 in the same way as the Swedish Mission. Seven years later, in 1945, a Chinese postmaster who, as it turned out, was a Christian was assigned to Urumchi. Immediately on his arrival to his new post, he placed an advertisement in the local newspaper inviting Christians to attend a meeting.<sup>152</sup> During the Japanese invasion in late 1930’s, great numbers of Chinese from Central China had fled to the western provinces. The Chinese postmaster was hoping there would be some Christians among these Chinese refugees.<sup>153</sup> Seeing the advertisement for the meeting in the paper, the Governor, an elderly Buddhist, asked him for an explanation. When it was clear that this Chinese Christian’s motives were genuine and that there were no political implications, the meetings were approved by the Governor. When Moen and Roberntz visited Urumchi there were 97 members in his church and a further group of 10 who wanted to be baptised. Some of the members had formerly belonged to the China Inland Assembly. Just before the two missionaries arrived in Urumchi, the church had purchased a building with 20 rooms.

On several occasions, the Chinese postmaster and church leader expressed his desire that a mission society would be established in Urumchi and assist the fellowship. He even asked if the Swedish Mission would be interested in doing this. The Mission would then have the opportunity to work in Hami too, a town on the Kansu border, where the Urumchi church was supporting a small fellowship of about 50 members. They also had an “outpost church” in a neighbouring town, east of Urumchi. Moen and Roberntz, however, did not feel it right to accept the offer. They felt that if a mission society was to start work again in Urumchi it should be the China Inland Mission.<sup>154</sup>

All the church members in Urumchi were Chinese, except for one person, Mahmud Kahn, who was a Turk. The missionaries were surprised and happy to see him as it turned out he was an old friend from Kashgar where in former days he had belonged to the Kashgar Church but had managed to flee from the revolution. Another happy reunion took place in Urumchi. From the Ili Region, where a Muslim revolution was currently going on, refugees were arriving daily on their way to inner China. Among them were some Christians, including Baptists, Pentecostals and Orthodox believers. They were all Russian refugees who now felt threatened again and were fleeing further east. Among them came an Orthodox family who had lived for some years at the Mission station in Kashgar. They had remained in Kashgar when the missionaries were forced to leave. During the political unrest in Kashgar, the father and the eldest son had been killed. The family now consisted of the mother and four daughters.<sup>155</sup>

While they were visiting in Urumchi, Moen and Roberntz obtained an audience with the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Liu. Having informed himself about the mission in Kashgar and the commission of the missionaries, he asked them to write a statement explaining the aim of their present trip. A few days later they were called back to Liu. He informed them that he had talked to the provincial government, which for the time being rejected the request of taking up mission work again. One reason Mr. Liu gave for this rejection was the general political survey of the situation in the province. He described the cruel era of Sheng Shih-tsai to them stating that the unrest was still great in the western and southern parts. A peace treaty had indeed been signed in the autumn of 1945 with the rebels of Ili<sup>156</sup>, but as late as the spring of 1946 fighting had been going on in the Kashgar and Jarkend areas. Thus it would be impossible for the provincial government to guarantee any protection for foreigners in these regions. But why not start mission work or build a hospital in some other part of the Province, asked the Commissioner? Why not here in Urumchi? The missionaries told him that they were not able to make such a decision without consulting others and at the same time expressed their desire to travel to Kashgar to inspect the old Mission buildings and to consult with the British Consul, who was acting Consul for Sweden as well. When permission was delayed, the missionaries applied to the British Consul in Urumchi for assistance in the matter; when his help was of no avail, application was made to the American Consulate. Through the help of the American Consul they were eventually granted permission to go to the old mission field.<sup>157</sup>

In late December, Roberntz and Moen arrived in Kashgar. They were invited to stay on the British Consulate premises by Sir Eric Shipton who had just begun his second term as Consul. Mrs. Shipton remarks that they were the first guests of the Consulate.<sup>158</sup>

After lengthy negotiations with the Governor of Kashgar, an old enemy of the Mission work, the missionaries managed to get permission to visit the Mission station.<sup>159</sup> The inspection was made together with Sir Eric Shipton, who later wrote a report. His report gives a good idea of the property left by the Mission.

Practically all the buildings at the four stations were in ruins. Those remaining were used as stock-rooms or soldiers' quarters. This was the case of the summer station in Bostan Terek.<sup>160</sup> The missionaries were, however, refused permission to inspect the printing house. The printing house was the most valuable of all the buildings and it was clear that ever since the Mission was expelled the authorities had been using the printing press.<sup>161</sup> Most of the Mission's belongings were missing as a result of vandalism or confiscation. This was also the case concerning the personal belongings of the missionaries. The few things that had been salvaged were in the custody of the British Consul.<sup>162</sup>

The congregation had been almost entirely dispersed. Most of the older co-workers of the Mission had been murdered. An official report gives the names of 15 people who had been executed. The same thing had happened to some of the younger Christians. All people who were of importance for the Mission had been removed. With few exceptions those who had been allowed to live had been forced to renounce their faith. One survivor writes in a letter about “all our dear friends who were tortured to death in the winter of 1937”.

People who recognised the missionaries were both surprised and happy to see them. Seeing the Swedes again brought hope to many. Some asked: “When will you open the hospital again?”<sup>163</sup> Others expressed their joy saying: “Now that you have returned everything will be alright again... there is no medicine like yours.”<sup>164</sup> Moen speaks of a distinguished Mullah, whom they had met in Kashgar. When he saw the two missionaries he was overjoyed and hoped they would stay and reopen the hospital. Moen explained to him that people could go to the British Consulate hospital for medical care. The Mullah replied, “You are different! We could come and talk to you about our problems. I do not like your religion, but I completely trust your missionaries.”<sup>165</sup>

When the missionaries enquired about the possibility of re-establishing the Mission work in Kashgar, the local authorities were totally opposed to it. While Moen and Roberntz were in Jarkend, inspecting the buildings there, a telegram arrived for them in Kashgar from the Provincial government in Urumchi. The telegram was originally written to the British Consul, telling him to call the Swedish missionaries back immediately to Urumchi. The reason for this order was said to be that the government had received a letter from the people in the southern part of the Province protesting against the presence of the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar. The missionaries, however, understood that the author of this letter was in fact the District Governor of Kashgar. It was common knowledge that this District Governor, who was a Turk and had been in office for 20 years, was a sworn enemy of the Mission. Nevertheless, the two Swedes thought it best to immediately comply with the order from Urumchi, and received permission from the Governor General to travel to India over the Himalayas. They reported to headquarters in Stockholm saying that “It would be useless to return unless the political situation improves and such a change does not however seem possible.”<sup>166</sup> The report adds that the people, in general, including the Chinese officials, were friendly and would have liked the Mission to resettle there. If only the local authorities allowed the Mission to return, many of those who had been forced to renounce their faith would probably come back to the Church.

## **8 SIGNS OF LIFE FROM THE MISSION FIELD**

In the late 1940's and in the 1950's mission activities in Mainland China were evident, principally directed towards the west. The evangelistic work in Urumchi and the surrounding area, which the Swedish missionaries had seen in 1946, has already been mentioned. The missionaries also experienced other gleams of hope, and in some cases these were related to the Swedish Mission.

When the missionaries, en-route to Kashgar, came to Aksu, they noticed a young man following them. At last the man approached them and asked, “Aren't you Moen and

Roberntz?” He turned out to be a boy from the Mission’s orphanage in Jarkend. His Chinese name was now Asimon. During the revolution when the Tungans were in command of southern Sinkiang, they had taken all the 14 and 15 year old boys and trained them to be soldiers. This was also what happened to the boys at the Mission’s orphanage. And Asimon had been one of them. After some time in Khotan he had managed to escape to Central China, to Sinhai, south of the Kansu Province. He had confessed to being a Christian and had therefore been persecuted, so he fled to Lanchow in Kansu. Again, he was mistreated for being a Christian and some Turks he had come into contact with even sought to kill him. This time he fled to the east and settled for a time in Tientsin, where he was baptised, and accepted into a military school. After he had completed school, he was employed by the Chinese army. And when the missionaries met him in Aksu he was taking his regiment to Kashgar. Over the years he had matured in his Christian faith, and felt a calling to return to his friends in Jarkend and Kashgar. The only way to return there was to enlist in the army. Once he had come to the old mission field, he intended to remain there as a missionary.<sup>167</sup>

Asimon’s courage was to be of great importance in yet another instance. His life story became known at the North West Bible Institute in Fengsiang and Shensi and, as a result, many young students expressed their willingness to go to Kashgar as missionaries.<sup>168</sup> And when the Swedish missionaries were in Kashgar in the spring of 1947, they received a remarkable letter from this Bible Institute. It was addressed to “The Missionary in Charge, Swedish Mission. Kashgar” and contained the following lines:

“Dear Friends!

Some of the teachers and students from our Institute have felt the Lord’s calling to form a ‘Gospel Band’ with the purpose of sharing the Gospel in Eastern Turkestan and other areas in Western China. After several years of prayer and preparation, we have found that the time is right to send the first missionaries. This summer two young men started out and are now in Singhai. We hope that some young women can be sent after the New Year and that a group will reach Kashgar in June.”<sup>169</sup>

In the letter they also requested help from the Swedish missionaries in finding accommodation for these people and in other practical matters. No information ever reached Sweden about the result of this outreach.

A missionary to the Mongolians, Anders W. Marthinson, also witnessed the eagerness of the young Chinese Christians for missionary work while staying in Sinkiang and Kansu in 1949. At that time Marthinson was there distributing Bibles for the British and Foreign Bible Society with his co-worker, Paul Eriksson, who was also a missionary to the Mongolians. The church in Urumchi, which had given the two MCCS missionaries such a pleasant surprise, was continuing to grow. They now had a pastor and a large church building to meet in, but the building was already too small, so plans were drawn up to build an even larger one. The church was very active and had just started a mission project in Turfan, a place nearby.<sup>170</sup> Here, George Hunter and some other British missionaries had been working with great perseverance, but had seen little response. Now this work was being continued by national Christians. In Turfan, some local people told Marthinson and Carlson about an incident from Hunter’s work: One day Mr. Hunter had sold an unusual number of Bibles. But, towards the evening, when he took a walk to the town square, he saw a group of Muslims making a fire. They had collected all the Bibles and were burning them.<sup>171</sup>

Marthinson heard of many small evangelism groups or “teams” working in the province. One such group was working in Hami, a small town southeast of Urumchi. There were two



Christian congregations there and a large church was being built. The team working in Hami had come all the way from Shanghai.<sup>172</sup> The young people belonged to the “Christian Workers’ Mission”. They told Marthinson that they intended to reach places in Sinkiang where no mission had yet penetrated. In 1954 Marthinson received a short message from one of these evangelists concerning the church in Hami: “The church continues to grow and now has many members...”<sup>173</sup> Marthinson and Carlson also had contact with some Christians in Aksu, a town about 300 kilometres east of Kashgar. A Chinese Christian there needed some Bibles for distribution among the Muslims and Marthinson sent a supply. Eventually a small Christian fellowship was established. The converted Chinese, the Bible distributor, later wrote to Marthinson, saying: “By God’s grace the church is growing! Presently there is no hindrance to the growth of the church and we can continue our work. We have registered with the authorities.” On another occasion a letter came from a place close to the Siberian border. It read: “All in the church are self-supporting. The church has no connection with anyone else.”<sup>174</sup>

So during the late 1940’s and early 1950’s there were many active churches only around a hundred kilometres from Kashgar. It would only be logical to assume that there was evangelism work going on in Kashgar as well. And so there was! The missionaries to Mongolia met some Christians who informed them that mission work had been started in Kashgar. “The Back to Jerusalem Movement” had begun to work there. The goal of the small mission was to plant churches right across Central Asia and all the way to Jerusalem. So here the Swedish missionary Höijer’s vision had been revived, only in the opposite direction. Marthinson says that every now and then he sent Bible portions and other literature to this mission in Kashgar.<sup>175</sup> During his stay in Urumchi Marthinson received a dispatch of Turkish New Testaments from John Anderson in India, that he later on forwarded to a group of Turkic Christians in Kashgar. The last book parcel was sent at Christmas 1950 from the Bible Society depot in Lanchow. The Bible portions arrived at destination, and a ‘Thank you Offering’ from the Christians in Kashgar was sent to Marthinson.<sup>176</sup>

More proof that the church in Eastern Turkestan was alive came to the missionaries in 1967. They were elated when they received a letter from the old mission field, for it had been nearly 30 years since any direct news had reached them from anyone who had been in personal contact with the missionaries. The person writing had been one of the girls in the Mission’s orphanage in Jarkend.<sup>177</sup> The correspondence between her and the Mission still continues today. The woman was in her fifties when, in 1967, she made her first contact. It was very courageous of her even to attempt to contact the foreign missionaries at that time, as it was during the peak of the “Cultural Revolution” (1966-1969) in China. All the churches, mosques, Buddhist temples and other places of worship were closed. Bibles, song books and Christian symbols in churches and homes were destroyed, and, in many cases, Christian leaders were sentenced to work camps or executed.<sup>178</sup> It would have been more logical for her to have made contact with the missionaries ten years earlier during the ‘Campaign of the Hundred Flowers’ (1956-1957). During that time China was experiencing more freedom, and everyone was encouraged to express their opinions. Criticism became so severe, however, that Mao had no other choice but to abolish these rights and the critics were severely punished.<sup>179</sup>

The missionaries remember the young woman well. Mrs. Naemi Terning remembers how the girl had left the orphanage and had later written to Mrs. Terning, who was a midwife, asking permission to accompany her on visits to the sick and to assist her in home deliveries. Mrs. Terning approved her request and found the girl keen to learn; she made notes about everything that happened. She accompanied Mrs. Terning for one and a half years. Gradually,

she was able to take care of normal cases by herself. At that time Mrs. Terning took leave of absence and was replaced by Miss Frida Lundell who died of typhus only ten days later. Her death left Nystrom alone in the medical and obstetric work in Jarkend. It was then decided that she should replace Miss Lundell. She did an excellent job and even succeeded in some very difficult cases where Nystrom himself did not succeed. "Her small hands were very suitable during deliveries", he said.<sup>180</sup> In 1940 she was arrested by the authorities and put in prison for two years. She became nearly blind because she was placed in a dark cell and did not see daylight for many months. After two years she was released, set free to die at home.

In her first letter, the woman wrote that she and another woman had been talking for two years about writing to the missionaries in Sweden. She also wrote that she was meeting with other Christians to pray and sing. In a letter dated during the summer of 1971, she describes how old friends of the missionaries were suffering. Some were quite ill and others had died.<sup>181</sup> In the spring of 1972 another letter arrived from the dear sister in Eastern Turkestan. As always, she was careful to choose the right words, but she wrote 'Jesus Christ' without being censored.<sup>182</sup> Another letter arrived at Christmas, 1972. These letters had not been censored. It was probably a general rule that letters were handed in open at the post offices, and then, after they had been read, they were posted. In her Christmas letter she relates how members of the fellowship were getting on. She continues, "We pray for you. We hope you are praying for us as well. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The same expression occurs several times in letters to Mrs. Terning and Miss Ester Johansson. In one of her letters she writes: "I have tried to get everyone together but it is difficult". Her words were undoubtedly a sign that there were a number of Christians in Jarkend.<sup>183</sup> In the spring of 1973 another letter arrived. The woman mentions several Christians that the missionaries remembered from old times. She also describes springtime in Eastern Turkestan - the birds singing and the gushing streams. Naemi Terning says, "When I read that I wished I was young and able to go there. Part of me longs to be there."<sup>184</sup> In the letter the woman also mentions a song that Miss Johansson had sent her. It was surprising that it had passed the censorship because it had a clear Christian message. In another letter in the summer of 1974 she mentions all the missionaries by name.<sup>185</sup> During 1977 several letters arrived. The woman sent greetings from "all friends and brothers and sisters". She mentions a son who does not want to continue his education. She hopes she will soon be able to find a job for him. She is ill and having difficulty in supporting her family. In the mornings she is barely able to get up. Sometimes she has to stay in bed all day. A married daughter and her family are living with her. In several letters she mentions the idea of going to Pakistan, where some of her relatives live. She dreams of meeting her dear old friend Naemi Terning there. In a letter from the beginning of the year 1978 the woman is full of gratitude about money she has received. This money helped her and her grandchildren from freezing to death. The woman continues: "If all the beautiful flowers in the world were writing paper, if the sea were ink, and the branches of the green pines were pens, my weak hands would never, never give up writing of your great love and compassion day and night."<sup>186</sup> In the same letter she writes about "the great Dr. Nystrom", who helped the sick and delivered so many babies.

Already in the 1960's, Arell had actually sent some American dollars to the woman. Other missionaries advised him not to do this, fearing she would get into trouble. At first the authorities confiscated the money, but later returned it to her.<sup>187</sup> On numerous occasions since that time Mrs. Terning sent money to her which she has always received.<sup>188</sup> In several of her letters the woman expresses sincere thanks and deep appreciation for this assistance. Once at the post office she sat weeping for joy as she read a letter from Sweden. People around her began to ask her what was wrong and when she explained, they were "both surprised and

happy”.<sup>189</sup> Apparently she never hid that she was in contact with the missionaries in Sweden. In the spring of 1980 she sent a photo which had been taken in 1932 when Nystrom had baptised her and four other women. The others had since died, she writes. Did they die as martyrs?

Jacob Stephen, who had fled from Eastern Turkestan to India many years ago and who had later settled in Sweden, translates the letters between the woman and the missionaries. Often he includes questions in his letters to her, because he is curious about the developments and changes but she never answers any questions relating to roads, electricity, telephones and other general conditions.<sup>190</sup> Probably she does not dare. She does mention, however, that she would like to go to Rawalpindi in Pakistan, and that the journey is possible “by machine” and takes only one week.<sup>191</sup> “By machine” was interpreted as “by bus”. As a rule her letters are very general. She once mentions that a letter which she had posted had been returned to her from the post office.<sup>192</sup> Probably she had written something that was forbidden.

The letters keep coming. In more recent years, though, she is more open in her letters. She writes about a Christian man whom she had met who was completely deaf. He had been raised in the Mission’s orphanage. Again she expresses how difficult it is to gather Christian friends together on a specific day and time. She mentions one brother who loves to sing when they came together for prayer, and that everyone remembers the days of the Mission and are thankful for its influence and help. Her letters prove that she does not in any way hide her faith. When other women are at their Muslim prayers, she ostentatiously continues her cleaning. She loves to sing Christian hymns and the children gather round her to listen. She openly discusses her faith with her Muslim neighbours and mentions another Christian Turk woman. They often meet a Chinese Christian family and “we talk openly about what it is like to be Christian in this country”. She emphasises that the freedom of religion which Christians are now enjoying is due to the generosity of the government. Although she is thankful to Chinese Communism for her “religious freedom”, she feels a strong aversion towards Russian Communism that had killed so many of her brothers and sisters in faith. Concerning the Muslim leaders she writes, “I despise Islam.”

In an interview with Jacob Stephen the question of Christian groups existing in Eastern Turkestan was brought up. He supposes these are remains from the time of the Swedish Mission engaged in and collaborating with the “Back to Jerusalem Movement”.<sup>193</sup> He adds that it should be taken into consideration that over the decades many Chinese had moved into the area and there were many Christians among them. Usually, Christian congregations were started by these Chinese, but local people – in the present case in places where the Mission had worked - joined the Christian fellowship and others were won for Christ.<sup>194</sup>

This was also confirmed by information reaching the missionaries via London where the Eastern Turk Josef Ryehan lived until his death in 1975. As has been mentioned above, Ryehan was a national evangelist during the mission era. After having fled from Eastern Turkestan to India, he eventually settled in London. From there he entertained correspondence with his old friends in Eastern Turkestan. As late as the spring of 1973 he writes to the missionaries about children of church members that they knew. These children were now, in the 1970’s, members of the church of Kashgar. He also speaks of other Christian Asians.<sup>195</sup> With his knowledge about conditions in Eastern Turkestan and the contacts he could apparently entertain up to the 1970’s, his information must be considered reliable. Of course he cannot indicate the sources of his information. The missionaries think the Christians he mentions are immigrants. Many of them have followed the masses to Sinkiang and have come

into contact with remnants from the mission era. Thus a more or less clandestine Christian fellowship has been established.<sup>196</sup> Undoubtedly it is a question of so-called house-churches where some families come together in homes without much previous planning and with no connection with the old Missions.

Space does not permit an analysis of the church in China. One quotation will suffice. A Baptist missionary and expert on China, Mr. Oscar Rinell says in 1978: “What needs to be underlined is the fact that hidden, informal, non-political and true churches are sprouting up all over China. Many Christians have broken away from the church officially recognised by the Communists as they are dissatisfied with the politicising of the church. Christianity is developing underground in forms free from denominations. The believers call themselves Christians and do not want to represent any particular denomination.”<sup>197</sup> What is said here about China in general is probably relevant to Sinkiang as well, which has now become more Chinese than ever. When MCCA Director Mr. Gosta Hedberg visited Hong Kong in the autumn of 1973, he observed what others had already learned, that Bible distribution was now legal.<sup>198</sup> On the basis of this information, it is possible that even the Swedish missionaries’ translation of the Bible is again in circulation.

Gunnar Jarring also conveys a short message from the old mission field. A colleague of his, a Pakistani diplomat, visited Kashgar in 1975. Later on he wrote to Mr. Jarring saying that his hosts in Kashgar had shown him a medical school and mentioned that it was situated in the same area that the Swedish Mission had had its hospital.<sup>199</sup> This incident serves as a reminder of what the Mission meant to the people.

In 1976, the author Jan Myrdal had an opportunity to make a short visit to Kashgar. During his stay there he could find no trace of the Swedish Mission. Nobody he met could remember exactly that there had been missionaries there. He writes: “It is as if the work never existed. The work of the missionaries is not even ‘writings in water’....In Kashgar they are forgotten.” Myrdal however admits that he had not had enough time to investigate the matter further.<sup>200</sup> His opinion of the missionaries was: “Wasted lives.”<sup>201</sup>

Gunnar Jarring stayed in Kashgar for a week in late summer of 1978. He reports that the Mission’s houses are gone. He had, however, met a couple of people who remembered the Mission but it was hard for them to recall any clear memories. And this is quite normal, says Jarring. It is unreasonable to expect people to remember details after more than 40 years.<sup>202</sup> It had to be a real coincidence if a visitor could trace anyone who had been living during the period of the Mission work in a city that now has 120,000 inhabitants.

However, neither Jan Myrdal nor Gunnar Jarring were able to visit Jarkend where the Mission had had its largest work including two orphanages. Most of the children were around ten years old at the time of the revolution in the 1930’s and would now be in their 50’s. Many of them still live in Jarkend and some are even Christians. The woman writing to the missionaries speaks of the Mission buildings still remaining. She has also been to Jengi-Hessar and seen houses from the mission era there.

## 9 THE MISSION'S HERITAGE

We have already considered some circumstances which make it possible to think that the Gospel continued to live on after the Mission's evacuation. The Church of Christ – be it in a modest way - took over the heritage after the Mission. It is probable that through the years there have been many more signs of life than those we are aware of. Some further aspects should also be considered even if they are less tangible.

The last thing known about the people is that their attitude towards the Mission was one of trust and great appreciation. The Mullahs, of course, encouraged fanaticism, but the people were generally friendly. This was true of people from all walks of life, the poor as well as some upper class families.

Over a period of 40 years of work, acceptance of the missionaries and confidence in them had been established among the people. This did not develop overnight nor did it disappear overnight, so it is illogical to imagine that people suddenly became hostile and that the numerous friends of the missionaries suddenly became their enemies. One could suppose that the old friendship lasted for a long time. And this was also confirmed, for example, when the missionaries revisited the mission field in 1946-47. Then they met many friends who wished that the Mission would come back. The same old friendship suddenly manifested itself in 1959 when some young Eastern Turks turned up at the M CCS Mission headquarters in Stockholm. One of them was the grandchild of a man who had been one of the richest men in Kashgar during the 1930's. The missionaries remember the family well. The young man had been asked to find the missionaries when he got to Sweden. Their visit proves that the friendly ties with the Mission lived on through generations.<sup>203</sup>

The new conditions brought about by the Mission, albeit in a limited way, did not simply disappear in the air. This could not have been just "writings in water". The Mission introduced professional skills so that people could build better houses, forge better tools, cultivate their fields and gardens in a more rational way and take care of their homes and families in a better way. The Mission cared for children and women and gave them a sense of human dignity and security. When the children learned to read and write, a new world opened to them. The Mission gave help to the sick and unhappy, but also taught those who suffered how to overcome some of their diseases. The Mission gave the Gospel to all those longing for a good God.

All this had been going on for more than 40 years. In 1912-1913, when L.E. Hogberg built the British Consulate in Kashgar he could already at that time employ over 100 people there during the construction; people who had all received their vocational training at the Mission. In a lecture in 1979, Gunnar Jarring described the Mission as one that was far ahead of its time providing technical help to an underdeveloped country as early as the 1910's.<sup>204</sup>

When all was over, not only emotional memories remained. What the Mission had given was "in the hands, in the hearts and in the minds". What had been taught made life a little bit easier to live. Such a heritage cannot be easily forgotten.

Many of the people who were associated with the Mission were executed. There were reports stating that the congregations had been nearly completely wiped out. Still, some individuals must have survived the persecution; some of those who escaped later established contact with the Mission. And maybe there were more who managed to get away. Some fled to safety in India or further east in China. When the situation improved in Sinkiang in the beginning of the 1940's, many of them probably returned home again.

Another group of people were those who believed in secret. No one knew that they were Christians or were sympathetic to the Christian faith. Therefore they did not undergo the same persecution. They survived. They had always been there. Tornquist writes: "Personally, I know of many in this country who believe in Jesus Christ in their hearts although they have not yet been able to be baptised."<sup>205</sup> David Gustafsson says that the lives of these secret believers reflected Christ, their way of life being entirely different from their old ways.<sup>206</sup> Mrs. Vendla Gustafsson speaks of one woman in the 1930's who to all appearances was a Christian. Mrs. Gustafsson got in touch with her when visiting her in her home when she was ill. The woman then confessed to Mrs. Gustafsson that on Fridays she went in secret to the Mission while her husband went to the mosque. On Sundays she would make up reasons to do some shopping so that she could go to Church. The missionaries noticed the woman because she was completely veiled and sat in the same place at every meeting. This happened in the early 1930's.<sup>207</sup>

Towards the end of the Mission period, one of the national evangelists was on a journey from Kashgar into the countryside. While riding along he saw some turban-clad pilgrims bound for Mecca, resting at the side of the road. As he approached the men he recognised them and was surprised to see that they were reading the New Testament. One of the men in the group said to the evangelist: "We know that the new regime is an enemy of yours, and it will surely force the missionaries to leave and even kill some of you. Do not fear, we will continue the Mission work. We are gathered here to read the New Testament and to pray in the name of Jesus because we are fed up with Islam."<sup>208</sup> Maybe the heritage of the Mission was passed on by secret Christians who had the courage to step forward when the storm had died down.

Other "remnants" from the mission era were the children. Some of the older boys, who professed to be Christians, were executed but the girls and the younger children were spared. Miss Ella Svedberg, one of the last missionaries to leave, writes about the spiritual maturity she found in the children. Boys 15-16 years old were willing to give their lives and their freedom for their Christian faith.<sup>209</sup> And the woman in Jarkend, mentioned above, a young girl when the mission work ended, continued to write regularly to the missionaries in Sweden witnessing about her living faith. There must be others as well, who passed on the Mission's heritage. It is absurd to imagine the contrary. Maybe "Paul" of whom Elsa Andersson writes, is one of them. He barely escaped during the revolution and the last thing the missionaries heard about him is that he was a teacher in Jarkend. If he survived the following years says Miss Andersson in 1942, "he is one of those for whom God undoubtedly has a future ministry among the Turks".

As has been said above, letters keep coming regularly from the former mission field, bringing news of the children and grandchildren of Turks who were members of the congregations when the missionaries worked there. News of other friends and some of the children from the orphanages has also come. Some of them have spent some years in India but are now back. Others have been elsewhere. Some are doctors; others work in a textile industry. "Talib"

practices as a hair-dresser, and “Rona” has just finished eighth grade of Chinese school and will now go on in a Turkish school, in order to become a nursery school teacher. “Elis”’s mother is at school at old age. All this is told to the missionaries as if they knew all about the families. And the missionaries remember and rejoice at the greetings. These letters show that “the Mission’s children and grandchildren” keep in contact with each other. One letter writer says that she often tells her grandchildren about the Mission “from the very beginning”.<sup>210</sup> It would be strange if they completely forgot the heritage for which their parents and grandparents had risked their lives. This is confirmed by a comparison with Mainland China. Elfie Kallberg, a missionary and expert on Chinese affairs, underlines the fact that totally new people are Christians nowadays, compared with the days before 1949. The generation which experienced the Communist Revolution has now disappeared, but their children are carrying on the Christian heritage.<sup>211</sup> It is logical to believe that the development is the same in Sinkiang. This is supported by the fact that other religions, such as Islam, which has the largest number of adherents, are experiencing freedom as well. In the summer of 1978, Gunnar Jarring visited Kashgar and saw the great mosque. From what he observed religious life was continuing in a normal way: The graves of the saints were kept trimmed and neat. Muslims were allowed to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the Muslim schools were functioning.<sup>212</sup>

A legitimate conclusion is that the Church of Christ is alive in Sinkiang, even though the Swedish Mission has left. It seems as if the safety – and the fall – of the Mission depended on the foreign consulates. The Russian Consulate was never more than half-hearted towards the Mission. After 1917 their attitude changed to active resistance, which grew to open hostility in the 1930’s. It also turned against the British Consulate, hindering much of the work in the British Consulate and making it impossible for them to protect the missionaries. This meant that the Mission, which had at least been partly protected and helped by the British, was now left alone and unprotected.

The Mission work was not, however, an isolated episode. Fragmentary facts, supported by circumstantial evidence, say that the Church is alive. If the Swedish Mission as such has now been forgotten, “as if this work never was”, is of less importance. What matters is that to all probability there are now Christians in the cities where the Mission was active. The Mission work was not an episode but the introduction of an era where people believe in Jesus Christ. And probably these Christians are now missionaries among their own people. Dr. David Wang, a young Chinese Mission leader who has been a refugee in Hong Kong for a number of years, visited Sweden in 1974 and shared news about the situation in China. He stated that foreign missionaries working in China was a thing of the past. The hope of the Church lay with national Christians and the house churches.<sup>213</sup> His opinion has been proved right during recent years. For instance, news came recently from Inner Mongolia, where the Swedish Mission work ended in the same way as in Sinkiang, that the church there is alive and that there are many Mongolian Christians.

And maybe the future will give us complete assurance about the Church of Christ in Sinkiang. The Swedish Mission to Muslims in Pakistan which has now been decided upon will surely play an important part here. This Mission work which will be carried out by the Swedish Lutheran Church and the MCCS, along with the Pakistani Church, will be just across the border from the old mission field in Eastern Turkestan. It will probably be possible to establish contacts across the border. This will be made easier by the opening of the Karakoram Highway, making travel between the two places less difficult. The highway has already been finished to the border on the Pakistan side and is used by lorries and buses and

will soon be open to tourists. The drivers tell about Christians they have met in Sinkiang. Nowadays it is easier for a Muslim in this area to become a Christian. Norwegian Bishop Arne Rudvin, who is one of the leaders of the Pakistani Church, visited the MCCA General Assembly in 1979. He said that, on the “birthday of the Prophet”, their church had baptised a Muslim who wanted to live as a Christian, and the Muslims had not reacted at all.<sup>214</sup>

In northern Pakistan, on the Chinese border, an Eastern Turkish population is found. Their relatives and friends live on in Eastern Turkestan, and in letters to the Swedish missionaries they speak about many of them, especially in Jarkend who have plans to travel over the mountains to visit their relatives in Pakistan. This trip is now possible both by plane and bus.<sup>215</sup> When Bishop Rudvin returned to Pakistan after his visit to Stockholm, he brought with him a copy of the Swedish missionaries’ translation of the Bible into Eastern Turkish. This is a cassette edition produced by Mission Secretary Folke Bjork and Jacob Stephen. It is hoped that this edition will be used among the Pakistani Eastern Turks, and possibly even reach into Sinkiang.<sup>216</sup> By the way, this cassette edition is the only thing left of the missionaries’ translation. The whole edition is out of print. A new project for the Mission is to have the Bible written in Romanised script as the children in Sinkiang now go to Chinese schools where they learn to read Turkish in Romanised script.<sup>217</sup> Concerning this Bible translation made by the missionaries, it is remarkable that in all the letters received since 1967 nothing is said about it. Probably no copies reached Jarkend. A parcel of Bibles was, however, sent to Kashgar, as has already been mentioned, in the late 1940’s by the Bible distributor Anders W. Marthinson. The assumption that the Turkish Bible is not to be found in Jarkend is confirmed by the fact the letter writing woman from Jarkend asked the missionaries, in the summer of 1980 to send her a Bible and a hymn book in Turkish. The writer did not think this would cause any problems, since the Muslims could send for copies of the Koran from Mecca. And thus, she as a Christian ought to have the right to read the Bible, she adds.<sup>218</sup>

Christians in Sinkiang live under the double pressure of Communist China and the Muslim majority in the province. Lately, this opposition has, however, slightly decreased from both sides, making it bearable to live as a Christian. A letter dated 1979 further confirms this assumption. The letter writer, the woman mentioned above, says: “Quite often we gather to pray and sing with our old friends from the Mission in Jarkend.” One of them is mentioned in the letter, a girl from the orphanage who had a hard time during the revolution of the 30’s. There is also a Chinese Christian family taking part in the meetings.<sup>219</sup> The conclusion is clear and unambiguous: the Church of Christ in Sinkiang is living today. It is active in house-groups without formal organisation. One of these house-churches has been mentioned by the woman in Jarkend. Maybe there are more house-churches in Jarkend with its more than 100,000 inhabitants? The fact that there are Christians in Kashgar has also been confirmed. The idea is fantastic! It is quite plausible that groups are meeting, scattered here and there all over the former mission field. Without knowing about each other or having contact with each other, these small Christians groups are persevering, witnessing about their faith and passing on the Mission’s heritage.



## NOTES

- 1 Andersson, 1948, p 99.
- 2 Palmaer, 1946, p 78; Hogberg, 1910, p 14 ff.
- 3 Wingate, 1951, p 12.
- 4 Nazarov, 1935, p 130 ff.
- 5 Mission Covenant Church of Sweden (MCCS) Annual Report 1932, pp 143 and 153. Such a large attendance was very unusual compared with mission work among Muslims in other areas. The MCCS Director Axel Andersson visited India at the end of the 1930's to familiarise himself with the other mission societies working among Muslims there. He wrote that mission work was allowed in India but the churches were empty. (Andersson, 1939, pp 213 ff. 220,225).
- 6 Sigrid Larsson's diary, 10/10/1926.
- 7 Palmaer, 1942, p 138 ff.
- 8 Lundahl, 1921, p 136, 2nd edition, 1939, p 281. Also published in Folke (a periodical), 1927, Vol. II, p 29
- 9 Nystrom to Lundahl and others, 19/11/1921.
- 10 Palmaer, 1942, p 34 ff.
- 11 The Apostolic Declaration of Faith compared to Islamic Faith (Vicedom, 1959, p 144; C-M Edsman in a book by Hemberg-Jeffner, 1966, p 145 ff.). Muslim Resistance against Christianity (Smith 1961, note 235; Kraemer, 1940, p 372). The Muslims Reject the Central Message of the Gospel (Sundkler, 1970, p 158). The Muslims' Understanding of Jesus Christ (Zwemer, 1929, p 183; Christensen, 1936, p 10 and 1959, p 150; Hogberg-Ahlberg, 1925, p 151; The Koran, sura 3,4 and 5; Zwemer, 1933, p 22 ff., 80 ff. 41). The lack of clarity about the death of Jesus on the Cross in the Koran has led to a number of differing traditions. One of them says that Jesus was taken down from the Cross before he died and some time later was seen riding along the Silk Route on his way to India, where he eventually died and was buried. (Palmaer, 1942, p.34 ff.; The monthly magazine "Aret Runt", 1973, No. 34; "Expressen" (a newspaper), 4 June Hemberg-Jeffner, 1966, p 159 ff.; The Muslim World, 1928, p 409; Christenson, 1959, p 8, 217; Sabri, 1948; Ansgarius, 1927, p 40.137; Kraemer, 1940, p 234. 237). Among the Muslims a "gospel" is circulating; the so-called Gospel of Barnabas. This was written in the 14th century by an Italian monk, a convert from Christianity to Islam. Many Muslims regard this gospel as the true, original one. In it, the teachings of Jesus have been adapted to the Islamic faith. The promise in the Gospel of John about the "Paracletos", "Helper", has been changed in the Gospel of Barnabas to "Pericytos" "the famous one, who is worthy of praise", and is said to foretell the coming of Muhammed. (Palmaer, 1942, p 32 ff. This interpretation is based on sura 61 in the Koran).
- 12 Raquette, 1935, p 173.
- 13 Lundahl, 1917, p 307; Raquette, 1928, p 4.
- 14 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972.
- 15 Christensen, 1936, p 11. In 1936 Christensen wrote the book "A Stumbling Block - the Incarnation, the Trinity and Redemption" as an attempt to explain Christian doctrines to Muslims. He was himself a missionary to Muslims.
- 16 Tornquist, 1928, p 494.
- 17 MCCS Annual Report, 1919, p 17.
- 18 Lundahl, 1917, p 443 ff. (Original with Jacob Stephen, Sundbyberg).
- 19 Mission Report, 1921, p 170 ff.
- 20 Swedish Mission Magazine (SMT), 1931, p 101 ff.
- 21 Rachel Wingate was the daughter of Colonel Wingate, the founder of the Central Asia Mission. Her brother, Brigadier General Orde Wingate, led the Burmese Chindites during World War II. The family became interested in the mission work in Eastern Turkestan and Rachel Wingate joined the field as a voluntary worker. In 1928 she returned to England where she became a secretary for the Royal Central Asia Society. During her youth she studied Arabic, Persian and History at Cambridge University where she obtained her degree in Arabic and History. Several years after she left Eastern Turkestan she assisted Sir Denison Ross in his research into the Eastern Turkish language. (Platt, 1966, p 193; Jarring, 1974, p 264).
- 22 Signe Olsson, a good friend of John Norstedt, had wanted to become a missionary in Eastern Turkestan. Although Miss Olsson never fulfilled this ambition, she forgot neither

- Eastern Turkestan nor Mr. Norstedt. When Nystrom travelled to the field in 1932, he brought with him a present from Miss Olsson to Norstedt. Sadly, Norstedt died before Nystrom reached Kashgar. If Norstedt had lived longer, Miss Olsson would probably have joined him on the field and married him. (Nystrom to Signe Olsson, confidential correspondence, no date, probably July 1932 and 30 October 1932).
- 23 Hogberg, 1924, p 51. In 1919 LMF (the Teachers' Mission Association) had decided to support fully one female missionary in Eastern Turkestan. (Hogberg to Raquette, 11/10/1919).
- 24 Tornquist to Nyren, 22/4/1924.
- 25 Lundahl to Raquette, 18/1/1928.
- 26 Ibid, 17/12/1929.
- 27 Ibid, 10/2/1930.
- 28 Tornquist to Lundahl, 7/8/1928.
- 29 Lundahl to Tornquist, 7/10/1928.
- 30 Tornquist to Sjöholm, 2/2/1915.
- 31 Ibid, to Oskar Andersson, 20/1/1919.
- 32 Nystrom to Gunnar Hermansson, 1/5/1936.
- 33 Obituary about Frida Lundell. Nystrom, 24/8/1934.
- 34 Nystrom to Lundell, Dannemora, 25/8/1934.
- 35 Memories and impressions from a lifetime, 1922, p 240 ff.
- 36 Interview with Ester Johansson, 27/2/1973.
- 37 Torvik, 1946, p 53.
- 38 Tornquist, 1928, p 449 ff.
- 39 Tornquist to Nyren, 22/4/1924.
- 40 The Friend of the Youth (Ungdomsvännen), 1919, p 269.
- 41 Ibid, 1935, p 413.
- 42 Palmaer to Tornquist, 19/5/1932.
- 43 Tornquist to Palmaer, 16/1/1932
- 44 Tornquist to Lundahl, 6/10/1930. Some years later Hermansson wrote to the mission board expressing how he felt persecuted both by the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan and by the mission leaders in Sweden. If they didn't apologise, he threatened to expose publicly the difficulties within the mission. In carrying through his threat, he created further problems for the mission leaders. (Hermansson to the leadership of the mission, 18/9/1939). In 1936 Nystrom had advised Hermansson not to create any scandals. (Nystrom to Hermansson, 20/11/1936).
- 45 Palmaer to John Andersson, 27/2/1932.
- 46 Palmaer to Gunnar Hermansson, 13/4/1932.
- 47 Interview with Carl Persson, 23/9/1972
- 48 Lindeberg, 1920, p 44 ff. and 1927, p 122 ff. Zwemer 1925, p 25 ff., 34, 84, 1925 in "Working together", p 140 ff. and 1939, p 140 ff. In 1914 Zwemer wrote about reformed Islam which seemed to be becoming more sympathetic towards Christianity. (International Review of Missions, Vol. 3, 1914, p 696 ff.). The Evangelical Mission Work (DEM), 1939 p 88.
- 49 DEM, 1930, p 153, Believed to be Raquette's position.
- 50 The magazine "Missionsförbundet", 30/6/1921
- 51 International Review of Missions, Vol. 14, 1925, pp 252-259. Raquette, 1928, p 3.
- 52 The magazine "Missionsförbundet", 9/12/1926.
- 53 Nyren, 1928, p 339 ff.
- 54 MCCS Annual Report, 1930,1931,1932.
- 55 Palmaer, 1942, p 222 ff.
- 56 Torvik, 1967, p 17.
- 57 The Muslim World, 1930, p 23. International Review of Missions, Vol. 18,1929, p 184.
- 58 DEM,1930, p 155.
- 59 Interview with Vendla Gustafsson, 11/9/1972.
- 60 Torvik, 1946, p 29 ff.
- 61 Interview with Ester Johansson, 27/2/1973.
- 62 Arell, 1935, p 8 ff.
- 63 Ansgarius, 1932, p 83 ff.
- 64 The magazine "Missionsförbundet", 1932, No. 8, p 119.
- 65 Ibid, 1897, p 227

- 66 The magazine, "Vinterny", 1920, p 13.
- 67 Nystrom, 1928, p 144.
- 68 The minutes of the Eastern Turkestan Conference, 1932, § 28.
- 69 Interview with Carl Persson, 23/9/1972. Torvik, 1946, p 54, 59. On their journey northwards, the missionaries came to the town of Kutja, where they met Lovisa Engvall. From there they continued on to Kuldja (or Ili), at that time the biggest city in Eastern Turkestan. Here, because of the presence of a large number of Russian and German refugees living in the city, they found signs of Western cultural influence. Some of these refugees were Christians. Although most of the Russians were Orthodox, there were also about a hundred Baptists among them. The Germans were Lutherans. (Torvik, 1946, p 118 ff.). During the 1930's there were several Orthodox congregations in the northern part of the province. An attempt was made from Beijing to coordinate them under one Bishop, but this was unsuccessful. (Latourette, 1945, p 356). Since they did not speak any Turkish, the Christian refugees did not evangelise the Muslims. A few Turks knew Russian, however, and sometimes came to the meetings. The missionaries took part in some of these church services which were organised by the Baptists. In one service, the evangelist from the group in Kashgar was invited to speak. Some of the Turks present became angry at what was said. The situation became so serious that they even threatened to kill the evangelist. (Interview with Carl Persson, 23/9/1972). Torvik intended to open a mission station in Kuldja, so when Persson returned to Kasghar, Torvik stayed behind. Within a short time he was able to start a school for Muslim children. However, when he spoke with missionaries from the China Inland Mission during a visit to Urumchi, they made it clear to him that he was an intruder into their area. (Torvik, 1946, p 158). The Urumchi missionary, Percy Mather, later printed a song book for the Baptists in Kuldja. (Cable, 1948, p 100). Torvik returned to Kuldja and at the beginning of 1933, the Norwegian Lutheran Mission to China was established there. Kuldja is approximately 1,000 kilometres from Kashgar. Although the work began well (Torvik, 1967, p 7), it had to stop in 1935 when Torvik was expelled from the country. A short time before his departure he baptised a young Turk, the son of a merchant. (Torvik, 1946, p 171).
- 70 Nystrom to the magazine "Missionsforbundet", 12/12/1923.
- 71 Palmaer, 1942, p 220 ff.
- 72 Nystrom to "brother Sandberg", 7/11/1932.
- 73 Inspection Report, 1913.
- 74 Ansgarius, 1927, p 39 ff.
- 75 Interview with Vendla Gustafsson, 11/9/1972.
- 76 Ibid with Roberntz, 16/4/1973.
- 77 Lundahl-Walder, 1938, p 100, 126 ff.; Hogberg, 1918, p 8, 15.
- 78 Nystrom to Palmaer, 2/6/1936.
- 79 DEM, 1936, p 26 ff.
- 80 The magazine "Missionsforbundet", 14/6/1935. Hedin wrote that General Ma Ho-san travelled all the way from Turfan to Kashgar (about 1,000 kilometres) in order to receive treatment from one of the missionary doctors (Hedin, 1935, p 330).
- 81 Fleming, 1936, p 490 ff.
- 82 Hogberg, 1925, p 47. Hanna Raquette wrote, "The leaders of villages far away from the mission station came to us for help, often together with many of the people from their village." (Svensk Veckotidning, 7/11/1975, a weekly magazine).
- 83 Oskar Hermansson to Palmaer, 6/4/1936. One of the few hand-written books that existed in Eastern Turkestan when the missionaries arrived was "The History of the Prophets". Originally written in Arabic, it had been translated into Persian at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. It was then eventually translated into Eastern Turkish. (Hogberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p 69). Owen Lattimore points out that the few books which had been written in Uighur (Eastern Turkish) dated back before the Mongol reign in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This literature was influenced by either Arab, Persian or Indian culture. (Lattimore, 1950, p 240, 245).
- 84 Hogberg, 1918, p 3 and 1925, p 47; Hogberg-Ahlbert, 1915, p 225.
- 85 Hedin, 1935, footnote, p 329.
- 86 Hedin to missionaries, 30/11/1928, Vinterny, 1972. The letter was found by Widman, an archivist, in the MCCS archives in Stockholm.
- 87 DEM, 1936, p 26 ff.

- 88 Ambolt, 1935, p 134 ff.
- 89 Wingate, 195, p 14; Jarring, 1979, p 110.
- 90 Palmaer, 1942, p 220.
- 91 SMT, 1931, p 110 ff., 116 ff.
- 92 Nyren, 1928, p 381.
- 93 Roberntz to Hultvall, 2/3/1978.
- 94 Nyren, 1928, p 382.
- 95 Ibid, p 382 ff.
- 96 Roberntz to Hultvall, 2/3/1978; Palmberg in "Vetlanda-Posten" (a newspaper). 14/2/1961.
- 97 Wingate, 1951, p 17.
- 98 Roberntz to Hultvall, 2/3/1978; Palmberg in "Vetlanda-Posten" (a newspaper). 17/1/1961.
- 99 Palmaer, 1942, p 173.
- 100 Andersson, 1948, p 107.
- 101 The minutes of the Eastern Turkestan Conference, 1921, §6.
- 102 Ansgarius, 192, p 44.
- 103 The minutes of the Eastern Turkestan Conference, 1926, §19.
- 104 Wingate, 1951, p 12 ff.
- 105 Interview with Roberntz, 16/4/1973.
- 106 Ahlbert to Raquette, 24/6/1940. The literature at the MCCS 50th anniversary in 1928 mentioned a number of the Asian leaders. Nyren, 1928, p 391. Nyren. B, 1928, p 275 ff. Also in Palmaer, 1942, p 143. "Svensk Veckotidning", (a periodical), 5/6/1942. Lundahl, 1945, p 245 ff. Report from an exploratory journey in 1946/47. Ansgarius, 1947, p 107.
- 107 Nyren, 1928, p 349 ff.
- 108 Palmaer to "Dear missionary friends", 1/7/1939.
- 109 From Sigrid Selvey (among others) to "Dear Adele", 10/1/1938.
- 110 The MCCS Annual Report, 1938. Palmaer, 1942, p 261.
- 111 Sigrid Selvey's diary, 19/8/1937. Sigrid Selvey to Adele, 10/1/1938.
- 112 Ibid to Adele, 10/1/1938.
- 113 Ibid to Ella and Stina, 22/8/1938. Mrs. Selvey received money from the mission headquarters in Stockholm for distribution among the poor. (Palmaer to "Dear Mission Friends", 1/7/1939).
- 114 Sigrid Selvey to "Dear Stina", 13/11/1939. She wrote, among other things, about the new Consul, Mr. Johnson: "What I appreciate most about the Consul is that he brought us greetings from our three brothers."
- 115 Ibid to unknown, 2/3/1939.
- 116 Shipton. D, 1950, p 129.
- 117 Wu, 1939, p 678.
- 118 Palmaer, 1942, p 300.
- 119 Sigrid Selvey to "Efraim", 27/1/1943.
- 120 Ibid, 19/5/1943.
- 121 Shipton, 1950, p 128.
- 122 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972.
- 123 Palmaer, 1942, p 260 ff.
- 124 Report from the journey in Northern India in the spring of 1939. Palmaer to the mission leaders, 25/1/1938. He reported that there were 5,000 refugees from Eastern Turkestan in India.
- 125 Neill, 1971, p 421 ff. 600.
- 126 Roberntz to Hultvall, 1/6/1978.
- 127 Ibid, The Scandinavian Alliance Mission had also tried to reach Tibet from bases on the Indian border. This missionary organisation was founded in 1900 among Scandinavians in America by Fredrik Franson. A few years prior to this, Franson had himself been working on the Indian/Tibetan border. He had many wild ideas about how missionaries could get into Tibet with Bibles. (Westman, 1960, p 123; Aulen, 1933, p 383; Thomander, 1924, p 90 ff. 108 ff.; Neill, 1971, p 196.)
- 128 Palmaer, 1952, p 257 ff. Gustav Westmo was from Varnamo (a city in Sweden). In 1922. he went to India as a missionary with the Swedish Alliance Mission. In 1937 he joined the International Methodist Mission Society. (Albertsson, mission leader of the SAM, to Hultvall, 14/6/1978) "The International Methodist Mission Society has sent

many Swedish missionaries to India. Mr. and Mrs. Westmo, for example, have a fruitful work among Muslims in a town near Bombay." (Westman, 1949, p 86).

129 Palmaer, 1942, p 260. The city of Karachi was under Indian rule until 1948.

130 The minutes of the MCCS General Assembly, 1939.

131 Stina Rydberg to Hultvall, 8/3/1978.

132 Ansgarius, 194, p 144.

133 The MCCS Annual Report, 1940, p 94.

134 Interview with Roberntz, 16/4/1973.

135 Torvik, 1967, p 16.

136 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972.

137 Stephen, 1947, p 40 ff., 72 ff. and interview with Stephen, 6/7/1970.

138 Anna Andersson in Uppsala to Nystrom, undated January 1937, 21/1/1937 Nystrom to Anna Andersson, 18/1/1937. To Jacob Akhon (Stephen), India. 28/1/1937.

139 Lydia Svard to Hultvall, 22/2/1978.

140 Palmaer, 1942, p 285; MCCS Annual Report, 1940, p 12.

141 Ibid, 1941, p 13, Minutes of the Mission Board meeting, October 1940, §48.

142 MCCS Annual Report, 1943, p 96.

143 Interview with Stina Rydberg, 3/4/1973.

144 Roberntz to Hultvall, 2/3/1978.

145 Lydia Svard to Hultvall, 22/2/1978. Nicklasson, 1955, p 155 ff.

146 Ansgarius, 1941, p 145; Stephen, 1947, p 73 ff.

147 Torvik, 1967, p 16.

148 Palmaer, 1942, p 260.

149 Ester and Sigrid Moen to Mission Board, 5/10/1943.

150 The Muslim World, 1939, p 274.

151 "Svenska Morgonbladet", 12/1/1946.

152 Ansgarius, 1947, p 102 ff.

153 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972. Stephen Neill wrote about this work in his report on his trip to Asia a short time before the World Council of Churches was formed in 1948. (Neill, 1950, p 60).

154 Ansgarius, 1947, p 102 ff. and the Report on the exploratory trip to Eastern Turkestan. Missionaries with the China Inland Mission, who had been working in the northern part of the province (their main station was in Urumchi), were also unable to return. Their mission work was outlawed in 1938 and the missionaries were expelled from the country. Three of them visited Kashgar before finally leaving the country. Others went to East China. One of these missionaries, in Lanchow, Kansu province, was visited by the Swedish missionaries in 1946 on their way to the mission field. (Ansgarius, 1947, p 101). Another CIM missionary, Raymond Joycei, moved to Canada. In 1972 he was to be found working in India and advocating an increase in literature evangelism among Muslims in different countries. (Svensk Veckotidning (a periodical), 1972, No. 42). The longest serving CIM missionary in Urumchi, George Hunter, refused to leave his work and was therefore imprisoned. (MCCS Annual Report, 1941, p 94). After 18 months he was taken to Lanchow, where his imprisonment continued. Hunter was 83 years old when he was finally released. He had lived 50 years in China and had only one furlough during that time. (Platt, 1966, p 201). His co-worker, Percy Mather, who joined him in 1914, died of typhus in 1933 at the beginning of the revolution when he was treating the wounded. Shortly after Mather's death, one of the younger missionaries, Dr. Fischbacher also died of typhus. Fischbacher had arrived on the mission field only a short time before his death. (Cable, 1948, p 92; Hedin, 1935, p 17; Teichman, 1937, p 114). After Hunter was released from prison, he moved to Kanchow, closer to the Eastern Turkestan border. While still awaiting an opportunity to return to Urumchi he died in Kanchow in December 1946. (Neill et al. 1971, p 263; Cable, 1948, p 103). None of the CIM missionaries were ever able to return to Eastern Turkestan. (Eric Malm, a missionary who was in China and Japan with the Swedish Mission, by phone to John Hultvall, 22/2/1978). A Catholic mission also worked in the northern part of the province. Missionaries who worked here generally belonged to the German organisation Steyl. Priests from other countries, such as Holland, were also involved in this work however. In 1935-36 the mission had 6 main stations, 5 smaller stations, a hospital and 2 "poor people's pharmacies". The Catholic Church had 738 members in the area, of whom 17 were Europeans. Included in this number were some baptised

- children. (Loy, 1936/37, p 114, Lindeberg, 1928, p 148 ff.). At the end of the 1930's many Catholics left the area. (Latourette, 1945, Vol. VII, p 344). Ferdinand Loy, a German, was the leader of the Catholic mission from 1931. He became the first Prefect in the mission when Sinkiang was made an apostolic prefectorate in 1938. (Dr. Fr Meltzer. SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO GENTIUM EVANGELIZATIONE SEU DE PROPAGANDA FIDE, to Hultvall, 19/4/1978). Philipp Moritz and Loy and the missionaries with them continued their work until the Communist invasion in 1949. (Bibliotheca Missionum, Vol. XIV 1, p 369,377).
- 155 Ansgarius, 1947, p 102 ff. and the report from the exploratory trip. The Russian refugee family reminds us that one of the motives for the Kashgar mission station was to help refugees from Russia. Among the refugees were exiled Russian "Stundists" (evangelical Christian peasant farmers from Russian Turkestan). These plans were never put into practice, however. (Lundahl, 1916, p 129).
- 156 Ansgarius, 1947, p 102 ff.
- 157 The report from the exploratory trip and an interview with Roberntz, 16/4/1973.
- 158 Shipton, 1950, p 107.
- 159 Ansgarius, 1947, p 105 ff.
- 160 Report on the inspection of the mission's property by General Consul E. E. Shipton.
- 161 Moen, Some impressions from the trip to Sinkiang, Bombay 1947, an unpublished manuscript added to the official report on the exploratory trip.
- 162 Interview with Roberntz, 16/4/1973. The British General Consulate in Kashgar was subject to the administration in India. When India became independent in 1948, the General Consulate became Indian instead of British.
- 163 The report from the exploratory trip. Rachel Wingate, who worked with the Swedish Mission in 1924-1928, returned to England and became a secretary for the Royal Central Asian Society. (Jarring, 1974, p 264). In 1951, she published information she had received about events in Eastern Turkestan. The last Christians were imprisoned in 1938-39. Further news about them was not received until after World War II. Some of them had been executed, while others had been starved to death. The remaining Christians had been tortured. They had been placed in cells that were so small that they couldn't sit or lie down in them. They had to stand until they got gangrene in their legs. Only a few of the strongest ones survived the persecution and stress. They were finally released, but with serious threats against them. (The Muslim World, January 1951, p 20). x to N Terning, 29/4/1980.
- 164 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972.
- 165 Ibid.
- 166 The report from the exploratory trip. The Norwegian missionary, Otto Torvik, wrote that during his exploratory trip to India in 1948, he met with the Swedish missionary Roberntz at the Swedish mission station of Bombay. Roberntz was tired and sick, says Torvik, and very depressed over the situation on the mission field that was still very much on his heart. He had not yet given up hope of one day returning to Eastern Turkestan. (Torvik, 1967, p 17).
- 167 Interview with Moen, 30/9/1972.
- 168 Wingate in The Muslim World, January 1951, p 20. Ansgarius, 1947, p 107 ff.
- 169 Ansgarius, 1947, p 109.
- 170 Marthinson, 1972, p 182 ff.
- 171 Light in the east (Ljusglimtar i Oster), 1950, p 21.
- 172 Ibid, 1950, p 20; Marthinson, 1972, p 180.
- 173 Marthinson, 1975, p 231.
- 174 Ibid, 232 ff.
- 175 Ibid, 1972, p 212. The headquarters was in London. (Interview with Roberntz, 16/4/1973).
- 176 Ibid. p 184; Marthinson to Hultvall, 18/5/1973.
- 177 Interview with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973. Ansgarius, 1967, p 67.
- 178 Oscar Rinell in the periodical "Religion and Questions in Life", No. 1, 1978, p 12. During the Cultural Revolution churches were turned into schools, offices and warehouses. The situation was chaotic and Mao had to bring in the army to re-establish order. All religions were severely attacked. One of the slogans was: "Destroy the four old factors!" - Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. (Ake Haglund in Religion and Questions in Life, No. 1,1978, p 5). The Buddhist monks, for example, became

- museum guards at the former monasteries. (Cecilia Lindqvist in a lecture for teachers, Spring 1973).
- 179 During the Campaign of the Hundred Flowers, many, such as Pastor Marcus Cheng, sharply criticised Communism. Pastor Marcus Cheng was a highly respected leader in the MCCS work in Central China until 1950, who later became one of the main leaders of the Three Self Movement. He criticised Communism and said its activities were worse than digging up the graves of ancestors would be. This accusation was called "the most dishonouring accusation ever made against the Communist Party, against the constitution and against the government's policy on religion." The campaign of the Hundred Flowers was stopped and critics were punished. It is not known how Cheng was punished. The same thing probably happened to him as to many other critics; they lost their political influence and were forced to become industrial workers. (Rinell in the periodical Religion and Questions in Life, No. 1, 1978, p 12. Rinell to Hultvall, 4/4/1978).
- 180 Interviews with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973 and 26/10/1977. In a letter written 29/4/1980, the woman regrets that she didn't begin the correspondence earlier. Another letter 29/9/1980.
- 181 Ibid, 24/7/1973. "Svensk Veckotidning" (weekly newspaper), December, 1968.
- 182 Interview with Vendla Gustafsson, 11/9/1972.
- 183 Interview with Ester Johansson, 27/2/1973 and Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973.
- 184 Interview with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973.
- 185 "Svensk Veckotidning" (weekly newspaper), 30/8/1975, No. 35.
- 186 X to Naemi Terning, 19/3/1977, 28/6/1977, 3/8/1977, 18/11/1977, 18/2/1978.
- 187 Interview with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973.
- 188 Ibid, 26/10/1978.
- 189 X to Naemi Terning, 3/8/1977.
- 190 Stina Rydberg to Hultvall, 8/3/1978; X to Astrid Persson, 29/4/1980.
- 191 X to Naemi Terning, 18/11/1977.
- 192 Ibid, 28/6/1977.
- 193 Interview with Jacob Stephen, 6/7/1970. X to Jacob Stephen, 25/8/1980 and 29/9/1980.
- 194 The periodical MED, 1972, No. 4, p 25. (An overview about the population increase in Sinkiang by W J Drew in Central Asian Review, Vol. XVI, No. 3. London. 1968). The number of Chinese has increased to over 4 million in the Sinkiang Province during the 1950's-1960's (Gore, 1980, p 321.)
- 195 Interview with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973. In the summer of 1966 Ryehan visited Sweden and participated in the MCCS General Assembly. There he mentioned that he knew of Christians in Eastern Turkestan. (Svensk Veckotidning, 1966, No. 25, p 6 ff.).
- 196 Interview with Naemi Terning, 24/7/1973.
- 197 Oscar Rinell in the periodical, Religion and Questions in Life. No. 1, 1978, p 12. Rinell has spent over 60 years in Far East Asia of which 30 years was as a missionary for the Swedish Baptist Mission to Shandong. Rinell wrote that the Lord's Supper is celebrated in these house churches. "When the Christians pray they don't fall on their knees and usually there is no set form in their meetings." (p 12). Karl-Axel Elmquist, the Chief Editor of the weekly newspaper "Svensk Veckotidning", also wrote about these "secret, half-secret or well-known" house meetings, after his visit to China during the spring of 1978. He was allowed to travel to Chengdu in Sichwan province, an area which foreigners had not previously been allowed to visit (Svensk Veckotidning, 1978, No. 16, p 7 ff.). There are many different opinions about the situation for Christians in China after the Revolution. (See for example, SMT, 1973, p 59 ff., 218 ff.; Sommarstrom, 1952, p 67 ff. 92 ff., 139 ff. 160 ff.; Nystrom, 1953, preface, 22 ff. 95 ff., 112 ff., 172 ff., 183 ff., 190 ff.; Rundblom, 1961, p 13-45, 429-439. 1973, p 124-132).
- 198 Svensk Veckotidning, 1973, No. 50, p 8. The Bible in modern Chinese was completed and printed in Hong Kong in 1978. This version is as easily understood by the Chinese as the wall-newspapers in their villages. The Bible can be brought into China by, for example, Chinese Christians, when they visit their relatives and friends in their home country.
- 199 Interview with Gunnar Jarring, 21/6/1976. Jarring to Hultvall, 22/11/1977.
- 200 Myrdal, 1977, p 69 ff. Jan Myrdal on Swedish Radio January 1977.
- 201 Myrdal, 1977, p 78.
- 202 Interview with Jarring, 18/12/1978. Jarring, 1979, p 161.

- 203 Svensk Veckotidning, 2/10/1959.
- 204 Jarring, 25/1/1979, A lecture for the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography.
- 205 Tornquist, 1928, p 486.
- 206 Palmaer, 1942, p 131.
- 207 Interview with Vendla Gustafsson, 11/9/1972.
- 208 Palmaer, 1942, p 150.
- 209 Friska Vindar, 1941, p 6 ff.
- 210 X to Stephen, autumn 1978. Ibid to Naemi Terning, 6/12/1978, 1/9/1979, 18/10/1979.
- 211 Elfie Kallberg in MED, 1975, No. 1, p 28 ff.; SMT, p 73 ff. (especially p 83).
- 212 Jarring in a lecture, 25/1/1979. Jarring, 1979, p 209 ff.
- 213 Svensk Veckotidning, 1974, No. 42.
- 214 Bishop Arne Rudvin at the 1979 General Assembly and in a personal conversation with John Hultvall, 14/6/1979. Rudvin explained that if the road between Pakistan and China had existed in 1938, the refugees from Sinkiang would not have gone to India, but to Pakistan. Rudvin himself had planned to travel to Eastern Turkestan as a missionary at the beginning of the 1930's. As already mentioned, the Norwegian Mission was at this time trying to establish work in the northern parts of Eastern Turkestan. Their only missionary to the area was Otto Torvik, who was expelled in 1935.
- 215 X to Naemi Terning, 18/10/1979.
- 216 Bjork in conversation with Hultvall at the General Assembly in 1979.
- 217 X to Naemi Terning, 1/9/1979. This reform had already been planned at the end of the 1950's. (Jarring, 1979, p 41).
- 218 X to Josef Stephen, 25/8/1980 and 29/9/1980.
- 219 X to Stephen, 9/12/1979.



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## Glossary

**(Words needing a special explanation will be underlined the first time they appear in the text. This list will be extended progressively with the publication of other chapters of the original text.)**

Aksu	Geographical name. A city of south-western Xinjiang, which is located in the northern rim of the Tarim basin and north-eastern direction of the Kashgar. It is situated more than 500 km from Kashgar and around 1000 km from the provincial capital city of Urumchi. Aksu means “white water” in Uighur language (Eastern Turki), and it is called “Akesu” in Chinese transliteration.
Bostan Terek	Geographical name
Chinese mission (the)	The part of the Swedish Mission work directed towards the Chinese population in Eastern Turkestan.
East/ern/ Turkestan	Geographical name. Today called Xinjiang or Sinkiang, the largest provincial region of the China. This region was a homeland of Uighurs from history to nowadays. It was formerly known in Europe as Eastern Turkestan or Chinese Turkestan. It has other names, used by different peoples at different times, such as Chinese Tartary, High Tartary, East Chaghatai, Moghulistan, Kashgaria, Altishahr (the six cities of the Tarim basin), Little Bukhara and Serindia and so on. In Chinese it has been called “Xinjiang” (literally meaning “new frontier”, “new territory”, “new borderland” or “new dominion”) since 1884. Since 1955, it has been officially called the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China. Today Xinjiang has the distinction of being China’s largest administrative region, covering approximately 1/6 <sup>th</sup> of China’s total territory or 1,646,800 square km.
East/ern/ Turks	This term was used by the missionaries for the inhabitants of East Turkestan, today officially called Uighur. As recently as the part of 20 <sup>th</sup> century, the Uighurs were still being referred to by a variety of names, they were called Turkis, Eastern Turkis, Mohammedans, Muslims, Kashgaris, Tartaris by the European Sources. The Chinese categorized them as Huihui, Huimin (literally, Muslims), Chantou (literally, turban-headed), while the nomads (mainly in Central Asian Kazakhs, Kyrghizs) and Russians called them Sart (literally, merchant, town-people or agricultural people). In 1922, former Soviet government decided to adopt the historical designation “Uighur” for the émigrés of Chinese Turkestan, living in the USSR. Under the Soviet Communist influence, the Xinjiang Authorities began to use this name for the sedentary oasis population. Actually, “Uighur”, this ethnic name was officially accepted by the provincial government in Xinjiang in 1934. Since then, in Chinese the name

	<p>“Uighur” is officially spelled “Weiwuer” instead of “Chantou”. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Uighurs constituted more than 90% of total population in Xinjiang. In 1941-1942 Uighur numbered 2,941,000, constituted more than 80% of the total population, the Han Chinese numbered 200,000, only constituted around 5 % of the province’s total population. Now the Uighur population exceeds 8,250,000 (Chinese government census in 1999), which constitutes 46.48 % of the total population in the Autonomous Region, a result of massive Han Chinese migration into this region since the early 1950’s.</p>
East/ern/ Turki	<p>The language spoken in the East Turkestan. Today called “Uighur Language”. Modern Uighur is a Turkic language of the Eastern or Chaghatai branch. Now it is commonly said to have been “Uighur”. This is the designation of a modern Turkic language (Uyghur tili or Uighurche) used by the majority of the Turkic speaking sedentary population in north-western China. Among western scholars, especially Swedish Missionaries, it has been referred to as “Eastern Turki” in general. It is most closely related to the modern Uzbek Language.</p> <p>The number of the native Uighur-speakers is currently estimated at ten million. Modern Uighur does not serve as the official language of any independent nation. It does, however, serve as the regionally official lingua franca among the various ethnic groups in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, who do not use Chinese as their first language.</p>
East/ern/ Turkish Fengsiang	See Eastern Turki Geographical name
General Assembly (the)	Short for the General Assembly of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. Annual assembly or conference of the MCCA.
Hami (Kumul)	Geographical name. A city of the eastern part of Xinjiang and bordering with the Gansu province in the north-western China. Kumul is an ancient city which is called “Hami” in Chinese. They produce the well-known fruit – “Hami melon”. It is 595 km from the provincial capital city of Urumchi, on the west side.
Hancheng	Geographical name. Hancheng meaning is “Chinese city”, it is located eastern side of Kashgar and is only 20 km from the Kashgar city. Now it is called “Shufu” in Chinese, and called “Yengi Shehr” in Uighur. It is a county, belonging to the Kashgar administrative district.
Headquarters	Short for MCCA headquarters
Jarkend	Geographical name. A famous city in the southern silk road. It is located eastern side of Kashgar. Today called Yarkand in Uighur, “Shache” in Chinese. It is one of the biggest cities in Southern Xinjiang, with a population of about 700,000 people.
Jengi-Hessar	Geographical name. A small city near Kashgar, which is located between Kashgar and Yarkand. It was well-known for

	Thenife-production. In Uighur called Yengi – Hissar, In Chinese Called “Yingjisha”.
Kashgar	Geographical name. A famous and ancient city in south-western Xinjiang. It is about 1500 km from the provincial capital city of Urumchi in the north. It has another name in Chinese “Kashi”.
Khotan	Geographical name. An ancient city in south Xinjiang, which is located at the southern rim of the Takla-Makan desert. They produce the well-known Khotan jade, Khotan silk, and Khotan Rugs. It is called “Hetian” in Chinese.
Kuldja	Geographical name. A city in north-western Xinjiang and bordering with Kazakistan on the west side. It is located in the Ili Valley. It is spelt in different ways, such as Gulja/Ghuldja/ Kuldja. In Chinese called “Yining”. It is situated 690 km from Urumchi on the east side.
Kutja	Geographical name. It was also spelt Kucha or Kutcha. It is located on the northern rim of the Tarim Basin and north-eastern side of Aksu city. Historically, it was a Buddhism centre. In Chinese it is called “Kuche”.
MCCS	Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
/Mission/ Board (the)	Short for the Mission Board of the MCCS
Mission Conference (the)	Short for the mission conference of the MCCS
Mission Director	Director of the MCCS
Mission Secretary	Mission Secretary of the MCCS
Mullah	Literary meaning is “Mister, Knowledgeable man or teacher”, Ordinary this word referred to a religious leader at the Mosque or teacher at the Madrasa
Sinkiang	See “Eastern Tukestan”, today: Xinjiang
Swedish Mission (the)	The mission work established by missionaries from the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
Tungans	Chinese Muslim or Chinese converts to Islam. From 1949, Chinese Government recognized them as an ethnic group, and called them “Huizu”. Now their number is estimated around more than ten millions, living throughout China.
Turfan	Geographical name. A famous city in the eastern part of Xinjiang, located in the Turfan basin, it was under 155 m from the sea-level. Turfan was located near Urumchi and is only 180 km from Urumchi. It was a capital city of the ancient Uighur Kingdom and a famous centre of the Buddhism culture in the History. It called “Tulufan” in Chinese.
Turk	Term used by the missionaries for the inhabitants of East Turkestan. But Turk and Turkic, these terms actually have a very wide meaning. It includes all of the Turkic speaking

peoples such as Turkey Turks, Uzbeks, Azerbaijanis, Kazaks, Kirghizs, Uighurs, Tatars and others. So this terms has a wide and a narrow sense.

Turkish

Today this term only refers to “Turkish language of Turkey”, not referring to so-called modern Uighur or other Turkic language.