

Missions, Families and the Life Course of Anna Sofie Jakobsen Cheng (1860-1911)



By

Marte Drønen Læg Reid



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Department of AHKR

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Map of central locations in China that are referred to throughout this project:



1. Shanghai
2. Chefoo (Yantai)
3. Hochow. Also spelled Hou Xian and Houzhou in various literatures. Located in the province of Shansi (Shanxi). This Hochow is located between the province capital Taiyuan in the North and Linfen in the South
4. Hunan province
5. Zhengding or Cheng-Ting-Fu, located in Shijiazhuang, Hebei province. Former located in the province of Zhili.

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1 Introduction

My dear Mr Elwin, Your letter on the 17th inst. Has just come to hand, and, in reply, I am very grieved to say that there is some truth in the letter to which you refer. The lady in question is a Norwegian, who came out to China in the early part of '86, and I should imagine is now about 35 years of age. We have done everything in our power to prevent this marriage, and have told her, in the event of her taking such a step, she would be dismissed from the Mission, as we could not possibly sanction such an arrangement.¹

These lines introduce a letter sent from John W. Stevenson, the deputy director of the China Inland Mission (CIM)² to another member of the CIM.³ The person in question is the Norwegian missionary named Anna Jakobsen Cheng⁴ and the topic of discussion was her marriage to a Chinese Christian by the name Cheng Xiuqi.⁵ This marriage seems to reflect a rather dramatic event that, according to this letter, the CIM could not possibly agree to. This marriage led to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's exclusion from the mission organisation she had belonged to for 11 years. This is not the only letter sent in the CIM regarding this marriage; nor did the issue remain within the CIM. Within weeks after the wedding, which according to another letter took place the 26th of July 1898, reactions were issued in *The North China Herald*, a large English newspaper located in Shanghai.⁶ The mere frame for this public debate was the issue regarding intermarriages. Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage caused reactions from a number of people from different origins.

¹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Mr Stevenson's letter to Mr Elwin. August 20th, 1898. No location is listed in this letter.

² The CIM was the organisation Anna Jakobsen Cheng worked for. It was an English non-denominational faith-mission founded by James Hudson Taylor in 1865. Austin (2007): 78. Faith missions emerged out of the Free Church. A 'faith mission' indicated that individuals had to put their trust in God for funds. Cox (2010): 183-184 and Austin (2007): 81. See more under section 3.1.1.

³ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Mr Stevenson's letter to Mr Elwin. August 20th, 1898. No

⁴ Sources have a tendency of referring to men by their surname, and women either by their surname, or their first name. I would like to stay consistent. All individuals are referred to by their last name throughout the analysis. As for Anna Jakobsen Cheng, I will, besides the introduction and the concluding chapter, refer to her as 'Jakobsen', and as she marries Cheng, I will refer to her as 'Jakobsen Cheng'.

⁵ "Cheng Hsiu-chi", 'Cheng Xiaoyu' and "Che'eng" are also used in various representations. In Chinese the surname usually comes first. In order to stay consistent throughout the analysis, I will refer to him by his surname 'Cheng'. All main characters are referred to by their full name in the introduction and the concluding chapter.

⁶ The marriage took place on the 26th of July in Taiyuanfu, Shansi. 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc, J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

Anna Jakobsen Cheng also appears in various missionary literatures as she is identified as one of the two first single Norwegian women to take up missionary work. She was born in Kristiansand in 1860.⁷ Her father, Bernt Tobias Jakobsen, was a timber man⁸, and her mother, Inger Marie Strømme, a housewife.⁹ She grew up as the oldest of four siblings. In 1884, at the age of 24, together with friend and co-worker Sophie Reuter, she became a missionary in the British mission organisation, CIM. Anna Jakobsen Cheng was stationed in the Shanxi¹⁰ province for approximately 11 years.¹¹ In 1889 Anna Jakobsen Cheng married Cheng Xiuqi and was because of this marriage excluded from the CIM.¹²

A more unknown story in Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life is perhaps her and Cheng Xiuqi's decision to continue their missionary activity on their own after their eviction and how they founded their own mission organisation in 1899 named 'Anna Cheng's Mission'.¹³ As a time of uproar arose in China, Anna Jakobsen Cheng, Cheng Xiuqi, and their newborn daughter Mary were forced to escape towards the coast and headed all the way to Norway.¹⁴ After spending approximately two years in Norway, the three of them returned to China in 1902.¹⁵ Here they would continue their missionary work until Anna Jakobsen Cheng died in 1911 and Cheng four years later in 1915.¹⁶

These events are mere fractions of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life. Still they reflect dramatic changes, bravery, personal earthquakes, controversy, and creates curiosity regarding Anna

⁷ State archive, Kristiansand: Church books: Kristiansand, B-11. (1851-1861): 157. 'Anna Sofie, daughter of Bernt Jakobsen and Inger Marie Strømme.'

⁸ The category in the census is "tømmermand". In 1865 he was registered as "timber man", in the census a decade later Bernt Jakobsen appears to have climbed the social ladder as he is registered as a house owner and as a boats timber man. However, it is of course also possible that the information for 1865 was insufficient.

⁹ See for instance: <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01038173010207>, <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01052210000788> and <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01037216000699> (Uploaded 01.02.2015)

¹⁰ This province is mostly referred to as 'Shansi' or 'Shan-si' in various sources. Not to be confused with the neighbour province Shaanxi. This province is identified as 'Shanxi' today, and I will refer to this province as 'Shanxi' throughout this project.

¹¹ Meyer (1929): 33, China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/6/18 China papers-personnel. CIM's register of missionaries 1853-1895, and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 22 and 25. Anna Jakobsen Cheng stayed in Shanxi for approximately 11 years. Sophie Reuter died in 1891. Austin (2007): 385-386.

¹² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33.

¹³ Tiedemann (2009): 120-121.

¹⁴ 'Kina-Uroligheterne' *Fædrelandsvennen*. September 10th, 1900.

¹⁵ Hamburger passagierlisten, 1850-1934. 'Anna Cheng'. www.ancestry.com

¹⁶ 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' From Elisabeth Rasmussen to Brother Barratt. *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2. January 15th, 1912 and Cable (1917): 24.

Jakobsen Cheng's life story. Who was she? I am not the only one who has been curious about Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story, and as Anna Jakobsen Cheng is in the very heart of this master project we need to provide an overview over, first of all, what the current research status is regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story.

1.1 Research status

Identifying research literature that portrays Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story is one thing, but discussing *how* literature has presented Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story is equally important. Therefore we must first review two major distinctions between genres in this context, namely research on mission and missionary literature.

1.1.1 Research on mission and missionary literature

Mission history has been under the scope traditionally from two main angles, namely mission history and missionary literature. Historian Jarle Simensen states that missionary literature has mainly been the work of believers sharing their own missionary experiences and carrying an agenda to promote the Christian image and mission.¹⁷ Biographies have been a main trend within missionary literature. By presenting life courses in a specific way and sharing testimonies of salvations, they reflect, in many ways, homogenous norms and values within missions.¹⁸ Professor of comparative religion Lisbeth Mikaelsson expresses the same opinion by arguing that even though missionary literature may include a vast number of genres, they all serve the purpose of promoting the missionary engagement.¹⁹ Research on mission does not carry these underlying motives.²⁰ However, mission history has on the other hand traditionally been studied through the lens of post-colonial history that focus in on how the presence of foreign actors in China, like missionaries, affected Western perceptions of China.²¹

Recent research on mission history acknowledges the use for both traditions and therefore pulls on both missionary literature and research on mission to reveal the complexity of mission history.

¹⁷ Simensen (2007): 231 - 232.

¹⁸ Mikaelsson (2003): 105-106.

¹⁹ Ibid: 15.

²⁰ Simensen (2007): 231 - 232.

²¹ Fairbank (1974): 445 and Reed (1983): 197-198.

Scholars have approached this complexity of mission history in different ways. For instance, the historian Thoralf Klein has studied how missionaries portrayed a certain image of China to the Western World and studies ‘missionary cases’ to highlight the process of cultural transfer.²² Historian Inger Marie Okkenhaug, sociologist Line Nyhagen Predelli, and Mikaelsson, amongst others, have made gender a focal point in mission history studies.²³ A large body of research literature emphasise that mission history is also a women’s history, and how studying missionaries’ experiences can reveal new and important aspects of mission history.

1.1.2 Current research status on Anna Jakobsen Cheng

It is mainly within the missionary literature genre that Ann Jakobsen Cheng’s story has been portrayed. Mildred Cable’s book *The Fulfilment of a Dream of Pastor Hsi’s* from 1917 portrays Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s missionary work in Shanxi, and shares her personal opinion about Anna Jakobsen Cheng and her work. Moreover, Cable talks about the difficult situation regarding her marriage.²⁴ Eleven years later, in 1928, Ole B. Meyer, a missionary of the Norwegian Mission Society (NMS), publishes a book on protestant mission in Hunan, *Forløperne*, which offers insight on Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s work in Hunan in the 1890s and once again highlight the situation revolving around her marriage.²⁵

Harald Steene Dehlin’s book *Pionerer i skjørt* from 1985 offers an engaging story about Anna Jakobsen Cheng and her co-worker and friend Sophie Reuter’s pioneering work. He provides stories of how the two women became the first Norwegians to take up missionary work. Moreover, he gives detailed description of their life in China and personal reflections from both Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter. Furthermore, Dehlin describes the situation regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi’s marriage, and of Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s final years. Dehlin includes letters allegedly written by Anna Jakobsen Cheng, Sophie Reuter, and other individuals that knew the two of them. However, because Dehlin informs that his story is partly fiction, this book provides some difficulties; it is merely impossible to recognise what is built on factual sources and what is fiction throughout his book.²⁶ It is even more problematic that other research literature mentioning Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s story has

²² Klein (2008): 142-145.

²³ Okkenhaug (2010) and Predelli (2003).

²⁴ Cable (1917): 22-23. Cable was a missionary also stationed in Shanxi. See more under section 1.3.

²⁵ Meyer (1928): 32-33 and Norsk Misjonsleksikon (1967): 911.

²⁶ Dehlin (1985): 8.

Treated Dehlin's story as an authoritative source and has been treated as such for many years.²⁷

However, there are research literatures that do not refer to Dehlin's story as they refer to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story. Historian Linda Benson's publication "Muslims, missionaries and warlords in North-western China" from 2001 refers to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's marriage as a highly controversial issue in a study of the experiences of a fellow missionary of Anna Jakobsen Cheng, Evangeline (Eva) French.²⁸ Historian Alvyin Austin's book *China's millions* from 2007 portrays the story of the China Inland Mission. *China's millions* is an important reference point to CIM's history throughout this project. Austin bases his study on an archive material, moreover on both British and Chinese history making it a valuable source to mission history in China.²⁹ Austin finds it relevant to include Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life story on several occasions. First of all in relation to the Swedish revivalist Fredrik Franson, who Austin claims to have sent both Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter to the CIM.³⁰ Second, that Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter became a part of the Chinese pastor Mr Hsi's work with opium refugees in Shanxi.³¹ Finally Austin discusses the situation regarding her marriage to Cheng Xiuqi.³²

It would seem, as Dehlin's book remained a point of reference regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life in reference to Norwegian mission history until 2013, when historian Ole Bjørn Rongen published a critical review of Dehlin's book. In "Dokumentar, dikting og plagiat. Om framstillinga av dei første norske Kina-misjonærene, Anna Sofie Jakobsen og Sophie Reuter." Rongen is factual and identifies a number of untraceable details. He is forced to question whether Dehlin himself has supplied parts of the story.³³ Rongen does more than criticising Dehlin's book, he also provides an overview of where sources after Anna Jakobsen Cheng can be found. Rongen concludes that due to the current research status on Anna Jakobsen Cheng, her story is in need of a complete do-over.³⁴

²⁷ See for instance Mikaelsson (2003): 131, Eide (2001): 69, and Gittings (2000): 'Lost souls'.
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/aug/05/china.johngittings> (Uploaded 22.03.2015)

²⁸ Benson (2001): 14.

²⁹ Rubinstein (2009): 469.

³⁰ Austin (2007): 319.

³¹ Ibid: 387.

³² Ibid: 390-391. Austin refers to Cheng Xiuqi as 'Ch'eng Hsiu-Chi'.

³³ Rongen (2013): 157-161.

³⁴ Ibid: 162.

Because of the problematic features of Dehlin's book, I cannot regard it as trustworthy and it will serve no purpose to my project.³⁵ Several Norwegian missionary literatures that have made Anna Jakobsen Cheng a part of their work, mainly focusing on how Anna Jakobsen Cheng was the first Norwegian to take up missionary work together with Sophie Reuter.³⁶ Still, bits and pieces are spread in numerous literatures, and as far as I can tell, none has yet systematically collected and reviewed her story.

1.2 Research questions and approach

1.2.1 Stating the thesis

The ambition of this thesis is twofold. First, it aims at locating sources and evaluate these in order to find out as much as possible regarding Jakobsen's life and work as a missionary; *Which sources exist, and what can they tell us about Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course and her work as a missionary in China?*

Attempting to establish answers to this question also implies an active dialogue with existing literature that deals with various aspects of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life. It can also be seen as a response to Rongen's call for a systematic re-examination of sources as well as narratives of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life. This might be easier said than done. The source material after Anna Jakobsen Cheng is fragmented and scattered across numerous archives and other collections. This implies a substantial methodological challenge, not only in terms of not only finding pieces of the jigsaw puzzle and assessing their reliability and validity, but also to acknowledge the limitations – such as when there are no sources or the sources are 'silent'.

Second, the thesis aims at trying to understand how relations, connections and interactions with others influenced Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. More precisely, what I am interested in here is how processes of belonging and alienation influenced Anna Jakobsen Cheng's transnational life experience. In order to do so, I have taken inspiration from recent research literature within mission studies and ask how adopting the concept of missionary families can further our understanding in this respect; *How can the concept of 'missionary*

³⁵ Still, I find it relevant to keep a dialogue with Dehlin's book on a few occasions to compare this literature to other sources.

³⁶ See for instance Asbjørn Frohold's *De Frieevangeliske Forsamlingers Misjon. 75 år.* (1985): 101-103 and Erik Kjebekk's *Verden for Kristus* (1991): 61-62.

families' contribute to further our understanding of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course and her work as a missionary in China?

This research question is intimately linked to the first one, and this is also an example of where I as a historian would have liked to have access to sources that unfortunately most likely no longer exist. More specifically, I do not have access to first hand sources from Anna Jakobsen Cheng that describes intimate relations between her and others. However, I have succeeded in locating a wide range of sources stemming from a web of individuals and networks around Anna Jakobsen Cheng. This will be a recurring theme throughout the thesis, but for now I would like to emphasise that both of the two main research questions have an empirical as well as a conceptual part. As for the latter, the concepts of 'life course' and 'missionary families' demand further explanations.

1.2.2 Approach

The 'new mission history' is marked by its focus on transnationalism.³⁷ Moreover, recent research on missions focus on transnational networks in order to understand the impact of human connections in mission history. The study of networks and transnational ties has opened up for a different approach as it recognises the importance of individuals and institutions that were positioned in-between cultures and nation.

Though life course theory is based on social science it can also be highly relevant in historical contexts. Some of the main principles in life course theory are the principles of time and place, principles of timing, and the principles of linked lives. Sociologist Glen H. Elder reminds us that a life course is always embedded in a larger historical context, and individual trajectories can therefore give insight into the time and place they lived in.³⁸ People make their own choices, however, individuals are also linked to historical contexts, places, timing and people.³⁹ Missionaries and mission organisations were actors that moved across cultural borders and settled in foreign lands with an agenda to transform 'heathen' societies.⁴⁰ The focus on transnational actors and network allows us to discover how missionaries affected

³⁷ Sharkey (2013): 6. Transnational: A generous term where the central tendencies can be identified as: cross border ties and flows. Saunier (2013): 23.

³⁸ Elder Jr. Et al. (2003): 12. Elder also emphasises that consequences of life transitions and events depends on when it occurs in a life course. Furthermore that lives are lived interdependent, and therefore tend to lead to transitions for other people as well. Ibid: 12-13.

³⁹ Ibid: 12-13.

⁴⁰ Austin (2007): 63, 80, and 89

both the countries where they worked as missionaries, and their home countries by portraying one-sided images of cultures. Missionaries carried home based perceptions of what was considered ‘civilised’ and ‘proper’ behaviour and came to construct discourses of difference.⁴¹ Not only did the Western missionaries’ perceptions create ‘otherness’ with respect to culture and racial aspects, it also constructed ideas revolving around ideal gender roles within missions. These ideas generated further ideas of ideal missionary families. Families were supposed to reflect the gospel by displaying high morals and serve as actors of cultivation.⁴² Historian Emily J. Manktelow argues that Christians referred to one another as brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers, and both the mission organisation and personal relationships were identified as a family.⁴³ This family rhetoric provided the frames for what a ‘proper’ family was supposed to look like, and this automatically formed ‘ideas’ regarding its antecedent. Missions found it difficult to accept different types of familial structures and patterned of sexuality because of their homogenous missionary family norms.⁴⁴

Anna Jakobsen Cheng was connected to families, friends and mission organisations throughout her life course. My aim is to study the impact of her connections; one way to explore this is through the analytic concept of missionary families. Though embedded in post-colonial studies, and closely connected to transnational and network studies, the concept of missionary families offer fresh opportunities as it recognise the importance of personal relationships within mission history.⁴⁵

Manktelow stands out as a major reference point to this concept as she offers an innovative study on the complexity of missionary families, and also highlights the importance of including the family aspect in order to understand mission history. The analytic concept of missionary families allows us to view individual connections and institutional connections as families. Moreover, missionary families can reveal aspects from childhood, marriage, and parenthood.⁴⁶ By including gender roles and family hierarchy, Manktelow studies for instance

⁴¹ See for instance Thomas (1994): 142 and Cleall (2012): 29-32.

⁴² Manktelow (2013): 109.

⁴³ Ibid: 11-12. The missionary wife was, according to Manktelow, in many ways perceived within a missionary understanding that was built on a patriarchal hierarchy. The missionary wife was understood through her husband and this was also the case in reference to her public appearance.

Ibid: 56-58.

⁴⁴ Cleall (2012): 34-35.

⁴⁵ Post-colonial studies focus on how foreign actors, such as missionaries, affected both China and their home countries with their presence. Fairbank (1974): 445 and Reed (1983): 197-198.

⁴⁶ Manktelow (2013): 12

how female missionaries were set up for failure, since their obligations were impossible to fulfil.⁴⁷ The missionary field was constantly a place of encounters and frictions between the private and the public, between reality and the ideal.⁴⁸ For instance, the mission organisation Anna Jakobsen Cheng belonged to, the CIM, regarded missionary marriages as important to mission activity. However, unsuitable marriages were regarded as damaging both to the couple and to missionary work.⁴⁹ From the CIM's perspective, there was a clear link between missionary marriages and missionary work and opinions about marriages were formed out of what would be in the best interest of the mission.⁵⁰ In contrary, historian Jeffrey Cox highlights the challenge protestant missions were confronted with in regards to intermarriages. Though mission wanted to disapprove them, they found no theologically foundation to do so.⁵¹

Mantkelow's study causes us to re-consider the importance of families within mission history. However, she is not the only one who emphasises the significance of families within research on mission. Usually *families* are understood by its focus on kinship. However, historian Esme Cleall's defines families as 'a fluid space where people can come and go and where belonging and membership are insecure'⁵² and argues that *families* are *also* constituted by connections and intimacy.⁵³ In essence Cleall releases the family concept from being a strictly biological bond. Cleall claims that families within mission and post-colonial history were a central part of negotiating discourses of 'otherness' and made distinctions between gender, sexuality and race.⁵⁴ Historian and anthropologist Nicholas Thomas argues in his book *Colonialism's culture* that missionaries carried an understanding of the mission as a family.⁵⁵ Because of this, missions were able to include 'natives' into their community as equals and at the same time unite this thinking with the 'natural' family hierarchy.⁵⁶

⁴⁷ Manktelow (2013): 62.

⁴⁸ Ibid: 64.

⁴⁹ The CIM practiced a rule of waiting two years before marrying in the missionary field because 'pre-mature' marriages were damaging both for the couple and to the mission. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM, China Council minutes (1886-1947) CIM/01/03/2: 'Narrative on marriage (1889).

⁵⁰ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/77: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), A.W. Douthwaite. 'Relation of the Marriage Question to Missionary work.' March 16th, 1898.

⁵¹ Cox (2010): 109.

⁵² Cleall (2012): 27.

⁵³ Ibid: 27.

⁵⁴ Ibid: 27.

⁵⁵ Thomas (1994): 98 and 142.

⁵⁶ Ibid: 142. Thomas's main focus is the Colonial project. However, Thomas highlights the family metaphor in order to reveals tension between egalitarian ideas and the hierarchical structure within the mission project that were in some aspects closely linked to the Colonial project. Ibid: 142.

Though there are no ideal or ‘pure’ analytical concepts, we must attempt to adapt the concept of missionary families in a way that can reveal aspects of Anna Jacobsen Cheng’s life course. This will require a concept that can embrace aspects of gender roles and make it possible to discuss how discourses of ‘otherness’ were constructed. Okkenhaug and Predelli are some of the central researchers who have made gender a focal point in mission history studies. Predelli for instance, highlights how mission organisations created new hierarchies that affected aspects of race, gender and class.⁵⁷ Also how missionaries themselves gave up personal standards as they joined mission organisations. This secured order and strengthened the patriarchal principles.⁵⁸ Moreover, Mikaelsson’s doctoral dissertation *Kallets Ekko* also presents aspects highly relevant to my thesis. Mikaelsson performs a critical review of the autobiographies within missionary literature and discusses, amongst others, how these representations created images of themselves and those ‘outside’ the mission culture.⁵⁹

I will work with two categories of the concept of ‘families’ in mission. The first category is missionary families, which focus on kinships and the more intimate connections between its members. The second category is mission families, which represent the non-kinship families and focuses on the institutional aspects. These categories make up an analytic construction that can capture some aspects of Anna Jacobsen Cheng’s experiences, but they are not meant to embrace every part. However, I find this analytical construction highly relevant for this project, as missionary families and mission family overlap on many levels. For instance, since Anna Jacobsen Cheng’s community in Kristiansand can be understood as a missionary family, and the CIM can be regarded as a mission family, we can study how these families connected through joint relationships. Since it was in many ways the many missionary families that made up mission families, this can also highlight the importance of missionary families as a space where gender roles and power relationships could be re-defined.

In addition, this construction may also reveal how mission families, in this case the CIM, was able to include anyone in their mission, regardless of gender, race and class. However, the CIM still found intermarriages unacceptable because such marriages did not fit with their understanding of what a missionary family should consist of. This overlapping dynamic between missionary families and mission families can highlight aspects regarding how the

⁵⁷ Predelli (2003): 23.

⁵⁸ Ibid: 28.

⁵⁹ Mikaelsson (2003): 16-17.

CIM was able to inspire a number of people to join their mission, and how the CIM transferred their mission family principles to missionary families and thus caused divergence.

Further, I have chosen to focus in on three central perspective of the missionary families concept that will function as analytical tools to better comprehend the complexity of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. These perspectives are: connections, hierarchies and plural identities.

First of all, this concept allows us to study the impact of *close connections* in mission history. Historian Pierre-Yves Saunier reminds us that linages between people, communities and instructions are needed in order to form a passage between them.⁶⁰ By establishing transnational networks, people and ideas can travel in-between and across nations, societies and polities.⁶¹ For instance, faith missions opened up for people from all social classes have a more active role in missions.⁶²

The second perspective narrows in on how *family hierarchies* constructed discourses of difference regarding race and gender. The mission project was based on the understanding that God created all people equal, regardless of race and gender. Salvation was available for all, no matter the cultural or social background. However, though missions were built on this foundation, another part of the mission project was the shared understanding that Christians were different and separate from non-believers. Non-believers were regarded as 'heathen' and were for that reason kept outside the Christian community. The mission therefore needed to provide the opportunity for the 'heathen' to become part of the Christian family.⁶³ Missionaries can be identified to have carried dualistic attribute, as they believed all were equal in terms of personal value, and at the same time identified a hierarchy based on an understanding of how families should ideally function. The mission family rhetoric also labelled their 'otherness' by putting labels on what a 'proper' family should look like.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Saunier studies transnationalism and highlights different transnational roles. See for instance Saunier (2013): 21 and 41-43.

⁶¹ Ibid: 35.

⁶² Only women with education were accepted as missionaries in the Norwegian mission societies. Faith missions therefore provided new opportunities for women from all classes to join, as they were qualified for mission through their personal 'calling', and not in regards to education. Skeie (2014): 71-71. See more on under section 3.1.1 and 3.2.2.

⁶³ Thomas (1994): 142.

⁶⁴ See for instance Thomas (1994): 142 and Cleall (2012): 29-32.

Questions' revolving around *Plural identities* is the final perspective of missionary families. Missionaries were tied to both national and local activities, lived in-between different cultures, and could thus be identified to have gained several identities. Professor of religion Stephen C. Berkwitz claims that a response to missionaries' understanding and 'exclusive' truths was hybridity.⁶⁵ Mission affected missionaries and 'natives' and this encounter resulted in new understandings of the Christian faith. In addition, it caused formation of new compounds that might have been perceived as both unfamiliar and threatening to the hierarchical structures within mission organisations.⁶⁶ An example of this might be the CIM's reaction to Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage. CIM feared that all female missionaries were in danger because of this marriage.⁶⁷

Though the concept of missionary families in theory provides the opportunity to embrace all life stages, it might not be fully adaptable to understand all aspects of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. Therefore this study aims at testing the latest trend within research on mission and discuss if this concept is transferrable to a life course study.

1.2.3 Delimitation

This project aims at mapping Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course, and because of this, the time frame is primary set to her lifetime from 1860 to 1911. Yet, I find it useful to extend the span a few years beyond 1911 to explore sources that may provide insight on what happened to her family and to include aspects of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's legacy.

1.3 Sources

On the basis of the current research status we have established that Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story is in need of a revision. Since sources are scattered and found in numerous of genres this section will discuss, not only what sources that will be of use and why, but also any challenges they may present.

Written sources are the main area I can obtain information from, as relatives or others that may have information about Anna Jakobsen Cheng have been difficult to trace. The most

⁶⁵ Berkwitz (2013): 118.

⁶⁶ Ibid: 118- 119.

⁶⁷ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor's letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

important sources in my project consist, first of all, of a private archive from Elisabeth Rasmussen held at the State archive in Kristiansand and diary and letters from Sophie Reuter published in the book *Fra herlighed til herlighed* edited by Abraham Grimsvedt.⁶⁸ Elisabeth Rasmussen was Anna Jakobsen Cheng's employer and long-time friend. In her reminiscences she describes incidents from Anna Jakobsen Cheng's upbringing all the way to her death. Elisabeth Rasmussen is the only source that gives account from Anna Jakobsen Cheng's early years, and also the situation regarding her death.⁶⁹ This makes her reminiscences, and also other contributions made by Elisabeth Rasmussen highly relevant in mapping Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. Still, Elisabeth Rasmussen wrote her reminiscences in the 1920s, many years after Anna Jakobsen Cheng's death. This may have made her able to direct and select her story carefully from beginning to end.

Her missionary travel partner and friend Sophie Reuter's diary edited by Grimstvedt reflects incidents from Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life from the time they met at the Rasmussen household to their arrival in China. Diaries are often written day-by-day and therefore different from reminiscences, as diaries are much closer to events in time. However, This diary from Sophie Reuter is edited. I have made attempts at finding the original diary and letters that Grimstvedt refers to, but I have not been able to locate these throughout this project.⁷⁰

It has been a challenge to find sources directly from Anna Jakobsen Cheng and the few I have located are either found in missionary literature, missionary magazines, or newspapers. It is however clear that Anna Jakobsen Cheng must have kept a journal, since some of her notes are published in books and missionary magazines. Moreover, every missionary of the CIM was required to keep a diary.⁷¹ Anna Jakobsen Cheng also wrote a considerable amount of letters, however, locating originals has proven difficult as well. I have been in contact with

⁶⁸ Depot 818, State archive, Kristiansand and Grimstvedt (2014).

⁶⁹ Rasmussen describes the situation of Jakobsen Cheng's death in an article printed in the pentecostal missionary magazine *Korsets Seier*. 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Changs hjemgang' *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2. January 15th, 1912.

⁷⁰ I have been in contact with a researcher who has published a book about Abraham Grimstvedt and Abraham's brother. However, he had not located these original sources either. There might be relatives that know more about these sources, but I have not been able to find them throughout this project. Kjell Dahlene (1983) *Plymouth Brethren – i norsk kristenliv*. However, there are source materials after Sophie Reuter at the Cambridge Centre for Christianity worldwide. This collection consists of letters from 1889-1891. <http://www.mundus.ac.uk/cats/17/279.htm> (uploaded 14.05.2015) I have not had the opportunity to do research in this archive throughout this project.

⁷¹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 33.

several institutions in search of original sources from Anna Jakobsen Cheng, such as the Norwegian Lutheran Mission archive, the Egede institute, the Norwegian Lutheran mission, and Ansgar Theological seminary to mention a few. Moreover, I have been in touch with several researchers and individuals that might have known more about where material after Anna Jakobsen Cheng could be found, but unfortunately, nothing has come up.⁷²

Due to this status of sources, my primary discoveries are mostly from friends and other individuals in her network. Here the most important ones are the source material from Elisabeth Rasmussen, Sophie Reuter and the CIM archive. Furthermore, finding information about Cheng Xiuqi has been proven difficult. In some narratives he is completely left out of.⁷³ The available sources are predominantly Western and seem to be highly focused on Anna Jakobsen Cheng's experiences. Some literatures do include Cheng Xiuqi, however, only on a brief note.

Another important source in the project consists of a letter collection from the CIM archive at The School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) in London. I have had the opportunity to visit this archive on two occasions in order to search for sources. The letter collection presents my main discoveries from the CIM archive as it shows correspondences from within the leadership of the CIM where Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's marriage is discussed. There is also a letter sent from James Hudson Taylor, the leader and founder of the CIM, directly to Anna Jakobsen Cheng, where he reflects his own opinion of the marriage.⁷⁴ These letters are found in Hudson Taylor's private collection. This collection is one of the main sources that offer insight on the controversial situation regarding Jakobsen Cheng's marriage in 1898 that led to her exclusion from the CIM.

Additional sources to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's marriage are the multitudes of responses published in the English-language written newspaper *The North China Herald*. This

⁷² I have been in contact with, amongst others, Ingrid Eskilt at Ansgar theological Seminar, Bjørg Seland at UIA, Ole Bjørn Rongen at UIS, Knut Sunde from Guds menighet på Vegårshei, Erling Ludeby from the NLM archive, Jette Bonnevie who also have done research on Anna Jacobsen Cheng, and Harald Steene Dehlin's family, who have all been of great help throughout this project. However, additional information about Anna Jakobsen Cheng's diary and letters remains obscure.

⁷³ An example of this is for instance that Cheng Xiuqi seems to suddenly appear as Anna Jakobsen Cheng and he announce their engagement, and stories revolving around Anna Jakobsen Cheng's death where Cheng Xiuqi is completely left out. See for instance Austin (2007): 390 and 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' From Elisabeth Rasmussen to Brother Barratt. *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2. January 15th, 1912. See more under section 5.2.

⁷⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor's letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

newspaper covers the history of the so-called treaty century (1842-1943) in China. As it was published in Shanghai, it was set in the centre of foreign activity and of trade, politics, and economy. This makes it a vital source that can provide insight into the contemporary time and conditions Anna Jakobsen Cheng lived in and under. *The North China Herald* aimed at covering all foreign presence in China, including missions, and could therefore provide a news stream of births, photos, political activity, marriages and rumours.⁷⁵ *The North China Herald* is available at the University Library of Bergen in a fully digitalised version covering all the years the newspaper was published.⁷⁶

From July to August 1898, *The North China Herald* printed several letters regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng's marriage to Cheng Xiuqi. This debate displayed harsh disagreements. In fact, the response was so overwhelming that the editors had to put this discussion to an end.⁷⁷ *The North China Herald* is a valuable source to my study as it reflects a wide range of responses to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's marriage.

Elisabeth Rasmussen's reminiscences and Sophie Reuter's diaries, together with the letters at the CIM archive and the correspondence issued in *The North China Herald* constitutes the most important sources throughout this project. However, there are also several missionary magazines and Norwegian newspapers that offers insight on Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. Moreover, digital censuses and registrations that make it possible to identify for instance Jakobsen Cheng's year of birth and when she, Cheng Xiuqi and their daughter Mary visited Norway (1900-1902).

The CIM archive at SOAS also holds records and minutes from its funding in 1866 onwards, and keeps copies of CIM's missionary magazine *China's millions* and the *Chinese Recorder*. Both these magazines were centred on mission activities in China, although *China's millions* generally focused on the CIM.

From the time Anna Jakobsen Cheng, Cheng Xiuqi, and their daughter visited Norway in 1900 until her death in 1911, there are less sources available compared to earlier stages of her

⁷⁵ <http://www.brill.com/products/online-resources/north-china-herald-online> (Uploaded 01.02.2015)

⁷⁶ Until recently, a complete version of this newspaper has been difficult to obtain in Europe, let alone a full coverage. However, this all changed after Brill publishers digitalised the newspaper, making it possible for individuals and institutions to either purchase it outright or to pay an annual subscription.

⁷⁷ 'The mixed missionary marriage'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

life. Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi completely vanish from records within the CIM after their marriage and as the debate regarding their marriage in *The North China Herald* dimmed down; there are no more tracks after them there either. However, Elisabeth Rasmussen offers some information of this part of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life, and so does a few of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's missionary co-workers as Mildred Cable from the CIM and Ellen Søyland, who belonged to a Pentecostal mission, together with some publications from Anna Jakobsen Cheng in different missionary magazines.⁷⁸

The available sources reflect opportunities, but also some display a need for a further discussion of what kind of sources they are and how historians can make use of them. I find it beneficial to divide the sources into three main categories, namely; private papers, missionary magazines, and newspapers. However, it must be mentioned that to some degree these divisions do overlap, as personal letters, which may be regarded as private papers, can be found in missionary magazines and newspapers. One may also regard the three categories as representing different levels of publicity because each of them aimed for a specific audience. Let us take a further look on what we may expect from these different genres.

1.3.1 Private papers

Diaries, reminiscences, and letters are private and semiprivate papers in this mission context. For this reason these papers can provide a very different side to a story than for example newspaper articles that are meant for a different audience.⁷⁹ A diary may be at some levels even more personal, as they might make reflections meant for the author only. One example of how private papers can provide 'inside' information is through Sophie Reuter's diary. Elisabeth Rasmussen claims in her reminiscences that Sophie Reuter was reluctant to become a missionary because of her mother, but through further conversation with her mother, she decided to become a missionary. It almost seems to Elisabeth Rasmussen, as it was God's intervention that made both Sophie Reuter and Anna Jakobsen Cheng take up missionary work.⁸⁰ However, in Sophie Reuter's own diary she makes a comment, as she was about to leave Kristiansand that she wished her mother had hindered her from becoming a

⁷⁸ Austin (2007): 388 and Bundy (2009): 228.

⁷⁹ Tosh (2006): 74-75.

⁸⁰ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25.

missionary.⁸¹ This may serve as an illustration of the difference between the content in a diary, which is written close to the event, and what is written in retrospect.

In this more personal genre one must therefore ask important questions such as why and when a particular diary, reminiscences, or letter was written, and whom it was meant for.⁸² We must bear in mind that Elisabeth Rasmussen, for instance, expresses her own personal story of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life and because we know through additional sources that Elisabeth Rasmussen was a devoted Christian who supported mission activity, we can assume that Elisabeth Rasmussen also spoke in favour of the mission and wanted Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story to revolve around God's faithfulness from beginning to end. Therefore, knowing the genre of these specific sources is crucial in understanding the purpose of their messages.⁸³

Letters sent within the CIM were either directed to one individual or many, they were perhaps intended for members of the CIM only. Someone outside the CIM, and without an understanding of why these letters were sent, can easily risk to misinterpret the information. Letters and records within the CIM allow insight into their activities and what they as an institution found important. Another example that illustrates the difference of private papers to for instance contributions made in newspapers, is, as previously quoted, the deputy director of the CIM, John. W. Stevenson's response to Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's wedding. In a personal letter to a Mr Elwin, Stevenson clearly expresses his deepest frustration and discontent regarding the wedding. He does this for instance by telling Mr Elwin that they did everything in their power to prevent this marriage from taking place, stating that it was impossible for the CIM to consent to such an arrangement.⁸⁴ A few weeks after Stevenson wrote this letter, he responded to a reaction to the wedding in *The North China Herald*. Here it seems like Stevenson's top priority is to defend the CIM's actions in regards to the marriage.⁸⁵ Though the issue was the same; the purpose behind it and the audience were of a different character.

⁸¹ Grimstedt (1914): 43.

⁸² Andresen, Rosland, Ryymin and Skålevåg (2012): 77-79.

⁸³ Ibid: 77.

⁸⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Mr Stevenson's letter to Mr Elwin. August 20th, 1898. No location is listed in this letter.

⁸⁵ 'The mixed missionary marriage'. 'I am, etc, A Chinese'. *The North China Herald*. September 12th, Volume 1898, Issue 1623: 494.

1.3.2 Missionary magazines

Missionary material consists of both published material and archive material. Missionary magazines are published material that may be identified to give insight on the missionaries' most important activities, and are written to promote missionary engagement.⁸⁶ Historian of comparative Religion Karina Hestad Skeie claims that regardless of what kind of situation the missionaries found themselves in, they all wrote very similar stories in the excerpts printed in missionary magazines.⁸⁷ In many ways, published material reflects the mission's ideology.⁸⁸ Further Skeie argues that in order to make use of the published missionaries' material as historical documents, we must bear in mind the connection between the mission's ideology and the content.⁸⁹ Mikaelsson, who has studied missionary literature, mentions Dehlin's book in order to illustrate the balance between 'personal' and 'public' information in this genre.⁹⁰ Dehlin is very detailed about Anna Jakobsen Cheng's personal emotions. This seems to be quite unique since aspects of marriage and personal relations are, according to Mikaelsson, close to taboo within published missionary material.⁹¹

Missionary magazines are representations meant for specific audiences. People who supported the mission financially or with prayer read missionary magazines and one may regard the purpose of these magazines was to focus on and track mission activity. However, one may argue that this was done on the basis of how missionary magazines wanted to appear. Missionary magazines were edited, which indicates that the published information was screened. CIM's own magazine, *China's millions*, was according to Austin edited by Hudson Taylor himself, in fact, Austin claims that Hudson Taylor would sometimes even re-write information to improve the message.⁹²

Austin argues further that the magazine was driven by the slogan 'only sell success' and thus displayed the progress of the mission.⁹³ One may argue that the most important contributions from missionaries living in China was to testify of God's 'divine' intervention in the field. Therefore, daily activities may not have been a high priority to Hudson Taylor. Austin

⁸⁶ Austin (2007): 25-26 and Cox (2008): 112.

⁸⁷ Skeie (2008): 91-92.

⁸⁸ Ibid: 91-93.

⁸⁹ Ibid: 93.

⁹⁰ Mikaelsson (2003): 131.

⁹¹ Ibid: 131. However, issues regarding marriage and other personal reflections are found in a regular manner within the archive collection through letters and other correspondences.

⁹² Austin (2007): 25-26.

⁹³ Ibid: 26.

encourages a focus on what *China's millions* leaves out rather than what it *does* reflect in order to discover more of its agenda. There is no personal information, or information of other foreign or Chinese residents. Moreover, as other missionary magazines, it remained silent regarding any conflicts and personal discontent they might have had. For Austin, it would seem as this magazine attempted to create an alternative reality by carefully selecting how the CIM was to be represented.⁹⁴ There are numerous reports written by Anna Jakobsen Cheng from the times she serves as a missionary on behalf of the CIM, especially in the CIM magazine *China's millions*, but also in miscellaneous Norwegian missionary magazines. Even though Anna Jakobsen Cheng wrote contributions to *China's millions*, we must keep in mind that her stories were represented by the CIM and Hudson Taylor, who edited *China's millions*. Another publication that is relevant to mention is *The Chinese Recorder*, which was a missionary journal written in English.⁹⁵ Both *The Chinese Recorder* and *China's millions* were publications directed towards Christian communities.

The most central publications missionary material that mentions Anna Jakobsen Cheng are *Korsets Seier*, *Kinas venn*, *Missionæren*, *China's millions*, *Kristelig budbringer* and *Det gode budskap*.⁹⁶ These sources are all missionary material that provides a very one-sided image of missionaries. The highest priority seems to be the progress of the mission and the hope to engage more people to contribute. Jakobsen Cheng's contribution allegedly consists of excerpts from her own diary, reports from missionary activity and travel records.⁹⁷ Once again, there is a minimal amount of personal reflections, by once again referring to Mikaelsson, is not uncommon within published missionary material.⁹⁸

The Norwegian magazines are located at different private archives and collections. Ansgar Theological School in Kristiansand has reserved several issues from both *Missionæren* and *Kristelig budbringer*. Issues of the Pentecostal magazine *Korsets Seier* were available by request at the National Library in Norway. I received relevant articles from *Det gode budskap* directly from Guds Menighet Vegårshei, the Christian institution that edits this missionary

⁹⁴ Austin (2007): 26-27.

⁹⁵ Bays (2012): 70.

⁹⁶ In addition, I have searched through many editions of NLM's missionary magazine *Kineseren*, from 1895-1904, however, I was not able to locate information about Anna Jakobsen Cheng.

⁹⁷ See for instance: *China's millions* (1889): 'Shan-si Province. From Miss Jakobsen': 55 and *Kinas Venn*. Number 4. 'fra Anna Jakobsen. Efter *China's millions*' Dated April 1890.

⁹⁸ Mikaelsson (2003): 131.

magazine. *Kinas venn* was available at Norsk Luthersk Misjonssamband's (NLM) archive in Oslo.

On the basis of what we have highlighted regarding missionary magazines, we can claim that all missionary magazines carried a motive to spread the Christian message and motivate people to contribute. Moreover, these magazines provided a consistency that could help maintain the linkages that made up the ideology of the mission.⁹⁹ These circuits would be immensely influential as they tied missionaries to their home countries. In some sense making missionaries feel closer to home with respect to understandings and perceptions than to the place they served as missionaries.¹⁰⁰

With reference to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's contributions one might say that missionary magazines, especially *China's millions*, represented what they ideally wanted to be and do. As Austin states, it might be relevant to ask what the missionary magazines do not say. Nothing can be found of Jakobsen Cheng's marriage, or her leaving the mission. There was no room for personal reflections. Missionary magazines may thus be regarded as normative sources that reflect how they wanted to appear and do not necessarily describe what actually happened.¹⁰¹

It is relevant identifying what kind of information about Jakobsen Cheng is located where. An example is the case regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng's marriage. This issue was avoided in both *China's millions* and *The Chinese Recorder*; however, it was widely discussed in *The North China Herald*, which exemplifies Mikaelsson's point about what type of information that is printed in published missionary material.

Professor of international studies Benedict Anderson describes how the Christian imagination was very visual and how rhetoric was used to build up certain images. Skeie also emphasises on how this notion of 'imagined communities' can help understand the transnational missionary network.¹⁰² Missionary magazines, but also newspapers became a powerful tool to

⁹⁹ Tosh (2006): 66-67.

¹⁰⁰ The sharp distinction made between 'nation' and 'colony' by the imperialistic actors contributed both to class and racial divisions. Anderson (2006): 15, 24 and 109-111.

¹⁰¹ Cox (2008): 112. In this example Cox emphasises on British perceptions.

¹⁰² Skeie (2014): 77.

construct ‘imaged communities’ as they could provide a homogeneous thinking and logic constructions to a community.¹⁰³

1.3.3 Newspapers

Historian John Tosh describes the press as an important published primary source, as it provides news regularly.¹⁰⁴ This opens up opportunities for studying trends, opinions and changes in a period of time. Newspapers cover far more than political material. Their focus on social matters make them sources for discovering general opinions and serve as official sources recording day-to-day activities.¹⁰⁵

Besides the large international newspaper *The North China Herald*, there are also a few Norwegian newspapers that reflect parts of Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s life course. *Fædrelandsvennen*, the regional newspaper in Kristiansand, covers a wide variety of news from both inside and outside of the local community. It was far from uncommon that cases linked to missionary activity in China were published in *Fædrelandsvennen*. These could consist of reports, letters or excerpts of diaries from missionaries. In 1900 *Fædrelandsvennen* published one article from Anna Jakobsen Cheng where she describes an intense escape from the Boxer rebellion and how they were able to make it all the way to Kristiansand.¹⁰⁶ Though this contribution from Anna Jakobsen Cheng is printed in the local newspaper in Kristiansand, the content is very similar to the classic missionary material printed in missionary magazines. The Oslo based newspaper *Aftenposten* must also be mentioned, since this publication, like *Fædrelandsvennen*, provides a stream of domestic and international news. One advertisement from 1901 informs us that Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi were visiting Christiania to preach. Anna Jakobsen Cheng is listed as the interpreter.¹⁰⁷

1.4 Structure

As this project’s empirical part aims at mapping and reviewing sources to Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s life course, the chapters will be presented chronologically. I will present her life course in three main chapters that each reflects a major shift or a transition.

¹⁰³ Anderson (2006): 24-25.

¹⁰⁴ Tosh (2006): 66-67.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid: 66. In this section he uses British publications as the main example.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina’. *Fædrelandsvennen* November 7th, 1900 and ‘Kina Uroligheterne’ *Fædrelandsvennen* September 10th, 1900.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Vennekredsen’ advertisement, September 15th, 1901.

The first chapter will map Anna Jakobsen Cheng's early years until she became a part of the CIM in 1886. Moreover, this chapter aims at discussing how Jakobsen's community and local family made it possible for her to take up missionary work in a time with limited space for women in the public sphere.

The second chapter will outline the course of events that led to Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage and consequently also their eviction from the CIM. Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage is in the very centre of this chapter and is by far the most controversial event throughout Anna Jakobsen Cheng's lifetime. There are no other situations that even come close to offering the richness of sources than what is available regarding this marriage. On the basis of the many controversial reactions reflected throughout these sources, this chapter aims at discussing how this marriage was different in a Chinese context. Moreover, explore how she because of her marriage diverted from what the CIM expected from her as a missionary.

The third chapter focus in on Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life after her marriage to Cheng Xiuqi in 1898 until her death in 1911. Though this couple now were separated from the CIM, they still continued the missionary work on their own. She broke her bonds with CIM, but she was still a missionary, still a Norwegian, and now she had also become a Chinese citizen as she had married Cheng Xiuqi. This chapter will examine how, and if, we can understand Anna Jakobsen Cheng's 'new' situation as a new missionary family.

The concluding chapter will summarise the most important results throughout this analysis. However, this conclusion will also undertake a critical review of the analytic concept of missionary families and discuss if this concept has given the level of abstraction and the means necessary to understand Jakobsen Cheng's life course. In addition, this final part of this project also consists of an epilogue that will explore Anna Jakobsen Cheng's legacy. Moreover review if there have been any attempts of rehabilitating her story.

Before embarking onto this analysis of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course, I find it relevant to give an overview of how Protestant missions in China began and to present a major institution in Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life, namely the CIM.

2 Protestant missions in China

2.1 The beginning of Protestant missions in China

China operated with a policy that restricted foreigners' access from the early 18th century and until the 19th century. Only the port city of Guangzhou, Canton was open to foreign traders under strict regulations, though only in trading seasons. The rest of the year foreigners had to revert to Macau. A Jesuit¹⁰⁸ successfully crossed the Chinese boarder and settled in Guangzhou in the 1580s.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the Qing¹¹⁰ dynasty banned Christianity from China in 1724 and the ban lasted until the 1840s.¹¹¹ Both the historians Joanna Waley-Cohan and Odd Arne Westad argue that the main reason for the banishment of Christianity was the Pope's renouncement of all Chinese religions.¹¹² Condemning the Chinese religions was to the Qing the same as condemning Chinese customs and culture. Confucianism and Daoism emphasised on respect for its ancestries and on moral principles, and were both an integral part of the Chinese culture. The Pope's proclaim was an attempt to control the Chinese Catholics, demanding them to omit all other religions than Christianity. This caused several disputes between the emperor and the Pope, especially between 1707 and 1742.¹¹³

Moreover, the emperor viewed Catholics more and more as a threat towards the order of the empire. There was an increasing fear that these 'new' religious tendencies would lead to a foreign invasion. As the Youngsheng Emperor (1723-1736) ascended the throne he made the choice to discard all Catholics. It must be mentioned that a few Christians, who offered useful assistance to the Emperor's court, were allowed to stay.¹¹⁴ Even though Christianity was outlawed, and the Western World was of less importance after 1724, it did not mean that Qing

¹⁰⁸ Jesuits: A catholic branch. Bays (2012): 19.

¹⁰⁹ Bays (2012): 20-21. By this time, Buddhism was already an integrated part of Chinese culture. As Buddhism was introduced in China at an earlier stage as well, Buddhism had fewer competitors. Only Daoism was a 'threat', however, since Daoism did not include a 'salvation' plan for all, Buddhism gained momentum. Christianity was tolerated in China until 1724, when the Chinese emperor, banished all foreign Catholics from China and ordered all Chinese Christians to cast off their faith. Waley-Cohan states further that even though the Jesuit identified a clear distinction between Christianity and Buddhism, the Chinese made use of the Christian God as they valued gods merely as 'helpers' to provide needs Waley-Cohan (1999): 87-91 and 80-82.

¹¹⁰ The Qing dynasty ruled in China from 1644 to 1912. Westad (2012): 6.

¹¹¹ Bays (2012): 32. The Qing dynasty ruled in China from 1644- 1912.

¹¹² See for instance Westad (2012): 11 and Waley-Cohan (1999): 87.

¹¹³ Waley-Cohan (1999): 75-77.

¹¹⁴ Ibid: 87.

China was closed for all foreign trade and diplomacy. In fact, China continued their foreign affairs with, amongst others, Central Asia and Russia.¹¹⁵

Robert Morrison (1782-1834) of the London Missionary Society (LMS) is referred to as the pioneer of Protestant missions in China.¹¹⁶ Morrison's protestant belief was that all people should have a bible in their own language, including the Chinese.¹¹⁷ He embarked on studying the Chinese language, even though it was forbidden for foreigners to learn the language, and began translating the bible into Chinese. Morrison spent much time in Macau, as missionaries could not reside in China. However, his knowledge of the Chinese language enabled him to work for officials, a role that also allowed him to gain access to Guangzhou for shorter stays. Morrison arrived in Guangzhou for the first time in 1807.¹¹⁸ He completed the Chinese version of the New Testament in 1814, and five years later he had translated the entire bible.¹¹⁹ Even though Morrison entered China in 1807, it would still take another fifty years before China was 'opened' for foreigners. The ban of Christianity would withhold until the 1840s as the events that followed throughout the Opium Wars forced the Qing to re-open Chinese borders to the West.¹²⁰

2.2 The 'opening' of China

Westad identifies China as a large category that has carried different meanings at different times throughout history. Westad claims that China historically has been an empire with undefined borders and therefore identifies China in reference to the contemporary ruling dynasty.¹²¹ Historian Thoralf Klein also emphasises that "China" is an elusive term that has changed its attributes over time.¹²² Waley-Cohen states that 'China' may refer to a vast number of regional differences and the borders that are present in China today were quite different in the 18th century.¹²³ Klein and Waley-Cohen argues that although China is a large

¹¹⁵ Westad (2012): 9.

¹¹⁶ See for instance Skeie (2014): 63 and Bays (2012): 41.

¹¹⁷ Bays (2012): 43-44.

¹¹⁸ Ibid: 41-45. One of the companies that Morrison worked for was the East India Company.

¹¹⁹ Harbakk (2004): 417. It was not all-out translated.

¹²⁰ Bays (2012): 32.

¹²¹ Westad (2012): 3-5.

¹²² Klein (2009): 141-142.

¹²³ Waley-Cohen (1999): 8-9.

category, one must be able to refer to ‘China’ as an entity, keeping in mind the variables that have changed over time.¹²⁴

Even though China tolerated religions, both domestic and foreign, all were obligated to followed rules within the Empire. Waley-Cohen argues that the suspicions from the Chinese emperors towards Christianity as being a rebellious religion would cause a more restrained relationship between Christians and Chinese rulers. This view was rooted in, amongst other causes, that Jesus in his lifetime confronted and broke boundaries that were set by the ruling power. In many ways, Western Christianity completely differed from the Chinese culture. Views on how the society should be socially organised was fundamentally different. This would include religious practice and the seriousness of breaking with Chinese moralities and laws, which from the Chinese side would indicate a lack of understanding of how the Chinese hierarchy functioned.¹²⁵ Also, the requirement to accept the Christian God alone in order to receive salvation was difficult to comprehend for the Chinese people. According to Waley-Cohen, Buddhism was more able to find common ground with the Chinese culture.¹²⁶

2.3 The Opium Wars and the treaties that followed

To explain China’s decline during the 19th century by focusing of relations between China and the West alone would be a simplification of a much more complex set of events. Yes, there was an external, but also an internal explanation for China’s decay. With limited economy, and more domestic uproars, they had their hands full and were not able to adapt fast enough to the rapid changes throughout the 19th century.¹²⁷

The disputes regarding opium developed gradually in the beginning of the 19th century, thus reflecting tension between external and internal pressure for the Qing state. The Qing emperor, Daoguang (1820-1840), began a war on drugs as he observed that abusers were careless about their own wellbeing, and moreover, the empire’s wellbeing. Opium made people less loyal, which Daoguang is said to have considered as a direct threat to the Qing Empire. Waley-Cohen argues that opium caused distress for the whole of China. Even though opium had been banned from the empire in 1796, the Qing was unable to stop smuggling

¹²⁴ Ibid: 9 and Klein (2009): 142.

¹²⁵ Waley-Cohen (1999): 84-86.

¹²⁶ Ibid: 90-91.

¹²⁷ See for instance Waley-Cohen (1999): 132-135 and Westad (2012): 19-20.

across the Chinese boarder.¹²⁸ This signalled, first of all, that opium continued to doze Chinese abusers and second, that foreign traders did not respect restrictions made by the Qing. Knowing this, Daoguang took what both Westad and Waley-Cohen describe to be a bold move and demanded foreign traders in Guangzhou to end the smuggling, however, the British authorities refused. As the Qing Empire now presented a threat to British interest in China, Britain answered with war.¹²⁹

The Opium Wars were fought between 1839-1842 and 1856-1860.¹³⁰ These two wars, including the run-up and the treaties that followed, have been widely debated and they have traditionally been studied through a post-colonial approach. These Eurocentric studies of China show a tendency to construct stereotypes, creating images of China as being inward looking and isolated. However, contemporary historians have made an effort in reprovng these Eurocentric perspectives.¹³¹ There is still certainly a great variety of how researches perceive these complex wars, but here I am interested in highlighting central contemporary research literature on the Opium Wars. As this project revolves around missionary activity in China, more specifically Jakobsen's life course, the priority here is to outline possible consequences of these wars in reference to missions in China. The first step in this process will be to discuss the treaties that followed after the first opium war in 1842, namely the Nanjing Treaty and its successors.¹³² The most important consequence of the First Opium War was the further opening of China for foreign presence.

According to Westad and Waley-Cohen, China lost the First Opium War due to Britain's superior naval power and military strategies, as well as the lack of strong Chinese leadership during the reigns of the Jiaqing (1796-1820)¹³³ and the Daoguang Emperors.¹³⁴ Waley-Cohen argues that China grew militarily strong after the first Opium War, even though they lost the war, as they adopted Western technologies and gained knowledge about their opponents'

¹²⁸ Waley-Cohen (1999): 140-141

¹²⁹ Westad (2012): 39-42 and Waley-Cohen (1999): 142.

¹³⁰ Ibid: 140 and 162.

¹³¹ Brautaset (2014): 26-27.

¹³² The Nanjing treaties were negotiated between Britain and the Qing Empire. The Nanjing treaty was the first of many treaties that followed after the first opium war. Hirono (2008): 75.

¹³³ The years in brackets refer to their reigns, not the lifespan of the Emperors.

¹³⁴ See for instance Westad (2012): 41-43. Waley-Cohen emphasises that this did not mean that Qing China possessed less complex and less developed military strategies. The Chinese military inhabited remarkable skills in changing, adapting and improving their operations. Moreover, China's defensive strongholds, made it immensely difficult for British forces to seize cities. Waley-Cohen (1999): 145-146.

weaknesses. She also identifies the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 as a clear setback for China in their conflict with the Western powers.¹³⁵

The Treaty of Nanjing opened up new port cities, such as Shanghai and Ningbo, which were now open to foreign settlement, foreign missionaries included.¹³⁶ The China inland was still strictly forbidden for all foreigners and was considered by many Westerners as dangerous territory. However, after the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858, this prohibition would be brought to an end. This treaty gave French missionaries the right to travel anywhere in the interior of the country. This opportunity to travel to the inland also benefitted the English and the Americans, as they could settle outside the port cities.¹³⁷ The Treaty of Tientsin also gave Christian missionaries the right to build churches and hospitals.

As the Second Opium War broke loose, America and France joined forces with Britain. They all desired more influence and control in China and found reasons to justify their hostility towards China.¹³⁸ China, now also riddled by a bloody civil war known as the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), did not stand a chance against the military superiority of the Western powers and lost the Second Opium War as well.¹³⁹ During the Second Opium War the Western powers destroyed the emperor's summer palace, which according to Waley-Cohen was a horrifying experience that was not forgotten by the Chinese people.¹⁴⁰ The treaties that followed ensured an open passage throughout China for foreigners; moreover, it granted Christians permission to practice their faith.

In retrospect, these treaties are often referred to as 'unequal treaties', as China was forced to grant Western powers privileges in China that were not reciprocated by admitting China

¹³⁵ Waley-Cohen (1999): 149-150.

¹³⁶ Bays (2012): 48. The British established their own consulates and the extraterritorial laws granted foreigners their own juridical authority in China. The treaties of Tientsin (1858) and Beijing (1860), which followed the treaty of Nanjing after the First Opium War, also served as templates for other powers to sign too. The Second Opium war treaties also gave the legal status of opium. The treaty of Beijing was in practise a ratification of the treaty of Tientsin two years earlier. Tientsin is also referred to as 'Tianjin' throughout research literature. Ibid: 56 and 58-59.

¹³⁷ See for instance Bays (2012): 59 and Hirono (2008): 75-76.

¹³⁸ Westad (2012): 50. One of the excuses that were made by the French was the execution of a missionary in the inland. Waley-Cohen (1999): 164. Bays argue that the War broke out as the Western powers wanted to settle the unfinished business that was left after the treaties that followed the first Opium War, for instance the legal status of opium. Bays (2012): 56.

¹³⁹ Waley-Cohen (1999): 159-160. The Taiping Rebellion was under the leadership of Hong Xiuquan (1813-1864) who claimed he was the younger brother of Jesus. According to Waley-Cohen, Hong viewed The Qing dynasty as demons that needed to be brought down and replaced with Hong's own understanding of Christian beliefs.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid: 164-165.

similar rights by their Western counterparts.¹⁴¹ Westad claims that the treaties, which came as a result of these two wars, became the very framework for China's relations with the rest of the world for the coming century.¹⁴² In this context, historian Daniel H. Bays also argues that these treaties would restructure the whole status for Christians in China.¹⁴³

Bays identifies missionaries in China as 'substantial beneficiaries' of the new framework of relationships between China and the West.¹⁴⁴ Bays also claims that there were no protests from missionaries in the aftermath of the Opium Wars.¹⁴⁵ Cox also emphasises how the British Empire empowered missions.¹⁴⁶ As the borders were now open, missionaries were free to establish their presence in China. The Protestant mission in China was to grow rapidly after 1860. According to Oscar Handeland, an author of mission history in Agder, by the end of the 1880s it would seem as nearly all countries interested in missions had their eyes on China.¹⁴⁷

Even though missionaries gained access to China through the treaty system that came into place in the wake of the Opium Wars, there were also some problematic issues that came out of these settlements. As we have discussed, the Chinese viewed these treaties as completely one-sided, as the Western powers were the only beneficiaries. The period from when the Opium Wars began is identified as the beginning of a more unstable time in Chinese history, both politically and socially. Several social mobilisations and rebellions took place after the Opium Wars; two of the major were the Taiping rebellion and the Boxer rebellion.¹⁴⁸ Because of this, Chinese people would blame the foreigners for their unstable situation, which in turn resulted in resentment towards the Western powers.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴¹ See for instance Twitchett and Fairbank (1987): 1-5 and Bays (2012): 56.

¹⁴² Westad (2012): 53. Also identified as 'The Treaty Century'.

¹⁴³ Bays (1996): 4.

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in Bays (2012): 58.

¹⁴⁵ Bays (2012): 58.

¹⁴⁶ Cox (2008): 176. Many Christians perceived the 'Opening' of China as an opportunity given by God, which made them even more self-confident about their missionary role. Cox (2008): 173 and 180.

¹⁴⁷ Handeland (1940's): 2.

¹⁴⁸ Both the Taiping rebellion, which researchers also refer to as a civil war, and the Boxer rebellion are major events that reflect both controversy and complexity in reference to how they are looked upon in retrospect. In this context I merely use these uprisings as examples to illustrate Chinese reactions to the Western powers' presence in China. See for instance: Waley-Cohen (1999): 159-161 and 190, Westad (2012): 47-51, and Plat (2012): xxiv-xxvii.

¹⁴⁹ Harbakk (2004): 418.

2.4 The missionary project

As we have discussed above, mission- and post-colonial history intertwines as the Protestant missions in China became institutionalised at the same time as the West gained authority over Chinese territory after the Opium Wars.¹⁵⁰

Perceptions of the ‘Western Empire’ entwined with religion were very vivid, and made use of one another to form a strong presence in China, either intentionally or unintentionally. On several levels, mission families were conjoined with colonial families as they were both transnational and transcultural unities that in some aspects were closer linked to their home country than the foreign country they resided in. These ties to a Western and Christian identity constructed a division between their own culture and the colonial culture. Moreover, both units carried a Western culture’s understanding of how gender roles and relationships should function.¹⁵¹ The use of the term ‘culture’ in the context of Colonial and Mission history may be identified to bolster perceptions of differences between the ‘West’ and others. Thomas argues that the distinctions that are made between cultures in terms of race, religion, and customs, depend on the perspective.¹⁵²

However, we could miss important aspects if we were to identify colonial and the protestant actors as two sides of the same project. These projects did overlap at times on certain aspects, but the motivation and vision behind their actions were very different. Reaching new communities with the gospel motivated the mission project, and the civilising part of the project was understood within the framework of this vision.¹⁵³ The mission project was based on an understanding that God created all people equal. Salvation was available for all, no matter the background.¹⁵⁴

2.5 Mission strategies

The Western missionaries could not distance themselves from being foreigners, or the fact that they were given extraterritorial rights by the treaty settlements. Entwinements of politics and religion were to some extent unavoidable, but also something some mission organisations, such as the CIM, did not want. ‘The Principles and Practice of the China Inland

¹⁵⁰ See for instance Twitchett and Fairbank (1987): 1.

¹⁵¹ Cleall (2012): 34-36.

¹⁵² Thomas (1994): 23-25.

¹⁵³ Cox (2010): 18 and 53.

¹⁵⁴ Thomas (1994): 142.

Mission'¹⁵⁵ included clear instructions for missionaries to not cooperate with Western officials. This was to avoid complications with the Chinese people.¹⁵⁶ In reference to this information of the 'natives'' hostility and general scepticism towards foreigners, it might be relevant to take a closer look at the strategies mission organisations used to establish their presence in China.

Historian Thoralf Klein has studied how missionaries portrayed a certain image of China to the Western World.¹⁵⁷ He highlights the strategy of the 'social gospel', which was the idea of indirect evangelism through philanthropically work, to study the 'process of cultural transfer'.¹⁵⁸ By offering health care and education the missionaries attempted to get closer to the Chinese people, and this strategy also appears to have been effective for the institutionalisation of protestant missions as they established schools and health stations.¹⁵⁹ This was the very pillar of the concept of 'social gospel', which was supposed to channel Christian knowledge through humanitarian work.¹⁶⁰ However, it also ought to be stressed that when missionaries shared Christian knowledge, they also shared Western knowledge, displaying that their protestant perceptions often were entwined with Western perceptions.¹⁶¹

The CIM's missionaries also wore Chinese costumes in an effort to appear less alien.¹⁶² The CIM constantly tried to adapt their message of salvation in a way that the Chinese could easily understand. An example of this was the wordless book that used symbolism to display the process of turning from darkness into light.¹⁶³

As already mentioned, the number of Protestant missionaries in China grew enormously from the 1860s onwards.¹⁶⁴ Many scholars have highlighted the CIM as a key actor for

¹⁵⁵ 'The Principles and Practice of the CIM' were bulletins describing their constitution, what their mission in China consisted of and instructions for missionaries.

¹⁵⁶ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 20.

¹⁵⁷ Klein (2008): 142-145. Klein is not the only researcher who refers to the impact of the social gospel. See for instance Pui-Lan (1996): 203-204.

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Klein (2008): 142.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid: 147 and Cox (2008): 152-154.

¹⁶⁰ Klein (2008): 145-147.

¹⁶¹ Another example of entwinements of western and Protestant ideas and perceptions was the presumption that Christianity would naturally also civilise people. Christianity indicated a prosperous life and would accordingly lead people from savagery to civilisation. Cox (2008): 134-135.

¹⁶² Austin (2007): 67. Austin describes that the CIM missionaries 'went native' by wearing Chinese clothing. Ibid: 121.

¹⁶³ Ibid: 5.

¹⁶⁴ Bays (2012): 68.

Protestantism's expansion in China in the 19th century. Handeland, amongst others, names the CIM as the largest Christian actor in China. He gives Hudson Taylor credit for involving thousands of Christians to contribute to mission work in China, both by funding and by taking up missionary work.¹⁶⁵

2.6 James Hudson Taylor and The China Inland Mission

“A million a month is dying without God in China”.¹⁶⁶ This is what the CIM founder Hudson Taylor allegedly pictured with his inner eye and served as the centre of his own “heavenly vision” to reach “Chinese souls”.¹⁶⁷

Hudson Taylor was born in Barnsley in 1832 into a family with long Methodist traditions.¹⁶⁸ Austin presents several noteworthy events leading up to Hudson Taylor's establishment of the CIM. For instance, the inspiration that came from the American revivalist Charles Gradison Finney that inspired a “spiritual renewal”.¹⁶⁹ At the age of 17 Hudson Taylor, who had been affected by the American revivalists, like Finney, left the Methodist Church with his father because of the lack of alignment between doctrines and the bible. Austin argues this decision as crucial to Hudson Taylor's move towards starting his own mission organisation.¹⁷⁰ In 1849 the German missionary Charles Gutzlaff¹⁷¹, who served as a missionary in China, held a compelling public speech in Yorkshire of the multitudes of people dying in China without Christ. It was because of this message that Hudson Taylor devoted his life to missions in China.¹⁷²

In 1860 Hudson Taylor returned in ill health from a longer stay in China and was recommended never to return to China. The next five years he kept a low profile while trying to regain strength. During this time he was able to complete his medical degree, which he had

¹⁶⁵ Handeland (1940's): 2.

¹⁶⁶ Austin (2007): xxiii.

¹⁶⁷ “Perishing or lost souls” was a normal description within the CIM of the ‘natives’ in China who had not converted to Christianity. See for instance Austin (2007): 63 and 80.

¹⁶⁸ Austin (2007): 37-38.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid: 46.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid: 46-47.

¹⁷¹ Charles Gutzlaff: A Chinese missionary who rewrote Robert Morrison's translated bible in the 1830s. Bays (2012): 49 and Austin (2007): 50-53.

¹⁷² Austin (2007): 53-54.

started many years earlier.¹⁷³ Though he was out of the public sphere for this period of time, he would make preparations that were crucial for the establishment of the CIM. For example, he was building a network of people willing and eager to reach out to China.

Austin claims further that nothing could keep Hudson Taylor's mind off China.¹⁷⁴ Researcher at the Norwegian National Library Elisabeth Eide also describes Hudson Taylor as obsessed by his vision of China.¹⁷⁵ Though there were other mission organisations in Great Britain at this time, Hudson Taylor wanted an organization directed from the field instead of being directed from England. This would ensure a more flexible and mobile mission that would be ready for changes.¹⁷⁶ The CIM was established by Hudson Taylor 25th of June 1865.¹⁷⁷ According to Austin, Hudson Taylor was not looking for advisors or colleagues; he was looking for helpers to carry out his vision. Not everyone was able to handle Hudson Taylor's demand of total obedience to fulfil his vision and therefore resigned from the CIM.¹⁷⁸ According to Austin, it would seem like Hudson Taylor constructed a hierarchical structure with himself on top and expected missionaries to work for him and his vision.

The vision Hudson Taylor carried for the China inland included both reaching land where no Protestants had been and to live in an area where he would be completely and utterly dependent on God's protection and guidance. The inland was far away from public aid.¹⁷⁹ Hudson Taylor also outlined 'The Principles and Practice of the CIM' that provided a thorough description of all circumstances and guidelines missionaries of the CIM needed to be mindful of. These bulletins were very detailed and stated clear expectations to behaviour and what was considered as proper relationships. Moreover missionaries were required to obey the mission directors.¹⁸⁰

Both Hudson's Taylor's leadership and the detailed description of 'The Principles and Practice the CIM' missionaries needed to follow, indicates that the CIM grew into a well-established organisation. The CIM become a large mission organisation within relatively short

¹⁷³ Austin (2007): 78-79.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid: 79.

¹⁷⁵ Eide (2001): 65.

¹⁷⁶ Austin (2007): 79.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid: 78.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid: 349.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid: 66 and 79.

¹⁸⁰ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 16-17.

time. From 1885 to 1899 the number of missionaries of CIM in China grew from a total of 177 to 811. According to Austin the number of baptisms carried out by the CIM in China also increased from 2206 in 1885 to 12,964 in 1899.¹⁸¹

Though it might seem as Hudson Taylor required full obedience from the CIM missionaries, Hudson Taylor first and main qualification to join the CIM, was the individual calling of God. Simultaneously, CIM's missionary magazine, *China's millions*, became an important tool to motivate people for missionary engagement in China, as it promoted the progress and needs of the mission. It was an issue of this magazine that reached the household where Jakobsen served as a housemaid in Kristiansand, Norway and served as an inspiration for Reuter, Jakobsen's traveling partner to China, to become a missionary.¹⁸²

2.7 Concluding remarks

The beginning of Protestantism in China was influenced by both Western imperialism and Chinese religion and culture. Hudson Taylor's rhetorical skills and ability to create powerful images of the needs in China recruited thousands of missionaries. It may be argued that the CIM became a mission family, as anyone, theoretically, could join the CIM and still they had clear requirements to the CIM's missionaries. The CIM's guidelines are reflected in 'The Principles and Practice of the CIM', which all missionaries had to agree too in order to become a member, can be in many ways regarded to be a part of a hierarchical structure that was supposed to maintain the norms within the mission. Both the history of Protestantism in China and the CIM are highly relevant contexts for understanding Jakobsen Cheng's life course and mission family she became a part of.

¹⁸¹ Austin (2007): 345-348.

¹⁸² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 26.

3 Becoming a member of a global mission family

According to Rasmussen's reminiscences, Jakobsen became a Christian at a young age while attending Sunday school, and would become a housemaid for Elisabeth and Theodor Rasmussen in her late teens or early twenties.¹⁸³ It was here Jakobsen met Reuter, also a member of the staff in the Rasmussen household.¹⁸⁴ Jakobsen and Reuter would become companions in both mission and travel, and also became the first Norwegian missionaries to live and work in China. The Rasmussen family, and Elisabeth Rasmussen in particular, appears to have been vital in Jakobsen's process towards becoming a missionary.¹⁸⁵ However, other factors also played a role, like the Christian community in Kristiansand and their involvement in faith missions, as well as Free Church activities that opened up for women to have a more active role.¹⁸⁶

This chapter will *investigate and review sources and literatures that provide insight into Anna Jakobsen's life course up until she settled in China as missionary on behalf of the CIM*. In order to investigate what these sources can tell us, I intend to discuss if we may consider Jakobsen's process of becoming a missionary as an opportunity, a choice, as an effect of the community she grew up in or all of the above. In this context I will explore *what kind of Christian community Anna Jakobsen became a part of in Kristiansand and identify conditions she needed to fulfil to become part of the CIM*. I intend to discuss Jakobsen's transition to becoming a missionary by first of all considering her community in Kristiansand as a missionary family to focus in on kinship. This allows us to explore Jakobsen's connections on a more individual level. The CIM will be understood as a global mission family that further directs the attention to connections beyond kinship, and thus highlights Jakobsen's connections on an institutional level.

To answer these queries we need to consider several coinciding developments taking place throughout the late 19th century. Moreover, discuss how religious phenomenon, such as 'revivals', the experiences of receiving a 'calling' from God and the influence of faith

¹⁸³ Jakobsen arrived in London to receive missionary training at the age of 24. We do not know exactly the year Jakobsen started to work as a housemaid at the Rasmussens. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/6/18 China papers- personnel. CIM's register of missionaries 1853-1895.

¹⁸⁴ Reuter worked as a governess. State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 22.

¹⁸⁵ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25-26.

¹⁸⁶ Seland and Agedal (2008): 128-129.

communities were all contributing factors to Jakobsen's opportunity and choice to become a missionary.

3.1 Mission organisations in Norway and contemporary gender roles

Predelli has studied issues of gender, race and class in the Norwegian Mission Society (NMS). She reminds us that in order to understand how missions opened up to women and generally increased the mobility of women in these societies, we must also consider the rapid social and economic changes that took place at the same time as mission activity grew.¹⁸⁷ Jakobsen's choice and opportunity to become a missionary, and perhaps also her migration to China, may thus highlight aspects of women's mobility. This can be identified as something quite extraordinary if we consider women's contemporary space of movement. This space was predominantly limited to the home and the private sphere.¹⁸⁸ Further, historian Bjørg Seland argues that to address how a single Norwegian woman could take up missionary work in a time with little space for women in the public arena, one has to study informal practises.¹⁸⁹

Seland and the cultural sociologist Olaf Agedal claims that women are not easily found in formal records of missions in this period, and if they were found, they would probably not be identified with any significant roles.¹⁹⁰ For this reason it is relevant to provide a brief overview of the background for mission activity in Norway before we proceed to analyse how Jakobsen became a part of mission organisations. I will first attend to this background with reference to the new roles women were given. Moreover, highlight how the establishment of faith missions gave room for women to have a more active role.

Existing research has been done on missions and organisations related to the Norwegian State Church. I will draw on this literature to contextualise gender roles in societies and women's

¹⁸⁷ Predelli (2003): 1-3.

¹⁸⁸ Okkenhaug (2010): 73-74.

¹⁸⁹ Seland (2009): 83.

¹⁹⁰ Seland and Agedal (2008): 60.

role in mission more generally as a necessary background for understanding Jakobsen in the Free Church and faith mission communities.¹⁹¹

The NMS was founded in 1842 in Stavanger and is known as the first mission society in Norway.¹⁹² Though many factors may have inspired this first formation, the influence of Hans Nilsen Hauge (1771-1824) is a common reference point in Norwegian mission history. Both Predelli and Seland, amongst others, single out the work of Hauge as a key inspiration to the formation of mission organisations, as he emphasised the link between personal convictions of faith together with improvements of both social and economic conditions.¹⁹³ The personal experiences of God's presence, and the feeling of responsibility to civilise non-Christians would become a trademark for the protestant movements that developed in the second half of the 19th century.¹⁹⁴

The NMS was, according to Predelli, independent, but cooperated with the State Church. Women had no decision-making roles and the educational program within this association was only offered to men. All in all, women had no formal roles. However, this did not mean that women had no part in these early mission associations; they would for example take on voluntary work to raise money and they attended meetings.¹⁹⁵ Hence, if we focus on informal roles, a different picture emerges. Okkenhaug states that women were to constitute a majority in these movements and that especially women from the middle class obtained more mobility by participating in missionary activities.¹⁹⁶

Okkenhaug argues further that the new roles for women were different from the old gender roles that limited women's movement to their homes, which is referred to as the 'private sphere', or the 'feminine sphere'.¹⁹⁷ The new roles were still predominantly located in the private sphere by first of all being a wife and mother. However, now, women received additional social roles outside their home. By being able to engage in philanthropic activities their room for manoeuvre expanded. In addition, Okkenhaug argues that this also enabled

¹⁹¹ In addition to the research literatures I have made use of in this context, I find relevant to mention Kristin Norseth's doctorate from 2007, "La os bryte over tvert med vor stumhet!": kvinners vei til myndighet i de kristelige organisasjonene 1842-1912, as well.

¹⁹² Predelli (2003): 9 and Seland and Agedal (2008): 33.

¹⁹³ Predelli (2003): 9 and Seland and Agedal (2008): 22-23.

¹⁹⁴ Seland and Agedal (2008): 33.

¹⁹⁵ Predelli (2003): 134-135.

¹⁹⁶ Okkenhaug (2010): 73-74.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid: 74.

women to cross former boundaries and enter the public sphere in newfound capacities.¹⁹⁸ There was a demand for women in the missionary movements. It might be possible to claim that missionary movements promoted change for women by giving them new spaces to move within the public sphere. Also, as Seland argues, that Free Churches gave women more ‘visible’ roles, although these roles were regarded as more informal.¹⁹⁹

The increased movement outside the private sphere for women may be regarded as a transition, but must be viewed in the context of the needs in the missionary field that was becoming greater. This called for more people to engage in missionary work at home. As the mission activity grew, especially from the 1870s, one might argue that mission organisations were forced to make room for new practises.

3.1.1 Faith missions

It was within the Free Church that faith missions emerged in Norway. Cox identifies the new ‘faith missions’ as a late Victorian mission innovation, as it constructed new methods and tactics to missions.²⁰⁰ Faith missions were also formed as a response to the established bureaucratic mission structures.²⁰¹ A ‘faith mission’ indicated that individuals had to put their trust in God for funds; this was indeed a ‘faith principle’.²⁰² One of the differences between faith missions and other mission organisations was that faith missions explicitly expressed the need for both genders in their work. There were other mission organisations in Norway, as the NMS, in the mid-19th century, which was the time Jakobsen took up missionary work. However, these required education, and only a number of men were found qualified to join.²⁰³ The requirement for joining a faith mission on the other hand was tied to the individual calling from God, and God called whoever he pleased, both men and women.²⁰⁴

In 1845, the so-called Dissenter Law allowed formations of what Skeie identifies as ‘faith communities’ outside the Lutheran State Church in Norway.²⁰⁵ It would seem that faith missions, faith organisations and faith communities reflected an even more open gathering

¹⁹⁸ Okkenhaug (2010): 73-75.

¹⁹⁹ Seland (2009): 87.

²⁰⁰ Cox (2008): 183-184.

²⁰¹ Ibid: 183-184.

²⁰² Cox (2008): 184 and Skeie (2014): 67.

²⁰³ Skeie (2014): 71.

²⁰⁴ Mikaelsson (2003): 80-81.

²⁰⁵ Skeie (2014): 70.

than the NMS, free from the rituals and the close connection to the State Church. The historian Bjørn Slettan argues that the new faith communities were regarded as dangerous by both the Norwegian State Church, and to many others in the Norwegian society.²⁰⁶ Members of faith communities viewed themselves, according to Slettan, as ‘real believers’, only acting on what they believed was the word of God.²⁰⁷ Slettan explains that the scepticism towards these gatherings outside the State Church was partly because of the contemporary customs in Norway. Church practices were an integrated part of the Norwegian community and the State Church reflected in many ways order and unity. To some extent, the separation of the faith community from the State Church represented a divergence, and constructed a new category for what a ‘true’ believer was supposed to look like.²⁰⁸

3.2 Missionary engagement and religious life in Agder

Though we have discussed some aspects concerning the formations of missionary communities in the 1840s in Norway, we must also attempt to focus in on the religious activity that took place in the Agder counties. Kristiansand was Jakobsen’s hometown. It was also here she allegedly experienced the conviction and opportunity to become a missionary. I intend to make use of the missionary family metaphor to understand the community in Kristiansand as Jakobsen’s missionary family to focus in on Jakobsen’s relations and more intimate connections. Saunier argues that studying networks and how individuals were tied to them can reveal middle grounds, where identities and roles can be redefined.²⁰⁹ Accordingly, I find it relevant to investigate what kind of religious community in Kristiansand Jakobsen belonged, and how this mission family connected her to global mission families, as the CIM.

Slettan, like Predelli, places the growth of faith communities outside the State Church in connection with the rapid changes that took place economically and socially, which included increased mobility and a less rigid hierarchical structure.²¹⁰ The historian and politician Berge Furre states that Agder had a close connection to many other countries, making information and influence from Methodist and Baptist flow towards Agder.²¹¹ However, the local historian

²⁰⁶ Slettan (1992): 8.

²⁰⁷ Ibid: 7.

²⁰⁸ Ibid: 7-8.

²⁰⁹ Saunier (2013): 128-129.

²¹⁰ Slettan (1992): 12.

²¹¹ Furre (1992): 116-117.

Gunnar Molden argues that eastern parts of Agder showed little interest in confronting the State Church and addressing religious questions before 1850-1860.²¹² Followers of Hans Nilsen Hauge were also relatively few in numbers at this point.²¹³ Furre places the priest, publicist and politician Lars Oftedal (1838-1900) in the centre as he explains how and why revivals grew in Agder in the latter parts of the 19th century.²¹⁴ Oftedal carried many roles, as he was involved in religious and political matters. His disputes with the State Church and his religious speeches have made him a key reference point in explaining the new interests in addressing religious questions and the formation of Free Church gatherings.²¹⁵

3.2.1 The Rasmussen household and Sophie Reuter

It was presumably at Sunday school in the Kristiansand area that Jakobsen made the choice to become a devoted Christian. Elisabeth Rasmussen describes incidents, allegedly from Jakobsen's upbringing, where she experienced a 'calling' to serve God.²¹⁶ In the process of identifying factors that may have influenced Jakobsen's engagement in missionary work, we are presented with alternative – and at times competing – narratives. As we discussed in the introduction, the different attitudes and perspectives depends on the sources' origin.

As Elisabeth Rasmussen stands out as a major point of reference with respect to Jakobsen's upbringing and process towards becoming a missionary, we will in the following excerpt introduce Elisabeth Rasmussen and the Rasmussen household.

Elisabeth and Theodor Rasmussen were an upper class family living in Kristiansand.²¹⁷ As the historical sources simply are too scarce, we cannot say for sure what social background Jakobsen had. However, the sources available to us enable us to make some informed speculations. Though there is not much information about Jakobsen's parents, we know that Jakobsen's father, Bernt Jakobsen, was listed as a house owner in the census of 1875.²¹⁸ The

²¹² Molden (1992): 36.

²¹³ Ibid: 36-37.

²¹⁴ Furre (1992): 94.

²¹⁵ Ibid: 94- 98.

²¹⁶ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 24. The importance of Sunday schools must be mentioned as it grew into a social institution that a large part of the working class in many Western countries attended. Cox (2008): 101.

²¹⁷ Theodor and Elisabeth Rasmussen owned for example Britannia Hotel in Kristiansand. State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 2.

²¹⁸ 'Anne Sophie Berntsen' The census of population from 1865, 1001 Kristiansand: <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01038173010207> (Uploaded 01.02.2015)

fact that her father was a house owner, suggests that Jakobsen most likely was from an upper working-class family, alternatively from the lower segment of the emerging Norwegian middle class. The fact that Jakobsen worked as a housemaid might have been fairly common for young women in both these social segments at the time.

According to Elisabeth Rasmussen's reminiscences, she and Theodor left the State Church in 1877 and became involved in Free Church activities. They were genuinely engaged in religious life and invited and hosted preachers from around the world.²¹⁹ Sources such as personal diaries and newspaper articles describe how the Rasmussen family were a part of many religious and local activities in Kristiansand. Elisabeth Rasmussen for example, was in contact with many religious leaders from both Norway and abroad, and was later to be one of the women elected to sit in the city council in 1901.²²⁰ They would also send no less than five women from their household to missions, amongst them the two employees, Jakobsen and Reuter.²²¹ In short, the Rasmussens' seemed to be a mission-oriented family. Elisabeth Rasmussen's engagement in 'faith mission' can be viewed in connection to their involvement in revivals that spurred in Kristiansand in the 1880s. The revivals that took place are known to have sparked new ideas and increased the activity within faith communities in Kristiansand.²²² The concept of revivals will be further discussed later in this chapter.

According to Elisabeth Rasmussen's reminiscences, Rasmussen first met Jakobsen at the age of 3-4 accompanied with her mother.²²³ Rasmussen also met Jakobsen on several occasions as she grew up. Rasmussen's story of Jakobsen's religious conviction and calling to missions is quite extraordinary. Two stories seem to be of extra importance.

The first incident took place as Jakobsen, and several other children who attended Sunday school, learned that their well-liked teacher was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Rasmussen describes that she personally knew both Jakobsen's mother and Sunday school teacher.²²⁴

²¹⁹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 4-5 and 20.

²²⁰ To mention a few central individuals: James Hudson Taylor and Fredrik Franson. See for instance: State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 9 and 14. State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: A newspaper article describing how Elisabeth Rasmussen was elected into the City Council.

²²¹ Austin (2007): 319.

²²² Seland (2006): 125-128.

²²³ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 24. Jakobsen's mother seems to have been a housemaid as she worked with cleaning, washing and ironing of cloths. Allegedly, Mrs Rasmussen asked Jakobsen's mother to be of assistance to her as well and therefore they met on several occasions.

²²⁴ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 24.

This event is said to have moved Jakobsen and the other children. According to Rasmussen, this experience touched Jakobsen's heart and made her become a dedicated Christian. The second story must have taken place at some point after this first experience, as Rasmussen describes that it occurred while Jakobsen worked as a nanny for the F. Strai family.²²⁵ One day a bricklayer asked her directly if she had found peace with God, and if she was happy. She replied that she had found peace, but answered no to the question regarding her happiness. The bricklayer told Jakobsen in response to ask God to reveal his 'word' to her. Because of this conversation, Jakobsen decided to spend time away from both friends and Church activities. As she read the gospel of John, the Holy Spirit is said to have fallen on her. This gave her a renewed understanding of God's love. According to Rasmussen, Jakobsen's perspectives on the world had now changed and became eager to impart her revelation with people she met. Rasmussen suggests that not everyone was pleased with Jakobsen's life-changing experience, including her employer at the time, F. Strai. Jakobsen was therefore sent home and it was after this event Jakobsen started working as a housemaid in the Rasmussen household.²²⁶

Rasmussen's story about Jakobsen seems to be centred on how she experienced the calling to engage in missions. According to Mikaelsson, the individual calling is a central part of missionary literature genre as missionaries identified the calling as the basis for missionary work.²²⁷ This might have been Rasmussen's intent as well, to speak for the cause of the mission. As Rasmussen's presents Jakobsen's story from a young age all the way to her death, she seems to be focused on testifying God's calling and life-long plan for Jakobsen.

Reuter's diary offers a story of Reuters and Jakobsen's 'calling' to mission in China as well. Reuter was at a similar age as Jakobsen and worked as a governess at the Rasmussen Household.²²⁸ According to Reuter, Jakobsen had been waiting for someone willing to go with her to missions for four years, as she did not want to take up missionary work alone. Rasmussen also confirms that Jakobsen had asked God to send one more person willing to take up missionary work.²²⁹ To Jakobsen this was a biblical matter, since Jesus sent his

²²⁵ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 24.

²²⁶ Ibid: 24-25.

²²⁷ Mikaelsson (2003): 152-153.

²²⁸ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/6/18 China papers- personnel. CIM's register of missionaries 1853-1895. Reuter and Jakobsen are registered together.

²²⁹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25.

disciples out in pairs.²³⁰ As they met in Rasmussen's household, Jakobsen asked Reuter to take up missionary work together. Reuter apparently felt the conviction herself to engage in missions, but was reluctant to leave her family.²³¹ However, Reuter was allegedly handed CIM's missionary magazine *China's millions* and as she read about the conditions in China, Reuter was reminded of Christ's command in the Bible to go to all corners of the world and preach the gospel. Through this experience she was convicted to give her life to missions. As Reuter told Jakobsen about her experience of God's 'calling', they decided to contact the CIM, through the revivalist and lawyer from Liverpool, Reginald Radcliffe, and asked if they could come to the CIM headquarter to receive missionary training.²³²

Reuter's story of her and Jakobsen's process towards taking up missionary work is similar to Rasmussen's. Once again the focus appears to be the individual experience of being called by God.

Rasmussen also highlights the influence of Radcliffe in an article issued in the Pentecostal magazine *Korsets Seier* from 1912. Radcliffe came to Kristiansand in 1879 and preached about the need for women in the mission field.²³³ According to Rasmussen, she and Reuter wrote Radcliffe after his visit and asked for advice on how Reuter and Jakobsen could engage in missionary work.²³⁴ Radcliffe forwarded Reuter and Rasmussen's request to Hudson Taylor, the leader of the CIM. In Rasmussen's story, Radcliffe's visit is given much attention. Rasmussen portrays his visit as a turning point in the lives of Jakobsen and Reuter, and identifies it as what triggered their decision to take up missionary work.²³⁵

As already mentioned, very little written material from Jakobsen's younger years seems to have survived. This may be the case because source material has been lost over the years, or perhaps such material never existed. We can neither exclude the possibility that Jakobsen simply may not have been able to read or write very well, which would also be an indicator of her background. What we do know, however, is that she later would teach such skills to

²³⁰ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25.

²³¹ Ibid: 25.

²³² Grimstvedt (1914): 16-18.

²³³ *Korsets Seier*: 15.01.1912. 'Søster Anna Jakobsens hjemgang'.

²³⁴ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25 and 30-31.

²³⁵ See for instance *Korsets Seier*: 15.01.1912. 'Søster Anna Jakobsens hjemgang'. Written by Elisabeth Rasmussen and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25 and 30-31.

female missionaries in China.²³⁶ Moreover, it is clear that the Rasmussen family was of a different social standing altogether. Theodor Rasmussen was a successful businessman.²³⁷ Elisabeth Rasmussen had spent time in England and could both read and write English. Rasmussen indirectly expresses, from a journey to London, that Jakobsen struggled with the language during her missionary training in England.²³⁸ Rasmussen informs us that Jakobsen attended Salvation Army meetings where she could more easily understand the language. Rasmussen is unclear as to why it was easier for Jakobsen to understand the language at these meetings. Perhaps this was a more international environment and that the Salvation Army therefore adapted somehow.

Predelli argues in reference to social classes that even though Norwegian women made an effort to build bridges between women from different classes, the upper social class and the middle class still had the commanding influence over missionary movements.²³⁹ This may be true with respect to the Rasmussen, which seems to have been deeply involved in mission activities and appears to have had both material and human resources available. The Rasmussen family, as we have seen, was widely engaged in religious work and it might be argued that they functioned as a catalyst for missionary activity in Agder.

3.2.2 Revivalists and awakenings in Kristiansand

According to Seland and Agedal, several revivals took place during the 19th century in Norway.²⁴⁰ Norway was highly influenced by the missionary activities taking place abroad, especially in England and this transnational bond resulted to a higher interest of missions in Norway. As mentioned above, Radcliffe visited Kristiansand in 1879 to preach.²⁴¹ Radcliffe carried a message to his ‘sisters in the lord’ to wake up and see that they also were needed in the mission field.²⁴² According to Rasmussen, she herself interpreted this message and she expressed subsequently that she was willing to send all her daughters to the mission field if needed.²⁴³ Alfred James Broomhall, CIM historian and author of the seven-part series *Hudson*

²³⁶ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33-34.

²³⁷ Ibid: 2-3.

²³⁸ Ibid: 8-9.

²³⁹ Predelli (2003): 5-6.

²⁴⁰ Seland and Agedal (2008): 30-33.

²⁴¹ Broomhall (1989): 123. Rasmussen claims that it was the summer of 1880 that Radcliffe visited Kristiansand. State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 20.

²⁴² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 21.

²⁴³ See for instance Handeland (1948): 47-50 and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 21.

Taylor and China's open century, refers to Radcliffe's visit to Norway as having 'awakened Norwegian interest for foreign missions'.²⁴⁴ According to Austin, A. J. Broomhall was the grandson of Benjamin Broomhall who was married to James Hudson Taylor's sister Amelia.²⁴⁵ A.G. Broomhall might have had 'inside' information from the CIM because of his familial ties. However, this may also have caused him to present the history from the CIM perspective. As we know Radcliffe was also tied to the CIM and caused prospective missionaries to connect with the CIM.

Seland and Aagedal argue that revivalists intentionally created emotional moods, directing the focus towards specific needs or people's own convictions.²⁴⁶ Seland and Aagedal identify them to be exceptional and therefore also possibly making room for women in new forums under these specific circumstances.²⁴⁷ The revivals that took place may, by referring to Okkenhaug, and Seland, also be put in context with the increased mobility throughout the 19th century that gave women a new responsibility to take on new duties.²⁴⁸ It may be possible that these overlapping events made room for women to be courageous and engage in new types of missionary work. Perhaps revivals in themselves can even be regarded as an example of how Free Churches were constituted by less rigid hierarchical structures.

It is rather difficult to describe what a 'revival' or 'awakening' is without generalising it or leaving some aspects out. An explanation for this may be that a revival is constructed precisely by the many individual experiences of sensing God's presence. A revival refers to a period of time where God 'revives' or 'wakes up' his people. In this context it is relevant to ask what people are woken up to or from, and what a revival may trigger.²⁴⁹ Seland and Aagedal describe an awaking as a transition from a passive to an active state.²⁵⁰ For instance, as revivals started, several individuals felt the calling of God to convert, become missionaries, or to serve God in any way he pleased.²⁵¹ Being 'called' indicated a self-understanding of being both special and needed, something that may have caused people to expect God to speak to them.²⁵²

²⁴⁴ Broomhall (1989): 123.

²⁴⁵ Austin (2007): 21.

²⁴⁶ Seland and Aagedal (2008): 128-129.

²⁴⁷ Seland (2006): 151-152.

²⁴⁸ Okkenhaug (2010): 74 and Seland (2009): 87.

²⁴⁹ Seland and Aagedal (2008): 8-10.

²⁵⁰ Ibid: 15.

²⁵¹ Mikaelsson (2003): 148.

²⁵² Seland and Aagedal (2008): 71.

Moreover, revivals opened up for idealistic images, for instance concerning moral reforms in society. Seland and Aagedal argue further that a revival was a result of an eagerness of aligning personal life with the word of God.²⁵³ The experience of being called also placed those who were still not called or saved in another category and contributed to a part of a sharp distinction, creating boundaries between those who were ‘lost’ and those who were ‘saved’.²⁵⁴ According to Reuter’s diary and Rasmussen’s reminiscences, Jakobsen also felt the calling of God to take up missionary work. Allegedly, in 1884 a revival in Kristiansand started.²⁵⁵ This was the same year as Jakobsen and Reuter’s journey to the CIM headquarters in 1884 to receive missionary training.²⁵⁶ It might be no coincident that a revival started in Kristiansand in the same year Jacobsen and Reuter felt called to take up missionary work. This may thus serve as an example of the link between times of revivals and people experiencing the calling of God.

The Rasmussen family also welcomed the Swedish charismatic character Fredrik Franson (1852-1908) to Kristiansand in 1883.²⁵⁷ Franson preached the message about reaching the lost in a somewhat new and unusual way, according to Edvard Paul Torjesen of the Evangelical Alliance Mission.²⁵⁸ Torjesen is the author of what is regarded as the authoritative work on Franson. Torjesen’s emphasis on how Franson focused, amongst other things, on the reward that waited in heaven for those who contributed to ‘saving souls’.²⁵⁹ He was clearly affected by the perception that he was living in the last days of the world.²⁶⁰ Since time was limited, the matter of reaching the ‘lost’ was urgent.²⁶¹ This may also have contributed to give Franson’s message a certain edge. Franson met Hudson Taylor in 1884, a year before his first visit to Kristiansand. Franson had, according to Rasmussen, also influenced Reuter, and he was the reason for her willingness to engage in missionary work.²⁶² It would seem as Rasmussen regarded Franson as more important for Reuter and that Radcliffe might have

²⁵³ Seland and Aagedal (2008): 123.

²⁵⁴ Ibid: 47-48.

²⁵⁵ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Newspaper article describing the events leading up to the revival in 1884.

²⁵⁶ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/6/18 China papers- personnel. CIM’s register of missionaries 1853-1895.

²⁵⁷ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 4-5.

²⁵⁸ Melton (2005): 530-531.

²⁵⁹ Torjesen (1984): 281.

²⁶⁰ Ibid: 281.

²⁶¹ Austin (2007): 89.

²⁶² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25.

been equally important for both Jakobsen and Reuter as he connected the two of them to the CIM.²⁶³ Broomhall refers both to the CIM magazine, *China's millions*, and to Torjesen when he identifies both Radcliffe and Franson to have influenced Jakobsen and Reuter to become missionaries on behalf of the CIM.²⁶⁴ Austin refers to Broomhall as his source of information to how Jakobsen and Reuter became connected to the CIM.²⁶⁵ Interestingly, Austin only refers to Franson as the connector between Kristiansand and the CIM – Radcliffe seems to have been left out of the story altogether.

Though Austin is not alone in placing emphasis on Franson's visit to Norway as a decisive turning point for missions in Kristiansand, he is the only one who identifies Franson as the one who sent Jakobsen and Reuter to the CIM.²⁶⁶ There are no references to Norwegian sources in Austin's research. An explanation for the above may be the fact that these sources are written in Norwegian, and that Austin was not able to use them or that he did not know about them.²⁶⁷ However, all in all, it might be more valid to claim that though Franson was an important influence, he did not directly send Jakobsen and Reuter to the CIM.

We have discussed how missionary activity took place in the voluntary organisations and faith communities outside the State Church, and how the Free Churches opened up to revivalists such as Radcliffe and Franson. Revivals seemed to take form within a fellowship, such as Free Churches. Moreover, Free Churches were also the place where 'after meetings' became more regular. People were invited to stay after meetings to receive prayer and salvation. It was allegedly in an after meeting that the revival in 1884 in Kristiansand started.²⁶⁸

To further understand the concept of revival, we need to look at the faith missions' perceptions of Christ's second coming and the urgency and need for missions. These complex issues are important in order to understand how missions in China grew and to explain how Jakobsen became a part of a transnational 'faith mission'. The urgency and the perception of living in 'the last days' was something Franson, Hudson Taylor and Rasmussen were profoundly affected by and served also as a trademark within faith communities. The common

²⁶³ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 25.

²⁶⁴ Broomhall (1989): 123.

²⁶⁵ Austin (2007): 319-320.

²⁶⁶ Ibid: 318-320.

²⁶⁷ See for instance: Skeie (2014): 65-67, Austin (2007): 318-320 and Handeland (1948): 52-56.

²⁶⁸ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Newspaper article describing the events leading up to the revival in 1884.

grounds regarding personal faith and the urgency of reaching the 'lost' was also something that tied the faith communities together.²⁶⁹ In addition one may argue that this also tied this transnational network together. The common emphasis on the individual calling caused faith communities to welcome *everyone* to join, including women for all social classes.²⁷⁰

Both Reuter and Rasmussen identify Radcliffe as the one who directly recommended Jakobsen and Reuter to the CIM. The CIM founder, Hudson Taylor, identified the individual calling of God as the main qualification to join The CIM. To receive a calling from God is, in reference to Mikaelsson, an inner experience of being chosen by God to a specific purpose. However, Mikaelsson also identifies an 'outer calling', which was the mission organisations' calling to individuals by motivating them for a special purpose.²⁷¹ CIM's missionary magazine, *China's millions*, became an important tool in this context, as it motivated people for mission engagement in China and promoted the progress and needs of the mission. It was, as already mentioned, an issue of this magazine that reached the household where Jakobsen served as a housemaid in Kristiansand, Norway.²⁷² It may be argued that the CIM provided this 'outer calling' for both Jakobsen and Reuter that was made possible through their connections to Rasmussen who was further connected with Radcliffe and Franson. One may regard this made up a transnational network where Jakobsen's missionary family in Kristiansand was connected to global mission families. One of these was the CIM.

It would seem as though the Rasmussen household was either involved directly, or indirectly at every stage of Jakobsen process towards becoming a missionary. The Rasmussen household appear to be a venue where people who shared similar convictions would gather. It was a place for mission interest, for revivalist, and other Free Church activities. Cleall claims that households can be understood as families and thus reveal intimate relations beyond kinship.²⁷³ It may be argued in the same lines that the Rasmussen household was a missionary family, and came to be a meeting place where gender and racial roles could be constructed and reconstructed. Moreover, it became a 'contact zone' for a transnational missionary families network.

²⁶⁹ Hudson Taylor frequently referred to the Chinese people as 'heathen' and 'lost'. This rhetoric bolstered a powerful image of the need for missionaries to become part of reaching the 'lost souls' in China. Austin (2007): 63,80, and 89.

²⁷⁰ Skeie (2014): 67-68 and 71-72.

²⁷¹ Mikaelsson (2003): 148-149.

²⁷² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 26.

²⁷³ Cleall (2012): 25-27.

3.3 Anna Jakobsen and Sophie Reuter's missionary training and journey to China

In order to be accepted for missionary training at the CIM headquarters in London, they had to fill out forms describing their own personal understanding of faith, and give information about their family and occupation. Furthermore, they were required to describe their medical conditions and list a few individuals that could endorse them.²⁷⁴ There is a high probability that Radcliffe was at least one of those who formally recommended the two of them. Maybe Rasmussen could have done so as well, however, at this point, we cannot know any of this for sure. As Jakobsen and Reuter were approved for missionary training, they were given an opportunity to come to the CIM headquarters, and for this reason they left Norway in September 1884.²⁷⁵ Their stay in London would include preparations for missionary work and functioned as a recruitment school for potential missionaries.²⁷⁶

Information about how Jakobsen and Reuter experienced their day-to-day lives in London is not easy to come by. Nevertheless, Rasmussen's reminiscences and Reuter's diaries offer some insight. Moreover, there are also some archive materials that outline what the CIM required of them during their stay in London and on what grounds they were accepted and deemed fit for missionary life in China.

According to Rasmussen, Jakobsen and Reuter stayed in England for 14 months and took up different types of work while they lived there. Rasmussen, who also paid the two of them a visit, claims that Reuter served as teaching assistant at a school and that Jakobsen worked at Mrs Broomhall's household.²⁷⁷ It would seem as Jakobsen and Reuter carried on with similar types of work to what they had at Rasmussen's household. As mentioned above, all missionaries needed to list current occupation as they applied to the CIM. Still, one may wonder if this also serves as an indication that Rasmussen might also have recommended the two of them to the CIM, as she was their former employer. That Reuter assisted at a school may be an indication from Rasmussen that Reuter was more educated than Jakobsen.

²⁷⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/08 James Hudson Taylor papers 1891-1898. Application forms for missionary candidates.

²⁷⁵ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 26.

²⁷⁶ Grimstvedt (1914): 18-19.

²⁷⁷ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 26.

However, Jakobsen did work for Mr and Mrs Broomhall, a couple of high social status, as Mrs Broomhall was Hudson Taylor's sister.²⁷⁸ According to Rasmussen, they also engaged in other types of work during their stay, however, she does not specify this any further.²⁷⁹ Reuter claims that they spent as long as two years there, which is a bit longer than what Rasmussen suggest. In Reuter's records we are informed that Reuter also spent some time working at a hospital and that she got baptised the 14th of January 1885.²⁸⁰

They both studied the Chinese language during their stay.²⁸¹ One might say that there was a fairly strict program for those who wanted to become missionaries on behalf of the CIM. Parts of the preparation included memorising large parts of the bible in mandarin, to learn about the geography in China and mind 'The Principles and Practice of the CIM'.²⁸² As we discussed in chapter 2, all missionaries were required to sign an agreement to honour the directors in charge of the mission field and to respect the directions given by "The Principles and Practice of the CIM".²⁸³ Even though the CIM opened up for anyone to join, they had strict regulations that their missionaries needed to respect.

The CIM was a faith mission that in many ways was conjoined with the faith communities in Kristiansand. However, the CIM was much more institutionalized. This must be regarded in terms of difference in size and number; however, it might be argued that as Jakobsen and Reuter became a part of the CIM, the frames for their activity and roles changed. As a member of this large mission family they now had to work 'under' - and act as a representative for this mission.

'The principles and practice of the CIM' were very descriptive when it came to recommendations and instructions for missionaries; these bulletins also provide some insight to how missionaries travelled to China. According Reuter's diary, their long voyage to

²⁷⁸ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 26.

²⁷⁹ Ibid: 26 and 31.

²⁸⁰ Grimstedt (1914): 18-19. To be baptised at an adult age can tell us something about personal conviction. Historian David Bundy separates infant baptism and believer's baptism. A believer's baptism was a re-baptism that came as a result of personal belief. Bundy (2009): 92.

²⁸¹ Grimstedt (1914): 18-19.

²⁸² China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 16-17 and Austin (2007): 250-253.

²⁸³ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 16-17.

Shanghai from London started 18th of November 1885, and they arrived in China on the 8th of January 1886.²⁸⁴

The journey from England to China was done on steamer boats and took 6-7 weeks. Missionaries were well prepared for things that were ahead of them as they set out on their journey. For example, they were told what types of items they should bring with them, that they would probably get one or two opportunities to wash their clothes, and that the long journey may tempt them to not use time well. Because of the latter issue, missionaries were encouraged to share conversations regarding faith, soul and missionary work.²⁸⁵ In Reuter's diary, she portrays her and Jakobsen's voyage to China. They travelled through the Mediterranean ocean and passed the Suez Canal. Reuter writes about the places they visited, the many people they met, and the weather conditions they experienced on their way to Shanghai. In Colombo in Sri Lanka, they changed ship from Khedive to Ganges, which would take them the rest of the way to Shanghai.²⁸⁶ Their final destination in China was Ho-Chow²⁸⁷ in the Shanxi province, which was the location they would spend most of their time working as missionaries.²⁸⁸

3.4 Concluding remarks

Rasmussen's reminiscences and Reuter's diary make up the main sources to Jakobsen's life course until she becomes a part of the CIM. However, also CIM archive material as 'The principles and practice of the CIM' and Austin supply relevant parts to Jakobsen and Reuter's preparation and journey to China.

There are different narratives to Jakobsen's choice and opportunity to become a missionary. The differences are displayed in how sources choose to tell Jakobsen's story. It would seem as both Rasmussen and Reuter's main focus is to tell how Jakobsen felt called to missionary work. For Rasmussen, it would appear as Jakobsen was a devoted Christian from a young age

²⁸⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/6/18 China papers- personnel. CIM's register of missionaries 1853-1895 and China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/11/02 List of arrivals in China with the China Inland Mission.

²⁸⁵ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 29-31.

²⁸⁶ Grimstedt (1914): 99-126.

²⁸⁷ Ho-Chow (Hochow) is also referred to as Hou Xian and Houzhou in various literatures. Located in the province of Shanxi. Ho-Chow or Huozhou (Hou Xian) is located between Taiyuan to the North and Ping-yang (Linfen) to the South. Austin (2007): 387-388 and 143.

²⁸⁸ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 26 and 31.

and is interested in telling Jakobsen's story as a testimony of God's guidance. According to Mikaelsson, these types of stories within missionary literatures seem far from uncommon as stories of people being called have a tendency to be told in the lines of the mission's ideology. This may also be the case for Reuter's story about Jakobsen's calling to mission.

However, Jakobsen and Reuter's were also connected to a culture that in many ways made it possible for her to become a missionary. Several researchers have discussed reasons as to how women could take up missionary work when they were limited by the gender boundaries of their time. The so-called Dissenter Law opened up for formations of Free Churches and faith communities that opened up for women to have a more active role. It would appear as that the two revivalists, Radcliffe and Franson, could have been equally important to Jakobsen, as they visited Kristiansand and the Rasmussen family on two different occasions. Radcliffe sparked the mission interest in Norway when he visited in 1879, and invited women to be an active part of foreign missions. Franson visited Kristiansand a few years later and further kindled the sparks that were already there. However, it must be noted that though they may have inspired both Jakobsen and Reuter to take up missionary work, it would seem that the main influence came through the Rasmussen family. Cleall claims that a household can be linked to families and thus reveal intimate relations beyond kinship. The Rasmussen family may thus be understood as a missionary family that was tied to a transnational network. Rasmussen's household may thus be regarded as a venue or a 'contact zone' that connected Jakobsen and Reuter to the CIM.

4 A highly unusual missionary family?



Image 1: Shanxi province.

Jakobsen and Reuter arrived in the Shanxi province (map) in 1886 and became a part of the Chinese pastor Hsi Shengmo's work with opium abusers.²⁸⁹ In 1888, Reuter married Stanley Smith, an educated man who was part of what has been referred to as 'the Cambridge seven'.²⁹⁰ The Cambridge seven were seven students from Cambridge recruited by the CIM.²⁹¹ However, Reuter (Smith) became ill and passed away in 1891, leaving her husband and a son named Algernon behind.²⁹²

This chapter addresses perhaps the most controversial event throughout Jakobsen's lifetime as it aims at *investigating and reviewing sources and literatures that provide insight to Anna Jakobsen's life from the time she began her missionary work in China in 1886 until she married Cheng Xiuqi in 1898*. This chapter will in reference to this query tend to the numerous reactions to their engagement and their marriage, and attempt to understand these reactions through the lens of missionary families. This will be carried out by *discussing how this marriage was different in a Chinese context and in what way this marriage represented a collision between what the CIM expected and what really happened will carry this out*.

The reactions to Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage are a major part of this chapter as it is highly relevant in the process of mapping and understanding this stage of Jakobsen's life. Reactions

²⁸⁹ Austin (2007): 387.

²⁹⁰ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 32.

²⁹¹ Austin (2007): 218-225. In addition, it might also be worth mentioning John Pollock's book on the Cambridge seven from 2012. Pollock, J. (2012). *The Cambridge Seven. The true story of ordinary men used in no ordinary way*. Christian Focus, Great Britain.

²⁹² China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/07: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1883 – 1886), Register of missionaries (1853-1895): 20, Austin (2007): 206, and Austin (2007): 385-386.

from the CIM, from connection in Norway, and the public debate issued in *The North China Herald* all reflect reactions of different character. Discussing sources' origin and purpose will therefore be very relevant in order to be able to analyse them. These reactions will be presented in three categories that display different aspects of the missionary family concept; moreover, they also represent three levels of publicity. CIM as a mission family welcomed both men and women from all classes into their mission; however, they also stated clear guidelines to their missionaries that needed to be respected. A mission family is, as previously discussed, constituted by missionary families that are made up by close connections. Missionary families take thus on a more intimate approach and focus on personal relationships.

The first category will analyse the reactions from within the CIM and thus Jakobsen's mission family. Sources from within the CIM mostly consist of personal letters, sent to and from members of the CIM, including one letter sent to Jakobsen personally. For the CIM, the outspoken reason for their opposition was issues of broken promises and the safety for all female missionaries in China.²⁹³ However, the language and content in these letters indicate that Jakobsen's marriage not only revolved around the principles of the mission, it was also a personal matter to the leadership.

The second category will explore reactions from Jakobsen's close connections and missionary family in Norway. As far as I can tell, Rasmussen's reminiscences, in addition to Rasmussen's article in *Korsets Seier* from 1912 are the only source that offers insight to Jakobsen's marriage from Norwegian sources.²⁹⁴ Rasmussen might seem to be more understanding to Jakobsen's marriage than the CIM. This might be due to her friendship to Jakobsen and therefore took a more understanding approach to Jakobsen's marriage than the CIM. Moreover, we know that Rasmussen wrote Jakobsen's story in retrospect and this might have affected the way she chose to present this event.

The last category will discuss the multitudes of reactions published in *The North China Herald*. The public debate in *The North China Herald* started spinning just weeks after

²⁹³ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor's letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, 26th Aug. 1898 and Broomhall (1989): 253.

²⁹⁴ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 157. The final words in her reminiscences were written in 1927 and 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Changs hjemgang' *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2. January 15th, 1912.

Jakobsen and Cheng's wedding. The topics of discussion in this debate illustrate that Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage was far more complex than the reasons provided by the CIM and Rasmussen.

4.1 Missionary life in Shanxi and events leading up to Anna Jakobsen and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage

Reuter offers insight on her and Jakobsen's journey to Shanxi from Shanghai in her diary. According to Reuter, they would stay at the mission headquarters in Chefoo before they began their journey to the China inland.²⁹⁵ Reuter describes the people as poor and the local customs as very different from their own.²⁹⁶ Allegedly, their journey from Shanghai to Shanxi took almost a year, and as they travelled towards their destination they shared the gospel when the opportunity presented itself. When Jacobsen and Reuter arrived in Hochow²⁹⁷, Shanxi, in December 1886, they were given a small room at a women's opium refuge camp.²⁹⁸ According to Austin, pastor Hsi had asked for single women to take part in the work with female opium abusers.²⁹⁹ Both Jacobsen and Reuter became a part of Hsi's work. Jacobsen would stay at this location for approximately ten years.³⁰⁰

Jakobsen makes a few contributions in the CIM's missionary magazine *China's millions* from her missionary activity in Shanxi and in Hunan, a province further south in China.³⁰¹ As we have previously discussed regarding published missionary material, these sources provide little insight into personal matters. Accordingly, *China's millions*, as a published missionary magazine, does not provide much information on Jakobsen's personal experiences. One contribution from 1897 might serve as an example of how *China's millions* always published similar stories from their missionaries, regardless of the missionaries' circumstances. Jakobsen writes about her journey and work to enter the foreign hostile province of Hunan

²⁹⁵ This station seemed to be a well-established location as there was a hospital with two doctors, boys, and a girl's school, as well as a chapel present. Grimstvedt (1914): 141-142.

²⁹⁶ Grimstvedt (1914): 141-142. For example, Reuter describes that men would buy their wife, and could, if he pleased, sell her to someone else.

²⁹⁷ Ho-Chow or Huozhou (Hou Xian) Shanxi was the place Jakobsen and Reuter settled first in China in 1886.

²⁹⁸ Austin (2007): 389. Based on Reuter's diary, we are given the impression that the missionaries were on the move quite a bit and it would seem as their life as missionaries started once the journey towards China began.

See for instance Reuter's travel descriptions. Grimstvedt (1914): 99-126.

²⁹⁹ Austin (2007): 387.

³⁰⁰ Broomhall (1989): 252 and Grimstvedt (1914): 186-194.

³⁰¹ See for instance *China's millions* (1889): 55, *China's millions* (1889): 126 and *China's millions* (1897): 114-116.

and shares about the progress of their mission.³⁰² According to Stevenson's, the deputy director of the CIM, response in *The North China Herald*, Jakobsen was removed to another part of the country after her engagement to Cheng was made known.³⁰³ Broomhall claims that their engagement was made know in 1893 and that Jakobsen moved to Hunan in 1896.³⁰⁴ Since Jakobsen only seems to reside in the areas around and in Hunan besides Shanxi in the 1890s it serves as a strong indication that Hunan was the place Jakobsen was 'removed' to. This might serve as an example of what *China's millions* chose to exclude. Indeed, Jakobsen might have felt called to do missionary work in Hunan, however, according to Stevenson, it would also seem as she was forced to leave the province of Shanxi because of her engagement to Cheng.

No missionary magazines gives us insight into when Jakobsen and Cheng met, or the situations regarding their engagement, and due to what we have made known in reference to missionary material this might have been as expected. Still, some sources assume they worked for some time side by side as missionaries as they came to this decision. For example, Austin claims that Cheng came in contact with Smith, Reuther's husband and became his helper in mission activities. Cheng also worked with pastor Hsi, as Jakobsen did. According to Austin, Cheng also cooperated with Hsi to open a refuge.³⁰⁵ In addition, Cable, a fellow missionary also stationed in Shanxi, claims that Jakobsen and Cheng journeyed to preached the gospel together.³⁰⁶ Cable states that Cheng had a 'strong admiration for Miss Jakobsen'.³⁰⁷ Descriptions of Cheng are not great in number, perhaps because the sources available predominately revolve around western missionaries' activities in China. Moreover, as we shall further explore, the reactions to Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage seemed to be much more centred on Jakobsen than Cheng.

According to Cable, Cheng was from of Huozhou³⁰⁸ and also worked with Hsi. Moreover, Cable claims that Cheng's own community rejected him as he became a Christian and refused

³⁰² *China's millions* (1897): 114-116.

³⁰³ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc, J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³⁰⁴ Broomhall (1989): 252. Both Meyer and Broomhall inform us that Jakobsen moved from Shanxi to Jiangxi in 1896 with an aim to enter the province of Hunan. Meyer (1928): 33.

³⁰⁵ Austin (2007): 388-389.

³⁰⁶ Cable (1917): 22 and Cable (1943): 11.

³⁰⁷ Cable (1917): 23.

³⁰⁸ This location might be the same as Hochow, which was the location where Jakobsen and Reuter started missionary carriers. Rasmussen claims that as Jakobsen and Cheng returned to China after spending two years in

to pay temple taxes.³⁰⁹ After Cheng's conversion he became a part of pastor Hsi's work. Austin refers to Cable as he provides information about Cheng, though Austin adds that his engagement to Jakobsen was made in secret.³¹⁰ A newspaper article printed in *The North China Herald*, identify Cheng to be of Mongolian decent.³¹¹ Reuter claims that Cheng was Smith's 'native' helper.³¹² Jakobsen's engagement to Cheng was, as already mentioned, allegedly made known in 1893.³¹³

According to the contribution made by Stevenson in *The North China Herald* in 1898, Jakobsen was ordered by the CIM to break off the engagement and if she did not consent, she would be sent to Shanghai and further back to Norway.³¹⁴ Stevenson claims that Jakobsen promised to break off the engagement and it was at this point she was removed from Shanxi to another location in China.³¹⁵ Meyer, who also provides information about Jakobsen's marriage and her work in Hunan, claims that Hudson Taylor confronted Jakobsen and made his disapproval of the marriage known.³¹⁶ Meyer refers to a letter sent from Jakobsen to Rasmussen in 1897 where Jakobsen expresses her own belief of how the marriage would benefit missionary work in Hunan.³¹⁷ In this particular letter printed in Meyer's book, Jakobsen explains that she was engaged to Cheng. This is noteworthy; since Stevenson clearly expresses his belief in *The North China Herald* that Jakobsen at this time had broken off the engagement.

These representations offer alternative narratives. Stevenson shares one side of the story regarding Jakobsen's engagement and Rasmussen, Meyer, Cable and Broomhall shares their understanding of the matter. According to Meyer and Rasmussen, it would seem as Jakobsen felt called to the restricted province of Hunan and also believed that marrying Cheng would

Norway they returned to Cheng's home province, which Austin identifies to be Shanxi. State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33-34 and Austin (2007): 387-388.

³⁰⁹ Cable (1917): 22.

³¹⁰ Austin (2007): 390.

³¹¹ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc. A Japanese'. *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542.

³¹² Grimstvedt (1914): 94.

³¹³ Broomhall (1989): 252.

³¹⁴ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc. J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³¹⁵ Ibid: 443.

³¹⁶ Meyer (1928): 32-33.

³¹⁷ Ibid: 32-33.

benefit the mission.³¹⁸ Still, we have reason to believe that Jakobsen's reasons for marrying Cheng were a bit more complex. Cable informs us that Jakobsen responded to Cheng's affection and that Jakobsen turned to her trusted friend Hsi to seek advice regarding her and Cheng's situation.³¹⁹ Hsi responded, according to Cable, that he could not identify it as a sin for a Christian man and woman to marry, however, he stated that time had not come for such an alignment to be made.³²⁰ Stevenson also states that Cheng had waited patiently seven years for Jakobsen to marry him.³²¹ Both the risk Jakobsen was prepared to take, and the long period of time they spent waiting, gives us reason to believe that Jakobsen's choice of spouse might have been in part because of her 'calling' to missionary work in Hunan, however, it was also out of affection for Cheng.

Regardless of the information highlighted so far, it seemed to come as a great surprise to the leadership of the CIM when a notice arrived in the summer of 1898 informing that Jakobsen and Cheng had decided go through with the marriage.³²² The CIM regarded Jakobsen also as a representative for their mission in China and in reference to Stevenson it would seem as she certainly had not done what the CIM expected from her.

4.2 'The Principles and Practice of the CIM ' Regarding marriage and female missionaries

In order to discuss how Jakobsen's marriage deviated from what the CIM expected from her, it is relevant to explore a little further what the CIM actually *did* expect from their missionaries.

As previously mentioned, the CIM welcomed men and women into their mission on the basis of the individual 'calling' to become a missionary, however, the CIM was also built on a hierarchical structure. The leadership of the mission was to be respected and in order to become a member of this mission family, all missionaries had to agree to a set of

³¹⁸ Meyer (1928): 32-33 and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 32-33.

³¹⁹ Cable (1917): 23.

³²⁰ Ibid: 23.

³²¹ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc, J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³²² Ibid: 443.

principles.³²³ As the CIM leadership wanted to secure an efficient and steady progress, several recommendations and guidelines were given to missionaries and made up ‘The Principles and Practice of the CIM’. Spreading the gospel in China constituted missionary work, and all missionaries were expected to work towards this goal.

‘The Principles and Practice of the CIM’ stated that missionaries had to give six months’ notice before leaving the mission.³²⁴ If a member wanted to leave the mission, they were also instructed to give up mission money and property of use.³²⁵ Further, married couples were only accepted to the mission if both of them were deemed suitable for the mission. Unmarried missionaries were expected to take betrothals seriously, and a marriage could only be pursued if the CIM leadership considered the union proper.³²⁶ The CIM was also concerned about the issue of safety for female missionaries. The female missionaries were to show great caution in the public sphere to avoid misunderstandings with the local people. Women, like men, were to respect the Chinese culture and customs and therefore be aware of how the Chinese regarded them.³²⁷

The particular bulletin of ‘The Principles and Practice of the CIM’ outlined above was published in 1886, and it would seem, as time moved on, that there were more and more questions relating to marriage and missionary work within the CIM. This might also have been a natural consequence of the rapid growth of missionaries between 1860 and 1905.³²⁸ The CIM practiced the rule that all missionaries had to wait two years before marriage, which might not have been uncommon within mission societies. This was because premature marriages were considered harmful to the mission and for the couples.³²⁹ This rule had been practiced since the early parts of the 1870s and was allegedly regarded as a good practise.³³⁰ A narrative about marriage written in 1889 describes how important women had become for the progress of the mission. This narrative states: ‘The Chinese are not afraid of them; they do

³²³ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 16.

³²⁴ Ibid: 18.

³²⁵ Ibid: 18.

³²⁶ Ibid: 20.

³²⁷ Ibid: 34-35.

³²⁸ Bays (2012): 68.

³²⁹ According to this narrative, health was reduced and lives were lost due to individuals marrying before they became used to the conditions in the field. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), “Narrative on marriage” (1889): 1.

³³⁰ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), “Narrative on marriage” (1889): 2. According to the author, this practise regarding marriage had been carried out for the past 17 years.

not think that they have come with any political message, they are not afraid that they are pioneers of an army of conquest...'³³¹ This letter, which highlights the value of women's work, claims that it was because of the female missionaries that the mission had gained access to number of homes. Hudson Taylor carried a vision to reach out to every home in China. This made female missionaries a valuable asset to the mission.³³²

On March 16th 1898, approximately two months before Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage, Arthur .W. Douthwaite³³³, a missionary doctor, shares his own opinion regarding marriages in missions in China.

...It is considered most improper for unmarried women, of any class, to live apart from their parents or guardians- in fact, it would not be tolerated among themselves-, and for such to leave their native land and settle among strangers, spending their time in going from house to house, is looked upon as so utterly outré...³³⁴

According to Douthwaite, the different customs caused single women to be treated disrespectfully as they lived in houses with couples, which were, in the eyes of the Chinese, a life of a concubine.³³⁵ Single women were neither welcome in Chinese homes of higher status. A married woman was however treated with more respect, and Douthwaite therefore considers married women as much more suited for missionary work in China. Douthwaite urges missionaries to an early marriage, not spending too many years in the field as single as this would benefit the mission.³³⁶ Douthwaite's proposition indicates that the marriage question may have been more and more debated, as single women were considered important to missionary work.

As Jakobsen was a missionary of the CIM, she was expected to agree and to respect the CIM principles and thus accept the authority of the CIM leadership. To further understand the reactions to Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage this mission family frame must be considered. In China, it seems as Jakobsen was understood within this mission family frame and caused her

³³¹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), 'The value of women's work' (1889).

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Austin identifies A.W. Douthwaite as a doctor and as a 'twenty-five-year veteran' in missions. Austin (2007): 231.

³³⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/77 James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), A.W. Douthwaite. 'Relation of the Marriage Question to Missionary work.' March 16th, 1898.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

to be ‘judged’ on the basis on how the CIM ideally wanted her to behave, as a mission family member. As we shall see for instance in the public debate, CIM was regarded as responsible for Jakobsen’s actions indicating that she was understood within a CIM’s mission family frame.

4.3 Reactions to Anna Jakobsen and Cheng Xiuqi’s marriage

Sources that reflect reactions from within the CIM are personal letters and records that were intended for members of the CIM only, however, perhaps these sources also reflects a semi-private room. Rasmussen reminiscences may also be regarded as a private writing as she reflects her own personal opinions and perceptions regarding Jakobsen and Cheng’s marriage. Knowing the genre of these specific sources is crucial in understanding the purpose of the message it portrays.³³⁷ As mentioned in chapter 1, letters and records within the CIM allow insight into their activities and what they as an institution found important. This requires an understanding of why these letters were sent and why the records were made. Moreover, who sent them and who received them, and in what context were they written? Reminiscences are private reflections that reveal personal thoughts and opinions and can therefore provide a very different side to a story than for example newspaper articles that are meant for a different audience.³³⁸ Rasmussen’s reminiscences distinguishes it selves from the reactions in the CIM and in *The North China Herald* as it was written in retrospect. Responses from the CIM and in *The North China Herald* appeared within the same time Jakobsen’s wedding. As Rasmussen wrote her reminiscences over 20 years after Jakobsen’s wedding, it might have given her a different approach to the matter.³³⁹

CIM’s personal approach to Jakobsen’s marriage is reflected through letters with more sensitive and emotional content sent about, and to Jakobsen directly.³⁴⁰ As a member of this mission family, Jakobsen committed to the community and was tied to personal relationships. Jakobsen’s close connection to the CIM is reflected for instance as Hudson Taylor’s sends a personal letter to Jakobsen regarding her wedding. Jakobsen also worked as a housemaid in Hudson Taylor’s sisters’ house when she lived in London to prepare for missionary work.³⁴¹

³³⁷ Andresen, Rosland, Ryymin and Skålevåg (2012): 77.

³³⁸ Tosh (2006): 74-75.

³³⁹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 257.

³⁴⁰ Perhaps to Cheng as well, however, because the sources reflect little insight into Cheng’s history, we cannot know this for sure.

³⁴¹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer. 26.

Cable, who seems to have known both Jakobsen and Cheng personally, refers to Hsi as a local leader in Shanxi and also Jakobsen's trusted friend.³⁴² Cheng was also, according to Austin, Hsi's co-worker.³⁴³ Reuter's diary provides indications that leaders such as Hudson Taylor and Mr and Mrs Broomhall were often in touch with her and Jakobsen.³⁴⁴ This information gives us the impression that Jakobsen had a very close connection to the leadership within the CIM. These connections may be relevant to highlight in order to make sense of the more personal reactions from the CIM.

China's millions does not mention the wedding, and neither does *The Chinese Recorder*, another missionary journal, and Chinese recorder written in English.³⁴⁵ Both *The Chinese Recorder* and *China's millions* were publications meant for the Christian community.³⁴⁶ As already mentioned, avoiding a topic may tell us something about a situation as well and published missionary material did not make it a priority to print personal matters such as marriages.³⁴⁷ Because both these publications were centred on missionary activity, they may have shared similar reasons for not publishing reactions towards Jakobsen and Cheng and their marriage.

However, it did not take long after Jakobsen and Cheng's wedding before the first reaction was printed in *The North China Herald*. *The North China Herald* may be regarded as a secular publication carrying different policies and restrictions, as it aimed at covering all foreign presence in China, including missions. *The North China Herald* represents thus another forum just by covering this debate. It reflected a public venue where Christians, non-Christians, Chinese, and Westerners all engaged into a discussion regarding intermarriages.

The following three passages will map and discuss the different reactions to Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage. In addition, review how this marriage was different in a Chinese context and diverted from what CIM, Jakobsen's mission family, expected for her as a missionary.

³⁴² Cable (1917): 23.

³⁴³ Austin (2007): 389.

³⁴⁴ Grimstvedt (1914): 146. Reuter explains that she received letters from Mr Taylor. Grimstvedt (1914): 180-181. Reuter informs that Mr Broomhall left them on 26th of November 1886 and that she, and most likely Jakobsen, stayed at Dr Edwards' house on 1th of December 1886.

³⁴⁵ Bays (2012): 70.

³⁴⁶ Ibid: 70. *The Chinese Recorder*, which was published in Shanghai, did also mainly record Christian activity in China and was issued once a month.

³⁴⁷ Andresen, Rosland, Ryymin and Skålevåg (2012): 80-81.

4.3.1 Reactions within the CIM

The first published letter from within the CIM in reference to Jakobsen and Cheng's wedding is dated July 28th, 1898, T'ai-Yuen-fu, Shanxi.³⁴⁸ It was written two days after the wedding took place.³⁴⁹ The letter is addressed from T.J. Underwood of the Baptist Mission Society to Dr Ebenezer Edwards, who was a previous member of the CIM.³⁵⁰ Underwood was, according to an additional letter, present at Jakobsen and Cheng's wedding.³⁵¹ Underwood tries to explain to Edwards, who supported the marriage that he merely attended for Jakobsen's sake. He did not necessarily agree with the event that took place.³⁵² It would seem, as Underwood needed to confirm that he attended out of obligations to Jakobsen and not because he supported the marriage although he was not even a member of the CIM. Underwood's reaction causes curiosity regarding why he felt the need to defend his attendance at this wedding. We need to review additional letters to make sense of Underwood's response.

On August 2nd 1898, Hoddle, who is believed to be an independent worker of the CIM in Pingyang, sent a letter to Mr Taylor regarding a marriage of a 'sister'.³⁵³ Hoddle introduces his letter by telling Hudson Taylor that he will not be surprised about the information he is about to share. Hoddle begins describing the protests from fellow missionaries and the advance notice given to a Mr Clapp, who performed the ceremony.³⁵⁴ Clapp was an American of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.).³⁵⁵ A notice was

³⁴⁸ T'ai-Yuen is today the capital of Shanxi. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11):

CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), T.J. Underwood's letter to Dr Edwards, dated T'ai-yuen-fu. July 28th, 1898.

³⁴⁹ The marriage took place on the 26th of July in Taiyuanfu, Shansi. 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am, etc, J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director'. *The North China Herald*. September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³⁵⁰ Edwards left the CIM at some point after 1893 as he followed his brother-in-law, Thomas Wellesley Piggott and started their own independent mission organisation. Austin (2007): 363.

³⁵¹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), W.S. Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898.

³⁵² China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), T.J. Underwood's letter to Dr Edwards, dated T'ai-yuen-fu. July 28th, 1898.

³⁵³ 'MASSACRE OF 44 FOREIGNERS AT VA' YANFU 9th July, 1900. *The North China Herald*. November 28th, Volume 1900, Issue 1738: 1156 and China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11):

CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Letter from A. Hoddle to Mr Taylor, dated T'ai-yuen Fu, Shan-si. August 2th, 1898. We have good reason to believe that Mr Taylor is in fact James Hudson Taylor. First of all because of letters implying that Mr Taylor was well aware of the situation and the fact that only other person Mr Taylor could refer to at this time was his son, Dr Howard Taylor. However, his son is, as far as I can tell, is only identified with this name, 'Dr Howard Taylor'. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), 'Narrative on marriage' (1889): 2

³⁵⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Letter from A. Hoddle to Mr Taylor, dated T'ai-yuen Fu, Shan-si. August 2th, 1898.

³⁵⁵ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Mr Stevenson's letter to Mr Elwin. August 20th, 1898.

also given Edwards, who attended and supported the marriage.³⁵⁶ Moreover, Hoddle expresses the effort he made in order to stop this wedding from taking place. He claims that there were seven foreigners present and shares his concern for the awful prospects for their children, especially if they have girls. Hoddle does not provide any reason for this opinion in this letter. He also has ‘grave doubts’ if this marriage was even legal according to Norwegian law.³⁵⁷ The choice of language of this letter gives an impression of a dramatic situation. For example by stating that ‘The almost universal feeling of consternation the news produced was succeeded by a perfect storm of protest’. Hoddle had also informed Clapp ‘how strong the opposition was’. Clapp responded to this notice that he could find no scriptural reasons to not be present at the wedding.³⁵⁸ His letter ends with a sort of prayer that such an incident must never happen again.³⁵⁹

Hoddle refers to Jakobsen as a ‘sister’. The family metaphor was according to Manktelow normal within missions as they in many ways perceived themselves as a family. Christians referred to one another as brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers both within mission organisation and in regards to personal relationships.³⁶⁰ Though the CIM regarded Jakobsen as their own, this letter does not mention anything about their position regarding Cheng.

Two days after yet another letter regarding Jakobsen and Cheng’s marriage was sent from W.S. Johnston to Stevenson. I have not been able to confirm much more about W. S. Johnston, however, according to this letter he resided in Sheo-yang, Shanxi. He was most likely a member of the CIM or the Sheo-Yang Mission (S.Y.M) as both these missions were stationed in this area. According to Austin, Thomas Wellesley Piggott and Edwards founded The S.Y.M, which is also identified as ‘Shouyang Mission’.³⁶¹

³⁵⁶ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Letter from A. Hoddle to Mr Taylor, dated T’ai-yuen Fu, Shan-si. August 2th, 1898.

³⁵⁷ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), W.S Johnston’s letter to Mr Stevenson. Dated Sheo-yang, Shan-si, August 6th, 1898. Johnston also questioned the legitimacy of the wedding in another letter to Mr Stevenson on August 6th, 1898. According to W.S Johnston, the English consul at T’ientsin did not validate this marriage.

³⁵⁸ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Letter from A. Hoddle to Mr Taylor, dated T’ai-yuen Fu, Shan-si. August 2th, 1898.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Manktelow (2013):11-12.

³⁶¹ Austin (2007): 268. Piggott and Edwards were both former members of the CIM. Piggott was a man who questioned the CIM practise and disagreed with Hudson on many levels. Piggott left the CIM in 1893, and Edwards followed him and founded the independent mission S.Y.M. in Shanxi. This quarrel, which led to a division and establishment of a new mission in the area, cannot have made matters in regards to Jakobsen and Cheng’s wedding any easier. Especially since the house where the wedding took place belonged to a Chu, who was also a member of the S.Y.M. Austin (2007): 279-280 and 363 and China Inland Mission Collection

Johnston's letter is a three-pages long report of the situation. Johnston introduces the letter by suspecting the issue to be familiar also to Stevenson and informs him of Jakobsen's marriage to Cheng that took place in T'ai-yuen fu on July 26th. Further, he states that the marriage was not allowed to take place on the S.Y.M base, or in any chapel. The ceremony was therefore held at a photographer's house named Chu, a member of the S.Y.M. As the CIM warned Chu about taking part in what Johnston refers to as an 'ungracious act'³⁶², Chu replied that the CIM had no right to try to control him and the CIM responded that this was not their intention.³⁶³

It would seem as the leadership of the CIM questioned every person involved in turn. Edwards was the next person the leadership confronted. Edwards and Mr Beynon of the B. & F. Bible society³⁶⁴ had ensured Chu that they would take full responsibility for the wedding. Assumingly, Chu was conflicted, but he reasoned that 'Miss Jakobsen felt called of God to go and open Hu-nan, and was taking the man Ch'en (Cheng) to help her.'³⁶⁵ Because of this, he allowed the wedding to take place in his house. Edwards's response to the CIM's is fairly direct. For example by stating that Hudson Taylor had no authority in regards to the matter.³⁶⁶

This letter appears to revolve around who was responsible for sanctioning the ceremony. For this reason, Johnston might have found it necessary to identify all who attended the wedding with names and which mission society they belonged to.

Besides natives, Dr and Mrs Edwards and three children were present, as was Rev. Clapp, who performed the marriage service, Mr and Mrs Beynon and three children, B&F. Bible Soc. Miss Coombs S.Y Mission, Rev. G.B. Farthing B.M.S. Mr Underwood B.M.S. Miss French C.I.M. P'ing-iao. (All these were aware of our protest and the telegram)³⁶⁷

(GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-Yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898: 1.

³⁶² China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Quoted in Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-Yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898: 1.

³⁶³ Ibid: 1.

³⁶⁴ British and Foreign Bible society.

³⁶⁵ Quoted in China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-Yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898: 2.

³⁶⁶ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-Yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898: 2.

³⁶⁷ Ibid: 3.

In this particular letter Chu, Mr Beynon and Edwards were directly questioned and Mr Underwood, as we have explored, felt the need to explain his attendance in a previous letter. It might have been even more risky for members of the CIM to attend the wedding than others. Benson, who had done research on Evangeline (Eva) French's missionary activity, informs us that all participants were officially reported to the CIM leadership and that Eva's attendance at this wedding was a brave act, maybe precisely because she also apart of the CIM family.³⁶⁸

Johnston informs us further that the majority of the mission opposed this marriage, and argues that Jakobsen was still a member of the CIM as she married. According to 'The Principles and Practise of the CIM', missionaries had to give six months' notice in order to leave the mission.³⁶⁹ Johnston claims that the marriage was CIM's responsibility. This might have made the issue particular difficult for the CIM and might also be the reason why they were eager to find the ones responsible for sanctioning the ceremony. Johnston confirms Jakobsen and Cheng's plans to go to Hunan and ends his letter by suspecting this issue to reach the public press.³⁷⁰ Stevenson's letter to Elwin on August 20th, 1898, carries a very similar message as Stevenson's expresses grief concerning the matter and explains how they tried to stop the wedding.³⁷¹

According to Johnston's letter there was a division within the CIM regarding the wedding. Maybe larger parts of the CIM opposed this wedding, but there were also a group of people, both members of the CIM and a few others who supported the wedding. The CIM seem to take this division very seriously as all individuals that attended the wedding were asked to explain why they attended, when they were clearly instructed not to.

One may wonder why CIM instructed their missionaries not to attend Jakobsen and Cheng's wedding. These letters seems to revolve more around *how* this situation played out than providing information for *why* the CIM so strongly opposed this marriage.

³⁶⁸ Benson (2001): 14.

³⁶⁹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 18.

³⁷⁰ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Johnston's letter to Mr Stevenson, dated Sheo-Yang, Shansi. August 4th, 1898.

³⁷¹ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), J.W. Stevenson's letter to Mr Elwin. August 20th, 1898.

Hudson Taylor's letter to Jakobsen written on August 26th same year is of such importance that I have chosen to attach the whole letter within this section. Hudson Taylor was the leader of the CIM and thus an authority figure for Jakobsen Cheng.

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"Copy" (W. B. Sloan Esq.)
Ku-ling, 26th Aug., 1898.

My Dear Miss Jacobsen,

Thanks for your kind letter of July 16. You do not know how much you have distressed us, and injured the C. I. M., and, indeed, the whole Mission cause in China. I do not know of any blow Missions in China have had, during the last thirty years, that is nearly so serious. However, I have already put this matter fully before you, and, as you think so little of the judgment of 99 out of 100 of all the Protestant Missionaries in China, as well as of us, the leaders of the C. I. M., I suppose it is useless to write any further on this matter. *But* I am sorry, too, that you did not remember your promise to give six months' notice of leaving the Mission, or of the intended marriage, before proposing to have it celebrated. That Dr. and Mrs. Edwards should, in any way, forward such a terrible mistake, is amazing to me! If you are determined to persevere, I can do no other than accept your resignation, as you wish, as dating from July 16, the time mentioned in your letter; but I do trust Mr. Clapp and yourself have both seen that you could not be married, under present circumstances, at any rate. You will be aware of the unanimous feeling of the members of the Sheo-yang Mission, excepting Dr. Edwards, and of the feeling of the P'ai-üen Missionary community, that so great a wrong must not be perpetrated in any missionary building. That ought to have been sufficient, in itself, to make you hesitate; and I trust that you have hesitated, and, indeed, decided to give up a course that, whatever you may think of it, is such a cruel wrong to every single lady missionary in China, and is scarcely less wrong to all our native Christian young men.

We grieve more than I can tell you to lose you; and if you, absolutely and forever, give up all thought of this or any such marriage,

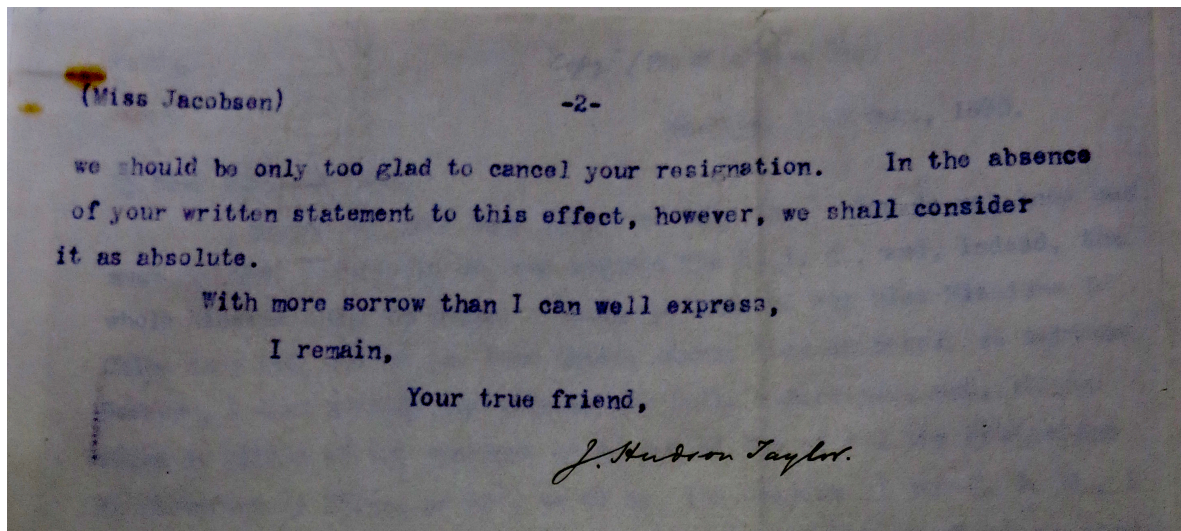


Image 2: Letter from J. H. Taylor to Anna Jacobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

Hudson Taylor introduces his letter by telling Jakobsen how much she has injured the CIM by marrying Cheng. It would seem as Hudson Taylor speaks on behalf of the entire mission as he refers to 'us' as the injured part that 'she' has caused the most harmful matter in the CIM history. The way Hudson Taylor chooses to express himself forces us to question whether he is trying to make her feel guilty. Hudson Taylor seems to make this marriage into a personal matter. As we have already highlighted, Jakobsen appears to have a close connection to Hudson Taylor and other individuals within the CIM leadership. Jakobsen was not only a member of this organisation she was also a friend. It seems like every sentence is a burden to Hudson Taylor, for instance by saying that he trusts that Jakobsen has hesitated her actions and that it grieves him more than he can tell to let her go.³⁷²

In some sense, Hudson Taylor appears to be torn between his personal feeling towards Jakobsen, and his opinion regarding what would serve as the best interest of the mission. Perhaps making this marriage, not only as a transgression towards the CIM, but also as a personal deceit towards Hudson Taylor. This might also illustrate, along the lines of what Cleall argues, how missions understood themselves as a family and moreover what the CIM regarded as a 'proper' family.³⁷³ According to Hudson Taylor's letter one may argue that Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage was not the kind of union that the CIM wanted. This might

³⁷² China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor's letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

³⁷³ Cleall (2012): 34-35.

also serve as an example of how difficult it was for missions to accept other familial structures than what they regarded as ‘proper’.³⁷⁴

I located two more letters from Hudson Taylor to Stevenson just briefly mentioning Jakobsen and Cheng’s marriage. In regards to the wedding, Hudson Taylor expresses: ‘It is most sad to see the part Dr and Mrs Edwards have taken.’³⁷⁵ The CIM seem to be extra sensitive about him and his wife’s involvement. This is also noticeable in Hudson Taylor’s letter to Jakobsen, where he expresses his amazement in reference to Edwards’ actions regarding the wedding.³⁷⁶ The Edwards’ were apart the CIM family and were closely linked with the leadership on an earlier stage, and may be the reason for the CIM’s personal approach towards them as well. Hudson Taylor ends his letter by stating: ‘I do not see how we can receive Mr and Mrs Ch’en in Shanghai, or agree to their going to what is now a station of our mission in Hu-nan.’³⁷⁷

By addressing the content of these letters, we can argue that the CIM was not willing to include this marriage within their mission family. The extent they went to in order to prevent this marriage from taking place raises questions of why this was such a serious matter to the CIM. Equally to Jakobsen, the CIM had a hard time understanding the Edwards’s actions, perhaps demonstrating that mission sometimes were conflicted between their mission hierarchical structure and their personal relations.

4.3.2 Reactions from close connections in Norway

Rasmussen suggests that Jakobsen never intended to marry when she made the choice to become a missionary.³⁷⁸ Rasmussen claims further that Jakobsen also declined a marriage proposal earlier on and suspects that Jakobsen married Cheng in order to better communicate with the local people.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁴ Cleall (2012): 34-35.

³⁷⁵ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Quoted in Hudson Taylor’s letter to Mr Stevenson. Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

³⁷⁶ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor’s letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

³⁷⁷ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Quoted in Hudson Taylor’s letter to Mr Stevenson. Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898. There is one more letter that includes a short comment on the T’ai-uen marriage and how Hudson Taylor is glad ‘The Recorder’ would ignore the issue. China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Hudson Taylor’s letter to Mr Stevenson. Ku-ling, August 29th, 1898.

³⁷⁸ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 32-33.

³⁷⁹ Ibid: 32-33.

According to Meyer, Jakobsen, and also Chu, who granted his house to the wedding ceremony, emphasises on the same argument as Rasmussen. As we have discussed, we may have reasons to believe that Jakobsen's choice to marry was more complex than her 'calling' to province of Hunan. Rasmussen, who was highly dedicated to missionary work, may have been interested in presenting Jakobsen's story in a way that showed the progress of the mission. Perhaps she knew more about Jakobsen's situation, but did not choose to tell every part. Rasmussen wrote her reminiscences many years after Jakobsen's marriage, and had time to think through how she wanted to present this story.³⁸⁰ Rasmussen's reflections may also have been to both understand and protect Jakobsen. Still, we cannot know this for sure.

Further in this context, Rasmussen states that the CIM forbade foreign missionaries to marry 'natives'; for this reason Rasmussen knew that Jakobsen had to leave the mission by marrying Cheng.³⁸¹ In an issue of the Norwegian missionary magazine *Korsets Seier* from January 15th, 1912, Rasmussen shares memories from Jakobsen's life. Rasmussen claims that when Jakobsen married Cheng, she left all her friends astonished.³⁸² Also this article from *Korsets Seier*, was published many years after Jakobsen's marriage took place.

Eide also offers stories of both Reuter's and Rasmussen's reaction to their engagement. Supposedly, Reuter and her husband Smith did not understand why Jakobsen wanted to go through with the marriage, as they had never heard of a western woman marrying a Chinese man. Moreover, they feared that she would damage herself in making such a decision.³⁸³ According to Eide, Rasmussen paid a visit to a priest for counselling when Jakobsen married Cheng, and through this, she came to the conclusion to accept Jakobsen's choice.³⁸⁴ I have not been able to locate sources confirming these specific reactions from Rasmussen and Reuter. The engagement was made known in 1893, however, Reuter died in 1891.³⁸⁵ Maybe Reuter knew about the engagement plans earlier on, but this is not mentioned in the diary collection edited by Grimstvedt. Neither is the story of Rasmussen visiting priest due to the matter described in Rasmussen's reminiscences.

³⁸⁰ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 157.

³⁸¹ Ibid: 32-33.

³⁸² 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Changs hjemgang' *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2. January 15th, 1912.

³⁸³ Eide (2001): 59.

³⁸⁴ Ibid: 60.

³⁸⁵ Austin (2007): 385 and Kjebekk (1991): 61.

4.3.3 The public debate

The public debate in *The North China Herald* holds a different character than what we have discussed so far. New issues revolving around ‘Christian brotherhood’ and questions regarding Chinese and Western customs are widely discussed. Also, it seems like Jakobsen and Cheng’s marriage entered an already on-going debate regarding intermarriages. Cleall argues that intermarriages were found unacceptable by colonial thinkers, as, in the colonizers perspective, the differences between the ‘natives’ and the Westerners were self-evident.³⁸⁶

The issue had also been up to discussion previously in *The North China Herald*.³⁸⁷ In essence, their marriage seemed to set fire to a spark that was already looming concerning the major and controversy topic of intermarriages. Nearly all the responses printed in *The North China Herald* are anonymous. They are signed as in any newspapers at the time. For instance as ‘I am etc, A Chinese’, ‘a missionary’ or ‘an English woman’. The CIM’s deputy director John Stevenson is the only one who signed his personal name throughout this whole debate.

On August 15, 1898, a report printed in *The North China Herald* stated that a mixed missionary marriage had taken place in Taiyuanfu on July 26th.

‘Round about the T’aiyaunfu district the heat has been very trying this season, as very little rain has fallen, consequently the small foreign community of missionaries have been feeling rather worn out, but the fatigue and lassitude were for the time forgotten when the announcement was made that a wedding had been arranged to take place in the city...’³⁸⁸

The passage above introduced the debate regarding Jakobsen’s marriage in *The North China Herald*. The couple are introduced, and the groom is described as a ‘native’ helper who had waited patiently for his bride for seven years. The bride is introduced to be a worker of the CIM who had been present in China for thirteen years. The writer claims that the community opposed the wedding because of the increased danger for other female missionaries present in China. Because of this marriage, ‘native’ men were enabled to look at foreign missionaries as potential wives and would be tempted to ‘gain a similar price’.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁶ Cleall (2012): 69-70. Cleall refers to debates from the 1880’s that came as a result of missionaries’ experiences from Africa and India.

³⁸⁷ See for instance ‘Miscellaneous articles’, *The North China Herald*. June 17th, Volume 1892, Issue 1298: 808.

³⁸⁸ ‘A mixed missionary marriage’, ‘I am, etc, Y’, *The North China Herald*. August 15th, Volume 1898, Issue 1619: 304.

³⁸⁹ Quoted in ‘A mixed missionary marriage’, ‘I am, etc, Y’, *The North China Herald*. August 15th, Volume 1898, Issue 1619: 304.

A few weeks later, on September 5th, 1898, *The North China Herald* published another letter regarding the marriage.³⁹⁰ This letter directs its attention towards the CIM leadership and asks why they did so little, knowing about the issue for seven years. In the writers' opinion, the women in question should no longer be provided for and should be left in her husband's care. Moreover, the writer believes, similarly to the former letter that the 'native' helper has won much by marrying a foreign woman, since he doesn't even have to support her financially.³⁹¹

Stevenson replies to the matter in the same column and explains the CIM's actions towards the issue. Stevenson goes along way to defend the CIM's part of the matter. The woman in question, whom he identifies as a 'Norwegian lady', was subsequent to the engagement asked to come to the coast and be sent home. When Jakobsen realised that the engagement was disapproved by the entire Christian community, Stevenson claim that she made the promise to break it off and was appointed to work far away from Shanxi. Because of this, the CIM directors considered the issue as settled. When a telegram reached Stevenson on July 15th about their marriage ceremony taking place the very next day, Stevenson claim that they did everything in their power to prevent the marriage. This news allegedly came as a great surprise to the CIM, as, according to Stevenson, Jakobsen had decided to break two promises. She broke the promise to break off the engagement and secondly to give six-month notice before leaving the mission. He also confirms, and reassures the readers, that contact between the CIM and the couple had now come to an end.³⁹²

Though Stevenson does not mention Jakobsen by name, she is referred to as a 'Norwegian lady' and it is noteworthy how many details he exposes about Jakobsen. This serves as an indication of how far the deputy director of the CIM was willing to go in order to whitewash CIM's part in this situation. Stevenson finds it important to highlight that *she* was the one who broke a promise and the CIM did all they could in order to prevent this marriage from taking place. It could appear as Stevenson attempts to pull the CIM out from this conflict.

³⁹⁰ 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am, etc, Disgusted', *The North China Herald*, September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³⁹¹ Quoted in 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am, etc, Disgusted', *The North China Herald*, September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

³⁹² 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am, etc, J.W. Stevenson, Deputy Director', *The North China Herald*, September 5th, Volume 1898, Issue 1622: 443.

On September 12, 1898, a letter signed 'a Chinese' once again direct the attention toward the CIM, but this time the CIM is questioned why they do not practice what they preach. It was because of the message of universal brotherhood that many Chinese had converted to Christianity. They have learned, from the foreigners, that in the Kingdom of God there was no difference between races, or between privileged groups. 'A Chinese' asks the CIM if they regarded their own doctrine as horrible?³⁹³ Some of the following responses agree with the letter written by 'a Chinese', but others do not. The following letter signed 'a missionary' claims that the harsh reactions towards this marriage was not due to question of belief or universal brotherhood, but because of the huge difference between Western and Chinese customs. 'A missionary' argues that because this 'foreign woman' becomes his property, according to Chinese law, he can do whatever he wants with her, and to her.³⁹⁴ Yet another response signed 'I am etc., Cynicus' centres his or her message around the opinion that this woman has degraded herself by marrying 'a man of inferior race'.³⁹⁵ Once again making this issue revolve around customs.

A letter signed 'Charity' written on September 12th, addresses the question discussed earlier regarding the 'grand price' this 'native worker' had won by not having to provide for her. He or she claims that marriages in China are sacred, just as in many other countries. 'A wife is the wife always; nothing can break the bond that binds time; only unfaithfulness.'³⁹⁶ The following letter also expresses some of the same opinions as the former. The letter signed 'An Englishwoman' questions the reason why this marriage became such a serious matter. She claims: 'many missionaries have done worse'.³⁹⁷ She argues that the case would have been different if a highly educated man had married a Chinese helper and argues that the CIM has thought too little of this 'native helper' whom had waited for seven years for his bride. This is of great contradiction to Hudson's letter that claimed that Jakobsen was the one who had thought too little about her community and her leadership. 'An Englishwoman' claims that it was because Jakobsen was a woman that the consequences of her actions were so great.

³⁹³ 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am etc. A Chinese', *The North China Herald*. September 12th, Volume 1898, Issue 1623: 494.

³⁹⁴ 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am etc. A missionary', *The North China Herald*. September 12th, Volume 1898, Issue 1623: 495.

³⁹⁵ 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am etc. Cynicus', *The North China Herald*. September 12th, Volume 1898, Issue 1623: 495.

³⁹⁶ Quoted in 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am etc. Charity', *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542.

³⁹⁷ Quoted in 'The mixed missionary marriage', 'I am etc. An Englishwoman', *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542.

The response that followed, signed 'A Japanese', identifies Cheng as a Mongolian and Jakobsen as a Caucasian, and claims that the reactions towards this marriage was mainly a racial matter. If Jakobsen had married someone her own class, the case would have been different, but Jakobsen married 'a class of race so degraded and so despised'.³⁹⁸ The final response published in *The North China Herald* provides a summary of this whole debate and summarises it into one question: 'should a foreign lady marry a Chinese?'.³⁹⁹ In an attempt to answer this question, he or she discusses the difference of Western and Chinese customs, and the uncertain future for possible offspring. Moreover, the writer argues that if the opposite were to happen, if a foreign man would marry a Chinese woman, the situation would be completely different. A foreign man would elevate her status instead of degrading it, and further stresses the increased danger for single women in the inland parts of China if a foreign woman marries a Chinese man. After this letter *The North China Herald* states that no further letters in regards to this particular marriage would be published.⁴⁰⁰

The public debate in *The North China Herald* displays a great controversy in regards to what this marriage was really about and why the CIM reacted the way they did. Stevenson claims it was because of broken promises, others direct the question back to CIM asking why they did not practice what they preached. However, there were other opinions as well. 'A Cynicus' claims that this issue had nothing to do with universal brotherhood, it was about differences between Western and Chinese customs. According to 'A Cynicus', in China a wife becomes his husbands' property, and he can do whatever he likes with her. In addition, there was no protection if she was to become a widow. In essences, a woman who married a Chinese man would become completely helpless and it was therefore dangerous for foreign women to enter into a Chinese family. Still, a few responses begs to differ, and questions how marriages in China were much worse than in other countries and claims that wives, and widows in China were provided for if necessary.⁴⁰¹ By this questioning the Westerners perceptions regarding marriage customs in China were in tune with reality.

³⁹⁸ Quoted in 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am etc. A Japanese' *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542.

³⁹⁹ Quoted in 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am etc. Consistent' *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542-543.

⁴⁰⁰ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am etc. Consistent' *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 542-543.

⁴⁰¹ 'The mixed missionary marriage' 'I am etc. Chinese' *The North China Herald*. September 19th, Volume 1898, Issue 1624: 543.

4.4 Concluding remarks

There are bits and pieces from a number of sources that provides insight on Jakobsen's missionary work in China and the events that led up to her and Cheng's marriage. The reactions towards Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage have made up larger parts of this chapter. This with good reason, since the responses to this marriage provides an opportunity to map perhaps the most controversial part of Jakobsen's life course.

As we have discovered, the responses display a huge variety depending on the sources' origin. For the CIM, the matter seemed to revolve around broken promises and increased danger for all female missionaries in China. Moreover, Jakobsen's choice of husband seems to be personal matter to the CIM as well, it was clearly a union that did not fit into their understanding of what a 'proper' marriage should be made up by. Jakobsen's close connections in Norway responded with astonishment, still Rasmussen seem to be thinking that Jakobsen had the best interest of the mission in mind as she married Cheng. Thus making Rasmussen take a different stand in regards to the marriage than the CIM.

The CIM's reactions reflect a grave serious matter, but these sources are more concentrated on explaining how the CIM tried to prevent this marriage, not making it clear why this was such a wrong both to the mission and to Hudson Taylor personally. The only reasons Hudson Taylor highlights is that Jakobsen's marriage has put every female missionary in the inland in danger and that she broke her promise to break of the engagement. However, as the issue reached the public press, it changed character as issues concerning CIM's responsibility and difference between Western and Chinese customs were in the very heart of the discussion. Furthermore, Jakobsen and Cheng's marriage seemed to enter an on-going debate about intermarriage in *The North China Herald*, and set fire to a spark that was already present.

According to responses within *The North China Herald*, everything about Jacobson and Cheng's marriage was different in a Chinese context because Jakobsen was a Western woman. A Western man could elevate a Chinese woman to his status, but a Western woman could not do the same. As a Western woman married a Chinese she would degrade her self and be completely unprotected. It was plainly dangerous in the eyes of many Westerns for a Western woman to marry a Chinese man. One may regard the CIM, together with many of the debaters in *The North China Herald* to hold perceptions of the Chinese culture that was built

on the understanding of their own culture. As 'A Japanese' states in *The North China Herald* that as a Western woman married a Chinese she would enter a class so degraded and despised. Westerners also feared that women would be ill treated and become her husband's property. However, some of the reactions in *The North China Herald* also questioned why marriages customs were so different in China and argued that marriages were sacred in China, just as in many other countries.

Jakobsen was in many ways understood as a part of the CIM and therefore many adjusted their focus on the CIM as they questioned this intermarriage and not Jakobsen directly. Some of the debaters held the CIM as responsible for Jakobsen's actions. Therefore the reactions to this marriage can be understood within the frames of the CIM as a mission family as they in many ways displayed the ideal norms Jakobsen was to live according to.

One may argue that the CIM carried perceptions of the Chinese culture as a degraded culture, though it might have been unintentionally. As Cleall argues, the western missions constructed frames for what a 'proper' family should ideally look like and thus automatically negotiated terms for 'otherness'. CIM expected Jakobsen as member of their mission family to respect to behave in the best interest of the mission. As Jakobsen married Cheng, she diverted from CIM's image of both how a mission family should function and how they imagined the work to be done in China. Because missionaries carried an understanding of the mission as a family, they able to include 'natives' into their community and at the same time unite this thinking with the natural family hierarchy. Jakobsen married a Chinese, which to many Westerners indicated that her spouse belonged to a subordinated class. Jakobsen might thus be argued to have transgressed CIM norms.

5 A new missionary family



Image 3: Hunan province

After Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's marriage they settled in Hunan (map), supposedly in the same area where Jakobsen Cheng had done missionary work prior to their marriage.⁴⁰² According to the CIM deputy director Stevenson, the Chengs headed for a station belonging to the CIM in Hunan.⁴⁰³ There are no sources, so far, that can confirm that they actually stayed at a CIM base. Meyer, on the other hand, claims that the couple settled in a Chinese house in Singtan⁴⁰⁴, which was a centre for commerce and trade in Hunan.⁴⁰⁵ Here they started their own family and received a daughter named Mary.⁴⁰⁶

Nevertheless, they would not be able to stay at this location long, as a civil unrest in China grew.⁴⁰⁷ In 1900, *Fædrelandsvennen* published two articles describing the Cheng family on a dramatic escape from violent groups in order to save their lives.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰² Broomhall (1989): 253. Broomhall claims that Jakobsen Cheng's Chinese colleagues in Hunan had asked her to not complicate the lives of fellow female missionaries upon their return to Jiangxi, Hunan.

⁴⁰³ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Hudson Taylor's letter to Mr Stevenson. Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

⁴⁰⁴ This might be the same location as Shang-ton. See more under section 5.1.

⁴⁰⁵ Meyer (1928): 36-37.

⁴⁰⁶ 'Anna Sofie Jakobsen Cheng' The census of population from 1900, 1001 Kristiansand: <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01037216000699> (Uploaded 01.02.2015)

⁴⁰⁷ 'Kina-Uroligheterne', *Fædrelandsvennen*, September 10th, 1900.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid and Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina', *Fædrelandsvennen*, November 7th, 1900.

This chapter aims at *investigating and reviewing sources and literatures that provide insight to the final parts of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course*. As Jakobsen Cheng's connections can be argued to take on new attributes and perhaps redefine what it can mean to be a missionary family, its frame might have changed or broadened. This chapter will thus *discuss if Anna Jakobsen Cheng's situation after she was excluded from the CIM may be identified to constitute a 'new' missionary family*.

Sources that gives insight to Jakobsen Cheng's life at this stage makes up a fractionated image. As mentioned in chapter 1, Jakobsen Cheng completely disappears from CIM records, and as the public debate in *The North China Herald* dims down, sources regarding Jakobsen Cheng seem to thin out. However, Rasmussen's reminiscences provide some insight, and so does a few letters sent from Ellen Søyland, a fellow missionary identified to be a part of the Pentecostal mission, to Rasmussen that are located at the State Archive in Kristiansand.⁴⁰⁹ Jakobsen Cheng also made sporadic contributions between 1900 and 1912 in a number of missionary magazines and one in *Fædrelandsvennen*, the local newspaper in Agder.⁴¹⁰

I will make use of the missionary families concept to once again focus in on kinship and Jakobsen Cheng's more intimate relations in order to understand Jakobsen Cheng's life at this stage. Cleall's definition of family as a fluid space where people can come and go, can allow us further to investigate which familial bonds Jakobsen Cheng still was tied to at this stage, moreover; discover if she gained new ones, and who she broke her bonds to.⁴¹¹ As Berkwitz also claims, a response to missionaries' 'exclusive' truths was hybridity.⁴¹² Jakobsen Cheng may be argued to carry more attributes than 'just' being a Norwegian throughout her life, she was also a woman and a Christian, and as she became a missionary she may be identified as a transnational actor and a migrator.⁴¹³ As we shall analyse in this particular chapter, Jakobsen Cheng also became a Chinese citizen, a wife and mother, and continued to be a networker. A focus on Jakobsen Cheng's connections and on plural identities as a consequence of missionary work may thus make it possible to negotiate the terms for a 'new' missionary family.

⁴⁰⁹ Bundy (2009): 229.

⁴¹⁰ See for instance: 'En Kinamisjonærs Erindringer fra Reisen til Ostasien', *Missionæren*, Nr. 51, December 18th, 1902: 6, 'Kina Uroligheterne', *Fædrelandsvennen*, September 10th, 190 and 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' From Elisabeth Rasmussen to Brother Barratt. *Korsets Seier*, Nr. 2, January 15th, 1912.

⁴¹¹ Cleall (2012): 27.

⁴¹² Berkwitz (2013): 118.

⁴¹³ Andresen, Rosland, Ryymin and Skålevåg (2012): 34.

5.1 Traces of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life

5.1.1 The Cheng family's stay in Norway

September 10th, 1900, *Fædrelandsvennen* published a personal letter sent from Jakobsen Cheng to Rasmussen. Jakobsen Cheng portrays a dramatic and miraculous story about the escape from what the article refers to as the 'Boxers'.⁴¹⁴

Bays refer to the Boxers as a group troubled by the conditions in China.⁴¹⁵ Historians further identify the 'Boxer rebellion' as an 'anti-Christian campaign' and as an 'anti-foreign movement'.⁴¹⁶ On the one hand, the Boxer rebellion reflected Chinese discontent with foreign religion. Bays claims that Christians and foreigners were blamed for floods and famines and were accused of sabotaging communal activities.⁴¹⁷ Historians Robert Bickers and R. G. Tiedemann also describe the rumours of Christians poisoning wells and causing draughts.⁴¹⁸ According to Austin, Shanxi, the province Jakobsen Cheng had been stationed for many years, was a major target in the rebellion.⁴¹⁹ Catholics were also more disposed than Protestants in Shanxi, which must be viewed in connection with the large number of Catholics living in this province.⁴²⁰ On the other hand, the Boxers' brutality towards Christians was not the only side to this conflict. Westad states that only one fourth of the casualties were Christians and foreigners, the rest were non-Christian Chinese killed by foreign armed forces, which indicates an unsparing brutality from foreign forces as well.⁴²¹

At the time of the Boxer rebellion, the Chengs had become parents to a daughter named Mary. As the Boxers were coming, the Cheng family fled, aiming to reach Shanghai. Jakobsen

⁴¹⁴ See for instance Waley-Cohen (1999): 190 and Bays (2012): 84-85.

⁴¹⁵ Bays (2012): 84-85.

⁴¹⁶ Waley-Cohen (1999): 190 and Bickers and Tiedemann (2007): 23. Waley-Cohen refers to this as the 'Boxer movement'. Westad argues that the rebellion should be identified as the 'Boxer revolution', indicating that this conflict consisted of too many factors to 'only' be identified as a rebellion. Waley-Cohen (1999): 190 and Westad (2012): 123.

⁴¹⁷ Bays (2012): 84-85.

⁴¹⁸ Bickers and Tiedemann (2007): 6.

⁴¹⁹ Austin (2007): 403-404.

⁴²⁰ Bickers and Tiedemann (2007): 2-3.

⁴²¹ Westad (2012): 127. This was not the first time militant groups protested in China as a response to foreign presence. The spread of opium and foreign presence in the aftermath of the opium wars (1839-1860) presented difficult situations for the Qing. Dissatisfaction was growing and resulted in large protest towards the Empire. The Taiping rebellion (1851-1864) was one of the major uprisings prior to the Boxer rebellion. Waley-Cohen (1999): 159. More recent studies refer to the Taiping rebellion as the 'Taiping Civil War'. Plat (2012): xxiv-xxvii and Spence (1999): 141.

Cheng's letter printed in *Fædrelandsvennen* was allegedly written from safety in Shanghai, describing how fortunate they had been to survive the journey.⁴²²

On November 7th 1900, a similar article about Jakobsen Cheng and the Boxer rebellion was published in *Fædrelandsvennen*.⁴²³ The writer is identified only as 'a woman from Kristiansand'. Based on the content the writer seems to be a friend of Jakobsen Cheng since she clearly has inside information. One could suspect that this was Elisabeth Rasmussen, as she knew Jakobsen Cheng well, but we cannot know this for sure.

According to the writer, the Boxer rebellion gained momentum in Shanxi, where Jakobsen Cheng had been stationed for 10 years. This letter claims that Jakobsen Cheng was not present in Shanxi, as the rebellion broke loose and that Jakobsen Cheng had been living in Hunan for the past four years.⁴²⁴ According to a contribution from Jakobsen Cheng in *China's millions* she was present in Hunan in 1887.⁴²⁵ Meyer however, claims that Jakobsen Cheng resided in or near Hunan for a couple of years before she returned to Shanxi to marry Cheng, which is a few years shorter than what both the former articles suggest.⁴²⁶

The article in *Fædrelandsvennen* states that 'natives' were encouraged to kill all foreigners, not mentioning anything about the possible danger for Cheng as a Chinese convert.⁴²⁷ After Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng got married they settled in Shang-ton⁴²⁸, Hunan. Once again a dramatic story of Cheng's escape is portrayed, however, this letter is slightly more descriptive than the former. The Cheng family came in touch with the Mandarin in the province, who originated allegedly from the same district as Cheng, and granted them four soldiers for protection on their journey.

The writer portrays a dramatic encounter on their journey down river with the Mandarin and the accompanying soldiers. People would gather on all sides eager to kill 'the white woman',

⁴²² 'Kina-Uroligheterne', *Fædrelandsvennen*, September 10th, 1900.

⁴²³ 'Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina', *Fædrelandsvennen*, November 7th, 1900.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ *China's millions* (1887): 114-116.

⁴²⁶ Meyer (1928): 32-34.

⁴²⁷ 'Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina', *Fædrelandsvennen*, November 7th, 1900.

⁴²⁸ *Fædrelandsvennen* states that they settled in Shang-ton, which might have been the same as 'Singtan' that Meyer refers to. Both locations are referred to as the place Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng settled after they left the CIM.

indicating that Jakobsen Cheng was the one in the most danger.⁴²⁹ However, the accompanying soldiers told the people that Cheng was an officer and that his wife, though she was white, could not be regarded as a foreigner. It would seem as the soldiers attempted save Jakobsen Cheng by elevating both her and Cheng's class or rank in the Chinese society. Jakobsen Cheng by simply claiming that since she was Cheng's wife, she could not be regarded as a foreigner. Because of this, people parted and they were able to continue their journey towards Shanghai.

This event is peculiar because, according to Westad, Chinese Christians and westernized Chinese were just as disposed in the Boxer rebellion as foreigners.⁴³⁰ However, maybe these people did not know Cheng was a Christian. Still, it would seem, that Jakobsen Cheng was the protagonist in this story, and not Cheng. Therefore Jakobsen Cheng might have been portrayed as the bigger target or victim in this situation. This event may also makes is possible to notice Cheng's missionary family plural identities. According to this article, Jakobsen Cheng's life was rescued because she was regarded more as a Chinese than a foreigner.

Their journey towards the coast was estimated to have taken half a month. The large steamship 'Preussen' would carry them to Hamburg together with many other missionaries forced to leave because of the unstable times in China. This was a six-week long journey. The writer states that the Chengs planned to return to China as soon as it was safe to do so.⁴³¹

This kind of testimony of having overcome dangers is not uncommon to find in missionary literatures, as they aimed at portraying missionaries as heroes and martyrs.⁴³² Missionary literature could also tie missionaries to their home counties and engage people to contribute by sharing about the progress of missions.⁴³³ The fact that this particular story was published in *Fædrelandsvennen*, the local newspaper of Kristiansand, might also suggest that Jakobsen Cheng still had ties to her home community in Norway.

⁴²⁹ Quoted in 'Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina'. *Fædrelandsvennen*, November 7th, 1900.

⁴³⁰ Westad (2012): 127.

⁴³¹ 'Oplevelser under Oprøret i Kina'. *Fædrelandsvennen* November 7th, 1900.

⁴³² Cox (2008): 112.

⁴³³ Mikaelsson (2003): 97-98 and 101.

According to Rasmussen's reminiscences, it was nothing but a miracle that they were able to pay their way to Norway.⁴³⁴ Supposedly, as Jakobsen Cheng attempted to exchange some money at a bank in Shanghai, she was told that a considerably amount of money was deposited into her account, not knowing where these originated from. It was the exact amount they needed to be able to take the long journey to Kristiansand.⁴³⁵ As we have previously discussed, Rasmussen writes her story about Jakobsen Cheng in retrospect and seem to be presenting Jakobsen Cheng's story along the lines of mission norms.

When it comes to money donations, sources are usually silent in regards to where, and whom the funds were from. I have not located a single source directly from Jakobsen Cheng were she personally mentions a specific individual in reference to funds.⁴³⁶

The Cheng family arrived in Norway in the autumn of 1900. Traces of their visit in Norway are few, and none directly from Jakobsen Cheng. However, there are some 'footprints' and records made by their friends that give us insight to at least some of their activity in Norway. In the population census from 1900, the Cheng family are listed together with Jakobsen Cheng's parents in Kongens Gade 40, Kristiansand.⁴³⁷ Cheng is identified to be a missionary while Jakobsen Cheng is listed with no occupation. According to this census, Mary Jakobsen Cheng was born July 19th 1899 in China.⁴³⁸ Rasmussen explains in her reminiscences that they received a telegram that the Chengs were coming to Kristiansand.⁴³⁹ This serves as an indication that Jakobsen Cheng communicated with her friends in Norway after her eviction from the CIM. Most likely she held some sort of communication with her biological family throughout her stay in China as well, as Jakobsen Cheng and her family stayed at her family's house during their visit in Kristiansand.

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is much less source material after Jakobsen Cheng compared to Reuter and Rasmussen. Jakobsen Cheng must have written several letters as Rasmussen

⁴³⁴ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33.

⁴³⁵ Ibid: 33.

⁴³⁶ Elisabeth Rasmussen does mention in her Reminiscences that Mr Edwards funded Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's journey to Hunan. State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33.

⁴³⁷ 'Anna Sofie Jakobsen Cheng' The census of population from 1900, 1001 Kristiansand: <http://digitalarkivet.arkivverket.no/ft/person/pf01037216000699> (Uploaded 01.02.2015)

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33.

replies to letters written by Jakobsen Cheng; Hudson Taylor also does the same.⁴⁴⁰ Moreover, the newspaper article in *Fædrelandsvennen* refers to Jakobsen Cheng's own diary.⁴⁴¹ Sources that provide insight on the Chengs stay in Norway are few in number as well. The sources that are available originate from friends who knew Jakobsen Cheng, and not her biological family. This might be the reason why there is not much information about her biological family during their stay in Norway either.

According to Rasmussen's reminiscences, many people gathered to welcome the Cheng family as they arrived in Kristiansand.⁴⁴² Rasmussen portrays them as 'looking poor'.⁴⁴³ If we are to believe the stories of their long journey to Norway, which lasted for more than six months, one might understand this appearance. Though the three of them would live in Jakobsen Cheng's parents' house, they also travelled quite a bit. According to Rasmussen's reminiscences they attempted to encourage people to support their missionary work and allegedly several became willing to contribute.⁴⁴⁴ One advertisement for 'Vennekredsen' from *Aftenposten* in 1901 states that a Chinese man named Cheng was preaching and his Norwegian wife translating in Teatergaten in Christiania.⁴⁴⁵ We might assume that there were several trips just like this to inspire people to contribute to their mission activity in China.

These are the only traces of the Cheng family, so far, from their two-year long stay in Norway. Through what we have discussed so far, one might argue that Jakobsen Cheng both connected and made use of the missionary family network she still belonged to in Norway in order to build a broader network for their mission in China. Thus implying that this stay in Kristiansand was not only about avoiding the dangerous times in China, or to visit friends and family, it was also to tie new connections to their missionary work.

On May 1th, 1902 Jakobsen Cheng, now at the age of 42, Cheng and Mary Jakobsen Cheng are registered as passengers from Hamburg to Shanghai.⁴⁴⁶ They are all identified as Chinese

⁴⁴⁰ See for instance State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33 and China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), James Hudson Taylor's letter to Miss Jakobsen. Dated Ku-ling, August 26th, 1898.

⁴⁴¹ 'Kina Uroligheterne' *Fædrelandsvennen* September 10th, 1900.

⁴⁴² State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33.

⁴⁴³ Ibid: 33.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid: 33.

⁴⁴⁵ 'Vennekredsen' advertisement, *Aftenposten*, September 15th, 1901.

⁴⁴⁶ Hamburger passagierlisten, 1850-1934. 'Anna Cheng'. www.ancestry.com

citizens and listed to be third class passengers on the steamboat named ‘Prinz Heinrich’.⁴⁴⁷ The choice to travel third class might tell us something about their economic situation. Perhaps they could not afford better conditions, or they preferred saving their money for a better purpose. The Cheng family returned to China as the Boxer rebellion had settled. One may also suspect that they were ready to return because they had collected enough funds to establish a mission in China.

The photo of Jakobsen Cheng’s extended family below was taken during their stay in Norway. Though the date is unknown, we know that they stayed in Norway from 1900 to 1902, which indicates the time frame for when this photo was taken.



Image 4: Picture from the Cheng family’s visit to Kristiansand. Copied from Dehlin (1985): 297. Top row from the left: Einar Eriksen (Jakobsen Cheng’s nephew), Anna Jakobsen Cheng, Cheng Xiuqi, Thora Jakobsen (sister) and Marie Eriksen (niece). Lower row from the left: Jacobine Jakobsen (sister), Bernt Tobias Jakobsen (father), Mary Jakobsen Cheng (daughter), Inger Marie Jakobsen (mother) and Johanne Pettersen (niece).

⁴⁴⁷ Hamburger passagierlisten, 1850-1934. ‘Anna Cheng’. www.ancestry.com

5.1.2 Back to China

In the period between December 1902 and January 1903, three parts of a travel portrayal from Jakobsen Cheng were printed in the Norwegian missionary magazine *Misjonæren*.⁴⁴⁸ Jakobsen Cheng writes a detailed description of her and her family's journey back to China. This portrayal is referred to be an excerpt from Jakobsen Cheng's diary.

Several of their friends waved them goodbye as they began their long journey back to China. Their voyage towards the Red Sea is fairly descriptive as she writes about the places they visited and some of the people they met.⁴⁴⁹

Additional information regarding the Chengs travels and mission organisation as who their partners were and who funded their mission has not been easy to find. Parts of the reason might be because their mission organisation was non-denominational, making it difficult knowing what kind of archive or collection more information of their mission is held. Maybe there are bits and pieces in several archives, or in private archives, or maybe there are no traces of their funding. Most likely there are some, since this was a mission that depended on donations, and as we know through Rasmussen's reminiscences, they attempted to find supporters to their mission. In the following excerpt we shall further discuss what we know about Anna Cheng's Mission.

5.2 'Anna Cheng's mission'

According to R.G. Tiedemann's book *Reference guide to missionary societies in China*, Anna Cheng's Mission was founded in 1899. Zezhou (Jincheng) in southern Shanxi and Xiangtan in Hunan are listed as the main areas for missionary work.⁴⁵⁰ This reference states that it was a nondenominational mission supported by Norwegian Christians, however no specific funders are listed.⁴⁵¹ Anna Cheng's Mission was still registered in 1916, which was approximately five years after Jakobsen Cheng passed away.⁴⁵² *The World Atlas of Christian Missions* also identifies Anna Cheng's Mission to be founded in 1899. This source lists a secretary named

⁴⁴⁸ 'En Kinamisjonærs Erindringer fra Reisen til Ostasien' *Misjonæren*. Nr. 51. December 18th, 1902: 6 and 'En Kinamisjonærs Erindringer fra Reisen til Ostasien' *Misjonæren*. Nr. 52. December 25th, 1902: 4.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Tiedemann (2009): 120-121.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid: 120-121.

⁴⁵² Ibid: 121 and 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' *Korsets seier*, January 15th, 1912.

Josefine Finholdt residing in Akersbakken, Christiania.⁴⁵³ That Anna Cheng's Mission engaged a person to organise the affairs of the mission in Norway serves as a strong indication that their mission had several financial partners in Norway.

This can further be confirmed through an article from another local newspaper in Kristiansand, *Agder Tidend* that stated that Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng received funds from friends and other connections, especially in Kristiansand, after their eviction from the CIM.⁴⁵⁴ In addition, this article claims someone founded a 'Committee for Anna Cheng's mission'⁴⁵⁵ in Norway.

Jakobsen Cheng talks about funding in a travel note published in *Kristelig budbringer* in 1904. Money was to be sent in her name through 'Hong-Kong and Shang-hai Banking Corporation' (HSBC)⁴⁵⁶ Tien-Tsin⁴⁵⁷, North China. According to Jakobsen Cheng the safest way to send money is by transferring funds from a Norwegian bank to this large 'Chinese' bank.⁴⁵⁸

We also highlighted in Chapter 1 how missionary magazines and mission campaigns could create powerful images concerning missionary work. A part of this missionary magazine 'strategy' was also to testify of miraculous stories of God providing in times of need.⁴⁵⁹ We might assume that Jakobsen Cheng gave information about funding to instruct people how they could contribute. *Kristelig budbringer* might have reached out to many missionary 'enthusiasts' and may serve as a further indication that there were several individuals and congregations supporting Anna Cheng's Mission. Apparently gifts were not only sent from Norway, as Anna expresses gratitude for receiving money from an American. According to

⁴⁵³ World Atlas of Christian Mission (1911): 54.

⁴⁵⁴ 'Kvinna frå Kristiansand som ble fyrste norske misjonær i Hunan - Eit 25 års minne.' *Agder Tidend*, October 16th, 1937. *Ander Tidend* was a local paper in Kristiansand published between 1919-1985.

⁴⁵⁵ Translated and quoted from 'Kvinna frå Kristiansand som ble fyrste norske misjonær i Hunan - Eit 25 års minne.' *Agder Tidend*, October 16th, 1937. This article lists no author, but refers to Ole. B. Meyers book *forløpere* as the main and only source of reference. Meyer claims that Jakobsen Cheng asked for prayers and funds from Kristiansand, however, as far as I can tell, there is no mentioning of the 'committee of Anna Cheng's mission' in this book. Meyer (1928): 33 and 36.

⁴⁵⁶ HSBC was founded in Hong Kong in 1865 and served as a British bank in East Asia. This bank would become a main bank for Chinese and foreign business. Westad (2012): 187.

⁴⁵⁷ Tien-Tsin (Tanjing) is both the name of the capital and the province located in Northern China on the coast of Behai Bey.

⁴⁵⁸ 'Fra fru Anna Jakobsen Chengs dagbog'. *Kristelig budbringer*. Nr.15. May 25th, 1904: 118-119.

⁴⁵⁹ Simensen (2007): 231-232 and Anderson (2006): 23-25.

Jakobsen Cheng's contribution in *Kristelig budbringer* in 1904, 'God-given' money arrived on several occasions.⁴⁶⁰

Elisabeth and Theodor Rasmussen may have been some of the funders of this mission. Though there are no explicit sources confirming this, we know that the Rasmussens supported the CIM, as their own daughters also served as missionaries for this mission.⁴⁶¹ We also know that Ellen Søyland, who worked with Anna Cheng's mission, received money from the Rasmussens on several occasions after Jakobsen Cheng's death.⁴⁶² Mr and Mrs Edwards may also have been financial supporters of Anna Cheng's mission. According to Rasmussen, it was them who paid for Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's travel expenses to Hunan. Furthermore, it would seem as the Edwards also kept close contact with Mary, Jakobsen Cheng's daughter, in England after Jakobsen Cheng died.⁴⁶³ Maybe these sources are insufficient to claim that the Rasmussens and the Edwards families were financial partners of Anna Cheng's mission, however, it does speak in favour of their involvement in Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's life while Anna Cheng's mission was in operation.

Sources that give insight into Anna Cheng's Mission are mostly of Norwegian origin and give an impression that all supporters of this mission were either Norwegian or at least Westerners. We do not know if Chinese communities or individuals supported this mission as well. Maybe this mission had a Chinese name as well, which is likely, since few spoke English in the China inland. Therefore it may be considered natural that the English 'version' of the name was directed towards English-speaking countries. However, I have not found any confirmation of this. Though these sources present a one-sided image of this mission, it does confirm that Jakobsen Cheng shared ties with Norwegian communities. Also, that Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng chose the name 'Anna Cheng's mission' to designate their work may tell us something about whom they believe could serve as contributors. Moreover, they chose Jakobsen Cheng's name, which may indicate that they wanted a more personal and Western image.

This may also offer a broader understanding regarding Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's new situation after their expulsion from the CIM. While serving as missionaries for the CIM, they

⁴⁶⁰ 'Fra fru Anna Jakobsen Chengs dagbog'. *Kristelig budbringer*. Nr.15. May 25th, 1904: 118-119.

⁴⁶¹ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Hudson Taylor to Elisabeth Rasmussen. London, June 26th, 1893. In this letter Hudson Taylor gives Elisabeth Rasmussen an update on her daughter's missionary work.

⁴⁶² State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: 'Kjære søster i Jesus' Letter from Ellen Søyland to Elisabeth Rasmussen. Shansi. December 26th, 1923.

⁴⁶³ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Mary Jakobsen Wright to Miss Rasmussen.

received money from this large mission family.⁴⁶⁴ After they left the CIM they were on their own financially, and needed to find a way to form a network for their own mission in order for it to function. Skeie argues that missions formed transnational networks where money and ideas could flow. These were made up by either formal or informal connections.⁴⁶⁵ By referring to Skeie we might argue that Anna Cheng's mission were connected through a missionary family network in Norway, where communication and funds could flow.

What did Anna Cheng's Mission focus on? Opium abuse was still a severe problem in Shanxi in the early 1900s. Jakobsen Cheng claims in *Kristelig budbringer* that nine out of ten smoked opium in this province.⁴⁶⁶ Meyer also expresses that after Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng got married, the issue of opium was a concern for their work.⁴⁶⁷ Rasmussen's reminiscences are one of the few sources that provide insight on Anna Cheng's mission. According to Rasmussen, The Cheng family first settled in Cheng's home province Shanoi.⁴⁶⁸ As previously mentioned, Cable claims that Cheng was from Hwochow and Austin identifies both Houzhou and Hwochow as Cheng's home.⁴⁶⁹

If they were headed for Hwochow in the Shanxi province, it was definitely a familiar destination for the Chengs. This was the area Jakobsen Cheng had lived for approximately 11 years while serving as a missionary for the CIM, and also Cheng's home province.⁴⁷⁰ Allegedly, many missionaries from Norway, Sweden, and America had also settled in this area, and some became Cheng's friends.⁴⁷¹ Several young women were sent to Jakobsen Cheng in Ho-chow⁴⁷², as she was regarded as woman with skills, both with respect to Chinese language and customs. These women came to Jakobsen Cheng to receive training so they, in the best way possible, could work as missionaries in China.⁴⁷³ It may appear as many

⁴⁶⁴ China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/01/03/2: China Council Minutes (1886-1947), Principles and Practice of the CIM (1886): 15. As a faith mission no money could be guaranteed, however, missionaries did receive passage-money and was supported by the mission.

⁴⁶⁵ Skeie (2014): 63-64.

⁴⁶⁶ 'Fra fru Anna Jakobsen Chengs dagbog'. *Kristelig budbringer*. Nr.15. May 25th, 1904: 118-119.

⁴⁶⁷ Meyer (1928): 36.

⁴⁶⁸ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33-34. It difficult to confirm if Rasmussen refers to 'Shansi' (Shanxi), and not 'Shanoi'. Both Cable and Austin seem to refer to Shanxi as Cheng's home province. Cable (1917): 22 and Austin (2007): 387-388.

⁴⁶⁹ Cable (1917): 22 and Austin (2007): 387-388.

⁴⁷⁰ See for instance Meyer (1929): 33, Cable (1917): 22 and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33-34.

⁴⁷¹ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33-34.

⁴⁷² Ho-Chow or Huozhou (Hou Xian) Shanxi was the place Jakobsen and Reuter settled first in China in 1886. Austin (2007): 387-388 and 143.

⁴⁷³ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 34.

missionaries knew of Jakobsen Cheng and respected and acknowledged her work.⁴⁷⁴ However, it must be mentioned that sources that provide information about Jakobsen Cheng's work in China originate either from Jakobsen Cheng through missionary magazines, or from friends that also were engaged in missionary work. Rasmussen was a close friend and supported missions in China throughout her whole life. Moreover, Rasmussen might be regarded as a part of the same missionary family network that Jakobsen Cheng belonged to and therefore personally wanted this work to progress. Rasmussen also seems to have come to a different opinion of Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's marriage than the CIM. The CIM felt the need to cut all contact with Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng, Rasmussen on the other hand stayed connected Jakobsen Cheng throughout her whole life.⁴⁷⁵

Eva French, a fellow missionary who also attended the Chengs wedding, would become a co-worker and especially involved with a school that trained young women to become teachers.⁴⁷⁶ Another co-worker was Ellen Søyland, who seems to have been a close friend of both Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng. The missionary magazine *Det Gode Budskap* published a letter from Jakobsen Cheng in 1912. According to this letter, missionaries visited her and Cheng from 'Bernt Berntsen Mission'.⁴⁷⁷ Historian David Bundy claims that this was a Pentecostal mission stationed in Cheng-Ting-Fu, Zhili.⁴⁷⁸ In this article Søyland is mentioned on several occasions in reference to missionary work, perhaps indicating that she lived near by or even worked together with the Chengs. By referring to Jakobsen Cheng's article in *Det Gode Budskap* 'Anna Cheng's mission' worked with a school for girls and held a refuge camp.⁴⁷⁹

According to Rasmussen article in *Korsets Seier*, Søyland was also present as Jakobsen Cheng passed away. Rasmussen is referring to a letter send by Søyland when she talks about Jakobsen Cheng's last years. Jakobsen Cheng had been working hard and became worn out.

⁴⁷⁴ Cable (1917): 24 and State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 34..

⁴⁷⁵ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 33 and 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' *Korsets seier*. Nr.2. January 15th, 1912.

⁴⁷⁶ State archive, Kristiansand: Depot 818: Elisabeth Rasmussens livserindringer: 34 and China Inland Mission Collection (GB/SOASNAF/C11): CIM/03/09/76: James Hudson Taylor Papers (1891 - 1898), Letter from A. Huddle to Mr Taylor, dated T'ai-yuen Fu, Shan-si. August 2th, 1898.

⁴⁷⁷ 'Siste brev fra Anna før hun døde', *Det Gode Budskap*, January 1th, 1912.

⁴⁷⁸ Bundy (2009): 228. Cheng-Ting-Fu or Zhengding is located in Hebei. Cheng-Ting-Fu was in the early 1900s located in the province of Zhili. Zhili was spread to other provinces in 1928. Today Cheng-Ting-Fu (Zhengding) is located in Hebei.

⁴⁷⁹ 'Siste brev fra Anna før hun døde', *Det Gode Budskap*, January 1th, 1912.

Because of this, she retreated at a Norwegian mission station named Cheng-Ting-Fu.⁴⁸⁰ Bundy claims that Søyland also was apart of the Pentecostal mission and even that Jakobsen Cheng died as a Pentecostal.⁴⁸¹ After spending three weeks at this station she regained some strength. Though she was able to work for a while longer, she became ill and returned once more to Cheng-Ting-Fu. After approximately one week, Søyland was asked to come down and stay with Jakobsen Cheng, and Søyland did until the 26th of September 1911, which was the day Jakobsen Cheng died.⁴⁸²

Dehlin portrays a quite different story of the circumstances regarding Jakobsen Cheng's death in *Pionerer i skjørt*. Dehlin also allegedly refer to a letter sent by Søyland. This letter is however far more detailed about Jakobsen Cheng's illness and passing than the letter Rasmussen refers to.⁴⁸³ As Jakobsen Cheng died, Cheng was, according to Dehlin, holding her hand.⁴⁸⁴ Søyland does not mention Cheng at all in her letter in *Korsets Seier*. Maybe he was present as Jakobsen Cheng passed; but it is difficult confirming what really happened. I have not been able to locate the original letter from Søyland that Rasmussen refers to in *Korsets Seier* or been able to find any sources to the detailed description of Jakobsen Cheng's passing from Dehlin. However, as we have previously discussed, sources regarding Cheng's story has been difficult to find throughout this whole project. It seems, as sources remain silent in regards to him. For instance, in Søyland's story, which Rasmussen refers to, Cheng is completely left out.

Jakobsen Cheng retreated to a Norwegian mission station when she became ill. There could probably be several reasons for choosing this station. Maybe Jakobsen Cheng was in touch with people working there. Jakobsen Cheng could have chosen other places to retreat, but she ended up at a Norwegian one. This gives the impression that she was connected to Norwegian missionary families in China as well as ties to Norway, as for instance Bernt Berntsen Mission. Though Jakobsen Cheng's missionary family may be regarded as small in size they appear to have become part of wide missionary family network stretching across nations, and also across different denominations.

⁴⁸⁰ 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' From Elisabeth Rasmussen to Brother Barratt. *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2, January 15th, 1912. and 'Siste brev fra Anna før hun døde', *Det Gode Budskap*, January 1th, 1912.

⁴⁸¹ Bundy (2009): 229.

⁴⁸² 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang' From Elisabeth Rasmussen to Brother Barratt. *Korsets Seier*. Nr. 2, January 15th, 1912.

⁴⁸³ Dehlin (1895): 292-294.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid: 294.

5.3 A new missionary family?

Sources that provide insight on the Cheng family and their activity after they left the CIM are mainly from Jakobsen Cheng's contributions in missionary magazines and from people who knew her and her family. According to sources that offer insight on Jakobsen Cheng's life course, she started her own family and her own mission organisation within two years after she left the CIM. Stories revolving around the Chengs journey to Norway are portrayed to be rather miraculous. Still, a few events throughout these stories highlight how Jakobsen Cheng carried plural identities. If we are to believe the article printed in *Fædrelandsvennen*, Jakobsen Cheng's life was rescued because she was regarded more as a Chinese than a foreigner. Though we do not know much about their foundation of Anna Cheng's Mission, we can argue that their visit to Norway was also in order to establish a network for their own mission. This was made possible as Jakobsen Cheng still was connected to Norwegian missionary families, for instance the Rasmussens that Jacobsen Cheng may have shared a network with for the most of her life.

Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng were members of different cultures, classes and ethnicities and because of their daughter; this family may in itself be identified as transnational and as a transcultural unit, moreover a family carrying plural identities. Their family was in-between - and apart of several identities and therefore also difficult to place within one specific category. Missionary families were able to transcend boundaries and still be member of the place they left and become a part of the place they enter.⁴⁸⁵ As ethnicity, biological families and heritage, missionary families are not necessarily definite or unchangeable.⁴⁸⁶ By focusing in on which missionary families Jakobsen Cheng's were still connected to and not, we may negotiate the terms for how the Chengs came to be new missionary family. For instance, Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's were excluded from the CIM because they carried different understanding of what constituted a missionary family. On the other hand, Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng tied new bonds to other missionary families and thus came to be apart of a 'new' missionary family network. Jakobsen Cheng's connection to Norway was not new, however, during their stay in Norway they established new links that may have been crucial to the existence of their mission.

⁴⁸⁵ Westad (2012): 209.

⁴⁸⁶ Cleall (2012): 27.

Jakobsen Cheng may be argued to have gained a new perspective on what would benefit the mission in China. If we are to believe Jakobsen Cheng's own justification for marrying Cheng, it was precisely the best interest of the mission she had in mind. However, this 'new' union was not how the CIM identified as an 'ideal' missionary family. Therefore we may argue that Jakobsen Cheng's new missionary family differed in ideology and in aspects of utility compared with the CIM. Nevertheless, Jakobsen Cheng's 'new' missionary family was still connected to Jakobsen Cheng's life-long friend Rasmussen and her family. Moreover, she still cooperated with fellow missionaries in China, as French and Søyland.

One may ask if there were other missionary families similar to Jakobsen Cheng's. Westad claims that intermarriages became more and more common in China as time went by.⁴⁸⁷ Austin states that there were only three intermarriages confirmed in the 19th century, two of them within the CIM.⁴⁸⁸ Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's were one of these three. Journalist and former lead writer for foreign affairs for the Guardian John Gittings suspects that Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's marriage was the very first to take place between a Western woman and a Chinese man ever.⁴⁸⁹ According to Austin, this might be true as the two other interracial marriages were between Western men and Chinese women.⁴⁹⁰

In light of what we have discussed in this chapter, we might argue that many of Jakobsen Cheng's familial connections withheld after she was evicted from the CIM. The foundation of Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's new mission organisation seemed to be built on familial connections as well, as friends and local communities in Norway might have supported it. Jakobsen Cheng's 'new' situation, by being independent financially and starting a new mission organisation may in itself be argued as something quite extraordinary for a woman of her time. However, Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng's mission carried the same vision as other missions in China, and that was sharing the Christian message to people in China.

⁴⁸⁷ Westad (2012): 209.

⁴⁸⁸ Austin (2007): 238.

⁴⁸⁹ Gittings (2000): 'Lost souls'. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/aug/05/china.johngittings> (Uploaded 22.03.2015)

⁴⁹⁰ Austin (2007): 238.

6 Conclusion

The starting point for this master thesis presented a twofold purpose. The first part aimed at locating and evaluation sources in order to discover what they can tell us about Anna Jakobsen Cheng. This search has denoted some challenges, as sources directly from Anna Jakobsen Cheng have been difficult to obtain and because sources that are found, reflect different, and at times competing narratives. Moreover, sources are scattered and requires contextual information. For instance, a newspaper article is meant for a different audience than a personal letter. In reference to Anna's story it is the sources origin that very much decides how Anna Jakobsen Cheng is represented. Missionary material both from Anna Jakobsen Cheng and about her reflect God's miraculous intervention and it is the progress of the mission that seems to matters the most.

The second ambition of this project has been to understand how relations, connections, and interactions affected Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course and discuss what this may tell us of mission history. The fairly new analytic concept of missionary families presents fresh opportunities for new insight. Employing it to the material revealed a few challenges in the process of adopting this concept fruitfully to a life course. Because the concept of family can reveal aspects beyond kinship, we are presented with elusive borders that demand some framework. Three extractions were therefore made from the concept of missionary families in order to make this concept more comprehensible. However, we have yet to argue if the concept of missionary families has given the necessary means to understand the complexity of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's relations and interactions.

My aim with this concluding chapter is to summarise, but also to critically discuss if this concept has granted the means necessary to provide insight on Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. The final part of this chapter will consist of an epilogue of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life to highlight what kind of legacy she has left behind, and to explore if there have been attempts to rehabilitate her story.

6.1 Close connections matter

The first main chapter aimed at mapping Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life until she settled in China as a missionary on behalf of the CIM. A focus on contemporary gender roles and the

development of faith missions serves as a pre-condition for understanding how a single woman from Norway in the 1880s could become a missionary in China. Norwegian church history experienced a shift in the 19th century, and the most important in this context are the formations of Free Church gatherings outside the State Church. Free Church communities distinguished themselves from the State Church by being more focused in the individual experience of God and opened up for religious impulses. The Free Church community in Agder and the Rasmussen family invited revivalists as Fredrik Franson and Reginald Radcliffe who preached about a renewal and the need for people to engage in missions. It was revivals such as these that also inspired faith missions that welcomed all people to become an active part, including women. Elisabeth Rasmussen was a woman of faith and seemed to take this inclusion seriously. Her commitment appears to affect the people around her, especially in her own household, where both Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter worked. Elisabeth Rasmussen, Sophie Reuter, and Austin are the main sources that provide insight on Jakobsen's choice and opportunity to become a missionary. Though they portray this process slightly differently, they all seem to agree on two main factors. First, revivalists that visited Kristiansand affected Anna Jakobsen Cheng's choice, and second, that the Rasmussen family was key in order for them to take the leap.

Though Jakobsen seems to have chosen to become a missionary before she started working at the Rasmussen household, it was here the opportunity presented itself. Anna Jakobsen Cheng met Sophie Reuter in this household and as they decided to take up missionary work together, it constituted an important requirement for Anna to become a missionary. Anna Jakobsen Cheng did not want to go alone. The Rasmussens invited preachers and shared connections with several central religious preachers internationally. Elisabeth Rasmussen also read English and was able to read the CIM missionary magazine. Moreover, it was she and Sophie Reuter who wrote Radcliffe in order to connect Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter to the CIM. Elisabeth Rasmussen, Reginald Radcliffe, and Fredrik Franson together seem to have all made the connections to CIM possible, based on what we have discussed I would like to conclude that Anna Jakobsen Cheng's close connection to the Rasmussen family seem to have mattered the most.

According to Cleall we can view households as families. As Anna Jakobsen Cheng became a part of the Rasmussen household, it can be argued that she became a part of a missionary family. This missionary family was connected to global mission families, as for example the

CIM, and together they were part of a transnational network. This connection was made through common convictions as for instance the value of the personal calling of God and urgency of reaching the 'lost'. Anna Jakobsen Cheng may therefore have been qualified for missionary work because of a 'shared' mission family network. The CIM presented new opportunities in missions, as they opened up a door to mission for all people, regardless of class, gender, and race.

6.2 What should an 'ideal' missionary family look like?

The responses within the CIM and *The North China Herald* constitute the main sources to this event. However, also Cable, the fellow missionary and CIM historian Broomhall, and Austin also offer insight.

As Anna Jakobsen Cheng worked as a missionary for CIM in China, it would seem as she shared a close connection to its leadership. Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi may have been working side by side with Anna Jakobsen Cheng for some time. When she and Cheng announced their engagement, Anna Jakobsen Cheng was given the choice between breaking off the engagement or returning home to Norway. Though Anna Jakobsen Cheng spent a few years in Hunan she returned to Shanxi in 1898 to marry Cheng Xiuqi. The announcement of their marriage plans seems to have come as a great surprise to the deputy director John W. Stevenson. In his response in *The North China Herald* he claims that the CIM did everything in their power to prevent this marriage from taking place, however, nothing could be done.

Hudson Taylor subsequently claimed in a letter to Anna Jakobsen Cheng that this had caused the greatest scandal in CIM history. According to the CIM, this issue revolved around broken promises from Anna Jakobsen Cheng and the increased danger her marriage implied for all female missionaries serving in China. Anna Jakobsen Cheng's friends and family in Norway seem to remain rather silent in regards to the marriage, other than the comment Elisabeth Rasmussen made about Anna Jakobsen Cheng leaving all her friends astonished. The public debate in *The North China Herald*, on the other hand, reflected a broader spectre of reactions. Arguments concerning Christian charity, the difference between marriage customs, and the fact that such an alliance was simply unheard of, were brought into the open. The headline for the debate was 'the mixed marriage', thus providing race as the very frame for the debate. One debater attempted to narrow the whole dispute down to one single question: 'should a

foreign lady marry a Chinese?’ As the public debate opened up to all responses, it reflected the extent of the discussion. This issue engaged a number of individuals from different backgrounds.

Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s marriage must first of all be understood within the CIM family frame to understand how it was different in a Chinese context. Anna Jakobsen Cheng was a representative for the CIM in China and was expected to follow the regulations made by the organisation. However, missionaries brought a home-based understanding of what a ‘proper’ family should ideally look like and came to define ‘otherness’. However, Cox argues there were no statements that spoke against a marriage between a Christian man and woman in biblical scriptures, regardless of race.

Arguably, missionaries despised in many ways the Chinese customs and because of this they regarded families in the mission as crucial in order to show what an ideal family was supposed to look like. In this, marriages were a central part. These ideas may reflect a ‘natural’ family hierarchy. Either it was intentionally or unintentionally; this family hierarchy became a basis for designating gender roles and racial divisions in the mission field. In many ways the CIM transferred their ‘rules’ and perceptions to missionary families as well. By this claiming the authority to interfere with missionaries’ personal lives when behaviour was considered ‘improper’ to their mission.

According to the CIM, Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi’s marriage was not a ‘proper’ marriage, and thus not a marriage they wanted. On the contrary, it was identified as being against the purpose of the mission. According to both the responses in the North China Herald and within the CIM, all female missionaries were now in danger. Perhaps making parents more reluctant towards sending their daughters to missions. As already discussed in references to the Rasmussen family, a household was a place where missionaries were recruited.

Anna Jakobsen Cheng viewed this union quite differently from the CIM. She was still committed to her missionary calling and identified it as an opportunity to reach more Chinese communities; the CIM did not seem to agree. To the CIM it would appear as families within the mission field was central, or perhaps even the very core of their work. Not only could ‘healthy’ Christian families reflect the ideal Christian life, it could also provide a permanent

settlement. It can be argued that Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage caused contradicting attributes to be revealed within the Christian mission. All were welcome into the Christian family, and all men were created equal. The CIM identified it as a part of their mission to 'go native' up to a point and live amongst the local people. At the same time, it was impossible for the CIM to accept a marriage between a Western woman and a Chinese man, even though they both were Christians. The mission family hierarchy constructed distinctions between the races and may have bolstered the impression of dangers of entering into a union with a man that the western missionaries identified to be of inferior race or status.

However, it must be taken in to consideration that this marriage was of an unusual character. According to Gittings, Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage might have been the very first to take place between a Western woman and a Chinese man ever. Austin confirms that there were only three intermarriages within the CIM, and that Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi's marriage was the only one between a Western women and a Chinese man. This was an unfamiliar compound that the CIM were not able to unify with their own understanding of how a family should look like.

6.3 Plural identities

Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi were forced to leave the CIM as a consequence of their marriage; however, their missionary work did not end here. They settled further south in the province of Hunan to continue the mission on their own and founded their own mission organisation. Sources to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course after the CIM are the most scattered. Elisabeth Rasmussen offers some information, and so does Ellen Søyland, and there are a few articles printed in newspapers and missionary magazines.

Through available sources, we know that Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi continued their work without any support from a larger mission organisation. Elisabeth Rasmussen informs us that the missionary colleagues Mr and Mrs Edwards paid for their journey from Shanxi to Hunan. Nevertheless, within few months, they were forced to flee to the coast because of the Boxer rebellion. An anonymous donation made it possible for the Cheng family to take the long journey home. There might be many explanations for their choice to return to Norway. It was clearly dangerous times in China, and Elisabeth Rasmussen states that residing in Shanghai was very expensive. As Anna Jakobsen Cheng had received a

significant amount of money, they decided to take the long journey to Kristiansand rather than staying in Shanghai. One may argue that the choice was also made to promote their new mission organisation that they founded in 1899. Furthermore, Anna Jakobsen Cheng may have found it natural to go home, as she had family and friends in Kristiansand who she had not seen for 12-13 years.

Accordingly, the choice can be a combination of many factors. However, what we may argue is that Anna Jakobsen Cheng could go home as she was still connected to her Norwegian family and found it natural to return in a time of need. There is a high probability that they gained new financial partners to 'Anna Cheng's mission' during their stay in Norway. Elisabeth Rasmussen describes their goal to attract investors to their work and as their organisation is listed with a secretary in Oslo, we know that there must have been a need to organise the affairs of the mission. Still, there is no information of specific individuals who actually supported them, we can only suspect who some of them might have been, for instance Elisabeth and Theodor Rasmussen.

As the Cheng family returned to China, they most likely went to Shanxi, which was Cheng Xiuqi's home province and the place Anna Jakobsen Cheng had lived for 11 years while serving as a missionary on behalf of the CIM. Here they would work with other missionaries and possibly people from other organisations. As Anna Jakobsen Cheng got ill, she retreated at a Norwegian Pentecostal mission station in Zhili.

When Anna Jakobsen Cheng left the CIM she was cut off completely from people and funds from this organisation and she and Cheng Xiuqi was left in charge of themselves. She had chosen, according to the CIM, an 'improper' marriage, and this new missionary family could not be unified with the principles of the CIM. Moreover, her community in Norway, the CIM, and the public debate in *The North China Herald* portray this marriage as a highly unusual union, perhaps not surprising, as this seemed to be the first ever between a Western woman and a Chinese man. Berkwitz claims that a response to missions was hybridity and that hybridity was also looked upon by post-colonial religions with suspicion, maybe precisely because these could be unfamiliar compounds. On the basis of what we have discussed, we can argue that Jakobsen Cheng's family collided with both the contemporary hegemonic perceptions on cultures and mission families' own ideals.

Missionary families may thus be said to be fluid enough to take on new attributes. This Western woman and Chinese man, which several in the public debate in *The North China Herald* identified them as, established a new mission organisation and worked in China for the rest of their lives. Perhaps this couple may be identified to do ‘unlikely’ accomplishments. For a woman to found her own organisation in 1899 seems to be quite new and out of the ordinary.

Anna Jakobsen Cheng broke her bonds to the global mission family, the CIM, and began her own missionary family with her husband, which might be regarded as global as well, though in a much smaller scale. Anna Jakobsen Cheng had become a wife and mother, and was still a networker. All these identities that were made up by new and old connections and belongings may fit to describe Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s new missionary family that furthermore can be regarded as a hybrid missionary family. We might even be bold enough to claim that Anna, in retrospect, redefined what it meant to be a missionary family.

6.4 The analytic concept of missionary families

I would like to argue that the analytic concept of missionary families has, first of all, allowed an emphasis on how more intimate relations can connect individuals to larger communities. That has provided an opportunity to focus in on how Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s missionary family in Kristiansand, the Rasmussen household, was the place that may have made the transition to the CIM possible. Second, exploring how Anna Jakobsen Cheng’s mission family in China, the CIM, was built on a family hierarchy can give attention to Western, Chinese and Christian perceptions of what a family should look like. Moreover, how close connections could conflict with the family hierarchy. Hudson Taylor’s personal friendship to Anna Jakobsen Cheng may be said to conflict with his opinion about her marriage. This is visible in his letter to Anna Jakobsen Cheng where he makes this matter revolve around the CIM, however it was also clearly personal. Also, Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi’s relationship conflicted with the practice of the CIM. Both these incidents reflect encounters between the personal and the institutional in regards the understanding of family and the importance of the intimate in mission history.

The lens of missionary families makes it possible to study the complexity of Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi’s marriage. By analysing the different reactions and the reasons for

them, an entwined image reveals itself. For the CIM this revolved around an understanding of what would benefit the mission and the consequence for all female missionaries serving in China.

Thirdly, the concept of missionary families can also embrace aspects of plural identities. As hybridity pulls on a number of attributes, we can use this perspective to highlight aspects of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's missionary family after she and Cheng Xiuqi left the CIM. One of the challenges for this analysis has been the lack of sources that gives insight especially to Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life after she left the CIM. There are bits and pieces that we must attempt to map out, and through this, try to identify how we can label Anna Jakobsen Cheng's 'new' family. We can argue that Anna Jakobsen Cheng's family obtained new attributes as she married and through starting her own organisation and also the difficulties connected to this, as will be more visible in the epilogue below.

I have argued that the concept of missionary families provides new opportunities in studying the complexity of mission history. However, this does not necessarily mean that this analytical concept is equally adaptable to all aspects of Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course. The family concept requires a definition that makes its borders both loose enough and rigid enough for a specific purpose. A way of making this concept adaptable to this study has been by extracting three perspectives that served as analytical tools. Still, one may on some levels regard the general notion of missionary families as too fluid; however, one may also regard these fluid borders as the very strength of this concept. This may have been a particular difficult task in the final chapter, as it has attempted to make use of these elusive borders of missionary families to identify hybrid characteristics. However, questions regarding identity are never easy. Nevertheless, we can provide examples of plural identities, and thus make use of the elusive borders the concept of missionary families to for instance highlight how Anna Jakobsen Cheng's gained plural identities as a consequence of her missionary life. I believe this can reflect both on the potential and the challenges of adapting the concept of missionary families to a life course.

6.5 Epilogue

What we have made known regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng's life course can make us wonder what kind of legacy she left behind. Moreover, in reference to both her controversial experiences and her pioneer work, have researchers attempted to rehabilitate her story?

There are suggestions of what legacies Anna Jakobsen Cheng might have left behind with regards to her missionary work. Cheng Xiuqi continued their work until he passed away in 1915. After 1916, Anna Cheng's Mission seems to cease to exist.⁴⁹¹ More information regarding their mission has, unfortunately, been difficult to obtain throughout this project. According to a letter from Ellen Søyland to Elisabeth Rasmussen, both Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Cheng Xiuqi were buried in China.⁴⁹² Ellen Søyland's letter claims that Anna Jakobsen Cheng was buried at Bernt Berntsen mission station in Cheng-Ting-Fu, Zhili.⁴⁹³ Where Cheng Xiuqi was buried is not clear, however, Ellen Søyland describes that he was buried on a property that belong Ellen Søyland's mission organisation.⁴⁹⁴ Ellen Søyland says that she hoped they would receive sufficient funds to move Anna Jakobsen Cheng to the same location as Cheng Xiuqi.⁴⁹⁵

An important legacy of Anna Jakobsen Cheng is she and Cheng Xiuqi's daughter, Mary Jakobsen Cheng. After Anna Jakobsen Cheng passed away, Mary was sent to England, which raises the question why Mary Jakobsen Cheng was not sent to Norway. There are no sources that provide insight to this choice. They also chose an international rather than a Norwegian first name.⁴⁹⁶ Maybe sending their daughter to England was considered a safer choice than staying in China, or they wanted her to have a British education as it might provide more opportunities? Or, perhaps this may reflect the extent to which they considered her to belong to the transnational mission family. It was however, not uncommon to send missionary children to their home countries to receive education.⁴⁹⁷ Schools in Western countries were considered to provide a better climate and moral than the alternatives in the mission field.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹¹ Cable (1917): 24 and Tiedemann (2009): 121.

⁴⁹² State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Ellen Søyland to Elisabeth Rasmussen.

⁴⁹³ 'Søster Anna Jakobsen Chengs hjemgang', *Korsets seier*. January 15th, 1912. According to Ellen Søyland, this was the same location where Anna Jakobsen Cheng retreated when she got ill.

⁴⁹⁴ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Ellen Søyland to Elisabeth Rasmussen.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ The Norwegian form for Mary is Marie.

⁴⁹⁷ Manktelow (2013): 130.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid: 114 and Cleall (2012): 59.

Mary Jakobsen Cheng would go on to study medicine at The University of Edinburgh.⁴⁹⁹ She married Morden Hatfield Wright and together they served as missionaries in Sudan on behalf of the Church Mission Society.⁵⁰⁰ Though we do not know when, because of the picture that is attached below, we know that Mary Jakobsen (former Cheng) Wright went to Kristiansand at after her marriage to Wright, probably visiting family.⁵⁰¹ Mary Jakobsen Wright must have held some contact with Anna Jakobsen Cheng's friends and family in Kristiansand. According to one letter sent from Elisabeth Rasmussen to Ellen Søyland, Ellen Søyland inquired about Mary Jakobsen Wright's wellbeing.⁵⁰² In another letter sent from Mary Jakobsen Wright addressed to Miss Rasmussen, Mary Jakobsen Wright expresses her deepest sympathy in regards to Elisabeth Rasmussen's death.⁵⁰³

The photo below was taken as Mary Jakobsen Wright and her husband visited Norway. The date is unknown. However, we know that Mary and Morden got married in 1925, which means that this photo was taken at some point after that.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁹ 'Wright, Mary Jakobsen (former Cheng)' 'Medical register for 1947' <http://home.ancestry.com/> (Uploaded 21.03.2015)

⁵⁰⁰ Church Mission Society archive. [CMS/C/ATm 2/230](#): Candidates papers: Morden Hatfield Wright.

⁵⁰¹ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Photo of Dr Mary (Cheng) Wright and Dr Wright visiting Kristiansand.

⁵⁰² State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Ellen Søyland to Elisabeth Rasmussen. Dated November 8th, 1926.

⁵⁰³ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Letter from Mary J. Wright to Miss Rasmussen. Elisabeth Rasmussen passed away in 1934. State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 818.

⁵⁰⁴ State Archive. Kristiansand. Depot 663: Photo of Dr Mary (Cheng) Wright and Dr Wright visiting Kristiansand. 'Wright, Mary Jakobsen (former Cheng)' Marriages registered in January, February, and March 1925. <http://home.ancestry.com/> (Uploaded 21.03.2015)



Image 5: Mary Jakobsen Cheng Wright and Mordon Wright's visit to Norway. Dr Mary (Cheng) Wright (Third from the left on lower row) and Dr Wright (third from the right on upper row).

There has been a few attempts at rehabilitating Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story. The article: 'Kvinna frå Kristiansand som ble fyrste norske misjonær i Hunan - Eit 25 års minne.' Printed in *Agder Tidend*, 16.10.1937 may be one example of an attempt to restore Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story. This story focuses on Anna Jakobsen Cheng being the first Norwegian missionary in Hunan.

In 1985 another jubilee story of 'De Frie Evangeliske Forsamlingers Misjon' refers to Anna story as they share about how mission activity in China grew.⁵⁰⁵ There are several other examples of missionary literatures that mention Anna Jakobsen Cheng story. It would seem as many mission organisations has acknowledged Anna Jakobsen Cheng's missionary work and therefore found it natural to mention parts of her story in their own mission organisations history.

⁵⁰⁵ Froholt (1985): 101-103.

As previously discussed, the largest piece of literature that has made Anna Jakobsen Cheng the protagonist is Dehlin's book. This book might be identified as an effort to rehabilitate Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story, however, it would seem as Dehlin has added information to present Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story in a certain way, though we know little of Dehlin's purpose behind his narration. The authors Erik Kjebekk and Oscar Handeland also mention Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story, although it serves as a part of larger presentations of Norwegian Church history.⁵⁰⁶

In 2010 a memorial tablet of Anna Jakobsen Cheng and Sophie Reuter was affixed to the building the two of them lived and worked in Kristiansand. On this tablet they are only identified with their maiden names. Perhaps the reason for this was to emphasise on their pioneering work as they left as the two first missionaries from Norway.

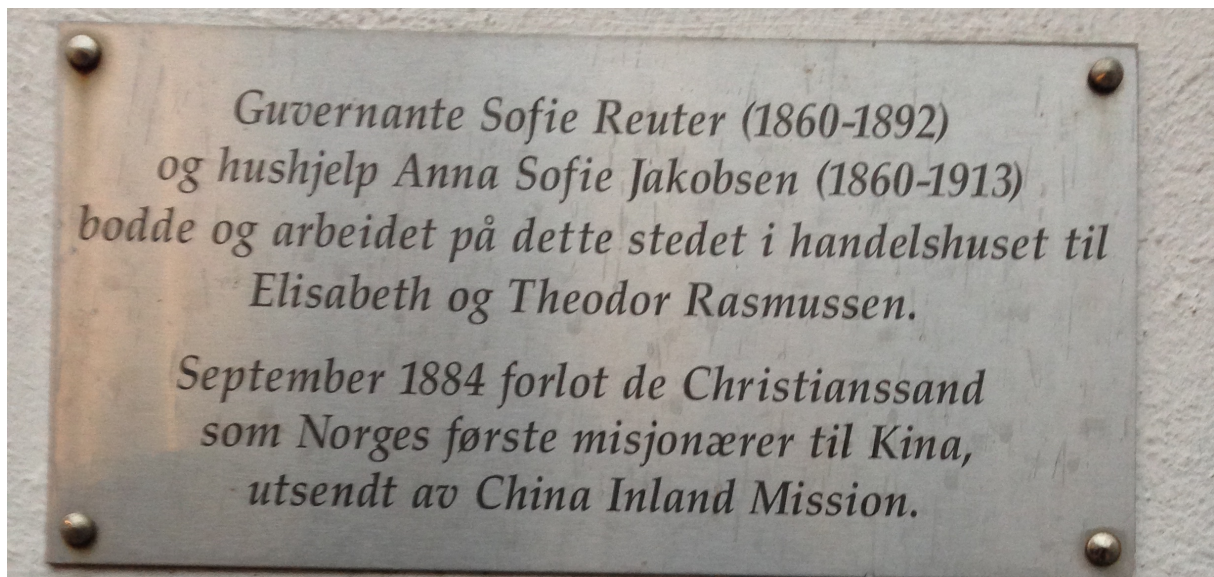


Image 6: Memorial tablet of Anna Sofie Jakobsen and Sofie Reuter in Kristiansand, Norway.⁵⁰⁷

There are still unresolved questions regarding Anna Jakobsen Cheng and her family. We know little about Anna Jakobsen Cheng's visit to Norway between 1900-1902 and of 'Anna Cheng's Mission'. Moreover, additional information about Mary Wright's family and about sources directly for Anna Jakobsen Cheng. Perhaps Anna Jakobsen Cheng's relatives possess additional original sources and maybe they have preserved her diary. Hopefully this

⁵⁰⁶ Kjebekk (1991): 61-62 and Handeland (1948): 52-57.

⁵⁰⁷ The picture is taken personally.

contribution has provided an important step in the right direction towards dissolving Anna Jakobsen Cheng's story, and shown how her life course can reveal aspects of mission history.

Abstrakt

Anna Jakobsen Cheng (1860-1911) er nevnt i misjonslitteraturen som den første single kvinnelige fra Norge som ble misjonær og at hun giftet seg med en kinesisk konvertitt med navn Cheng Xiuqi og ble utvist fra The China Inland Mission (CIM), misjonsorganisasjon hun hadde tilhørt i mange år. En mer ukjent historie er at hun og mannen fortsatte misjonsarbeidet etter de forlot CIM.

På grunn av usikkerhet rundt grunnleggende informasjon om hennes livsløp har senere forskning uttrykket at Anna Jakobsen Cheng sin livshistorie trenger å innfattes på nytt. Det er heller ingen tidligere som har systematisk samlet kilder og litteratur som finnes om henne. Derfor har først del av denne oppgaven tatt sikte på å rekonstruere Anna Jakobsen Cheng sitt livsløp igjennom en kritisk analyse av kildene som finnes om henne. Andre del av oppgaven tar opp spørsmålet om hvordan vi kan forstå Anna Jakobsen Cheng sine relasjoner, kontakter og interaksjoner og videre hva hennes liv kan fortelle oss om misjonshistorie i Kina.

Jeg har valgt å benytte meg av et nyere analytisk konsept for å kunne belyse denne kompleksiteten. Konseptet Misjonsfamilie er en analytisk konstruksjon som kan omfatte et livsløp fra barndommen til alderdom, men begrepet omfatter mer enn bare biologiske familier. Familie kan også bestå av relasjoner, kontakter og nettverk. På mange måter forstod misjonen seg som en familie og misjonsfamiliediskursen skulle få betydning for hvordan misjonærene forstod seg selv og menneskene de misjonerte for.

Jeg har tatt i bruk tre tilnærminger som fungerer som knagger for å kunne overføre dette konseptet til Anna Jakobsen Cheng sitt livsløp. Igjennom å studere nære kontakter, forståelsen av et familie hierarki, og multiple identiteter har jeg diskutert hvor avgjørende de nære relasjonene var for at Anna Jakobsen Cheng kunne bli en del av en global misjons familie. Videre ved å undersøke de mange reaksjonene til Anna Jakobsen Cheng sitt ekteskap og ekskludering av CIM, har sammenhengen mellom hvordan misjonen forstod en 'ideell' misjonsfamilie vært bestemmende for deres reaksjoner. Da Anna Jakobsen Cheng og Cheng fortsatte misjonsarbeidet på egenhånd var det igjen de nære relasjonene som kom til å støtte deres arbeid. På mange måter kan misjonsfamilie forståes som et nettverk av relasjoner. For Anna Jakobsen Cheng livsløp har dette gitt innsikt til hennes livserfaringer og på mange måter også utforsket sider ved misjonshistorien.

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