

# Mission and Revolution in Central Asia

The MCCS Mission Work in Eastern Turkestan 1892-1938

*by John Hultvall*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by Ambassador Gunnar Jarring

Preface by the author

- I. Eastern Turkestan – An Isolated Country and Yet a Meeting Place
  1. A Geographical Survey
  2. Different Ethnic Groups
  3. Scenes from Everyday Life
  4. A Brief Historical Survey
  5. Religious Concepts among the Chinese Rulers
  6. The Religion of the Masses
  7. Eastern Turkestan Church History
  
- II. Exploring the Mission Field 1892 -1900. From N. F. Höijer to the Boxer Uprising
  1. An Un-known Mission Field
  2. Pioneers
  3. Diffident Missionary Endeavours
  4. Sven Hedin – a Critic and a Friend
  5. Real Adversities
  
- III. The Foundation 1901 – 1912. From the Boxer Uprising to the Birth of the Republic.
  1. New Missionaries Keep Coming to the Field in a Constant Stream
  2. Mission Medical Care is Organized
  3. The Chinese Branch of the Mission Develops
  4. The Bible Dispute
  5. Starting Children’s Homes
  6. The Republican Frenzy Reaches Kashgar
  7. The Results of the Founding Years
  
- IV. Stabilization 1912 – 1923. From Sjöholm’s Inspection Tour to the First Persecution.
  1. The Inspection of 1913
  2. The Eastern Turkestan Conference
  3. The Schools – an Attempt to Reach Young People
  4. The Literary Work Transgressing all Frontiers
  5. The Church is Taking Roots
  6. The First World War – Seen from a Distance
  7. The Russian Revolution Had Far-Reaching Consequences for the Mission
  8. Severe Blood Letting in the Missionary Group
  9. Everyday Life of the Missionaries
  10. For and Against the Eastern Turkestan Mission
  11. The Persecution of 1923
  
- V. “Fields Whitening to Harvest”. (1924-1932). From the reconstruction of the Church to an approaching revolution.

1. A Coming Storm
2. “Distressed, Tortured and in Pain”
3. To preach the Gospel
4. Between Colleagues Only
5. Renewal of Health Care Work
6. On the Brighter Side
7. A Spiritual Breakthrough – Some Underlying Causes

VI. Phasing out. (1933 – 1938). From Ma Chung-yen to Sheng Shih-tsai.

1. The Muslim Revolution Reaches the Mission Field (1933 – 1934)
2. The Mission in the Storm
3. Interwar Years – Russian Years (1934 – 1936)
4. Reconstruction of the Mission
5. A Missionary’s Life – One of Many...
6. Guarded Optimism – in Spite of Everything
7. The New Testament in the Language of the People
8. Sheng Shih-tsai Strikes (1937 – 1938)
9. The Mission is Crushed
10. Separate Destructive Forces Sealed the Fate of the Mission

VII. The Church of Christ in Sinkiang.

1. “Red Exodus” and “Sheng Shih-tsai’s Exodus”
2. “God’s Surprising Providence”
3. The Mission Continues in India
4. The Completion of the Bible Translation
5. Exploring Old Territory
6. Signs of Life from the Mission Field
7. The Mission’s Heritage

Notes

Bibliography

## **Foreword by Ambassador Gunnar Jarring**

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

## Preface by the Author 1981

Eastern Turkestan, or Sinkiang as the province is called today, is the very hub between the two eastern giants of today, the Soviet Union and China. At the end of the 19th century, this area was not just a political “hot spot”; it was also an area of confrontation between different religions.

And in this meetings of religions, the Swedish Mission was involved for at that time the Mission Covenant Church, of Sweden (the M CCS), as sole mission society within a vast area, was carrying out an attempt of evangelical mission work among Turks and Chinese. Its main mission stations were built in Kashgar, in 1894, Jarkend, in 1896, Hancheng in 1908 and in Jengi-Hessar in 1912. This Swedish Mission attracted international attention. Dr John R. Mott’s comment on the Eastern Turkestan Mission reads, “If the door of Islam is not opened, Christianity cannot win the world.”<sup>1</sup> And Dr Samuel Zwemer underlined the great importance of the Swedish Mission for the propagation of the Gospel in Asia, as it was so strategically located in Kashgar. He also stressed the fact that this particular mission society was the most successful one among orthodox Muslims that he knew of.<sup>2</sup> After 45 years of hard work, however, this missionary effort came to a full stop in 1938 because of political upheavals. By the look of things, the end came as a failure, and “the most remarkable enterprise among many other missionary efforts” never had the time to develop into anything more than an attempt, a beginning.

Behind my wish to put together some essential aspects of the Eastern Turkestan mission lies a long time interest in what is, in my opinion, a remarkable mission. For the last ten years – and more – all my spare time has been spent studying these highly interesting matters.

This account is based mainly on a large collection of letters, sent to and from the missionaries in the area. I have also used the minutes from meetings and conferences both in Sweden and in Eastern Turkestan. Other non published material has been found in different archives such as the Mission Archives of Lidingö, those of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden in Stockholm and of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. Several missionaries, their children and close friends have on various occasions recounted memories and very willingly placed diaries, letters and other material not in print at my disposal.

The printed material used includes a number of general works on the country, its people and religions, etc. Several Swedes are among the authors. During the 1970s, books by Jan Myrdal, Lars-Erik Nyman and Gunnar Jarring have been published. There are also documents and other publications written by missionaries and various Mission leaders. In many cases the story of a life-long missionary commitment lies behind these books. Other printed documents include annual reports, diaries, periodical reviews and newspapers.

Unique printed material, such as the M CCS registers, mission station diaries, correspondence between stations and between the mission and local authorities, etc. were lost when the mission activities came to an end. As a precautionary measure, the missionaries burnt their archives before leaving the mission field. Thereby they wanted to remove everything that could possibly be used as evidence against the Asian Christians. They hoped that doing this they might be able to save their lives. How suspicious those in power were of everything printed or non printed, belonging to the Mission was experienced for instance by missionary Moen. At the time of his expulsion, Moen had a handwritten portion of the Bible in his pocket, the letters of Paul to Timothy. During a search this text was found and when the officer of the guard saw that it was “a letter”, it was immediately confiscated, with the

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<sup>1</sup> Folke, 1927 I, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Folke, 1927, p. 27, 84, 87. Nyrén to Törnquist, January 27th, 1927. Andersson, 1948, p. 29.

explanation, "I cannot allow you to travel with this letter."<sup>3</sup> How interesting and valuable these destroyed documents would have been for the understanding of the mission and the conditions of the missionaries is shown by a number of letters that were saved for posterity. They were written in Eastern Turkestan by various missionaries to Raquette, their colleague, and when he returned to his own country, in the beginning of the 1920s, he took these letters home with him. These letters contain a lot of details explaining the situation in the field.

The source material may seem one-sided, since in most cases it was written by the missionaries themselves. As to the religious life of the people – in which area the mission came to play its main role - not much other material is however available. Literature about Islam in general is immense. But when it comes to Islam in Eastern Turkestan, this Muslim region inside China's western borderline, the general history of religion has very little to offer. And when it comes to the Swedish Mission and the evaluation of its work, there were only a few westerners, apart from the missionaries themselves who actually saw and experienced what was done. An American couple, the Asian expert Owen Lattimore and his wife Eleanor, visited the mission stations and in their books there are some brief passages about what they observed. The British Consul-Generals in Kashgar continually met the missionaries. A friendly, trusting relationship prevailed between the missionaries and the British officials. Worthy of being particularly mentioned is Sir George Macartney who served as a Consul-General up to the year 1918. In one of her books, his wife, Lady Catherine Macartney, recounts several interesting episodes from their time together. Several other Consuls also comment favourably and with appreciation on the mission work.

Journalists and scholars from England, America, Germany and Switzerland and other countries, travelling in the country, also came into contact with the Mission and wrote about it in their books. Gustaf Mannerheim who later on became president of Finland, travelled through the area in the beginning of the 20th century in his capacity as a Russian officer. He, too, mentions the missionaries and the impression they made on him. The English missionary, Rachel Wingate, came to work for the Swedish Mission on a voluntary basis from 1924 to 1928. Through her articles in British periodicals she made the work of the Swedish Mission well-known far beyond the bounds where the missionaries reached. In the year 1927 she wrote the following in a Swedish newspaper, "It is impossible to grasp the spiritual darkness in this country unless you have been there yourself."<sup>4</sup>

Only four Swedish people "from outside" saw the Swedish Mission on the spot. They were the three explorers Sven Hedin, Nils Ambolt and Erik Nordin. Hedin and Ambolt have both described, verbally and in writing, their meeting and relations with the missionaries. They became true friends of the Mission. This is also true of the fourth Swede, the Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, who accompanied a group of missionaries to Eastern Turkestan in 1929. He remained there for some time for linguistic research, staying at the mission station in Kashgar. He made a second attempt at getting into the country in 1935, that time too in the company of travelling missionaries. He was however prevented from entering and parted from his companions in Srinagar.<sup>5</sup> Jarring has never tired of writing and speaking with appreciation about the Mission.

There are several ways of spelling geographical names. The province for instance is called "Eastern Turkestan" or "East Turkestan". Referring to the linguist and missionary G. Raquette, I will use the term "Eastern Turkestan"<sup>6</sup>. The older German spelling of "Kaschgar"

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<sup>3</sup> Interview with Moen, September 23rd, 1972.

<sup>4</sup> Wingate in *Friska Vindar*, 1927, p 291.

<sup>5</sup> Jarring, 1972, p. 264.

<sup>6</sup> Raquette, 1928.

is sometimes found. Here I use the more modern spelling “Kashgar”<sup>7</sup>. In most cases the spelling used by the missionaries has been adopted, for example “Jengi-Hessar”. Today the new name of the province, “Sinkiang” is generally in use, something of which I have taken note in this book. Thus “Sinkiang” will be found in the title of the last chapter. Often the name of this province is spelt “Xinjiang”, which however appears too strange in this case.

Literal quotations from letters for example have been modernized as far as old forms of spelling and grammar usage are concerned. On the contrary the appellation “Mohammedans” which is now abandoned in modern literature of history of religions has been retained in verbatim quotations. For the rest, the word “Muslims” has been used. The term “Musulman”, found even in modern literature is only used in verbatim quotations. H.S. Nyberg has the following to say about these different terms: “...the form Muselman, Musulman is adopted from the Turkish language where this form exists as a Persian hybrid and should immediately be abolished in our language replaced by Muslim, the noun, and the adjective Muslim ... The adjective corresponding to Islam should be Islamic, not Islamite”<sup>8</sup>.

It is questionable whether a description of mission work among Muslims should use the name of “Allah” and not “God”. Some Muslims mean that “Allah” should be translated by “God” in western languages<sup>9</sup>. The missionaries always use the word “Allah” and this usage has been observed here too.

In some of the cases the terminology of the missionaries has been modified. Especially the early missionaries’ use of “idols”, “heathens”, etc has been exchanged by “Gods”, “Asians” or “nationals”.

In order to get a good idea of the historical development this account has been written in a chronological order. Hopefully this minimizes the amount of repetitions. There are cases of events overlapping each other periodically. This has been done intentionally, for the sake of continuity. Chapter I provides a very short but necessary background to the understanding of the Mission enterprise. The actual description of the mission work starting in Chapter II continues up to the expulsion of the Mission. The account leads up to the conclusion that the Church of Christ in Sinkiang is alive.

As I myself have never had the chance to visit the country, and as I do not speak the local languages, I consider the help given by missionaries and their children extremely valuable. Professor Bengt Sundkler and senior lecturer Sigbert Axelsson have also assisted me. During the last years, I have had the privilege of collaborating with Professor Carl F. Hallencreutz of the Department of History of Religions of Uppsala University in Sweden who has been my indefatigable supervisor. Ambassador Gunnar Jarring has also provided me with abundant and valuable book suggestions. He has also checked my manuscript and made important remarks. The MCCS Director, Gösta Hedberg. Mission Secretary Walter Persson as well as Rev. Göran Gunner have all given valuable assistance. Ragnar Widman, Ph.D, guided me through both of the MCCS archives. Finally, missionary Sigfrid Moen has put excellent photos at my disposal.

The political development sealed the fate of the Swedish Mission. There were times when the working relationship between the missionaries failed to express a standard worthy of the Christian faith. Human weaknesses may at times have made their work seem less than perfect. Nonetheless these shortcomings could never take away the heroism by which the Eastern Turkestan mission work was characterized.

John Hultvall

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<sup>7</sup> Farquhar, Jarring et aliter, 1967. Raquette, 1928.

<sup>8</sup> Nyberg in the preface of *Smith*, 1961.

<sup>9</sup> *Dialog*...1971, p. 44 and note 5 p 127.

## Glossary

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 “Uighur” is officially spelled “Weiwuer” instead of “Chantou”. In the early 20 <sup>th</sup> century, the Uighurs constituted more than 90% of



	<p>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	<p>See Eastern Turki</p> <p>Geographical name</p>
General Assembly (the)	<p>Short for the General Assembly of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. Annual assembly or conference of the M CCS.</p>
Hami (Kumul)	<p>Geographical name. A city of the eastern part of Xinjiang and bordering with the Gansu province in the north-western China. Kumul is a 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.</p>
Hancheng	<p>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.</p>
Headquarters	<p>Short for M CCS headquarters</p>
Jarkend	<p>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.</p>
Jengi-Hessar	<p>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".</p>

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 Kazakhstan 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.

## I. Eastern Turkestan – An Isolated Country and Yet a Meeting Place

The following surveys contain very basic information. The country, its peoples, its history and religion etc., all this is of great interest, but the rich material has had to be extremely restricted. On the whole only matters having had a direct importance for the Mission have been included. Primarily, it is the observations made by the missionaries themselves that are accounted for. This was not possible to do in a chronological order; missionaries are for instance often quoted as if they were already there, however they will not arrive there until Chapter 2. These surveys, though not exhaustive, constitute an attempt to give parts of the background of the mission work, but they also touch upon conditions that remained during the entire mission period. This may add to the general understanding of the situation and the work of the missionaries.

### 1. A Geographical Survey

Eastern Turkestan means “The land of the Turks”, which is what the Persians originally called the area inhabited by Turk nomads to the north and north-east of Iran, between the Caspian Sea and Mongolia. It is the most westerly province of China, today called Sinkiang, “the new territory”, and it makes up about one sixth of the total territory of China.

Eastern Turkestan is bounded to the north-west by Russia, where West Turkestan is to be found. In order to separate the two provinces, Sinkiang was formerly called “Chinese Turkestan”.

Eastern Turkestan is made up of highlands with an altitude above sea-level of 1000 - 1500 metres. The town of Kashgar for example is situated at 1300 metres above the sea.

On three sides the country is demarcated by high mountains; the ranges of the Kunlun Shan to the south and the Pamirs to the west. To the north, the Tian Shan mountain ranges which on their eastern side divide the province into two parts, the Dzungarian Basin and the Tarim Basin, in the western part of which the mission field was situated. The British named it “Kashgaria”. From the mission stations in Kashgar and Jengi-Hissar, one could see the high, snow-capped mountains. The missionaries say that when the sunlight fell on the distant white mountains they gleamed so much that it was hard to look at them without sunglasses.<sup>1</sup> The eastern border is made up of the enormous Gobi Desert, a branch of which, the Taklamakan Desert, stretches into Eastern Turkestan.

All the rivers had their sources in the mountains and on their way through the desert they gave life and fertility to large areas. What looked like a cold, sterile mountain range was, in fact, the “mother” of the lush vegetation of the river-basins. Many smaller rivers were lost in the desert sand where they “drowned”. A strange phenomenon was the continuous change of the river channels, moving their course to the right. As a result of this, the towns, which were nearly always built by the water course, came to find themselves on their left side.<sup>2</sup> The British archaeologist Aurel Stein was responsible for the mapping of these areas during the Mission period. He confirms what the missionaries themselves had been observing namely

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<sup>1</sup> Andersson, 1948, p. 105. Lady Macartney is in raptures over the view from the Consulate, built by Högberg, from where one could see the magnificent mountains of Pamir, with eternal snow. (Macartney, 1931, p. 202.) And Hermann Francke tells about Högberg’s enthusiasm when, from Jengi-Hessar, he could see Mustagh-Ata, well-known through Hedin’s travels. (Francke, 1921, p. 72.) Raquette quotes Aurel Stein saying that it is wrong to call the country to the south of Tianshan Kashgaria.. (Raquette, 1928, note p. 151 f. and Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, 1907.)

<sup>2</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 8 f.

the “drowning” in the desert sand and the tendency of the rivers to move to the right.<sup>3</sup> C. G. Mannerheim visiting with the Russian Consul in Kashgar, also mentions the wandering of the Kashgar river. The garden of the consulate was situated near the river and every year the river took a chunk of the garden.<sup>4</sup> The river-beds very often consisted of quicksand, very dangerous for both men and animals.

The climate alternates between tropical summer heat and winters with down to 20 degrees centigrade below zero. Occasionally, it happened that the temperature was below - 30 C. During cold winters people could even freeze to death. Others turned up at the stations bare-footed. “We have lots of poor and nearly naked people here, suffering from illnesses,” writes one of the missionaries during an unusually cold period.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand the heat could be equally intolerable. “I am half boiled, it is + 30° C indoors and in the sun, between + 40° and + 50°,” reflects the missionary Högberg in a report to Sweden.<sup>6</sup> The highest temperature recorded was + 40° C in the shade. Mosquitoes were a real nuisance. Roads were “a perfect hell because of the heat and the mosquitoes,” says Mrs. Lattimore.<sup>7</sup> The insects also spread malaria, a disease contracted by several missionaries.

Spring and autumn were the best seasons from a temperature point-of-view. Recurring sand storms were the only disagreeable part of these seasons. Ella Sykes, the sister of the British Consul in Kashgar, says that these sand storms conveyed a “greyish atmosphere” to the town and were the reason why the country only enjoyed some hundred really clear days a year. Spring in Kashgar she describes as very windy.<sup>8</sup> The British Consul, R. E. F. Schomberg, also writes about these sandstorms after having travelled in the country. One entire village had been devastated, its inhabitants had fled, camel caravans had been lost and thousands of sheep had been killed.<sup>9</sup>

When these storms came from the large deserts to the east, they brought with them yellow dust which got in everywhere, according to the missionaries. Aurel Stein’s maps indicate these enormous areas of shifting sand on the desert border east of Kashgar, Jarkend and other places where the Mission worked. These “yellow” days were feared by the population. Not only was the dust brought in over the buildings, the storms also stirred the huge amount of ground dust already present on the ground. This particular dust or sand covering practically all the country could, at places, reach up to ones ankles. As the rains were so rare, they neither kept this dust in place, nor did they remove it.<sup>10</sup>

During the Mission era, there was no road for vehicles except in the east-ward direction, to China proper. Travelling to the capital of China could require eight to ten months for a return journey. Reaching the outside world across Russia or India was also possible, but then one had to travel across the high mountains, and these journeys could only be done on horse-back.

Already Marco Polo travelling through these parts of the world at the end of the 13th century praised the beauty of a country with its areas of tilled land, gardens and hills planted with vines.<sup>11</sup> And Eleanor Lattimore writes, “During five days and nights we travelled from

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<sup>3</sup> Stein, 1928, Vol IV, maps 2 and 5.

<sup>4</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Bohlin to the Board, January 19th, 1909. Albert Andersson to Waldenström, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1909. Macartney, 1931, p. 113.

<sup>6</sup> Högberg to Raquette, July 31st, 1913. Jarring, 1979, p. 93.

<sup>7</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 214 and p. 218.

<sup>8</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 56 and p. 239.

<sup>9</sup> Schomberg, 1933, p. 183 f.

<sup>10</sup> Högberg, 1917, p. 38.

<sup>11</sup> *The Journeys of Marco Polo*, 1967, p. 84.

Kashgar to Jarkend in a carriage along a wonderful road, where the oases were even more shady and lush than the ones in the north.”<sup>12</sup> She also mentions meeting the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar in the year 1927. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Lattimore and her husband, the great authority on Asia, Owen Lattimore, were there on their honey-moon. She speaks in enthusiastic terms of the “happy” bazaars and dignified mosques.<sup>13</sup> Owen Lattimore himself also praises Kashgar, a beautiful and interesting town he would not mind seeing twice.<sup>14</sup>

The rich summer vegetation of this country was overwhelming. Billowing fields of corn reached right up to the lodgings of the missionaries. Almost every kind of vegetable was grown, and several crops could be harvested three times a year. The most common cereals were wheat, barley, corn, rice, millet, flax, hemp and cotton. And among vegetables carrots, sugar-beets, radishes, onions, cucumbers, peas, beans, melons and water-melons were mentioned. Fruits and berries were also in abundance such as mulberries, apricots, nectarines, cherries, pears, apples and grapes, plums, olives, figs and pomegranates.<sup>15</sup> Mrs Eleanor Lattimore makes a note of the fact that she could buy fruits such as melons, apricots and “wonderfully juicy nectarines” at nearly every halting-place.<sup>16</sup>

Farming was done in a traditional way. A vital necessity was the watering of the earth. As has already been pointed out, the rains were rare during the summer months. During the spring and summer of 1915 for instance when Sir Percy Sykes moved to Kashgar, there was no rain at all.<sup>17</sup> Spring rainfall could be quite violent though. Raquette mentions one such rainfall in May, which was so violent that it nearly jeopardized a wedding-celebration in Kashgar.<sup>18</sup> However, as a rule the fields were supplied with water brought down by the great rivers during the melting away of the snow in the mountains. This water was diverted into canals, which were later on diversified into ditches and grooves. The canals were filled according to a systematic order. Thus the mission stations, for instance, received water in their canals on a special day of the week. During the annual autumn rainfall, large basins were filled with water at the mission stations and elsewhere, a supply which was to last throughout the winter. Since the water supply was so well organized, the country was very productive and poor harvests and failures of the crops were rare.<sup>19</sup> During the Mission period this country was even one of the world’s best areas for fruit farming.<sup>20</sup> From June up to Christmas, people actually lived almost exclusively off fruit. The American Professor Ellsworth Huntington, on a journey through Eastern Turkestan in the early 20th century, predicted a great future for this interesting area in his book *The Pulse of Asia*. He recommended large scale irrigation. He says that the country was especially suited for cotton crops but also for other crops.<sup>21</sup>

Even though flowers were rare, the rest of the vegetation made the country beautiful. The Norwegian missionary, Otto Torvik, visiting Eastern Turkestan in the 1930s, called the area where the Mission was engaged “the country of oases”. He mentions Kashgar and Aksu, but the largest oasis was around Jarkend.<sup>22</sup> In an interview, Ester Johansson, one of the Swedish missionaries, was once asked what it was like living in the desert, “We didn't live in a desert,

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<sup>12</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 233.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 7 and p. 231 f.

<sup>14</sup> Lattimore, 1930, p. 316.

<sup>15</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 8. Persson, 1938.

<sup>16</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 219.

<sup>17</sup> Sykes, 1936, p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> *Ansgarius*, 1907, p. 85 f.

<sup>19</sup> Torvik, 1946, p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> Ekberg, 1948, p. 100.

<sup>21</sup> Macartney, 1909.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Ester Johansson, February 27th, 1973.

we lived in an oasis,” she exclaimed.<sup>23</sup> But once outside the oasis, like on longer journeys, she added, sand-storms caused a lot of trouble. Sand and dust got inside ones clothes, into ones ears and eyes. She also mentioned the “yellow” or “red” dust-storms described above. The archaeologist Stein’s maps show that the mission field was made up of oases extending for miles and miles.<sup>24</sup>

Besides farming and gardening, cattle-breeding was a chief occupation in the country, but craftsmanship, cottage industry and trade were also important. Domestic industry produced linen, felt carpets, ordinary oriental carpets and silk.<sup>25</sup> Already Marco Polo speaks of domestic production of cotton fabrics.<sup>26</sup>

Among exported goods cotton was the main product, mostly sold to Russia. Melons were exported to China on a large scale. Carpets and silk fabrics were also exported. The export of expensive fur, e. g. Persian lamb, was also considerable.<sup>27</sup> Commerce was of course made difficult by the long distances and the almost insurmountable mountains, especially towards India. In spite of this, trade with India was busy. In Jarkend, for instance, quite a large colony of Indian tradesmen had their homes. From India, muslin-fabrics and cotton-fabrics with prints were imported.<sup>28</sup>

Real industry, in the common sense of the word did not exist during the mission era. However great riches were hidden in the soil like gold, silver, tin, coal, oil, iron, copper, but industrial extraction had not yet begun.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. Different Ethnic Groups

The population of Central China regarded people in Eastern Turkestan as un-educated barbarians. It is impossible to tell exactly how many these “barbarians” were around the turn of the century. At that time a census of the Chinese population had never been carried out. Books written as late as in the 1960s work with assumed figures for the population of China. *Nordisk Familjebok* printed in the year 1922, in the middle of the mission era declares the Eastern Turkestan population to be around 1.77 millions.<sup>30</sup> After having spent some 25 years in the mission field, missionary Törnquist criticized this figure as being totally incorrect. His own estimates were built on information from the Chinese Government. According to this information he states that there ought to be around six million people in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Barnavännen*, 1911, number 10, p. 75, Ahlbert, 1934, p. 13 and interview with Ester Johansson, February 27th, 1973.

<sup>24</sup> Stein, 1928, Vol IV, map number 5.

<sup>25</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> *The Journeys of Marco Polo*, 1967, p. 84.

<sup>27</sup> Torvik, 1946, p. 23. In 1939, A.K. Wu appreciates the number of cattle in the province. There were between 12.000.000 and 18.000.000 sheep, between 1.500.000 and 2.500.000 goats, 1.000.000 cows, 2.000.000 horses and between 50.000 and 60.000 camels. (Wu, 1939, p. 675).

<sup>28</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 246.

<sup>29</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 78. McLean, 1948, p. 131. Wu, 1939, p. 674. The oil-fields were in the hands of the Tungans who only made small and primitive efforts of extracting oil. From the beginning of the 1920s, the Swedish engineer Whitt was employed in this project (Etherton, 1924, p. 247 f.). Whitt had fled from Russia during the Revolution in 1917.

<sup>30</sup> *Nordisk Familjebok*, 1922, volume 2, column 312. The edition of 1955-56 however indicates a population of 2-3 millions. Volume 22, column 980.

<sup>31</sup> Törnquist 1928, p. 429. This estimate was done by the Postal Management in China towards the end of the 1920s. (DEM, 1930, p. 191.) In 1954 the last census was carried out. It is supposed to be incorrect by a few millions. One realizes how extremely difficult it must be to get all the millions in China correctly counted when one compares with Sweden. Here, authorities are aware of the fact that there are some 10.000 persons not registered statistically. (Cicilia Lindquist in a lecture.)

His estimates can be compared to the ones given by Owen Lattimore which oscillate between two and eight million people. Maybe four million people is the most probable figure he says. According to Lattimore, the two districts where the missionaries worked, Kashgar and Jarkend, might have had a total population of 1.5 million people.<sup>32</sup> The two cities, not including the countryside around them, were big cities in the modern sense. Jarkend, the larger of the two, had approximately 100 000 inhabitants, and Kashgar around 90 000. It is true to say that the Swedish Mission worked in a very densely populated area.

The population was mixed. In the province there were thirteen different ethnic groups. There were Kazakhs, Mongolians and other large minority groups. They will however not be taken up any more here as they were not of significance for the mission work. Only a few groups in the southern part where the mission was actively engaged will be mentioned here.

The Chinese, masters of the country, made up perhaps no more than 5-10 per cent of the entire population.<sup>33</sup> According to Lattimore the Chinese belonged to four categories: 1. Immigrants from Central China, 2. Tradesmen, 3. Soldiers and 4. Criminals deported from China.<sup>34</sup>

The Central Government encouraged the Chinese in the coastal provinces to move here. They found it important to have as many reliable Chinese as possible living in Eastern Turkestan forming a barrier against the increasing migration from Russia.<sup>35</sup> Many of these Chinese immigrants had made a fortune in their "new homeland". Their salaries in Eastern Turkestan would generally be three times the amount they were paid in other Chinese provinces.<sup>36</sup> Many of them however did not feel at home so far away from where their ancestors lived. In the middle of their material affluence they were plagued by spiritual distress and deep rootlessness. The missionaries were convinced that these immigrants were more to be pitied than the rest of the population. They had left their home provinces and the land of their ancestors behind in order to seek their fortune here. They had various social backgrounds, but they all found themselves cut off from the ties of tradition and family life.

During the Mission period the Chinese had time to arrive in the area and to start families. Their children came to look upon themselves as natives in the country. Many of these boys attended the mission schools. Not only were they gifted and positive children, according to the missionaries, but they often learnt the Turkish language beside their own mother tongue.<sup>37</sup> The future of the Mission depended on these children.

To other Chinese, Turkestan was "Siberia". Criminals from China proper were deported there. Yet others had fled there to escape from justice. Mrs. Lattimore describes the Chinese here as "real scoundrels and bandits, rabble and scum coming from everywhere." It was not surprising, she points out, that the Governor was said to be extremely severe, ruling his province like a dictator.<sup>38</sup> Törnquist is of the same opinion concerning many Chinese. "On the

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<sup>32</sup> Lattimore, 1920, p. 103. In 1940 however, Lattimore gives the figure 3.500.000. (Lattimore, 1940, p. 11.) Douglas Jackson indicates for 1953 the figure of 4.900.000. (Jackson, 1962, p. 12.) W.J. Drew has stated the same number for the year 1953. In 1967, the population had grown to 8.000.000. (Drew, 1968, p. 208.) The great increase starting in the 1940s continuing into the 1960s was due to a massive migration from Central China. Jarkend was the centre of Indian-British commerce. (Mirsky, 1977, p. 141.)

<sup>33</sup> Högberg writes in his book, *Ett och annat från Kinesiska Turkestan*, p. 14 f, that the number of Chinese could hardly attain 3 %. This low portion of the population was something he wanted to prove because he was against a special mission among the Chinese in Eastern Turkestan. See also Gore, 1980, p. 292, indicating 5 %.

<sup>34</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup> Inspection minutes, 1913. The trade with opium was flourishing practically without restraint. Eastern Turkestan did not however cultivate the poppy, but the article was imported for instance from Western Turkestan in Russia. (Etherton, 1923, p. 93 f.)

<sup>36</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 100 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. P. 106.

<sup>38</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 114.



whole one gets to know them as scoundrels that the other provinces of China have driven out as far as possible.”<sup>39</sup> Once, writing about the Governor of Urumchi, coming from the “half-wild people of Kansu”, he says, “There are lots of his kind of rabble among the soldiers of Kashgar.” On another occasion he says, “Kashgar is now one of the undercurrents of the Chinese population where all scum comes together.”<sup>40</sup> When the German ethnographer and orientalist Albert von Coq took part in the fourth Turfan expedition, 1913-14, which also brought him to Kashgar, he talked to Törnquist who was extremely unhappy about the Chinese. Their drinking habits were particularly discussed. There was an ample choice of alcoholic drinks for example Shamsu, “an abominable drink”.<sup>41</sup> In order to relieve their homesickness other Chinese got into gambling or smoking the opium pipe. These habits often resulted in “a dissolute life beyond description” as a Christian Chinese expressed it.<sup>42</sup> The missionaries speak about gambling, opium addiction and venereal diseases having shattered many people’s lives. Forced as they were to live far from home, they let go of all inhibitions, leading “a life of boundless irresponsibility”.<sup>43</sup> They often ran the gambling-houses and the pawn-shops and were also reputed to be money-lenders.<sup>44</sup>

Mannerheim writes about what the behaviour of the Chinese in Eastern Turkestan could be like. He paid a visit to the highest-ranking military official in Jarkend. “He was a deaf old man about seventy, totally uneducated”, says Mannerheim. Furthermore this mandarin was a braggart, pretending that no army in the world could defeat the Chinese army. Having said that he was not primarily interested in training his soldiers but, according to Mannerheim preferred to keep his garrison as small as possible, so as to be able to make use of the grants from the Government for his own purposes. The small garrison of 150 men was a pitiful sight. Opium addiction and other bad habits had totally broken down the soldiers. They seemed to be “a regular gang of criminals, opium smokers, gamblers, usurers, brothel owners, pimps, etc.” The officers did not appear any better than the others, concludes Mannerheim.<sup>45</sup>

The Chinese women were free and independent in contrast to the Muslim women. They rarely offered their services as maids. They were also few in numbers, which often forced the Chinese men to marry Muslim women. A Muslim woman married to a Chinese man did not however have an easy life. Her own people saw her as a renegade and she was deeply despised by her close relations and family.<sup>46</sup>

All Chinese wanted to see their native country again and, if possible, die there. Many actually made the long journey back home. Others arranged to have their mortal remains brought back home. Törnquist mentions “these sad funeral trains” on their way to the interior of China. They were long processions of heavy carriages loaded with red-painted, heavy coffins.<sup>47</sup>

The Turks – or the Sarts, as the Russian often called them - were in majority in Eastern Turkestan. Authorities on the country believe they made up around 70 per cent of the total population.<sup>48</sup> And they were the ones who had given the province its name. The Turks were invariably Muslims and here, just like in other Muslim countries, Islam had imbued all aspects of human life. The Turks were, of course, forced to respect the Chinese who held all

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<sup>39</sup> Andersson, 1928, p. 451.

<sup>40</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, August 1st, 1929 and Törnquist, 1926, p. 307.

<sup>41</sup> Le Coq, 1928, p. 28.

<sup>42</sup> Nyrén, B., 1928, p. 278.

<sup>43</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 107.

<sup>44</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 451.

<sup>45</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 82 f.

<sup>46</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 107.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. P. 107.

<sup>48</sup> Teichman, 1937, p. 16.

higher official positions, but still the Chinese – the master race - were a negligible minority in their own country.

By the end of the Mission period it became increasingly common to refer to the Turks as Uighurs, their original name. The Turks themselves wanted it that way.<sup>49</sup> Uighurs was the name of the ancient ethnic group living in these parts, from which the Turks originated.<sup>50</sup>

The Chinese converts to Islam were called Tungans. Having accepted Islam and become Muslims they had become so isolated that they came to make up a separate group of the population. They were strangers to everybody. The Turkish Muslims did not approve of them. They were not allowed to pray in the Turkish mosques but had their own mosques away from everybody else. Their own people, the Chinese, also rejected them. Having accepted “the religion of the foreigners”, “the faith of barbarians”, they were regarded as semi-barbarians. The Tungans, on the other hand, deeply despised the “idolatry” of the Chinese.<sup>51</sup> Still they wore their hair plaited in a queue just like all other Chinese. The Tungans were stricter than the Turkish Muslims in their religious worship. The latter could for example happily have tea with the missionaries, but the Tungans refused to do so without exception.<sup>52</sup>

Owen Lattimore points out that in times of political crises, the Tungans found themselves in a severe dilemma. If they sided with their Muslim friends, they were regarded as unreliable. In spite of their Muslim faith, they were after all Chinese! And if they sided with the Chinese, the tendency was the same. There was always the fear that their faith might prove stronger than their patriotism. When Tungan armies from other provinces had invaded Eastern Turkestan, continues Lattimore, the Tungans in this country have always thrown in their lot with the invaders. They have sided with them not only as fellow-believers but also as relatives. Together they had then not only fought non-Muslim Chinese but they had also massacred entire communities.<sup>53</sup> This is what happened during the revolution in the 1930s. However the Tungans were a fairly small group; during the Mission period, maybe no more than 150 000 persons, but being very militant they were a political power. During the latter part of the 1930s and during the 1940s they became very unpopular because of their martial character and many of them were liquidated.<sup>54</sup>

The Kyrgyz lived in the mountains. They were of Mongolian descent but spoke a Turkish dialect. They were all Muslims. But the Turkish Muslims looked down on them considering them to be culturally very much inferior. The Kyrgyz came to play an important part during the revolution in the 1930s.<sup>55</sup>

There were also Indians in Eastern Turkestan. They were tradesmen and British subjects. Their presence was one of the reasons why there had to be a British Consulate in Kashgar.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Törnquist's report, 1935. In official Chinese circles, the Turks were formerly called "turban heads". (Teichman, 1937, p. 188.) From 1921, the official name was "Uighurs". (Nyman, 1977, p. 12.)

<sup>50</sup> Gunnar Jarring has done research on Uighur language and history. During a research trip to Eastern Turkestan he was also the guest of the Mission for a couple of months. He relates an episode about an early contact between the Uighurs and Christian Sweden. When the army of Charles XII was taken prisoners in Russia, the Swedish soldiers were sent to different places in eastern Russia. Some officers enrolled in the Russian army, made journeys and did scientific research. Johan Gustaf Renat was one of them. Already when in custody he met the Swedish born Birgitta, widow of a soldier in the Swedish army, whom he married. Birgitta had been in service with the Kalmucks and they sent her on a mission to Jarkend in Eastern Turkestan. When the couple went back to Sweden in 1733, they brought two Uighurs from Khotan along with them. They were both later on baptized in Storkyrkan in Stockholm. (Jarring, 1939, p. 388 and 1970.)

<sup>51</sup> Ahlbert, 1935, p. 12 f.

<sup>52</sup> Hem Hem, 1916, p. 21 f.

<sup>53</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 119 and 143 f.

<sup>54</sup> Towards the end of the 1940s there were some 100 000 Tungans in the province (McLean, 1948, p. 139.)

<sup>55</sup> Ahlbert, 1935, p. 12 ff. In the northern part of the province there were 475 000 Kazhaks and a Mongolian minority of some 120 000. (Jackson, 1962, p. 12.)

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Carl Persson, September 23rd, 1972.

The Indians dealt with the Chinese, for example lending them money – at an extortionate interest. The authorities let them have their way. If people were stupid enough to do business with the Indians they had only themselves to blame!<sup>57</sup> The Indian colony in Jarkend represented several firms and was a trade centre in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>58</sup> The Indians were Hindus. Already in 1897, the Swedish missionary Bäcklund visited some Indians in Jarkend. They were very strict Hindus and when the missionaries were not able to finish all the food they were offered, they had to take the leftovers home to the Mission station. It had already been made unclean and must be taken away.<sup>59</sup> The Indians usually worshipped their gods quietly at home. On one occasion when they arranged a public procession, the Muslims felt offended and organised a riot. These Indian trades-men were an asset to the Mission. They were the ones who brought news from the outside world to the isolated missionaries.

### 3. Scenes from Everyday Life

The ordinary life led by the Chinese minority has been partly described above. “Everyday life” in the above title concerns mainly the Muslims, the great majority of the population. In his book *The Pulse of Asia*, Professor Huntington makes a list of good and bad characteristics of this people. Among the good points he mentions kindness, cheerfulness, hospitality, good manners, patience and contentment. The bad points are for example cowardice, dishonesty, laziness, lack of initiative, indifference to other people’s distress, immorality.<sup>60</sup>

All this was also experienced by the missionaries. Certainly the hygienic habits of the people were not among the most important things, even though these things were important and of course differed totally from those of the westerners. A young girl about to start working for the missionaries was told, “Try to be as clean as possible, for these people even rinse their mouth after having said some dirty words, that’s how clean they are.”<sup>61</sup> The Asians themselves however meant that it was the westerners who were dirty. “They never seem to be able to learn how to eat with their fingers,” a well educated Turk once wrote.<sup>62</sup>

Lack of moral standards was however more important than hygiene. Missionary accounts from an early stage of the mission period give many examples of people’s dishonesty, petty thievishness, unreliability and idleness.<sup>63</sup> Others noted the same thing. Ella Sykes for instance writes about a girl whom the Mission had employed. One day she carried away the pot-plants from the living quarters of the missionaries and went to the bazaar where she sold them.<sup>64</sup> Schomberg one day in Jarkend rode past some men and women sitting on a wall eating melons. Thirty-six hours later, on his way home along the same wall, he observed the same people still sitting there, eating melons.<sup>65</sup>

In a letter home, Adolf Bohlin writes, “The lack of morality is beyond description”. Opium smoking was a prevalent custom and in the streets of the towns, there were crowds of loose women.<sup>66</sup> These prostitutes were only meant for men of other religions and were totally

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with Arell, October 27th, 1973.

<sup>58</sup> Skrine, 1926, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup> *The Missionsförbundet*, 1897, p. 227.

<sup>60</sup> Huntington, 1907, p. 225 ff.

<sup>61</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 44 and p. 53.

<sup>62</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 39.

<sup>63</sup> Bäcklund to Ekman, August 14th, 1902. Larson, 1914, p. 19. *The Missionsförbundet*, 1906, p. 6, 1911, p. 119. Missionary accounts 1921, p. 170. Albert Andersson to Sjöholm, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1908. Oskar Hermansson to the Board, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1910.

<sup>64</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 53.

<sup>65</sup> Schomberg, 1933, p. 114.

<sup>66</sup> Bohlin to the Board, July 4th, 1908.

rejected by the Muslim community. As they were known to associate with foreigners and with the Chinese, they could not even be buried in the Muslim burial-grounds.<sup>67</sup>

“The gambling frenzy” - a wild passion - had seized many, from Mandarins to beggars. It sometimes happened that people coming to the Mission hospital for help, when asked about their occupation, declared “gambler”. The pawnbrokers often put up their tents next to the gambling-dens. “The gamblers pass one article of clothing after the other to the pawnbroker, in exchange for money which disappears just as quickly”<sup>68</sup>. “Gambling is rampant here in an incredible way”, says Mannerheim. There were gamblers at every street corner, in every backyard and by-lane. High Mandarins, ordinary people, prisoners in chains fastened to heavy iron bars or wooden beams, beggars in rags, all of them shared the passion of gambling, continues Mannerheim.<sup>69</sup>

There were a number of explanations for the things the missionaries found unacceptable. And way the bad everyday habits among the people tended to affect the missionaries was partly due to the fact that they were foreigners. There was a innate distrust of foreigners. Högberg writes, “A person coming from another town or place is forever looked upon as a stranger. How difficult must it not be for the Europeans?”<sup>70</sup> However, the Muslims’ aversion towards the missionaries had its cause primarily in their faith. The missionaries were proselytizing intruders and could hardly expect any other reaction. Moreover there had to be a huge difference as to moral and legal issues between these people from the East and the Swedish missionaries. Westerners with hundreds of years of Christian traditions to fall back on, and with a very special upbringing in the Swedish Free Church pietism on top of that met with people who knew nothing about Christian faith and ethics but had been strictly brought up in a totally different tradition. And yet, these people with their faults and sins were they not the very people the missionaries wanted to reach out to? When confronted with people’s ignorance, and dishonesty, Högberg was on the point of being discouraged, he used to say to himself, “Were everyone here good, noble and true, then I would not be needed here.”<sup>71</sup>

People’s everyday habits were in many cases not at all anti-missionary but they sprang from their living conditions. The British explorer F. E. Younghusband, who came to Kashgar towards the end of the 19th century, was of the opinion that this indolence and lack of initiative had to do with the society itself. People did not have to make special efforts in order to survive. They led quiet, even happy lives, which nothing could upset.<sup>72</sup> Aurel Stein is of the same opinion. He says that people of Eastern Turkestan were often seen as indifferent, lacking initiative, but the main reason for these traits of character was perhaps the fact that the country was under-populated. There was no competition pushing people to try harder. And Högberg points out that “the strivings and worrying how to make ends meet and to make progress, so obvious in other places, are totally absent here.”<sup>73</sup>

The habit of smoking opium was deplorable and basically destructive. Eleanor Lattimore says, “Smoking opium may very well seem like an elegant addiction among civil servants, but it is totally unfortunate when the smoker is someone in transport, someone one relies upon to get somewhere, be he a coachman, a man who loads ones baggage onto the horses, or a guide.”<sup>74</sup> Next door neighbour to the Mission station in Kashgar, a caravan seraglio, was an

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<sup>67</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 223.

<sup>68</sup> The MCCS Annual report of 1905, p. 141 ff. The *Ungdomsvännan*, 1907, p. 125 f.

<sup>69</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 82.

<sup>70</sup> MCCS Annual report of 1897, p. 96 f

<sup>71</sup> Högberg, 1915, p. 39.

<sup>72</sup> Younghusband, 1896, p. 171. Etherton, 1923, p. 98.

<sup>73</sup> Macartney, 1909, p. 21. Grenljuset. Volume 11, 1898, p. 76.

<sup>74</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 175.

opium-den. A hole in the town wall made the business easier.<sup>75</sup> Opium was smuggled into the country from Russian Turkestan and from Afghanistan.<sup>76</sup> A young man from Kashgar tells about his personal experience of smoking opium, "It gives you a wonderful feeling of happiness, but at the same time it quickly makes you an addict and changes you from a normal person into a careless and half mad wretch."<sup>77</sup>

So far some experiences and impressions from the early days of the Mission period have been related. Towards the end of this period, the missionaries could however describe changes in the attitudes among many people. But also during the early decades they met individual Asians displaying generosity, sincerity and faithfulness. One of them was Quasim Akhun. Raquette tells us this story about him. Quasim lived in Kashgar. His family was one of the most well-to-do and prominent ones running extensive business enterprises. Quasim's two uncles had been to Moscow and Constantinople as well as to Berlin and Paris on business. In order to let Quasim learn about Western education and development he was sent to Constantinople where he made friends with a Muslim who was in many ways close to Christian faith. Through this friend Quasim came into contact with the schools of the American mission and soon became one of their students. Later on he moved to Beirut to continue his studies at the Christian college there. Once this fact became known to Quasim's family in Kashgar, he was ordered home where he was held accountable for his interest in the Christian faith. This happened in 1913. Once home, he writes a series of letters to his friend in Constantinople in which he tells him how he was received by his family, about his life in Eastern Turkestan, on festival days and ordinary days, about religious conditions and so on. These letters translated into Swedish by Raquette and published only in 1975, after having been translated into English with a commentary by Gunnar Jarring, also give an account of Quasim's relations to the Swedish Mission in Kashgar. Quasim's family had been negative towards the Mission until the day when illness forced them to seek help at the Mission hospital. The help received there led to unlimited trust from their side.<sup>78</sup>

One more aspect of everyday life will be taken up here: the situation of women. For the women in Eastern Turkestan marriage was extremely important. A woman was saved by marriage. For this reason parents started looking for a husband for their girl while she was still a child. Having an unmarried daughter was considered shameful. A girl who had reached the age of 15 - 16 without getting married was looked upon as "overripe".<sup>79</sup> In many cases these child marriages turned out a failure. The missionaries had stories to tell about these tragedies that many young girls were subjected to. Quasim Akhun tells about how he himself narrowly escaped such a marriage. In his desperation he turned to one of the missionaries who managed to make the head of the family change his mind. Afterwards Quasim said the following words about the missionaries, "From where do these people get their authority over us?"<sup>80</sup>

A woman could only have one husband, whereas a man was allowed to keep a maximum of four wives at the time. He was however allowed to marry an unlimited number of "pleasure wives".<sup>81</sup> Such marriages were confirmed by a Mullah for a period of twenty-four hours, one week, one month or longer.<sup>82</sup> According to Moen, one of the servants at the Mission had had

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<sup>75</sup> Etherton 1926, p. 267.

<sup>76</sup> Ambolt, 1935, p. 90. Skrine, 1926, p. 40.

<sup>77</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 40.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. P. 31 ff. Palmberg for instance tells about a nanny "who in faithfulness and reliability merited the highest notes." (V.P. February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1961.)

<sup>79</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 219.

<sup>80</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 35 f.

<sup>81</sup> Edsman, 1971, p. 163.

<sup>82</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 23.

thirty-five wives.<sup>83</sup> Mrs. Lattimore mentions another man who had had sixty wives “and who was still full of life”.<sup>84</sup>

Not surprisingly divorces were quite common. But there were exceptions. One day, a married couple came to the Mission hospital in Jarkend. They were seeking help for the husband’s cataract and his wife accompanied him as a good companion and assisted him. They had been married for thirty years.<sup>85</sup>

New marriages and subsequent divorces were however so common that the Mullahs issued a divorce license at the same time as they confirmed the marriage.<sup>86</sup> The marriages succeeded each other: there were men who had been married up to 300 times.<sup>87</sup> The husband could cast off a wife without stating a reason for it. And there were husbands who went on the pilgrimage to Mecca and who never returned. Hilda Nordqvist gives an example of a husband and family father who went to Mecca. Before his departure he sold everything in his home that was valuable. He needed this money for the journey.<sup>88</sup> His wife and children were left without support, and the husband never returned.

A woman’s value rose and fell according to her fertility.<sup>89</sup> For the rest, she was supposed to be the obedient servant of her husband. Mannerheim confirms this, “A woman’s role is a completely subordinate one. Her field of activity is entirely confined to the home”.<sup>90</sup> There she might however exercise certain power, provided she was the first wife.<sup>91</sup>

In the harems of the wealthy, with several wives at the same time, disagreement and jealousy flourished. The wives could resort to witchcraft in order - as they believed - to hurt their rivals. They went to the bazaars where they bought poison in order to murder one another. It even happened that women came to the mission hospitals to buy “the destructive medicine.”<sup>92</sup>

The unmarried women’s role was, if possible, an even harder one. They could be seen standing by the Saints Shrines, loudly beseeching Allah for a husband and children.<sup>93</sup> If there was no way out, these Muslim women even married infidels, be they Russians, Jews, Armenians, Hindus or Chinese.<sup>94</sup> The missionaries understood the plight of woman. It was understandable if she did everything in order to get married and thereby saved her soul for eternal bliss. Raquette went as far as hesitating at condemning polygamy considering the background it had in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>95</sup>

The Mission ran into difficulties on account of the way women were regarded in the country. Several of the women missionaries were not married and people could not see them as better than prostitutes available to men who wanted their services.<sup>96</sup>

A consequence of the promiscuity was the considerable spreading of venereal diseases.<sup>97</sup> Many children were born with such a heritage. Once the Mission health care had been

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<sup>83</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 82.

<sup>84</sup> Lattimore, 1927, p. 224.

<sup>85</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 158.

<sup>86</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 65.

<sup>87</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 306.

<sup>88</sup> *Barnavännen*, 1914, p. 42.

<sup>89</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 80 f.

<sup>90</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 51.

<sup>91</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 47.

<sup>92</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 24.

<sup>93</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 131.

<sup>94</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 222.

<sup>95</sup> Raquette, 1925, p. 165 f.

<sup>96</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 223. Inspection minutes, 1913.

<sup>97</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 125.

developed some patients with this problem could be treated. The missionaries had received special training in this field.

Rich men's wives were deeply veiled. This means that apart from the chador they also had a dark veil in front of their faces. They were only seldom allowed to move about outside, except in the evenings when they could go for a ride in a carriage, in the dark.<sup>98</sup> The wives of the poor could, however, walk about in the streets without the veil.<sup>99</sup> It even happened that they worked in the bazaars totally unveiled.<sup>100</sup> In Jarkend it was more common to see unveiled women than in Kashgar. This could be due to the fact that Jarkend was more dominated by the Chinese.<sup>101</sup>

#### 4. A Brief Historical Survey

The drive of Islamic political ambitions has for long periods played a decisive part in the country's history. One of the most cruel and lawless periods lasted up to the middle of the 18th century. At that time the so called Khodja Regime came to an end. Khodja was the name of a family that had got into power already at the end of the 15th century. They claimed they were descendants of the prophet Mohammed and behaved as a spiritual upper class. Interior struggles undermined both their political and religious power and in 1759 China was able to take over their entire territory. Eastern Turkestan was now subjected to Chinese military rule, and the Chinese ruled the country in a harsh way. "No Muhammedan was supposed to remain seated on horseback when he met a Chinese public official, and when the Mandarins visited the temples, Muhammedan dignitaries had to kneel at the entrances."<sup>102</sup> Humiliation was complete. Many Muslims chose to flee to Western Turkestan in Russia during this time.

Kokand in Western Turkestan became a meeting-place for the Eastern Turkestan exiles. It was from there that they invaded their homeland in 1816 and managed to get back into power. The Chinese were now completely exterminated in certain areas and it was not until the middle of the 19th century that China once again regained supremacy in Eastern Turkestan. That did not come about until a Chinese army of 200 000 men had been engaged in the invasion. Again large numbers of the population fled to Western Turkestan. This time Chinese domination lasted only for some ten years. Next, Russian forces in collaboration with the remaining Turks in Kashgar conquered the town and the area around it. In 1864 Jakub Beg from Kokand seized power in southern Eastern Turkestan.<sup>103</sup> He took up diplomatic relations with Britain, and trade agreements were signed with Russia. An army was organized and new coins were introduced with his name on them. Over the years however the pay for the soldiers was cut down, and people were impoverished by taxes high above their capacity. The Prince himself took to luxury and degrading habits. Dissidents were exposed to violence and oppression. In the end people hated him so much that they turned to the Chinese for help to get rid of him. The Chinese armies had already earlier liberated Aksu in northern Eastern Turkestan. When the Chinese arrived in Kashgar, those Chinese who lived there and whom Jakub Beg had forced to become Muslims raised a mutiny and joined the assaulting armies. The conquest of the country was completed in the spring of 1878. Eastern Turkestan was again made into a province of China. This time the Chinese did not take revenge. The Muslims were guaranteed freedom of religion, taxes were reduced and subordinate officials

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<sup>98</sup> Interview with Roberntz, April 16th, 1973.

<sup>99</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 46.

<sup>100</sup> Hedin, 1893 II, p. 464.

<sup>101</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 189.

<sup>102</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 59.

<sup>103</sup> Broomhall, 1910, p. 157.

belonging to the population of the country were appointed. The new Chinese name for the province was Sinkiang, the New Possession.<sup>104</sup>

Already at the arrival of the Mission, Russian influence was obvious in the country. The Russian Consulate in Kashgar had been set up in 1882, and up to the Russian Revolution in 1917 the Russians had a large staff in Kashgar. The Consul-General was a high-ranking Government official with a detachment of some one hundred Cossacks at his disposal. He also had a considerable number of consular officials at his side. After the Russian Revolution the Consulate had to close. It was not reopened until 1925. The Consul-General was however not allowed to keep a Russian detachment as before.<sup>105</sup>

The Russian Consul during the first mission period was a man called Petroffski. According to the missionaries, this man was a constant source of trouble to the Chinese. To the very last the Chinese authorities had tried to stop the re-opening of the Consulate.<sup>106</sup> Petroffski was very efficient and tried by all means to find out political information for his government. Törnquist noted that the Consul was grateful for any “gossip” he was given, and that he paid 20 öre for every piece of news “be it of any kind”.<sup>107</sup> There is no evidence however, that the missionaries made use of this way of making extra money. But the Consul had his network of informants who would pick up gossip in the bazaars or elsewhere.<sup>108</sup> One such informant was Father Hendrichs a former Catholic missionary. Lady Macartney writes that he was nicknamed “the Newspaper”, since he was always on his feet collecting information that he later passed on.<sup>109</sup>

The Russian Consulate with Consul Petroffski was very important for the Mission during its early days. Among other things the Consul gave the missionaries military protection in 1899 when a mob was threatening their lives. Petroffski was also a hospitable man who invited the Swedish missionaries for dinner every now and then. At Christmas time he used to invite the staff from the British Consulate, the Swedish colony and other foreigners in the city for a Christmas party in his home. Lady Macartney mentions that on these occasions people were dancing around the Christmas tree singing Christmas songs each one in his own language. On one occasion there were eight languages represented: Russian, English, Swedish, French, Chinese, Turkish, Persian and Hindi.<sup>110</sup> During the first years the Headquarters in Sweden were allowed to send money, letters and goods by way of the Russian Consulate to the missionaries.<sup>111</sup>

Thanks to Petroffski and his zeal, Russian trade was expanding. Already the first missionaries could note the variety of Russian products for sale in the shops. Sven Hedin who during his travels in the country had become a good friend of Petroffski's, notes that Petroffski “exercised an almost almighty influence”.<sup>112</sup>

China's Central Government tried to counteract this growing Russian influence by encouraging Chinese from other parts of the vast empire to move to Eastern Turkestan. At the

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<sup>104</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 60 f. Hayit, 1917, p. 141 ff.

<sup>105</sup> Skrine, 1926, p. XV, 66.

<sup>106</sup> Hedin, 1893 II, p. 446 and p. 449.

<sup>107</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 183.

<sup>108</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 47.

<sup>109</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. p. 49. Younghusband, 1896, p. 166 ff.

<sup>110</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 50.

<sup>111</sup> Larsson, 1919, p. 56.

<sup>112</sup> Hedin, 1893, p. 57. Gottfrid Palmberg writes about these enormous stocks of goods intended for Eastern Turkestan, that he saw in Andidjan, on the Russian side of the border. There was also heavy caravan traffick. (Palmberg, 1961, nr 4.)



same time efforts were made to control this distant province both by political and military means. The first few decades of the 20th century saw the introduction of censorship. And no one could leave the country without paying a deposit. These measures were taken in order to stop people from going to Russia, returning later with socialistic ideas.<sup>113</sup>

Britain, too, had interests in Eastern Turkestan. Via India, Britain could send both people and ideas. The aim was to take up competition with the Russians and to conquer commercially this province so neglected by the Chinese. In the early 1870s already, a British delegation, headed by Sir T. D. Forsyth had shown great interest in the possibility of increasing relations with India, particularly in the field of commerce.

From 1886 Britain's man in Kashgar was Sir Francis Younghusband. He was formally introduced as an explorer, but his real commission was to study the political development in the country with a special eye on the influence of the Russians.<sup>114</sup> In 1892, Britain opened a business office in Kashgar. Sir George Macartney became its first manager. Later on, in 1909, when the British Consulate was established, he was appointed Consul-General.<sup>115</sup> During his first years in Eastern Turkestan, he was called "a political agent". His success can be understood through the description of him made by Mannerheim, who after having seen him at work describes him as a "completely acclimatized half Chinese".<sup>116</sup> Sir George was to continue in his position until 1918 and both he and his wife, Lady Macartney, became real friends of the Swedish missionaries during these years. Because of their official position, they could assist their missionary friends on numerous occasions. In his inspection report of 1913, The Secretary of Mission Sjöholm mentions Sir George's very positive attitude to the Mission. During Sjöholm's inspection tour, the missionaries decided to call upon the Mission Board in Stockholm to propose Sir George as a candidate for a Swedish Order of Merit.<sup>117</sup>

One of the Swedish missionaries, L.E. Högberg, was in fact commissioned to build the Consulate. Sir George and Lady Macartney had noticed the great skills he had as a builder, and after having been given the consent of the Mission Board, he started the project. The buildings were indeed very well designed which was certified by many visiting Westerners.<sup>118</sup> After having seen the Consulate, Erich Teichman says that it looked more like an Embassy.<sup>119</sup>

Britain had its chance in the early 1920s, when Russian activities were forbidden in Kashgar. From 1925 British interests were however pressed back again. With all possible legal means Britain tried to resist and combat the Soviet Russian influence.<sup>120</sup> Ella Maillart writing about the two Consuls says that they were hardly best friends, but officially they observed the diplomatic protocol.<sup>121</sup>

In the towns around Kashgar the British Consul-General was represented by elders, the so called *aksakals*, who were nationals. During the tough 1930s, the missionaries in Jarkend

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<sup>113</sup> Nyrén, B., 1928, p. 88.

<sup>114</sup> Hedin, 1893 II, p. 453 and Lattimore, 1928, p. 47. In the book *The Heart of the Continent* (London, 1896), Younghusband describes his time in Eastern Turkestan.

<sup>115</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 41. Mirsky, 1977, p. 136.

<sup>116</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 182. Mannerheim, 1940, p. 47. Macartney spoke perfect Chinese. When he came to the country, British influence was still non-existent. During his time in Kashgar up to 1918, when he left the country, the British influence was built up and increased constantly. (Younghusband in Etherton, 1923, p. 97 f.)

<sup>117</sup> Inspection minutes, 1913.

<sup>118</sup> Lattimore, 1930, p. 116.

<sup>119</sup> Teichman, 1937, p. 151.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. P. 152.

<sup>121</sup> Maillart, 1940, p. 256. The Russians saw Britain's influence as an undue encroachment. Petroffski thus ignored Macartney totally during his first days. For two years he did not speak to him. (Mirsky, 1977, p. 136 f.)

among others had some bad experience with the local *aksakal*. He was partial and corrupt, they said.

During the Mission period, Eastern Turkestan was an autonomous province within China. The highest official of the province was the Governor-General whose residence was in Urumchi.<sup>122</sup> His power was all but supreme. The influence of the central government was diminished by the enormous distance between the Chinese national capital and the provincial capital. In this situation the personal qualifications of the Governor-General were of vital importance. The Mission had varying experiences of these governors. During the imperial days, the governors bought their official status. When the Republic was introduced, in 1912, they were appointed by the central government. Even so the old feudal administration continued, after 1912. Second to the governors-general were the district-governors. The province consisted of ten districts whereof Kashgar and Jarkend were two. Under the district-governors were the mayors. They were also judges within their districts as well as responsible for the tax-collecting. All these high officials were Chinese. The Turks could only hold lower posts. They could for instance be translators at a local administrative office, or be the head of the office of a minor judicial district, etc.<sup>123</sup>

Custom required foreigners arriving in the towns of the country to pay a visit to the more important Chinese officials. This also applied to the missionaries. On these occasions, an extravagance of Chinese dishes was being served. C. G. Mannerheim was once present at such a dinner organized by a Mandarin. The gourmand G. Raquette was in the company. Mannerheim observes that “Raquette had large helpings of shark fins, snail fish, pork cooked in sweetened water, eggs one hundred years old... He maintains that one gets used to these dishes and begins to enjoy them.”<sup>124</sup>

In times of peace, the Chinese administration of Eastern Turkestan was mild and humane. But there were exceptions; the higher officials’ personal shortcomings could hit people in a hard and unjust way. The most striking feature is tolerance, says Macartney. He stated that the administration was more flexible than firm. The Chinese have never been aggressive. Nothing could be a better example of that than the process which finally absorbed Eastern Turkestan, giving China full control of the country. Macartney saw this as a kind of “pacific penetration.” He goes on to say that it is a paradox proving truer and truer, that in the Chinese slackness and *laissez faire* policy lies one of the secrets of China’s power in this Muslim country. The 7 000 – 8 000 Chinese soldiers in different parts of Eastern Turkestan were of course hopelessly inefficient in their resistance to an invasion, says Macartney, but they served the purpose of all the Chinese provincial armies, i.e. to guarantee normal life, to maintain order, to catch bandits, to ward off minor disturbances and to quench tax riots.<sup>125</sup>

Parallel with Chinese law, the law system of the Muslims was applied, the Islamic administration of justice, which was in the hands of the people. To this end every town had a Muslim council consisting of four Muslims well versed in this law. The council was however appointed by the local Chinese authorities. Its most important task was to see to it that people lived according to the commandments of the Koran.<sup>126</sup> Certain tendencies within Islam taught that a woman was not allowed to appear in public unveiled. If she ignored this rule, the “morality officer” of the council could take measures and it even happened that the woman was punished with a leather whip. These “officers” could even enter a harem where normally

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<sup>122</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 429.

<sup>123</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 77.

<sup>124</sup> Jägersköld, 1965, p. 40 f.

<sup>125</sup> Macartney, 1909, p. 4 and p. 13 f.

<sup>126</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 268 f.

no unknown man was allowed. On the spot they could punish a woman without any legal procedures if they found her guilty. It also happened that these officers walked around, from house to house, forcing the Muslims to attend the worship service in the Mosques.<sup>127</sup>

## 5. Religious Concepts among the Chinese Rulers

As has already been pointed out, the Chinese were a minority in Eastern Turkestan. But they were the rulers, and their ideology and religious way of thinking could not but leave their mark to a certain extent on the people. However the Chinese did not try to actively spread their own religions.

It is well known that the Chinese religions tolerate people of other faiths. This tolerance gave Buddhism a place among Chinese religions already at an early stage. And when Swedish missionaries wanted to settle on the outskirts of the “Middle Kingdom”, they were allowed in, and their status was regulated through mutual agreements.<sup>128</sup> If the country’s administration had been Islamic, it would probably have been much harder for the Christian Mission to establish itself there. Now the political power was held by the tolerant Chinese and that is why Mission history – albeit unassuming – could be written there at the turn of the century.

Quite a few temples, where Chinese divinities were publicly worshipped, were to be found in the part of the country where the Mission started working. In the Muslim town of Kashgar, there were four Chinese temples within the town walls. In New Kashgar, or Hancheng, the Chinese name of the town, there were as many as 14 temples.<sup>129</sup>

The Chinese festivals were numerous and extensive. The most important one was the celebration of the Chinese New Year.<sup>130</sup> Then people came to worship in huge crowds outside and inside the temples. Plays were also organised. They were mainly meant as a form of entertainment but they also included cultural drama.

The belief in demons was general among the Chinese. It was believed that demons feared the red colour in particular and in order to protect themselves people decorated their homes with red objects and with red paper slips.<sup>131</sup> On one occasion a Mandarin was about to inaugurate his home. Outside, he put up large sheets of paper with dragon heads and pictures of money on them. The intention, of course, was that the symbols of luck, the dragons, would bring happiness and prosperity to his home, but also to keep the evil spirits away. The pictures of money, he hoped, would buy the favour of the demons.<sup>132</sup> Another way of protecting oneself against the demons was equipping the town gates, and also the doors of the homes, with a double zigzag entrance. That way, nobody could enter directly, and the spirits had this peculiarity, they could not “turn around a corner”.<sup>133</sup>

During the Chinese New Year celebrations the Mission schools were closed for vacation. Before the vacation was due, the Chinese teacher at the Hancheng Mission School used to

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<sup>127</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 47 f. and Palmaer, 1942, p. 90.

<sup>128</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1910, number 5, p. 1 ff. Etherton, 1923, p. 90, 95, 100. Lundahl, 1917, p. 138.

<sup>129</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 447 f. Hermann Francke says that Törnquist brought him along to two Bouddhist temples. (Francke, 1921, p. 68.)

<sup>130</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 141 f. Bohlin to Sjöholm, December 12th, 1913. Five different New Year Celebrations were held in Kashgar: the ones of the Swedes, the Russians,, the Chinese, the Jews and the Muslims. (Högberg, 1918, p. 16.)

<sup>131</sup> Aagaard, 1966, p. 332. Cf the Muslim colour of protection which is blue or sometimes green.

<sup>132</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1909, number 18, p. 264.

<sup>133</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 30. Jarring, 1979, p. 86.

give a lengthy speech to warn the schoolboys. Once he described in detail how dangerous these festivals could be. He told them about boys turning completely corrupt during those weeks. And, he added, it was much more tempting to act “off limits” while the festival was on, since nobody was punished during these celebrations. “Don’t take part in the divinity processions. That ghastly dummy, the Fire God with those extra eyes painted bright red is nothing but an image made of strips of wood, rags and plaster painted red and given eyes made of pieces of looking-glass. How do you expect something like that to actually protect the town from fire? Don’t take part in carrying that scare-crow through, the town!” He went on to say that he thought it a shame, that nearly twenty years after the Republic had been introduced, there were still “fools believing in this”.<sup>134</sup>

The missionaries complain of uninhibited “hell of gambling” during the festivals. Even the normally haughty Muslims accepted to sit down at the gambling table of the despised Chinese.<sup>135</sup> The missionaries point out that during the Festival weeks, people were totally unable to do any useful work.<sup>136</sup>

But if the Chinese national festivals were experienced by the Swedes as superficial and repellent representing one extreme of the religion, they were also to learn about the other extreme, where people took their religious beliefs extremely seriously. One day a Chinese man came to Raquette with a problem. The man knew that Raquette had medical skills and now he asked him to cut one opening under each of his two collarbones. In these openings this pious Chinese wanted to put in wooden pegs, and then, his idea was to walk, in this condition, all the way to Beijing, a walk of six months. As a result he hoped to become righteous and to find peace.<sup>137</sup>

Ancestor worship occupies an important place in the Chinese religious cult. It is the dominating form of religion in the homes where the ancestor altar is to be found. The depth of the attachment of the Chinese to their deceased relations is shown by the fact that they never feel quite at home in any other province than the one where their ancestors are buried. As has been suggested above they wanted to return there when they themselves were approaching death.<sup>138</sup> Ancestor worship is probably the one aspect of the cult that has best survived all the many radical changes of China in modern times.<sup>139</sup> The reason why the Mission had so little success among the Chinese was probably partly due to their feeling of alienation and rootlessness in Eastern Turkestan, being so far away from home.

After the Revolution of 1911 it became more and more common, according to the missionaries, that the Chinese from China proper were atheists. If these immigrants still worshipped their old gods, they did it secretly in their homes.

The Chinese religions were characterized by syncretism. This blend of religions had been going on for thousands of years. The Chinese themselves did not mind what temple they worshipped in or which divinities were honoured. In Confucian temples both Taoist and Buddhist divinities were worshipped. In Hancheng for instance the Buddhists had several temples but the Taoists none. They were however allowed to rent temples from the Buddhists.<sup>140</sup> Törnquist has the following to say about the Chinese religions:

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<sup>134</sup> *Hem Hem*, 1929, p. 18 ff.

<sup>135</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 141 f.

<sup>136</sup> Törnquist to the Board, July 6th, 1915.

<sup>137</sup> *The Missionsförbundet* 1898, number 1, p. 22 f.

<sup>138</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 100.

<sup>139</sup> Ringgren-Ström, 1968, p. 408.

<sup>140</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 140.

“Chinese religions are like a motley fabric with Taoism as the warp and Buddhism as the weft with Confucianism’s modest theses as decorative streaks on the upper side and ancestor worship as red threads both lengthwise and crosswise all over the fabric.”<sup>141</sup>

## 6. The Religion of the Masses

The religion of the majority of the people in Eastern Turkestan was Islam. At least 80 per cent of the population – most of them Turks – were Muslims. Most of them were Sunnites but there were also Shiites. These two fractions lived in sharp antagonism towards each other. A learned Mullah who later on became a Christian and joined the Mission in Jarkend, told his new friends about his past: “We Sunnites do not accept any other sects. We believe that we are the only true believers, and everyone else is more or less wrong.”<sup>142</sup> Another member of the church, a Shiite before he became a Christian, said that the Shiites were convinced that they were practising the only genuine form of Islam.<sup>143</sup>

The Shiites could, however, show some tolerance towards other religions. They could for example take jobs at the Mission station. The Shia leader of the whole province lived in Kashgar. Being a leader within Islam did however not stop him from working for the Mission for many years. For some twenty years, until his death, he taught at the Mission schools. He was also a literary co-worker. But he remained a faithful Muslim until his death.<sup>144</sup> Every year the Shiites of Eastern Turkestan celebrated a two-week-long mourning ceremony in memory of Ali, the Caliph and cousin of Muhammad.<sup>145</sup>

The Sunnites were however totally predominant. With their orthodox faith they made Christian work difficult. Christian faith diverged fundamentally from their Muslim conceptions, the reason why they could under no circumstances tolerate this religion. If the Shiites had been in majority, and thereby more influential, the mission work might have taken a different course.

Mysticism within Islam, the so-called Sufism, was also well represented. It was manifested in the dervish orders. Some of these orders were represented in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>146</sup> The followers, dressed as mendicant friars, collected alms from the people.<sup>147</sup> Apart from that they were known for their strange cult, often performed at the shrines of the saints. A few former dervishes were among the people that the missionaries had won for Christ. An evangelist within the Mission told the missionaries that his ancestors had been dervishes for many generations. One of his elder brothers was still head of an order of about 200 friars. The evangelist himself had belonged to this order when he was young.<sup>148</sup>

There were more than 2 000 mosques in the province.<sup>149</sup> The countryside mosques were simple buildings, whereas the ones in the towns were richly decorated. This was especially true for Kashgar.<sup>150</sup> This is how Törnquist describes a mosque belonging to the Tungans:

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>142</sup> Nyrén, B., 1928, p. 276.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>145</sup> *Ungdomsvännen*, 1927, p. 531.

<sup>146</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 120. Etherton, 1924, p. 247.

<sup>147</sup> Raquette, 1935, p. 152 f.

<sup>148</sup> Nyrén, B., 1928, p. 275.

<sup>149</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 232.

<sup>150</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 232.

“The mosque itself is made up of an open court or rather a park. In front, there is the big water reservoir and the prayer-wheel with its pillars in an open row. Now the whole park is full of praying people in perfectly arranged rows. The ground is covered with prayer-mats also arranged in rows as far as can be seen. People are lying on these mats, side by side as close together as possible. From the platform up in front there are silent instructions, and now the ‘foaming sea’ is heaving up and down, like wave after wave, very regular and very dignified in a quiet way. There are no shouts of command, no conductor’s baton ... Immense is this crowd of tens of thousands of the Kashgar Mohammedans.”<sup>151</sup>

Minarets were parts of the mosques in Eastern Turkestan. This was not very common in China. Marshall Broomhall, a missionary from the China Inland Mission, points out that the Mosques in China did not differ appreciably from other temples, seen from the outside. Eastern Turkestan minarets were an influence from Russian architecture according to Broomhall.<sup>152</sup> He also mentions another particularity which distinguished Chinese Muslims from the rest of the Muslim world. In Central China there were special women’s mosques which were not to be found in Eastern Turkestan, where women had to pray in their homes.

The Koran covered all aspects of faith and life and was regarded as divine. Kraemer points out that the fundamental position of Islam is not “the Word was made flesh” but rather “The Word was made book”.<sup>153</sup> In the Koran there are many concepts borrowed both from Judaism and from Christianity. The Old Testament prophets for example are contained in the Koran and Jesus is regarded as the last one of them. Jesus and the New Testament are however been passed by and the will of God is so much better and more completely expressed through Mohammed and the Koran. In Eastern Turkestan there was at the time of the Mission a bulky volume, the history of the Prophets, an addition to the Koran. It contained handwritten texts, translated from Persian, previously translated from Arabic.<sup>154</sup> It was however not allowed to translate the Koran itself. Its magnificence was partly due to the fact that it was written “in the noblest of languages, classic Arabic.”<sup>155</sup>

The five Pillars of Islam and the religious obligations were observed more or less seriously. The profession of faith made a person a Muslim. “Muslim is any person who expresses the profession”.<sup>156</sup> The Muslims in Eastern Turkestan were fully convinced that the profession of faith gave them salvation and eternal life. One day a woman, who had recently become a widow, came to Raquette. She said that her husband had been more ungodly than most people. But when he was about to die, he assured himself of eternal bliss by professing, “Allah is one, and apart from him there is no other god”.<sup>157</sup> Thus the profession of faith opened the door to the Muslim community during ones lifetime and also gave the assurance of eternal life. Few sins could change that state of facts. There were however things that closed all possibilities of community and life, both in this life and in the life to come. Högberg relates such a case. During his time at the Mission station of Jengi-Hessar, he got to know a man who had taken a prostitute as his wife. Their two daughters followed their mother’s way of life. The man himself was a drunkard and he also led others into his own drinking habits. He was expelled from the Muslim community. And when he died, nobody cared for him. Long before his death he had arranged for a burial-site within his own compound because he knew he could not expect to be buried in a Muslim burial-ground.

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<sup>151</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 126 f.

<sup>152</sup> Broomhall, 1910, p. 237.

<sup>153</sup> Kraemer, 140, p. 233.

<sup>154</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 69 ff.

<sup>155</sup> Arbman, 1957, p. 82.

<sup>156</sup> Ericsson, 1967.

<sup>157</sup> *The Missionsförbundet*, 1905, p. 230.

When he died it was impossible for his relatives to get a Mullah to perform the funeral ceremony.<sup>158</sup>

Prayers were said five times daily. The word “namaz” is often translated by "prayer", but this translation is doubtful according to Högberg. He felt that “mass” might be a more accurate rendering of the word.<sup>159</sup> (Since “prayer” is an accepted term, this word will be used here.) Prayers in the mosques, where the men came together, were held in Arabic – a language that people did not understand as a rule. The devotions are a sign implying that the Muslim subordinates himself to the will of Allah and continuously wishes to bear him in mind. The Eastern Turkestan Muslims did not always take their prayer obligations very seriously. When Högberg supervised the construction of the British Consulate, there were 100-150 Muslim workers employed. Only two of them said their prayers regularly.<sup>160</sup>

Almsgiving was regulated in detail, but here too, many tried to escape from it, according to the missionaries.

Even though almsgiving in many regions had turned into some kind of tax it was also practised in other contexts directly from man to man. Social life in Muslim countries is based on begging and almsgiving. In that way the numerous beggars in the country had a chance to survive. And it was not considered shameful to beg. But it was shameful to neglect ones religious duty to give.<sup>161</sup>

During Ramadan the true believers lived in total abstention from food and drink as well as from sexual relations. Fasting could be imposed at any time of the year as atonement for sins against various Koran commandments.<sup>162</sup> Ramadan ended in a two days’ festival when people came in masses to the mosques. In the Great Mosque of Kashgar some 80 000 Muslims would come together. John Andersson says that during these days the men also gathered by the river to enjoy themselves. The women were on the other side of the river from where they could watch the men having a good time.<sup>163</sup>

Many people made up for Ramadan’s daytime privations during the night. The Koran allows this.<sup>164</sup> It is obvious that fasting hereby lost much of its importance.<sup>165</sup> These nightly festivities also made the people totally unfit for any useful work in the daytime. The missionaries complain saying that it was nearly impossible to get anything done.<sup>166</sup>

Before the pilgrims set out on their yearly pilgrimage to Mecca a great festival in memory of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Ishmael was celebrated in Eastern Turkestan. Islam derives its history from Abraham’s family just like the Jews. The history of the Jews lived on through Abraham’s son Isaac, and the history of the Muslims through Ishmael, the son of Hagar, the handmaid.<sup>167</sup>

Only very few people could make the journey to Mecca from Eastern Turkestan, being such a distant country. So instead, one single person from the extended family was appointed to make the pilgrimage. This person would then be given money and other things needed to

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<sup>158</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 60.

<sup>159</sup> Högberg, 1917, p. 10 f.

<sup>160</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 57 f.

<sup>161</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 33.

<sup>162</sup> Aagaard, 1966, p. 483.

<sup>163</sup> Andersson, 1948, p. 102. Wingate, 1929, p. 320. The festival marking the end of Ramadan is among the most important ones.

<sup>164</sup> Sura 2.

<sup>165</sup> *Ungdomsvännan*, 1906, p. 25.

<sup>166</sup> *Hem Hem*, 1929, p. 18 ff.

<sup>167</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 28.

be able to represent a large number of relatives. These relatives would later on have the privilege to live near this holy man. Very often everything a person owned was sold to make possible this pilgrimage for oneself or to give someone else the chance to go. For he who could not travel himself but who helped in equipping some-body else for the trip could expect all the blessing bestowed on the pilgrim.<sup>168</sup> Still, there were quite a few pilgrims leaving from Eastern Turkestan. Raquette mentions that several hundred Muslims left for Mecca from Jarkand every year.<sup>169</sup> Sometimes husband and wife would travel together.

It also happened that Muslims converted to Christianity made the pilgrimage. Törnquist knew of a Christian man from Kashgar who travelled to Mecca and who died there. Nobody knows if he kept his Christian faith until the end, but to his Muslim friends this pilgrimage was interpreted as a return to Islam.<sup>170</sup>

Those who were unable to go to Mecca had to be content with the numerous saints' shrines in the country. Just outside Kashgar, for instance, there was a famous shrine where many people went on a pilgrimage.<sup>171</sup> The last request of a Muslim was to be buried somewhere next to a saint. But this was reserved for the rich only, since such a burial-place was very expensive.<sup>172</sup>

Gunnar Hermansson once saw some 7 000-8 000 people gathered around the shrine of a local saint. He understands this saint cult as people's need for a mediator. Allah was so far away and so indifferent to the needs of ordinary people! People were looking for a link, someone close to them who could also reach God.<sup>173</sup>

According to the popular beliefs, the demons, or the "jinns" in the local language could sometimes appear in human forms. They were recognized by the way their eye slits were vertical, not horizontal as is the case with normal human beings.<sup>174</sup> The missionaries also mention people who were possessed by evil spirits.

All boys were circumcised. It was usually the barber who was asked to perform the circumcision. It did happen, though, that parents came to the Mission clinics to have this operation done. Raquette mentions that he performed this operation on several occasions. The reason why parents turned to the missionaries in such an important and holy matter was according to Raquette, that the operation at the Mission would be done in a painless way and that the subsequent very common inflammation could be avoided.<sup>175</sup> The very fact that Muslims contacted the missionaries in this important matter proves that the contact between them was very good. It was, of course, surprising that a Muslim could allow this rite to be handed over to "an infidel" and, moreover, a Christian missionary. It also gives evidence of freedom from prejudice among the missionaries. The circumcision was a ritual celebration within a religion that the missionaries had come to abolish. But in this particular matter they met people half way, although it took a lot of will-power to do it.

Eastern Turkestan Muslims were fatalists. This could be observed everywhere. Writing about Jarkend in 1901 Albert Andersson says that it was "repulsive in its ugliness .... I have never seen such a lot of jerry-built crow's nests." He believed that the decay had to do with the Muslims being held down by their faith. They felt that their fate was poverty and misery;

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>169</sup> Broomhall, 1910, p. 251.

<sup>170</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, February 19th, 1908.

<sup>171</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 29.

<sup>172</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 227 f.

<sup>173</sup> *Ungdomsvännan*, 1929, p. 562 and 1930, p. 230.

<sup>174</sup> Raquette, 1935, p. 135.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., note, p. 129 f.



there was nothing they could do about it.<sup>176</sup> God had created the rich to be rich, and the poor to live in misery. To interfere with this and to relieve misery was against the will of God.<sup>177</sup>

Another typical example comes from Magnus Bäcklund's health care work in 1902. When a person was admitted into hospital the relatives would be "living in" with him or her without worrying about the risk of infection. At night the relatives of the patient cuddled up against him on his sleeping-mat. If it was the will of Allah that you die, you died, no matter how much you protected yourself! Many sick people refused all help on these grounds.<sup>178</sup>

Fatalism held back cultural development. Once, this country had been one of the great cultural centres of the world.<sup>179</sup> But during the Islamic era the culture had not developed at all, according to the missionaries, "maybe, in fact, it had declined."<sup>180</sup>

Sigfrid Moen says that the lack of initiative among Eastern Turkestan people had its origin in the paralysing fatalism that Islam brings about in its adherents. "This fatalism certainly makes him nearly indifferent to certain sufferings and bad luck, sometimes stubbornly patient, sometimes brave with complete disregard for the dangerous risk to his life, but at the same time lacking in will- power when facing difficulties he would otherwise probably very easily overcome".<sup>181</sup>

After having to return to Kashgar from his studies in Beirut, the well educated Qasim Akhun, a son of the country, writes about "hopeless ignorance and spiritual darkness, tyranny and intolerance."<sup>182</sup>

To some missionaries the religion of the people in Eastern Turkestan appeared to be totally false. Gottfrid Palmberg had once heard Tor Andrae give a lecture on Islam. Afterwards he was upset. Andrae's picture, he felt was in many parts highly idealized. Not only Andrae's depiction of the concept of charity and compassion but also his description of the feeling of sin and of guilt within Islam was highly misleading.<sup>183</sup>

Lars-Erik Högberg found the religious state of things among people quite depressing and intimidating. What good there is in the Koran, and it exists, he emphasizes, had been lost and misunderstood. He categorically condemns the religious worship of the people and writes:

"... a heathen can hold on to some of his abominations handed down from earlier generations, transplanted into Islamic soil. Neither in Catholicism, nor in Judaism nor in paganism one is likely to find the parallel of the cult of shrines, of superstition, fortune-telling and witchcraft, rain-doctors and talismans etc. found in Islam. One could go one step further saying that heathens are invited and enticed by the Muslims into accepting their religion and thus be free to lower themselves even deeper into the mire of vice than they were able to do while heathens."<sup>184</sup>

Certainly there were a number of people who wanted to serve God, Högberg continues, but there was mostly undue pride and hypocrisy among them.

Other missionaries presented a much more balanced picture of the religion of the people. Gösta Raquette was one of them. He too saw Islam as the reason for people's cultural backwardness although he said so with some hesitation.<sup>185</sup> Raquette says, "When the missionaries first arrived, they met an ignorant people whose main interest was to find out how many waistcoat buttons we had, or why we wore our caps with the lining on the inside

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<sup>176</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1901, p. 275.

<sup>177</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 82.

<sup>178</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1902, p.245.

<sup>179</sup> *Ansgarius*, 1928, p. 63.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 1934, p. 96 and Törnquist, 1926, p. 65.

<sup>181</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 80 f.

<sup>182</sup> Jarring, 1975, p. 32.

<sup>183</sup> Palmberg to Lundahl, August 1st, 1921.

<sup>184</sup> *Ansgarius*, 1919, p. 107 ff, 116, 130 f.

<sup>185</sup> Raquette, 1935, p. 143.

and not on the outside, which was the custom in their country.”<sup>186</sup> He tries hard, though, to create understanding and sympathy for “the sometimes very primitive and self-contradictory ideas of this people”.<sup>187</sup> He writes about the school of piety within Islam, where one tries to accumulate merits before God by keeping the religious law, by doing good deeds and by executing spiritual exercises. But there was also a deeper and more spiritual form of piety:

“This other form of piety, which I think most Christians will be surprised to find among the Muslims is the kind which has its roots in a wish to serve God for His own sake, and to attain the highest aim of blessedness - to see God face to face. In both cases we find not only an honest search for truth and peace of mind but also hypocrisy and false piety. Here is one more thing that Christianity and Islam have in common: the majority of their adherents lead a sham religious life without a real faith and ongoing spiritual growth whereas the genuine believers are only in minority.”<sup>188</sup>

The missionaries’ experiences of Islam in Eastern Turkestan were consequently quite varied. The two missionaries last quoted, Högberg and Raquette will suffice as examples. In 1919, when Högberg wrote his article, quoted above, he could look back on 22 years of missionary work in Eastern Turkestan. He had often written and spoken about the many dark aspects of Islam during those years, and when he published his book *Memoirs of a Missionary* in 1924, he was equally downcast. It might have been that he never found himself at home in this new Mission field. Already after his first term there, his going back was a matter of hesitation.<sup>189</sup> And what could he gain by his superficial presentation of Islam? The Mission surely did not benefit from it. Communications were certainly poor at that time, but there was still a chance of his views being known among Muslims in Eastern Turkestan. This is exactly what happened in the early 1930s, when Swedish Muslims tried to exploit these statements in various ways. This happened during the final years of the Mission era and will be treated later in this book. As to Raquette and his balanced and positive statements, they were written as late as 1925. By then he had been living in his home country since 1921 and the distance in time and place probably contributed to his caution. To this should be added his vast knowledge of Islam. To his friendly attitude towards Islam he adds an unconditional belief in the possibilities of Christian Mission in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>190</sup>

## 7. Eastern Turkestan Church History

Among the very first things known about Eastern Turkestan history of religion is the fact that people are said to have been worshippers of fire.<sup>191</sup> At an early stage, Buddhism penetrated the country. On its way to conquer China, Buddhism followed the road through Eastern Turkestan.<sup>192</sup> This form of Buddhism which now gained a foothold in the country was called Mahayana, or Northern Buddhism. However after some centuries its influence diminished. The kind of Buddhism existing in the country during the mission era and which was mainly the religion of the Chinese population was mixed up beyond recognition with elements from ancient Chinese religions.

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<sup>186</sup> SMT, 1913, p. 84.

<sup>187</sup> Raquette, 1935, p. 8.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 146 f.

<sup>189</sup> Ekman, 1903, p. 89.

<sup>190</sup> Raquette, p. 8. See also Myrdal, 1977, p. 70 f.

<sup>191</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 164 f.

<sup>192</sup> Anvill, 1932, p. 124 ff.

Towards the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, Mani, the founder of the Persian religion came to Eastern Turkestan where he spread his teachings. Raquette points out that Mani had considerable success.<sup>193</sup> Findings from recent years also point to this fact.

During the first centuries after Christ, Christianity also established itself in Eastern Turkestan. A legend tells us that the Apostle Thomas had brought the Gospel there. The Apostle Bartholomew is also said to have witnessed here on a journey from India to China.<sup>194</sup>

There is historical proof of the presence of the Nestorian Church in the country. A remarkable inscription from 781, found in His-an-fu in Central China, speaks about this missionary era. Other findings have been made in Eastern Turkestan, east of Urumchi in Turfan. They are fragments of the New Testament and other Christian written documents in Turkish, Chinese and Iranian dialects, believed to be dating from the 8th century. During excavations of an abandoned town in the sand desert, a picture of Christ was discovered by German archaeologists and the item was brought to Berlin.<sup>195</sup> Sir Aurel Stein thought he had found still another remnant from the Christian days. In a ruin about a day's journey to the north of Kashgar he found human bones. He comes to the conclusion that this place must have been a Christian burial-ground, a columbarium from the Nestorian days.<sup>196</sup>

In the middle of the 13th century several Europeans travelled to Central Asia. Best known of them is the Franciscan Wilhelm van Ruysbroek, who travelled to the interior of Asia in the year 1253. The driving force behind this interest in Asia and the journeys there at the time was the information which had reached the Pope that the Mongolian ruler was a Christian. The Pope now hoped to make him an ally in the campaign against Islam.<sup>197</sup> Wilhelm found out that the rumour about the ruler's Christian faith was false. But he met with many other Christians. In the Uighur towns, Nestorians and Saracens (Muslims) lived side by side, he wrote. After a number of discussions they had come to understand that they all believed in one God.<sup>198</sup> It seems to have been typical for the Nestorian mission that it was a "Folk Church". It did not include just special groups or classes in society but reached the majority of the population.<sup>199</sup>

When Marco Polo was in China towards the end of the 13th century he also travelled through Eastern Turkestan, visiting towns like Kashgar and Jarkend, which were later to become the sphere of activity of the Swedish Mission. There he found both churches and Christians who came together to worship.<sup>200</sup> Marco Polo mentions that he found a Jacobite church in Jarkend. Raquette therefore comes to the conclusion that in Eastern Turkestan - just like in many other places where Christianity had come at this time - there were conflicts and discord, among the various churches. He believed that this could be one of the reasons why Christianity was weakened, and why Christians were an easy prey to other teachings.<sup>201</sup>

This report given by Marco Polo constitutes the last information about a Christian church in this area. At the beginning of the 17th century the Jesuit missionary Benedict Goëz travelled

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<sup>193</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 48 f.

<sup>194</sup> SMT, 1914, p. 230.

<sup>195</sup> Interview with Arell, November 27th, 1973.

<sup>196</sup> The Muslim World, January 1951, p. 11. Mirsky, 1977, p. 140.

<sup>197</sup> Schildt, 1961, p. 77.

<sup>198</sup> Charpentier, 1919, p. 187, p. 191.

<sup>199</sup> Hannestad, 1957, p. 31 f.

<sup>200</sup> *Travels of Marco Polo*, 1967, p. 84.

<sup>201</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 50.

through Eastern Turkestan on his way to China. In spite of his thorough investigations, he found no traces of Christian life there.<sup>202</sup>

The Swedish missionaries also tried to find possible traces of those early Christian times. They actually found some reminiscences. For instance the Muslims often decorated Mosques and other buildings with a cross. When asked why they did so, the answer was that their ancestors had always done so.<sup>203</sup> It is of course possible that this Christian symbol has been kept from the Nestorian Church up to modern times. Wilhelm van Ruysbroek says that he even met people in heathen temples with a cross tattooed on their hands.<sup>204</sup> The Nestorians taught that by drawing the sign of a cross on ones forehead, one could protect oneself against diseases.<sup>205</sup> Maybe the sign of the cross still served a magic purpose during the mission era, although at that time it was no more than a meaningless custom. Percy Sykes, the British Consul-General in Kashgar, says that he looked for traces of the Nestorian Church while he was in Eastern Turkestan. He too had met with the cross symbol. When a horse-dealer failed to sell a horse, says Sykes, he marked it with a cross on its forehead, hoping to give this horse a better chance on the next market day. This was done in order to protect the horse from “the evil eye”, says Sykes.<sup>206</sup> Another possible remnant, mentioned by missionary Arell, was observed at a Christian wedding at one of the Mission stations. When the wedding ceremony was over, an elderly Muslim exclaimed, “What a wedding! My parents have told me that long ago our ancestors had wedding ceremonies of this kind.”<sup>207</sup> Yet another possible reminiscence was mentioned by Högberg in a letter from the 1920s. By then he had left the Mission field, but he wrote to Raquette, asking him to explore the possibility of there being traces of Syrian Christians in Eastern Turkestan. He mentioned a place where “most people are monogamous and where the customs are not at all like those of the Muslims... They are a Mohammedan sect, but what lies behind all this?”<sup>208</sup> However, no such investigation was ever made.

Christianity came to an end, once and for all, with the coming of Islam. Already in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, armed Muslim armies had reached China by way of Asia Minor and Persia. Everywhere people were forced to surrender. In Central Asia the Turkish and Mongolian peoples were conquered. But it was not until the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century that the country was altogether permeated with the religion of Mohammed. By the time the Swedish missionaries arrived there, 300 years later, they found a population totally dominated by Islam.

Islam in Eastern Turkestan was not an altogether homogenous phenomenon. There were numerous different factions, as has already been mentioned. And among these Muslim factions, there was constant tension and friction. During times of unrest they even waged war upon each other, slaughtering their brothers mercilessly.

The Chinese religions did not harbour the same tension and hostility. They could, for instance, very well share temples and yet these were different religions.

Between Islam and the Chinese religions there was animosity and disdain. The Muslims looked upon the Chinese with loathing, “those detestable Idolaters”. The Chinese on the other hand behaved in a modest way, almost timidly confronted with the large number of Muslims.

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 1916, p. 124.

<sup>203</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1896, p. 11.

<sup>204</sup> Schildt, 1961, p. 109.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., note, p. 109.

<sup>206</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 323.

<sup>207</sup> Palmaer, 1932, p. 143.

<sup>208</sup> Högberg to Raquette, March 10th, 1920.

When they behaved in an aggressive way, they were not pushed by religious motives but by nationalistic and political ones. After all, the Chinese were the masters of the country.

The Muslims and the Chinese (most of them Buddhists) were very far apart. They were extremely different from each other which, according to P.T. Etherton, made any rapprochement impossible.<sup>209</sup> In daily, practical life however there was an ongoing mutual influence. Writing about the Chinese, John Törnquist says, “The contact with Mohammedanism certainly contributes to deprive them of their belief in idols, but gives them nothing in its place.”<sup>210</sup> Islam, on the other hand did not escape influences either. Neither the belief in demons, nor the cult of the shrines would have become so prevalent without the Chinese belief in spirits and ancestor worship.

So, for centuries, Eastern Turkestan had been the meeting place and the focal point for different religions. This was also a place where Christianity had been confronted with other religions. And this came to happen again around the turn of the century 1800/1900. One thousand years ago the Nestorian church had been powerful here. And now Christianity came back through Free Church missionaries from Sweden. Within a vast area in the southern part of Eastern Turkestan the Swedish Mission was the only mission society present. But unfortunately it never really had a chance. The same thing could be said about other mission societies working in other parts of the province like the China Inland Mission, centred around Urumchi, the Catholic Mission with several main stations in the northern part of province and the Norwegian Lutheran China Mission in the Lili area. As will be described below, all these missions struggled with great difficulties. The church history of Eastern Turkestan also includes those orthodox Christians who after having fled the Soviet Union settled in the northern part of the province. This area was also the dwelling site of some Baptists who were also refugees.

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<sup>209</sup> Etherton, k 1923, p. 103, where his statements are underscored by Sir Charles Bell.

<sup>210</sup> M CCS Annual report of 1905, p. 144 ff.

## **II. Exploring the Mission Field 1892 – 1900. From N.F. Höijer to the Boxer Uprising**

In February 1892, N.F. Höijer arrived in Kashgar for an exploration trip. When Höijer went back to Russia after just one week, his companion, a Christian Turk by the name of Avetarianian, remained in Kashgar where he worked, on his own, until 1894 when the first Swedish missionaries arrived. A few years later, some more missionaries from Sweden joined them. The first tentative of missionary efforts during the pioneer era yielded few results apart from what was achieved within the field of medical care. Sven Hedin who was living in the area at that time criticizes the Mission. The leaders of the people want to get rid of the missionaries and send written complaints to the Chinese authorities. Local riots against the Mission around the turn of the century and in the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising in Central China force the Mission to wait and see, and the new century starts with unrest and uncertainty about the future. The Mission pioneers followed unbeaten tracks and in all that they saw and did during the first years, they kept looking for a reply to the question: Are there conditions in this country for breaking ground and starting mission work?

### **1. An Un-known Mission Field**

The M CCS was already engaged in mission work in Asia in the 1880s working in Russia, Caucasus and Persia. One of its missionaries to Asia, N.F. Höijer dreamed about enlarging the mission work further east.<sup>1</sup>

Höijer came from the province of Värmland, and after studies at the M CCS mission school, then situated at Kristinehamn and language studies in England, he started an eventful missionary career in Kronstadt in Russia. He was the “visionary type”, full of enthusiasm and his tremendous power of initiative brought him from one task to another. He has been called the bold pioneer. But his staying power seems to have been less developed.<sup>2</sup> His various mission tasks were facilitated by the fact that he spoke 14 languages.

Soon he finds himself in Caucasus where the Armenian Evangelical Mission Covenant Church was founded, on his initiative, in 1887. This Church comprised the M CCS missions in Caucasus and Persia. The name was later changed into The Oriental Covenant. This name evokes Höijer’s great mission vision. The Oriental Covenant was intended to push further on into Central Asia, and en route establish a band of mission stations. “Why not mark out a road in white from the Baltic Sea to the Land of the Rising Sun, through the whole of Asia?”<sup>3</sup> This line of strongholds, stretching over Batum at the Black Sea in Caucasus into the heart of Asia, via among other places Askabad, Buchara, Samarkand, Tashkent, Kokand and Osh, would then, in the East, meet the already established Mission in Central China, and in the South contact would be established with the Missions in India. In India, there was Christian mission work in a modern sense already established since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in China, the China Inland Mission had been founded in 1865. The M CCS also had mission work in China in the Hupeh province, where the first missionaries arrived in 1890.<sup>4</sup>

It was this vision of Höijer’s focused in conquering Asia for Christ that lay behind his eagerness to come to Kashgar. Impatiently he wrote letter after letter to the Mission Board in Stockholm concerning this matter. But it took time before the Mission Board could come to a

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<sup>1</sup> Werner, 1898, p. 331. The English explorer Henry Lansdell mentions having met with N.F. Höijer in Tiflis in 1888. (Lansdell, 1893, p. 19).

<sup>2</sup> Björk, 1965, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> Lindeberg, 1948, p. 19. Larsson, 1905, p. 348.

<sup>4</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 10 f. Larson, 1919, p. 56. The M CCS General Conference minutes from 1895, § 34.

decision, and Höijer became more and more impatient. It would be difficult to find a more strategic place than Kashgar in Höijer's mind. And in 1891 he "finally" got the assignment by the General Conference to go to Kashgar and examine the possibilities for mission work there.<sup>5</sup>

Höijer had already been on his way to Kashgar a few years earlier. But he had had to stop and return back home when he reached Samarkand in Western Turkestan. From there, some 1000 more kilometres remained before reaching Kashgar across very rough mountain areas.<sup>6</sup> In fact an attempt at doing mission work had been made at the beginning of the 1890s by the Armenian Margara Ter-Asaturians. He was paid by mission people in the US and by the M CCS.<sup>7</sup> Ter-Asaturians, who had spent some time at the Mission School in Kristinehamn wanted to have Höijer with him on his trip to Kashgar. However this did not happen.<sup>8</sup>

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1891, Höijer started out on his tour looking at the prospects in Kashgar. The journey started in Tiflis and in his company Höijer had some Armenian Christians and the newly converted Turk, Avetaranian. Towards the end of January, the following year, the expedition had reached Kashgar in Western China, or as it was also called Eastern Turkestan. They continued south of the Caspian Sea, through Persia and further on, on board the Transcaspian railway to Buchara, the holy place of the Sunnite Muslims, and from there to Samarkand. There Höijer met with Christians who he knew from a previous visit to the town.<sup>9</sup> Through Western Turkestan, he continued on to the Heaven Mountains. Afterwards he described his journey over the mountains with his typical, rich imagination. Törnquist commented on this years later, saying "His ignorance concerning the people in these mountains allowed his imagination to create robbers out of peaceful shepherds, which of course added to the excitement and underlined the thrilling parts of his story."<sup>10</sup>

Before leaving, Höijer had not had time to apply for a Chinese visa. This document had to be issued in Peking and having to wait for the reply from there would have completely upset his timetable.<sup>11</sup> His attempts under way to get an entry visa failed, and on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1892, Höijer arrived in Kashgar – with no visa. The only thing he had was a Swedish passport.<sup>12</sup> Once in China he began to have misgivings about his situation, and already on February 8<sup>th</sup> he left Kashgar and went back to Russia.<sup>13</sup>

But the first thing Höijer did after arriving in Kashgar was to contact the Russian consul. Sven Hedin who had at that time already travelled in the country had previously told Höijer about Petroffski<sup>14</sup>, the Consul. Hedin describes him in the following way, "Consul Petroffski is the most amiable and pleasant man on earth... A better starting-point for travels in inner Asia could therefore not be imagined."<sup>15</sup>

Höijer was well received by the Consul and remained his guest during the week in Kashgar. As it turned out, the Consul was really a "good starting-point" for Höijer and his plans. One day Petroffski showed his Swedish guest the treaties established between China

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<sup>5</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 419.

<sup>6</sup> Hedin, 1893, p. 458.

<sup>7</sup> Ohldén, 1906, p. 111. Ansgarius, 1909, p. 127 f.

<sup>8</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 15. From Tiflis, Höijer wanted to bring missionary E. John Larson. Larson had to stay in Tiflis however, in order to lead mission work there. (Larson, 1919, p. 54).

<sup>10</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 420 f.

<sup>11</sup> Björk, 1965, p. 110.

<sup>12</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 420 f.

<sup>13</sup> Björk, 1965, p. 110.

<sup>14</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 18. Höijer also had contacts with the English agent (later on General Consul) in Kashgar, Macartney. (Lundahl, 1916, p. 130).

<sup>15</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 187 f.

and Russia. Höijer even received a copy of the passage dealing with the Christian mission which runs like this in Höijer's translation:

“The Chinese government acknowledges the fact that the Christian doctrine teaches people order and unity and pledges not only not to persecute its citizens for accomplishing the duties of the Christian faith, but also to treat them as equals with other believers in the Empire. It sees Christian missionaries as good people, not working for their own interest, and the Chinese government allows missionaries coming with recommendations from Russian Consuls or from a foreign power to spread Christianity among its citizens and shall not refuse them entry to any open space in the Empire.”<sup>16</sup>

As it was written “Christian missionaries” and not “Russian missionaries”, Höijer remarked that the Russian Consul had the possibility to protect any missionary entering the country. Consequently this was also valid for Swedish missionaries. The Consul agreed to this, but hoped that the Swedish King would address himself directly to the Russian government on this matter. When leaving Kashgar a few days later, Höijer and the Consul parted as best friends. This first positive impression of Swedish mission made upon Consul Petroffski was something that the missionaries could benefit from further on. However the Consul never whole-heartedly supported the Mission.<sup>17</sup> Höijer himself fell into disgrace with him for having written a series of articles in the periodical *Missionsförbundet* about his travels in Russia where he expressed harsh criticism about certain things in Russia. The Consul learnt about this criticism and was very indignant. When it was decided, in 1895, that new missionaries would be sent out and it was suggested that Höijer, knowing the travel roads to Kashgar be their guide, Högberg was decidedly against this. If Höijer comes here now, writes Högberg, that would inevitably create a stir and cause trouble, the Consul being “very distressed”.<sup>18</sup>

After his exploring trip to Kashgar Höijer wrote a detailed report and sent it home to the Mission Board. Following that it could be said that Höijer's contribution to the new mission project was more or less finished. Not until 1895 does he participate in the General Conference in Stockholm, where he makes a speech about what the reporter describes as his “adventurous missionary life”.<sup>19</sup> Later on he returned to the mission field in Russia from where he was called home a few years later by the MCCA Board having made himself “impossible as a missionary”, according to MCCA President Ekman. He had thrown himself into “a lot of risky undertakings, even of a political nature, that were hardly compatible with the beautiful calling of being an evangelical preacher...”<sup>20</sup>

Höijer had caused the Mission Board trouble previously. Already in 1891, the year before the exploring trip to Kashgar, Högberg, who was then Höijer's colleague within the Oriental Covenant (the Armenian Evangelical Covenant Church), wrote a letter home to Ekman, complaining about Höijer. It was impossible to consult with him on mission matters, says Högberg. Höijer took his own initiatives without consulting anybody else. On top of that he acted thoughtlessly and hastily, which gave him enemies among the population. Högberg continues:

“I have had personal talks with Höijer, but he expresses no real regret over mistakes he has made, but rather he triumphs at feats, expressed in words like: ‘I seized him by the neck and threw him out.’ His opponents have written an official letter about him, but all this has only turned him into a martyr.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Larson, 1905, p. 332 f.

<sup>17</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 18 f. Sjöholm relates about Consul Petroffski after the inspection made in 1913. The Consul was disobliging towards the missionaries. He reported untruthfully to the Chinese authorities that the newly arrived missionaries came with trunks full of weapons. (SMT, 1914, p. 77)

<sup>18</sup> Högberg to Ekman, December 18th, 1895.

<sup>19</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1895, number 1 p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> Ekman, 1903, p. 65.

<sup>21</sup> Högberg to Ekman, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1891. Högberg could get impatient with Höijer. (Högberg, 1920, p. 107).



Högberg concludes by expressing the hope that the MCCS President would rebuke Höijer. The best thing would be for him to go back to Sweden and leave everything behind. Högberg reacted coolly to Höijer's eagerness to go to Kashgar exploring the possibilities to start mission work there. Höijer had already been on his way there, but had turned back in Samarkand.<sup>22</sup>

The reason behind the conflict between Högberg and Höijer, and also the main reason for Höijer's discharge from the MCCS, was to be found in the business activity that the two missionaries had started in Tiflis, in Caucasus around the beginning of the 1890s. In order to divert the attention of Russian authorities the missionaries had opened a shop, the *Swedish Shop*. Inside the shop there was a room where the missionaries preached. In connection with this business activity, Höijer had muddled up the finances which led to great losses for the MCCS. This dissension continued after Höijer had come back to Tiflis, after his trip to Kashgar, and turned Höijer into an issue at the Conference in the summer of 1899. The embarrassing discussion was made public by the *Dagens Nyheter*. In 1901, the Höijer issue was again taken up by the General Conference which then decided to discharge him.<sup>23</sup>

Höijer still had the conversion of the Russians at heart and in 1903, in Stockholm, he formed the Committee for Evangelical Mission in Russia. This mission organization, which later on turned into the Slavic Mission employed Höijer. For 12 years he was engaged in this work with mission activities in Russia and extensive travelling in Sweden and other countries for fund-raising. In Sweden, Höijer mostly visited MCCS congregations. He had no authorisation whatsoever to do so from the MCCS head quarters, and he was bitterly blamed for his arbitrariness.<sup>24</sup> In 1915 he got a post within the American Mission Committee. At that time, Waldenström had already warned the Americans about him. In a letter to the Missions Director in America he wrote, "Höijer is an adventurer and no missionary." In 1925, at his post within this American organization Höijer is on board a ship, off the coast of Alaska. The ship sinks in the storm. After these hardships he had to be taken into hospital in Seattle, where he dies, the same year, nearly 70 years old.<sup>25</sup>

Höijer's good friend, Johan Sköld, missionary to China, remarks in an obituary at Höijer's funeral, not without bitterness, that the Swedish newspapers had said very little about Höijer's great life-work. On the other hand, several American papers gave him good obituary notices. At the annual meeting of the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church in America, in the summer of 1926, the following words were uttered in memory of Höijer, "Many volumes could be written about Höijer and his life-work. He has been criticized by many... a great man, a hero has left us. His plans were always daring, but they were all directed towards mission work among the most forgotten ones, to whom no one else wanted to go. He gave up everything for the Mission. If he got encouragement and help he was happy. If not, he continued his own way straight ahead, all the same."<sup>26</sup>

At the MCCS General Conference in the summer of 1892, Höijer's report from his travel to Kashgar was taken up. The Mission Board saw the development in the perspective of continents and speaks about "a door being opened to the heart of Asia."<sup>27</sup> The 1893 General Conference decided unanimously to start mission work in Eastern Turkestan. At the same time, it was decided to close down the mission activity in Persia. Central Asia with all its

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<sup>22</sup> Högberg to Ekman, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1891.

<sup>23</sup> Bredberg, 1954, p. 207. The *Dagens Nyheter*, June 9th, 1899. General Conference minutes from June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1901, § 19.

<sup>24</sup> Sigrid Högberg to Sjöholm, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

<sup>25</sup> Björk, 1965, p. 110. Gillén, 1952, p. 75 ff.

<sup>26</sup> *Ansgarius*, 1926, p. 106. 1930, p. 25 ff. Pages where Höijer's mission work is described.

<sup>27</sup> MCCS year book, 1892, p. 60.

immensity and its millions of non-Christians appealed to the mission leaders as a “challenge”, which is now time to address.<sup>28</sup>

Here, to the inner of Asia, to “the most isolated country on earth”, an area of political confrontation for the giants of the East, to a people completely governed by non-Christian religions and with no knowledge of the Christian faith – this was the place to which Christian mission now arrived, and it was Swedish missionaries who got the privilege of bringing the gospel.

The missionaries were to experience the isolation of the country. But not only they. When the British embassy official to China, Sir Eric Teichman, visited Kashgar in the 1930s, he pointed out that the British Consulate in Kashgar was probably the most isolated one in the whole British Empire. He writes about its extreme isolation and about how very difficult it was to get there.<sup>29</sup> Another person expressing the same opinion is Eleanor Lattimore who was on her honeymoon trip in Eastern Turkestan, in 1927, with her husband Owen Lattimore. They arrived in Kashgar and Jarkend where the couple got to know the Mission. There were only very few white people in the whole province, the capital Urumchi included, according to her. There was one British Consul, two Russian Consuls, one Irish Commissioner at the Post Office, four Catholic priests, some British and Swedish missionaries, a couple of business men, but not one single American. Travellers having visited the country, she continues, have been few and “consequently the country is still in the blessed state of being very little known”.<sup>30</sup> At the end of her diary she writes that the stay in Kashgar had given her the feeling of having spent her honeymoon on another planet.<sup>31</sup>

The missionaries came to a people being belonging to the most neglected ones among all the Muslims of the world, says Samuel Zwemer, Professor of Missiology. And as late as 1929, there was Christian mission work going on among Muslims in Central Asia only in Buchara and in the Swedish field. To that one could add a few touring missionaries, says Zwemer.<sup>32</sup> He does not count the Catholic mission in the northern part of the province.

Decades would pass until mission people outside Sweden knew about this Mission. Raquette spoke about these silent, unknown years in a lecture, in 1931:

“The world knows only very little about this country and only some two years ago did mission people in the West turn their attention to it. And then, to their great astonishment, they realized that a small evangelizing nation in the world had been awake and had gone to meet the rising sun in the East, nearly 20 years earlier. And this small nation was Sweden.”<sup>33</sup>

Even though Kashgar was an exceptionally isolated place, the Mission would soon experience the opposite. Kashgar was in fact the main town for a very large area in the inner of Asia, a crossroads for many roads and interests. Höijer was right in his mission strategy. This was all the time being stressed by different people during the missionary era. China Inland missionary H.D. Hayward, for example, writes about this in 1935, when the Mission was going through its hardest times. The Orthodox Russians present in the country had done nothing to evangelize among the Muslims, he points out. The Swedish Mission was going through a hard time, he continues, but it was strategically very important.<sup>34</sup> In his book *Pivot of Asia*,

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<sup>28</sup> General Conference minutes, 1893. Some people however were hesitant to the idea of closing down the mission to Persia, among them E. John Larson (Larson, 1919, p. 52) *The Challenge of Central Asia* (World Dominion Survey Series. Nr 1, p. 3).

<sup>29</sup> Teichman, 1937, p. 151.

<sup>30</sup> Lattimore, 1935, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 238.

<sup>32</sup> Zwemer, 1929, p. 210.

<sup>33</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1928, p. 434. SMT, 1913, p. 84.

<sup>34</sup> The Muslim World, 1935, p. 194.

Owen Lattimore repeatedly underlines the strategic position of Eastern Turkestan-Sinkiang. The very title Pivot, indicates a central point. The country is a linguistic border zone, he says. Here languages and cultures from Mongols, Chinese, Tibetans, Indians and Afghans meet. People from different religions are being confronted with each other such as Muslims, Buddhists, and Nature religion followers, Orthodox Russians, Atheistic Russians and totally irreligious Chinese. The province is also a political border zone. Here are dividing lines between Free states, governed states, satellite states or dependant states, colonial states, monarchies, principalities and theocratic states. Economic systems are also crossing each other here. Here we find industrial Soviet, rapidly changing Mongolia with its shepherd culture and agricultural China.<sup>35</sup>

Kashgar was also central from an evangelical point of view. Missionaries were constantly reminded that the town was a meeting place for people from different parts of the world, especially from the Asian countries. This was very evident for instance at the inauguration of the mission hospital of Betesta in 1907. On that occasion, nine languages were used.<sup>36</sup>

For Højjer, the vision soon faded away. He threw himself upon other tasks. But within the Mission, the vision remained vivid. This was particularly clear at times when the Mission was threatened by being closed down. On those occasions discussions often ended with someone pointing out the strategic motive. Giving up Kashgar was unthinkable! The area was a key to the whole of Central Asia!

Kashgar was strategic from a geographical point of view, but also demographically with a predominantly Muslim population. But when the MCCS started mission work in Kashgar among Muslims one reason for that was that these Muslims were governed by China. When the missionaries to Persia were transferred to Kashgar the reason was that mission work in Persia did not seem to have a future. There the state was Islamic and everything indicated that the difficulties already experienced by the Mission would only get worse. It was for instance getting more and more difficult gathering children to the Mission school. And in addition, the Swedish Mission was not appreciated by the American missionaries who had already started mission work in this area. And in the early 1890s the objections from the American Mission had become louder and louder concerning the “encroachment” of the Swedes.<sup>37</sup> In Kashgar there was no mission work being done, and more important still, the Muslims were Chinese citizens, and the Chinese state was known to be tolerant towards dissidents. John Törnquist expresses the strategy in the following way:

“If Eastern Turkestan had been under Muslim rule, the history of a mission in the country would never have been written... but the country is a Chinese province, pagan land. Thanks to that, there is Christian mission work in the country”.<sup>38</sup>

Högberg is of the same opinion. If the tolerant Chinese had not been rulers of the country mission work would have been impossible here, he writes.<sup>39</sup> And the fact that Kashgar was situated on the edge of the Muslim world was also a good thing, according to the missionaries. Raquette says:

“The time can not be very far away when railways will open up the country for various influences from outside, and then we will have to combat what is much worse than superstition and ignorance, i.e. Islam; hostile to Christ, in Western attire, from where the step is very small to total atheism.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 4. Whiting writes: “Pivot or Pawn”.

<sup>36</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 72.

<sup>37</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 441.

<sup>39</sup> Francke, 1921, p. 73.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson, 1928, p. 59.

The short Mission history in Eastern Turkestan will show how suitable this place was for mission work among Muslims. Of course results were never overwhelming, compared to mission work among other peoples, but in terms of mission to Muslims, it came to be successful.<sup>41</sup>

## 2. Pioneers

When, on his exploring trip, Höijer came to Kashgar he had in his company, among others, Johannes Avetaranian, who has already been mentioned above. He was a Turkish Muslim converted to Christianity. "Johannes the Evangelist", as the missionaries used to call him, was born in Turkey. His father had been a dervish, i.e. a member of a Muslim mendicant order. His mother who was deaf, dumb and blind died when Johannes was two years old. At the age of 18 he also lost his father. By then he could however support himself as a school teacher and Imam. As an Imam he had the right to lead the prayers in the mosque and to announce the hours of prayer from the minaret. At that time he began to have serious doubts about his faith. By chance he then came into contact with a prisoner of war, returning home from Russia who had received a New Testament in Turkish, while in Russia. Johannes borrowed the book and started studying it with growing interest. After some time it became clear to him that here had found the salvation he was looking for. The change he underwent soon became visible for the Muslims around him and he had to leave his post as a teacher. He now devoted a whole year to the study of the Bible and he also started to preach his new faith. He was persecuted and had to flee from place to place. Finally he ended up in Tibilis where he came into contact with the Swedish Mission and was baptized. Shortly afterwards he met with Höijer who took him along with him on preaching tour in Armenia and later on to Sweden. In Sweden, he attended a Mission Course at the Mission School of Kristinehamn. After that he returned to Asia. In Caucasus he met missionary E. John Larson, and the two of them started on a six months' mission trip.<sup>42</sup>

In the beginning of 1892 he arrived in Kashgar, together with Höijer. When Höijer left, after only one week, Avetaranian stayed on alone. He spoke the language of the country and his looks did not attract attention. Höijer was convinced he would be a good missionary in the new field.<sup>43</sup>

Shortly after Höijer's departure the representative from the British and Foreign Bible Society for Southern Russia, Dr. Morrison came to Kashgar for a visit. He was both astonished and happy to find a Swedish missionary there.<sup>44</sup> In collaboration with the MCCS, Avetaranian was now employed by the Bible Society as an agent for selling Bibles.<sup>45</sup> Morrison gave Avetaranian his best recommendation adding that he "is an unusually zealous, amiable and competent worker in the service of the Gospel".<sup>46</sup>

Avetaranian now employed a couple of poor boys. After some time one of them became a Christian and was baptized. Apart from that, Avetaranian led a life of solitude and isolation. Höijer writes about him in 1893 saying "that he was nearly forced to leave Kashgar, but he is still there, remaining faithfully on his post".<sup>47</sup> Sven Hedin got to know him and writes about

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<sup>41</sup> Björk, 1965, p. 110. Et aliter.

<sup>42</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 109. Lundahl, 1917, p. 286 ff. Larson, 1919, p. 46, 54.

<sup>43</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 109. Höijer counted on another one of his followers from the beginning, Mnatsakan, to stay on in Kashgar. The Russian Consul advised him not to. Mnatsakan's looks made people think he was a Jew, and antipathy against the Jews of the town was great. (Larson, 1905, p. 337 f.).

<sup>44</sup> Larson, 1905, p. 347 f.

<sup>45</sup> Canton Vol V, 1910, p. 46.

<sup>46</sup> Larson, 1905, p. 437.

<sup>47</sup> MCCS Annual Report, 1893, p. 77.

his absolute loneliness. In the daytime he was busy doing literary work, says Hedin, and “at night he played Swedish hymns on his violin”.<sup>48</sup> Avetaranian, on his part, also writes about Hedin saying that he was the guest of the Russian Consul, adding, “The Gospel and God’s Mission seem to them to be mere play things”. He might be referring to the Consul and Hedin when he says in the same letter, “I have often been ridiculed and mocked by nominal Christians.”<sup>49</sup> He also mentions the fact that the Muslims of Kashgar had tried to lure him into something punishable so that the authorities might get a reason to expel him from the country. Those Christians referred to by Avetaranian as living in Kashgar could also have been two Roman Catholics dwelling there at that time. The missionaries were later to get to know one of them more closely, namely the Dutch missionary Father Hendrichs. The other one was a Polish man, called Adam Ignatieff. He came to Kashgar towards the end of the 1880s and is described by Hedin as a “discharged Cardinal”. No one else but himself saw him as a missionary, says Hedin, as he had not won one single convert during his ten year stay in Kashgar. He had not even tried.<sup>50</sup>

At that time, Avetaranian was highly appreciated by the Swedish missionaries. They saw him as an excellent model when it came to the delicate task of preaching the Gospel to the Muslim population. On the whole he was the first evangelical preacher in this part of Central Asia. In his sermons he often referred to the prevailing distress among the people. Much of this distress was due to the numerous broken marriages and to the deeply unhappy conditions present in many homes. He took up cases of men and women having been married up to 300 times. This situation brought about a lack of love, lack of peace and violence. These unhappy circumstances, said the preacher, had their origin in the religion of the people. But the Loving God did not want people to suffer. That was why he sent a Saviour. The preacher finished his sermon by giving an account of the life of Jesus and his redeeming work.<sup>51</sup> Fragments of one of Avetaranian’s first sermon have been preserved. It was held in November 1892. In a letter to the Mission Board he quotes parts of his sermon. Like the good street preacher he was he had set out for the bazaars in order to get into contact with people and preach to them about Jesus Christ. This time too he spoke about the distress among the people. There was so much pain, lack of love, shedding of blood and lack of peace. He went on to say, “...do you think that the loving God who fills up the whole earth wants people to be so unhappy. No, of course not! He loves us all alike, and he has given a Saviour to all nations. If you like, I will tell you about this Saviour, Jesus Christ and about his apostles.” And then he continues in his letter, I got the opportunity to tell them about the life of Jesus and his atonement, and about his followers. And the Muslims were amazed, he adds finally.<sup>52</sup>

While waiting for the Swedish missionaries, Avetaranian started translating the New Testament into Eastern Turkish. During the two and half years he had to wait for the Swedish missionaries to arrive, he had time to translate both the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke. Later on he also translated Mark and John, and so the four Gospels could be published in 1898. He was assisted in the translation work by Mirza Abdul Kerim, a man from Kashgar. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark were taken into use already in 1897. The printing was done in Leipzig and the British and Foreign Bible Society was responsible for the publishing.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 191.

<sup>49</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1894, p. 294 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 188.

<sup>51</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 306 f.

<sup>52</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 198 f.

<sup>53</sup> The British and Foreign Bible Society catalogue V.II, p. 1628. Also typewritten in a file. Edition nr 9410 (BUB archives London).

However, when the missionaries had become more acquainted with the language, they realized that Avataranian's translation was not totally satisfactory. Surely they wholeheartedly appreciated his endeavours, but at the same time they found serious shortcomings. (See more about this in Chapter III). When the Swedish missionaries suggested a revision he was however strongly against it. The different opinions concerning Avataranian's translation led to animosity and bitterness poisoning Avteranian's last years in Kashgar. Periodically Högberg and Avataranian lived in such tension that they did not talk to each other but they "carried on a strange correspondence".<sup>54</sup> In 1895 Högberg writes a letter to MCCA President Ekman, expressing serious complaints about Avataranian. He had been "extremely troublesome". Among other things he had "been gossiping" to the authorities about the conditions at the mission station. Without further notice he had also left his work in Kashgar and accompanied Sven Hedin as an interpreter.<sup>55</sup> Hedin was not content with him either. When Hedin's expedition was ready to enter Taklamakan, he abandoned it. Hedin writes, "With all his imagined piety he totally lacked the courage of someone who unhesitatingly entrusts himself to God." He was pathologically religious, says Hedin "and always seemed to be bored".<sup>56</sup> From Hedin's expedition he then returned to the Mission and continued his work there. In 1897, however, he left Kashgar for good and settled down in Bulgaria.

His intention was to go back to the mission field, but this never came about. In Bulgaria he took up mission work among the Muslims of that country. Among other things he edited two different newspapers for Muslims.<sup>57</sup> His bitterness towards the missionaries of Kashgar persisted, and during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which will be described later on, a forceful "Bible dispute" developed between Avataranian and the Swedish missionaries.

In 1894 the first Swedish missionaries arrived in Kashgar in the persons of Lars-Erik Högberg and his wife Sigrid, Anna Nyström and the Persian doctor Mirza Josef Mässrur. Apart from Mrs Högberg, they had all previously been missionaries to Persia, working in the MCCA mission field there.

L.E. Högberg came to be the undisputed leader of the Mission up to 1916 when he left the mission field. But also after that, up to his death in 1924, he was a leading figure within the Mission during these years as a permanent advisor for the Mission Board in Sweden.

Initially, Högberg was against the move to Eastern Turkestan. In a letter to the Mission Board he writes,

"Going to Kashgar in order to convert Muslims would be like giving oneself a lot of unnecessary trouble, as long as we have millions of Muslims right outside our door, here in Persia, who have not heard the Gospel. My suggestion would be, in short, like this: Let the mission work in Caucasus and in Persia carry on, like it does for the moment."<sup>58</sup>

Högberg was not the only person to be hesitant concerning the dismantling of the mission work in Persia. E. John Larson, who also was a missionary to Persia writes, "When after 24 years one looks back upon what happened, one still feels uncertain whether the decision was a good one."<sup>59</sup> The Christians were dismayed at the closing down of the Mission. They sent two petitions with 200 signatures (members of the congregation and friends of the Mission) to the MCCA Mission Board with an urgent request that the Mission be allowed to stay on. The MCCA however did not find it possible to go on working in Persia considering the mission work that was planned to start in Kashgar. E. John Larson was transferred to Tiflis in

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<sup>54</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

<sup>55</sup> Högberg to Ekman, February 2nd, March 15th, May 1st, May 25th, June 4<sup>th</sup> and August 14<sup>th</sup> 1895.

<sup>56</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 429.

<sup>57</sup> The *Svenska Morgonbladet*, December, 1912.

<sup>58</sup> Högberg to Ekman July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1891.

<sup>59</sup> Larson, 1919, p. 52.

Caucasus and the others became pioneers in Eastern Turkestan. The old mission field in Tabris in Persia was handed over to the Presbyterian Board, an American Mission Society also working there.<sup>60</sup>

When the M CCS General Assembly of 1893 dealt with the question of taking up mission work in Eastern Turkestan Högberg however took part in the debate supporting the suggestion. Of course his word carried weight. Once the decision had been taken, he was positive not only to the closing down of the Mission to Persia but also to his own transfer to Kashgar. Already the year before he had expressed his loyalty to the new mission. M CCS President Ekman says in a letter to Højjer that Högberg is “quite willing to move to Kashgar.”<sup>61</sup> Was Högberg’s change in attitude due, among other things, to the fact that in Kashgar he had the prospect of getting rid of Højjer? He was thoroughly fed up with having to work with him. He used to say that he was “the brake on Højjer’s cart”.<sup>62</sup>

The first problem for the pioneers was to find somewhere to live. After some time the Högberg couple found a small dwelling place three kilometres outside Kashgar. Sven Hedin praises their little home. He spent Christmas Eve there in 1894. “Could there be a more suitable home to visit on this great day than the one of the Swedish missionary Högberg who had come to Kashgar with his family during the summer... where the old Bible texts were read and Christmas hymns were sung accompanied by the music of the organ.” Some time later Hedin is back in Kashgar. He writes, “I was so happy to meet the Högbergs once again.”<sup>63</sup>

The Persian medical doctor Josef Mässrur also came to Kashgar. He was the only son of a well-to-do business man in Teheran. In his youth he had held several public posts for example as a judge and a high-ranking officer. As he did not feel at ease with his life as an officer he resigned and started to study French and Medicine. After four years of study he got a post as a physician in Teheran. At that time the city was ravaged by a cholera epidemic. Mässrur worked day and night and after some time he had to get away for a rest. He came to Tabris where for the first time in his life he met with Christian people. Anna Nyström was a missionary there at the time, and she relates how he often came to see her in order to understand matters concerning the Christian faith. He also became her language teacher.<sup>64</sup> After some time he decided to abandon his Muslim faith and convert to Christianity and at a visit to Tiflis he was baptized by E. John Larson.<sup>65</sup>

Anna Nyström was the third missionary to be transferred from Persia to Kashgar. In December 1894 she writes home to Sweden saying that she and Doctor Mässrur wanted to get married.<sup>66</sup> Their wedding took place in April 1895.<sup>67</sup> Before that, Anna Nyström had been assumed to be Högberg’s concubine by the Muslim community.<sup>68</sup>

After their wedding, Högberg got to know that the couple Nyström-Mässrur had been living together “as husband and wife” already before they were married. This was a fact known by the people of Kashgar. Högberg saw this whole situation as an extreme moral defeat for the Mission. His letters home to the M CCS President give evidence of his perplexity and despair. Having no one to consult with in Kashgar he felt totally helpless.<sup>69</sup> The moral defeat was however not the main problem for the Mission among Muslims. The

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ekman to Højjer, June 22th, 1892.

<sup>62</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 48.

<sup>63</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 373 and 1903, p. 61.

<sup>64</sup> Anna Nyström to her brother, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1894. Fritzon, 1972, p. 13 ff.

<sup>65</sup> Larson, 1919, p. 52.

<sup>66</sup> Anna Nyström to her brother, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1894. Fritzon, 1972, p. 15.

<sup>67</sup> Anna Nyström to her brother, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1895. Fritzon, 1972, p. 15.

<sup>68</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 375.

<sup>69</sup> Högberg to Ekman, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1895.

most difficult thing was that a Christian missionary had married a Muslim. The fact that Mässrur had abandoned Islam and become a Christian could not be understood by the Muslims. In their opinion he was still a Muslim, and by marrying him, Anna also became a Muslim. For that reason their acting came to harm the Mission for a long time ahead.<sup>70</sup> Writing about it herself to MCCS President Ekman, Anna Nyström-Mässrur talks about her “fall” in the following way,

“Is there no possible way of tempering justice with mercy and letting us remain in the service of the Mission and testify with our lives to God’s love and the power of Jesus Christ... We do not ask to preserve the title of missionaries, because we can no longer preach in public with words. But let us work with our hands among the sick and the suffering ... so that these poor people may feel that we love them and understand that we work for their best... I am asking you all this covered with sorrow and shame...”<sup>71</sup>

The Mission Board in Stockholm however did not find this matter so serious. In a letter to Högberg, Ekman writes that “although surprised by this step of hers, we cannot but express our hearty blessing upon their union, hoping that this step was taken in the name of the Lord.”<sup>72</sup>

The attitude of the Mission Board implied full forgiveness and wholehearted rehabilitation of the Mässrur couple. It was however considered appropriate that they should leave Kashgar and so in 1896 they were sent to Jarkend to start mission work there. Their presence was no longer necessary in Kashgar as other missionaries had arrived.

This new centre was the largest town of Eastern Turkestan, situated about 150 kilometres south-east of Kashgar.<sup>73</sup> It was only with the greatest difficulties that the missionaries managed to rent a site in the centre of Jarkend. As none of the local people dared work for the foreigners, Mässrur himself built up a temporary mission station. These premises however came to provide accommodation for the missionaries for 12 years, until a better site could be bought appropriate for a larger and more spacious mission station. In 1900 the Mässrur couple left Eastern Turkestan and returned to Persia where Doctor Mässrur resumed his practice. A couple of years later they wanted to come back to Kashgar. At that time it had become known that Mässrur was an opium smoker and the missionaries thus found him less acceptable in the service of the Mission.<sup>74</sup>

In 1896 Magnus Bäcklund came to the mission field. Already in the summer of 1903 he got typhoid fever and died shortly afterwards. He was the first missionary to succumb in this new mission field. Bäcklund came to share his few years of work between medical care and linguistic research. On his arrival in Eastern Turkestan he had more or less the same feeling as most people at that time: it was clear to him that in order to accomplish anything, he had to have medical training. So he went back to Sweden already in 1898. After one year of studies he returned to the mission field where he served until his death.

Bäcklund made his most important contribution as a linguist. Already as a young student at the Mission School, his talent for languages was discovered. “He had an almost irresistible passion for language studies.”<sup>75</sup> He acquired the elements of the Turkish language in Sweden, while waiting for his departure. Long breaks during the trip to the mission field gave him time for further training. Upon his arrival in Kashgar, however, he realized that the Turkish dialect that he had studied differed so much from the Kashgar dialect that he had to start again from scratch. “With his brilliant talent for languages” he however rapidly caught up. It was also

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<sup>70</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 375.

<sup>71</sup> Anna Nyström to Ekman, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1895.

<sup>72</sup> Ekman to Högberg, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 1895.

<sup>73</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 110.

<sup>74</sup> Albert Andersson and Bäcklund to Ekman, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1902.

<sup>75</sup> Larson, 1914, p 8.



clear to him that something had to be done to facilitate language studies for new missionaries. An incomplete draft for such studies had already been made by Avetaranian. Bäcklund had time to elaborate 20 lessons of Turkish grammar. Moreover he collected 6000 words in a word-book. "He literally devoured foreign languages" says one of his fellow students and missionary colleagues, G. Raquette, and after only four months in Kashgar he started to preach in Turkish. In his personal talks with people, he had an unusual capacity for giving simple and clear answers on spiritual matters. Raquette adds, "Bäcklund was a highly qualified missionary among Muslims".<sup>76</sup>

The German Orientalist, Martin Hartman, was travelling in Eastern Turkestan during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He then got to know the young Swedish Mission which he criticized quite sharply. But where Bäcklund was concerned, Hartman's attitude was totally sympathetic. He describes Bäcklund as being a most dedicated, intelligent and altruistic person and the one to whom the Swedes were indebted for the esteem and confidence they enjoyed among the population.<sup>77</sup> The explorer H.H.P. Deasy who encountered Bäcklund in Jarkend and who met him daily during his stay there, remembers him with gratitude. They spent time together on horseback and on foot into the countryside or through the bazaars and Bäcklund provided him with useful information about the country and the people.<sup>78</sup>

Bäcklund, and through him the whole Swedish Mission, became internationally famous for a totally different reason. One of Bäcklund's colleagues in Jarkend, Doctor Mässrur had a young boy in his service. This young boy had previously lived in Khotan where he had become the friend of another young boy whose father was Islam Akhun, who was later on to become notorious. Islam Akhun had produced a number of documents which he later on sold, declaring them to be antique. When Bäcklund heard about the falsifications, the so called Taklamakan documents, he reported the matter to the authorities, and Islam Akhun was punished according to the customs of the country: he was sentenced to walk around with a cumbersome wooden collar. Bäcklund's "feat" is mentioned both in British and French sources. A couple of British scholars finally confirmed Bäcklund's revelations after museums and scholars had let themselves be fooled by "the strange characters".<sup>79</sup>

But Bäcklund also had his critics. One of them was the American O.T. Crosby who visited Eastern Turkestan in 1905, a few years after the death of Bäcklund. He hired an interpreter who had had his training at the Mission. Crosby mentions that Akbar, which was the name of the interpreter, had learnt from Bäcklund to call the Bible "the Book of Angels". This and other equally dubious Christian doctrines had turned Akbar into an indolent and indifferent polytheist. But not only does Crosby blame Bäcklund for the boy's confused theology, he also holds him responsible for the boy's poor English, with which he "continually plagued us". Akbar seemed however to be the best result of the pious work of the Swedish Mission, says Crosby condescendingly. Another one, an inconspicuous Chinese, was about to receive his baptism, continues Crosby, but this man was doing his best trying to find a compromise between Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and his new Christian faith.<sup>80</sup>

Gösta Raquette arrived in Kashgar in 1896, in the company of Bäcklund. When these two missionaries were on their way out to Eastern Turkestan, Högberg sent off a telegram to Ekman asking whether Raquette's fiancée, Evelina Björkgren, could catch up with the others and go with them to the mission field. Högberg also wanted another woman missionary, Alma Bäckström, to be sent out. The two ladies were asked to catch up with Raquette and Bäcklund

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<sup>76</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 470. *Grenljuset* 1903, p. 16.

<sup>77</sup> Hartman, 1908, p. 47 ff and note p. 107. Lundahl, 1917, p. 540.

<sup>78</sup> Deasy, 1901, p. 137.

<sup>79</sup> Larson, 1914, p. 20. f, Deasy, 1901, p. 149 f, Stein, 1907, p. 512 note and 1912, Vol 1, p. 278, Mirsky, 1977, p. 144 f, Cobbold, 1900, p. 74, Fraser, 1907, p. 278, Gardier, 1920, p. 148, *Grenljuset*, 1903, Vol 16 p. 18 f.

<sup>80</sup> Crosby, 1905, p. 33 f.

who were waiting in Tiflis. When Ekman realized that in Raquette's case he was considering marriage, he was very upset. In a letter to Högberg he harshly rebukes him for having come up with such suggestions. He reminds Högberg about his earlier opposition against Raquette's fiancée coming out to the field. Ekman now believes that Raquette has been "harassing" Högberg making him change his opinion and send this telegram to Sweden. "But not only that, it was also proposed in the telegram that we send out Alma, who is not even engaged in the service of the MCCS. How is this possible?" In his letter, Ekman refers to the statutes of the MCCS. "Our statutes state that a missionary should spend three years in the field before marrying".<sup>81</sup> The fact that Högberg wanted to ignore these directions was outrageous, according to Ekman. At the same time as he sent his letter to Högberg Ekman sent a telegram to Tiflis, ordering the two missionaries to continue immediately to Kashgar, because "there will be no ladies".<sup>82</sup> However, Raquette's "lady" arrived, and before the end of the year, they were married. Mrs Raquette was a trained teacher and a midwife.

Gösta Raquette came to share his time between linguistic studies and medical care. With his achievements within these two fields, he was the one who, more than anyone else, contributed to making the Mission well-known. Among the linguistic efforts we could count the disputes already mentioned above with Avetaranian. They lingered on into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the final part of this dispute will be discussed in a further chapter where we will also mention Raquette's other linguistic and literary achievements. His important work within the framework of medical care provided by the Mission was also of a pioneering kind. Straight after his arrival in the mission field, although a layman, he came to start his life project as a medical missionary.

### 3. Diffident Missionary Endeavours

After several attempts at finding a suitable site for the mission station to be, Högberg finally managed to rent a piece of land just outside one of the town gates. While the building work was being carried out, the population was so angry that Högberg had difficulties even to be seen at the building site supervising the work. It was rumoured that the Swedes were about to build a fortress.<sup>83</sup> When the construction had been completed it held a hospital ward and lodgings for the missionaries and their employees. The surroundings were however very unhealthy, the site being situated in a position lower than a water canal just nearby, and open to dust drifting in from the other side.

In the MCCS Annual Report of 1894 Högberg gives an account of the first diffident missionary endeavours. Small meetings had been held in the homes of the missionaries. This form of activity had however to be cancelled when the hostility of the Muslims broke out "like a storm".<sup>84</sup>

Högberg now realized that the problem had to be addressed in a different way. His practical skill now served him well. He noticed there was a lot of wool to buy at a low price. Rapidly he put together some spinning wheels and looms. Then he taught people to spin and weave. In that way, a number of people soon managed to earn their living within this domestic industry.<sup>85</sup> And he taught others to knit socks.<sup>86</sup> Sven Hedin noticed Högberg's new "approach" to mission work and he writes:

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<sup>81</sup> Ekman to Högberg, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1896.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 68.

<sup>84</sup> MCCS Annual Report of 1894, p. 103 f.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 1894, p. 102 f.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 1907, p. 149.

“Mr Högberg was clever enough to realize that it was dangerous to start mission work right away, and instead he started by making several useful household tools and other objects that could prove of interest to the Kashgar inhabitants and that they could themselves produce in a very primitive form. He made a grand machine for processing raw silk, spinning wheels, bellows, etc. to the great astonishment and admiration of the population.”<sup>87</sup>

During the first years of the Mission, all activities were carried out in order to try to find one's bearings. Everything was on an experimental basis, and this also applied to the school.

There were schools in the country when the missionaries arrived there. Attending school was however not yet compulsory and the children turned up quite irregularly.<sup>88</sup> At times though a couple of hundred children could come to one single school. These elementary schools were totally autonomous. Every Mullah who could assemble a sufficient number of children was allowed to start a school. He was paid through gifts in nature and minor cash gifts from the children. The Koran was their text-book.<sup>89</sup> It usually took about three years to get through the Koran. The lessons were taught in Arabic, the holy language of the Koran. Reading therefore became both tiresome and meaningless as the children did not understand one single word.<sup>90</sup> Sentence by sentence the teacher read first, after that the children repeated the same thing in chorus, at the top of their voices.<sup>91</sup> Higher education was based upon these elementary schools. Through generous donations the students got free education, free lodgings and at best even free meals.<sup>92</sup> But it also happened that they were obliged to walk around begging for their living.<sup>93</sup> The timetable contained no practical subjects which led to a situation where the small number of young people having had access to higher education had no interest in social issues.<sup>94</sup> Some of them even left higher education without being able to express themselves in writing in their mother tongue.<sup>95</sup> Such was the situation when the missionaries arrived. When a student able to read and write left higher education, he was called “Mullah” and wore a turban. He then got a job as a teacher or else he became Imam in some small village where he came to exert great influence on the population.<sup>96</sup>

The first attempt at school work was done in 1896. Mrs Högberg and Mrs Raquette started the project. They were both trained teachers from Sweden. The very first thing was to invite the children of the neighbours.<sup>97</sup> Högberg has written about these first attempts, “With the help of a piece of bread given to hungry children the missionary manages to get a couple of whole-naked or half-naked children within reach and then they start teaching them the very first steps on the steep path of knowledge.”<sup>98</sup> It even happened that the Mission bought children who were slaves. John Törnquist mentions “Natanael...and expenses concerning his being bought free from slavery”.<sup>99</sup> This happened in 1901.

The children were interested in this new school, but their parents were worried. The foreigners' school was extremely objectionable to the Mullahs, the Muslim leaders. And when the Mullahs threatened the children with being beaten and the parents with being excluded

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<sup>87</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 379.

<sup>88</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 237 ff.

<sup>89</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 27. Wingate, 1929, p. 320.

<sup>90</sup> Högberg, 1907, p. 36. Wingate, 1929, p. 320, p. 322.

<sup>91</sup> Högberg, 1925, p. 28 and 1928, p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 1925, p. 27.

<sup>93</sup> Wingate, 1929, p. 322. These donations were called "Vakf". (Cf. Ahlbert in Lundahl, 1917, p. 231.)

<sup>94</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 238.

<sup>95</sup> Högberg, 1907, p. 37.

<sup>96</sup> Wingate, 1929, p. 325.

<sup>97</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 64.

<sup>98</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 229.

<sup>99</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 203. This detail from one of the cash-books of a mission station gives an idea of all those interesting records that were lost when all the archives were burnt at the dismantling of the Mission.

from the Muslim community, the parents stopped their children from going to the Mission school. A new attempt was done after a year or two. At that time, the Mission took care of some orphans and these children, alongside with the children of some of the servants, made up the first real school class of some fifteen pupils.<sup>100</sup>

Over the years, medical care came to be the most important institution of the Eastern Turkestan Mission. From the beginning this was not at all planned for. It all grew out of a need, but had not been decided upon “in the highest quarters”, in Stockholm.<sup>101</sup> That is the reason why the first missionaries were totally unprepared for this situation. But already during their first furlough some of them got medical training at a hospital in Sweden. This was the case of Raquette and Bäcklund for instance who both of them followed a year-long course with Professor Ribbing in Lund.<sup>102</sup> But when, for the first time, the missionaries were facing their task in the mission country they were shocked. This only shows how badly informed they were about the living conditions of the population in the new mission field.

The missionaries were not at a loss however, but tried to make the best out of their difficult situation. “Necessity knows no law”, says Högberg. When people seeking help came to the missionaries in large numbers, there was no way of escaping.<sup>103</sup> It was in Khotan, a town to the south-west of the actual mission field, that a medically speaking totally non-trained Högberg was forced to attend to his first “desperate case”. He had been asked to visit a man who had been severely hurt in an accident. Högberg writes:

“Six days ago the man had fallen from a roof on to a wooden stump and hurt his genitals in such a way that they were now presenting themselves as a bloody half-rotten mess. Unfortunately we had no instruments whatsoever. What to do? On Easter Day I went to a goldsmith, and there with his help, I could make catheters and trocars, the instruments most urgently needed. ... All attempts to use the catheters on the sick man proved unsuccessful and thus we (Bäcklund was also present) had to empty the bladder through the abdominal wall. Then we sharpened our clasp-knives with which we cut off a good portion of the rotten tissue. Beyond all expectations the man recovered.”<sup>104</sup>

Högberg says in relation to the first years that the missionaries were overburdened with people seeking help. They came riding on their camels, horses, mules or donkeys. Others were taken there on chairs or on stretchers. And yet others came walking or creeping. Many were so ill that they had to be visited in their homes. “According to our capacity we have tried to help this host of suffering people”, he says.<sup>105</sup> And Raquette gives an account of the first years:

“And furthermore these big children come to us and ask for medicine for the strangest kinds of ailments. One wants medication against grey hair, another something to stop ageing; one wants something to take to enhance fertility, another one something with an opposite effect; one wants help to become so fat that he ‘cannot enter a normal door’, and another one wants something to make him thin; one wants medication for his old horse so that his legs become more deft and another one thinks it would be good to have something that could prevent saddle gall. Anyone can see that it is not easy to satisfy everybody.”<sup>106</sup>

From those early years Raquette also told the story of the “Lady with the lizard”. This woman came to see him one day. She was sure she had a lizard in her head and she wanted it

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<sup>100</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 64.

<sup>101</sup> Hanna Raquette in *Svensk Veckotidning*, November 7th, 1975.

<sup>102</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 65. On the demand from the MCCS, professor Ribbing in Lund organized courses for missionaries working in the medical sphere, in all MCCS mission fields. These courses lasted for 1½ years. (General Assembly minutes, June 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 1900, §18).

<sup>103</sup> Högberg, 1924, p. 77.

<sup>104</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 66.

<sup>105</sup> MCCS Annual Report, 1907.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

removed. Raquette's attempts to make her listen to reason were useless. She was then asked to come back. When she came back, Raquette had captured a lizard that he kept in his pocket. The woman was anaesthetized and Raquette made a very shallow incision on her forehead. When she woke up she realized she had been bandaged but when Raquette showed her the lizard she exclaimed: "It was a good thing it was taken out, but the worst part of it is that she had time to breed before she was taken out".<sup>107</sup>

#### 4. Sven Hedin – a Critic and a Friend

It has already been mentioned that during his exploration trips to Eastern Turkestan Sven Hedin got to know the Swedish Mission. During the mission era he spent a lot of time in the country and was constantly in contact with the missionaries. Back home in Sweden he talked about the mission and wrote about it and made it known far beyond the limited circle of mission friends.

We will just mention the contacts during the first years here. We have already written about the Christmas visit that Hedin made to the Högbergs in Kashgar and the kind words he uttered about Högberg's practical activity. He was not however always that kind.

Already in 1891 Højjer went to see Hedin in Stockholm. Højjer was then planning the explorative trip to Kashgar and he told Hedin about the MCCS plans of starting mission work there. Hedin describes Højjer's visit in the following way:

"I did not want to influence their plans, but I told them what had happened to Father Hendrichs and informed them that the Gospel does not easily find any fertile soil in the souls of the Kashgar people. All the same, they seemed set on going there in about a month's time. May their evangelistic zeal will give better results than that of Father Hendrichs."<sup>108</sup>

Hedin advised against. But Højjer interpreted his attitude as an encouragement.

Three years later, in 1894, Hedin met Högberg in Kashgar when they spent Christmas together. The following years were very hard ones for the Mission. In his book *A Journey Through Asia*, 1898, Hedin makes public his impressions. During his frequent visits to the Mission station he had got a close look at the difficulties and trials that were part of the everyday life of the missionaries. He says in his book that the missionaries had themselves to blame for these difficulties. They "are skating on thin ice" and have to take the consequences. The hopeless situation for the Mission was due to lack of responsibility from the Mission Board, and Hedin continues:

"I readily pass in silence the interpretations and discomfort caused by this marriage (between Anna Nyström and Josef Mässrur) but to many people in Kashgar it was a wretched example of how MCCS matters have often been handled, and how easily its leaders often seem to disown the responsibility they have taken upon themselves."<sup>109</sup>

The marriage referred to between Anna Nyström and Josef Mässrur was one of the points of accusation in a long series directed to the Mission by Hedin. In 1895, Högberg writes several letters to the MCCS President Ekman telling him how badly Hedin has treated him. Hedin had been behaving condescendingly and critically, says Högberg who felt hurt by Hedin's bullying. Högberg had moreover got to know that Hedin had written about the Mission in Swedish newspaper in a deprecatory way. Hedin had said, among other things, that the

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<sup>107</sup> Related on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1968 by senior master Per-Erik Gustafsson from a student meeting in Lund where Raquette had told this episode.

<sup>108</sup> Hedin, 1893, p. 458.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 1898, p. 375.

missionaries were very bad representatives for Europe.<sup>110</sup> Towards the end of the year Högberg writes more and now more in greater detail about the relationship between Hedin and the missionaries. Hedin had told Högberg that he had written to the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs and that the missionaries would certainly be called home. From the beginning Hedin had wanted to exert authority over the missionaries, says Högberg. When Högberg let him understand that he had no power over the Mission, Hedin had replied, “Mr Högberg, beware not to provoke me into showing that I have power to have you called home.” Furthermore, Hedin was in a conspiracy with the Russian Consul, Petroffski. Both of them were against the Swedish Mission. Hedin’s objections to the Mission were summarized by Högberg in the following six points: 1. A missionary should not be married. 2. The Mission to Eastern Turkestan has no future; therefore it is just a waste spending mission money on this project. 3. The people of Eastern Turkestan are not yet ready to accept the Gospel. 4. Anna Nyström’s marriage with Josef Mässrur was a catastrophe. 5. The Mission staff is being blamed for inappropriate moral behaviour. 6. ‘I lack the capacity to be a missionary’ ”.<sup>111</sup>

At the beginning of 1897 Ekman answers Högberg’s letter. Surely it was true that Hedin had written in the *Aftonbladet*, but he had only words of praise for Högberg and his wife. Hedin had written that Högberg was very well suited for being a missionary to Eastern Turkestan. Ekman finally expresses surprise at Högberg’s lamentations, assuring him that Hedin had only spoken well of the Mission.<sup>112</sup>

It is however quite likely that Hedin has the Kashgar missionaries in mind when writing in 1898 about his experiences of the Mission. Missionaries of today are quite often un-educated, he says. Without serious preparation, without having acquainted themselves with the religion of the people they intend to work among, without considering the fact that this religion is often older and more rooted in people’s lives than their own, they throw themselves thoughtlessly into unknown difficulties. Failing to think for oneself and to think wisely, not even the most fervent kind of piety nor the most steadfast faith can protect against earthly dangers. It is of no avail that Hedin, later on in his book, praises the missionaries for being unusually solid and respectable. The impression still remains that in his critical remarks he refers to the Kashgar Mission. Moreover, what other missionaries had Hedin met at that time in Central Asia?

Finally Hedin advises the missionaries to be like Paul in their mission methods:

“The huge difference (between Paul and the missionaries to Eastern Turkestan) is of course due to Paul’s way of preaching and living. He wandered around, like the dervishes of the East, living by the work of his hands but remaining poor and remaining unmarried, which facilitated the immediate contact with the people... and was not dependant upon support or collections and could not even resort to reprisals against those who persecuted him.”<sup>113</sup>

Maybe after all Hedin’s criticism was not all that far-reaching. At any rate he repeatedly showed his wholehearted support for the Mission during the years to come.

## 5. Real Adversities

<sup>110</sup> Högberg to Ekman 2/2, 13/3, 17/5, 25/5, 4/6 and 14/8, 1895.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. December 18th, 1895.

<sup>112</sup> Ekman to Högberg, February 25th, 1896.

<sup>113</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 375 ff. In 1899 Hedin was back in Eastern Turkestan. At this time too he met with the Högbergs. He writes that it made him happy to see them again. (Hedin, *Asien. Tusen mil på okända vägar*. I. /Asia, ten thousand kilometres on unbeaten tracks/ Stockholm, 1903, p. 47).

We have already touched upon some initial difficulties for the new Mission. Now we will take up a few more, of a more serious kind.

On several occasions the Muslim population handed in written complaints to the Chinese authorities demanding that the Mission be expelled. In an official letter from 1899 the missionaries are accused of all sorts of crimes:

“They (the missionaries) prevent rain and snow from falling in the country, they poison the water in our canals so that people and cattle alike get sick... they buy children and turn them into slaves, dressing them up in European clothes, teaching them to speak their language and seducing them into adopting their religion.”<sup>114</sup>

The complaints written by the Muslims reached the highest authority, the government in Peking. From there however the reply arrived saying that the missionaries and the Christians were to be protected. If not, even the highest officials would be punished.<sup>115</sup>

What could be the reason behind the reaction of the people? Maybe there had been a severe drought with lack of fresh water, failed harvests, etc. It is very likely that, in all this, people could see God's judgement on the new religion which was beginning to infiltrate the country. And surely the missionaries took care of children. An Eastern Turk, living in Sweden since long back, reports that his mother went to the Mission and left him there. She could not take care of him herself, and then she knew of no better place than the mission station.<sup>116</sup> The fact that the water in the canal was unhealthy is known from other sources, but if the missionaries could be held responsible for this, there were even more reasons for expelling them. The fact that the children were dressed in European clothes was explained by the argument that otherwise they would have frozen to death in their rags during the cold winters. As to learning the language of the missionaries, this was limited to learning one or two stanzas of Swedish songs. But the Muslims saw something linked to cult and magic in the language of the foreigners, be it only a question of a few sentences. The mystery was of course enhanced by the fact that they did not understand the language.

In the autumn of 1899 the difficulties of the first years culminated in a riot against the mission station in Kashgar. The reason was probably the foothold that the Mission was gaining among the people. A couple of Muslims had been converted, small worship services were held, a minor school had been opened, and a large number of sick people had found their way to the Mission hospital. However the missionaries felt surrounded by a feeling of paralysing resentment from the leaders of the people. On top of all that Kashgar got a new Mayor, a Chinese reputed to despise foreigners.

The assault on the Mission started with a door of the missionary residence being torn off. A few days later the Mayor sent a message to Högberg, ordering the missionaries to leave the house immediately. The house was going to be demolished! The Mayor and the landowner required the Mission to leave. A crowd assembled outside the missionary residence. Högberg estimated their number to some 500 people. Things were looking quite threatening especially when some persons in the crowd started attacking the clay walls of the house. Högberg then went out to the agitated crowd. With his back to the wall he managed to get hold of the landowner's beard, while trying to put things right with him and the others. During the scuffle that followed Högberg's clothes were torn into rags, but thanks to the pushing crowds he escaped the worst blows. The fighters hit each other instead in the general confusion.

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<sup>114</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1899, p. 112 f.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Jacob Stephen July 6th, 1970.

A message was sent to the British agent and to the Russian Consul. The latter sent a division of Cossacks from his bodyguard to restore order.

The days that followed were troubled. One day, Högberg was summoned to the Mayor who tried to extort a promise from him to leave the country within four months. Högberg refused categorically, although both the British agent and the Russian Consul supported the Chinese. Högberg instead asked the Mayor whether he did not know about the treaty between China and Sweden where the Swedish missionaries were not only allowed to dwell in the country but were also guaranteed protection. The Mayor took this reminder as a gross insult whereupon he got heavily drunk. In his drunken state he had a notice put up on the house of the missionaries announcing that the house was to be pulled down. This however did not come to pass. Högberg turned to the Swedish Consul in Shanghai and about a month later there was an official letter from the Peking Government giving the missionaries their lawful rights.<sup>117</sup> Mrs Högberg and Mrs Raquette who in the meantime had taken refuge at the Russian Consulate could now return home and the mission work continued in its rugged everyday life pattern.<sup>118</sup>

In Jarkend there was also rioting at this time against the Mission. Josef Mässrur who was working there as a mission doctor was attacked one morning by a crowd of townspeople. He rushed into the pharmacy where he got hold of two big bottles. Armed in this way he rushed out towards the people who were totally taken aback and the crowd was dispersed.<sup>119</sup>

Quite independently of these local riots, Chinese xenophobia expressed itself more violently than ever in a way that touched the whole empire, Eastern Turkestan in the far west, included. We are speaking of the Boxer Uprising that broke out in Central China in the year 1900.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the hatred of foreigners among people had been channelled into secret societies. In 1899 the “boxers”, fighters, appeared who with their shadow-boxing and magic tricks of evidently Taoist origin believed they were invulnerable. These “fists of justice and unity” turned foremost against the ruthless European exploitation of China. Foreigners had not showed any hesitation when for example it had come to making railway tracks pass through family graves, nor to putting up telephone posts in sacred places or enticing Chinese youngsters in thousands to come to Christian schools and churches.

In 1900 the uprising started in Peking. “Halfwild” troops from Kansu were called in by the Empress. Already in late summer the besieged foreign legations were however rescued by international troops which grew and came to consist of 60.000 men. Peking was systematically looted. The peace conditions gave foreigners the right to have troops in Peking’s legation area. This was considered by the Chinese as an incredible offence.

The Boxer Uprising did not only hit foreigners but also Christian Chinese for having accepted the religion of those hateful foreigners. It is estimated that about 30.000 Catholic Christians were killed and nearly 2.000 Protestant Christians succumbed to the same fate. Out of the Catholic missionaries, 47 were killed, 5 of them Bishops. Add to that 186 Protestant missionaries whereof 40 adults and 16 children. Among others all the missionaries from the Helgelseförbundet were killed (10 persons).<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 302 ff. Westman, 1949, p. 57 f.

<sup>118</sup> Deasy, 1901, p. 302 f. Skrine-Nightingale, 1973, p. 303.

<sup>119</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 303.

<sup>120</sup> Westman, 1934, p. 649. Platt, 1966, p. 26. Bonniers Lexikon band 2, Stockholm 1961. Superstitious and religious opinions among the Boxers made them especially hostile towards the missionaries. Communist history research however does not consider the Boxer Uprising to be religiously conditioned but sees it rather as a precursory movement of the coming Revolution. Among other things it is said that the Boxers fought imperialism. – The revenge of the Western Powers was fierce. Emperor Wilhelm of Germany sent a military force of 20.000 men and on departing, the troops were given the following order, “Remember that when you meet the enemy, no pardon will be given and no prisoners will be taken. Use your weapons so that no Chinese



The Boxer Uprising resulted in severe consequences for the Swedish Mission Societies to China at that time. And also Eastern Turkestan was affected, even though the consequences here were of a more indirect kind. People who had been active in the Uprising for example were exiled to this area, Eastern Turkestan being “China’s Siberia” where criminals of all sorts were sent. Rumours, one more terrible than the other, from the bloody scene of action in the East, were circulating in the bazaars setting hearts aflame. The Muslim population began to wonder whether this was not the time to get rid of both Chinese and Europeans, and at the Russian border, the Chinese were concentrating their troops.<sup>121</sup>

The Swedish Mission “held its breath”. Would the hatred of foreigners spread into Eastern Turkestan and affect the mission there, as it had done in Central China? Högberg says that the missionaries were greatly worried.<sup>122</sup> And Bäcklund who had just come back from Sweden says, “All our activity is practically at a standstill for the moment and because of the political situation we have not dared to move in order not to wake up the sleeping bear.”<sup>123</sup> Albert Andersson and his wife and Lovisa Engvall, who left Sweden in May 1900 judged it wise to abide in Russian Turkestan until November before going on to Kashgar.<sup>124</sup>

The new century began with many questions and with great fear within the Mission. Facing an uncertain future, the missionaries asked themselves the question whether it was at all possible to go on working in Eastern Turkestan.

The staff situation was worrying. Johannes Avetarianian had left the Mission already in 1897. Anna and Josef Mässrur went back to Persia in 1900. Mr and Mrs Högberg had left Kashgar in 1900, and three years were to pass before they came back to the mission field. In 1903 Magnus Bäcklund died, an irreparable loss for the Mission, as it seemed.

The results of the mission work were nearly non-existent. A couple of Muslims had certainly been baptized and one Chinese had been converted, but the school activities were at a standstill and the medical work was about to lose its credibility among the population. Everybody acknowledged the difficulties of the Mission and many looked upon the mission effort in Eastern Turkestan as hopeless. Professor A. Kolmodin, among others, says in his survey *A History of Protestant Missions* in 1903 that the mission in Eastern Turkestan had started off with big difficulties. This mission field needed a lot of patience and enduring

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will dare even to glance at a German for a thousand years. Pave the way for civilization once and for all.” (Blomqvist-Lindström-Odén, 1967, p. 47). – All the 10 missionaries to China of the Helgelseförbundet were killed by the Boxers. (Fredberg, 1939, p. 156 ff. Jacobsson-Öberg, 1902, p. 96 ff. The information given in Ekberg, 1948, p. 127 is not correct.) Swedes belonging to the “Alliansmissionen” were also killed. This was however not the Swedish Alliansmissionen, which at that time had not yet started its mission to China. So in cases where the “Alliance Mission” or the like is mentioned in the literature, it refers to the so called “Simpsons mission”, nowadays the “Christian and Missionary Alliance”. (Mission secretary of Alliansmissionen, Eskil Albertsson to Hultvall, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1978. Jacobsson-Öberg, 1902, p. 13.) “Alliansmissionen” also stands for the American Alliance Mission or the Scandinavian Alliance Mission. Its leader was Fredrik Franson. Some thirty Swedes were sent out by this mission society to China in 1893. Out of these, some 14, among them many children, died as martyrs during the Boxer Uprising. (Ekberg, 1948, p. 128. Jacobsson-Öberg, 1902, p. 17 ff.) In his book *De främmande djävlarne* (Oslo 1977), (The Foreign Devils), Tore Zetterholm has described some of the martyrs of the Helgelseförbundet and the Alliansmissionen. When writing about “Alliansmissionen” he is speaking about the “Scandinavian Alliance Mission” in the US or the “Franson Mission”. – The MCCS mission field in Hupei in Central China was spared from the Boxer Uprising. One station was burned down however but no missionaries killed. The missionaries all the same judged it safest to leave the country for a while and went to Nagasaki in Japan. (Palmaer, 1940, p. 72.)

<sup>121</sup> Fleming, 1960, p. 242. Bredberg, 1954, p. 212.

<sup>122</sup> Högberg, 1910, p. 11 f.

<sup>123</sup> Larson, 1924, p. 17.

<sup>124</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 525.

love.<sup>125</sup> Kennet S. Latourette, Professor of Missiology, also mentions the fact the M CCS had taken up mission work “in this distant land under very hard conditions”.<sup>126</sup>

Apart from the general, hopeless situation, a series of personal problems accumulated upon the mission field leader L.E. Högberg. Among them was the discord already mentioned between him and Avetarianian, there was the situation of the Mässrur couple and there was Hedin’s attitude towards him. Much later, when summarizing the bitter experiences of the pioneer era, Högberg says:

“The first six years of our stay in Eastern Turkestan were indisputably the ones that left the hardest memories for life. Difficulties and resistance accompanied every step we took. Enemies, political and spiritual powers, all and everyone seemed to unite against the starting of mission work there. We had literally to work our way inch by inch. And not a gleam of hope was to be seen anywhere.”<sup>127</sup>

When Högberg talks about his first years in Eastern Turkestan as being the hardest ones during his whole missionary career, one must not forget that he had other hard times to compare them with. Especially the years in Persia must have given him memories of pain and loss. There the couple had lost their youngest son in smallpox and their eldest son had lost his eyesight on one eye through the same disease. And a few years later Mrs Högberg succumbed to a ravaging cholera epidemic.<sup>128</sup>

Apparently neither the missionaries nor the Mission Board in Sweden were prepared for this hard spiritual climate offered by the new mission country. And yet this was not the first time that the M CCS tried to work among Muslims. In 1889 Doctor E.J. Nyström had been sent to Alger in Northern Africa. Initially, this activity was meant to be directed towards Jews, but soon it came to address itself to Muslims as well. After having met with great difficulties this mission activity had to be closed down in 1907.<sup>129</sup> The Muslim mission in Persia had also had very modest success.

But expectations had been different as to the mission field in Kashgar. Here “a door to the heart of Asia was opened”. But practically the only thing known about this new mission field, before the arrival of the missionaries in the middle of the 1890s was furnished by the report written by Højjer after his trip there. A week-long stay by a Swedish enthusiast was the basis for the decisions to be taken by Swedish mission friends concerning taking up mission work in Eastern Turkestan. It all seems to have started off as an optimistic rushed job. The fact that this enterprise should have been more carefully considered and more thoroughly prepared is evident from among other things the sending out of Avetarianian there and letting him spend two years and a half years in Kashgar all alone, before the arrival of the Swedish missionaries. During that period Avetarianian was close to breaking down both physically and spiritually. And when the General Conferences decided upon starting mission work there, Højjer was not even present. The Conference had nothing but his written report to rely on. Before this important Conference, Højjer and Ekman had been exchanging letters. From these letters it is clear that Ekman had planned a tour of the Swedish Mission to Caucasus in order to consult with the missionaries there about the planned Eastern Turkestan Mission. This trip had however to be cancelled because of a cholera epidemic.<sup>130</sup> So, on the basis of the casual experiences of the mission enthusiast Højjer during his short stay in Kashgar – and on nothing else – the Conference decided to take up mission work there. If this decision had been more

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<sup>125</sup> Warneck-Kolmodin, 1903, p. 593.

<sup>126</sup> Latourette, 1944, p. 335.

<sup>127</sup> Högberg, 1927, p. 52.

<sup>128</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 547. Palmaer, 1946, p. 58. Ekman, 1903, p. 89.

<sup>129</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 17.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. 1942, p. 19. A cholera epidemic had broken out in Caucasus.

well-founded, the missionaries would have known more about the conditions of the enterprise they undertook. And the disappointments of the initial years would not have been so bitter.

### **III. The Foundation 1901 – 1912.**

#### **From the Boxer Uprising to the Birth of the Republic**

As has already been suggested, the turn of the century was characterized by concern and uncertainty for the Mission. Hesitation and caution held the missionaries back from more extensive efforts. Moreover the two missionary couples Högberg and Raquette were both back home in Sweden during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Mission was “worn out”, and when Bäcklund came to Kashgar in 1900 “it was shattered”. But the remarkable expansion that missionary efforts in China on the whole was to experience after the Boxer Uprising was also to be seen in Eastern Turkestan. The planning for the mission work was soon in full swing. The era of foundation had arrived. New missionaries are sent out, activities within medical care and orphanages are expanded. The Chinese branch of the mission work develops. This period also harbours a magnificent “Bible dispute”. This section comes to an end with the Chinese Revolution that reached Kashgar in 1911-1912.

A summary of this period shows that Waldenström came to be of decisive importance for the missionaries in several important issues. What is also made clear is the difficulty for the Mission to win Asians for the Christian faith. The summary also gives evidence to the fact that the Mission activity during this period establishes itself as a work of institutions. The path chosen for the work during these years came to be decisive for the whole missionary era. A foundation was built, and on that foundation the work was continued.

#### **1. New Missionaries Keep Coming to the Field in a Constant Stream.**

The “old” missionaries, Högberg and Raquette and their wives, received 20 new collaborators during this period. Albert Andersson and his wife Maria Lovisa arrived at the turn of the year 1900-1901 together with Lovisa Engvall. In 1903 Adolf Bohlin and Elsa Svensson (later to become Mrs Törnquist) arrived, and in 1904, John Törnquist. Elsa Andersson and Hilda Nordqvist arrived in 1906 and the year after, Stina Mårtensson and Elin Svensson. David Gustafsson and Oskar et Gerda Andersson (brother and sister) in 1908 and Rikard Nyström, Gottfrid Palmberg and Maria (Mia) Mobeck 1910. In 1911, Gustaf Adolf Arell, Helena Lundahl (later on married to Nyström) and in 1912 Hanna Larsson (later on married to Arell) and Gustaf Ahlbert. During the whole missionary era, 24 male and 36 female missionaries were sent out, all in all 60 persons. So those above mentioned make up not less than a third of the whole number of missionaries.

A considerable number of missionaries remained single which created some problems. Muslims have no respect for an un-married woman. According to them, she is necessarily a whore. Furthermore, it was not considered appropriate to station a single woman and a single man at the same mission station. If that happened, evil rumours rapidly went around among the population. Not even if they were engaged to be married, and the marriage would take place in a very short period of time, was it considered acceptable that they lived in the same place. Palmberg for instance had his fiancée in the field, but he did not dare to have her near him but was obliged to live alone at the mission station in Jarkend.<sup>1</sup> Problems could arise already on the journey out to the mission field. The M CCS regulations concerning marriage, stipulating that missionaries had to spend three years in the mission field before marrying caused a lot of trouble in Eastern Turkestan. The workers in the field complained on several occasions about the fact that the Mission had so few married couples. They expressed for instance their disappointment at the fact that Bohlin came back single.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Palmberg to Sjöholm, April 4th, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Albert Andersson to Sjöholm, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1910.

The basic training for the missionaries at that time included a full curriculum at the Theological Seminary, or as the school was called at that time, the Mission School. During the first decades of the mission era, there was no university training. At that time, P.P. Waldenström was a leading figure within the Mission headquarters and he did not seem interested in university training for missionaries, neither at home nor in the mission field. Mission Secretary Lundahl, Waldenström's collaborator for many years expresses his wonder at Waldenström's negative attitude towards university training within the MCCS. Lundahl relates how Rev. Janne Nyrén (later to become MCCS President) one night walked up and down the streets of Stockholm together with Waldenström, trying to make him understand the value of having university trained people within the MCCS. Waldenström however did not listen to him, but only said that Nyrén could preach just as well as any university trained pastor, and that without having a university degree. But when Nyrén asked Waldenström if he himself would have been able to achieve what he had done if he had not had his university training, he was speechless.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from their basic training at the Mission School, most of the missionaries also received special training through courses of varying extent. During the first part of the mission era, women missionary candidates were often sent to follow Bible courses at the training centre of Elsa Borg, Vita Bergen, in Stockholm. Those who got their training there were called Bible women. Twelve missionaries followed this training. The MCCS General Conference had decided in 1882 that especially "mission brides", i.e. women missionaries engaged to be married, should spend some time at the Bible school of Elsa Borg. From 1891 they then did one year at the Mission School. In 1912, a two-year course was introduced at the Mission School for them.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of the women missionaries had a complete nurse and/or midwife training. Several of the men missionaries also had medical training. They had received this training at different hospitals in Sweden. Added to that were complementary courses for example at the Livingstone College in London, at Kingsmead College or the The Mothers Hospital of Salvation Army in London. 28 missionaries had complete or abridged medical training. One of them was a dental technician and another one was a trained pharmacist.

11 missionaries were qualified teachers. It was mostly the women missionaries who had gone through this form of training. But there were also some men who had studied at a teacher training college.

Language studies started already in Sweden, where the missionaries studied either Turkish or Chinese. The Chinese language was taught by professor Karlgren in Stockholm. Continuous courses in Turkish were also organized. After his return home to Sweden in 1921, Raquette was in charge of these courses.

Most missionaries had a training in one sphere, either education or medical care. Several of them however had a double training. 16 missionaries had training within two or more areas.<sup>5</sup>

In the course of time several missionaries became scientific field researchers, without having any university training. Apart from Missiology, the research also embraced other areas. Högberg for instance collected ethnographical artefacts commissioned by Professor Erland Nordenskiöld. The aim was to include the 700-800 objects in an exhibition in Sweden in 1907. The delivery was however delayed during transport in Russia and did not arrive in time. Later on the collection found its way to the Ethnographical Museum of Stockholm. Commissioned by Nordenskiöld, Högberg also wrote a small pamphlet, "Some Facts about

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<sup>3</sup> Lundahl, 1943, p. 151 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Nyrén, 1928, p. 13. Mosesson, 1921, p. 163.

<sup>5</sup> Westin, 1937, p. 898. Palmaer, 1938, p. 172 ff. Lundahl, 1917, p. 537 ff. *Biografiskt album*, edition 1934, p. 112 ff and edition 1946, and interviews with the missionaries.

Chinese Turkestan”, meant to inform the visitors to the exhibition about the mission field. For his scientific work Högberg received the Silver Medal of the Royal Academy of Science.<sup>6</sup> Högberg also contributed to the ethnographical collections of Mannerheim, who was travelling in Eastern Turkestan in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to get an idea of the Chinese province in the far west. This was undertaken on the pretext of a series of scientific assignments designed by the F.U.S., the Finnish Uigurian Society of Helsinki. (At that time, Finland was part of Russia.) He was to collect ethnographical, archaeological, anthropological and philological data. Högberg made important contributions to these collections.<sup>7</sup>

Carl Persson who came to the mission field in 1920 devoted his spare time to botany. His collections containing between 500 and 600 plants were later on incorporated with the collections of the Riksmuséet (National Museum). Persson also followed up his field research by doing six months at the Riksmuséet, cataloguing his material. He presented his work in the booklet “A List of flowering plants from Eastern Turkestan and Kashmir” (Lund 1938).<sup>8</sup> In 1929 Persson took his B.Sc. in Botany.

More will be said later on concerning the achievements of Gösta Raquette especially within medical care and linguistics. Let us just state here that he as well as Högberg came to collaborate with Mannerheim. Thanks to Raquette, Mannerheim learned about some old handwritten manuscripts in Khotan. Mannerheim sent them to his employer in Helsinki who sent the message to Eastern Turkestan stating that especially one of these was of great value from the point of view of history of religion. This manuscript was made up of a historic chronicle starting with Adam.<sup>9</sup> Mannerheim says about Raquette with whom he met in Jarkend, “Thanks to the deep knowledge of the people and the country he has devoted his life to, I have received an insight into many matters that would otherwise have escaped me.”<sup>10</sup> He also gives praise to Raquette’s medical practice and his linguistic research. Later on Mannerheim recommended F.U.S. to urge Raquette to do research on their behalf.<sup>11</sup> This did however not come about, apart from a description of some manuscripts that Mannerheim brought along with him home to Helsinki. Later these manuscripts were worked on by Raquette at home in Lund in the 1920s.<sup>12</sup> Raquette also published a “Wakf” document from Kashgar.<sup>13</sup>

The missionaries possessed a great measure of practical skills. Most of them were also obliged to try their hands on everything. Arell for example was a handy “Jack-of-all-trades”. He learnt carpet colouring, shoemaking, tailoring, weaving and knitting, among many other things. And then he engaged the population in these handicrafts. He brought along machines from Sweden or he made them on the spot. Among other things he constructed a loom where one only had to press a button to let the shuttle run.<sup>14</sup> Contrasting with all this “home

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<sup>6</sup> Westin, 1937, p. 598. Högberg, 1907, p. 5 and 1924, p. 95. Högberg to Waldenström, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1906. Sjöholm to Högberg, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1907.

<sup>7</sup> Mannerheim, 1961, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> *Biografiskt album*, edition 1954, p. 261.

<sup>9</sup> Jägersköld, 1965, p.100.

<sup>10</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 65.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961, p. 44.

<sup>12</sup> Jarring, 1970. Uigur is the “original language” of Eastern Turkestan, spoken in pre-Islamic times. After the progress of Islam, the characters used hitherto were replaced by Arabic ones. Mannerheim, 1940, p. XIV.

<sup>13</sup> Wakf was the name of a donation “where real property was transferred according to specially detailed regulations to serve with its proceeds such purposes as saints’ graves, schools, mosques, the feeding of the poor and so on.” (Raquette, 1935, p. 125.) The document is published with comments made by Raquette under the title *Eine Kaschgarische Wakf-Urkunde aus der Khodscha-Zeit Ost-Türkestans*. University of Lund, Annual publication, N.F., Avd. 1, bd 26, Nr 2. Mentioned by Lattimore, 1950, p. 193.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Arell, October 10th, 1973.

industry” there were other achievements, by Arell and others, building the different houses of the mission station such as churches, hospitals, lodgings, orphanages, schools, etc.

As to practical skills L. E. Högberg was maybe the outstanding person. He speaks about his various occupations in the book, “Souvenirs of a Missionary”. He had been a preacher, a missionary, a teacher, an agent for a tract society, a writer, a printer, a tool maker, a doctor, a pharmacist, a constructor, a mason, a black-smith, a tin-smith, a stove-builder, a cartwright, a carpenter, a sawyer, an upholsterer, a mapper, a glazier, a painter, a farmer, a baker, a collector of ethnographic and zootomatic material and a worker among prisoners of war.<sup>15</sup> The German archaeologist Le Coq lived in Eastern Turkestan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and he also visited the Swedish Mission in Kashgar. He calls Högberg the architect of the Mission. Added to that he was an unusually friendly and peaceful man, says Le Coq, and in spite of his stature – around 2 metres tall – he was still a child at heart.<sup>16</sup>

Within the group of missionaries there was a general bent for practical work. This was seen for example in the wish to find jobs for the Christians. The Christians were on the whole so badly thought of by the population that they could not even get a normal job. Thus the missionaries planned to start carpet manufacturing in Jarkend. The missionaries in Khotan knew an Armenian, in charge of a carpet factory. They intended to borrow a carpet weaver for some time to teach the art of making carpets.<sup>17</sup> This did not however take place, but up to the end of the missionary era these plans were cherished.

In other cases, similar practical plans could be realized. The missionaries had to start from scratch in all spheres of this mission field which was different from all others. They were never allowed to be at a loss. Their tasks stretched from building mission stations to executing advanced surgical operations, from calming agitated crowds to teaching and guiding spiritual seekers. Especially within medical care, which will be described more in detail later on, the missionaries wrote mission history in Eastern Turkestan. They were often obliged to act with a minimum of theoretical training and had to rely on their own judgment. It has been said about the legendary Stina Mårtensson for example who was a missionary to Eastern Turkestan for 30 years that “she was never at a loss, whatever complicated obstetrical cases appeared. She managed to handle the situation, even though he baby had to be extricated, bit by bit.”<sup>18</sup> The life of the mother had to be saved, at any cost.

## 2. Mission Medical Care is Organized

There was no western medical care in the country before the mission era. There were however many national “doctors” and the missionaries give a vivid picture of their fantastic medical exploits.<sup>19</sup> It would lead too far to give an account of what the missionaries witnessed. A few examples will suffice to give a background picture of the missionary medical care.

Arell tells us about one of these “doctors” who worked in Jarkend where Arell met him. He was one among many “doctors” from Kashmir, working in the country. In his pharmacy there were many spices, most of them imported from India. He proudly announced to Arell that he had got hold of an excellent “medical book” that gave him priceless help. This book turned out to be a bound annual volume of the MCCS children’s’ magazine the *Barnavännen*

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<sup>15</sup> Högberg, 1924, p. 71 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Le Coq, 1928, p 26.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Carl Persson, September 23rd, 1972.

<sup>18</sup> *Ansgarius*, 1932, p. 93.

<sup>19</sup> DEM, 1913, p. 86 f. Högberg, 1925, p. 38 f. 1918, p. 9 f. Lundahl, 1917, p. 38 f and 245 ff. Interview with Vendla Gustafsson, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1972. The so-called “barefoot doctors” did not exist at that time. They are a kind of barber-surgeons with elementary medical training. Certain help was to be found in medical plants used in Uigurian medicine from time immemorial. Cf also Jarring, 1979.

(Children's friend) from 1905, and in Swedish, of course. At that time, this paper had a vignette of Jesus blessing the children. This vignette was deleted in every copy. The "Doctor" was greatly satisfied with his "medical book", without which he said he could not get along.<sup>20</sup>

Small pox epidemics were a real curse on the population. People were often totally defenceless. Vaccination in its modern sense was of course not at hand, but people had their own ways of trying to protect themselves by taking the scab of a wound of a person suffering from smallpox and pulling a sowing thread through it. The thread was thus infected, and it was then pulled through the thumb grip in order to create a wound between the fingers. In that way, the infection was transmitted and the antibodies of the body were mobilized. After this inoculation, the "infected person" had to be kept under control. In that way many people were saved. But people still died in large numbers, especially little children. Missionary children too were infected and died. The native people had a saying that a person having survived small-pox was born again. The sufferings were enormous.<sup>21</sup>

The examples quoted above, one from a charlatan and the other from popular medicine, show how the population tried to get to grips with sufferings. Both of them show how perplexed and helpless people were when faced with sickness. Not only missionaries have described such hopeless attempts at finding health and cure. Eleanor Lattimore for example tells the story of a sick woman who was considered to be possessed by the devil. A medicine-man was called upon to come home to her. This man arranged for a violent dance to take place around the woman, dressed up in lots of white frills. The dance ended with another woman pushing a dagger into the body of the sick woman. The thick layers of frills however protected her. The dagger-thrust was a symbolic one, intended to drive out the devil. Exorcised from the woman he would then flee through the smoke-hole in the ceiling.<sup>22</sup>

Consul-General Sykes also confirms the observations made by the missionaries. Among other things he speaks about the "doctors" of Kashgar trying to cure rheumatism and hydropsy by burying the patient in hot sand or else by wrapping him up in the hide of a newly slaughtered sheep. Abdominal pain and women's diseases were cured by putting several burning candles into a piece of bread that had been put on the stomach of the patient. Sykes points out that the doctors of the country were not held in high esteem. And as they gave no help, people often turned to magicians and fortune-tellers.<sup>23</sup>

When Magnus Bäcklund came back to Kashgar in 1900 the whole Mission was shattered. Both Raquette and Högberg were now back home in Sweden. However Bäcklund managed to rehabilitate the confidence in the Mission, and especially in its medical work. In 1901, 800 patients were treated at the hospital.<sup>24</sup> At his death in 1903, Bäcklund was succeeded by Högberg who returned from Sweden a few months afterwards. During his years in Sweden, Högberg had studied available literature in order to become a Mission Doctor. He brought along with him books in Swedish, German, English, French and Russian that gave him great help, but very often he had to fall back on his own judgment and on his exceptional practical skills. He was often forced to make his own medical instruments, even those intended for cataract operations.<sup>25</sup> At times, however, his judgment failed him. On one occasion he wrote home to Sweden ordering an artificial eye according to an enclosed sketch. The measures were however totally wrong and Lundahl says in his reply to Högberg's letter that the firm contacted to produce the eye had sent a message that "an eye as big as the one shown in the

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<sup>20</sup> *Barnavännen*, 1929, nr 1, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Moen, September 30th, 1972.

<sup>22</sup> Lattimore, 1926, p. 221 f.

<sup>23</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 318.

<sup>24</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 460.

<sup>25</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 66.



sketch does not exist”.<sup>26</sup> Mannerheim had followed Högberg’s work in 1907 and praises his practice, especially as “he has trained himself to become a doctor through studies and practice carried out here”.<sup>27</sup> Mannerheim relates how he one day saw some 40 patients in the courtyard of the hospital waiting for their turn. Among them was a man stabbed with a knife and with pus pouring out of his wounds. Not until his furlough in 1910 did Högberg have the possibility to follow a course at the Karolinska Institutet.

Among the laymen/mission doctors, Gösta Raquette had the greatest competence. After medical studies in Lund he continued at the Victoria University of Liverpool where he obtained his doctor’s degree in tropical medicine in 1903.<sup>28</sup> During a number of years he was in charge of the medical care at times in Kashgar at other times in Jarkend. Aurel Stein relates how he met him during his expedition in 1908. A member of the expedition, Naik from India, had fallen ill and Stein saw to it that he was examined by Raquette. It turned out that the man had glaucoma and the prospects of regaining his eye-sight were small. Raquette advised Stein to try to get the man back to India with a caravan. But Stein dreaded sending a blind man through those mountain passes.<sup>29</sup>

During the foundation period, David Gustafsson, Gottfrid Palmberg and Rickard Nyström also did important work within the medical branch of the Mission.<sup>30</sup> It has been said about Nyström that he “devoted himself with great and well-known skill to medical work”<sup>31</sup> The doctor from the Russian Consulate even learnt how to operate on cataract while assisting Nyström during several surgical interventions.<sup>32</sup>

The missionaries’ situation was trying. On one occasion Högberg took part in a meeting lasting for several days. At that time he was stationed at Jengi-Hassar. If the meeting was held in Kashgar he was forced to be absent from the hospital of Jengi-Hassar all that time. So he wrote a letter to the committee suggesting the meeting be held in Jengi-Hassar, in which he went on to say, “If I stay here, Palmberg will take care of it (the station activities) and he and Sigrid will prepare the operations and then I will do them in my spare time.”<sup>33</sup> An impossible work-load!

Many of the women missionaries were better educated than their male colleagues. Most of them were trained nurses or midwives. On several occasions a nurse was the sole missionary at a station and for long periods of time she was in charge of medical care, worship services and all the rest. Often the midwives managed to save lives at thousands of deliveries. Their work was both demanding and delicate. If they failed many people could lose their confidence in Mission medical care for a long time. They often had to take over cases where the natives themselves were helpless. Only then were they sent for, and that was often too late. For the missionaries were often consulted as the very last resort. Many people waited as long as possible before they exploited this possibility. Rarely did the deliveries take place in a hospital. If one had to turn to the missionary, at least it had to be done outside the hospital! So the midwives were obliged to go home to the patient. Often they had to walk long distances and spend the night at the place of birth. Naemi Terning gives an account of how she shared the bed with a whole family on such occasions.<sup>34</sup> Stina Mårtensson who arrived in the field in 1907 says about her first years, “Nobody dared to come in daylight to get the midwife, and long afterwards we had to follow the guide along the most unbelievable circuitous routes,

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<sup>26</sup> Lundahl to Sigrid Högberg, June 25th, 1908.

<sup>27</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 46 ff and 1961, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> The *Svensk Veckotidning* 1975, 7/11. Jarring, 1974, p. 264.

<sup>29</sup> Mirsky, 1977, p. 302, 304 ff.

<sup>30</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 115.

<sup>31</sup> Westin, 1937, p. 831.

<sup>32</sup> Nyström to Palmaer, May 31st, 1935.

<sup>33</sup> Högberg to Raquette, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1915.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Naemi Terning, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1973.

weaving through the streets in order to mislead neighbours and acquaintances. Incredible things could happen if someone got wind of the real facts – and who does not fear the evil eye?”<sup>35</sup>

Often the midwives had to do operations and interventions normally reserved for fully qualified doctors and that under extremely primitive conditions, in the homes of the patients. Over a period of time they were increasingly trusted by the population. Even well-to-do women asked them for help at child-birth. Sometimes even totally private events among the missionaries could deepen this confidence. One such example was when Mrs Nyström was giving birth in Jarkend in 1912, and it was a forceps delivery. This became widely known among the population. And the confidence among the population was remarkably raised where child-birth was concerned.<sup>36</sup>

The first hospital in Kashgar was built by Högberg in the year 1900. It was ruined in an earth-quake in 1907. Immediately afterwards a new hospital was built, a larger and better one. This time too, Högberg was the constructor. Betesta, which was the name of the hospital, attracted general public interest. At the inauguration both the Russian and the British General Consuls were present. The Chinese Mandarin as well as high Chinese officials also attended. No less than nine languages were spoken at the event. The guests handed over their gifts. One gift received special attention, the gift from the Russian Consul to Raquette, for having given medical care to some Russian citizens. The gift was a golden case with jewels.<sup>37</sup> At this solemn inauguration, a cantata, entitled “Betesta”, composed by Högberg, was also performed.<sup>38</sup>

In Jarkend, the first Mission hospital was built by the Persian doctor Mässrur. This took place in 1896 when he and his wife Anna Nyström-Mässrur moved there and started working there. In 1910 a new hospital could be inaugurated, built by Raquette. The new hospital had light, airy rooms both for clinical work, operations and in-patients.<sup>39</sup> In Jarkend, the Mission managed to get hold of a seraglio that was turned into sick-rooms in a native style. There the patients could be treated and far-away patients could sleep. This connection to the area was seen by the missionaries as a good complement to the traditional medical care given.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately similar arrangements could not be made at the other hospitals.

In Jengi-Hessar medical work was taken up in 1912 by Lovisa Engvall. The hospital was built after that by Arell and Palmberg, and the first Missionary doctor was Högberg.<sup>41</sup> Here Högberg carried out many successful operations and the confidence in missionary medical care grew among many people. His manifold home visits to the sick contributed to making the Mission well known and respected. This town was normally a centre of learning with several Muslim High Schools offering hard resistance to the Mission.<sup>42</sup>

The Chinese town of Hancheng never had a hospital. However, medical care was given there on a smaller scale. Accidents for example were taken care of by medically qualified personnel.<sup>43</sup>

Instruments used by the first missionaries at surgical interventions were of a very primitive kind. When for instance Högberg was suddenly faced with the inevitable fact of having to operate, he had to have instruments. Sometimes his own penknife had to do as a scalpel. On other occasions he was helped by local black-smiths, who directed by him produced the

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<sup>35</sup> Lundahl-Walder, 1938, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> Fritzon, 1968/69, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 72.

<sup>38</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 395 ff.

<sup>39</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 412.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 466.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 463.

<sup>42</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 464. Palmaer, 1942, p. 92.

instruments he needed. Often the missionaries' situation was unbearable. Nyström for instance once writes home to Raquette, then in Sweden, asking him for suitable instruments for deliveries. "In many cases we have been called for at such a late stage that the foetus has begun to rot, and when the forceps were applied, the head of the foetus was misshapen. On such occasions we have had real difficulties as we did not have the suitable instruments for disjuncting the foetus."<sup>44</sup>

Gradually instruments were sent for both from Sweden and from Russia. Transport conditions were however very troublesome at times.<sup>45</sup> Later on, instruments were also sent for from Shanghai. A shipment from Shanghai could however take from 12 to 18 months and multiplied freight charges were imposed.<sup>46</sup>

Medicines often came by the same route as the instruments. After some years however the Mission began to order a more extensive annual shipment of medicines from London. The time required for such a shipment, from the moment the order was written until the medicines arrived was about a year. And the freight charges were enormous. Re-loading had to be done many times along the way, passing via India and Kashmir.<sup>47</sup> The vaccines were a special problem, having to be packed in a special way in order not to be destroyed by the severe cold.<sup>48</sup> The medical staff had to prepare their own ointments, pills, tinctures, etc. as the preparations arrived in the form of drugs. Later on this work was taken over by missionaries with a pharmaceutical training.<sup>49</sup>

The number of patients grew from year to year suffering from illnesses of the most varied kinds, like neglected wounds, burns, skin diseases, malaria, cataract and other eye diseases. Glaucoma was a widely spread disease, just like TB and leprosy. Many people had venereal diseases and especially syphilis was widely spread.<sup>50</sup> During their medical training in England those missionaries engaged in medical work followed special courses concerning care of venereal diseases.

In Jarkend a surprisingly large number of people suffered from goitre. Approximately 80 % of the population had this disease and outgrowths often the size of a child's head were hanging from their necks.<sup>51</sup> Also some missionaries contracted this disease, among others Arell and Ellen Söderberg.<sup>52</sup> The population explained the presence of this illness by evil spirits attacking people when asleep.<sup>53</sup> Others saw the stagnant basin water as the "culprit". This theory was confirmed by the fact the Chinese, who only drank the water after having boiled it, never had goitre.<sup>54</sup> Raquette points out that goitre existed in areas with "white" water, i.e. river water with a grey clay mixture, for example in Jarkend. Kashgar on the other hand had "red water", i.e. water from a river with red clay, and there was no goitre.<sup>55</sup> At the mission hospital, the goitre growths were operated on and removed, but in cases where that was not possible, there was no other medication but iodine.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Nyström to Raquette, October 2nd, 1913.

<sup>45</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 457.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 464 f.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 465.

<sup>48</sup> Nyrén, 1928, p. 126.

<sup>49</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 461 f.

<sup>50</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 401 f.

<sup>51</sup> In literature and in missionary letters there are many descriptions of this condition. *Marco Polo's Travels*, 1967, p. 85 and p. 286. Mannerheim in Jägerskiöld, 1965, p. 40. Sykes, 1936, p. 151 and 1920, p. 184. Sjöholm's inspection minutes of 1913. Interview with Ester Johansson, 1973. Macartney, 1931, p. 96.

<sup>52</sup> Nyström to Palmaer, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1936.

<sup>53</sup> Huntington, 1907, p. 167.

<sup>54</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 184. Macartney, 1931, p. 96.

<sup>55</sup> Raquette, 1928, p. 148.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Ester Johansson, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973.

A great obstacle for the Mission medical care was the fact that the patients often arrived far too late. The mullahs often prevented the sick people from looking for help, and many were already dying when they were finally cared for by the missionaries.<sup>57</sup> “Harelip is treated with pork!” was a saying used by the mullahs. Another one was, “If the child eats the medicine of the Mission it will have blue eyes!” Blue eyes were considered as a serious flaw, all eyes should be brown!<sup>58</sup>

In 1905 Högberg published a survey of one year of missionary medical care. The survey here below concerns the hospital of Kashgar, in the year 1904.

Different kinds of fever.....	422 patients
Diseases of the digestive organs.....	293 patients
Diseases of the breathing organs.....	161 patients
Diseases in urinary system and genitals.....	77 patients
Diseases of the heart and blood circulation.....	56 patients
Venereal diseases.....	183 patients
Inflammations, rheumatism, skin diseases, external injuries .....	447 patients
Wounds.....	483 patients
Eye, ear and tooth diseases.....	242 patients
Dislocations and fractures.....	5 patients
Paralysis and falling sickness.....	13 patients
Opium patients, poisoning.....	8 patients
Cataract operations.....	6 patients
Eye membrane operations.....	2 patients
Harelip operation.....	1 patient
Tumours in the face operations.....	4 patients
Tumours on the tongue operations.....	2 patients
Tonsil operation.....	1 patient
Haemorrhoids operation.....	1 patient
Operation of an “eye” weighing 470 grammes.....	1 patient
Operation of a varicose tumour weighing 637 grammes.....	1 patient
Opening of a mouth.....	2 patients
Opening of rectum.....	2 patients
Making of a truss for hernia.....	11 patients
Making of mother slings (?)......	8 patients
Making of a wooden leg.....	2 patients

Furthermore, Högberg mentions in his report operation of bladder stones, extracting a “wandering needle”, etc. All in all 2.440 patients were treated in the course of the year 1904. This took place in the first hospital of the Mission, extremely poorly equipped.<sup>59</sup>

The patients came from all walks of life, most of them were poor, but there were also well-to-do patients, among Muslims as well as among Chinese. In 1907 Hilda Nordquist gives a picture of the sufferings in Eastern Turkestan:

“A child with a terribly large wound on his neck, which had eaten into his throat and up towards the ears.... A man whose forehead is eaten up by cancer... A dropsical man. We emptied him of two buckets of water, but that only gave him help for the moment.... Blood-poisoning of a hand. The poisoning had spread up to the shoulder. Patients with a high fever... A child who had had small-pox and whose eyes

<sup>57</sup> Sykes, 1902, p. 52.

<sup>58</sup> Högberg, 1915, p. 14 f.

<sup>59</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1905, p. 293.

were damaged. In the eyes there were a lot of small worms... A man who was badly cut in the stomach, nearly all mesentery had fallen out.”<sup>60</sup>

Raquette tells about “the man with the feet”, from the hospital of Jarkend. The man had had his two feet frost-bitten, one cold winter when he was ill with typhus. Nobody had taken any care. When he came to the hospital his feet were already gone and the “half-rotten bones were sticking out through the wounds dripping with pus”. After a number of operations the man was cured. With joy and thankfulness he spoke about “his new feet”, i.e. the prostheses. For the rest of his life he wanted to be the slave of the Mission, he added.<sup>61</sup>

Well-to-do people also sought the help of the missionaries. The old Mayor Wang of Hancheng fell mortally ill. It is said about the Chinese that they get sick only once in their lifetime, and that is when they are about to die. And now Wang was convinced he was dying. The ordinary doctors in the town could do nothing, and finally the “despised foreigners” were sent for. Ellen Törnquist visited the sick old man, but found his condition so severe that she refused to do anything at all for him. Instead she suggested a rapid transportation to the hospital in Kashgar. The mayor refused blankly and Mrs Törnquist was forced to take the whole responsibility for his life. She was picked up daily from the hospital by the Mayor’s carriage and was transported through the town as a “genteel lady”. After a couple of months, the old man had recovered.<sup>62</sup>

From the very beginning, the missionaries tried to make the medical care self-supporting. Those who could afford to had to pay for medication and care. Those without means got all the help the Mission could provide for free.<sup>63</sup> Some people had quite a lot of money and paid generously for care and medication. “So there is no need for financial help from the home church for this activity” says Törnquist. “It supports itself and run rationally it even gives a considerable profit.”<sup>64</sup> When Högberg pleaded with the Mission Board for a new hospital in 1907 in Kashgar, he could add:

“These means do not necessarily have to be taken from the MCCS in the form of subsidies but could be paid by the medical assistance here, which has yielded such a good profit that over half the sum has already been gathered and the rest could come, before the money was required.”<sup>65</sup>

Högberg came to build his hospital solely with money coming from the medical care work. In 1912 the mission station of Jengi-Hessar was built. The whole construction was financed by the surplus from the medical care work in Kashgar.<sup>66</sup>

In order to make the medical work yield as much as possible, the missionaries did their utmost. They made pills the whole night. The medicine was put into home-made cups as glass bottles were expensive.<sup>67</sup>

### **3. The Chinese Branch of the Mission Develops**

To start with, the mission work was carried out solely among the Muslims. That was the intention from the outset. However once established in the mission field, the first missionaries realized that mission work was necessary among the Chinese too. To begin with the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 1907, p. 324.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 1906, p. 214.

<sup>62</sup> Palmaer, 1943, p. 92 ff.

<sup>63</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 72. *The Missionsförbundet*, 1894, p. 341.

<sup>64</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 468.

<sup>65</sup> Högberg to the Mission Board, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1907.

<sup>66</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 454.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Moen, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1972.

missionaries tried to reach the Chinese through the ordinary Muslim mission. This however proved impossible. The Chinese differed from the Muslims in so many ways: language, customs, outlook on life, religion and so on. The only way of reaching the Chinese in a proper way was to start a special branch of work, among them. This Mission branch was to follow its own policy.<sup>68</sup>

With the arrival of Albert Andersson in the field, at the turn of the century, the Chinese Mission was initiated. Mr and Mrs Andersson had previously worked as missionaries in Northern China, where they had served the Christian Missionary Alliance, also called the Franson Mission Society.<sup>69</sup> They therefore knew the language and were well acquainted with Chinese conditions. While on furlough in Sweden they were called upon by the MCCS to come and serve as missionaries to the Chinese in Eastern Turkestan. Andersson was no stranger to the MCCS. At the end of the 1880s he had studied at the MCCS Mission School, and after that served for some time as a pastor in the MCCS congregation of Skövde.<sup>70</sup>

Concurrently with the expansion of the Chinese branch of the Mission a stormy chapter of the Eastern Turkestan Mission opens. This was especially clear after the arrival of John Törnquist in the mission field in 1904. With the introduction of the Chinese branch, the Eastern Turkestan Mission acquired a peculiar structure. It turned into two separate Missions with a common administration and common funds. All the conditions were present for a conflict, as the two Missions, with the best of intentions, developed in separate ways.

All the missionaries agreed that mission work among the Chinese was necessary. After all, the Chinese were the master race holding all higher offices in the country. This in itself was a strong reason for working among the Chinese. But where mission methods were concerned, opinions differed. Some missionaries wanted Chinese Mission, of a distinctive character, within the Muslim Mission. Others were of the opinion that the Chinese Mission had to follow its own policy and form a special branch. The former united around Högberg and Raquette and the latter around Andersson and Törnquist.

When finally the MCCS opted for a special Chinese branch, this Mission came to be the cause of much irritation and tension among the missionaries for a long time. The missionaries to the Muslims were of the opinion that the extent of the Chinese Mission was not justifiable with regard taken to how few the Chinese were. And maybe they were right. It is quite possible that the MCCS gave priority to the Chinese Mission, and that in accordance with a general tendency at the time. Of course Waldenström's visit to China in 1907 contributed to increased mission efforts. In the same year, Högberg published a small booklet on Eastern Turkestan where he writes about the exceedingly small number of Chinese within the population:

“The question of how many percent of the population are Chinese is of special interest for us and for our Mission. However opinions differ as to the number of Chinese here. The British Consul believes them to be 0,33 % of the population. One of our Christian Chinese brothers thought they were only ‘one in a thousand’. This seems however to be a very low estimate...in my opinion, the Chinese ‘in the six cities’ are more likely to be below than above the number of three percent of the population.”<sup>71</sup>

Shortly afterwards, the Mission Secretary Sjöholm sent a letter to Törnquist, referring to Högberg's figures. Considering the fact that the number of Chinese in Eastern Turkestan was negligible, the Chinese Mission must be relegated to a second place in planning the work. Törnquist took offence and in a reply he points out that in certain parts of the country, the Chinese population was about 50 %. According to him Högberg's figures were totally

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<sup>68</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 447 f.

<sup>69</sup> Ohldén, 1906, p. 102.

<sup>70</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 544 f.

<sup>71</sup> Högberg, 1907, p. 14 f.

misleading.<sup>72</sup> Totally unaware of the disputes between the Eastern Turkestan missionaries, Lattimore estimates the number of Chinese in Eastern Turkestan at that time to be around 10 % of the population.<sup>73</sup> They lived principally in the cities. The bigger cities were divided into two parts, one Muslim part and one Chinese part. In Kashgar there were many more Chinese than in Jarkend.<sup>74</sup>

In three letters written in 1907, Raquette attacks the Chinese Mission branch. He writes to Sjöholm, "It really needs inspection...", "...the Board must have been misled concerning the Chinese Mission." And he writes to the Board thanking them for having resisted the demand from the Chinese Mission for new missionaries.<sup>75</sup>

The antagonism between the missionaries was a source of trouble for the Mission Board in Stockholm. Waldenström who had succeeded Ekman in 1904 as MCCS President (from 1904 as Chairman and from 1908 also as President) expresses his concern in a letter to Törnquist in 1909, "It is somewhat sad that in your letters there is always a tension between the Chinese and the Muslim Missions."<sup>76</sup> And Törnquist admitted in his next letter to the Waldenström "The tension between the two branches of the Mission is there, I cannot deny it, nor do I wish to do so."<sup>77</sup>

The opposition also concerned the division of missionaries between the two mission branches. Both missions cried for reinforcement. Normally the division of personnel was directed by the Mission Board in Sweden, through language studies, etc. One single example will suffice to demonstrate the difficulties that could arise at the stationing of new missionaries.

John Törnquist's fiancée, Ellen Svensson, went through some special training for Muslim mission before leaving Sweden. She arrived in Eastern Turkestan in 1903. Törnquist arrived the following year. He was also trained for working among Muslims. Upon his arrival he realized he could do nothing within the Muslim mission without medical training. Therefore he took up work among the Chinese. In 1905, when the Kashgar Conference decided to station him within the Muslim Mission he refused. He felt he had a calling to work among the Chinese and he intended to stay there. The whole thing was reported back to Stockholm and in a letter Waldenström gives Törnquist a sharp rebuke, reminding him that he had been sent out as a missionary to the Muslims, and he had only to accept leaving his work among the Chinese. There was nothing to do but comply with the decision of the General Conference in Sweden! Waldenström pointed out that in the last resort it was the General Conference that decided about the missionaries.<sup>78</sup> Törnquist however did not submit to Waldenström but remained a missionary to the Chinese for the rest of his life.

Törnquist very soon had to "pay" for his "insubordination". In the autumn of 1905 he wrote to Waldenström and the Mission Board asking them for permission to marry even though there were a few months remaining of the stipulated time in the field.<sup>79</sup> His fiancée had arrived in 1903 and the MCCS stipulations said that the contracting parties had to spend three years in the field before marriage could take place. Törnquist's demand was rejected. Waldenström wrote to him saying that the Board had not been able to grant his demand, and he went on saying, "Just imagine all those here in Sweden who have to wait for years before they have the chance to marry."<sup>80</sup> Some months later, in another letter, Waldenström

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<sup>72</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, February 19th, 1908.

<sup>73</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 3. Högberg, 1910, p. 10.

<sup>74</sup> Lattimore, 1930, p. 325.

<sup>75</sup> Raquette to Sjöholm, February 12<sup>th</sup>, and July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1908, and to the Board, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

<sup>76</sup> Waldenström to Törnquist, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

<sup>77</sup> Törnquist to Waldenström, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

<sup>78</sup> Waldenström to Törnquist, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1905.

<sup>79</sup> Törnquist to the Mission Board, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1905.

<sup>80</sup> Waldenström to Törnquist, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1906.

expresses his personal disapproval of Törnquist's request.<sup>81</sup> And in a letter to Högberg, the same month, he derides Törnquist saying, "Tell Törnquist to write in a readable way".<sup>82</sup> At that time, Högberg and Törnquist were not on good terms with each other. Waldenström certainly knew about that, and probably really appreciated being able to give Törnquist this remark through Högberg.

When Törnquist did not gain anything through his requests, the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan took up the question. Their Missionary Conference made the following statement,

"The Conference decided to commission John Törnquist and Ellen Svensson to meet a newly arrived missionary (on her way to the field) in Tashkent in West Turkestan, in order to accompany her on her way to Kashgar... Because of this situation, the Conference demands that the Board accepts that Törnquist marries although some months are still missing in the period stipulated for missionaries to spend in the field before getting married."<sup>83</sup>

Believing that everything would now be OK Törnquist made the necessary preparations for the wedding. When the reply arrived from Stockholm, very much delayed by bad postal service, it contained a categorical refusal. It is not hard to understand that this time too, it was the President of the Board, Waldenström, who was behind this rejection.<sup>84</sup>

Törnquist had however come so far in his preparation for the wedding that there was no turning back. Among other things the person in charge of officiating at the wedding was already booked. The German pastor in Tashkent had promised to officiate at the Törnquist/Svensson wedding that would take place during their stay there.<sup>85</sup> There was no person among the missionaries who had the legal right to officiate at a wedding and it would take more than six months back and forth to the Swedish Consulate in Shanghai, the nearest Swedish official authority.

So Törnquist married in spite of both Waldenström's and the Board's refusal. But that was not all. The Mission Board further decided that Mrs Törnquist should go on working among the Muslims and thus work at a different station from her husband. She had language training for working among the Turks and it would be a loss of both money and time to let her go over to the Chinese Mission, said the Board. Here is Törnquist's reply to Waldenström:

"To our astonishment we now find that the request handed in by the Kashgar Conference has been rejected, and that the Board, in opposition to what the Kashgar Conference had decided, now decides that Ellen should go on working at the Muslim Mission station. It is hardly possible to find words to express our sadness... At our Conference here in January, *nobody* here found it possible that two married people work at different stations... As far as the Muslim activity is concerned, we cannot understand that it needs five women workers, whereas I cannot even have my own wife with me here in the work among the Chinese... If the Board's decision remains unchanged, i.e. that Ellen should work with the Muslim Mission in Kashgar, we will be forced to leave Kashgar... Do not make things more complicated for us here than what we can bear, in this work in Chinese Turkestan, which is already in itself very hard."<sup>86</sup>

After this letter and a unanimous appeal from the mission field, Mrs Törnquist was allowed to move to the Chinese mission field.

The question of where to place the missionaries was a delicate one. And as far as the woman missionary was concerned whom the Törnquists were to meet in Tashkent, Högberg had his suspicions. After having complained about Ellen Törnquist in a letter to Sjöholm,

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1906.

<sup>82</sup> Waldenström to Högberg, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1906.

<sup>83</sup> Minutes from the Missionary Conference in Kashgar, January 9-11, 1906.

<sup>84</sup> Terning, 1956, p. 81.

<sup>85</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1906. How a German Lutheran pastor in Russia could marry two Swedes in a legal way remains a mystery.

<sup>86</sup> Törnquist to Waldenström, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1906.



Högberg adds, “If the sister who now joins us in the field is a pleasant and talented woman, is it your hope that the same thing happens until ‘all needs’ in the Chinese Mission have been met, i.e. until there are no more bachelors in that mission branch.”<sup>87</sup> The new missionary in question was Elsa Andersson. At that time there was only one single bachelor within the Chinese Mission. His name was Adolf Bohlin, and he was not going to entice Elsa Andersson nor any other woman from the Muslim Mission.

The tension between the two groups of missionaries sometimes led to disputes about very trivial matters. Once there was a tussle between them about a carriage that had been left by a missionary going home on furlough.<sup>88</sup> Another such quarrel was about some kitchen stoves that had been shipped from Sweden.<sup>89</sup> And this quarrel was brought up to the highest level. Finally the Head quarters in Stockholm had to settle the dispute.

But maybe this was not as trivial as it may appear 70 years later, in well-to-do Sweden? Maybe it was not a question of trivialities and trifles. In the primitive conditions where the missionaries lived every single little convenience or improvement was hailed with genuine gratitude. On one occasion Törnquist serves as an example of how happy and thankful a missionary could be for one small change for the better. From Sweden, he had received an ordinary kerosene lamp. Afterwards he writes home speaking about how “indescribably happy” he was, how people assembled at night in order to look at the “miracle”.

The schism between the two missionary groups was obvious. The missionaries to the Chinese saw in Högberg and Raquette the root of all the evil. When Högberg was in Sweden in 1910-11, everything was so much simpler at the Chinese station Hancheng. Albert Andersson says that “it was peaceful both inside and outside”.<sup>90</sup> And at that time Törnquist could speak about community and fellowship between the missionaries.<sup>91</sup> During these years, Högberg was often reminded of his “treachery” towards the Mission, for having taken time to build the British Consulate.<sup>92</sup> The different opinions could not be overarched. Towards the end of the 1910s feelings were so agitated that the Mission on the whole was about to undergo severe damage.

#### **4. The Bible Dispute**

As has already been mentioned above, Avetarianian left Kashgar in 1897 and carried with him – his bitterness. He felt deeply offended by the fact that the Swedish missionaries did not want to acknowledge his translation of the Gospels. During the following winter, the Gospels were printed. When they reached Kashgar, the missionaries noted that Avetarianian had not paid any heed to their remarks.

Now and then during the following years, Avetarianian sent a letter. His letters indicated that he had not been able to get over the alleged injustices suffered in Kashgar. He was unable to forget how these uneducated Swedes, especially Högberg and Raquette, could question his linguistic abilities. On several occasions he wrote insulting letters to these two missionaries.<sup>93</sup> When Waldenström was in the States in 1904, Avetarianian wrote to him accusing Högberg of dubious business transactions in Kashgar. Högberg was said to have purchased ethnographical and archaeological artefacts which he had then sold at good profit to museums in Europe.

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<sup>87</sup> Högberg to Sjöholm, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1905.

<sup>88</sup> Albert Andersson to Sjöholm, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1924. Palmberg to Raquette, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1913.

<sup>89</sup> Elsa Andersson to Sjöholm, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1908. Sjöholm to Törnquist, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1915. Norberg to Törnquist, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1916.

<sup>90</sup> Albert Andersson to Sjöholm, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1910.

<sup>91</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

<sup>92</sup> Palmberg to Raquette, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1913.

<sup>93</sup> Raquette to the Board, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1910.

Avetarianian enclosed an article about Högberg's activities and asked Waldenström for help to get it published in an American paper. Waldenström however refused this, but he wrote a letter to Högberg, full of admonitions:

"I have wanted to tell you this as a reminder to be extremely cautious in order not to attract well-founded blame which could harm the Mission... As to your disputes with Avetarianian concerning the divinity of Christ, I hope there must be some kind of misunderstanding on Avetarianian's side. However his words in that respect too lend themselves to caution in word and expression."<sup>94</sup>

In the meantime, Avetarianian continued his work with the rest of the New Testament. After a light revision of the Gospels he anticipated he could publish the whole New Testament in 1911. The printing was taken care of by the German Oriental Mission where Avetarianian was employed at the time.<sup>95</sup> With regard taken to the mixed reception given to Avetarianian's first translation of the Gospels, the British and Foreign Bible Societies, responsible for the publishing, wanted however to test his new attempts, before the New Testament was printed in its totality. So when the Gospel of Matthew was printed, the Bible Society sent a number of copies to Kashgar asking the missionaries there to test it in their work among the population. They soon found some serious translation errors that they pointed out to the Bible Society. There was however a lack of response to their remarks and the printing went on. In the meantime the missionaries were more and more convinced that there had to be a thorough revision of Avetarianian's translation. Especially Högberg and Raquette were involved in this Bible dispute. New proposals were made to the Bible Society, but this time too, no heed was paid to the remarks.

In 1909, Waldenström entered the linguistic battle. In several letters to the Bible Society, he identified with great accuracy the errors and absurdities in Avetarianian's translation. And it was not a question of trifles. It had to do with important matters such as the concept of God. Avetarianian had for example translated "your God" in a way that could be interpreted in the plural, and thus meant "your Gods". Of course this was seen as an abomination by the extremely monotheistic Muslims.<sup>96</sup> The correspondence between Waldenström and the representative of the Bible Society, Dr Lepsius, led to a Conference in Berlin, in the autumn of 1909. Waldenström participated there together with professor Andreas from Göttingen, a representative of the Oriental Seminary of Berlin and four members from the German Oriental Mission. Dr Lepsius reported to the Bible Society's Sub Committee that the majority of the Conference had found the Högberg and Raquette themselves were not apt to translate the New Testament into Kashgar Turkish, nor were they capable of revising Avetarianian's translation.<sup>97</sup> Waldenström reported from the Conference that Professor Andreas had taken the academic responsibility for the accuracy of Avetarianian's translation. The remarks made by the missionaries had been waved aside and explained by the fact that they were due to ignorance and misunderstanding.<sup>98</sup>

When these discussions didn't seem to lead anywhere, Högberg and Raquette took the matter in their own hands and revised Avetarianian's translation of the Gospel according to Matthew. The printing took place in Tiflis 1910 and the Bible Society was in charge of the

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<sup>94</sup> Waldenström to Högberg, October 22nd, 1904.

<sup>95</sup> Catalogue of the Bibelsällskapet (Bible Society), Vol II, p. 1628, nr. 9414.

<sup>96</sup> A summary of the 50 remarks made by the missionaries, far too extensive to be accounted for here, is to be found in a letter from Högberg and Raquette to the Mission Board in Stockholm, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1909. This letter was translated into English and is to be found in the archives of the Bible Society, London. A copy is found in the personal archives of Hultvall. Waldenström to Dr. Pepsius, Potsdam, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> 1909. Waldenström builds his presentation on the above mentioned summary.

<sup>97</sup> Lepsius's report to the Bible Society, November 16th, 1909.

<sup>98</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1911, p. 326 f.

editing.<sup>99</sup> This revision was of course not approved of by Avetaranian. However he was willing to make a new revision of his own manuscript, providing the Bible Society published his translation.<sup>100</sup> The Bible Society however did not want to undertake the printing unless the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar promised to distribute it. The missionaries then made it a condition that at least the most serious errors were to be corrected. The Bible Society now called a new conference in London, in 1911. The MCCS was represented by Waldenström and Raquette. The Conference decided to appeal to Avetaranian to go through the manuscript together with Raquette and to try to agree upon necessary corrections.<sup>101</sup> Avetaranian accepted this proposal and after some years of laborious collaborative work the whole New Testament was completed in 1914, ready for distribution. Printing was done in Filippopol in Bulgaria, and was taken care of by the Bible Society.<sup>102</sup> The edition was done in portions. The four Gospels, Acts and Romans were published in 2000 copies and the rest of the letters in 1500 copies.<sup>103</sup>

Just as the printing was completed, World War I broke out. All transport to the mission field of the precious and eagerly awaited Bible portions was made impossible for several years.

## 5. Starting Children's Homes

The first Children's Home was opened in Jarkend in 1910.<sup>104</sup> Just like medical care, the work among children grew spontaneously out of the needs of the people.

Life was hard for children in Eastern Turkestan. Infant mortality was high. Half of the children died before reaching the age of one. Lady Macartney points out that many parents did not do anything in order to protect their children from illnesses. They were fatalists and meant that if the children died, it was the will of Allah.<sup>105</sup> Those children surviving early infancy often succumbed to smallpox a few years later. Every other child died. "Allah's will is unfathomable."<sup>106</sup> Only one child out of four reached his/her fifth anniversary.

The surviving children were believed to be constantly threatened by "the evil eye". This was especially the case if the child was a beautiful one. "The evil eye" in that case was in the form of other people's envious eyes. He who first touched a new born baby could influence its whole future by his glance. This notion often prevented missionaries from giving help at the delivery.<sup>107</sup> On one occasion, Mrs Macartney was about to take a photo of a baby. The mother hastily arrived, snatching away the child, explaining that "the evil eye" was hidden in the camera and if the camera "looked at the child", it would die.<sup>108</sup> To protect the child against the evil eye, but also to protect it against the djinns, the parents put an amulet around its neck, a small triangular pouch containing slips of paper with quotations from the Koran. A beautiful child was rarely washed. And its clothes were never washed. If the children were dirty and clothed in rags, their beauty would not be seen and the evil powers would then leave them alone.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Catalogue of the Bible Society, Volume II, nr 9413a. Hermansson in Palmaer, 1942, p. 207.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Avetaranian made by the representative of the Bible Society in 1911. (Minutes of Editorial Sub Committee p, 42 f).

<sup>101</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1911, p. 326 f.

<sup>102</sup> Catalogue of the Bible Society, Volume II, Kashgar Turki. Bredberg, 1946, p. 237 f.

<sup>103</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 488 f.

<sup>104</sup> Palmaer, 194,2 p. 180.

<sup>105</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 124.

<sup>106</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 10.

<sup>107</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 125.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126. Similar conceptions exist in other Muslim countries too.

<sup>109</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 10.

Girls were considered of less value than boys. It was almost regarded a disaster when a girl was born. Many parents loved their girls too, however. This could be seen already at the name-giving as was the case with Bachtan Chan, about whom the missionary Ahlbert has written a little book. The name means “Child of Happiness”.<sup>110</sup> Sometimes children were given ugly names, for their protection. The evil spirits would then be “fooled”. A beautiful child could be called “Garlic”, “Broom”, “Tiger”, “Axe”, “Garbage”, etc. Högberg writes about such protective names in his little book “Jolbas”. Jolbas by the way means “Tiger”.<sup>111</sup> Other names meant to have a magic force were for example “Strong” or “Stay”, the meaning being “may he stay”, a wish and a prayer sent up to the good powers.<sup>112</sup>

The children were often the losers in the numerous divorces and remarriages. In the new families, they were often considered an obstacle to the parents. The men especially disliked it if their new wives had many children from a previous marriage.

The situation of the children became a strong calling for the missionaries. Something had to be done in order to help at least some of them. That was how the children’s home of Jarkend started. From the beginning, both boys and girls were accepted here. In 1924, this children’s home turned into a boys’ home and a new home was built for the activity among the girls.<sup>113</sup> Some forty boys and girls were taken care of annually. Many of them stayed on for a number of years.<sup>114</sup>

The children taken care of came from the poorest families. At the time of the beginning of this activity the missionaries spoke in the following way about the children:

“Homeless, abandoned children are living among the graves. Rejected by the living, they seek their abode among the dead. Half naked, dressed only in rags, they soon succumb to the cold. Sleepiness overcomes them, and so the angel of death liberates them from the sufferings of life.”<sup>115</sup>

One sick and dying girl thrown on a garbage heap in Kashgar was found by a missionary. She was treated at the hospital and returned to life. She was later on sent to the children’s home in Jarkend.<sup>116</sup> Hilda Nordqvist once found a boy at the roadside, abandoned by his parents. He was lying there, unconscious and with frozen feet. At the hospital he received medical care, but at first he was in such a bad state that he could not walk but had to crawl on his knees. Later on he too was transferred to the children’s home.<sup>117</sup> One day a father was sitting outside the mission station with his little son. Both had malaria. When they had recovered, the father wanted the boy to stay on in the Children’s Home.<sup>118</sup> One day a man came to Raquette with a man blinded with cataracts, escorted by his little daughter. They had walked for three days to get to the mission hospital. After a successful operation the man said, “I am just a poor beggar, I have nothing to pay with. But wouldn’t you like to take my little girl?”<sup>119</sup> The girl was then brought up in the Children’s Home. Sometimes when parents wanted to leave their children to the Mission, the Muslims reacted. They then turned to the Chinese authorities and asked for assistance with picking up the child.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>111</sup> Högberg, 1918, p. 14 f.

<sup>112</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 314.

<sup>113</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 175.

<sup>114</sup> *The Barnavännen*, 1914, number 17, p. 123.

<sup>115</sup> Sandegren, 1913, p. 25.

<sup>116</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 51.

<sup>117</sup> *The Barnavännen*, 1914, number 6, p. 42.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., number 24, p. 190.

<sup>119</sup> SMT, 1913, p. 89.

<sup>120</sup> Högberg, 1917, p. 56,

Sometimes fathers came quite openly, wanting to sell their children. Naturally, the missionaries could not normally accept such offers, but they knew that if they did not accept the children, the fathers would go to the Chinese and sell them. Therefore they kept the children on some occasions giving the “seller” a gift in return.<sup>121</sup> Once a well-known Muslim gambler wanted to sell his daughter. The girl was in a bad condition and the missionaries had not got the heart to reject her.<sup>122</sup>

At the children’s home, the children were given basic schooling and training in some trade. The boys learnt weaving, knitting, carpentry, shoemaking, tailoring and the girls learnt household keeping, child care, needle work, knitting, embroidery and other domestic arts and crafts.<sup>123</sup> Writing about a visit to the Children’s Home Ella Sykes says that the girls were cooking all the food, baking bread and tending to all the housework. On top of their cute little dresses they had aprons made of Russian cotton fabric. The boys’ clothes were made of material they had woven themselves.<sup>124</sup>

At the children’s home the children could feel happy and at ease. The British Consul-General of Kashgar, Sir Clermont Skrine, visited the Children’s home of Jarkend on one occasion, where there were at the time some 35 orphans aged between 10 months and 14-15 years old. “And they were all merry as larks, chubby-cheeked little people...” he says. The activity among orphans, Skrine goes on to say, was perhaps the most admirable part of the Mission work among Turks and Chinese.<sup>125</sup>

Many people saw girls as simple merchandise. They were very often despised because of the very widespread practice of child marriages. The men defended their very young wives by referring to the Prophet himself, who married Aischa when she was only nine years old.<sup>126</sup> When the Mission managed to keep the girls at the Children’s Home some time into their teens, they often saved them from life-long misery. On several occasions the Mission arranged weddings when young people from the Children’s Home had found each other.<sup>127</sup> This was for example the case of Bachta Chan, already mentioned above. Towards the end of her teens she was married, together with some older sisters. And they were all three married to Christian men. Ahlbert says about these girls, “These girls were surely the first girls in Eastern Turkestan who had had a real youth before getting married. The Muslim woman has no youth. Directly from childhood’s carefree playing of games she enters life’s bitter everyday toil... She is but a child and a wife.”<sup>128</sup>

The girls from the Children’s Home were never allowed to go out on their own in town. There they were always accompanied by a woman missionary. At the age of 12 they started wearing a veil, in order not to deviate from the customs of the country.<sup>129</sup>

## 6. The Republican Frenzy Reaches Kashgar

The first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was on the whole a calm period when the Mission could settle down without any disturbances from either the population or from the authorities. The sole exception was Jarkend in 1907. It all started with the hundred Hindus in the city celebrating one of their religious festivals. The offerings to the gods irritated the Muslim population and the Hindus were arrested or dispersed. The agitated Muslims now turned on

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<sup>121</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 470.

<sup>122</sup> The *Barnavännen*, 1921, number 26, p. 202.

<sup>123</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 62.

<sup>124</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 188 f.

<sup>125</sup> Skrine, 1926, p. 126.

<sup>126</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 59.

<sup>127</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 187.

<sup>128</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 61.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with Esther Johansson, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973.

the Mission. It had to go! The few Christians there were persecuted and the school had to close down for some time. After about a month school work could be resumed however. The same thing also applied to the rest of the people employed by the Mission.<sup>130</sup> Towards the end of the year C.G. Mannerheim visited the mission station. Moreover he spent Christmas with the Raquettes. He praises their hospitality. On the Christmas table there was porridge and home brewed ale, and even an imitation of special Swedish Christmas fish. Mannerheim also mentions how much the population loved “the likeable Swedish doctor and his charming wife”, something that was important to listen to especially at that time. During the festival they were presented with lots of trays loaded with fruits and sweets.<sup>131</sup> A missionary called Hunter from China Inland Mission in Urumchi also visited Jarkend during the latter part of 1907. He writes about the trust that people had in the missionaries. Every Sunday crowds of men, women and children came to services of worship.<sup>132</sup>

In China proper, however, important political changes took place around the turn of the year 1911/1912. The Ming Dynasty, the Manchu branch, which had been in power since the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, was dethroned. The Manchu were not Chinese but strangers from Siberia. Dissatisfaction with the regime and several other social issues had become so general towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a revolution seemed to be the only way out in order to give China a new future. In 1895 an open revolt broke out. The leader of the coup was Sun Yat-sen, a Christian medical doctor born in southern China in 1866.<sup>133</sup> The coup was however put down and Sun Yat-sen had to flee from the country. During his exile in Japan he founded Kuomintang, the national people’s party together with other political refugees. Up to the 1950s the Kuomintang party was to be of decisive importance for the political development of China.

Around Christmas in 1911, Sun Yat-sen came back to China. The Revolution was then in full swing and several provinces had broken with the government of Peking. The uprising was now coordinated by Sun Yat-sen who formed a revolutionary government in Nanking. In a few weeks the rebels managed to force the abdication of the five-year-old emperor and the widow-empress. The Republic was proclaimed and Sun Yat-sen became its first president. Already in February 1912 Sun Yat-sen left his post and was succeeded by Yuan Shih-kai, an imperial official and general. Between these two leaders there was soon an open breach leading to an attempted coup by Sun Yat-sen. The coup was a failure and “The Creator of New China” once again had to flee from his country.<sup>134</sup>

Yuan Shih-kai carried on the old imperial policy in nearly all respects; however some small changes were made. The old dragon flag symbolizing China for instance now disappeared and was replaced by the five-coloured flag. This flag was supposed to symbolize the unity between the five main ethnic groups in China: the Chinese, the Mongols, the Manchu, the Tibetans and the Turks.<sup>135</sup> Another change was the abolition of the hair queue which was a symbol of the long-lasting subservience of the Chinese under the Manchu. Soldiers equipped with large scissors were posted everywhere, and as soon as a Chinese with a queue appeared, it was cut off. “Many people had the impression that part of their head disappeared and they felt at a loss.”<sup>136</sup>

The Revolution never turned against the Christian Mission. This was surely due to the fact that many of the leaders of the Revolution had gone to Mission schools. So they knew that the

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<sup>130</sup> MCCA Annual Report 1907, p. 158.

<sup>131</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 124.

<sup>132</sup> Cable, 1948, p. 46.

<sup>133</sup> Henrikson –Hwang, 1967, p. 304. Sun Yat-sen became a Christian at a mission school in Honolulu and was later baptized on his return to China.

<sup>134</sup> Sjöholm, 1916, p. 417 f.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 418 f.

<sup>136</sup> Palmaer, 1940, p. 137 f.

Mission worked in favour of the population, for the general good. Furthermore it was clear to the leaders that if the foreign powers were to be kept outside, the Revolution must not appear to be hostile to foreigners.<sup>137</sup>

The Revolution came early to Wuchang, the province capital of Hupeh. The official buildings of the city were burnt down and the Manchu officials were executed.<sup>138</sup> It was here that the MCCS had mission work and its missionaries fled to Shanghai. There they later on received a letter from the new Mayor of their hometown. He let them know that the property of the Mission was undamaged. And he goes on to say, "I write to you personally in order to welcome you back to your station. I am a Christian since many years and I have a special love for the Church and the missionaries... As China is now a Republic, we need you more than before..."<sup>139</sup>

The Revolution reached Kashgar in 1912. Hordes of rebels poured into Eastern Turkestan from Central China. A group called "The men of the Black Hand" was particularly active in Kashgar. The goal here, like elsewhere, was to "rub out" old China and eliminate high Manchu officials. Among others the County Governor of Kashgar and his wife were murdered.<sup>140</sup> The same fate befell many of the officials of his Residence. Many others were wounded. The rebels knew about the missionaries and sent word to the mission station ordering some missionary with medical skills to come and give help to the wounded. Högberg and Gustafsson went there. Gustafsson writes about what they witnessed there, "An awful sight met us. Several Chinese with sword wounds and others were lying there bathed in blood, and the stench was almost unbearable."<sup>141</sup> Högberg adds, "Never in my life have I felt so near hell as that day when I entered the head quarters of the rebels."<sup>142</sup> Another high Kashgar official saved his life by quickly cutting off his queue and painting a decorative arabesque saying "Long live the Chinese Revolution!"<sup>143</sup>

The Missionary Hunter was in Kashgar during these days of blood-shed. He was dressed as a totally assimilated Chinese, wearing Chinese clothes and a queue. He took shelter at the British Consulate. He took off his queue, but the question of clothes was trickier. He was a big man and no clothes available at the Consulate fitted him. Then someone came to think of Högberg, being also a man of stature, and clothes were fetched for him from the mission station. The Consul's wife, Mrs Macartney writes, "Suddenly he looked like a distinguished Scot, which, in fact, he was."<sup>144</sup> The wounded survivors of the bloodshed were mainly young Chinese who were considered harmless to the "New China". Many of them received medical care at the mission hospital. Swedish newspapers spoke about total anarchy in Kashgar.<sup>145</sup>

The bloody show-down was a settlement between the Chinese. The Turkish population had no part in it. The Turks/Muslims "got off with no more than a fright". An eye witness relates how scared they were at what was happening.<sup>146</sup> Many were total strangers to the purpose of the rebellion. To them it mattered little, or not at all, whether the head of the country was an emperor or a president.<sup>147</sup> However there was a risk that Chinese violence would increase Muslim sympathy for Russia. Russians were politically strong at the time and if there had been a war between China and Russia, analysts considered it probable that the Muslims would

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<sup>137</sup> Sjöholm, 1916, p. 412 f.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 411.

<sup>139</sup> Palmaer, 1940, p. 132 ff.

<sup>140</sup> "The County Governor has been cut to pieces". Bohlin to the Board, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

<sup>141</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 95.

<sup>142</sup> Högberg, 1924, p. 113.

<sup>143</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. 295.

<sup>144</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 187.

<sup>145</sup> Sjöholm to Högberg June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

<sup>146</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 95.

<sup>147</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 65.

have sided with the Russians.<sup>148</sup> And rumours about war were in circulation. In the autumn of 1911 some Chinese were getting ready to leave China.<sup>149</sup> Lars-Erik Nyman however points out that the threat from Russia had mostly to do with the usual tactics of the Tsar regime at that time, “often threat, seldom strike”.<sup>150</sup> The person who thwarted possible Russian conquests and who thereby gave the Muslim majority of the country peace and quiet was the new General Governor of Urumchi, Yang Tseng-hsin. In 1911 he succeeded the Manchu Governor Yuan Ta-hua<sup>151</sup> as the man of the “New China”. For nearly two decades, Yang was to govern the province in an independent and arbitrary way almost totally isolating it from the rest of China and its republican regime. The political change in China therefore never came to be of importance for the Muslims of southern Eastern Turkestan and the Mission there.

In Kashgar the period of blood and violence was soon over. The refugees could return to their homes and calm could be more or less re-established. A few executions were still carried out though. In the autumn of 1912 Högberg writes tersely, “The Chinese have recently decapitated a soldier in Kashgar and two or three soldiers in the New City.”<sup>152</sup> Several of the rebels themselves met with misfortune like for instance the butcher Sheng. Being a pig butcher he was despised by the Muslims in Kashgar. When passing by his shop they held their noses. Nonetheless, in this republican frenzy he could seize power and for some time he became the dictator of Kashgar. It was not long however before he was summoned to Urumchi where the new authorities sentenced him to death.<sup>153</sup>

Some time later, a couple of criminals having been released from prison during the reign of terror in Kashgar, got together in Hancheng. They were now planning to attack and loot Kashgar. But the attack never took place, after all. A Christian Chinese managed to put a stop to these plans. Before his conversion to Christianity, this man whose name was Yang had been part of a gang of criminals operating in Kashgar, and he had not broken completely with them. His old gang mates now listened to him and thereby, apparently, both Kashgar and the Mission were saved.<sup>154</sup> At the beginning of 1913 a new general officer commanding came to Kashgar and order was totally restored.

Like in the rest of China, the Revolution in Eastern Turkestan did not turn upon the Mission or the Christians. The Mission also tried to conform. So for instance the new Mandarin of Jarkend received a medal from the Mission.<sup>155</sup> A hard “sifting-time” however befell the Chinese branch of the Mission. In the Chinese city Hancheng, situated 12 kilometres from Kashgar, there was total chaos for some time. The Mission had been active here since 1908 when this new station was opened. The work was led by John Törnquist and in the year of the Revolution, 1912, there were 15 Chinese members of the congregation. Several others showed interest. Nearly all of them disappeared during the time of terror, and concerning the situation as a whole, Törnquist writes that “it is difficult to attract people and to make them listen to the Gospel”.<sup>156</sup> He also writes about the “Republican religion” and adds, “The new Chinese who come are worse than the old idolaters<sup>157</sup>, because they do not believe in anything but the Republic.”

## 7. The Results of the Founding Years

<sup>148</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1911, p. 334.

<sup>149</sup> Bohlin to Sjöholm, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1911.

<sup>150</sup> Nyman, 1977, p. 17 f.

<sup>151</sup> Yang, 1961, p. 270.

<sup>152</sup> Högberg to Waldenström, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

<sup>153</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 98.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Oskar Andersson to the Board, June 10th, 1912.

<sup>156</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 100.

<sup>157</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, March 24th, 1913.



P.P. Waldenström came to play a decisive role during the founding years in several important matters. During these years he assumed total leadership of the MCCS when he succeeded Ekman in 1904 as leader of the MCCS, first as its chairman and from 1908 also as President. This is of course not the place to portray Waldenström as a Mission Leader, but some details will throw light on his relations with the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan.

In their personal dealings with Waldenström the missionaries often experienced distance and coldness. Oskar Terning who became a missionary to China in 1909 says, "Waldenström could be extremely cold towards the individual, the missionary."<sup>158</sup> The above mentioned relations between Törnquist and Waldenström reinforce this statement. Waldenström had little understanding for the personal problems of a missionary. Between himself and the missionary he placed the MCCS statutes. Statutes had to be respected, even if the individual missionary was jammed. As far as Waldenström was concerned, "The MCCS statutes and regulations were more important than personal relationships."<sup>159</sup>

L.E. Högberg also had his share of Waldenström's disapproval on several occasions. This was especially obvious in 1912 when the new printing press had come to the mission field. Högberg could not wait for greater expertise but eagerly assembled the press. When this became known in Stockholm, Waldenström wrote a letter to Högberg, rebuking him severely.<sup>160</sup> Högberg was deeply hurt by the letter. Yet Waldenström sent another letter to Högberg, expressing his disapproval even more clearly. How could Högberg ignore Bohlin and assemble the press all by himself, asks Waldenström. "The MCCS could have contracted huge expenses if it had broken down."<sup>161</sup>

Waldenström's collaborator of long standing at the MCCS Office, J.E. Lundahl says that Waldenström could sometimes be hard. His firmness gave security and stability to the Mission, but he could have shown more consideration in personal relationships.<sup>162</sup> Gustav Mosesson, Director of the Mission School and also very close to Waldenström is of the same opinion. Especially when compared to his predecessor, E.J. Ekman, Waldenström appears to be a person of cold matter-of-factness.<sup>163</sup> The missionaries also found it hard to turn to him in personal matters.<sup>164</sup> They preferred writing to Mission Secretary Sjöholm who was very anxious to remain in constant and personal contact with all of them. They saw him as Waldenström's superior when it came to understanding and dealing with mission problems.<sup>165</sup> It is typical that when the Mission in Eastern Turkestan was about to undergo inspection, the missionaries wanted Sjöholm. Normally Waldenström would have been the first choice.

An important issue in which Waldenström got involved during these years was the missionaries' right to officiate at a wedding. At the synod of 1910 where Waldenström was a delegate, he presented a motion in the matter. He proposed that the Synod should ask the Government that the right to officiate at weddings abroad which at the time was limited to Consular authorities should also apply to other competent Swedes. The Swedish missionaries would then be able to acquire this right. This issue was highly topical for the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan, said Waldenström at the Synod. There had been a request from an official

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<sup>158</sup> Terning, 1956, p. 81.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Waldenström to Högberg, June 26th, 1912.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

<sup>162</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, August 1st, 1917, number 15. Lundahl, 1943, p. 139 ff, 145.

<sup>163</sup> Mosesson, 1954, p. 89.

<sup>164</sup> Terning, 1956, p. 81. "Ekman showed personal and fatherly consideration for everyone. Waldenström was totally matter-of-fact; the problem of the individual did not interest him unless it had repercussions on the 'matter', the 'issue'.

<sup>165</sup> Lundahl, 1943, p. 153, 185. Mosesson, 1954, p. 89 f.

at the Russian Consulate who wanting to marry a Swedish lady, turned to the missionaries asking if they might marry them.<sup>166</sup> Waldenström mentioned that he had turned to the Archbishop with no result. He went on to say, “I wrote to our missionary and said, ‘Marry them, don’t hesitate, don’t worry about such nonsense!’”<sup>167</sup> The Synod rejected Waldenström’s motion. The same fate later on befell a motion in the parliament. At that time Waldenström had left the Parliament, but some other members presented the motion.<sup>168</sup> In 1911 Waldenström once again turned to the Government on the same issue. He points out the absurd situation for the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan. They had to content themselves with an internal wedding ceremony where they professed fidelity to God and to each other in front of a missionary colleague. The “married couple” was forced to break the Swedish law as there was no one to officiate at their wedding.<sup>169</sup>, <sup>170</sup> This time too the request was rejected. Not until 1916 did the missionaries acquire the official right to officiate at weddings.

Another important issue in which Waldenström was wholeheartedly involved with the missionaries was the “Bible dispute” already mentioned above. Waldenström who was himself a Bible translator (*The New Testament with explanations*) could easily understand the linguistic problems. In the struggle led by the missionaries in order to achieve a correct Bible translation he was himself very active. It is highly probably that it was Waldenström who finally managed to make the learned experts among whom was for instance Professor Andreas, to accept the request of the missionaries for a total revision of Avetaranian’s translation.

During the years of foundation, the congregation was next to non-existent. There were hardly any conversions. In the year 1902, after ten years of work, the number of the baptized was only three. One of them, Lasarus, had been baptized already by Avetaranian, during his solitary years before 1894. Lasarus was in the service of the Mission for some years in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. When several missionaries went home and Magnus Bäcklund died, Lasarus together with another Chinese Christian young man were left alone. At that time Lasarus’ relatives turned up. They sold his house and forced him to join his family on a journey to Mecca. He later on settled in Arabia where he died. What happened to his Christian faith is shrouded in mystery.<sup>171</sup>

In the year 1907, 15 years after the foundation of the Mission, there were nine persons baptized, four of whom were Muslims – two in Kashgar and two in Jarkend – and five were Chinese in Hancheng.<sup>172</sup> In his booklet of 1907, Högberg writes about the spiritual results under the heading “Visible Fruit”, and states that five Muslims had been baptized. Törnquist attacks this statement harshly in a letter to Sjöholm,

“I don’t know what to say about the assertion, under the heading ‘visible fruit’ that five Muslims have been baptized to Christ. Surely, it says that one of these has died. Did he die in faith in his Saviour? We cannot know such things, but what we do know, through information, is that he died in Mecca, as a Muslim pilgrim. It is not necessary to say more... Another one of the converts walks around here in the bazaars like someone about whom one is inclined to say: It had been better for the Christian faith and the Christian name if this man had never had that name. So, when this booklet was published, there were also

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<sup>166</sup> It was the secretary of the Russian Consulate, a Presbyterian who in 1910 planned to marry a Swedish lady. He had turned to Albert Andersson, asking him if he could marry them. (Andersson to Waldenström, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1910.)

<sup>167</sup> Johansson, 1931, p. 362 ff.

<sup>168</sup> The *Svenska Morgonbladet*, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1911.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1911.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1912. The internal wedding mentioned by Waldenström in his communication to the Government referred to Högberg marrying Rikard Nyström and Helena Lundahl in the autumn of 1911 (Helena Nyström’s diary, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1911).

<sup>171</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 301 f.

<sup>172</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 494.

the two people baptized last summer, so all in all, there were four people. And what remains of them? The two who were last baptized are excluded for sinful acts of a serious kind. The husband is back in the Mosques, like a true Muslim... This is the crude reality, and the visible fruit...not much above zero.”<sup>173</sup>

The work was however not altogether without results. In the year 1911 Stina Mårtensson for instance writes from Jarkend, “The wife of our school-teacher has been baptized.”<sup>174</sup> And the same year, Albert Andersson informs about his work in Hancheng saying, “Our cook has died. He was the kindest and most honest Chinese I have ever met. He was not baptized but he died with the name of Jesus on his lips.”<sup>175</sup> At the turn of the year 1912/1913, the congregation had 14 members. The number of the missionaries was at that time 24. After 20 years of mission work the missionaries were thus nearly twice the number of the native Christians. The Christians were practically all of them converted Muslims. The small group of Chinese Christians had been dispersed during the Revolution.<sup>176</sup>

People supporting the M CCS back in Sweden were getting impatient. They expected results after so many years. Doubts were transmitted to the head quarters in Stockholm about the sense of continuing this mission work. The Board however took sides with the Mission,

“Some people may have found it superfluous and the decision about its launching may have been considered rash. That is why interest in this branch of our mission work has often been pushed into the background by the work done in the Congo and in Central China and elsewhere. This should however not be the case.”<sup>177</sup>

While voices in Sweden were heard urging for the closing down of the Mission, the missionaries were building the foundation. New mission stations were built in all the places where the Mission was active. In Kashgar, the new mission station was ready to be in use in 1903.<sup>178</sup> The new station came to be situated just outside the town wall in a garden area where the Russian and British Consulates were also situated. A Chinese station was built in 1908 in Hancheng, 12 kilometers outside Kashgar. The Chinese branch of the mission had also started in a place near the Turk station in Kashgar.<sup>179</sup> The Chinese authorities were very disobliging when the Mission asked for land for the station. Finally the Mission was allowed to buy a site that was so bad that “nobody can live here for a long time... A swamp, a marsh with deathly green, dirty water, where grass snakes and frogs were fighting for hegemony among reed the height of a man, mosquitoes and a poisonous stench.”<sup>180</sup> After planning and clearing-up work the place however became liveable and thanks to the high degree of humidity in the soil and to the tropical heat, everything grew very quickly. In Jarkend, a new station was built in 1909. The place of the station had great psychological effect. In order to get to the old buildings, there was only one door leading there. This door opened towards the other houses and the neighbours and opponents of the Mission could easily see who went to the station and then report this to the Mullahs. Therefore many people did not dare go to the Mission unless the hospital was open and only very few people attended the Sunday Services. Practically only beggars came. They had nothing to lose by being seen. Since the new station had been built, anybody could attend without being seen.<sup>181</sup> The fourth and last station was erected in 1912/13 in Jengi-Hessar, on the road between Kashgar and Jarkend, at 110 kilometers from

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<sup>173</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, January 19th, 1908.

<sup>174</sup> Stina Mårtensson to the Board, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1911.

<sup>175</sup> Albert Andersson to the Board, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1911.

<sup>176</sup> M CCS Annual report of 1913 (published in 1914), p. 51, 163

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 1905, p. 18.

<sup>178</sup> Palmaer, 1946, p. 71 f.

<sup>179</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 349.

<sup>180</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 87.

<sup>181</sup> Ahlbert, 1934, p. 49 f.

Kashgar<sup>182</sup>. With the station in Jengi-Hessar the mission field was united into a geographical unit.

During these years, the missionaries had plans of extending the Mission to other places. In 1908, Törnquist made a trip northwards in order to explore whether there were possibilities for Chinese mission. With the exception of the China Inland Missionary, Mr Hunter, who had occasionally visited these areas, there was no Christian Mission there.<sup>183</sup> The plans concerning the extension northwards however came to nothing. A couple of years later there were again new ideas about extension, but this time southwards. Khotan was considered well placed as a mission station. Furthermore Karghalik, just by Jarkend could become an outpost of Jarkend.<sup>184</sup>

No churches were built during the first phase of the new stations. They came later. Worship services were held in small halls during the first years. However, hospitals were built at all three of the Muslim mission stations. It is quite evident that medical care was the priority. And thereby we touch upon the institutionalized Mission that was now founded and which remained predominant for the Mission in this country the whole mission period out. Among the institutions were also Children's Homes, literature work and schools. Medical care was however the most extensive and maybe the most important branch.

In Kashgar, medical mission work received its baptism of fire during the violent riots of the Revolution 1911/12. The work done by the missionaries during that period earned them goodwill for a long time ahead.

Through medical care, the Mission however acquired a kind of imbalance. Back home in Sweden, the Board was worried about the development of the Mission. Sjöholm writes to Raquette, the grand old man of the medical mission,

“You have a lot to do in the hospital. But you will have to solve that problem yourselves. Hilda Nordqvist will be joining you, but she should be doing evangelical work. That must be a priority, even before medical care, for instance.”<sup>185</sup>

This letter caused disappointment in Kashgar. The hospital was undermanned and Hilda Nordqvist was a qualified nurse. The missionaries were irritated by the constant veiled criticism of their work. The Eastern Turkestan Mission was becoming too humanitarian in its work according to Stockholm. In letters, newspaper articles and lectures, the missionaries tried to defend their cause. In a lecture held in 1913, Raquette described the foundation of the medical mission. The missionaries started out helping the sick on a minor scale, but soon things had gone so far that circumstances began to govern the missionaries. He continues,

“And that is how it came about that we were standing there trilling pills, preparing ointments and dressing wounds the whole day long. We often said to each other at that time, ‘How will this end? We came here to preach and teach, and now we have time for nothing else but smear and plaster these poor wretched bodies.’”<sup>186</sup>

Later on in his lecture Raquette quotes the mission doctor David Livingstone. “God had but one Son, and he was sent into the world to be a mission doctor.”

Helping the sick became the most important part of the work. Högberg writes, “...I have never had the courage to wave away a patient, where there was still some kind of hope for his

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<sup>182</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 112.

<sup>183</sup> Törnquist and Albert Andersson to Waldenström, July 25th, 1908.

<sup>184</sup> Oskar Andersson to the Board, May 27th, 1911.

<sup>185</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, March 17th, 1914.

<sup>186</sup> SMT, 1913, p. 85 f.

recovery.”<sup>187</sup> Medical care was not only a means of mission, but it was in itself Mission. Palmberg writes:

“In the face of the several thousand patients who have received relief and help in their sufferings, the great number of blind who can now see and the hundreds of homes where women and children have the mid-wives of the Mission to thank for their lives, this activity acquires its motivation even if it’s purely for humanitarian reasons.”<sup>188</sup>

In 1910 the Englishman P.T. Ehernton visited the country. He writes that nine out of ten persons in the population were affected by some of this country’s abhorrent diseases. And the sick came to the missionaries, he goes on to say, where they were kindly received and got help.<sup>189</sup> And Högberg reports that sick people could travel for 20 days in order to get to the mission hospital.<sup>190</sup> The patients arrived at any time. The hospital was situated just by one of the town gates. The gates were locked from the inside from sunset to sunrise. The missionaries however never had any trouble passing the gates and patients could arrive at any time. It even happened that watchmen left the gates open for the sake of the Mission.<sup>191</sup>

Högberg quotes the case-book for one single day of the hospital at Kashgar:

“The first patient has a complicated fracture. A furious camel has bitten his forearm. A man from Kashgar has put on a bandage but too hard so that gangrene has already begun in the hand. When the bandage is opened we see the wound full of soot and ashes and oozing pus ... the man has a high fever. The second patient has a big contusion on his leg. Then there are patients suffering from fevers, gastric catarrh, rheumatism, heart diseases, syphilis, asthma, cough, goitre, cancer, wounds and skin diseases, eye and ear inflammations, angina and other difficult diseases, until we have reached some thirty patients.”<sup>192</sup>

Of course it meant taking great risks, says Högberg, to try to deal with so complicated cases considering the low degree of medical training of the missionaries. But they had no choice. People could not be left suffering.

The aim and direction chosen for the Mission during the years of foundation came to be decisive for the whole mission era. It is quite true to talk about laying a foundation. And on that foundation the rest was built.

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<sup>187</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 383.

<sup>188</sup> Palmaer, 1942 p. 56.

<sup>189</sup> Ehernton, 1911, p. 150.

<sup>190</sup> Högberg, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>191</sup> Wingate, 1951, p. 13.

<sup>192</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 384 ff.

## **IV. Stabilization 1913 – 1923. From Sjöholm’s Inspection Tour to the First Persecution**

At the beginning of this period, disturbances from the Chinese Revolution had more or less calmed down. Now followed a number of years with relative calm for the Mission during which the whole enterprise settled down and stabilized. One factor contributing to this stabilization was the Sjöholm Inspection tour. During the period, the Eastern Turkestan Conference also got a firmer administrative grip of the situation. Medical care and children’s homes are further developed, but especially the schools and the literary work make good headway during this period. The great masses still seem unaffected, but one by one, people are converted, and the church grows.

Still there are some disturbing elements. From outside, the Mission is affected by the aftermath of World War I, isolating the Swedes totally. The Russian Revolution makes it impossible for the missionaries to travel through Russia. It also drives great crowds of refugees over the border into Eastern Turkestan. Internal conflicts between the missionaries and the numerous “defections” spread discouragement and bitterness and were probably harder to endure than disturbances from outside. The persecution of 1923, which probably had its roots in the widely spread fear within worldwide Islam at that time, and the attempts at a new organization of the MCCA mission work threatened the whole existence of the Mission. The persecution becomes the baptism of fire for the Mission, and it survives. Surely some members are sifted away, but a core of members remains. This small Christian community is the bright spot in the darkness of this period.

### **1. The Inspection of 1913**

The Eastern Turkestan Mission was inspected only on one occasion. Very often the missionaries spoke about the necessity of an inspection. “Especially the Chinese Mission ought to be looked thoroughly into” said Högberg on one occasion.<sup>1</sup>

In 1913 the inspection was carried out by Mission Secretary Sjöholm. When after the inspection, Törnquist writes about Sjöholm’s visit, saying that he did not come as a dignitary asking for obedience,<sup>2</sup> the obvious assumption is that Törnquist had MCCA President Waldenström in mind. Waldenström had also been proposed as inspector.

The Inspector came to a mission field practically void of new Christian congregations, says Törnquist. “No warm, enthusiastic services of reception in the different stations, no grandiose show in any area, not one single baptismal service during the time he was in the field.... We had nothing.”<sup>3</sup> That was how the missionary experienced the situation. It would however turn out that the Inspector had the capacity to see behind the apparently eventless and fruitless surface and under it discover the values and the progress that this Mission was endowed with, in spite of everything.

The four stations were visited and the inspection report has some short commentaries for each of them. In Kashgar the station had a central position. Land that was not taken up by Mission buildings was cultivated and planted with fruit trees. The same thing

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<sup>1</sup> Högberg to the Board, May 17th, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Tomson, 1919, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

applied to Hancheng. This station had up to then been called New Kashgar, but at Sjöholm's visit, it was decided to use the Chinese name of the city, Hancheng. Two days' journey south was Jengi-Hessar which was newly built. Another three days' journey south was Jarkend. Sjöholm remarks that the activity seems to have developed furthest there. The station was however far too big. This applied especially to the hospital, where a third would have been enough. Högberg was assigned to propose necessary changes. The report also speaks about the missionaries' residence. "When I saw the old residence of Kashgar and Jarkend where our missionaries lived for many years, I was surprised that anyone could endure, so bad was this accommodation."

The inspection tour finished with a three day conference in Jengi-Hesar where all missionaries were present. Among the important questions addressed was the proposal for a children's home. One children's home had already been opened in 1910 in Jarkend, but in the new plans there was a scheme for a children's home combined with a model farm. Another important proposal was for a shared publication for the whole mission field. The printing press had just become operational and it was possible to print a newspaper in a large edition. A third urgent matter concerned starting mission work in Khotan. A good friend of the Mission, Sir Aurel Stein, the British photographer, had recommended the place after investigations there. There the Mission would meet more appreciative people to work with than in Kashgar.

The report underlines the limited progress of the Mission. Not more than seven Chinese and as many Muslims had been baptized. And out of them some had already fallen by the wayside.

The inspector further notices the complete confidence in the missionaries from the population. "We have won more than what one could imagine at first. Everywhere... we are met with respect and esteem... When a missionary buys something in the market or in the bazaars, the tradesman normally does not count the money given for the article..." The Mission had increased the general state of welfare for many people. Builders, blacksmiths and other craftsmen had learnt a lot from the missionaries. The social care provided by the Mission for the sick and the poor had inspired the authorities to start their own medical care and relief of the poor.

The medical care provided by the Mission is brought out in the report as being particularly valuable. "There are probably few mission fields where the medical care provided by the Mission is of such great importance as in this country." The literary work is also mentioned. Raquette was unequalled as a linguist. But Oskar Andersson "is about to challenge the supremacy of Raquette as the prime linguist of the Eastern Turkestan Mission." During this inspection tour it was also decided to ask the Mission Board if Andersson could be allowed to study Arabic on his coming furlough.

The report also mentions the tension already at this moment at hand between China and Russia. Russia held a military unit of 1,000 men in Kashgar, and on several occasions war had been imminent. Sweden and the Swedes were however seen by the authorities as loyal friends of China. This did now however prevent the missionaries from having good relations with both the Russian and the British Consulates in Kashgar. "Our missionaries are like one of the family in the home of the British General Consul, Sir George."

In his report, Sjöholm also touches upon the relations between the missionaries. Both the language dispute and the tension between the two branches of the Mission had poisoned the atmosphere between the missionaries for many years. Their relationship

now seemed to be “fairly good”. A settlement had been reached at the Conference of 1912. Everything was now said to be “hidden and forgotten”.<sup>4</sup>

The Inspection provided a new starting point for the Mission. The Mission now became known and accepted in wider circles, not only in Sweden but also in international mission circles. The most important thing about the Inspection may however have been the fact that the missionaries felt encouraged and spurred on. They could now keep on working with a firm purpose. Törnquist most certainly speaks on behalf of all the missionaries when he says that the Inspection and the official inspection report infused “new life into our Mission. After Sjöholm’s visit the Eastern Turkestan Mission rose from having been something of a pauper to being an equal of other Missions in the immense body of the world missions...”<sup>5</sup> Very little came out of the proud declarations of the Conference though.

Gösta Raquette however was critical. He said that Sjöholm was not at all equal to the situation.<sup>6</sup> In his criticism lay personal feelings. In his report, Sjöholm had praised Oskar Andersson’s excellent linguistic talents. This was treading on Raquette’s toes. And worse was to come when back home again Sjöholm wrote in the publication *Missionsförbundet* that Raquette “had completed” the work on a grammar of Kashgar Turkish, started by Magnus Bäcklund. When in a letter to Sjöholm Raquette expresses his indignation at having been deprived of the honour of having written the grammar, Sjöholm answers him by quoting a diary entry from the station in Jarkend on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1906, in which Raquette himself had written that he had “taken up and begun working on the completion of the grammar work launched by Magnus Bäcklund.”<sup>7</sup> This wording is repeated almost literally by Oskar Andersson in the *Ansgarius* of 1916.<sup>8</sup> Raquette did not feel more at ease when he received a letter from Sjöholm in the summer of 1914, where he was told to tend to the accounts at the station of Jarkend in a better way.<sup>9</sup> What with one thing and another, Raquette ceased communicating with Sjöholm. In the summer of 1914 Sjöholm writes to Törnquist concerning Raquette, “In his messages here he is very sparse and he seems to be wanting to avoid writing directly to me.”<sup>10</sup> In a long letter to MCCS President Norberg, Raquette expresses his disappointment at the fact that his grammar in three volumes was partly ascribed to Magnus Bäcklund. Bäcklund elaborated two little booklets, says Raquette, totalizing 100 pages. “All that would cover 30 pages in my grammar, where only the first two volumes make up 172 pages.” And again he accuses Sjöholm of having contributed to spreading this incorrect information. Others had afterwards continued doing so. Raquette seems to have totally forgotten what he wrote in the *Grenljuset* in 1904,

“When the Mission started in the Kashgar area, there were virtually no textbooks or wordbooks to help us in our language studies. We had to get the words and the expressions from people’s mouth.

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<sup>4</sup> Inspection minutes, 1913.

<sup>5</sup> Tomson, 1919. p. 121 f.

<sup>6</sup> Raquette to Lundahl, May 19th, 1920.

<sup>7</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, August 15th, 1920.

<sup>8</sup> The *Ansgarius* 1916, p. 129 f.

<sup>9</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, February 5th, 1914.

<sup>10</sup> Sjöholm to Törnquist. June 16th, 1914.



But now we own a really good grammar and an extensive wordbook, for the most part it is the fruit of Bäcklund's efforts."<sup>11</sup>

## 2. The Eastern Turkestan Conference

The supreme authority of the Mission Field was the Eastern Turkestan Conference. It was placed directly under the MCCS Board and the General Conference in Stockholm. The purpose of the Eastern Turkestan Conference was to present proposals to the Board concerning the activities of the Mission, to place the staff at the different mission stations, to plan the furloughs, etc. Guidelines for the proposing and executive functions of the Conference were given in the "Statutes for the Eastern Turkestan Mission".

The Conference met normally once a year and lasted for some days. All missionaries then came together for consultation and edification. All decisions made by the Conferences were submitted to the MCCS Board. On the other hand, the Board always tried to hear the missionaries' opinions on their own decisions.<sup>12</sup>

The first Conference from which minutes have been preserved was held in Kashgar in 1898. Those present were Mr and Mrs Högberg, Mr and Mrs Raquette and Magnus Bäcklund. Of special interest is the handling by the Conference of a proposal from the Mission Board in Sweden. The proposition wanted the Missions in Caucasus and Eastern Turkestan to merge into one single Conference. Considering the huge distances and what these would mean in the form of travelling time, money and insecurity under current political conditions, the Conference made a statement firmly advising against this merger.<sup>13</sup> Törnquist remarks acidly that the proposition demonstrates the Board's "primitive opinion of Central Asian conditions".<sup>14</sup> Between Kashgar and Tiflis in Caucasasia, there are - as the crow flies - some 2,500 kilometres.

During the first period of the Mission, only the men had the right to vote at the Conferences.<sup>15</sup> Not even all men had the right to vote. Only after one year in the field, was one considered a valid member of the Conference. Already at the Conference of 1898, the women's position had been discussed.<sup>16</sup> It would take another 15 years however before anything definite was decided. That decision was taken during the Sjöholm Inspection tour in 1913. The Conference then decided about universal suffrage.<sup>17</sup> For both sexes however the condition about having first spent one year in the field was still valid.

This new order could however not come into effect until the General Conference had made up its mind. In the spring of 1914 Sjöholm writes in the *Missionsförbundet*, speaking in favour of women's right to vote among the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan. Thereby he wanted to influence the delegates who would soon be gathering for the General Conference.

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<sup>11</sup> Raquette to Norberg, January 18th, 1917. The *Grenljuset*. Volume 16, p 12.

<sup>12</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 527 f.

<sup>13</sup> The Eastern Turkestan Conference minutes of 1898, § 2.

<sup>14</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> The Eastern Turkestan Conference minutes of 1905 § 15.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 1989, § 4.

<sup>17</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 454.

Even if the missionaries in the field agreed to the proposal, there were others, even among missionaries on furlough, who had their objections. Albert Andersson writes to Sjöholm,

“The proposition that women may have the right to vote out there was highly surprising and does not appeal to me. If this is carried out, the future will prove that confusion and unpleasantness will come out of it...”<sup>18</sup>

The proposition was adopted and from 1915 women were considered valid members of the Conference.<sup>19</sup> That year, 18 missionaries entitled to vote were present at the Conference. In Stockholm however, they saw to that the statutes were being adhered to. Apart from the regulation about having to spend one year in the field before having the right to vote, there was another regulation saying that the new missionary also must have passed the first language exam before acquiring the right to vote. On one occasion, there was a remark from Stockholm caused by the Conference minutes from Eastern Turkestan. It appeared from the minutes that a couple of new missionaries had voted although they had not yet passed their first exam. “Statutes must be followed”, writes Lundahl.<sup>20</sup>

As will be seen below these Conferences could be stormy ones. Strong-willed singular personalities met there. The Conferences however gave stability to the work and provided strong leadership.

### **3. The Schools – an Attempt to Reach Young People**

As has already been mentioned above, the first missionaries made attempts at starting schools. The schools however did not meet with sympathy among the population. This was by the way the general attitude at the time. Ahlbert tells about an educated Turk who opened a school in Kashgar in 1915, offering modern education. This school provoked resentment among the orthodox Mullahs. It was declared unclean and its pupils infidels. It did not help that the ideas emanated from Constantinople, “Holy Stambul”.<sup>21</sup> In the 1920s however quite a few young men went abroad for studies.<sup>22</sup>

For the missionaries, Christian school work appeared to be a vital necessity. From the mid 1910s there were schools at the stations.

The pupils of these schools were the future and the hope of the Mission.<sup>23</sup> The number of pupils however fluctuated from time to time. The same instability characterized all schools, the national ones and those of the Mission. The Chinese schools of the Mission also assembled large classes from time to time. That was the case for instance in Kashgar and in Hancheng. One attempt at a Chinese school in Jarkend was however a total failure.<sup>24</sup> From the mid 1910s up to the first years of the 1920s, some hundred pupils each

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<sup>18</sup> Andersson to Sjöholm, May 6th, 1914.

<sup>19</sup> The Eastern Turkestan Conference minutes of 1915.

<sup>20</sup> Lundahl to Nyström, January 30th, 1923.

<sup>21</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 197. Jarring, 1975, p. 8, note.

<sup>22</sup> Wingate, 1929, p. 326 f.

<sup>23</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 316.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Carl Persson, September 23rd, 1972.

year attended Mission schools. In the spring of 1923 the schools had their best time ever, the number of pupils being nearly 200. There were also girls attending school, which was something new in Eastern Turkestan. And even if the girls in the Mission schools did not make up for more than 25 %, this was all the same a great step towards the emancipation of women.

The Mullahs naturally took a stern view of the influx of pupils towards the Mission schools. In Jengi-Hessar, the break-through for the school came about only towards the mid 1920s. The class-rooms filled with pupils. But then one day, there were no pupils. No one at the mission station could understand why. Several days passed and the children remained absent. And then one day the missionaries discovered a bacon rind hanging in a poplar at the gate. No Muslim dared go through the gate as long as the rind was hanging there. Some ingenious Mullah had managed to scare away the children in this way. But the same as day the rind was taken down, the children came back to school.<sup>25</sup> The children could be scared off in the most horrible ways. "The missionaries buy children, butcher them and make medicine out of their eyes, hearts and lungs."<sup>26</sup> And another variant, "First they (the missionaries) wash the children in ice cold water, and then they force them to eat pork meat and fatten them in order to be able to send them to their home country and make medicine out of them."<sup>27</sup> In Kashgar, a Mullah ruined the school work for some time. He managed to stir up the population against the Mission. The parents of the school children were forced to take their children out of school and to assure in writing that they would not be sending them there any longer.<sup>28</sup>

In many cases, the Mission school work was successful. Several of the pupils from the Mission schools were later on employed within the Administration where they were highly esteemed. This was particularly valid for pupils from the Chinese schools.<sup>29</sup> Rachel Wingate says that in the 1920s, south of the Tian Shan Mountains, only the Chinese school of the Mission satisfied the requirements for registering as a middle school.<sup>30</sup> The schools contributed to making the Mission more widely known. While travelling through the northern parts of the province, Carl Persson met with several former pupils from the Mission schools.<sup>31</sup>

In Jarkend the Mission ran a vocational school. For a couple of years some 90 girls and women learnt how to knit and spin. The material was local, but the tools were taken from Sweden. Thus for example there was once a shipment of carding combs from Doretea to Jarkend.<sup>32</sup> The finished products were sold widely. Orders came all the way from Urumchi. The vocational training was generally appreciated by the population. A rich merchant in Jarkend once said, "Hindus and others are happy to buy warm stockings and other items, those who spin and knit them get a job so that they do not have to keep asking me for a loan all the time, as they did before, a loan that they would never pay back."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Mr and Mrs Moen, September 30th, 1972.

<sup>26</sup> Högberg, 191, p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> The *Barnavännen* 1923, number 2, p. 14.

<sup>28</sup> Lundahl, 1916, p. 140.

<sup>29</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Wingate, 1929, p. 325.

<sup>31</sup> Torvik, 1946, p. 68, 72.

<sup>32</sup> Nyrén, 1928, p. 126 f.

<sup>33</sup> Lundahl-Walder, 1938, p. 126 f.

During the Mission era, 11 missionaries with a teacher training were sent out. They mostly worked as school directors, however.<sup>34</sup> From the very beginning, the Mission tried to employ local teachers. During the first years, the Mullahs did not dare being engaged by the Mission, but with time things changed, especially since a few Mullahs were converted to Christianity. At the Chinese school of Hancheng a Chinese Christian teacher was employed from the outset. "He was stern but a father to those he taught" says Törnquist, who also points out how absolutely necessary it was to have a native teacher. No missionary could teach the Chinese language, and from a disciplinary point of view, a native was irreplaceable. If the missionary was forced to exercise the "disciplinary office" it was seen as an offence. However if the Chinese teacher administered reprimands, this was seen as something normal.<sup>35</sup> Hancheng became the central school for the Chinese schools of the other stations. Christian young men having graduated from Hancheng afterwards served as teachers at the other Chinese station schools.<sup>36</sup>

Among the subjects taught was reading, especially for the beginners. After that came arithmetic, spelling, scripture, natural science, geography, music, physical education, drawing and handicraft. At the school of Jarkend the older pupils also studied some Persian and Arabic grammar. In the Muslim schools, the Koran was used. From a missionary point of view, "studying" the Koran was somewhat questionable, but a school without Koran reading was unthinkable.<sup>37</sup> In the Chinese schools the Chinese language had an important place. Apart from the already mentioned subjects, history and English were also taught there.<sup>38</sup> At the Central school of Hancheng an upper primary school was opened in the 1920s with around 20 pupils aged 14 to 22.<sup>39</sup>

A training college for national teachers was a long-felt aspiration. In 1921 the Stockholm Conference decided to establish such an institution for the training of both Turk and Chinese teachers. In connection with this teacher training college there would also be a practical school where the students could study languages, book-keeping, etc. An anonymous "friend of the Mission" had donated 12.000 SEK for the purpose. Land had already been rented and Törnquist had been designated principal. However, it all came to nothing because of the hostile storm wind that blew over the Mission in 1923. And later on it became impossible to rent "even the smallest piece of land".<sup>40</sup> A couple of years later it was however possible to carry out a shorter training course in Jarkend, covering three terms. Nine Turks of both sexes, aged 15 to 18 took part in the course.<sup>41</sup> This course, even though it only took place once came to be of great importance for the Mission. It provided trained teachers for the schools and some of the male participants even started to preach.

#### **4. The Literary Activity Breaking all Barriers**

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<sup>34</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 172 ff.

<sup>35</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 463 f.

<sup>36</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 71.

<sup>37</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 461 f.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 463 f.

<sup>39</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 480.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 481 f.

<sup>41</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 147. M CCS Annual report, 1926, p. 153.

In his book *The Cross over Asia* from the end of the 1940s, Stephen Neill points out that one of the most urgent tasks for the Christian Mission in this part of the world was to give it Christian literature. “Asia is remarkably well equipped with Bible translations”, says Neill, “but in many languages that is all there is”.<sup>42</sup>

The Eastern Turkestan Mission understood this need. In 1912 a literature committee was appointed which was active during the whole Mission era. The committee was made up of three members with the printing director as an ex-officio consultant member. The committee was supposed not only to write books or translate books and pamphlets but also to check what others had written and be accountable to the Conference for all products handed in for printing.<sup>43</sup>

Within the literary work, the missionaries had invaluable help from competent Asians. Oskar Andersson mentions among others Kader Akhond who had already helped Magnus Bäcklund. He was well acquainted with Arabic and Persian and several Turkish dialects.<sup>44</sup>

The literary work would not have reached any great extent without the printing office. There was no other printing office where the missionaries could have their products printed.

Already in 1893 the General Conference in Stockholm had decided about a printing press for Eastern Turkestan. Nothing was however done in this matter, and in 1897, Högberg wrote an impatient letter reminding the Board about this decision.<sup>45</sup> It was not until 1910 however that the Mission Board seriously took up the question anew.<sup>46</sup> Now the decision was implemented.

Transporting such a heavy thing as a printing press across the high mountains was a risky undertaking. As far as possible the different pieces of the press were shared among the different pack animals. All went well apart from a shaft of rotation that was broken, but that could be fixed by the missionaries on arrival.<sup>47</sup> In 1912 the mission printing office was mounted and could start working. It was made up of a high-speed press, a job-printing press, a cutting machine and a stitching-machine and a fairly complete material of prints, both Turkish and Latin characters.<sup>48</sup> The Latin characters made possible the printing of some minor European products. Some Russian characters were also purchased in order to be able to serve the Russian Consulate.<sup>49</sup> When Chinese characters were needed they were cut out in wood.<sup>50</sup> The enterprise also comprised a bookbindery.

The Mission printed and published some secular literature. Already before the coming of the printing press the missionaries had published some products. Literature for their own training for instance had to be produced. As it has already been mentioned above

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<sup>42</sup> Neill, 1950, p.192.

<sup>43</sup> Andersson, 1928, p. 472 f. In 1917 the committee was made up of Högberg, Oskar Andersson and Raquette. When the former two had gone home to Sweden “the literature committee is synonymous with Raquette” says Törnquist to Norberg acidly in a letter to Norberg from December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

<sup>44</sup> The *Ansgarius* of 1916, p. 134 f.

<sup>45</sup> Högberg to Ekman, May 17th, 1897.

<sup>46</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, April 14th, 1910.

<sup>47</sup> Nyrén, 1928, p. 385.

<sup>48</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p., 473. The Turkish types were delivered from Constantinople (Nyrén, 1928, p. 426).

<sup>49</sup> Bohlin to Sjöholm, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1913.

<sup>50</sup> Nyrén, 1928, p. 386.

Magnus Bäcklund started this work. During his short time in the field he laid the foundations for a grammar book. Furthermore he collected 6,000 words for a word book.

Gösta Raquette continued and extended Bäcklund's works. He published the Eastern Turkish grammar in an English edition, *Eastern Turki Grammar*. Its three volumes were printed by the Oriental Seminar in Berlin in 1912-1914. The same author also wrote *Eastern Turkestan Dialect of Yarkend and Kashgar*. This work was printed and published by the Finnish scientific society called *Société Finno-Ougrienne*.<sup>51</sup> And in 1927 Raquette finally published the wordbook *English-Turki Dictionary*.<sup>52</sup>

An important task for the printing office was the production of text-books which had hitherto been written by hand. Raquette had compiled a spelling-book and Oskar Andersson had written an arithmetic book and a geography book. Some years into the 20th century the Mission acquired a cyclostyle machine and could thus start duplicating handwritten material.<sup>53</sup>

The printing press was revolutionary for the literary activity. Handwritten school-books were revised and printed at haste. New subjects were added.

What was especially appreciated by the population was Raquette's compilation and edition of an Eastern Turkestan Calendar. The publishing started in 1909, being the year 1327 according to the Islamic calendar. After the opening of the printing office this calendar became widely spread. The parallel lines contained both the Christian calendar and the Muslim one. For each day there was also a special Bible passage. When Raquette left the mission field at the beginning of the 1920s, the calendar edition was taken over by Ahlbert, Hermansson and Roberntz.<sup>54</sup> Gunnar Jarring who was interested in the activity of the mission printing office mentions that a number of pamphlets on practical matters were also printed. Among other things there was a booklet with advice how to act when frost-bitten.<sup>55</sup>

Some more extensive works were translated by the missionaries, printed and published in Kashgar. Among these publications were *Quo vadis* by Henryk Sienkiewicz and *In the Temple* (a part of the *Legends of Christ*) by Selma Lagerlöf. Jarring mentioned these editions in a lecture for linguists in Moscow in 1970 pointing out that these publications were now bibliographical rarities.<sup>56</sup> After the translation of *In the Temple*, Selma Lagerlöf wrote to Ahlbert, saying, "Hereby I want to express my thankfulness for the remarkable drafts of translation that I keep in my collection of valuables. Yours, thankfully, Selma Lagerlöf."<sup>57</sup>

Within the religious literary production, the Bible translation naturally occupied the first place. This matter is however dealt with in another part of this book. The production of other religious publications started long before the printing press was installed. Raquette, Bäcklund and Högberg wrote different Scripture manuals.

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<sup>51</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 488ff

<sup>52</sup> Westin, 1937, p. 898.

<sup>53</sup> Lundahl, 1917, p. 488.

<sup>54</sup> Westin, 1937, p. 898. The MCCS Annual Report of 1908 (published in 1909) Sjöholm to Raquette, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1909.

<sup>55</sup> Jarring in the *Svensk Veckotidning* 1975, January 1st and conversation with Jarring. Jarring intends to publish shortly a complete bibliography on everything that was printed at the mission printing office.

<sup>56</sup> Jarring, 1970.

<sup>57</sup> Letter kept in the MCCS Archives, Tegnérgatan 8, Stockholm. The *Vinterny* of 1972. Eastern Turkestan minutes 1930. (The letter found in a litter bin in the autumn of 1972 by archivist R. Widman. Not dated.)

With the establishment of the printing office tract spreading brought immense possibilities. Already at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mission in 1917, the printing of tracts had reached an edition of 30,000 copies.<sup>58</sup> Among others, the China Inland missionary Hunter visited the Swedish missionaries on several occasions and always received a collection of tracts.<sup>59</sup>

The printing press seemed to break all barriers for the literature mission. Two problems remained however. One was that many people could not read. This problem was often solved by a literate person reading aloud to the others. The other problem was of course the fact that many people did not want to have anything to do with the literature from the Mission. People sometimes tore up or burnt Bible portions and tracts. In order to prevent this, the missionaries seldom gave away their publications for nothing. As a rule, people had to buy them. The article then, hopefully, was of greater value and was not destroyed.

The hymnal was one of the most important productions of the printing office. The first songs were composed or translated by Bäcklund. In the first years, handwritten song-books were used. Högberg also made early attempts at translating songs, not always successfully though. Once he happened to translate “Prince of Peace” by “Bald Prince”. In yet another song he tried to express the delight of “being alone with the Lord”, but the choice of words led the thoughts to the place where one goes in order to relieve oneself.<sup>60</sup>

In 1913 a hymnal of 33 songs could be printed.<sup>61</sup> This hymnal was an excellent asset in the mission work. People liked singing in the worship services. In the Mosques there was no singing. The hymnal also met another need: it served as a text-book for literacy training. And here, just like in other publications, the missionaries attempted to avoid strange words and phrases and to write as pure a Turkish as possible.

## 5. The Church is Taking Roots

The Church is taking roots and grows during these years. This is the bright spot amidst all the sad things during this period. But the growth is slow, too slow.

The statistics however show a calm and stable development. Reports from some years are missing which makes the survey below incomplete. The trend is however clear.

Year	Memb./Muslims Chinese	Native coll.	Schools	Pupils M F	Missionaries
1913	14 / 7 7	5	-	- - -	24
1916- 17	21 / - -	6	3	100	25
1922	50 / 39 11	21	6	183 162 21	28
1923	70* / 59 11	24	6	186 148 38	30

\*Apart from Kashgar, where the Church had been uprooted in the summer and autumn of 1923.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 202.

<sup>59</sup> Cable-French, 1948, p. 46.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Roberntz, April 16th, 1973. In the MCCS hymnal “Sånger och Psalmer”, number 716 is composed by Högberg. He wrote this hymn in Persia 1882.

<sup>61</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 471.

<sup>62</sup> The MCCS Annual Reports.

In 1912 the Chinese Mission was shattered. Bohlin writes, “The small crowd of Chinese has been dispersed.”<sup>63</sup> What is remarkable is that in 1913, the Chinese congregation had already 7 members. The year 1917 was a year of anniversary; 25 years had passed since the beginning of the mission work. At the beginning of the anniversary year, the Church had 21 members. And the number of missionaries was 25. “Not even one single person for each missionary, a frighteningly low figure if it were to characterize the spiritual result of the numerous laborious years.”<sup>64</sup> At the turn of the year 1922/23, the number of members had reached 50. Some of these are the ones who were imprisoned or who fled during the persecutions in the summer of 1923, described below.

There were 21 native co-workers in 1922. This must be considered a surprisingly high figure as the Church itself had only 50 members. As a matter of fact, the Christians were so despised by the population on the whole that they did not even get a job in the community. The Mission had to provide many of them with jobs at the mission stations.

The table above shows a favourable development within the school work. In 1922 six schools were operational, both Muslim and Chinese ones, teaching altogether 183 pupils. The situation in 1923 was still a bit better. The number of schools was the same, six, but the number of pupils had risen to 186. What is remarkable here is the presence of quite a few girls. It was found surprising in this Muslim country that the Mission considered it worthwhile to teach girls.

Before becoming a member of the church, one had to pass through teaching and baptism. When Sjöholm inspected the field in 1913, some practical questions concerning the baptism were taken up. There was as yet no prescribed baptismal practice. Even though the number of baptized at that time was very small, different baptismal practices had been implemented, and both children and adults had been baptized. It was decided to await the opinion of the M CCS Board, which was given the year after,

“In Central China, the missionaries have agreed upon using only pouring of water on the head of the person, and also on baptising the children of the Christians. In Congo, however, neighbouring with two Baptist missions, the missionaries have decided to opt for their baptismal practice and not to baptize the children of those converted. The Board, on its part, would of course have liked the Eastern Turkestan Mission to follow the same practice as the one used in Central China, but leaves it to the missionaries themselves to handle this question at their Conference and come to a common decision in this important matter.”<sup>65</sup>

After this declaration from the Board, the pouring of water became the rule for baptism. However, the children of the Christians were not baptized. Raquette baptized some children during the first years of the Mission, but these cases of child baptism came to serve as a terrible warning for the Mission. When the children grew up, they made a pilgrimage to Mecca, which was at variance with the meaning of the Christian baptism. Later on child blessing became the normal ritual. The missionaries themselves even refrained from baptizing their own children out of consideration to the natives.<sup>66</sup> Exceptionally some adults were baptized by immersion. At the station of Jarkend, there

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid. 1913, p. 163.

<sup>64</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 112.

<sup>65</sup> Inspection minutes 1913. Board minutes February 1st -2<sup>nd</sup>, 1914. Interviews with the missionaries.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Roberntz, April 16th, 1973. In 1915, for example the child of the Nyström couple, Astrid, was presented for blessing (Fritzson 1968/69 p. 22).



was a baptism grave, which was however rarely used for several reasons, one being that there was always a shortage of water.<sup>67</sup>

Normally, baptisms took place individually at the different stations, but in the spring of 1923 there was a great baptism service in Kashgar where 13 Turks were baptized. Another 50 were being taught in baptism classes in order to be taken up into the congregation later on.<sup>68</sup> That is when the persecution started spoiling the work for a long time ahead. This will be taken up later on.

## 6. The First World War – Seen from a Distance

China kept out of World War I for a long time. After pressure from the US, Peking however declared war on Germany and Austria in August 1917. China sent no troops however to the fronts. Its contribution was mainly to put manpower at the disposal of the allied war industry, especially in France and in Russia. At the Peace Conference in Paris, China was rewarded for its contribution by five years postponement of payment of damages after the Boxer Uprising. China was at that time divided into two nations: one government ruling northern China from Peking and another one, seated in Kanton, ruling southern China. The leader of the Kanton government was Sun Yat-sen who had now returned from his exile. The two governments were represented at the Paris Conference.<sup>69</sup>

In Eastern Turkestan, there were hardly any political repercussions of the War. In Sweden, the Board worried though. In October 1914, Sjöholm writes to Raquette, “What will happen in Eastern Turkestan is difficult to foresee, especially as the Muslims have declared Holy War.”<sup>70</sup> And a few months later he says to Törnquist that the mission field was in the risk zone as there now was a war going on between Russia and Turkey.<sup>71</sup>

A certain unrest was also felt in the mission field. Palmberg writes in 1915 from Hancheng to the Board that the school has been closed, that worship services had low attendance and that the Mission was under great pressure in general. Medical care was carried on however. The War gave the Muslims one more reason to despise the Christians, he says. “How can people with your religion hate each other so blindly?” At the same time, Turkey’s chances in the war were built up out of all proportion by the population. If the Sultan joined the war, he would annihilate the other armies in one single blow.<sup>72</sup> In December 1916, Palmberg writes a new letter to the Board about the situation in the mission field. He says that at the beginning of the war, people thought that the almighty Sultan would soon conquer the whole world. “They have now been soundly and bitterly persuaded that they are not the masters of the world.”<sup>73</sup> In the autumn of

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Arell, November 27th, 1973. “In Kashgar, the Christians were baptized by doing the sign of the Cross.” (Wingate 1951 p. 14).

<sup>68</sup> Högberg, 1915, p. 48 ff. Palmaer, 1942, p. 120.

<sup>69</sup> Carrinton-Goodrich-Mogård, 1968, p. 236. Henrikson, 1967, p. 313 ff. In 1922, Japan returned the former German territories to China.

<sup>70</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1914.

<sup>71</sup> Sjöholm to Törnquist, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1915. Turkey nominally entered the war in the autumn of 1915. In October 1917 there was a battle between Turkey and Russia. Turkey had to surrender a large territory to Russia in connection with the Peace treaty.

<sup>72</sup> Palmberg to the Board, January 10th, 1915.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, December 23rd, 1916.

1917, Ahlbert writes about the same thing. The war has made it clear to many, he says, that the Islamic world is not necessarily the centre of Universe.<sup>74</sup>

Relations with the outer world were almost totally cut off during the war. Letters and shipments took years to arrive, if they arrived at all. One shipment for example got stuck in Russia and reached Kashgar after two years.<sup>75</sup> And a letter written by Raquette to the Board took three and a half years before arriving in Stockholm.<sup>76</sup>

During the war, journeys to and from the mission field were impossible. The road through Russia was closed. The only one of the missionaries who managed to get through Russia out to the field during the war was Hanna Andersson (married in 1929 to G. Raquette). "The Russians were very polite and helpful", she says.<sup>77</sup> When the war was over, new missionaries arrived. Vendla Schönning (later on married to David Gustafsson), Oskar Hermansson and Carl Persson arrived in 1920. And the following year Elin Järner, Judith Svensson (later on Mrs John Andersson) and Georg Roberntz arrived. Sigrid Larsson (later on married to the British medical doctor Selvey) and John Andersson came in 1923.<sup>78</sup>

Furloughs were not possible during the war either. From Kashgar, Törnquist writes in the summer of 1918 saying that quite a few missionaries preparing to go home were stuck there, awaiting a chance to go home.<sup>79</sup>

The war put the Mission in an economical crisis. Gradually the situation deteriorated. In 1916 Palmberg complains about the fact that the local currency, in relation to the Russian Rouble had fallen to a third of its value.<sup>80</sup> The following year, inflation had continued to devalue the currency to the extent that it was now only a twelfth of its normal value.<sup>81</sup> And in the same year, Törnquist writes about the crisis. The quarterly salaries of the missionaries had surely arrived but the missionaries had little use of the money coming via Russia. "If the money cannot be sent some other way, for example via the China Mission I fear that we will soon be forced to stop all activity and to appeal to the Swedish authorities in China for our own livelihood."<sup>82</sup> After this cry of distress money was being sent via China, and the economical pressure was somewhat eased.

The MCCS in Sweden went through a difficult economical crisis in the 1920s. Hopes were nourished that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1928 would solve the crisis. The jubilee collection did not however yield what was hoped for, and the economical problems persisted.

The mission field was politically relatively untouched by the war, although it was squeezed in between the allies China, Russian and India on one hand and Germany-oriented Afghanistan on the other. The neutrality of the missionaries was however questioned. Lars-Erik Nyman maintains that the Swedes were strongly pro-German during the war. He bases this statement on reports from the British Consul General in Kashgar. After the war the missionaries changed their standpoint quickly, says Nyman,

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<sup>74</sup> Ahlbert to the Board, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

<sup>75</sup> Lundahl to Ahlbert, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>76</sup> Lundahl to Raquette, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1920.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Hanna Raquette.

<sup>78</sup> Palmaer, 1938, p. 172.

<sup>79</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, July 1<sup>st</sup>., 1918.

<sup>80</sup> Palmberg to the Board, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1916.

<sup>81</sup> Ahlbert to the Board, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

<sup>82</sup> Törnquist to the Board, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

and sided wholeheartedly with the British.<sup>83</sup> There was nothing surprising in the fact that the missionaries were pro-German. At the time it was the Russians that were considered the great threat for the Mission. Besides the population in Sweden was to a great extent pro-German.<sup>84</sup>

The missionaries only just avoided a tricky situation caused by a German agent who came to Eastern Turkestan. His name was Otto von Hentig, and on his government's order he had gone to Afghanistan, apparently to make that country join the war on Germany's side. On his return journey he chose to travel through China, and ended up in Eastern Turkestan. He spent the summer of 1916 in Jarkend where he was conspiring with the Afghans present in the town. Rumours went around that he was even preparing a German consulate in Kashgar. Popular imagination also had it that his suitcases were filled with explosives. People also thought that by telegraphing Berlin he could make several hundred horsemen come down from the mountains.<sup>85</sup>

When later on Hentig came to Kashgar he was arrested by the Chinese authorities. He was admitted certain freedom of movement while awaiting the trial. Then he came close to asking for asylum at the Swedish mission station. He had already negotiated with Törnquist, who was considered to be pro-German.<sup>86</sup> The Military Governor seized him and put him on trial. The Governor had Russian sympathies and intended to have Hentig executed. But then, says Hentig himself, "Fate sent the missionary and his wife. In the presence of such an influential person, whose voice could not be brought to silence, the whole execution plan had to be dropped."<sup>87</sup> Hannes Sköld, who writes about Hentig in the *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, supposes that it was Raquette who came as an angel to the rescue.<sup>88</sup> Hentig himself says it was Törnquist.<sup>89</sup> Hentig was now released and was allowed to continue on his way to Central China. For the help given to Hentig by the missionaries the German government later showed their appreciation by presenting Nyström in Jarkend with the Iron Cross.<sup>90</sup> It is highly probable that Törnquist also received the same order.

The British Consul General of Kashgar, Macartney, thought that he could detect pro-German tendencies among other missionaries too. When Hentig later on dwelled in Peking he wrote letters to the missionaries in Jarkend and via them he tried to get through messages to the Afghans in the town and from there further on to Afghanistan. Macartney found out about these letters in Urumchi where they were censured. He especially suspected Arell of having conveyed material to the Afghans.<sup>91</sup>

## **7. The Russian Revolution had Far-Reaching Consequences for the Mission**

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<sup>83</sup> Nyman, 1977, p.54.

<sup>84</sup> Conversation with Jarring in February, 1977.

<sup>85</sup> Mihi, 1919, p. 155.

<sup>86</sup> Skrine-Nightingale, 1973, p. 248 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Hentig, 1918, p. 176.

<sup>88</sup> The *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, July 16th, 1923.

<sup>89</sup> Hentig, 1962, p. 179. Mihi, 1919, p. 158.

<sup>90</sup> Nyström to Palmaer, February, 1931.

<sup>91</sup> Skrine-Nightingale, 1973, p. 259.

Crowds of refugees took shelter in the province. The stream of refugees started already in 1916 when the Russians living near the Chinese border started a rebellion. Around 30,000 Russians crossed the border and came to Sinkiang at that time.<sup>92</sup> During the year of the Revolution, the crowd of refugees continued coming, among others 30,000 to 40,000 armed soldiers.<sup>93</sup> The soldiers did not come as conquerors, says *Time* reporter, Peter Fleming, but as typhoid-infected relics of the disintegrating “White” armies. Many of the “White Russians” then continued into China, while others formed colonies in Eastern Turkestan. During the Revolution of the 1930s, some of these colonists fled again, this time away from the “Red ones” in Eastern Turkestan. Those who remained had to “change colours”.<sup>94</sup>

The Russian General Consulate in Kashgar was forced to close. The Russian Consul General at the time was Mestchersky. He fled to Europe.<sup>95</sup> In 1924, the new Soviet regime was allowed to re-open the Consulate in Kashgar. It was when the Soviet Union acquired Consular status in the province that many refugees felt threatened and left. The Mission could give temporary relief to some of them.<sup>96</sup>

One of those who fled out of the country when the Soviet Consulate in Kashgar was re-opened in 1924 was P.S. Nazaroff. In a couple of books he has written about his meeting with the Swedish Mission. In Jarkend for example he made a week-long stay during his flight to India during which he was the guest of the missionary couple Nyström. Those were peaceful days he says, and the missionaries received him with great kindness. When Nazaroff was about to continue his journey, Nyström organized a farewell service and asked upon him the benediction of the Almighty for the precarious trip that lay ahead of him.<sup>97</sup>

The Russian Revolution grew to have an impact on the journeys of the missionaries. There were three routes leading to and from the mission field. One went through Central China. This one was too expensive and took too much time and was therefore never used by the missionaries.

The best route was through Russia. After the Communist takeover this route was normally closed. This affected particularly missionaries travelling to the mission field. Naturally enough, atheist Soviet Union had no interest in helping Christian missionaries wanting to spread their doctrine. However exceptions were made, but very rarely. Also Muslims wanting to travel via Russia to Mecca were stopped by Soviet authorities.<sup>98</sup>

The journey from Sweden through Russia went by railway via Moscow to Tashkent in West Turkestan. From there, there were 350 kilometres to be covered in a cart without springs to Osh. The remaining 300-350 kilometres down to Kashgar were made on horseback in a caravan. Later on the railway track was extended to Andidjan, a place

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<sup>92</sup> Hayit, 1956, p. 29. Yang, 1961, p. 305 f.

<sup>93</sup> Lattimore, 1950, p. 61.

<sup>94</sup> Fleming, 1936, p. 270 (Combined edition in 1948).

<sup>95</sup> Skrine-Nightingale, 1973, p. 258 f note. In 1930, Sir George Macartney, at the time residing in England, heard from him. The family was then living in Paris under hard conditions. Mestcheresky worked as a caretaker and his wife as a charwoman. Macartney sent money to him. (Skrine-Nightingale, 1973, p. 258 f note).

<sup>96</sup> Lundahl, 1943, p. 251.

<sup>97</sup> Nazaroff, 1935, p. 11 f., 129. 137. Nazaroff's Russian manuscript was translated in 1934 into English by Malcolm Burr and was published the year after.

<sup>98</sup> Maillart, 1940, p. 295 f.

situated only a day's walk from Osh. And a couple of years later on yet, the railway track reached Osh.

The journey through Russia was considered comparatively easy, even though the trip over the high mountains was very trying. Sjöholm, travelling here in 1913, says,

“When travelling this road for the first time, one starts wondering what driving force or interest has brought us Swedes along such a difficult road to such a distant and isolated part of the world in order to start a permanent activity... One is lost in admiration for these pioneers.”<sup>99</sup>

After 1917, the missionaries had no possibility but to make the three-month-trip via India. Apart from the fact that this route took as many months as the one via Russia took weeks, it was much more expensive. There were two routes to choose from across the high mountains. One easterly route from Jarkend via Karakorum and the Sassar pass to Leh in Laddak and on to Srinagar. And another westerly one from Kashgar via the Mintaka pass and Gilgit down to Srinagar.

The easterly route via Leh was the one most commonly used. It was considered less complicated even though it was both more deserted and longer. The route via Leh was the trade route passing through the highest altitude in the world, says Sir Clemont Skrine. He travelled there in the first part of the 1920s, when he was British Consul General in Kashgar.<sup>100</sup> This route passes through five high passes, all of them more than 4,900 meters above sea level. The caravan animals succumbed in great numbers. In her account of her journey along this route, Eleanor Lattimore relates about how some 40 percent of the beasts of burden died.<sup>101</sup> Nils Ambolt, also travelling here, describes how, in order to make the beasts survive the thin air, the caravan men ran the handle of their whips into the nostrils of the beasts making the blood spurt.<sup>102</sup> Sven Hedin calls the route via Karakorum “Via Dolorosa”. He says, “It is not without reason that it has been marked in red on the map – in reality, it is marked with blood”.<sup>103</sup> On one occasion, a dam construction gave way along the Karakorum route, just as a large group of Muslim passed by on their way to Mecca. Many of them were washed away by the water masses and the rest were forced to go back to Eastern Turkestan.<sup>104</sup> Nazaroff, the Russian, says that he met a group of Swedish missionaries who had camped at the Sassar Pass. He remarks that their caravan consisted of three men and four women and was a model of organisation and perfect equipment. “How charmed I was by their kindness and hospitality.”<sup>105</sup>

G.A.Arell travelled home by this route in 1921. Because of the war he had been isolated in the mission field for 10 years. Accompanying him on his way back were his wife and their two small children. Arell relates how, during the hard trip over the

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<sup>99</sup> From the Inspection Minutes of 1913. Lundahl, 1916, p. 120. The English traveller David Fraser met Albert Andersson in Osh in 1906. Andersson had been travelling from Kashgar in order to meet two women missionaries coming from Sweden. Andersson told him that it could be somewhat difficult to have women among all the men in the hostels. But it was even worse on one occasion in China, added Andersson. At that time, he had escorted nine ladies. When Fraser heard this he exclaimed, “Who would not like to be a missionary!” (Fraser, 1907, p. 313.)

<sup>100</sup> Skrine, 1926, p. 4.

<sup>101</sup> Lattimore, 1927, p. 233 ff.

<sup>102</sup> Ambolt, 1935, p.144 ff.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. 143.

<sup>104</sup> Cable, 1948, p.83.

<sup>105</sup> Nazaroff, 1935, p. 208.

mountains, the children “lived” each in a wooden box, strapped on to a horse. In those boxes the children could sit, lie down, stand up and talk to one another. The route at times went across glaciers where Arell had to carry the children, one by one, for long distances.<sup>106</sup> At the Sassar pass, the family very nearly succumbed in the snow and the cold. The caravan men had by then turned back home, leaving the family to their fate. All alone they very nearly froze to death in the cold and the dark of the night. The following morning, they managed to walk to a camp place where they could rest some time before continuing their journey.<sup>107</sup>

On some occasions the missionaries were forced to go home during a season when the route via Leh was impracticable. They then had to take the westerly route from Kashgar via Pamir and Gilgit. This route was shorter, but it was much more difficult. Trained caravan men could however make their way here at nearly any time of the year. The route had been built for communications between Britain’s two spheres of interest here: India and Kashgar.<sup>108</sup>

From Kashgar the route led into the mountains of Pamir with among other passes the Muztagh pass at nearly 5.000 metres above the sea. The top of the mountain rises some 6.400 metres in its breathtaking might, says Sir Aurel Stein.<sup>109</sup>

In the year 1920, a whole group of missionaries travelled by this route. The leader of the party was Gottfrid Palmberg. In the group there were also several women and toddlers. Also present in this group was the engineer John Witt and his family.<sup>110</sup> Earlier, no European woman had travelled along this road. The British Consul of Kashgar called the whole enterprise “an absurd jeopardy”. Palmberg describes the journey in the book *Över Pamir och Himalaja med östturkestanmissionärer* (= Across Pamir and Himalaya with Eastern Turkestan Missionaries) (Stockholm, 1924). He relates how the situation several times was very critical. For example, the women were already exhausted at the outset, having worked for 8 to 10 years in the field. Among the horrors of the journey, there was the fact that it was nearly impossible to dry the children’s diapers in the terrible cold.<sup>111</sup> After 42 days the group had passed through the mountainous area and after another 45 days they were home in Sweden.

The year after, John Törnquist travelled this road all alone after 10 years in the field. When he came to the Mintaka pass, there were several caravans there, waiting for better weather. The caravan men from Kashgar refused to accompany him any longer. He finally managed to get some local porters, and in the company of Afghan tradesmen he continued across the pass. The path he walked on went “along vertical mountain sides, on tiny shelves made of poles or on flat rocks, across glaciers where bottom-less crevasses gaped at me...”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Arell, October 27th, 1973. Svea Egefors to Hultvall, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1977.

<sup>107</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 50.

<sup>108</sup> Teichman, 1937, p. 155 f.

<sup>109</sup> Stein, 1933, p. 297.

<sup>110</sup> Palmberg to Lundahl, January 1st, 1918. John Witt was a Swedish engineer, son of missionary Witt in Zululand where the Church of Sweden had mission work. Mr Witt had moved with his family from Russia to Kashgar in order to become counsellor at the establishment of industries like a match factory, cotton manufacturing, soap making, spinning mills, etc. There were also plans of building an electricity plant in Jarkend, where the industries were to be established.

<sup>111</sup> Palmberg, 1924, p.10.

<sup>112</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 45 f., 1928, p. 28.

## 8. Severe Blood Letting in the Missionary Group

During this period, 13 missionaries left the mission field. None of them had reached the age of retirement. From the 1920s the mission work is now in other hands. The pioneers have all left, in many cases tired and discouraged. Some of them went home with broken health.

Mr and Mrs Albert Andersson left the field for good already in 1911. Mia Mobäck went home in 1915. Towards the end of the year 1914 she was affected by a severe depression and could not continue her work at the mission station. She withdrew to the British Consulate where she stayed until her journey back home, in the summer of 1915.<sup>113</sup>

When Oskar Andersson left the mission field in 1915<sup>114</sup>, he was a respected linguist.<sup>115</sup> Among other things, he had translated some of the Old Testament books into Turkish. On arriving in Sweden he was on the sick-list for some time and then he was employed by *Bolinders verkstäder* (= Bolinder factory) in Eskilstuna. In the autumn of 1917, Törnquist wrote to the Mission Head Quarters in Stockholm wondering if Andersson could not come back to the mission field again.<sup>116</sup> In January, 1919, he wrote directly to Andersson. During the war it had been impossible to reach the field, he says, but now it was time for Andersson to come back to the ministry. "I have not been able to accept the idea that you have left us... We need you out here."<sup>117</sup> In the spring of 1919, Andersson turned to the Head Quarters offering his services in the mission field.<sup>118</sup> Upon hearing about this, Högberg wrote a letter to the MCCS Chairman Sven Bengtsson, presenting a highly critical view of Andersson's possible return to the mission field.<sup>119</sup> Bengtsson too was decidedly against the idea of Andersson going back to the mission field, and thus Andersson never came back.<sup>120</sup>

In 1916, Mr and Mrs L.E. Högberg left the mission field for good. The Högbergs had by then worked in Eastern Turkestan for 22 years and when they returned to Sweden they were tired and disappointed. The years in the field had been filled with adversities. Just before leaving, Mrs Högberg writes,

"... Having lived in a Muslim country for so many years, and having tried all this time to witness to the Lord and work for him, and having seen very limited result, ones mind is so burdened that one has the feeling one cannot go on. My conscience forbids me to paint the circumstances in a better light than what is really the truth, in order to win the sympathy and favour of the "mission friends" back home in Sweden."<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Mia Mobäck to Sjöholm, June 10th, 1914. Sjöholm to Törnquist, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1915.

<sup>114</sup> Inspection minutes, 1913.

<sup>115</sup> Högberg to Bengtsson, January 8th, 1920. Högberg to Raquette, December 30th, 1918.

<sup>116</sup> Törnquist to Norberg, December 12th, 1917.

<sup>117</sup> Törnquist to Oskar Andersson, January 29th, 1919.

<sup>118</sup> Oskar Andersson to Lundahl, April 22nd, 1919.

<sup>119</sup> Högberg to Bengtsson, January, 8th, 1920.

<sup>120</sup> Sigrid Högberg to G. and E. Raquette, Midsummer Day, 1920.

<sup>121</sup> Sigrid Högberg to Sjöholm, January 17th, 1916.

The Högberg couple got their financial support during all the years in the mission field from “mission friends” in Gotland.

Adolf Bohlin arrived in the mission field, shortly after the printing press in 1912. Before his departure he had gone through typographical training, and in Kashgar he was responsible for the printing for many years.<sup>122</sup> He was a skilled craftsman, but towards the end of the 1910s he incurred criticism from his missionary colleagues for having mismanaged his work.<sup>123</sup> He admitted his injudicious behaviour and left the mission field. Later on he settled with a brother in America.<sup>124</sup>

In 1920, Hilda Nordqvist and Ellen Törnquist went home definitely. They were both nurses. Hilda Norqvist had been working in Kashgar and Mrs Törnquist in Hancheng. They both went home with the group following the route across Mintaka. Miss Nordqvist had poor lungs and was about to give up several times during the trying journey. Her health was broken down totally during the journey, and she could never go back to the mission field.<sup>125</sup> The numerous years in the mission field and the atrocities of the journey back home had also broken down Hanna Arell in 1921. She was obliged to have hospital care and could never return to the field.<sup>126</sup>

When Mr and Mrs Gösta Raquette went home to Sweden in 1921 they had been working in Eastern Turkestan for 25 years. During this period, Gösta Raquette had made a pioneering and lasting work within medical care and linguistics. Within this latter field he had produced such well documented work that he was given an associate professorship in Turkish linguistics at the University of Lund. One of the advocates was the associate professor Hannes Sköld, stating in 1923 that “Raquette’s position within Turkology is outstanding”.<sup>127</sup> In 1937, Raquette was promoted Honorary Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Lund. Moreover he was a member of the Society of Science of Lund and of the Finnish-Uigur society of Helsinki. K.A. Adrup puts it in a disrespectful way saying about Raquette that “he had converted the pagan dogs of Eastern Turkestan, learning the language as a result.”<sup>128</sup>

Lovisa Engvall broke with the Mission already in 1913. She remained in the country however, working in the northern part of the province as a missionary and as a nurse in private practice. She continued like this up to the middle of the 1930s when she was reunited with the Mission in Kashgar, shortly before her journey back home.

She had arrived in Eastern Turkestan at the turn of the year 1900/1901. Her troubles started already after a few years. She then turned to her brother C.J. Engvall, the first MCCS missionary to the Congo, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century back home in Sweden again. She tells him that she has been the object of malicious rumours and

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<sup>122</sup> Palmberg to Raquette, July, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1919.

<sup>123</sup> Ahlbert to the Board, April, 20th, 1920. Arell to Lundahl, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1920.

<sup>124</sup> Arell to Lundahl, March 26th, 1920.

<sup>125</sup> The *Ansgarius*, 1924, p. 133 ff.

<sup>126</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 107. Arell’s daughter, Mrs Svea Egeskog, confirms that “mum came home to Sweden, bodily and mentally broken down”. (Egeskog to Hultvall, October, 19<sup>th</sup>, 1977.) Mrs Arell’s father, Mr. Larsson, accountant from Nora, writes about this in his memoirs. (Not published. Available in Partille, at the Egeskogs.)

<sup>127</sup> The *Göteborgs Handels. och Sjöfartstidning*, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1923. DEM, 1923, p. 141. One of Raquette’s students in the 1920s was Gunnar Jarring. From 1933, Gunnar Jarring became associate professor in Turkology, alongside with Raquette.

<sup>128</sup> Westin, 1927, p. 898. Adrup, 1978, p. 111.



slander from her missionary colleagues. At the beginning, she was “innocent and pure”, she writes, but after having been so badly treated she did not care any longer what happened. C.J. Engvall brought the matter to Sjöholm.<sup>129</sup> In 1904, Lovisa reports the matter to Waldenström. Without any grounds she had been accused of entertaining an inappropriate relationship with her servant. She felt condemned and frozen out, she says, and she was not allowed to go on working as a missionary.<sup>130</sup>

There was however no breach with the Mission, so far. Instead, she went home to Sweden on furlough. In 1908, she was back in Kashgar. Together with Hilda Nordqvist she carried the whole responsibility for the activities in Kashgar for quite a few years ahead. All the other missionaries were home in Sweden. In the spring of 1912, she was transferred to Jengi-Hessar to start missionary work there all on her own.<sup>131</sup>

However she kept up the relationship with her servant, and in December 1912, the Missionary Conference decided to send her home.<sup>132</sup> In April the following year, Högberg also informs the Mission Head Quarters that she had left Kashgar in order to go home.<sup>133</sup> Just before her departure, she also got a letter from Waldenström, requiring her to return home.<sup>134</sup> In June, there was a new letter from Högberg in which he relates how she up to the last moment maintained her innocence, pleading to be the injured party. Högberg also announces that she had settled with her servant that he should come after her in the mountains. She was to wait for him at the first night shelter. The missionaries had held back the servant for three days, but then he had set out.<sup>135</sup> Later on Högberg could announce that their misgivings had turned out to be justified. Lovisa had waited for the man in Osh where she had then contracted a marriage with him.<sup>136</sup> In the eyes of the population she thereby became a Muslim.

When Sjöholm arrived in Kashgar, in 1913, learning about Lovisa’s situation he was worried. It came as a “thunder-bolt” he writes in the Inspection Minutes.<sup>137</sup> She was no longer at the mission station, and Sjöholm could not reach her, but he agreed with the missionaries that she ought to go home to Sweden.

In the summer of 1913, the German explorer Le Coq met Lovisa in the Russian mountains. She declared she was with the Swedish Mission in Kashgar<sup>138</sup> She was probably then on her way to Osh in order to be united there with the Muslim from Kashgar.

She now carried out the plans she had long cherished. From Russia she turned back to Eastern Turkestan and travelled into the northern part of the country, working as nurse with a private practice. In the spring of 1914, she came back to Kashgar but did not contact the Mission. Instead she turned to the British Consul. On his rejection she turned

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<sup>129</sup> C.J. Engvall to Sjöholm, August 26th, 1903. Lovisa was the grand-daughter of “Mor i Wall”, a famous woman in Karlskoga. C.J. Nyvall was her uncle.

<sup>130</sup> Lovisa Engvall to Waldenström, October 28th, 1904.

<sup>131</sup> Hilda Nordqvist to Sjöholm, April 1st, 1912.

<sup>132</sup> Högberg to Sjöholm, December 3rd, 1912. Törnquist to Sjöholm, December 5th, 1912.

<sup>133</sup> Högberg to Sjöholm, April 28th, 1913.

<sup>134</sup> Waldenström to Lovisa Engvall, March 18th, 1913.

<sup>135</sup> Högberg to Sjöholm, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1913.

<sup>136</sup> Högberg to Raquette, July 31st, 1913.

<sup>137</sup> Inspection Minutes, 1913.

<sup>138</sup> Le Coq, 1928, p. 18.

to the Russian Consulate.<sup>139</sup> Shortly afterwards she however went back north and stayed for some time in Aksu, about 500 kilometres from Kashgar. “We have not heard a word from her” says Bohlin to Sjöholm. “I fail to understand what she lives on. Her stocks of medicines must have been used up a long time ago.”<sup>140</sup> At the beginning of 1915 she writes to Sjöholm giving him to understand that she planned to go to Sweden. He immediately contacted Bohlin asking him to help her with money for the journey, if he could not get into touch with her.<sup>141</sup> She did not go home however.

Not until 1921 did the missionaries of Kashgar have a sign of life from her. She was then still living together with her Muslim husband.<sup>142</sup> At the time she was living in Kutja, a town situated at 700 kilometres north-east of Kashgar. In the year 1924, she suddenly turned up in Jarkend. She stayed there for a year, working within medical care. Her “interference” in Jarkend put the Mission Head Quarters in Stockholm at a loss, not knowing how the “Engvall case” ought to be handled.<sup>143</sup> The problem received its natural solution when Lovisa returned to her solitude. The population of Kutja had sent letters asking her to come back.<sup>144</sup> She stayed on among these people up to the middle of the 1930s as will be elaborated below.

## 9. Everyday Life of the Missionaries

Missionary life was hard. Some of the missionaries could not endure it. A couple of them left the field prematurely, discouraged and broken down. Others were forced to give up after personal failures. Their working situation was the main reason for all this.

Daily life was trying. When Lovisa Engvall had broken with the Mission in 1913, Törnquist wrote home to the Board, a letter full of bitter disappointment. “...What does God mean? Is it not enough that more than a score of people sacrifice their lives, seemingly without success, for this mission field? Do people’s souls also have to be sacrificed?” And further down in the same letter he comes down on the side of his erring colleague, “...the immense temptations meeting Lovisa Engvall ... heart-rending and exhausting both for body and soul with no encouragement from success ... It takes an extremely well-rooted faith.”<sup>145</sup> Oskar Hermansson took up the same subject during a continuation course for missionaries, “All the time, the missionary is surrounded by things destined to pull down the morals and weaken the spiritual life.”<sup>146</sup> Törnquist also hints at how depressing it was not to see any result of ones endeavours. When Sven Hedin saw the first missionaries in Kashgar he wrote, “I felt sorry for them, their effort vain, their work fruitless, their life empty –all futile.”<sup>147</sup> As a matter of fact, the situation had not changed appreciably. There was no success giving encouragement neither in the 1910s nor in the 1920s. Gottfrid Palmberg is desparate when writing in 1919, “God alone knows how draining it at times is to see nearly all one’s endeavours fruitless.” In 1918, Högberg

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<sup>139</sup> Bohlin to Sjöholm, March 29th, 1914.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., July 15th, 1914.

<sup>141</sup> Sjöholm to Bohlin, January 31st, 1915.

<sup>142</sup> Stina Mårtensson to Raquette, January 17th, 1921.

<sup>143</sup> Lundahl to Nyström, April 4th, 1924.

<sup>144</sup> Nyström, 1928, p. 144.

<sup>145</sup> Törnquist to the Board, June, 1913.

<sup>146</sup> SMT, 1931, p. 101.

<sup>147</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 190 f.

expresses how encouraged the missionaries could be by the smallest progress, when reporting home about two newly converted Muslims. “The Lord has comforted us through them”, he writes.<sup>148</sup>

Georg Roberntz also writes about the missionaries’ greatest suffering, the lack of results. “I will never forget an incident in Jarkend during my first years there. One of our Christians, also employed by the Mission, had committed a crime and also turned out to be a big thief. When the missionary tried to make him confess and repent what he had done, he was met with scorn and abuse. Faced with this situation, I saw the normally strong missionary, who never seemed to know fear at the moment of danger, break down in tears and inner pain.”<sup>149</sup>

Solitude and isolation were parts of the everyday life of a missionary. Palmberg was alone at Jengi-Hessar. His fiancée had arrived in the field, but they did not dare live or work at the same mission station considering all the gossip that would then have started among the population. This happened in 1914.<sup>150</sup> Four years later, in 1918, he is married all right but still working at Jengi-Hessar. He writes, “I have now been here for eight years and I am tired and spiritually dried up.”<sup>151</sup> After coming home in 1920 Ellen Törnquist says, “The isolation out there has made us shy. The climate and sicknesses have affected us deeply.”<sup>152</sup> And after his dismissal from the Mission in 1921 Adolf Bohlin complains, “

“... I have nothing more to say about my deep fall. I have nothing to say in my defence apart from the fact that the long isolation, ten long years, contributed to breaking down my power of resistance completely. What I have suffered and still suffer because of what happened cannot be expressed in words.”<sup>153</sup>

Contacts with Sweden were at times totally cut off. During the World War, postal and telegram communications were of course especially uncertain. In 1917, a telegram from Stockholm arrived. It had taken 15 days to reach Kashgar, and then the translation was so bad that the only thing the missionaries could detect was the word “Waldenström”. They deduced, quite correctly, that “the old lector” had died.<sup>154</sup> During the War it was all but impossible to send goods. The Bible translation made by Avetarianian-Raquette, newly printed in Bulgaria in 1914, could consequently not be sent out to Eastern Turkestan for several years. The same fate befell the Raquette grammar and word book, printed in Berlin 1912-1914.<sup>155</sup>

Once in a while the missionaries experienced a break in the everyday routine and that was when visitors arrived. These visits not only provided change and encouragement for the missionaries, but guests to the Mission later on also wrote about their experiences in books and periodicals, and thus the Mission became known in many parts of the world.

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<sup>148</sup> Palmberg to Lundahl, April 19th, 1919. *Grenluset*, 1989, volume 11, p. 80.

<sup>149</sup> The *Ansgarius*, 1942, p. 91 f.

<sup>150</sup> Palmberg to the Board, April 21st, 1914.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. November 1st, 1918.

<sup>152</sup> Lundahl-Walder, 1938, p. 158.

<sup>153</sup> Bohlin to Lundahl, December 17th, 1921.

<sup>154</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, August 20th, 1917.

<sup>155</sup> The *Vinterny*, 1917, p. 20.

Among Swedes who got to know the Mission and then spoke and wrote favourably about it are for example Sven Hedin, Nils Ambolt and Gunnar Jarring. Among other Westerners who witnessed the Mission at work were Owen and Eleanor Lattimore and the journalists Peter Fleming and Ella Maillart. Explorers like Le Coq, Colonel Schomberg and Aurel Stein also saw the Mission on the spot. Yet another appreciated visit was the one made by Hermann Francke.<sup>156</sup>

When scientists, journalists and others from the Western world came to the mission stations, they were received with joy and thankfulness. And the visitors experienced the contact with the missionaries in a similar way. On reading their reports and travel books, one clearly sees how impressed they were by the missionaries' work but also how thankful they were for the fellowship and the help they got with many practical questions.<sup>157</sup>

The two Consuls General placed in Kashgar were significant assets for the missionaries. Particularly the British Consulate came to mean a lot to them. During the whole missionary era, the Consuls General were personal friends of the missionaries, but Sir George Macartney, who worked as Consul General up to 1918, and his wife, held an exceptional position. Lady Macartney has described her years in Eastern Turkestan in a book in which she recounts several insights from sharing time with the missionaries.<sup>158</sup> It was at this time that Högberg built the Consulate in Kashgar.<sup>159</sup> Several other Consuls and other employees at the British Consulate have written about the Mission in an interesting and friendly way.<sup>160</sup>

The periods of work were long. In the beginning, the term in the field was seven years. The MCCS leadership in Sweden however thought that this period could be extended to ten years. Thereby they would save money and have fewer vacancies in the field. The missionaries however were against this idea, referring to among other things the practice for employees of the Russian Consulate, where the working periods had been shortened down from five to three years. The Russian Consul had said that ten-year-periods could only be considered in the case of punishing criminals. The climate could be compared to that in the Congo.<sup>161</sup> No general extension of the periods came about. At the Sjöholm inspection of the field in 1913 the working periods were six and a half years.<sup>162</sup> The lack of manpower and the political unrest in the world however occasionally forced the missionaries to stay on in the field far beyond the appointed time. During the World War for example several missionaries were obliged to stay in the mission field for ten years.

In order to have a couple of weeks of relaxation, when the summer was at its hottest, the missionaries withdrew into the mountains. There, in a valley in the Pamir Mountains was a Kyrgyz camp. The place was called Bostan-Terek, and here the missionaries could rent land and have some simple houses constructed. Some of them were however

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<sup>156</sup> Francke, 1921, p. 59 ff.

<sup>157</sup> For example Stein, 1920 I, p.113 f. II p. 429 ff.

<sup>158</sup> Macartney, 1931, p. 30, 37, 40,47, 88, 136, 153.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. p. 201 f. Concerning Högberg's construction techniques, see Högberg, 1920, p. 16 f. note.

<sup>160</sup> Sykes, 1920, p. V in the preface, p. 37, 51, 66, 73, 104 f., 171, 173. Etherton 1925, p. 112, 1911, p. 148 f. Skrine, 1926, p. 66, 279 f.

<sup>161</sup> Eastern Turkestan Mission Conference minutes, 1905.

<sup>162</sup> SMT 1914, p. 80.

reluctant to go on holiday to the mountains for the journey there was very demanding. On horseback it took several days.<sup>163</sup>

The fellowship between the missionaries was not always of a kind to be the support they all needed. In this unique mission field, there were unique missionaries working, strong individuals with a strong will. Opinions differed on many matters, sometimes with tensions as a sad result. There were especially two persons who could not collaborate: Raquette and Törnquist. Certainly the Eastern Turkestan Conference of 1912 had decided that, before the arrival of the Inspection, old tensions between the missionaries should be “buried”. This was also confirmed by Sjöholm, at his inspection. But still the antagonism prevailed.

The tension between Törnquist and Raquette was of old age. The seed was probably sown when Törnquist was preparing to leave for the mission field for the first time. He planned to study medicine to become a doctor before leaving. Contacts had also been taken with the “Karolinska Institutet”. When this became known in Eastern Turkestan, Raquette announced in a letter to the Mission Board that no doctor was needed. “I myself am a mission doctor, and there is no need for another one.”<sup>164</sup> The MCCA leadership followed the advice of Raquette and Törnquist was told to leave without medical training. Medical mission was Törnquist’s special pride, and when he arrived in the field, he felt useless and unqualified within the Muslim mission. He therefore resorted to the China mission, already established under the leadership of Albert Andersson. He could never forget that the Board and Raquette had prevented him from doing medical studies. Continually during his long missionary career this dull pain would burst forth in open irritation and quite often in bitter confrontation with Raquette. Mere trifles could release his displeasure. For example he writes on one occasion to Lundahl, expressing his annoyance at Raquette being addressed as “associate professor”.<sup>165</sup> And on another occasion the *Svenska Morgonbladet* had interviewed Raquette concerning conditions in Eastern Turkestan. When Törnquist saw the copy of this newspaper he wrote a long letter to Lundahl, stating that Raquette’s information was wrong.<sup>166</sup>

Among the personal controversies between Törnquist and Raquette there was also the old dispute concerning the China mission. The other missionaries became involved and chose one side or the other. Things happening at the Muslim station in Kashgar were

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<sup>163</sup> Etherton, 1911, p. 143. The British Consul Eric Shipton was here in the 1940s. He writes about the missionaries being very appreciated by the local population. (Shipton, 1951, p. 41). One summer the Högberg couple spent their holidays here together with Consul Macartney and his wife. Lady Macartney writes about this visit saying that she found that the women in the mountains lived a much freer life than the women in Kashgar. They showed themselves everywhere without a veil. (Macartney, 1931, p. 136.) Aurel Stein said after a week in Bostan-Terek, “A week of wonderful peace.” (Stein, 1933, p. 289. Skrine, 1926, p. 128 f.) It was difficult for the missionaries to find time for holidays. Especially within medical care they had made themselves indispensable. This was very clear for example in 1935 when Ella Maillart was in Jarkend. She had been “eaten up” by parasites and was really in a bad way. But when she sent for the Swedish missionaries she was told that they had gone to the mountains for a rest. (Maillart, 1940, p. 240.) Ella Maillart made this journey through Eastern Turkestan together with Peter Flemming. When the two journalists came to Kashgar, the Kashgar missionaries too were away on holiday in the mountains. Later on they met however. (Flemming, 1948, p. 528, 540.)

<sup>164</sup> Raquette...?

<sup>165</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, March 12th, 1929.

<sup>166</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, November 21st, 1923.

reported to the China missionaries in Hancheng. And from there the report often went on to Stockholm. In 1914, Törnquist writes to Sjöholm, "There is a curse on old Kashgar... Raquette and all his family are ill... He does not care about the medical work... He behaves like a wild boar among his co-workers..."<sup>167</sup> At times however the tension suddenly eases. In 1915, Törnquist writes that Raquette has become like a new man towards him. "I have judged him harshly before."<sup>168</sup>

The tension between the missionaries continues. A couple of letters can illustrate the level of irritation. One letter is about Törnquist and is spiced with invectives.

"Wretchedness and hatred are facts that remain ... Shabby small-mindedness... One is tempted to resign ... And this whole pretty league is coming home at the same time. Surely Törnquist has a wonderful capacity of sneaking around the corner and turning black into white and vice versa... Must you, Raquette too, resign?"<sup>169</sup>

Yet another missionary judges Törnquist just as heartlessly. He is called "the wretch" and is being threatened with a day of reckoning for all his "malevolence". Mrs Törnquist is contemptuously referred to as "that little wife of his".<sup>170</sup>

Yet another letter gives proof of deep division. Several missionaries are being vilified. Oskar Andersson should not be allowed to return to the mission field. Lovisa Engvall and Adolf Bohlin have forfeited all confidence. Törnquist had gone with gossip to Mosesson, the Principal of the Mission School, concerning the Mission. "Yes "Moses" ought to come out here himself and undertake Muslim mission work in the way Törnquist has persuaded him to do it."<sup>171</sup> This letter contains no real understanding of, or desire, to make the best of the situation in which the missionaries were living and that they found so difficult.

At the 1918 Conference, the antagonism reached its peak. The outburst was so violent that the missionaries did not dare to have a conference of spiritual uplift the following year. After having separated, harrowed and desolate, and having come home to their respective stations, Palmberg wrote a letter after some time to Raquette. It concerned the preparation of next year's Conference, but Palmberg wrote,

"The memory of our edification from the last Conference in Kashgar nearly makes me dread the coming one. Apart from other irregularities among us, it is embarrassing to us, and very favourable for Satan, that the two of you, our two senior leaders, should be such enemies... If during the Conference you decide to renew your enmity... and then we are going to finish the whole Conference by celebrating the memory of Jesus' death, this will be a proper spectacle."<sup>172</sup>

To the very last, the missionaries hoped it would be possible to have a Conference. But during the planning it became very clear that it was not possible for them to meet. Palmberg writes about this to Raquette,

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<sup>167</sup> Törnquist to Sjöholm, June 22nd, 1914.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., February 2nd, 1915.

<sup>169</sup> Elin Svensson to Raquette, April 19th, 1917.

<sup>170</sup> Stina Mårtensson to Raquette, May 12th, 1912. "Stina" to Raquette, May 21st, 1912.

<sup>171</sup> Sigrid Högberg to G. and E. Raquette on Midsummer Day, 1920.

<sup>172</sup> Palmberg to Raquette, August 31st, 1919.

“I have written a serious letter to Törnquist in order to make reconciliation between you possible. His reply very clearly shows that there is no hope of improvement of the situation between the two of you. He also announces that he will not take part in the devotional part nor in the celebration of the Holy Communion.”<sup>173</sup>

At long last Raquette had to write a report to the M CCS President Nyrén about what had happened. He did so in the spring of 1921. He there admits that the concern and animosity had been great among the missionaries. When this report was composed, the 1920 Conference had been held, and Raquette could comfort Nyrén by saying that it had been peaceful and edifying. “It was for me a pleasant memory from Eastern Turkestan to take with me home among all the dark ones that I have to carry with me from there.”<sup>174</sup>

While studying the correspondence between the M CCS leadership and the missionaries one asks oneself while the leaders in Sweden did not do more for their missionaries. At times the Mission head quarters showed an amazing lack of judgment. Just while the war was raging at its height, when it was a question of life and death for millions of people, Sjöholm wrote to Bohlin, “Buy me a pair of fur-lining of white lambskin and send home to me. I would like to give them to my daughters.”<sup>175</sup> How unrealistic and petty the missionaries must have found this wish from the M CCS President in this situation. Or when Bohlin was forced to leave the mission field in 1921. At that time Mission Secretary Lundahl wrote to him, using the wording Mr Bohlin”, instead of Missionary.<sup>176</sup> Bohlin had already written to the Board acknowledging his “deep fall”. Not to let him keep his title “Missionary” was surely totally correct, but not very considerate. Worn out and sick Albert Andersson came home from the field for good in 1912. When he came to Stockholm in late summer in order to meet Sjöholm, the latter had no time to see him. Afterwards Andersson writes to Sjöholm saying, “I had wanted to speak to you... but you were all the time busy so it was not possible.”<sup>177</sup> It must have been quite a bitter experience being received like that, after a long and trying life in the service of the Mission.

A lot could be said however in defence of the M CCS leadership in Stockholm. For long periods, the Head Quarters could not reach their missionaries. Often the financial situation was not sufficiently good for the Board to help the missionaries. Moreover it was surely difficult both for the Mission friends and for the leadership in Sweden to understand this mission field at all.

And it was not always easy to deal with the missionaries. Some of them were complicated. They had also said irreverently what they thought about the leadership in Sweden. Such things never happened during the first years, when Ekman and Waldenström were mission leaders. The most outspoken missionary was John Törnquist. Lundahl for example had written to Törnquist on one occasion telling him the meeting of the International Mission Council in Jerusalem where he had taken part. Törnquist’s reply is full of gall where Törnquist, referring to Lundahl’s letter says he is sure Lundahl got

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid. September 6th, 1919.

<sup>174</sup> Raquette to Nyrén, May 25th, 1921.

<sup>175</sup> Sjöholm to Bohlin, December 8th, 1915.

<sup>176</sup> Lundahl to Bohlin, January 22nd, 1922.

<sup>177</sup> Albert Andersson to Sjöholm, August 2nd, 1912. At times the mission funds in Stockholm were empty and the missionaries had to wait for their salary and money for the journey. (Palmberg, December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1960).

both “joy and benefit” out of the meeting. But what is the benefit of the Missionary Council, says Törnquist. He did not know of one single case where this Council had done any good. Yes, he goes on to say, as a matter of fact he had heard someone say that the Missionary Council had encouraged the M CCS to carry on mission work in Eastern Turkestan. So good old Sweden had to be upheld by Englishmen and Americans! The M CCS ought to feel ashamed of itself. This was the weakness of the M CCS, that its leaders had started to “grovel” in order to win acclaim. “Good God, how disgusting when I think of all that!”<sup>178</sup> The whole letter is a personal attack on Lundahl due to his highly appreciated work done within international mission circles.

## 10. For and Against the Eastern Turkestan Mission

On several occasions during the 1910s and during the first part of the 1920s the issue was discussed whether to close down the Mission or not. The M CCS leadership in Sweden was worried. In spite of the many years of activity the Mission could show neither success nor stability, they said. Was it really compatible with missionary responsibility to sacrifice great sums of money and wear out human resources in an enterprise which to all appearances rendered so little?

As has already been related, the question was asked already during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And it came back in 1914. Sjöholm then expresses his distress and uncertainty to the missionaries. Islam had proclaimed the Holy War, and the future of the Mission was more uncertain than ever.<sup>179</sup> The question of closing down was however not answered that time. It was taken up again in 1921 when Lundahl, during the summer of that year, lets the missionaries know that the Board had decided to launch an investigation of the Mission. Voices had been raised, said Lundahl, in favour of the closing down of the Mission, or else, of handing it over to some other Missionary Society, the reason being the poor results and “the events that had occurred repeatedly within the body of missionaries”.<sup>180</sup> The missionaries were very upset. Nyström in Jarkend writes an irritated letter to Lundahl and Westling accusing them of having made statements about the Mission that were not accurate. And why did they not see to it that the newly printed Bibles were sent out to the field? Now he had got the explanation for “the disinterest in sending the Gospels”, says Nyström: the Mission was to be closed down.<sup>181</sup> Back home in Sweden the investigation went on during the autumn of 1921. Törnquist was in Sweden at the time, and he was called in as an expert. He declined the offer, adding, “No extra measure needs to be taken. We have broken through the worst darkness.”<sup>182</sup> The Board’s decision was once again to let the Mission go on. It is typical that J.M. Ollén who at that time edited the voluminous omnibus book *Svenska missionsbragder* (= “Swedish Missionary Feats”) did not even with a word mention the Mission in Eastern Turkestan.

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<sup>178</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, September 24th, 1928.

<sup>179</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, October 16th, 1914.

<sup>180</sup> Lundahl to the missionaries in Eastern Turkestan, June 1st, 1921.

<sup>181</sup> Nyström to Lundahl and Westling, November 19th, 1921,

<sup>182</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, October 21st, 1921.



In the autumn of 1925, the closing-down-issue once again became topical. It had come to the knowledge of the missionaries that this time it was Lars E. Larsson, Uppsala who tried to push through the decision of closing down. Larsson was a member of the MCCC Board. He was a general manager of a shoe factory and had financial opinions concerning the Mission. In a letter, Törnquist is very bitter against “Shoelasse” (“Lasse” being the pet name form of Lars). Törnquist preferred being beaten to death or driven out of the country to having to leave it voluntarily.<sup>183</sup> This time too, the decision was taken to carry on the mission work in Eastern Turkestan.

There were many reasons for carrying on the Mission. When comparing the Eastern Turkestan Mission with other Muslim missions, it was clear that the slight progress achieved was not so slight after all. This fact gave comfort and motivation to the missionaries. Ahlbert was in Cairo in 1923 in order to study the Muslim mission there. Dr. Zwemer and about a hundred other missionaries worked within this Mission. Ahlbert writes, “Here the Mission has been working for double the time compared to our Mission in Eastern Turkestan, and their results are not greater than ours. On the contrary!”<sup>184</sup> Another reason for carrying on the mission work in Eastern Turkestan was the importance attached by missionary circles outside Sweden to “the bridge-head for the Gospel in the heart of Asia”. Samuel Zwemer for example had expressed himself in very appreciative way about the Swedish Mission in Eastern Turkestan.<sup>185</sup> Another reason for letting the Mission continue in Eastern Turkestan was the fact that Muslims in different parts of the world followed the development with sharpened attention. If the Mission were to close down says Nyrén in 1922, “this would be interpreted in the whole Muslim world as a declaration of bankruptcy of Christianity.”<sup>186</sup> Still another strong motive for the staying on of the Mission lay in the Christian converts. What would happen to them, asks Törnquist. “They would be killed or else go back to Islam.”<sup>187</sup> By the 1930s it would be proved that these fears were not exaggerated.

Furthermore the missionaries and the MCCC leadership often pointed out that the importance of the Mission lay in the fact that it was the only mission active within a very large area. As a matter of fact, within an area as large as France, the Swedish Mission was the only working mission.

Outside this area, in the northern part of the province there were other missions working. And even though these missions, to the Swedes, were experienced as distant neighbours “on the other side of the border”, it is justified to mention some facts about them.

The China Inland Mission with its centre in Urumchi, some 1.000 kilometres (or 54 marches) from Kashgar had been working there since 1906. The founder of this Mission in Eastern Turkestan, and its leader up to 1938, when he was expelled, was the Scot George Hunter, “the Apostle of Eastern Turkestan”. During all these years, he never left the mission field.<sup>188</sup> Hunter was extremely tough and stubborn, says Moen who knew him

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid. January 1st, 1926.

<sup>184</sup> Ahlbert to Lundahl, September 15th, 1923.

<sup>185</sup> MCCC Annual Report of 1926, p. 8. The *Missionsförbundet*, 1928, p. 120. Folke, 1927 I, p. 84. Nyrén to Törnquist, January 27th, 1927. John Andersson, 1948, p. 29.

<sup>186</sup> Nyrén to Nyström, January 21st, 1922.

<sup>187</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, January 6th, 1926.

<sup>188</sup> Neill, 1971, p. 263. Concerning other Missions in Central Asia, see Cochrane, 1925, p. 30 ff.

well.<sup>189</sup> On his extensive mission trips he sold Bible portions and preached in the bazaars. He worked mainly among the Chinese. On several occasions he visited the Swedish mission field, for the first time in 1907. At that time he stayed in Jarkend for several months, preaching every Sunday for the Chinese. At the same time he himself was taught the Turkish language.<sup>190</sup> Raquette translated some tracts into Turkish that Hunter afterwards spread to people on his journeys.

In many ways, the China Inland Mission worked in different ways from the Swedish Mission. The MCCS mission work was more stationary with its hospitals, schools and churches. The China Inland Mission saw it as its chief assignment to spread the Gospel over as large areas as possible. Leading parishes and doing school work were important tasks for the missionaries but could never be their central task.<sup>191</sup> Hunter himself wanted to evangelize like Paul. He liked to quote Paul's words, saying, "Christ has not sent me to baptize but to preach the Gospel". And he put this into practice. During his first years in the field he baptized two Muslims, but then there were many years when he did not baptize anyone. And as late as 1925 there were only around ten Christians.<sup>192</sup> This was of course also due to the general difficulties in this country making people believe. Hunter's missionary work was in this respect just as thankless as that of the Swedish missionaries.

In order to blend with the population, the China Inland missionaries wore Chinese clothes and tried in other ways too to identify themselves with the Chinese population. Hunter for instance wore a queue up to 1912. At that time the Revolution reached Kashgar where Hunter was then staying. As has been described above, he had to cut off his queue very quickly in order to save his life.

During all its active years the China Inland Mission was very limited in Eastern Turkestan. From 1914 to well into the 1930s when a group of young missionaries arrived in Urumchi, Hunter's sole collaborator was the Englishman Percy Mather.<sup>193</sup> In the year 1938, this Mission wrote its final chapter.

In Urumchi and the neighbouring areas Catholic Mission was also active. Catholic Mission in Eastern Turkestan in modern times started in the 1880s when the above mentioned Father Hendrichs moved from Mongolia where he was a missionary, to Eastern Turkestan. First he worked in the northern part of the province and then he settled in Kashgar. Three other missionaries also came to the northern part of the province in the 1880s.<sup>194</sup> Already Höijer met with Father Hendrichs. He could well be an expelled cardinal, according to Höijer, judging by his level of education. In a shack he had set up a distillery where he produced wine, snaps and brandy. Höijer looked upon him as a danger for the planned Swedish Mission and tried to make him leave Kashgar. When invited to join him to Russia Father Hendrichs however declined.<sup>195</sup> Törnquist says that Father Hendrichs parish was made up of one single Chinese that he had managed to convert. For this Chinese he held daily masses, but for the rest, he had given up evangelizing long ago.<sup>196</sup> Father Hendrichs and the Chinese once fell out with each other, says Sven Hedin,

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<sup>189</sup> Interview with Moen, September 30th, 1972.

<sup>190</sup> Cable, 1948, p. 84 f. Cochrane, 1925, p. 31.

<sup>191</sup> Neill, 164, p. 334.

<sup>192</sup> Cable, 1948, p. 84 f. Cochrane, 1925, p. 31.

<sup>193</sup> Cable, 1948, p. 92.

<sup>194</sup> Loy, 1936/37, p. 292 f., 318.

<sup>195</sup> Larsson, 1905, p. 338 f.

<sup>196</sup> Törnquist, 1926, p. 189 ff.

and the Chinese had been locked out from the masses. Father Hendrichs however continued his saying Mass, all by himself, the Chinese seeking his edification by listening through the key-hole.<sup>197</sup> Hedin remarks that Father Hendrichs spoke 12 languages, but he adds, “Alone, alone, alone – that was the password of his life.”<sup>198</sup> A few years into the 20<sup>th</sup> century he died from cancer.<sup>199</sup>

The Catholic Mission continued in the northern part of the province. In 1922, there were mission stations not only in Urumchi but also in Kuldja, Suiting and Manass. The activities were led by Steyl missionaries and the number of parishioners was 350.<sup>200</sup> The Catholic missionaries remained in the country late into the 1940s.

In the Ili district, a region situated in the north, alongside the Soviet border, there were Orthodox Christians, as has already been mentioned above. They had no evangelizing work. An effort to bring these parishes under the control of the bishop in Peking failed.

To go back to the Swedish Mission, the question remained concerning the poor results. What was wrong?

Some people were of the opinion that the poor results were due to bad and short-term planning. And it had been like that from the very beginning. The whole thing started out as an optimistic rushed job. It has already been pointed out how little was known about this new mission field when the decision was taken to start mission work there. The year before, mission work had been taken up in the Congo and in Central China. These missions had been promising from the very outset. In Eastern Turkestan lay something new and untested that apparently nobody seemed to be prepared for.

Törnquist accuses the M CCS leadership for lack of thought through planning. And this was something typical of the M CCS over the years, according to Törnquist. This was especially true concerning medically trained missionaries. Törnquist writes:

“For however it has been argued, suggested, rejected, changed and messed about with the training of the missionaries in this field, we still find ourselves here... looking in vain for medically trained missionaries... In Kashgar we have no one when Palmberg goes home. In Jengi-Hessar, we have had no one for a very long time, and now we need some one in Khotan.”<sup>201</sup>

When the religious results were so few, the missionaries sometimes asked themselves if the time of grace for the Muslims had not yet arrived, or whether it was already over. These ideas were not at all new. Already during the Reformation era, it was maintained that the Church had no obligation to preach the Gospel to the people of Islam. They had already had their time of calling, but had wasted their opportunities.<sup>202</sup> And in 1902 Bäcklund had raised the question, “Is the time of grace for the Muslims not yet there, or is it already over?”<sup>203</sup> In 1920, Westling writes to Ahlbert:

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<sup>197</sup> Hedin, 1893, p. 458.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid. 1898, p. 190.

<sup>199</sup> Mirsky, 1977, p. 137, 238 f.

<sup>200</sup> Loy 1936/37, p. 322. Latourette, 1945, p. 325.

<sup>201</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, March 12th, 1929.

<sup>202</sup> Christensen, 1959, p. 203 f.

<sup>203</sup> Bäcklund to Ekman, February 14th, 1902.

“... It seems likely that the time of awakening for the Muslims has not yet come, if it will ever come. If a person can harden himself so much that the Holy Spirit must go away from him, then a whole people could also do that.”<sup>204</sup>

Sven Hedin makes himself the spokesman of some kind of religious climatology. Populations of different degrees of culture have different religious needs, he says, “and who can maintain that Chinese and Muslims are ripe enough for Christianity”.<sup>205</sup>

Högberg neither believed in the talk of “populations with different religious needs” nor did he believe in the notion of “Islam’s wasted time of grace”. Of course Muslims could be won for the Gospel, he said, and he goes on, “Most Muslims do not belong to Islam because they have rejected the Gospel but because they have never heard it.” If the missionaries were only given time, everything would be different.<sup>206</sup> Sjöholm came to share this opinion after his inspection tour in 1913: “...But one day, when the time of awakening of the Muslim world is at hand – and that time will most certainly come – the work achieved by the MCCS missionaries, with faith and patience, will prove to be of greater importance than anybody could imagine.”<sup>207</sup> In 1916, Raquette writes about the Mission as on the threshold of a breakthrough. Never before had the conditions been so favourable. Now was the time of grace for the Muslims!<sup>208</sup>

The conviction that Islam could be won for the Christian faith experienced a renewal during the 1910s and the 1920s. In England towards the end of the 1910s, many Christians had started to pray daily for the mission work among Muslims. This gave the impulse to “Lärarinnornas missionsförening” (= the Association of Women Teachers for Mission) in Sweden to make an appeal that was sent out in 1922 to all the Christians in Sweden. In this appeal it says among other things, “Doubtlessly we find ourselves at the dawn of the solving of the Muslim problem by the power of the Gospel of Christ.”<sup>209</sup> After that follows a prayer list for Missions in Muslim countries. As to the Mission in Eastern Turkestan, the challenge presents itself as follows, “that the old Turkish population ... may come under the influence of the Gospel before it is caught in the snare of pan-Islamism”. A couple of years later, Samuel Zwemer sent another appeal in which he presented “A Year of Prayer for the Muslims”.<sup>210</sup> On the sixteenth day of each month, people were invited to pray especially for the Mission in Eastern Turkestan.

The missionaries themselves held a key position. Those who saw the Mission as a “quantity problem” urged for more missionaries. If there were only more missionaries, the results would ensue. With the world wide mission in his mind, Högberg made a request to the General Swedish Mission Conference in 1921, proposing an appeal to go out to all known mission societies in the whole world. Högberg suggested that an international school should be set up for the training of “ordinary” missionaries, doctors, nurses, teachers and industrial leaders and youth leaders.<sup>211</sup> These world wide plans however came to nothing!

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<sup>204</sup> Westling to Ahlbert, October 13th, 1920.

<sup>205</sup> Hedin, 1898, p. 376 ff.

<sup>206</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 262 f.

<sup>207</sup> Lundahl, 1916, p. 145. Inspection Minutes of 1913.

<sup>208</sup> Lundahl, 1916, p. 184.

<sup>209</sup> Till gemensam bön... (= Together in Prayer...) 1922, p. 1 ff.

<sup>210</sup> The Muslim World, 1928, p. 209.

<sup>211</sup> SMT 1921, p. 177 f.

The recruiting of Eastern Turkestan missionaries was unbalanced. Mostly women wanted to go to Eastern Turkestan. In 1914, Sjöholm informed those on the Mission Field, “This year, we have a lot of young women wanting to become missionaries.”<sup>212</sup> The following year the situation was similar, but “we need some men too”. In yet another letter written at about the same time Sjöholm writes, “We need two or three young men.”<sup>213</sup> Raquette describes the missionary situation in the publication the *Missionsförbundet* in the following way:

“One thing is making me lose courage, and that is the fact that I get no help... If only a member of the Board came here and saw what it is like here, I think he would not be long here, because he would like to go home at once, and at any cost he would find a missionary to Jarkend, unless he decided himself to stay on and fill the void himself.”<sup>214</sup>

At times the lack of missionaries was so bad that certain stations found themselves totally without missionaries. For that reason activities in Jarkend were practically suspended for a couple of years at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in the case of Jengi-Hessar, also during the years 1920-1923.<sup>215</sup>

The Mission could also be considered as a “quality problem”, and here the relations between the missionaries themselves were of great importance. There were times when the missionaries themselves were the main problem of the Mission. In 1919, Westling took up the matter with Törnquist, “Sometimes I wonder if there could be something wrong in your mission methods or in the lives of the missionaries themselves.”<sup>216</sup>

Raquette, yet another of the most combative ones, admits in 1921 that the relations between the missionaries were a vital thing for the success of the Mission. The missionary body ought to be analysed says Raquette.<sup>217</sup> And the following year Nyrén writes a serious letter to the missionaries:

“Islam in itself is hard enough to grapple with, and when we add to that all the difficulties within the body of missionaries, and sins having been committed, we understand fully the extreme hardships you have gone through.”<sup>218</sup>

In the autumn of 1921 when the Mission and the missionaries were discussed in Stockholm, Törnquist was in Sweden. He repudiates the accusations that the missionaries were a hindrance to the Mission, “Because of some difficulties and trouble you seem to have totally forgotten all the good things that God has let us achieve in this field too.”<sup>219</sup>

Was accommodation a way of winning Islam for the Gospel? Some missionaries definitely rejected the idea of accommodation. To a certain extent one could meet the Muslims half way, but there were limits to the concessions. If these limits were crossed the Christian faith would lose its essential contents.<sup>220</sup> Törnquist’s opinion on this matter

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<sup>212</sup> Sjöholm to Raquette, March 17th, 1914.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid. October 28th, 1915.

<sup>214</sup> The *Missionsförbundet*, 1907, p. 7.

<sup>215</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 452, 464.

<sup>216</sup> Westling to Törnquist, November 17th, 1919.

<sup>217</sup> Raquette to Nyrén, May 25th, 1921.

<sup>218</sup> Nyrén to Nyström, January 25th, 1922.

<sup>219</sup> Törnquist to Lundahl, October 21st, 1921.

<sup>220</sup> Aagaard, 1966, p. 4.

was expressed in the following way, “When the antagonism of Islam has finished, either Christianity is no longer Christianity, or Islam is no longer Islam, or else the two have met in two distorted pictures.”<sup>221</sup>

The missionaries – the first ones too – however tried to exploit the existing points of connection between these two totalitarian religions. It is important says Högberg not to look upon the Muslims as opponents, and not to treat them as such until they themselves start the discussion and making objections. He indicates some areas where the two religions meet and have good connections, such as faith and prayer.<sup>222</sup>

Roberntz criticises the Muslim Mission on the whole for being polemic instead of evangelical. For example the literature filling Muslim Missions library bear witness to this. And this was especially true where old publications are concerned. It is not the incisiveness of thought of the missionary, nor his arguments that convince a Muslim, but sanctified personalities, says Roberntz.<sup>223</sup>

At the Nordic Missionary Conference of 1925, Raquette pointed out how important it was for the Mission to try to adjust to the way of thinking and conditions of the Muslims. “That time ought to be gone when we present Christianity to indifferent masses as a religion of opposition, and accordingly attack the religions of the peoples and their religious ethics.” The task of the Mission is not first and foremost to tear down but to build up. “Consequently it is on the basis of mutual understanding that Christianity can work and will finally vanquish with its clear light and its pure truth...”<sup>224</sup> A condition for this mutual understanding lies in the fact that the missionary sees and accepts what is good in Islam, says Raquette. He is thus an advocate of “dialogue” between Islam and Christianity. Later on he broadens his “idea of dialogue” in the book *Muhammeds religion* (= The Religion of Mohammed), which was published in 1935. In a practical way he tried to put into practice his openness towards the faith of the Muslims. Already in 1906 Mannerheim observed how Raquette let the children in the school in Jarkend learn the Muslim prayers under the leadership of a Mullah.<sup>225</sup> This could be seen as bordering on self effacement.

The people of Islam were to be won through patient Christian influence. Palmberg writes in 1919:

“Over all these years I have more and more come to the conviction that if there is anything that could move the Muslim in his self-assuredness... that is real Christian influence, daily exercised...”<sup>226</sup>

Högberg too believed in quiet, patient influence. He wonders if the missionary societies and individual Christians should not seriously consider Islam’s own missionary methods. When making proselytes, the Muslims do not call themselves missionaries nor do they build mission stations or schools. They come as doctors, merchants, etc. and while they

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<sup>221</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 444. Samuel Zwemer says, “A compromise is just as impossible for them as it is for us.” (Zwemer, 1925, p. 149.)

<sup>222</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 242.

<sup>223</sup> Palmaer, 1943, p. 37 f.

<sup>224</sup> Raquette, 1925, p. 160 ff.

<sup>225</sup> Mannerheim, 1940, p. 65.

<sup>226</sup> Palmberg to Lundahl, April 19th, 1919.

exercise their daily work they all the time “expose” their faith to the public.<sup>227</sup> The missionaries tried to live that way all right, being near the people, even though there were both mission stations and schools. While the Swedes lived as “Swedes”, hissing their blue-and-yellow flag in their gardens, their homes were open to the people and neighbours came visiting constantly, says Rachel Wingate.<sup>228</sup>

## 11. The Persecution of 1923

It has already been stated that the 1910s and the first years of the 1920s were hard years. The discord between the missionaries and the multiple “defections” spread discouragement and bitterness. Surely the Mission “rooted itself” during these years, but growth was remarkably small. Added to that came the persecution of 1923 which was aimed directly at the Mission, threatening to crush it.

In Kashgar the Mission had had an unusually good time in the spring of 1923, as has already been mentioned. The schools were full and a number of people had been baptized.<sup>229</sup> That was when the antagonism of the Muslims broke out.

The persecution started in a village outside Kashgar where a couple of Christians lived. A farmer from the village had for a long time delivered milk to the Mission in town. He became a Christian in the spring of 1923. He now invited the missionaries to come to his village to hold services. They came, and the services held in the garden of this farmer attracted some of the villagers. Everything looked very hopeful. The Christians wanted their own chapel in the village, and an old house was put at their disposal. When the Christians were renovating this old building the persecution broke out. Some Muslims from the village surrounded the building workers, attacked them and hit them. They were later on arrested and brought to the authorities who put them in prison.<sup>230</sup> The unrest spread into town, and the Christians there who had not had time to save themselves were arrested in the same way and jailed. Some of them managed to escape to Jarkend.<sup>231</sup> In May 1923, Hermansson reports home to Sweden that the little community was scattered together with “the crowd of seekers”.<sup>232</sup> Some weeks later he writes that all the work was at a standstill,<sup>233</sup> and to Raquette he sends the message, “Our co-workers fled like scared sheep.”<sup>234</sup>

The protests of the missionaries handed in to the authorities – both Muslim and Chinese one – led nowhere. Moreover, chaos was at hand in all China and the so-called

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<sup>227</sup> Högberg-Ahlbert, 1925, p. 241.

<sup>228</sup> Wingate, 1951, p. 14.

<sup>229</sup> *Hågkomster och livsintryck* (=Memories and life impressions), 1923, p. 231 ff. Hermansson to Lundahl, April 15th, 1923. The *Ansgarius*, 1924, p. 45.

<sup>230</sup> Palmaer, 1942, p. 120 f.

<sup>231</sup> Helena Nyström’s recording. Among those who managed to escape to Jarkend was the farmer who had opened his home to the missionaries. He could never return home. Everything was taken from him, his farm, his wife, his cattle. (Palmaer, 1942, p. 39.)

<sup>232</sup> Hermansson to Lundahl, May 3rd, 1923.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, May 17th 1923.

<sup>234</sup> Hermansson to Raquette, June 21st 1923.

central government was totally powerless.<sup>235</sup> For the Muslims, this was a very favourable opportunity to attack the Mission, without the risk of having the Chinese authorities meddling. A new County Governor had just been appointed in Kashgar, “an opium-smoking nobody” whom the Muslims could completely disregard in their undisturbed attacks on the Mission.<sup>236</sup>

The Muslim attacks on the Christian Mission were probably part of a larger context. There was unrest all around the Muslim world at that time. The Sultanate had been abolished in 1922. And the Sultan was the one supposed to conquer the world in the World War! With the Sultanate disappeared the Caliphate. Surely it lived on for a couple of years afterwards, but without significance.<sup>237</sup> Shocked the Muslims found themselves without a leader. And the reaction was noticed in Eastern Turkestan.

Apart from the physical violence towards the Mission, the Muslim leaders turned to the Chinese authorities in order to make the Mission leave the country by diplomatic means. At the end of May the Mission Head Quarters in Stockholm was informed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of a telegram from Peking, in which the Swedish Mission was asked to stop its activities trying to convert Muslims in China.<sup>238</sup>

In June, Nyrén writes to Nyström encouraging the missionaries to make the best of the situation. Be sure to establish your own security, says Nyrén, and if possible, see to it that the property of the Mission is secured. At that time there was no intention of closing down the Mission. On the contrary, Nyrén says that a group of missionaries were just about to prepare their departure from Sweden for the mission field.<sup>239</sup> During the summer, the MCCA leadership in Stockholm tried to provide the Mission with security and peace of work through diplomatic channels. Nyrén visited London and together with the Secretary of the International Mission Council he called on the British Consul General to Kashgar who was then residing in London. This led to a diplomatic appeal to the authorities in Peking. Upon arriving back from London Nyrén and Raquette paid a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm and from there a petition was made to the Chinese government.<sup>240</sup>

Just as the missionaries were gathered for a conference in Jarkend in November, they received a message from Peking. Hermansson says it was “a very good piece of news to us”. The Central government now gave the Provincial Governor the order to invalidate the ban on the Mission. For the rest the missionaries could act as they thought best and consult with the British Consul General in Kashgar.<sup>241</sup>

All activities were now taken up again. The Christians however remained in prison. Most of them were released the days before Christmas, but four of them were not released until April the following year. They had then had a hard time in prison. The

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<sup>235</sup> Concerning the development in Central China, see next chapter. As it did not influence the Mission, it is not commented upon here.

<sup>236</sup> Törnquist, 1928, p. 445.

<sup>237</sup> The office of the Caliphate was moved in 1922, when the Sultan was removed from office, to Abd ut-Medjid. He was however removed from office and expelled in 1924. That was also the end of the Caliphate.

<sup>238</sup> Lundahl to Arell, May 30th 1923. Nyrén to Nyström, May 25<sup>th</sup> 1923. Lundahl to Carl Persson, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1923.

<sup>239</sup> Nyrén to Nyström, June 6th 1923.

<sup>240</sup> Minutes of the MCCA Board, September 6th-8th 1923, § 51.

<sup>241</sup> Hermansson to Lundahl, November 16th 1923.



Chinese judicial system worked in the following way: the relatives of those imprisoned had to provide “the criminals” with food, fuel and whatever they needed. The Muslim relatives naturally refused to pay for their Christian families, so the Mission had to come to the rescue.<sup>242</sup>

In Jarkend unrest started at the turn of the year 1923/24. The events here were directly inspired by the persecution in Kashgar. The Muslim leaders had turned to the Mandarin in early winter in order to have the Mission banned, but they had been sent away.<sup>243</sup> Then a couple of Mullahs started to warn the people of the Mission, in the streets outside the mission station. One of these Mullahs had just arrived from Kashgar. One Sunday when they tried to prevent people from going to church, Nyström came out. The altercation that followed ended with the seizure of some of the Christians who had accompanied Nyström out of the door. When Nyström tried to free the seized ones he himself was seized and all three were taken away followed by the crowd. The persons seized were taken to the Chinese judge who treated them in a kind way, and after some mild warnings they were set free. When the crowd would not accept the judgement and was unwilling to disperse, Roberntz, witnessing the tumult, sent a message to the Mandarin, who in his turn sent soldiers who dispersed the crowd. He also had guards put up at the mission station, but when nothing happened it was withdrawn after some days. The two riot leaders were arrested. After that activities could carry on as usual.<sup>244</sup>

When calm had been restored Nyström sent a report of what had happened and thanked the Mandarin for his intervention. He immediately got a reply from the Mandarin, saying:

“... Your letter made me feel ashamed on behalf of my subjects. These Muslims do not know the Mission and its work in the service of Enlightenment and Altruism. So they behave like rabble rousers and defame the Mission, stirring up the population against it. I will however take up your cause so that they will no more dare to attack the Mission. We know you, revered Pastor, and we respect your knowledge and your work for the best of our people. From this moment I will take even greater pains to protect the Mission and exhort the Muslims not to cause any more riots. And it is my hope that you, revered Pastor, will act with necessary prudence not giving them any reason to make a row. This is what I ask you to do, wishing you health and eternal bliss.”<sup>245</sup>

These riots were a temporary break in the hopefulness that had begun to mark the Mission in the mid 1920s. Already in March 1924 Helena Nyström writes about the peace and joy of work. She particularly mentions the work among the women. One young Armenian woman had been in charge of this work for some time, and at the weekly meetings up to 50 women had come together. Some of the women in the parish also took part in these meetings with testimonies and prayer. Practical work was also being carried on. Some 30 women were busy spinning and stitching. The result was socks, mittens,

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<sup>242</sup> Palmer 1942, p. 126 ff. Palmberg in the *Vetlandaposten*, January 17th 1961.

<sup>243</sup> Nyström to the *Missionsförbundet*, December 12th 1923.

<sup>244</sup> Nyström to the Board, January 3rd 1924. The *Dagens Nyheter*, February 19<sup>th</sup>, February 20<sup>th</sup> 1924. When the news cables from Kashgar about unrest in Jarkend reached Sweden, newspapers wrote about “Swedish martyrs in Eastern Turkestan”. One day there was a message about Nyström together with some newly converted Christians having been attacked and dragged away. The following day there was a reassuring message saying that the authorities had re-established order.

<sup>245</sup> From the Mandarin of Jarkend to Nyström, January 28th 1924.

sweaters, shawls, caps, etc.<sup>246</sup> In February the following year Mrs Nyström could report that eight young people, three of them girls, were in baptismal classes.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Helena Nyström to Anna Pettersson, Göteborg, March 3rd 1924.

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