

The time in Ruihua Middle School

When I was in Middle School, we all had to live and study at the school dormitory. We could go home to visit our families only on week days. In the dormitory there were four students to a room. Two shared one bed and the four of us shared one table. In the evening each of us brought our little vegetable oil lamp and placed them on the table, two on each side so that we could see to study. In those days the petroleum oil was controlled by the Japanese. It was a precious item for the war and there was no way that civilians could use it. So we used vegetable oil instead. During the evening study time we had to study in our rooms and later when the bell rang we all went to the chapel for evening prayers. The chapel was dark, so every student brought their own little peanut oil lamp. We all knelt down to pray. After the prayer one person led us in singing: "Humbly before Jesus, humbly before Jesus, let us be humble all the way." After prayer we went to our dormitory to go to bed. This evening prayer really had an impact on my life. I cannot forget it. Even now I still can see the scene vividly: everyone holding a little lamp, like a flock of fire beetle or as a group of little angels gathered together. There is no way that I can forget these beautiful and holy moments of my early youth.

Ruihua Middle School had a staff of teachers who mostly came from the Christian University of Qilu (a very famous university in Shandong). So our academic standing was always above that of other schools in the area! One of my teachers, Mr. Feng Guo Zheng, who taught history and geography, was more talented than the average teacher. I remembered that whenever he came to our class, he always brought a stick under his arm that was a foot long. He used this to point at the black board when teaching. He also brought a few pieces of chalk in his hand. Mr Feng's familiarity with history and his skilful teaching led us into the history of ancient to current events. I admired him for his excellent memory of historical facts in detail. We were all captivated by his teaching. One thing that struck me was how he ever could memorize all those historical dates and events correctly! What a teacher he was! He did not only teach history, but also geography classes. He taught well beyond the printed materials in the book. He also drew maps on the black board. So I could remember keenly what he taught us in class. If I only could grasp 20% or 30% of his lecture, I would gain more

knowledge than by studying the whole book on my own! Mr. Feng was not only a talented teacher, but a good writer. He wrote scripts for drama. Once for a Christmas show he wrote a skit called “Introduction”. I was one of the actors. Mr Feng was very tall, so we called him “Tall Guy”. He was about 180 cm (six foot and 8 inches tall). Unfortunately he suffered from tuberculosis, his body was weak and he died at the age of a little over thirty. It was such a waste of talents.

Later on I learned that our teachers’ salaries were very low. So Mr. Feng must have suffered from a lack of nutrition, which may have contributed to his early death. In those days the Japanese controlled the three Northern Provinces of China. The schools had a shortage of funds. The Ruihua School was a Church School, and offered free education to the community. Even later, when a symbolic student fee was introduced, there was never enough to cover the expenses! Particularly during the Second World War when communication between Europe and Asia was cut off, there was no way for the Swedish Mission to transfer money to support the mission in China. Even the missionaries had to rely on selling off some of their belongings to cover their daily needs. This was true also of Rev. Egron Rinell. In a situation like this of course the salary for the teachers was lower than we can imagine!

As students we were better off than our teachers, because our families brought food to us. The teachers had two meals a day with Bingzi (steamed bread made of a kind of grain and beans) and some preserved vegetables. We had heard that if the teachers wanted wheat bread, they had to purchase a few pounds of wheat grain and grind the flour by hand on stone mortars. This illustrates just a little bit of the hardships of those days! I admired our teachers, who regardless of suffering starvation, faithfully taught us and didn’t quit their jobs! Our principal, Mr Wang, and his family most likely didn’t have enough food for regular meals every day. Their family ate uncooked yams for a living. When his family complained, Mr. Wang got down on his knees and prayed. Students heard about this and, knowing that Mr. Wang would refuse to accept any charity from others, the students made packages of steamed bread and threw it in Mr. Wang’s yard. Those packages helped the family to survive. Once Mr. Wang witnessed and said that one day after his prayer, there came food from heaven. That day the whole family had survived from such a package!

Mr. Wang and the other teachers were models of teaching faith in action. Every time I think about them I cry! This kind of education into faith by action was not taught in the text books,

but by their faith in their daily living. No wonder the students from the school never will forget what they learned. With grateful hearts they learned a life-long lesson how to trust in God. What a model beyond the history of education in our country – China.

Our spiritual well being was central for the education at the Ruihua School. We had Bible-studies within our curriculum. In music class, taught by Mr Wang himself, we also sang hymns. Every day we had morning prayers and worship. At evening time we had evening prayers. Sunday worship and Sunday School was obligatory for everyone. The most important event in each semester was the one week revival meetings (fen xing ju hui). All classes were discontinued so that we could go to meetings all day long. The whole school was totally involved in Revival Week! Almost all the famous preachers of that era came to our school to lead the revival meetings, such as John Sung, Wang Mingdao, Li Jisheng, Xie Baoluo, Dong Ji Ting etc. I especially remember the blind man, Mr. Xie Baoluo. His sermons touched many of us. During the week of revival meetings our principal Mr. Wang visited us frequently at the student dorm. He knelt down to pray with students, to encourage them to confess their sins and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. At the evening meetings a lot of people were moved by the Spirit and cried, confessing their sins. The whole school was filled with the movement of the Holy Spirit - everyone was touched by the Spirit. I remember our Chinese teacher Mr. Zhang Yu Dien who, in the midst of the revival meeting, cried so that mucus from his nose dripped down to his chest, almost one foot long. I can hardly forget that picture of him.

In later years, when I visited the Swedish missionary Rev. Egron Rinell, he added some interesting memories from these revival meetings. He said that one of the speakers had visited him in his home and while they were talking, the coffee table crushed into pieces. That table had been firm and strong enough for many years and why this happened no one could ever explain! Another time when the preacher was preaching a fly suddenly flew into his throat so that he had to end his sermon... Pastor Egron Rinell said to me that when the Holy Spirit is working with people the devil is working too. These two events really impressed Pastor Rinell.

The Profile of Rev. Egron Rinell (The Big Pastor Rinell)

When I was a student at Ruihua Middle School, Mr. Wang Hua Ting was the principal and Pastor Egron Rinell was the Chair of the Board of Trustees. He was from the Swedish Baptist

Mission. The reason why I called him “Big Pastor” was because of his biological order among the siblings in his family. His brother was called “Second Pastor”, the Rev. Oscar Rinell. Big Pastor Rinell lived close to the school and the church. We called their home “The Rinell Garden”. The garden was big and included not only the house but also a huge lawn and flower platforms and a pavilion. It was very famous in Jiaozhou at the time. We got a chance to get in to the garden since the summer camp was always held there. We sat on the huge lawn with its beautiful green colour, something that we could seldom see in our country! At the South side of the garden there was a house that was Second Pastor Rinell’s home. There was also a Swedish School there for the children of the Missionaries. There was another house at Nan Guan, Golenzi Qiau Street. This was far from our school, so I have never been there. I only saw the big black gate beyond the curved bridge. This was the home of the missionaries Wei Jiaoshi and An Jiaoshi and others.

Missionaries of the Swedish Baptist Mission lived in comfortable homes. In those days nobody said a word about the gap in the standard of living between rich and poor. We just assumed that missionaries should live in this style. I think it was possible because the foreign currency was strong when exchanged into Chinese currency. This helped them to be able to afford to live as upper class people. I clearly remember when I visited Rev. Egron Rinell, the Big Pastor, many years later in Sweden, how his son in law, Dr. Hermansson, told me that when he visited Taiwan several decades later that the American currency exchanged into New Taiwan currency made everything seem cheap to him. Of course this must be the case! In those days that was true of Taiwan. It seems to me that during the time in Jiaozhou all the missionaries lived in the best houses. They had motor vehicles for their transportation while others mostly used bicycles! They had hired servants, a luxury far beyond the normal standard of living. For those who worked in Thailand and the Philippines, where there was serious poverty beyond what was true of other places in Asia, the cost of living was very low, and servants could be hired for even less money. Most likely the missionaries in that area had several servants such as a cook, a laundry lady, a baby-sitter or nanny, and a driver. They lived like the noble class compared with the pioneer missionaries to China. There is no comparison, the difference was like the distance between heaven and earth!

In the 1920’s missionaries exchanged foreign currency to the local currency and benefited from the difference between them. We cannot imagine what happened in history! But after all these years, the question has bothered me for a long time. Why is there a big gap between the

salaries of Western and Chinese clergy? Is it because the Western Clergy is more valuable than the Chinese Clergy? Or is it just a difference between people? Even today I have my doubts, because this has not been resolved! I wonder why we have to set up two different standards for God's servants. We should be equal regardless of nationalities! I cannot understand this!

Big Pastor Rinell was everyone's favourite. His handsome appearance and when he dressed up in a Chinese long robe he looked as a high class gentleman. He spoke fluent Jiaozhou dialect and attracted people with his humour and lively preaching. Once he covered a lit candle with a drinking glass. When the oxygen was used up the light of the candle went out, first slowly, then completely. He said that it's just like a person who wants to shine, but without the Holy Spirit to supply the light of God, the human light soon will be gone. This candle demonstration of the light of God really impressed me a lot!

Big Pastor Rinell Also taught us English. His Oxford English made our conversational English courses very lively and interesting. Big Pastor Rinell was educated at the British "Chefoo School" run by the China Inland Mission in Yantai. His penmanship was extremely beautiful. Every week he wrote a sentence on the blackboard on the wall of the Class Room, and asked every student to copy his writing. That was my favourite part of learning English in the class!

Whenever we had classes with pastor Rinell, the Big Pastor, he always liked to sing a song: "I am H-A-P-P-Y, I am H-A-P-P-Y, I know I am, I'm sure I am, I am H-A-P-P-Y." His cheerful voice led us in the singing of this light melody. We all responded and enjoyed singing back and forth with him. Then he'd change the mode to sadness and sing: "I am S-O-R-R-Y.." He could express himself in different ways and used the same song and the same melody to mix happiness and sadness of life. This was exactly what I recall from the weaving pattern of my childhood years.

Big Pastor Rinell told me that, since he grew up in Northern China, he liked to eat Jiaozi (boiled dumplings). When he was little he had an eating competition. Once he had eaten a few dozen Jiaozi he ran a circle of the City Wall to help the digestion. Then he ate some more. Jiaozhou had a double City Wall. The inner wall was built around the county government administration center. The outer wall was called Weizi. The inner wall was wall wide enough

to ride a chariot on it. I don't know how long it took to run a circle of the whole wall. I just assume that this young missionary had passion and love for the town where he had grown up – Jiaozhou.

**The Proclamation of the Gospel in China by the Ruihua Baptist Church.
(An Overall Picture of the Swedish Baptist Mission in Shandong)**

1. The forced departure of the last missionary from Jiaozhou.

In the Spring of 1981 I visited Uppsala, Sweden for the first time. I visited my English teacher from my younger years at Ruihua Middle School, Rev. Egron Rinell – Big Pastor Rinell. We hadn't seen each other for decades. He looked very old and had lost his young and handsome appearance. He sighed over how fast life passes by and brought out an album of memories. It showed his classmates from Bethel Seminary, all of which had passed away. At the age of almost 90, he was the only one left. Mrs. Gerda Rinell had Parkinson's Disease and lived in a nursing home. She could only come home for a while on week-ends. They were married at Jianzhu Baptist church. For those days that was a huge event for the community of that church. Mrs. Gerda Rinell was the soprano of the church. She usually sang solos during the Sunday worship services. Her beautiful voice rang to the ceiling of the church. Its ringing was unforgettable and we all admired her. Time had gone by, they were aged. Next time I visited Sweden both of them had passed away.

The Swedish Mission served in Jiaozhou for half a century. Because of political changes the Mission had to leave in 1951. They left the country and the ministry in a hurry, leaving the Chinese believers behind. This was the end point of the Swedish Baptist Mission era in Jiaozhou.

In the year 1948 the Communist Army came to Jiaozhou for the last and final time. Most of the Swedish Missionaries had left, but Big Pastor Rinell and his wife were still there. He was firm and tall as usual. To Big Pastor Rinell this was his home, he was born in China, he had grown up in Jiaozhou, he married there and had his children there. So why should he leave his home and not continue to preach the Gospel and win people for Christ in his home town? He insisted not to obey the army's command when they ordered him to leave. They told him: "Egron Rinell, you live here and the house now belongs to China. You eat Chinese food and drink Chinese water, you even breathe Chinese air – all these belong to China! Nobody

welcomes you any more. Get out of here and go back to your own country immediately!” This was a kind of “kicking out order”! With sadness Big Pastor Rinell packed up his things and left the place he loved with endless remorse!

When Big Pastor Rinell left Jiaozhou his first stop was Qingdao. The Ruihua Middle School was closed and not permitted to reopen. Mr. Wang, the principal, was invited to visit Sweden. He stayed for one year and visited many places. In 1949 he caught the last plane from Hong Kong back to China. Pastor Rinell went to Japan for a few years to work among Japanese students and retired from this mission field in 1963. He went back to his homeland for retirement, but his heart was still in Jiaozhou. We shared a lot of memories together, particularly related to Mr. Wang, whom we had not heard anything from. When China opened its doors later on, I sent a letter from Hong Kong to Qingdao, and through several diverse contacts Mr Wang was found. I reported this to Big Pastor Rinell immediately. Mr. Wang was still living! Some time later the Second Pastor Rinell went with a team to visit Qingdao and Jiaozhou. They met Mr. Wang and other friends. Big Pastor Rinell’s daughter Alice wrote a letter and told me about their journey and how they met. I felt relieved that Big Pastor Rinell received this message before his death. He is now resting in peace in the Lord’s bosom!

Of Big Pastor Rinell’s children only Alice lived close to take care of him. Alice’s husband Dr. Hermansson had died in a heart attack. Now Alice lives in the small apartment which her parents left behind. It contains many precious pictures from Jiaozhou. The photo materials I have used in this book mostly came from these resources. Most of them were taken by Big Pastor Rinell, who had a camera even if it was second hand. But he was one of few who gave us precious records of Jiaozhou.

Alice is not only fluent in English but also in the Chinese Jiaozhou dialect. But she can only read and write a little in Chinese. In the past missionaries who came to China learnt the Chinese language at “Guan Hua Xuexiao”, the official school of mandarins. A specialist would teach them not only to speak Chinese, but also to read and write. Alice told me that Mrs Hellen Rinell, Second Pastor Rinell’s wife, had read the whole Chinese Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, for learning purposes. What an amazing journey for a foreigner into the Chinese language!

Alice is still in good health, but her father's generation is gone. Their fidelity to the mission and their vision for the mission is still alive within the hearts of those whom they have touched in China!

2. The earliest Three Pioneer Missionaries to Jiaozhou.

While I was in Sweden Big Pastor Rinell gave me a book written to celebrate the first fifty years of the Swedish Baptist Mission in China. The editors were Rev. J. A. Rinell, Rev. J. E. Lindberg and Mr. Hu Shu Xian. It covers the period from 1891 to 1941 and gives a comprehensive account for the Swedish Baptist Mission in China.

In the introduction it is stated that the Swedish Baptist's involvement in overseas mission started in 1877. At this time there was a desire to proclaiming the Gospel in China. Some churches had sent missionaries in to work together with the English missionary Hudson Taylor. When he came to Sweden to preach in 1888 he also visited the Bethel Seminary. When the students heard Taylor's report from the China mission, their interest to respond to this mission field increased. In the group of seminarians that listened to him there were three who applied to go to China: Carl Vingren, J. E. Lindberg and J. A. Rinell.

3. Pastor Carl Vingren

Rev. Carl Vingren reached Shanghai in March 1891, the first thing he did was to shave part of his hair and wear a wig of horse tail under his hat, all dressed up as a Chinese. Then he went to An Qien school, where missionaries learnt the Chinese language. Later on he travelled to many places to look for a suitable field for the mission. In Shandong he visited Yantai, Dengzhou, Laiyang and eventually came to Jiaozhou, the small Xiao Qiao Nan You . He rented eight rooms for the mission and started evangelic work among the local people. Unfortunately he had difficulties to adjust to the environment and became ill. He was sent back to Sweden. Later he served several churches in America as a pastor. But he never forgot China.

4. Pastor J. E. Lindberg

Pastor Lindberg first came to Jiaozhou together with Pastor Carl Vingren in 1892. They rented a house for the mission and settled down there in 1893. In 1903 Mrs. Lindberg started a primary school for girls at Meu He Qiou in Jiaozhou. Later on the Lindbergs moved to Zhucheng, where they bought property and built the foundation for mission work there. Pastor

Lindberg was not only responsible for the Church, he was also principal of the school. He was a passionate writer and published books on “The origin and resources of ancestor-worship in China”, “The Baptist Missionaries in China” and other subjects. Pastor Lindberg’s ministry focused on the social conditions, he served the community by running schools and hospitals. He was an advocate for ministry among drug addicts and for the release of bound feet among women in China etc. He was a pioneer for openness toward Chinese tradition and culture. He worked all over Jiaodong in Rizhao, Jiuxien etc. These were all pioneer cities for the Swedish Mission work.

5. Pastor J. A. Rinell

We called Pastor J. A. Rinell “Old Pastor”. He died when I was in Ruihua Elementary School so I don’t have many memories of him. But I remember his wife Mrs. Hedvig Rinell. She lived at Da Jing street and every Sunday she rode on a cart to the Church. It was a beautiful mule cart with red shafts and blue covering. It looked very elegant. No one else had that kind of a vehicle in those days. Even if I didn’t meet him, I heard stories about Old Pastor Rinell, since he was one of the three famous pioneer missionaries to Jiaozhou. Rev. J. A. Rinell and his wife were the founders of Ruihua Elementary School and Ruihua Middle School. People in Jiaozhou were thankful for his contribution and when he died they built a monument at the right side outside the Church. When the stone was uncovered there was a ceremony led by Rev. Han Fengming and all the merchants and officials of the city were there. The monument was black with words in red characters. Rev. Han and the Chair of the merchant’s association started the celebration by uncovering the stone. This was the year after 1941. I was sorry to learn that the monument as well as the big church building were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. When I asked about the condition of the church after China introduced a more open policy, my teacher Mr. Feng Zanting wrote to me and said: “Not a single stone will be left in its place!” (Mathew 24:2).

Who could ever have thought that the beautiful church would be damaged and destroyed over night. Old Pastor Rinell spent all his life in Jiaozhou. He laid the foundation for the Baptist Mission there and his two sons, Big Pastor Rinell and Second Pastor Rinell, followed in his footsteps serving the mission. Old Pastor Rinell died from illness in the year 1941 in Qingdao. He was buried at the Qingdao International Public Cemetery. Unfortunately this cemetery disappeared, giving place for a public park in commemoration of cultural celebrities from the Qingdao area.

Pastor J.A. Rinell, Old Pastor Rinell, came to China in 1894. When he arrived in Jiaozhou he started to learn the Chinese language and at the same time he engaged in the evangelistic outreach. Shortly after his arrival the Sino-Japanese War began (Jia Wu War) and the city turned against foreigners. Old Pastor Rinell and his wife fled to Yantai for a short period of time. Even if there were difficulties, Old Pastor Rinell never ceased to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord. Four years later, in 1898, four people were baptized and became Christians. At this time Old Pastor Rinell found that it was time to organize a church in Jiaozhou. While he was busy with church work, the county government asked Old Pastor Rinell to help them set up the Post Office. So he contributed to the convenience of communication for the people in the county! After a short time the civil war of Quan Fei Zhi Zhan (“the Boxer rebellion”) started, so in 1900 Old Pastor Rinell had to flee again, this time to Qingdao! On coming back to Jiaozhou he went to Wangtai, Longjiacun and Gaomi to build up churches. By 1940 the Ruihua Baptist Mission had 12 district congregations with 5,000 members. Old Pastor Rinell made Jiaozhou the head station with an outreach in four directions. He always encouraged the believers to gather their treasures in heaven. His faith was visible in action with an emphasis on education and guidance of the members in their offering. So that even later on, when the mission budget was cut down, the church could stand strong in self support of its ministry. That is what he did for the church. Old Pastor also contributed to literature. Among other books he wrote: “The Civil War on Quan Fei Zhi Zhan” (published 1906), “The Ruihua Baptists’ 15 years history” (Published 1907), “Difficulties in overseas evangelism” (Published in 1910), and “The Mission Challenge and we” (Published in 1932).

Old Pastor’s wife, Mrs. Hedvig Rinell graduated from Teacher’s College. She played an important role in Christian education. She and Old Pastor Rinell in built up Ruihua Boy’s School, Girl’s School, which later were united in the Primary School, Ruihua Middle School and also the Women’s Bible School. The couple also used their time for charity work, especially within farming, irrigation, famine relief, war time crisis and in care of dysfunctional families. People trusted him for fund raising when disasters struck. You never heard Old Pastor complain for his heavy duties. He tried his best to fulfil his responsibilities with a cheerful heart. He served Jiaozhou 47 years, and returned to his own country only three times for short furloughs. The couple had five children. Two sons entered Bethel Seminary in Sweden and came back to do evangelistic work in Jiaozhou upon graduation. What a

contribution to Jiaozhou. No wonder that people, after his death, wanted to set up a monument to remember his achievement for the people in Jiaozhou.

6. The Achievement of the Ruihua Baptist Mission in China

According to the book on the first 50 years of the Swedish mission, the situation in Shandong was very different compared to what met Robert Morrison. When he arrived in China in 1807, he hoped that after one hundred years there would be one thousand believers in China. But it took him ten years before he baptized the first Chinese believer. Soon after that Morrison died. Fifty three years later, in 1860, there were about 1000 Chinese believers. The Swedish Baptist Mission Church in the Jiaodong and the adjacent Counties had baptized 6 628 by 1941 and in the whole nation there were over 500 000 believers. Of course there is no comparison!

Rev. Carl Vingren, the first generation missionary of the Swedish Baptists, visited many places in China. In the end he chose to start work in Shandong. One of the reasons for his choice was that Shandong was the Holy Province of China, the home of Sages like Confucius and Mencius. It would be possible that Mission work in Shandong would influence people nationwide. So from that kind of thinking the new format of education was promoted all over the Eastern part of Jiaozhou (the traditional Confucian private tutoring school had already been suspended by the government). Old Pastor Rinell really changed the educational culture in Shandong, particularly through the Elementary School and the Middle School in Jiaozhou, as the pearls in the crown - besides other ministries he did for the Swedish Baptist Mission in China.

According to the 50 year book, the Swedish Mission started their ministry in Jiaozhou in 1893. At that time the population of Jiaozhou was 50 000 and there were 1 282 villages in the countryside with a population of 365 576. From the year 1893 to 1940, totally 47 years, the mission had proclaimed the Gospel in seven counties each with 400 000 inhabitants. More people had heard the Good News of our Lord.

7. Education

The Swedish Baptist Mission set up schools starting in the Eastern part of Jiaozhou as vehicles of evangelism. They founded schools all over, also pioneering schools for Chinese girls. They showed openness to give equal opportunities to both girls and boys. The main founder of the educational work was Mrs. Hedvig Rinell, Old Pastor's wife. She not only

operated the famous Ruihua Schools, both the Primary and the Secondary Schools, to begin with she also was the principal of Ruihua Girl's School. The Ruihua church needed trained Chinese evangelists, so the Ruihua Bible Institute was started. From 1940 it offered a three year Bible program to strengthen and equip laity for the ministry. Later on that proved to be a key to success for expansion of the local ministry. Pastor Egron Rinell was the principal of the Ruihua Bible Institute. All the schools that Swedish Mission started were famous. They were beneficial to all the Shandong children and young people of that time.

8. Social Activities and Charity

At the time when the Swedish Baptist Mission came to China, the economy in China was in many ways far behind that of the European countries. Along with proclaiming the Gospel there was a Mission outreach of many kinds of activities for the local people, such as campaigns to stop opium smoking, building up post office services with the local government, disaster fund raising, promotion of women's rights. At this time there were serious issues caused by poverty, such as throwing out new born female infants along the road side to die, and supporting women and men who had no value or position in society, releasing the bandages of women subject to foot binding (according to custom men regarded small feet most attractive, but it was an unethical and harmful procedure for women). The Church also opened an orphanage to receive many abandoned babies. The Swedish Mission cared about the needs of the people in those days, so that the harvest of the mission grew rapidly as a natural result of the Gospel of Christ! All the above were important achievements of the Mission.

9. The Policy of Openness of the Swedish Baptist Mission

When I read the book on the first fifty years of the Shandong Ruihua Mission, I was touched by their vision for the mission some 60 years ago. Their insight was far beyond many others. I was amazed to find that in the 1940's, the Swedish Baptists Mission had set up goals to let the Chinese Church be Indigenous with Self support, Self nurture, Self control of their administration, and Self proclamation of the Gospel. What an insight and openness for the ministry in China. This policy is like Sun Light from above over the land of Missions in China even today! According to historical records from the 60's or even from the 70's many Western Missions have not yet decided on the policy for their mission in China. How can an unclear target lead missions to success? At the same time with the awakening of the Asian Chinese Churches, the local leaders fought for their right and power causing tension between

Western Mission and Chinese Congregations. Instead of working together as a team for the Gospel, they worked against each other in their desire for control. What a shame!

Since 1949 the political situation has changed in Mainland China. Many of the Missions from China were relocated either to Hong Kong or Taiwan to continue their work. Unfortunately the relocation did not change the policy of Western Missions within the Chinese Church community. The bosses of the Mission Churches were the Westerners. The policy was set up by them and from them and the Chinese clergy or other workers just submitted to their decisions without participating or trying to change their policy. Of course a lot of policies were wrong for the mission of today, but since the Chinese workers and clergy only played the role of listeners, there was no way to change the incorrect ways. This is very sad! In Hong Kong, particularly as a British colony, the Westerners from the Missions became the Kings and Queens with absolute power in decision making. Whatever the missionaries or the Mission Board said became the WILL OF GOD! Nobody could ever say “no” to them! From the conclusion of the Ruihua Baptist Mission 50-year book, the Swedes in Shandong approved the policy to let the church of China grow by being indigenized. Is this Christ’s policy for today’s church mission too!

China’s greatest need is Christ! The first priority is not a culturally adapted Christ, or an artistic Christ, not even a theologically correct Christ, but the Christ of the Gospel, the Good News of Christ. There are the Beatitudes of the Nazarene, the dynamic of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ. It is said that the Chinese Church needs to speak in Chinese to the Chinese people ... The Ecumenical Christians of the World must allow the Naturalized Chinese Church to join the team. For the Christian faith to be rooted in China we first of all must let it become a Chinese Church and let it grow in a Chinese style. The dynamic of Christian faith is based on believers who earnestly practice faith in action. The only way for the Christian faith to grow in China is that the life of Christ be implanted in the innermost souls of the people. Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again. That is the strength of Christ within them. Surely, the Church in China will become the indigenous Church of Christ. The Church must reach the goals of Self conduct evangelism, continually proclaiming the Gospel of our Lord. All of the above implies that we should keep our present and future target FOR THE Church. The Mission in China must be based on a Christ-centred indigenized Church which proclaims the Gospel to the Chinese, so that the Kingdom of God will come true in China soon!

According to the four policies above, the Church should first start with the mission worker as a solo worker on the missionfield, letting the real active Christians (born again people who with their life are dedicated to faith in action) join the work of the congregation. Secondly the laity should become future evangelists to win new disciples for Christ. Then they should go on to a new area so that the local co-workers could have a chance to realize that a congregation exists which can take charge of the ministry for continued Church growth. The third step is to turn over the power to Chinese Leaders so that they can be in complete charge of the ministry. The Mission Board should by then only supply financial support and have the role of consultants in facilitating the ministry that they once started. This would agree with the words of John the Baptist: "He (the local church) must increase, but I (the Mission Board) must decrease" John 4:30).

After all, the fourth step is to let the local church be completely autonomous. At that point the Mission Board will have the role to communicate and have mutual relationships with the church and pray for the ministry.

Now back on track. When the Ruihua Baptist Mission finished the first step in the Jiaozhou area, it proceeded to the second step and was ready for the third step: to accomplish an independent Church in China. This ministry was ended before it was completed. We do not know at this time what God's plan was, it was not a plan which we as human beings were able to comprehend! What is God's real plan for China? Why did not the good plan of the Swedish Baptist Mission get a chance to develop further? Even if some missionaries on the field would accept a plan like this, what would have happened if the administrative staff of their Mission Boards didn't chose to act on it? In South East Asia, including Taiwan and Hong Kong, after 1949 whatever was supported by the Western Missions was accepted. The Chinese played a very stupid and incompetent role, as though caught on a muddy road in their frustration as they wished to serve the Lord. This continued until the 1980's due to the lack of funding from the overseas Mission Boards. The Westerners of the Mission Boards were unwilling to entrust power to the Chinese staff. It was indeed a very sad situation.

In accordance with the Ruihua Baptist Self Evangelism policy, the Mission built a Bible Institute in Jiaozhou where they trained a lot of volunteers for the ministry. This facilitated the growth of the ministry. Sadly there was not enough higher education or plans for leaders as

pastors and clergy to take part in continued education in those days. The only well educated leader was Mr Wang Huating, the genius from Qilo University. This was a serious draw back after the change 1949. In communist China, the Swedish Mission had no one from China who was trained for the ministry. What a waste!

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