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L'influence des femmes: women, Evangelical Protestantism, and mission in nineteenth century France

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dissertation

**“L’INFLUENCE DES FEMMES” : WOMEN, EVANGELICAL
PROTESTANTISM, AND MISSION IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE**

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my husband Sam, copy editor
extraordinaire, and my children Johan, Annie, and Catherine who have
encouraged me and put up with me all the way to the end; and also to my
missionary parents, Rev. Douglas and Ann Miller.

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PROTESTANTISM, AND MISSION IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE**

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Boston University School of Theology, 2018

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues that female piety and mission practices shaped the Evangelical Protestantism and the missionary movement that emerged from the *Réveil* [Revival] in nineteenth century France. It shows that women through their writings, their philanthropic initiatives, and their focus on education and social renewal on behalf of children laid the foundation for French Protestant mission and outreach. This study fills a gap in Anglophone scholarship on the role of women in French Protestant mission history and the history of the nineteenth century Evangelical Revival in France.

After the Reformation, Protestant women preserved the Huguenot cultural identity of Protestants both at home and abroad. This continuity was manifested in the nineteenth century when the countries of the Huguenot Refuge sent missionaries of the Evangelical Revival back into France. The ethos of Jan

Hus' *Dcerka* [*The Daughter*] present in the work of French Protestant women in philanthropy, education, and social renewal demonstrates the continuity in piety and outreach from the Reformation to the nineteenth century. After the founding of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in 1822, the Paris Mission women's committee, led by Albertine de Broglie and Émilie Mallet, played a crucial role in promoting missions by mediating regional and class differences between Protestants. Late eighteenth century female initiatives on behalf of vulnerable women and children laid the foundation for the work of missions because, through them, women developed networks that served the goals of philanthropy, fundraising, and infant education.

Infant school education, pioneered in the Lesotho Mission by Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland, was essential to women's mission practice. The infant school pedagogy of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, with its religious teaching, the centrality of the female role, and the emphasis on kindness was the key component in the work of the Lesotho Mission. In the 1830s, the arrival of missionary wives launched the work of the Lesotho Mission and energized French Protestant faith. In the 1840s, women once again sparked spiritual renewal with the creation of deaconess communities in Paris and Strasburg that served as models of Christian unity and self-sacrificial service.

Overall, women's piety and outreach were sources of revitalization in the Reformed Church and influenced early Evangelical Protestantism in nineteenth century France. Women's mission practices that focused on works of mercy, education, and the nurturing of Christian families served as catalysts for renewal.

PREFACE

Just a few days ago, my mother asked me, on the phone, “Tell me again what you are writing about, what you are trying to do.” As I launched into the final iteration of my thesis and all my chapters, I realized how much joy I had had, delving into the fascinating history of Protestantism in France. And I enjoyed sharing this history with my mother, a missionary wife, former American history teacher, and avid consumer of French Protestant history.

It is, in part, to honor her and all the other women in mission that I have written this dissertation.

Soli Deo Gloria.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BSHPF*Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*
- HSP.....Haute Société Protestante [Protestant High Society]
- JME**Journal des Missions Évangéliques*
- LMS London Missionary Society

GLOSSARY

<i>Camisards</i>	"Wearers of shirts" - rebels of the Cevennes Mountains
<i>Colporteur</i>	Traveling peddler (of Bibles)
<i>Concordataire</i>	Official state church
<i>Département</i>	Subdivision of a region
Dragoons	Soldiers under King Louis XIV
Huguenot	French Reformed Protestant (term used 1500s to 1800s)
<i>Inspirés</i>	Prophets
<i>Maison des Missions</i>	Paris Mission School for Missionaries
Metropolitan France.....	European France
Provinces (plural)	everywhere except Paris and its suburbs
<i>Règlement</i>	By-laws
<i>Réveil</i>	The Revival in France
<i>Salles d'asile</i>	French infant schools
<i>Salonnière</i>	Woman who ran a salon

N.B. All translations from the French are mine unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The nineteenth century *Réveil* rekindled the historic faith of French Protestants, transforming the evangelical faith born of the Reformation into a new Evangelical identity and drastically changing the shape of Reformed Protestantism. In the sixteenth century, the term “evangelical” had been associated with the Protestant Reformation throughout Europe, eventually becoming interchangeable with the designation of “Protestant.”¹ From the 1730s on, evangelicalism took on more specific characteristics that included an emphasis on heart conversion, the centrality of Scripture, compassionate service, and crucicentrism.²

The Evangelical movement did not arrive in France until the early

¹ See Mark Noll’s longer explanation of the evolution of the term “evangelical” in his book, Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 15-21. Note: In France, Reformed Protestants were known as Huguenots.

² Noll points out that historic evangelicalism has been identified with “a consistent pattern of convictions and attitudes” since the 1730s. He quotes David Bebbington’s “quadrilateral” mentioned above: conversionism, Biblicism, activism, and crucicentrism (David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* [London: Unwin Human, 1989]). See Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 19.

nineteenth century because it was delayed by persecution, the Revolution of 1789, and the political turmoil arising from Napoleon Bonaparte's wars of conquest. However, the advent of the *Réveil* jolted France's Reformed Protestantism out of its monolithic identity that was both united and stunted by official repression, and factured it into several diverse expressions of Protestantism—not all of them part of the Reformed tradition (such as the Methodists). Those who embraced a “revived” or “born again” faith identified with diverse church traditions—Quakers, Moravians, Methodists, Baptists, Reformed, and Lutherans.³ These were the French Evangelical Protestants of the nineteenth century. French Evangelical Protestantism emerged from an inward-looking, “ghetto” identity to develop an international outlook that relied on networks for its survival in the mid-nineteenth century.⁴

This study focuses on the birth and growth of the French evangelical

³ Sébastien Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau: le protestantisme évangélique en France, 1800-2005* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2005), 214. Fath describes this transition as the emergence of French Protestantism from a “ghetto” mentality into a new “network” identity in his study on the growth of French evangelicalism from 1800 to 2005. I am appropriating this image to describe the difference between pre-nineteenth century French Protestantism with its “ghetto” mentality and the Evangelical Protestantism of the nineteenth century, nurtured and sustained by many networks.

⁴ Noll underlines the diversity of emphases in the evangelical traditions in different places and times. See Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 20. This study seeks to tease out the particularities of the French evangelical tradition.

tradition that I call “(French) Evangelical Protestantism.”⁵ By contrast, I have designated the pre-nineteenth century Protestantism in France “Reformed Protestantism” —including both the Reformed and Lutheran churches.⁶ I designate nineteenth century “revived Protestants” by the term “evangelicals” by contrast with the traditional Protestants or “liberals,” actively opposed to the revivalists whom they considered fanatics.

I contend that many of the influences that shaped Evangelical Protestantism emerged from the work of women, both in France, in their service to international missions, and on the mission field. The female emphasis on child education as a key mission practice, the use of networks, and the inter-denominational and international cooperation that sustained the missionary movement were essential traits of French Evangelical Protestantism.

⁵ The existing traditional historical accounts do not give satisfactory descriptions of the early evolution of evangelicalism in France. These historical works include: Jean Baubérot, *Le retour des huguenots: la vitalité protestante, XIXe-XXe siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1985) ; Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard, *Une histoire des protestants en France XVIe-XXe siècle* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998) ; Daniel Robert, *Les églises réformées en France (1800-1830)* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1961) ; Robert Mandrou, ed., *Histoire des protestants en France* (Toulouse: Privat, 1977).

⁶ Alsatian Lutheranism represents a particular case that was not subject to Bonaparte’s Organic Articles in the same way as the Reformed Churches of France. More information on this later.

While research exists on Protestant female figures at the time of the Reformation, there are no systematic studies of the contribution of women to missions in French Protestant history.⁷ French scholar Michelle Perrot has underlined the “silence of history” with respect to women, both Catholic and Protestant.⁸ However, because Protestant women have had the advantage of education and biblical literacy as transmitters of the faith since the Reformation,

⁷ Natalie Zemon Davis has written on women in the period of the Renaissance and Reformation. Her early book, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), includes a chapter on the social and vocational consequences of the Protestant Reformation for urban women. Her edited volume, *A History of Women in the West, Volume III: Renaissance and the Enlightenment Paradoxes* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), offers a portrait of women in their home, marriage, and work contexts, underlining both their conformity to and their subversion of accepted norms. Davis particularly underlines the marginality of women’s religious practice in her portrayal of three women (Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant) in *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). Mary T. Malone’s coverage of women in *Women & Christianity: From the Reformation to the 21st Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003) only mentions a few figures and offers no in-depth or systematic analysis.

⁸ Michelle Perrot, “Introduction,” Special issue on Émilie Mallet, *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme Français (BSHPPF)* 146 (janvier-février-mars 2000), 9. Perrot underlines this silence with respect to church women, in particular, by contrasting the different treatment Catholic and Protestant women have been given in history: “An embarrassed silence, total among the Catholics, less so among Protestants (four articles in the [Protestant] journal *Réforme*), surrounded this encounter [between the pope and Protestant and Catholic women in 1988], the suppression of which illustrates the elimination of women from the historical narrative (...). Isn’t a woman in public, and even more on the religious scene, always out of place? (...) And yet, Protestant women have not been reduced to silence.” (9) Perrot points out that there is more documentation on Protestant than Catholic women in French history. This issue of the *BSHPPF*, however, only has one article on a Protestant woman (Mallet) in the first half of the nineteenth century who is also connected to the work of missions.

they have not been reduced to complete silence.⁹ In the global history of revivals, women have always played influential roles—for example, the women “exhorters” of the Great Awakening, Lucy Farrow of the Azusa Street revival, and the women leaders of the *Fifohazana* revival in Madagascar. But French Protestant history remains silent on what roles women played in the nineteenth century *Réveil* in France and on the changes they effected on Evangelical Protestantism.

This dissertation focuses on the missing puzzle pieces in the historical record of early Evangelical Protestantism in France, namely, the mission work of women in metropolitan France and of missionary wives in the first mission field of the Paris Mission. To find these missing pieces, I will follow the thread of the “influence of women” [*l’influence des femmes*] throughout French Protestant history.¹⁰ Women initially operated from a backstage position and only later

⁹ Perrot, “Introduction,” *BSHPF* (2000), 9. She points out the wealth of writing by Protestant women in the nineteenth century. However, connecting Protestant women to the narrative of the *Réveil* is the challenge of this study.

¹⁰ I intentionally use the expression “the influence of women,” which is a euphemism that downplays any direct authority women may exercise in the public arena. Women have struggled to be recognized for their “authority” or “leadership”—both accepted male traits. However, the more feminine, behind-the-scenes “influence” is less threatening because it does not diminish male agency and authority. Henriette de Witt-Guizot used this expression in her collection of biographies, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1889), 3.

became increasingly visible.

In this study, I argue that women's piety and mission practices shaped many essential characteristics of the French Evangelical Protestantism of the nineteenth century. As transmitters of the Huguenot faith and models of a holistic spirituality, women gave Evangelical Protestantism a strong spiritual impetus for national and international mission and perhaps even more importantly a practical *modus operandi*. These women served as catalysts of a missionary vision, initially by responding to the material, educational, and spiritual needs of children. Strong women figures in the Paris Mission committee shaped mission theory and helped to implement its practical application in the work of infant school education in the Lesotho Mission. They raised up financial and human resources by developing networks and promoting a vision of missionary work rooted in education.

Historical Context

After centuries of persecution, the advent of the *Réveil* [revival] in France in the first decades of the nineteenth century served as a powerful catalyst for the renewal of the Reformed Church—in the eyes of its evangelical critics—that had

fallen into dead formalism.¹¹ Thanks to the influence of the *Réveil*, French Protestantism regained the vitality to initiate a missionary movement. Women in France were key in the unfolding of both the national and international missionary movements by developing networks and pursuing work in philanthropy, education, and social renewal. The Lesotho missionary wives inspired the women of the Paris Mission committee and exercised a renewing influence on Protestant Churches in France, Reformed and Lutheran. Their work in education made Lesotho a model for later French mission fields. Altogether, the collaborative and complementary efforts of these pioneering women had a transformative effect on the Evangelical Protestantism that grew out of the *Réveil*.

Significance of the Problem

While a number of French scholars have written about the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, few contemporary books deal with the *Réveil*.¹² Anglophone histories of the Evangelical Revival in Europe hardly mention the

¹¹ One clarification in the use of terms: I use “Revival” to describe the international movement of the Evangelical Revival and “*Réveil*” to talk about the national movement of revival in France that was a fruit of the international movement.

¹² Alice Wemyss’ book, *Histoire du Réveil* (Paris: Les Bergers et les Mages, 1977), is the only comprehensive contemporary account of the nineteenth century revival in France.

movement in France and do not highlight the role of the *Réveil* in creating the only major Protestant Francophone missionary movement in history.¹³ Some literature exists, in French, on Protestant women in the nineteenth century but almost none is written from the perspective of mission history by scholars who analyze the role of faith, let alone the *Réveil*, in their work. One scholar has pointed out that the Paris Mission archives are not complete when it comes to the women's committee reports.¹⁴ This explains in part why the narratives that do exist of the Paris Mission scarcely mention the contribution of women. Also,

¹³ W. R. Ward's *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) presents the progress of the Revival in Europe and the United States but does not mention France. In fact, Anglophone scholars seem to know very little about French Protestantism in the nineteenth century. For example, Kenneth Scott Latourette's *A History of Christianity* gives a mere two paragraphs to nineteenth century French Protestantism under the heading "Protestantism in Latin Europe." He does mention the *Réveil* but wrongly states that both Monod brothers (Adolphe and Frédéric) left the Reformed Church to join the Union of Evangelical Churches when Adolphe actually remained a pastor in the Reformed Church (Temple de l'Oratoire). See K. S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1953), 1155.

¹⁴ In a 2013 Master's thesis entitled "Femmes et Mission, de la France au Lesotho," Camille Aubret asked the poignant question: "Where are the women in this history?" However, even her study had very little material on women in the first half of the nineteenth century; Daniel Robert has underlined the gaps in documentation on women's work in the Paris Mission archives. See Daniel Robert, "Les femmes et la mission dans les débuts de la Société des missions évangéliques de Paris" in *Les Réveils missionnaires en France, Actes du Colloque de Lyon, 29-31 mai 1980* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1980), 273-296. In fact, the reports of the Paris Mission women's committee meetings do exist. However, they are handwritten, often in badly faded ink, hard to decipher, and very terse, often omitting the entire discussion around specific topics. I was not able to locate any of the correspondence the women's committee received. It was probably not preserved.

while there was a feminist movement unfolding in France during the same timeframe as this study (1830s on), the social and intellectual reforms it was seeking on behalf of women had little influence on the thinking of Protestant women in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ This fact is critical to understanding the mindset of nineteenth century French Protestant women touched by the *Réveil*, who were less interested in being independent from men than in contributing, alongside them, to the evangelization of the world.

This study will augment and update Anglophone scholarly literature on the history of the nineteenth century Evangelical Revival in France, its direct impact on French Protestantism in the creation of a missionary movement, and on the role of women in the formative stages of this movement. By focusing attention on this aspect of French history, I hope to fill in gaps in the history of the international revival movement and global mission in the nineteenth century especially regarding the influence of women on nineteenth century French Evangelical Protestantism.

¹⁵ Florence Rochefort states that "Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as protestant feminism that claims to be such a thing, in contrast with the Catholic tendency that calls itself 'Christian feminism.'" She also notes that there are striking connections between French Protestantism and feminism that have not been sufficiently studied. (Florence Rochefort, "Féminisme et Protestantisme au XIXe siècle, premières rencontres 1830-1900," *BSHPF* 146 (Janvier-février-mars 2000), 69-70.)

Method of Investigation

This dissertation is a study in history and missiology that incorporates a careful reading of both primary and secondary sources. The accessible primary sources were analyzed to fill in gaps in the historical records, especially in the area of women's roles. Since the historical record is incomplete when it comes to the contribution of women, sometimes case studies of women served as focal points to achieve more depth of analysis. These case studies are biographical accounts of the work and ideas of particular women who played leading roles in French Protestantism—in the Reformed Church, the Paris Mission or related voluntary societies—or in the Lesotho Mission. The use of the mission periodicals in women's groups and churches in France and women's committee reports helped to measure the reflexivity effect (reverse influence) of the missionaries' work on French Protestants.

Because of the uneven documentation of women's work, it was necessary to analyze traditional historical sources using a "hermeneutic of suspicion"—an approach that evaluates the received narrative in light of women's experience

and perspectives.¹⁶ Existing sources often do not represent the voice of women but that of their husband or biographer. Therefore much of women's mission thought and practice had to be inferred from what they accomplished. Also, because it was women's missionary husbands who wrote the mission reports and journal articles, and because men delivered presentations at public gatherings, the work of the women was often subsumed under the men's work. It was therefore challenging to hear the voices of women.

Social history, mission history, and the history of ideas were all critical areas of investigation. This study employed many of the same methods that Dana Robert pioneered in her book *American Women in Mission*, the first systematic history of women's mission theory—that is, methods that “place the mission theory of (...) women in social context” by “exploring the settings from which it emerged.”¹⁷ A study of the dialectic between the traditional historical narratives of the Paris Mission and the account of women's contribution

¹⁶ This method interrogates the sources, evaluates them in the light of women's work in the context of the nineteenth century, and questions the accuracy and adequacy of the information as it is presented. The term was coined by philosopher Paul Ricoeur as part of his theory of interpretation. The basic presupposition is that “nothing ultimately means what it first seems to say.” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, s.v. “Paul Ricoeur,” accessed July 3, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ricoeur/?PHPSESSID=83444a8a950c44f4aea6e4f3bee15550>.

¹⁷ Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), xx.

uncovered the complementary way Protestant men and women of the time worked together in this fledgling movement of global missionary outreach.

Sources

Before my research trip to France in July 2016, I had identified archives that were available either in local university libraries or online. Many of the important sources related to Lesotho are available digitally or through the Boston University or Yale Divinity School libraries. These sources include the archives of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society and of the Lesotho Mission. Important religious and missionary sources available online include the *Journal des Missions Evangéliques*, *Les Archives du Christianisme*, and the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*. In addition, the French national library (la Bibliothèque Nationale de France or BNF) has developed a vast library of digital resources that are freely downloadable. The digital site (<http://gallica.bnf.fr/>) offers a wealth of primary documents on Protestant history.¹⁸ The challenge was culling out, from among the wealth of materials, those that were relevant to my

¹⁸ In a conversation with Claire-Lise Lombard, archivist of the DEFAP (former Paris Mission headquarters) library in July 2016, she mentioned that there is an ongoing collaboration with the Bibliothèque Nationale de France to digitize important documents of French Protestant history.

three areas of study, especially mission (rarely covered).

My research trip in July of 2016 made it possible to acquire documents that were not available digitally. I identified and scanned important resources in the Paris Mission archives, the archives of the Deaconesses of Reuilly, the Deaconesses of Strasbourg, and the archives of the Montauban Protestant Seminary in Montpellier. These documents include the Minutes of the Paris Mission Ladies' Committee (1825-1860) and of the Yearly Paris Mission General Assembly (1833-1860), missionary publications (*Cahier du Sou Missionnaire*, *Le Petit Messager*), financial reports, and correspondence of the Lesotho missionaries (some of these are now digitized). The memoir entitled *Recollections of Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland*, compiled and edited by Karel Schoeman, is to date the best and most extensive source of female missionary writing from that time period on the history of the Paris Mission. A volume documenting the correspondence of Caroline Malvesin with the co-founder of the Deaconesses of Reuilly, published in 2007, is another source of the female missionary voice—in this case that of a “national” rather than a foreign missionary.

Scope and Limitations

As this dissertation proposes to do research at the intersection of three major themes in mission studies—the nineteenth century Evangelical Revival, French Protestant mission history, and women’s work—it was essential to employ a strict analytical methodology that maintained what I call a “tri-focal” or “bi-focal” perspective. I limited my choice of topics to those that intersected with at least two of the abovementioned major themes.

This study focused on the stretch of time that runs from the late 1700s—the proto-*Réveil*—to the 1850s. This last period saw the destruction of the Beersheba station in Lesotho and the schools established by Samuel and Elizabeth Rolland as well as the departure of founding missionary Eugène Casalis.¹⁹

Outline of the Study

Chapter one demonstrates how women preserved the continuity between the pre-nineteenth century Reformed Protestant identity and the Evangelical

¹⁹ Casalis returned to France after the death of his wife Sarah when he was called to become president of the Paris Mission in 1856.

Protestant identity after the *Réveil*. Women guarded the Huguenot legacy of their families even as many went into exile to escape persecution. The Huguenot exiles “seeded” the foreign territories that later became home to the international Revival movement. From these lands, evangelists made their way into France in the nineteenth century. Women were influential at key moments in Huguenot history and they worked alongside men or as autonomous pioneers in predecessor movements to the *Réveil*. This historical continuity refutes the concept that the *Réveil* was a foreign phenomenon.²⁰

Chapter two argues that *Dcerka* [*The Daughter*], a fifteenth century devotional text that Jan Hus wrote to, and for, women, expressed a “prophetic spirituality” that made its way from Bohemia to France in the teachings of the Moravians and the Pietists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This form of piety was present in the work of French Protestant women in philanthropy, education, and social renewal.

Chapter three focuses on the genesis of the international missionary movement and underlines the leadership role of the Paris Mission women’s committee in promoting missions among French Protestants. The early sources of

²⁰ Alice Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil: 1790-1849* (Paris: Les Bergers et les mages, 1977), 7.

the *Réveil*—the creation of Bible societies, the ministry of Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, and mission publications eventually led to the creation of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. Only a few years later, Protestant women in Paris formed a women’s committee to serve the interests of the Paris Mission. The members of the committee became the spiritual champions of the missionary movement, by mediating regional and class differences between Protestants, and by developing the beginnings of a mission theology and a strategy for outreach.

Chapter four shows that early female initiatives on behalf of vulnerable children and women prepared the *Réveil* and laid the foundation for the work of mission. In the late eighteenth century, leading Protestant and Catholic women who were concerned about issues of child welfare created networks to facilitate fundraising and raise public awareness. The networks that resulted from these early collaborations later served the work of the Paris Mission women’s committee.

Chapter five brings out of obscurity the key role of the first missionary wives in launching the work of the Lesotho Mission through their work in infant school education and in their Christian homes. In addition, the fact that women were finally on the “front lines” of mission work energized the work of French Protestant women—both the female leadership in Paris and the women’s

auxiliaries in the provinces.

Chapter six demonstrates how infant school education, pioneered by missionary wives in the 1830s, shaped early French mission practice.²¹ The religious teaching, the centrality of the female role, and the emphasis on kindness that composed the infant school pedagogy of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and Jean-Frédéric Oberlin were key components in the educational work of the Lesotho Mission. The emphasis on education as a means of social renewal and missionary outreach became the hallmark of the Lesotho Mission. Twentieth century French missionary and missiologist Maurice Leenhardt modeled the New Caledonian mission practices on the Lesotho Mission because of the importance it placed on education in the vernacular.²² He went on to champion

²¹ Infant schools were schools designed to teach small children between the ages of 4 and 7, following a certain pedagogy, depending on the location. They were originally designed to care for poor children without parental supervision. Infant schools were precursors to kindergarten. The concept evolved differently in Britain and in France.

²² Maurice Leenhardt's missionary vision prioritized education in the vernacular. It took him over a decade to convince his missionary colleagues of the essential role of education in the Caledonian mission. (Jean-François Zorn, *Le grand siècle d'une mission protestante: la Mission de Paris de 1822 à 1914*, 2nd ed. [Paris: Editions Karthala, 2012], 313-314) For the Caledonians, education had been important from the beginning of their work of evangelization—so much so that the expression “to embrace Christianity” had been translated “to do the writing and the counting.” (Maurice Leenhardt, *La Grande Terre: mission de Nouvelle-Calédonie* [Paris: Société des Missions évangéliques, 1922], 79, 80) According to Leenhardt, wherever a people was self-conscious and had an organized religion, education should serve as preparatory to the formation of the Church because “a school opens minds and loosens the soil so that the Christian seed can penetrate.” (Maurice Leenhardt, *Propos Missionnaires* [April 1931]: 80).

the central role of education in the missionary enterprise.

Chapter seven shows how women once again served as agents of renewal when the momentum of the *Réveil* flagged in the 1840s with the creation of deaconess communities. The purpose of these female communities was to revive the Protestant sense of devoted service for the “work of the kingdom of God” and to model inter-denominational cooperation in reaction to internal divisions in the churches.

Chapter eight (conclusion) summarizes the overarching argument that women’s piety and outreach served as catalysts for renewal in the ranks of French Reformed Protestants and shaped early Evangelical Protestantism in France. Women’s mission practices that focused on works of mercy, education, and the nurturing of Christian families were the primary sources of this revitalization both at home and abroad in the first half of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER ONE: THE ADVENT OF THE *RÉVEIL*: PREDECESSOR MOVEMENTS AND THEMES

The nineteenth century Protestant *Réveil* [revival] was not an event in discontinuity with Huguenot past nor was it a foreign phenomenon.¹ Women helped to preserve the continuity between historic Huguenot identity and the Evangelical Protestant identity that emerged with the *Réveil*. The agents who carried the message of the *Réveil* across the borders into France came from regions where Huguenot exiles had settled in previous centuries.

Therefore, in order to fully understand the unfolding of the history of the Huguenots and of the *Réveil* as a continuous event, one has to recognize that French Protestants were spread over a territory that was much larger than the national borders of France. And while they were eventually assimilated into the local cultures, they were nonetheless Huguenots in exile—people who formed their own communities in their host countries. In other words, “Protestant France” overflowed its national boundaries.

As a result, the *Réveil* was a European family affair—that is, one chapter in the international movement of the Evangelical Revival in the nineteenth century.

¹ I am using Huguenot and Reformed Protestant interchangeably.

But it was also fully appropriated by French Protestantism as a new evangelical movement. Today, the evangelical strain of French Protestantism traces its roots to the *Réveil* and its ethos.²

The *Réveil* was an event of major significance in nineteenth century French Protestant churches, one that brought about changes in practices (new hymnology, new liturgy, for example) and beliefs. However, many in the Reformed Church rejected the *Réveil* because they saw it as a foreign invasion—foreign piety that threatened both their historic religious practices and their Huguenot identity.³ At the turn of the nineteenth century, political animosity pitted France against the rest of Europe because of Napoleon's wars of conquest. This state of affairs contributed to a xenophobic view of the *Réveil* and to the French Protestants' felt need to defend their national identity.

Historians of this period of French history tend to identify the *Réveil* as a "foreign import."⁴ While this may seem to be a valid observation, this view

² Sébastien Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau: le protestantisme évangélique en France, 1800-2005* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2005), 214. Fath's study underlines the growth in contemporary Evangelical Protestant churches that is unmatched in the French Reformed and Lutheran churches.

³ The term "Huguenot" originated at the time of the Reformation and is used to describe a French Protestant.

⁴ Original text: "*le Réveil est d'importation étrangère.*" Alice Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil: 1790-1849* (Paris: Les Bergers et les mages, 1977), 7. Wemyss was Scottish.

reveals a superficial understanding of the historical underpinnings of the *Réveil* as well as a rigid and one-dimensional definition of French Protestant identity. One historian, Alice Wemyss, author of *Histoire du Réveil 1790-1830* [History of the Revival], contrasted the foreignness of the *Réveil* with “the Huguenots [who] were not only French by birth but also by choice, having preferred rather to suffer at home than to find freedom abroad.”⁵ While it may have been accurate to define a pre-nineteenth century Reformed Protestant as a person of Huguenot lineage, to say that the Huguenots who fled France under persecution forfeited their cultural and religious identity is shortsighted at best and cruel at worst. It also plays into the misperception—or intentional blind spot—of the French ruling powers who historically maintained that to be French was to be Catholic, because Protestantism was not considered to be native to France.⁶

⁵ Original text: “*les huguenots ne furent pas seulement français par la naissance mais également par choix, ayant préféré souffrir chez eux plutôt que de retrouver la liberté à l'étranger.*” Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 7.

⁶ Wemyss quotes a Protestant pastor who (after the National Assembly voted for freedom of conscience at the time of the French Revolution in 1789), joyfully exclaimed, “From now on, we can be French without being Catholic!” [*Dorénavant on pourra être français sans être catholique!*] (Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 40) In various tussles over colonial territories in the later part of the century, the stereotypical view that “French = Catholic; British = Protestant” caused trouble for Protestant converts in some French territories. In Madagascar, British London Missionary Society agents called on the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society to send missionaries to help them resist encroachments by French Catholic Jesuit missionaries.

When nineteenth century Protestant opponents of the *Réveil* entrenched themselves in a strict nationalistic self-definition of a French Protestant, they could not see—or refused to accept—the transforming influence of international Protestant networks on the national church. The *Réveil* subverted the narrow, nationalistic definition of French Protestant identity in various ways: when many former Catholics converted, joining the ranks of the “*réveillés*” [the revived]; when outreach efforts on the national and international level became extensions of the church, and when churches adopted new liturgy and music for their services. The new converts, liturgy, music, and outreach ministries belonged to a new brand of Protestantism, linked to a spiritual identity that, though rooted in tradition, was no longer exclusively tied to a bloodline and a historic legacy but to shared experience.⁷ Women played discreet but effective roles in this

⁷ Fath mentions Wemyss’ categorical interpretation of the schism that later took place between the Reformed Church and the Union des Églises Évangéliques de France in 1849, the latter incorporating the revivalist elements of Evangelical Protestantism into an institution independent of the government. Fath underlines that after this schism, two options existed for French Protestant identity: “a Protestantism that placed individual conversion and professing engagement at the heart of its identity and its basis for the Church, and another one (composing the vast majority) that defended the idea of a “Church for all,” teaching a Christian engagement in which multiple rhythms were recognized as legitimate, from revivalist-type conversion to a “passive” attachment, without professed faith or regular practice.” (Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau*, 124.) Original text: “un protestantisme qui place le cœur de son identité sur la conversion individuelle et l’engagement professant, à la base de l’Église, et un autre (alors ultra-majoritaire) qui défend l’idée d’une ‘Église pour tous’, pédagogue d’un engagement chrétien où de multiples rythmes sont légitimes, de la conversion de type revivaliste au rattachement ‘passif,’ sans foi professée ni pratique régulière.”

subversion of French Protestant identity throughout history.

From the Reformation until well into the nineteenth century, France was not ever a safe motherland for her Protestants. Huguenot poet Agrippa d'Aubigné, writing in the sixteenth century, painted France as an afflicted mother whose breasts became the battlefield for her warring twins. "Mother France" was not able to protect the vulnerable "twin" — the Protestant church — which, although inferior numerically, showed its resilience by enduring centuries of hardship and persecution. The long centuries of repression prepared nineteenth century Protestants for the coming of the *Réveil* so that they recognized its message and its practices, and the hope it offered as something familiar. The furrows of fervent piety — prayer, Scripture reading, the role of the Holy Spirit, help for the suffering — had already been plowed in the Huguenot faith.

This chapter will track the influence of women in the predecessor movements of the *Réveil* in Huguenot history. In the first part, I will show how many of the features of the *Réveil* are rooted in anterior experience: the Huguenot legacy of persecution, the role of women, the burden of illegitimacy, the internationalist identity of French Protestantism, and the embedded seeds of intense faith. These themes serve as interpretive lenses for understanding the

Réveil as a natural outgrowth of French Protestant history rather than as a foreign implant. Without them, one risks interpreting the French chapter of the Evangelical Revival as the fruit of foreign missionary intervention, thus making it a footnote to the Anglophone movement and robbing it of its rich Francophone legacy. The second part will show how the social, political, and economic context of the early nineteenth century created ideal conditions for the advent of the *Réveil*. The third section will trace the coming of the *Réveil* through its predecessor movements. A final part will analyze the Methodist contribution to the *Réveil*. Throughout the chapter, I will show how the leadership of women contributed to the renewal of faith by fueling the spread of revivalist piety among the popular classes and by subverting established authority structures.

Understanding the *Réveil* in Light of Huguenot History⁸

The history of Huguenot suffering serves as a precursor to the *Réveil* because struggle is the soil out of which revivals grow.⁹ Starting in the 1530s,

⁸ Some of the text in this section is excerpted from M. Sigg, "From 'Church of the Desert' to Missionary Movement: The Protestant Church in France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (a paper written for Modern Church History, Dr. Christopher Evans, Fall 2013).

⁹ This assertion is based on Wallace's revitalization theory. The revitalization process includes the following stages: 1) steady state; 2) increased individual stress; 3) cultural distortion; 4) revitalization; 5) new steady state. Stage 2 and 3 are the "struggle" states that I am referring to.

officially sanctioned persecution forced Jean Calvin and other Protestant minded theologians to seek safety in nearby Switzerland, which was already the refuge of French reformer Guillaume Farel.¹⁰ Close ties with Geneva sustained the French Reformed churches in their development, under the pressures of religious war and persecution, over the next several centuries.¹¹ The Reformation was well received in Alsace where reformer Martin Bucer played a prominent role in the growth of Alsatian Protestantism. He also influenced Calvin who worked among

Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, vol. 58, no. 2 (April 1956): 268-275.

¹⁰ Repression started as a royal response to the "Affair des Placards" [posters incident]. See Carlos M. N. Eire, *War against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 189-193. On Calvin and Farel, see Bruce Gordon, *Calvin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011); Jason Zuidema and Theodore Van Raalte, *Early French Reform: The Theology and Spirituality of Guillaume Farel* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011); Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); Note: I intentionally use Calvin's French first name, Jean, instead of the English version, John, to underline his French identity. English-speaking theologians and historians tend to appropriate him and perhaps too easily forget his heritage and historical legacy. Anglicizing his name contributes to the weak coverage or absence of the French Protestant narrative in global studies of the church. Their contribution fades into oblivion because Huguenots were assimilated everywhere they settled. This has diminished the singular contribution Huguenot history and spirituality has made to global Christianity.

¹¹ Robert Kingdon shows how Geneva, in particular Theodore Beza, was an ongoing influence in the formation and growth of the Reformed Church in France. He also highlights the role of Genevan pastors during the wars of religion in the sixteenth century. Robert M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1572: A Contribution to the History of Congregationalism, Presbyterianism and Calvinist Resistance Theory* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1967). From Geneva, Calvin maintained epistolary ties with many important figures of the nobility in France such as Marguerite de Navarre who was an important political ally for the Reformed movement in France. He also dedicated his *Institutes* to Francis I in a letter that contained a deeply felt appeal for his persecuted countrymen in France. Gordon, *Calvin*, 58, 194.

French Reformed Protestants in Strasburg for two years.¹²

A Legacy of Persecution

After thirty years of religious wars between Protestants and Catholics, an edict of tolerance, the Edict of Nantes, promulgated by Henri IV (a former Protestant) in 1598, provided a peaceful interlude for Huguenots until his assassination in 1610.¹³ Repression resumed and increased steadily under Louis XIV during the seventeenth century. Then, with the Edict of Fontainebleau, Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, thus stripping Protestants of their civil rights and outlawing Protestant worship. This period, known in Huguenot history as “*le Désert*” [the Desert], lasted over one hundred years until the Edict of Tolerance of 1787. *Le Désert* denotes not only a time period—the eighteenth century—but also a geographical location—the Languedoc and the rugged Cévennes mountains in the south of France—as that was where most remaining French Protestants still lived.

¹² Eire, *War against the Idols*, 89.

¹³ See Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) and *The Reformation and Wars of Religion in France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Louis XIV sent his dragoons to occupy Protestant villages in the south where the resistance was greatest. The king's soldiers raided secret assemblies and used intimidation, molestation, vandalism, torture, or the threat of the galleys or imprisonment to sniff out "illegal" activities such as religious instruction or worship services. The misery they caused and the terror they inspired caused many Huguenots to abjure their faith and become "*nouveaux convertis*" [new converts to Catholicism].

But many resisted. Secret assemblies took place in hidden places in the countryside or in caves within ten days of the Revocation. In the Languedoc, in southern France, where Protestants were in the majority, one such assembly gathered in a mountain forest near Anduze to sing the Psalms that had been outlawed several years previously.¹⁴

The Reformed Church, bereft of its shepherds, drew its strength from the theology of the priesthood of all believers, a theological concept foreign to the Catholic Church.¹⁵ Now, lay leadership rose up from the grassroots to fill the

¹⁴ The Languedoc is a historically Protestant region in the south of France that includes the departments of the Gard (Cévennes mountains), the Hérault, the Aude, the Lozère, and the eastern Pyrénées. It was also the region of the Cathars and the Waldensians (though the latter also itinerated further east, on the other bank of the Rhône). It continues to be the region with the most vibrant Protestant presence today.

¹⁵ The Reformed Church emphasized church order—Calvin devoted Book 4 of his *Institutes* to questions related to church polity, structure, and discipline. However, in the

void: *colporteurs* [peddlers] secretly brought sermons and letters from exiled pastors, texts that were read to the faithful by the *prédicants*. Even as Huguenots mourned their destroyed *temples* [churches], the wilderness became their temple as they organized secret assemblies in deserted places and in the many grottoes and caves in the Cévennes mountains.¹⁶ More than sixty *prédicants* served in the “desert” of southern France between 1687 and 1700 in the Bas Languedoc and the Cévennes.¹⁷ Over a century later, lay leadership was also important in the spread of the *Réveil*. Evangelists crossed over from Switzerland to preach revival in many of the same mountainous regions in the East and women distributed Bibles

eighteenth century, the church was forced to demonstrate great flexibility under the pressures of persecution. The underground church, being in survival mode, had to make do with the teaching, liturgy, and music that was secretly available. Availability of resources varied according to regions and to the level of official surveillance. Cyril Eastwood’s classic study on the priesthood of all believers underlines that “The Sacrifice of Christ and the Priesthood of all Believers are combined for ever in the mystery of the Holy Communion.” While the early Church Fathers gave this doctrine a “central place,” the evolution of beliefs about priesthood and sacrifice eliminated the idea of universal priesthood and gave “all authority” to the bishop in the later centuries. Starting with Luther and the Reformation theologians, this theological concept once again gained prominence, but in the Protestant tradition. Eastwood traces the history of universal priesthood from Luther through Calvin, Anglicanism, Puritan theology, and Methodism. C. Cyril Eastwood, *The Priesthood of All Believers: An Examination of the Doctrine from the Reformation to the Present Day* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), vii, xi, xii. Article 31 of the French Reformed Confession of La Rochelle, dated 1559, made provisions for the lack of ordained pastors.

¹⁶ The Huguenots used the term *temples* to distinguish their churches from the Catholic ones that were called *églises* [churches]. Jeannine Evelyn Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 169.

¹⁷ Georgia Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy and Clandestine Worship in the Eighteenth Century: “the Sacred Theatre of the Cévennes”* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005), 39-41.

to the local population and held Bible studies.

The Role of Women in the Reformed Faith

From the beginning of the Reformation in France, Protestant women among the nobility played key roles in encouraging or protecting the beleaguered Huguenots. Marguerite d'Angoulême (1492-1549), queen of Navarre, though remaining a Catholic, provided patronage to "men of evangelical bent" and, to some extent, political protection thanks to her family relationship to King Francis I.¹⁸ Marguerite and her daughter Jeanne d'Albret (1528-1572) who embraced the Huguenot faith, were strong protectors of the Protestant cause in France along with Renée de France (1510-1575).¹⁹ In Geneva, Marie Dentière (1495-1561) exhorted her female audience to "transgress the artificial boundaries set up by humankind" — that is, to rise up and help lead the church in its urgent situation.²⁰

¹⁸ Marguerite was the king's sister. She wrote a literary work entitled *Mirror of the Christian Soul* that Queen Elizabeth of England had translated into English. Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 64-65.

¹⁹ Kirsi Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 150.

²⁰ Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation*, 134. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge underline the complexity of male-female dynamics in the early modern period and the lively debates concerning the "woman question" and "the war between the sexes." There were frequent and persistent clashes between the views of men and women as times evolved and the negative

What was Calvin's position on the position of women in the church and in society? Even though, from 1541 on, Geneva offered free public education for children—primary and secondary education for boys but only primary school for girls—it is not possible to document whether or not Calvin advocated for the education of women.²¹ The Protestant Reformation had restored dignity to marriage, making it equivalent to celibacy in the life of faith.²² While Calvin fought for equality for men and women in divorce laws, he believed that because of the order of creation and the role of Eve in the Fall, women should be subordinate to men and were never allowed to exercise public teaching roles over men.²³ However, Calvin believed that the only appropriate public office for

images of women from the past were called into question. (This was the *querelle des femmes* [women's quarrel]). These debates were taking place not only in France but all over Europe. They impacted Catholic and Protestant women differently because they "approached culture and learning in distinctive ways that affected their relations to the family and the community." Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, eds., "Introduction" in *A History of Women in the West, Volume III: Renaissance and the Enlightenment Paradoxes* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), 1-2.

²¹ John Lee Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah: Women in Regular and Exceptional Roles in the Exegesis of Calvin, His Predecessors, and His Contemporaries* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1992), 5.

²² Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah*, 7. That is, neither state was considered "more holy" than the other.

²³ Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah*, 9, 16,17, 227. In marriage, Calvin believed women were meant to serve as companions for their husbands in addition to their roles as childbearers; Women's public leadership was only allowed in situations of "extraordinary calling" (like the prophetess Deborah) or disorder (when there were no male leaders) [227]; It is not clear, however, what Calvin thought of Katherine Schutz Zell's pastoral role in Strasburg.

women was to care for the poor—one of the two roles in his theory of the “double diaconate”—the other role, only open to men, being to administer the diaconate.²⁴ Calvin regretted the absence of deaconesses in Geneva.²⁵ The Reformation understanding of the role of deacon restored the Early Church role of caring for the poor.²⁶ Women were allowed to join the diaconate but there was no separate office of deaconesses in Geneva, let alone France.²⁷

John Lee Thompson points out that scholars disagree over whether Calvin was egalitarian or hierarchical in his presentation of women but he believes that Calvin was “firmly traditional,” lacking any trace of radical “proto-feminism” that Jane Dempsey Douglass seems to detect in his theology.²⁸ Calvin’s traditional stance included his understanding that woman was created in the image of God but “in a secondary degree”—an interpretation that incorporated I

Jane Dempsey Douglass, *Women, Freedom, and Calvin* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1985), 92-93.

²⁴ Jeannine Evelyn Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 127.

²⁵ Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries*, 127.

²⁶ Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries*, 133.

²⁷ Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries*, 166-167.

²⁸ Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah*, 18, 104-105; Douglass, *Women, Freedom, and Calvin*.

Corinthians 11:7 with his view of the image of God.²⁹ Douglass' more optimistic analysis leaves Calvin's position on women's leadership in the church open to change in different contexts or time periods.³⁰

Protestantism: An Illegitimate Religion

French Protestants never enjoyed the political sanction of the monarchy, in spite of the strong early support for Protestantism among the nobility in the sixteenth century.³¹ By the time of the White Terror in 1815, they had lived in fear as an illegitimate, repressed, yet resilient religious minority, for close to three hundred years. Francis I (ruled 1515-1547) had the backing of the Catholic Church and he saw no political gain in making concessions to Protestants. Even Henri IV (ruled 1589-1610), a Protestant by upbringing, decided that in order to prevent a civil war he had to convert to Catholicism when he became king. His

²⁹ Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah*, 102.

³⁰ Douglass, *Women, Freedom, and Calvin*, 63, 88, 106. This is the concept of *adiaphora*—things the church should be open to changing. Her optimistic interpretation is based, in part, on Calvin's sanction of the rule of queens and on his view that women's silence in the church is a matter of human governance.

³¹ The one exception to this was King Henri IV, a Protestant who converted to Catholicism to save the country from civil war.

promulgation of religious toleration in the Edict of Nantes of 1598, only stopped the religious wars and gave Protestants a short reprieve until 1610. Louis XIV (ruled 1643-1715) systematically led a campaign of repression and extermination against the “*Religion Prétendue Réformée*” or RPR [the Supposedly Reformed Religion] during his long reign.³² After his death and virtually up to the Revolution, persecution continued as Protestant men were condemned to a life of slavery in the galleys and women to life imprisonment in the *Tour de Constance* [Tower of Constance] when captured by the king’s agents. In the galley ships, each man was chained to his bench for life and lived there in filth and misery in a space measuring five feet by ten feet, shared with four companions.

By the 1770s, three thousand men had endured this fate, in spite of pressure from foreign sovereigns on the French monarchy to release them.³³ Jean Bion, a Catholic chaplain on the galley “*La Superbe*,” was so deeply moved by the suffering of the Huguenots and the constancy of their faith that he converted

³² Alsace followed a religious and political trajectory distinct from France because of its proximity to Germany. The region changed hands several times, sometimes being under the rule of France, sometimes Germany. The particular Lutheran tradition in Alsace, under the leadership of Martin Bucer, also created a different Protestant experience from that of the French Reformed Church.

³³ Treasure, *The Huguenots*, illustration 42 of a register of Huguenot galley slaves; Renée-Paule Guillot, “Jean Marteilhe, forçat de la foi,” *Historia: Les guerres de religion* 465 H.S. (Sept. 1985): 106-108.

to Protestantism. He emigrated to England where he published a poignant account of their travails entitled *Relation des tourments qu'on fait souffrir aux Protestants qui sont sur les galères de France* [Account of the torments that Protestants are made to suffer in the galley ships of France], disseminated by a local French printer in 1708.³⁴ At the time of the *Réveil*, Protestant clergy in England also stepped in to defend the Protestants who suffered persecution under the White Terror in 1815 (see more below).

Huguenot women played a significant role in maintaining the faith of their covert religion and persevering in the face of persecution. Wives and mothers took responsibility for nurturing their family's faith when the men were either away fighting or in prison. One prisoner of the *Tour de Constance* whose story became an emblem of faithful endurance was Marie Durand, who was imprisoned in 1730 at the age of nineteen in the stone fortress where she remained for thirty-eight years. Marie Durand was the epitome of the strong Huguenot woman who, being endowed with a higher level of education and culture and a sharp critical outlook, was very different from her Catholic counterparts.³⁵ She was freed one year before the last prisoners were released

³⁴ Treasure, *The Huguenots*, illustration 41.

³⁵ Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *L'homme protestant* (Paris: Hachette, 1980), 151.

from the *Tour de Constance* in 1769.³⁶

Also, in the early nineteenth century, women were the first to create associations for the distribution of the Bible. Leading female figures such as Émilie Mallet, Albertine de Broglie, and Mme. de Krudener contributed to the spread of revival piety through their writing and during their travels—much like the itinerant evangelists of the *Désert* or later missionaries in Lesotho.

The Forced Internationalism of French Protestantism

From 1534 on, France lost many prominent citizens who chose to live in exile rather than suffer persecution at home.³⁷ The repressive circumstances in France displaced the “operational heart” of French Protestantism, creating multiple centers—in Geneva, London, Rotterdam, and Strasbourg, among others—that contributed richly to the Reformation legacy.³⁸ Geneva exerted a

³⁶ Daniel Ligou and Philippe Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1900)” in *Histoire des Protestants en France* (Toulouse: Edouard Privat Editeur, 1977), 229-230.

³⁷ After the Revocation, the emigration of 200,000 Protestants had long-lasting effects on the economic fabric of the country. Towns such as Dijon, Tours, Nîmes, and Rouen witnessed the exodus of more than half of their skilled workers. Lyon lost 9,000 of its 12,000 silk workers. Treasure, *The Huguenots*, 367. Note: Countries of the Huguenot Refuge include Holland, Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Canada, and the United States

³⁸ There is a rich bibliography of books on the Huguenot exiles in various countries. Among these are: Ole Peter Grell, *Calvinist Exiles in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Routledge,

privileged influence on the French Reformed Church because of the many theologians in exile who chose Switzerland as their home base—men such as Calvin and Farel—and the many pastors, trained in Swiss seminaries, who returned to support the French church. From these locations, 300 years later, the descendants of this French Protestant legacy abroad returned as agents of revival, to help restore the vibrant piety of the Huguenot faith.

The exodus altered the demographic composition of the Protestants who remained in the country. Forty percent of northern Protestants emigrated, compared with only sixteen percent of southerners. In the Cévennes mountains, where Huguenots were more prevalent and put up the greatest resistance, no more than five percent of the population fled the country. In the years after the Revocation, these southern, rural Protestants expressed their faith with a striking boldness that contrasted with the conformism of urban Protestant nobles and bourgeoisie.³⁹

To support the persecuted church, Huguenot exiles also began producing

2017) and Robin D. Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage: The History and Contribution of the Huguenots in Britain*, 2nd ed. (Brighton: Sussex Academic, 2011).

³⁹ Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 194, 200.

literature that flowed back into France thanks to the work of *colporteurs*.⁴⁰ On account of a concern for the devotional life of the persecuted remainder, one type of literature that developed was that of “liturgies for Christians deprived of their pastor.”⁴¹ The countries where Huguenots settled became known as “*le Refuge Huguenot*” [the Huguenot Refuge]. Persistent persecution forced leading French figures of the Reformation, such as Jean Calvin, to go into exile, in a sort of “long term loan” to their countries of adoption. Therefore, one could say that lines were blurred between French Protestantism at home and abroad, especially as many foreign Protestant communities in Europe shared a personal stake in the future of the French Protestant church.⁴² At the time of the *Réveil*, many Swiss pastors and theologians returned to France, where they took churches and also joined the work of the Paris Mission.⁴³

⁴⁰ Treasure, *The Huguenots*, 377.

⁴¹ Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 202.

⁴² In the 1922 *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, the British authors wrote: “It is sometimes forgotten, too, that from a merely material point of view our country is greatly indebted to French Protestants. These came to England in thousands during the troubled years of the seventeenth century, bringing with them arts and crafts which greatly enriched the industries of this country.” (G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Five Volumes*, vol. 4. [London: The Epworth Press, 1922], 444).

⁴³ Wemyss notes that that most Genevans, in the early nineteenth century, were French descendants. Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 42.

The Seeds of Intense Faith in the Huguenot Experience of Suffering

Persecution not only made Huguenots resilient but it kindled in them a lively faith and a deep devotional life. The Holy Spirit held a powerful place in French Reformation theology, especially in times of persecution.⁴⁴ The emergence of prophetism after the Revocation was a manifestation of supernatural phenomena attributed to the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵ It empowered the persecuted Protestants in the South, and the prophets also aided in the war of the *Camisards*.⁴⁶

After the Revocation (1685), when persecution was at its worst, inspiration for southern Huguenots arose from an unexpected source. In February 1688, prophetism began in the small town of Crest, on the left bank of the Rhône river,

⁴⁴ Calvin spoke of the Holy Spirit as the “bond that unites us to Christ,” and one of the three witnesses on earth — “the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit.” Huguenots considered their suffering during the *Désert* as living their faith “under the cross.” Calvin lists “fire” as one of the names of the Holy Spirit, something that the Camisard prophets would have picked up on. Jean Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. Ford Lewis Battles and John T. McNeill (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 3.1.1 and 3.1.3.

⁴⁵ Prophetism was accompanied by supernatural or “miraculous” occurrences. Calvin taught that miracles strengthened the authority of God’s messengers and affirmed the truth of Scripture. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.16.5-6.

⁴⁶ “*Camisards*” means “wearers of shirts” in old Languedocian.

sixty miles from the Italian border, when a shepherdess named Isabeau Vincent began to preach in her sleep.⁴⁷ The phenomenon was dramatic and contagious. Prophets, who were usually peasants or simple country artisans, often children, youth or women, fell down in the grip of seizures, sometimes sobbing, trembling uncontrollably, shivering, and convulsing. They then gave a message in French—which they did not remember later—even though they only spoke the local *patois*. These messages could be deeply moving, could contain specific information (such as the names of informers), or give instructions.⁴⁸

In January 1689, the prophetic epidemic traveled down the Drôme river and crossed the Rhône where it spread like wildfire in the Vivarais region. There the phenomenon reached such a peak that all caution was thrown to the wind as prophets taught that angels would protect the faithful from bullets. The king's soldiers surprised numerous assemblies and massacred many in attendance.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Pierre Jurieu, *The Reflections of the Reverend and Learned Monsieur Jurieu, Upon the Strange and Miraculous Exstasies of Isabel Vincent, the Shepherdess of Saov in Dauphiné: To Which Is Added a Letter of a Gentleman in Dauphiné*, trans. W. Pratt (N.p.: Richard Baldwin, 1689). Jurieu was a Protestant exiled in Rotterdam who was an advocate for the rights of Huguenots. He came in to stiff opposition with another exiled Protestant, Pierre Bayle (also a strong advocate for religious tolerance) for what Jurieu considered heresy—his willingness to extend tolerance to atheists.

⁴⁸ Cosmas, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 81, 96, 97.

⁴⁹ Ligou and Joutard, "Les déserts (1685-1800)," 205-206.

During this period in southern France, there were over 8,000 prophets, including women and children. The authorities soon realized the danger these *inspirés* represented in sustaining a movement they were trying to stamp out, and they threw hundreds of children and adults into prison for their prophecies.⁵⁰

When prophetism reach the Cévennes mountains in 1700, rushing into the void created by the lack of pastors and *prédicants*, it took on a new and violent form.⁵¹ Prophecies often called for repentance and some took an apocalyptic tone with references to the Devil, the Beast, and the False Prophet from the book of Revelation. Some utterances morphed into a call to arms, leading to armed revolts, and eventually to an all-out war.

The short, bloody war of the *Camisards* lasted from 1702 to 1704.⁵² Aware that the *Camisards* had the spiritual and military leadership of prophets in these battles, the king's soldiers often turned tail and ran, unnerved by the *Camisards'* singing of Psalm 68 as they rushed upon them. Needless to say, these victories by the *Camisards* drew the attention of the international community.⁵³

⁵⁰ Cosmas, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 53.

⁵¹ Ligou and Joutard, "Les déserts (1685-1800)," 206.

⁵² Ligou and Joutard, "Les déserts (1685-1800)," 194. The *Camisards* were rural mountain people, about 42% peasants and 58% artisans, most of them in the textile industry.

⁵³ Ligou and Joutard, "Les déserts (1685-1800)," 207-208.

This violent period of the Church of the Desert ended when the *Camisards* laid down their arms after the loss of their major leaders: Rolland was ambushed and killed and Cavalier negotiated his surrender and went into exile in 1704.⁵⁴ Atrocities had been committed on both sides, with whole villages burned by one side or the other, and much of the region was in ruins.

Even though a violent strain continued to run through Protestantism in the Cévennes, this was no longer the defining characteristic of the movement. French prophetism evolved into a different phenomenon when several leading prophets went into exile in England after the conflict ended. In France, in the absence of *prédicants* and *Camisard* leaders, women prophets began to lead small assemblies but the “inspirations” no longer gave exceptional power or insight, nor did they produce supernatural manifestations.⁵⁵ For the rest of the eighteenth century, in France, Protestant resistance was simply endurance.

Antoine Court (1695-1760), a layman who had witnessed both the violence of the *Camisards* and the sometimes questionable prophecies of the *inspirés*, led the Reformed Church in a period of reconstruction. It is thanks to the efforts of

⁵⁴ Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 210.

⁵⁵ Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 210-211.

the leaders of the Church of the Desert at this time that the institution of the Reformed Church survived.⁵⁶ Court recognized the importance of providing theological training for the pastors and *prédicants* who worked in the Bas Languedoc region.⁵⁷ In 1726, he and the other leaders of the Church of the Desert founded a seminary in Lausanne that was eventually nicknamed the “School of Death” because it provided a level of training that was sufficient to risk going to the gallows in France, but not sufficient for service as a pastor in Swiss cities.⁵⁸ A century later, evangelists of the *Réveil* in Geneva also came over from Switzerland to spread the message of revival.

The historical antecedents of the *Réveil* in Huguenot experience as presented above are foundational to an understanding of nineteenth century

⁵⁶ Margaret Maxwell, “The Division in the Ranks of the Protestants in Eighteenth Century France,” *Church History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (June, 1958): 108.

⁵⁷ In 1715, the year of Louis XIV’s death, Court organized the first synod of the Desert, bringing together a small group of about ten people, some of them former *Camisard* leaders, at les Montèzes, near St. Hippolyte-du-Fort. The synod laid down the foundational principles for the rebuilding of the church. These included: 1) the rejection of prophetism and unbridled sermons that only reflected “individual inspiration”; 2) the reestablishment of the consistory of elders (along the lines of the Scottish Kirk session); 3) a stance against violence used for exacting revenge; and 4) a call for obedience to the king, within the limits of one’s conscience. The role of women leaders was also curtailed at this time because prophesying was no longer recognized. Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 211.

⁵⁸ Ligou and Joutard, “Les déserts (1685-1800),” 195.

Protestant history. The primary features of the *Réveil* find their source in the Huguenot past of persecution (revivalists were mistreated), a sense of illegitimacy (groups outside the official churches were unsanctioned), international networks, and ardent faith. Throughout women left their mark. The next section explores the circumstances that directly facilitated the arrival of the *Réveil* in France.

Awaiting Revival: Protestants in the Social, Political, and Economic Context of Early Nineteenth Century France

In the eighteenth century, persecution had kept the faith of the Huguenots alive.⁵⁹ But how did their situation evolve after the Edict of Tolerance (1787)? What was their context in the early decades of the nineteenth century? In Huguenot history, the period from the 1760s on up to the Revolution is called the *Second Désert* [second desert] and it was a relatively quiet period, with no systematic persecutions.⁶⁰ During the French Revolution, Protestants were

⁵⁹ Daniel Benoit, "Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France" in *Revue Chrétienne* 9 (Paris: Bureau de la Revue Chrétienne, 1891).

⁶⁰ Ligou and Joutard, "Les déserts (1685-1800)," 215-216. The *Second Désert* started with the Calas Affair, in which a Jean Calas, a Protestant, was falsely accused of murdering his son for wanting to convert to Catholicism. He was later exonerated.

generally republicans and “good patriots” because it was a ground-breaking event that went beyond the 1787 concession of minimal civil toleration—in contrast, the Revolution granted “all freedom and was concerned to repair some of the wrongs done to Protestants.”⁶¹

The French Revolution did little to change the social and economic situation of the people, and, in fact, left many shattered lives.⁶² The indigent continued to form a major underclass in cities and countryside and starvation was a frequent occurrence. At the end of the eighteenth century, it was not surprising that most Reformed French Christians lived in rural areas, given the areas of resistance (in the rural South) and exile (mostly from the North and the cities). Only the cities of Nîmes and Paris had considerable numbers of Protestants.⁶³ In 1815, France was still profoundly inegalitarian and hierarchical

⁶¹ Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard, *Une histoire des protestants en France XVIe-XXe siècle*. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998), 113, 114-115. Rabaut Saint-Étienne was a noteworthy Protestant during the Revolution because of his contribution to the writing of the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme* [Declaration of the Rights of Man].

⁶² This is the “minimalist” view of the French Revolution, voiced by Roger Price, *An Economic History of Modern France, 1730-1914* (London: Maxmillian, 1975), xi, quoted in Peter McPhee, *A Social History of France, 1780-1880* (London: Routledge, 1992), 93; McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 96. Simon Schama and John Livesey, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London: Royal National Institute of the Blind, 2005).

⁶³ Daniel Robert, *Les églises réformées en France (1800-1830)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), 12.

because the Revolution had only achieved civil equality for citizens before the law.⁶⁴ However, the Revolution had made a profound impact on the clergy and the nobles because the latter lost the general habit of attending church—a trend that reduced the church’s social authority.⁶⁵ The status of women had not improved, though they did retain their right to equal inheritance.⁶⁶ Under the Republic, an “ideology of gender” created a separation between the public sphere reserved for the “new male elite,” and the private sphere, which was the domain for women.⁶⁷ Later, Napoleon turned back the clock on women’s rights in divorce law and paternity claims.⁶⁸

In the brief interlude of the Terror (1793-1794) that followed the Revolution, Robespierre launched a campaign of de-christianization that deprived the Catholic Church of its religious and civil authority and allowed the government to confiscate all its property. While Huguenots were not direct

⁶⁴ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 95-96. In practice, powerful, rich, and male citizens lorded it over weaker citizens, including women, who had little to no recourse.

⁶⁵ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 106.

⁶⁶ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 96, 108-109.

⁶⁷ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 109-110.

⁶⁸ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 95-96.

targets of religious intolerance during the French Revolution and the Terror, the Reformed Church nevertheless emerged from this period weakened and having lost a sense of vision. After the Terror, when most Protestant pastors had chosen to discontinue their worship services to avoid trouble, churches were slow to re-open, some taking until 1795.⁶⁹ The de-christianization campaign led to the abdication of 98 pastors from a group of 215 pastors in 1793. Some of them did so only temporarily in order to safeguard their parishes, some did it out of obedience to the law, and some did it because they were influenced by the official worship of the Supreme Being (the personalization of Reason), instituted at the Revolution. Rationalism continued to take its toll on the faith of Protestant parishes and pastors: there had been 185 pastors in 1789, but in 1801 there were only 135.⁷⁰

The *Directoire* ("Directorate") was a weak and unpopular parliamentary regime that governed France from October 1795 to November 1799, when Napoleon seized power and established the Consulate. Under the *Directoire*, the

⁶⁹ André Encrevé, "Les protestants et la Révolution française" in *Réforme et Révolutions: Aux origines de la démocratie moderne*: 101-128, ed. Paul Viallaneix (Paris: Réforme/Presses du Languedoc, 1990), 125.

⁷⁰ Encrevé, "Les protestants et la Révolution française," 121, 122, 126.

religious situation was highly problematic for the political leaders who feared fanaticism and the loss of public order: less than half of all Catholic parishes had priests, and many of the clergy, still in exile, were embittered by political developments and the church's loss of social authority.⁷¹ To help stabilize the situation, the *Directoire* allowed the churches closed under the Terror (1793-1794) to reopen and for their priests to return. A populist Catholicism was on the rise and women returned to the church in greater numbers than men. As women viewed the clergy with mistrust and would no longer wait for the return of the *émigré* priests, they played leading roles in this populist religiosity: lay people held Mass and midwives baptized babies.⁷²

In the late eighteenth century, Reformed pastors experienced a decrease in their piety when persecution ended because persecution itself had served as a catalyst for their faith.⁷³ In addition, after a brief time in which Reformed Protestants came together politically, based on the 1789 principles of religious freedom and civil equality, they soon experienced sharp divisions in their ranks

⁷¹ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 74-75.

⁷² McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 75-76.

⁷³ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 18. The increasing nominalism would have affected the traditional Reformed pastors, not those affected by early Moravian influences (more often living in the Midi).

over differences in social, political, and religious outlook.⁷⁴

In 1795, lingering anger from the Revolution and discontent from unpopular *Directoire* policies manifested itself in the Midi [the South] as “white terror” gangs targeted Jacobins who were often Protestants.⁷⁵ By 1798, France’s economy was a disaster and there was widespread political instability. When Napoleon returned, triumphant, from his foreign campaigns and staged a military coup in 1799, the country welcomed his strong-armed control. He stabilized the country and provided for the most urgent needs of the people within two years.⁷⁶

The Edict of Versailles, otherwise known as the Edict of Toleration of 1787, signed by Louis XVI, had legally recognized Protestants by allowing them to regularize their marriages in non-religious weddings, and to register their births and deaths.⁷⁷ In 1789, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens

⁷⁴ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 23-24.

⁷⁵ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 77. Jacobins were “the most famous political group of the French Revolution, which became identified with extreme egalitarianism and violence and which led the Revolutionary government from mid-1793 to mid-1794.” Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, s.v. “Jacobin Club,” accessed January 15, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Jacobin-Club>.

⁷⁶ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 81.

⁷⁷ This move by Louis XVI was a response to pressure by notables and jurists, both French and foreign, to ease the repression of the Protestant minority. La Fayette, in particular,

had opened the door for religious freedom. However, the most important political development for French Protestants at this time was Napoleon's *Loi du 18 germinal an X* [the Law of April 8, 1802] that contained the *Articles Organiques des Cultes Protestants* [Organic Articles pertaining to Protestant Worship].⁷⁸ The Organic Articles laid out legislation that clearly defined the limits of the freedom of religion granted to Protestants. It also limited the way the Reformed Church functioned as an institution, placing it entirely under government control. The Organic Articles contained several sections or "titles," the first of which laid out general guidelines for pastors. Here are a few significant articles in this section:

Art. I. No one may exercise the functions of the worship service, unless he is French.

II. Neither Protestant churches nor their ministers may have relations with any foreign power or authority.

IV. No doctrinal or dogmatic decision, no formula, under the title of *confession* or any other title, can be published or used as teaching material, before the Government has authorized its publication or promulgation.

VII. The salaries of pastors of consistorial churches will be provided, with the understanding that the goods of the churches will be taken into account as well as the product of the offerings established by usage or by regulations.⁷⁹

had advocated for freedom for French Protestant churches after his return from the American war of independence in 1785.

⁷⁸ "18 *germinal an X*," translated the eighteenth of Germinal, year 10, was the new date notation in the French Republican calendar that started shortly after the 1789 Revolution.

⁷⁹ Original text: "ART. I.^{er} Nul ne pourra exercer les fonctions du culte, s'il n'est Français.

Thus, according to the Articles, the government restricted the development of any new theologies and proscribed relations with foreign church entities. Pastors could only be French, were salaried by the state, and were mandated to pray for the “French Republic and the Consuls” (Art. III). This limitation of the pastoral function to French citizens later contributed to a narrow definition of French Protestantism among the opponents of the *Réveil*.⁸⁰

Title II, Section I laid out the general organization of the churches. Section II stipulated the composition and specific ways in which consistories and pastors functioned, which the state strictly controlled. No church could expand beyond the borders of its own *département* (Art. XXVIII). Section III defined the functions

II. Les églises protestantes, ni leurs ministres, ne pourront avoir des relations avec aucune puissance ni autorité étrangère.

III. Les pasteurs et ministres des diverses communions protestantes prieront et feront prier, dans la récitation de leurs offices, pour la prospérité de la République française et pour les Consuls.

IV. Aucune décision doctrinale ou dogmatique, aucun formulaire, sous le titre de confession ou sous tout autre titre, ne pourront être publiés ou devenir la matière de l'enseignement, avant que le Gouvernement en ait autorisé la publication ou promulgation.

VII. Il sera pourvu au traitement des pasteurs des églises consistoriales, bien entendu qu'on imputera sur ce traitement les biens que ces églises possèdent, et le produit des oblations établies par l'usage ou par des règlements. “

Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, appendix to chapter 3, 78-79.

⁸⁰ Robert does not comment on the prohibition in Article 2 of foreign relations between churches, pastors and “foreign authorities.” Was this simply Bonaparte’s way to protect himself against foreign incursions or possible espionage during a time when he was actively involved in his European campaigns? Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 78. Robert only comments that church elders were sometimes foreigners (the language did not specify whether Article 1 applied to elders or not) and the government only reacted when official complaints were filed.

of synods, which were only allowed to assemble with government permission. This was a blow to the Reformed Church because, without synods, there was no venue where the larger conversation about church affairs and Protestant religious identity could take place. Each individual parish was isolated, a factor that could only exacerbate the political divisiveness of the time.⁸¹ The Organic Articles recognized the 6,000 Reformed and Lutheran churches that were termed “consistorial churches” or “*églises concordataires*” and eliminated regular synods, allowing only those authorized by the government upon request. Robert called these “ghost synods—that is, non-existent.”⁸²

The Organic Articles affected the status of pastors and consistories of the Augsburg Confession in essentially the same way, which was a very new organization model in Alsace. However, it generally conformed to the tradition of Lutheran churches in the sixteenth century. So the changes prompted by the Organic Articles could be considered either an overturning or a preservation of

⁸¹ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 22.

⁸² Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 71. Robert believes that there was lip service permission for synods every two years but that this was for what he called “ghost synods.” He thinks the government was trying to make sure this permission didn’t cause Catholics to clamor for the right to meet together—something they wished to prevent (73). The term *concordataire* refers to the *Concordat* or agreement between Napoleon and the pope that undergirded the Organic Articles.

historic Lutheran church practices, depending on one's perspective.⁸³

Protestant response to the Organic Articles

Protestant reaction to the Organic Articles was generally quite positive, as both Reformed and Lutherans were grateful for the religious freedom and civil equality granted by the state but also anchored in an official agreement, the *Concordat*, with the pope. Lutherans gave the Articles a particularly joyful reception.⁸⁴ However, the fact that pastors were now salaried by the state contributed to a further deadening of Protestant piety and to the *embourgeoisement* [gentrification] of the pastors.⁸⁵

In contrast, independence from the state was one of the principal characteristics of Evangelical Protestantism in nineteenth century France. One reaction to the Organic Articles came from Rev. Charles Cook, Wesleyan missionary to France and pastor in the Midi for forty years. Cook began the biography of his wife, Julie Marzials, stating that "She was born at a time [1804]

⁸³ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 82-83. The changes were entirely new for the Reformed churches, by contrast, and broke with tradition.

⁸⁴ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 76.

⁸⁵ Robert, *Les églises réformées en France*, 249.

when the Reformed Church, of which her father was a pastor, was in a sad state of decadence, of which it had just given sign and seal by joyfully accepting the enslavement offered by the law, called organic, of 18 Germinal, year X."⁸⁶ By thus placing his wife's birth under what he considered "the pall" of the Organic Articles and the "enslavement" they caused by putting pastors on the payroll of the state, Cook was clearly distancing himself, along with all French revival-minded pastors, from this perceived subservience.

The White Terror of 1815: Old Religious Animoshities in a New Political Context

In spite of these advances in religious freedom, French Protestants were still not safe, especially with the rise of extremist politico-religious factions bent on exacting revenge for recent events, all in a highly charged political context. In November of 1815, a pamphlet publicizing events that took place between July and November of 1815 in the southern Huguenot heartlands was distributed in Paris and promptly suppressed.⁸⁷ It contained a "Petition addressed to Lewis

⁸⁶ Charles Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marziats, 1804-1844, fragments inédits de la biographie par son mari, Charles Cook: publiés et complétés par Matth. Lelièvre* (Paris: Delessert, 1907), 5.

⁸⁷ The text of the petition appeared in a 150-page pamphlet published by the Rev. I. Cobbin in 1815 entitled *Statements of the Persecution of the Protestants in the South of France since the*

XVIII by the Principal Protestants of Nismes” that summed up one of many atrocities in a four-month rampage called the White Terror.⁸⁸

Paris, July 30, 1815

Sire,

We lay our acute miseries at the foot of your throne: in your name, in the name of the most clement of princes, our fellow-citizens are plundered and assassinated. (...) When the armed peasantry entered our walls, they attacked the garrison, consisting of 150 men, quartered in the barracks; upon being summoned to surrender, they capitulated, and delivered up their arms and artillery; but they were assailed on their departure, and nearly all massacred.⁸⁹

This massacre marked the start of the White Terror in the *département* of the Gard, a rampage during which hundreds of Protestants were killed, tortured, plundered, or forced to flee.⁹⁰

The White Terror serves as a window into the religious and political

Restoration of the Bourbon Family, 2nd ed. (London: Ogles, Duncan, and Cochran, 1815), vii. Cobbin explained in his introductory “Advertisement” that he was given all the documents “translated and printed” with only a few days to write his preface (v).

⁸⁸ This period, from July to November 1815, had the most numerous and widespread attacks. However, violence against Protestants in the Gard started before July 1815 and continued well beyond 1815, even up to 1819, but as more scattered incidents.

⁸⁹ Cobbin, *Statements of the Persecution*, 1-2.

⁹⁰ The number of victims of the White Terror in the Gard is subject to much debate (Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 75). One letter to the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, dated August 26, 1815, cites the figure of “not less than 3000 victims.” (Cobbin, *Statements of the Persecution*, 73). Historians have quoted figures ranging from 80 to somewhere between 300 and 500, which seem very low when one reads the accounts of the horrific acts committed by uncontrolled mobs.

context of early nineteenth century France. However, it was also a watershed event on the historical timeline of French Protestant experience because it marked the transition from the old Protestantism of the Huguenots to a new Evangelical Protestantism born of the *Réveil*.

Occurring late in a history of protracted religious conflict, the White Terror of 1815 was the last major bloody episode of Huguenot persecution.⁹¹ At the same time, it was a dramatic manifestation of underlying forces striving to combat, by any and all means, the results of the Revolution of 1789.⁹² Chief among these forces were the Ultras, short for the Ultra Royalist party, a group of extremist Catholic royalists who believed that the Revolution was the incarnation of ultimate Evil in the world, and who hated Republicans, Bonapartists, and Calvinists alike. Thus, the centuries-old Catholic animosity against Huguenots was augmented by a renewed fury at the political realities that had developed since 1789.

⁹¹ French Protestants did not enjoy religious freedom until the 1880s under the Third Republic because of lingering official and popular intolerance. See Jean Baubérot, "Le protestantisme français trois cents ans après la révocation de l'Edit de Nantes: Auto-révocation ou nouveau souffle?" *Vingtième Siècle, Revue d'histoire*, no. 6 (Apr.-June: 1985), 41.

⁹² Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 74.

Waterloo: Oil on the Fires of Discontent

Napoleon Bonaparte was defeated for the last time at the Battle of Waterloo, in Belgium, on June 18, 1815. The first Restoration had put Louis XVIII back on the French throne in April 1814, after Napoleon's first abdication. It had lasted less than a year. However, Napoleon's return after escaping exile on Elba was brief, barely 100 days [*les Cent Jours*] between his arrival in Paris on March 20, 1815 and the return of Louis XVIII to Paris on July 8, 1815 (the Second Restoration).

At this time, Protestants were not necessarily Bonapartists to the extent assumed by their enemies. They tended to divide along the lines of social class—the nobles remaining loyal to the crown and the lower class embracing the cause of the emperor.⁹³ However, Napoleon's final defeat and the return of the Bourbon king, Louis XVIII, unleashed the fury of the Ultras against the Protestants in the Gard. The White Terror was, without a doubt, a “punitive expedition carefully prepared and perfectly executed” against Protestants by the Ultras.⁹⁴

⁹³ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 75.

⁹⁴ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 75.

In his impassioned “prefatory address,” editor Rev. Cobbin showed the parallels between the events documented in the pamphlet and the worst episodes of Huguenot persecution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries under Bourbon rule.⁹⁵ For Cobbin, the abovementioned petition illustrated how history was repeating itself in the events of the White Terror.

The International Community was Watching

Starting on November 14, 1815, English newspapers reported the events surrounding the violence in the Gard (that had started at least three months earlier) and the reactions of government and church leadership.⁹⁶ Cobbin’s intent, in publishing these documents for an English-speaking audience, was to raise an international outcry for the plight of Protestants in Nîmes while protecting the identity of the authors. He stated that the publication was not

⁹⁵ Cobbin, *Statements of the Persecution*, x. Cobbin underlined the persistent cover up of Protestant suffering in the seventeenth- eighteenth centuries when Claude’s book, *Complaints of the Protestants of France*, was burned in France, by the Pope and James II (reigned 1685-1688, the last Roman Catholic king of Britain). According to Cobbin, the rest of Europe protested the treatment of the Huguenots.

⁹⁶ *The Times*, November 14, 1815; then more reports on Nov. 20, 22, 24, 29, Dec. 4, 9, 11, 15, and extensive coverage in Jan. 1816. Reference: Robert Phillip Evans, “The Contribution of Foreigners to the French Protestant Reveil,” (Ph.D diss., University of Manchester, 1971), 45n1.

meant to be a political invective or an attack on Catholicism in general, but was meant to shed light on the truth in solidarity with the suffering Protestants.⁹⁷

As the violence continued unchecked in the Gard, a committee of three British denominations tasked Rev. Mark Wilks, an important agent of the *Réveil* and future member of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society executive committee, with writing a full account of the events.⁹⁸ Wilks undertook in-depth research based on a number of sources that he described in the preface:

The Author, who had been requested to arrange for the press the papers in [the Committee's] possession, found himself charged, not only with those materials, but with a vast quantity of additional evidence, furnished by persons of the first respectability, and obtained on a visit to the South of France⁹⁹

The collection of these materials, that included eyewitness accounts, caused some delay in finishing the work. It was only in 1821 that he published *History of the*

⁹⁷ Cobbin, *Statements of the Persecution*, iv-vi. In his "Advertisement" (meaning "public notice" or warning, from the French origin *avertissement*), he mentioned his sources without naming them and stated that he received the pamphlet "already translated and printed" (page v, italics Cobbin's).

⁹⁸ To be precise, this was "the Committee appointed by the General Body of Ministers of the Three Denominations, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, &c." See Mark Wilks, "Preface," *History of the Persecutions Endured by the Protestants of the South of France: And More Especially of the Department of the Gard, during the Years 1814, 1815, 1816, &c. : Including a Defence of Their Conduct, from the Revolution to the Present Period*, vol. 1 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, 1821), iii.

⁹⁹ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, iv.

Persecution Endured by the Protestants of the South of France and More Especially of the Department of the Gard During the Years 1814, 1815, 1816, &c. The book included not only a detailed account of the atrocities perpetrated in Nismes (now spelled Nîmes) and the surrounding villages from 1814-1816 but also an introductory overview of Huguenot sufferings after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.¹⁰⁰ Like Cobbin, Wilks' concern (and that of the denominational committee) was "that the truth be ascertained and established" especially as persecution "formed a striking feature in the history of Protestantism, as well as that of the reformed churches of France."¹⁰¹ He underlined that the truth of the events and the culpability of those responsible was, in fact, being suppressed:

It is no longer possible to deny the reality of the sufferings of the Protestants. The declarations of the French government and of some of the members of the British ministry, as well as the trials of several of the principal agents of the persecuting faction, have rendered doubt both criminal and absurd.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, iv.

¹⁰¹ Wilks' preface (iii-vii) indicated his intent to write an accurate account of the events. This was an important gesture because, from the Reformation on, the Catholic majority in France based much of their case for the persecution of the Huguenots on misinformation and slander. Though a small minority in France—never more than 2% of the population for most of their history—Huguenots had nevertheless held positions of power and influence in government as ministers and in the economy as bankers, entrepreneurs, and explorers. They were therefore the object of widespread envy.

¹⁰² Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, v.

By publicizing the facts about the persecution, Wilks' work became an expression of the solidarity of all European Protestants with the suffering of the French Protestants. This spirit of solidarity was the uniting factor for many of the undertakings and associations that came out of the Revival among Protestants who were French or foreign-born, and whether Lutheran, Reformed, or Methodist.

Wilks' report gave detailed firsthand accounts of the violence committed against the Protestants of the Gard, a people who already had extensive experience of persecution in past centuries. The initial massacre of the National Guard of Nîmes gave the undisciplined hordes and their rabble-rousing leaders free range to exact vengeance on anyone recognized as being Protestant.¹⁰³ The mobs extorted exorbitant amounts of money from those who were well off "in the name of Trestaillon, [their leader] and the king."¹⁰⁴ Wives and daughters were not exempt from these indignities.¹⁰⁵ The accounts of torture, murder, vandalism,

¹⁰³ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, 199-209, 213-214. One sixty-three year old farmhand named Ladet was shot and then burned while still alive. Whole families, like the Chivas, lost husband and father to the savagery of marauding bands who shot, mutilated, tortured, and burned their victims, leaving the corpses exposed while they sat down to eat the food of those they had killed. Businesses were pillaged and destroyed.

¹⁰⁴ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, 217.

¹⁰⁵ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, 247-250. Protestant women were captured while doing laundry, some of them pregnant. Crowds shamefully exposed and flogged them with a

and destruction of property, including that of Protestant *temples* (church buildings), were endless and went on for over 300 pages. Although violence against Protestants continued, according to Wilks' report, in various places until 1820, international pressure caused King Louis XVIII to issue ordinances in November of 1814 and January of 1815 that slowed the attacks and caused the main leaders, Trestaillons and Quatremaillons, to be arrested.¹⁰⁶ However, they were not called to account for their actions at their trials and they both died free men, as did most of those who perpetrated the worst of the violence.

The horrific chapter of the White Terror was but one symptom of the volatile political, social, and economic state of a country besieged by internal divisions, a proud country humiliated and forced to its knees after Napoleon's final defeat. The religious and political tensions that led to the White Terror, along with the deplorable socio-economic conditions of a country sorely strained by years of Napoleonic wars, created the conditions for religious revival.

battoir (board used to beat laundry) in which nails had been embedded in the shape of a *fleur-de-lis* (symbol of the French crown) until their blood flowed. Some women later died of their injuries. The mobs even dug up bodies of recent victims and desecrated them.

¹⁰⁶ Wilks, *History of the Persecutions*, 535ff.

The Coming of the *Réveil*

In 1806, five reformed pastors from the Gard—Bonnard from Marsillargues, Marzials from Saint-Laurent-d’Aigouze (future father-in-law of Methodist missionary Cook at the time), Dilly from Lunel, and Gautier and Gachon from St. Hippolyte—wrote a “touching letter” to the leaders of the Moravian church assembled in Herrnhut.¹⁰⁷ In it, they expressed their joy at having made their acquaintance after suffering isolation for so long.¹⁰⁸ They added that they too were committed to “the true, eternal, and powerful Head who has redeemed his Church by his own blood and promised on their honor to serve him faithfully.”¹⁰⁹ This letter was the first sign of the restored relationship between Moravians and the Reformed Church in France after the troubled period of the Revolution.¹¹⁰ In the wake of this letter, several Moravian missionaries returned to France to renew the Reformed Churches suffering from widespread nominalism, the rise of rationalism, and the lack of strong pastoral leadership.

¹⁰⁷ Daniel Benoit, *Du Caractère Huguenot et Des Transformations de La Piété Protestante* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1892), 57.

¹⁰⁸ Herrnhut was/is a small town in Saxony, near the border of Bohemia, about sixty miles north of Prague.

¹⁰⁹ Benoit, *Du Caractère Huguenot*, 57. The letter is dated June 11, 1806.

¹¹⁰ Benoit, *Du Caractère Huguenot*, 57.

These missionaries—Forestier, Mérillat, and Schafter—along with the few remaining evangelical pastors in France, preached against the dangers of intellectualism and the need to return to the gospel message of redemption.¹¹¹

Roots of the Réveil: The first Moravian Missionaries in France

Moravians had first made contact with the Reformed Church in the 1730s thanks to a series of events that started with a letter from Zinzendorf to his friend, Frédéric de Watteville.¹¹² Zinzendorf, who had just settled in Lausanne, wrote to his friend about French refugees from the Cévennes (French prophets, as will be explained below) whom he had met in Germany and with whom he felt a great affinity:

It was with great pleasure that I saw that there were no longer any of these turbulent spirits in your midst, ready at any moment, to take up arms to fight violence with violence, but that they are led by love and by faith, carefully avoiding their persecutors, but suffering with courage when they have the misfortune of falling into their hands, otherwise living together in great simplicity and a perfect union and

¹¹¹ Benoit, *Du Caractère Huguenot*, 57-58. The evangelical pastors named, in addition to Gachon and Marzials, were Vergé from Saverdun, Soulier from Anduze, Lissignol from Montpellier (a Swiss pietist), and Chabrand from Toulouse.

¹¹² Moravian origins: A Bohemian priest who descended from fifteenth century Hussites led a small group of friends to Lusace where Count Zinzendorf eagerly offered them a refuge in his domain at Herrnhut. Hussites were the followers of Jan Hus, a Bohemian proto-reformer, burned at the stake in 1415. Benoit, *Du Caractère Huguenot*, 57; Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 828.

seeking only to love Jesus Christ in their suffering and to support each other through their inner life.¹¹³

It is clear from his enthusiastic description that Zinzendorf felt that Moravians and French Protestants shared not only a long experience of suffering “under the cross” but also a simplicity of lifestyle, and similar devotional practices.

Overjoyed to hear these details, de Watteville decided he wanted to visit the suffering Protestants in the Cévennes. Finding no better contact, he wrote a letter to Antoine Court dated August 27, 1731 that marked the beginning of the relationship between the Moravian community and the Reformed Church of France.¹¹⁴

In 1737, the first Moravian missionaries who arrived in France were artisans. Among them, Brother Cossart, born in Frankfurt of Protestant refugees,

¹¹³ Original text: “*C’est avec un plaisir extrême que j’ai vu qu’il n’y avait plus, parmi vous, de ces esprits turbulents prêts, à tout moment, à prendre les armes contre leur roi et à réprimer la force par la force, mais qu’ils sont conduits par l’amour et par la foi, évitant avec prudence leurs persécuteurs, mais souffrant avec courage, lorsqu’ils sont assez malheureux pour tomber entre leurs mains, vivant d’ailleurs entre eux dans une grande simplicité et une parfaite union et ne cherchant qu’à aimer Jésus-christ dans les souffrances et à s’entr’aider dans la vie intérieure.*” Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 828-829. Hillel Schwartz documents an encounter between Zinzendorf and these Cévennes exiles which identifies them as French Prophets (see next section). Hillel Schwartz, *The French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in eighteenth Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 182.

¹¹⁴ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 829. Court ultimately proved to be a fierce opponent of Moravian teachings and practices.

traveled throughout the Midi. In 1746, Léonard Knoll undertook a two-year trip through the Languedoc, narrowly escaping the *intendants* (officials charged with hunting down Protestants). Between 1744 and 1754, five other less fortunate brothers of the *Unitas fratrum* were martyred in France for their evangelism.¹¹⁵ Throughout the eighteenth century, a steady stream of Moravian evangelists secretly slipped into France to share in the suffering of the persecuted Protestants. Rev. Samuel Vincent, nineteenth century French theologian and author of *Vues sur the Protestantisme* [Views on Protestantism], described Moravian believers as being “peaceful and harmless people, who did not dogmatize much, who identified religion with love, especially the love of Jesus, who met in small groups, quietly, without pretense, proselytizing in a very gentle and moderate way.”¹¹⁶

In spite of this gentle approach, Moravian theology was not always well received. One pastor from Bordeaux, Etienne Gibert, was defrocked by his consistory, for the crime of “*Moravianism*.”¹¹⁷ When Brother Weitnauer was

¹¹⁵ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 831-832. *Unitas fratrem* is the name for the Bohemian Brethren or Moravians.

¹¹⁶ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 827.

¹¹⁷ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 836. Italics are Benoit’s.

confronted by Pastor Jean-Pierre Lafon, as to the purpose of his travels, the exchange went this way:

(Weitnauer): [The purpose of my trip] is to meet people who are concerned about their salvation and who are seeking rest for their souls by redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

(Lafon): When you find such souls, is your goal to sanctify them, to instruct them and to exhort them?

(Weitnauer): Sanctifying is the work of the Holy Spirit, instruction and exhortation—that is the function of pastors. What I seek is to join with these souls on the foundation of the faith, which is redemption fulfilled by Jesus Christ, and the Lord deigns to impart to these simple exchanges his blessing and his peace. He blesses them so much with his presence that our hearts burn within us like the disciples on the road to Emmaus.¹¹⁸

Lafon then went on to criticize the Moravians' neglect of God the Father in their worship service. He was obviously uninterested in the Moravian emotional faith response, which was the most frequent criticism of their faith practices and later,

¹¹⁸ Original text: “[Weitnauer]: [Le but de mon voyage] est de faire connaissance avec des personnes qui ont leur salut à cœur et qui cherchent du repos pour leurs âmes dans la rédemption par le sang de Jésus-Christ.

[Lafon] Quand vous trouvez de telles âmes, votre but est-il de les sanctifier, de les instruire et de les exhorter ?

[Weitnauer] Sanctifier est l'ouvrage du Saint-Esprit, instruire et exhorter c'est la fonction des pasteurs. Ce que je cherche, c'est de me lier avec ces âmes sur le fondement de la foi qui est la rédemption opérée par Jésus-Christ, et le Seigneur daigne accompagner nos simples entretiens de sa bénédiction et de sa paix. Il les favorise tellement de sa présence qu'on a le cœur embrasé comme les disciples qui allaient à Emmaüs.” Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 839-840.

of those of the *Réveil*.

Pastor Paul Rabaut, who helped to draft the Edict of Tolerance of 1787, also met Moravian evangelists who inspired his interest in the “religion of the heart” once they had thoroughly explained it to him.¹¹⁹ The young pastor Gachon (d. 1738), perhaps the grandfather or great-grandfather of the Gachon of the 1806 letter mentioned above, was an early proponent of the “Moravian method.” This approach that grouped people into small societies inspired many conversions in St. Hippolyte and Mazères, making Gachon a precursor of the *Réveil*.¹²⁰

Deeper Roots of the Réveil: The French Prophets

The French Protestants from the Cévennes (mentioned above) who had so impressed Zinzendorf in Germany, belonged to a millenarian group that had emerged from a movement of prophetism in southern France starting in 1688.¹²¹ They left a long trail of influence throughout the Huguenot strongholds in Europe, though not among the Huguenots themselves, who rejected them for

¹¹⁹ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 838.

¹²⁰ Benoit, “Les premiers missionnaires moraves en France,” 846.

¹²¹ It was in 1688 that the first prophetess, Isabeau Vincent, received the gift of prophecy. See the section “Understanding the *Réveil* in Light of Huguenot History” for the historical background of the movement in southern France.

their apparent extremism.

The enthusiasm of the *inspirés* began to spread beyond the borders of France in 1706 when three prophets relocated to London. They were Elie Marion, Durant Fage, and Jean Cavalier.¹²² Unfortunately, the French Prophets received a violently hostile reception from the local Huguenot refugees—50,000 of them—who were already deeply divided, half being Calvinists, half conformists. But all disassociated themselves from the religious enthusiasm of the prophets.¹²³

A Text to Connect the Réveil and the Prophets

In late 1706, a Huguenot nobleman, François-Maximilien Misson, met with the French Prophets in London and was impressed by their testimony. He collected eyewitness accounts of prophetic events in the Cévennes from Huguenot refugees, as well as the stories of the three prophets. The result was a book entitled *Le théâtre sacré des Cévennes; ou, récit de diverses merveilles nouvellement opérées* [The sacred theater of the Cevennes; or, an account of the various wonders that have recently happened] published in April of 1707. It was

¹²² Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 72. N.B. This “Jean Cavalier” was not the same as the famous Camisard leader who was exiled as settlement of the Camisard war.

¹²³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 54-55.

immediately translated into English as *A Cry from the Desert*, by John Lacy, who reportedly received his prophetic gifts the day he handed in the translation manuscript on March 1, 1707.¹²⁴ The text of *Le théâtre sacré* expressed the ethos of the French Prophets -- especially their experience of the *Désert* of which it was a reminder.¹²⁵

This text later played a role in connecting the “Holy Spirit enthusiasm” of the Protestant past and the emotional response of the *Réveil*. In 1847, Ami Bost, a Swiss Pietist and evangelist of the *Réveil*, re-published *Le théâtre sacré* under the title *Les prophètes protestants* [The Protestant Prophets] in a new edition for which he wrote notes and a preface. This re-publication spoke to the affinity between the beliefs and praxis of the French Prophets and those of nineteenth century proponents of the *Réveil*. Bost’s desire, in publishing this document, was to rehabilitate the French Prophets who, he believed, had been misrepresented as violent and bloodthirsty fanatics by writers incapable of understanding them.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 79.

¹²⁵ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 107, 189.

¹²⁶ Ami Bost, editor’s preface, in François Maximilien Misson, *Les prophètes protestants; Réimpression de l’ouvrage intitulé Le théâtre sacré des Cévennes; ou, Récit des diverses merveilles nouvellement opérées dans cette partie de la province du Languedoc*, ed. Ami Bost (Paris: Delay, 1847), viii.

In addition, Bost used their example to attack rationalist doctrines that reduced the interpretation of the biblical verb “prophesy” to “teach.”¹²⁷ His overall purpose, therefore, was to rehabilitate the biblical idea of prophecy and to restore belief in supernatural events in the church. He argued that there was continuity between signs and wonders in the past and the present day.¹²⁸ He even took to task the lukewarm attitude of Zinzendorf and Wesley towards the supernatural and Luther’s rejection of visions when he said, “Let God not send me any visions of angels: I wouldn’t know what to do with them!”¹²⁹

The Missionary and Inter-denominational Ethos of the French Prophets

The persecution the French Prophets underwent in London replicated their experience of the *Désert* to a certain extent. However, the educated English context changed their ethos and influenced the content of their prophecies and warnings.¹³⁰ New English prophets shaped the group into a religious community

¹²⁷ Ami Bost, editor’s preface, in Misson, *Les prophètes protestants*, ii.

¹²⁸ Ami Bost, editor’s preface, in Misson, *Les prophètes protestants*, iv-vi.

¹²⁹ Ami Bost, editor’s preface, in Misson, *Les prophètes protestants*, iv.

¹³⁰ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 107.

distinct from the one that had existed in the Cévennes.¹³¹ In contrast with their Cévenol past, the French Prophets didn't teach strict Calvinism or a rigid schedule for the millennium. Also, several followers received the gift of tongues and of healing, previously unheard of in the Cévennes. In addition, the "True Church" of the French Prophets began to reflect the diverse religious community in London and included people from all "sects," such as Anglicans, Baptists, and Quakers.¹³²

In London, the French Prophets included a remarkable number of women, though the scribes did not always record their names. In April 1706, fourteen out of the twenty-three *inspirés* were women.¹³³ Between 1708 and 1712, women played a prominent missionary role, pioneering evangelism in Scotland and Holland. In 1709, when the Prophets undertook expanded missionary outreach, a group of eight women and six men went on sixteen missions together.¹³⁴ There were more female than male missionaries because the women prophets tended to be younger and unmarried, did not have the business responsibilities that tied

¹³¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 81-82.

¹³² Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 89, 95, 108, 155.

¹³³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 83.

¹³⁴ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 136.

men down, and it was known that judges didn't arrest women as frequently as men.¹³⁵ Thanks to their aggressive missionary efforts, enclaves of Prophets grew up in England and Ireland. The largest circle outside England was in Scotland, where the Prophets' ethos had attracted quietists—readers of Jakob Boehme, Madame Guyon, and Antoinette Bourignon.¹³⁶

English Prophets had evangelized Scotland and Ireland but the mission to the continent was entirely the work of the French Prophets. On the continent, they tried to reconcile with local Huguenot refugees but instead encountered violent opposition in Berlin and Rotterdam, and were denounced in Holland and Germany.¹³⁷ On the other hand, leading Huguenot pastor, theologian, and advocate in exile Pierre Jurieu met the French Prophets in Rotterdam, and he and his wife espoused their millenarianism.¹³⁸

The missionaries found a safe haven in August Francke's Pietist

¹³⁵ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 138. Schwartz also adds that women were more adventurous and aggressive (136).

¹³⁶ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 155.

¹³⁷ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 172, 174, 180.

¹³⁸ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 170. One of Pierre Jurieu's most important works was entitled *Lettres pastorales adressées aux fidèles de France qui gémissent sous la captivité de Babylon* (Rotterdam: A. Acher, 1688) written as a response to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685).

community and orphanage in Halle. Before leaving in 1713, they believed that they “had restored the affection of Halle Pietists for the French Prophets.”¹³⁹ However, after the French Prophets left Halle in 1713, five Pietists received prophetic inspiration, which caused division in the community. Francke sent away those affected by prophetism and had pamphlets printed against the phenomenon.¹⁴⁰ The French Prophets traveled to Switzerland where their message spread through Pietist networks to a quietist community in Yverdon, just outside Lausanne. But in Switzerland as in other locations, they met with a fierce opposition campaign.¹⁴¹

Throughout Europe, local Huguenot communities typically rejected the French Prophets for their extremism: their millenarianism, their questionable theology, and their fanatical prophecies that, more than once, turned out to be completely wrong, as in the case of the failed resurrection of Dr. Thomas Emes.¹⁴² In addition, the French Prophets came from the rural south and tended to be peasants or artisans with less education than the exiles who represented a more

¹³⁹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 177.

¹⁴⁰ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 181.

¹⁴¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 183, 186.

¹⁴² Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 125ff.

urban, upscale population. Nevertheless, setting aside the fringe elements, the French Prophets exhibited a spiritual resilience born of suffering, a rich inner life, leading roles for women, and a vibrant faith that attracted Protestants from many different sects. Their missionary itineration scattered the seeds of proto-revival far and wide in Europe and created connections with likeminded communities such as the Lutheran Pietists or the Moravians.

The Proto-*Réveil* in Alsace: Jean-Frédéric Oberlin

The work and ideas of Jean-Frédéric Oberlin prepared the way for the coming of the *Réveil* because many of his initiatives foreshadowed or influenced later endeavors. Starting in 1767, he became the handpicked successor of Rev. Jean-Georges Stuber, who had started an important work of education and renewal as pastor of the Waldersbach Lutheran church, in the remote county of Ban de la Roche, west of Strasburg (Alsace).

Oberlin's spirituality was deeply rooted in the Lutheran pietism of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), another Alsatian who had studied in Strasburg.¹⁴³ He

¹⁴³ Spener was author of *Pia Desideria*, a foundational work of German pietism that influenced the next leader, August Herman Francke. Spener was also a sponsor at the baptism of Nicholas Zinzendorf, the founder of the Moravian Church. Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), 24.

believed that improving people's living conditions would lead to the uplift of their souls.¹⁴⁴ He devoted his life to the spiritual welfare of his parishioners and the social renewal of the region. He achieved such success in a region formerly beset with famine and destitution that in 1818 he was awarded a gold medal by the Royal Agricultural Society of Paris for over fifty years of services to humanity through agriculture. In 1819, he received the cross of the Legion of Honor from King Louis XVIII.¹⁴⁵

In 1826, Henri Lutteroth, an important agent of the *Réveil* in France, whose wife belonged to the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society Women's Committee, wrote a brief narrative of Oberlin's life on the occasion of his death. Lutteroth's work highlighted the influence of Pietist thought in Oberlin's ministry and the connections of both Oberlin and his wife, Madeleine-Salomé Witter, with the fledgling missionary movement in Europe and beyond. In a letter to the women's auxiliary to the Paris Bible Society, Oberlin's daughter, Madame Rauscher-Oberlin told the story of a young woman who refused to marry so that

¹⁴⁴ See Kaspar Burger, "Entanglement and Transnational Transfer in the History of Infant Schools in Great Britain and Salles d'asile in France, 1816-1881," *History of Education* 43, no. 3 (2014): 318n 83; Loïc Chalmel, "Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, Pédagogue Révolutionnaire?" *Revue Française de Pédagogie* 116, no. 1 (1996): 105-118.

¹⁴⁵ John Northcote, "Jean Frédéric Oberlin," *The Bookman* (June 1926): 153.

she could devote all of her time and income to supporting “the beautiful and pious institutions that have begun in our days.”¹⁴⁶ This was a reference to the voluntary societies that were springing up in Europe as a result of the Evangelical Revival. Lutteroth described Oberlin’s excitement at the first of these endeavors that caught his attention,

this Mission Society that sends messengers of peace to unhappy slaves, in order to comfort them, to offer them relief, and to bring them the Gospel of the Son of God, as the most efficacious remedy. His wife was still alive at this time. [She died in 1784.] As soon as they learned that pious Christians were leaving their country with this objective, they agreed to sell all their silverware so they could contribute to such a beautiful work by donating the proceeds of the sale, distressed they couldn’t send more. His imagination had been so vividly struck by the picture of black slaves’ tragic lot—slaves who worked cultivating sugar and coffee—that he resolved never again to taste either one or the other, and he kept this rule, even though his stomach, which was used to them, struggled to adapt to this deprivation.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Henri Lutteroth, *Notice Sur Jean Frédéric Oberlin, Pastor À Waldebach, Au Ban de La Roche; Mort Le 1er Juin 1826* (Paris: Henry Servier, 1826), 46.

¹⁴⁷ Original text: “cette Société des Missions qui envoie des messagers de paix auprès des malheureux esclaves, afin de les consoler, de les soulager et de leur porter l’Évangile du Fils de Dieu, comme le remède le plus efficace. Sa femme vivait encore à cette époque. Aussitôt qu’ils furent instruits que de pieux chrétiens quittaient leur patrie dans ce but, ils se défirent, d’u commun accord, de toute leur argenterie pour contribuer à une si belle œuvre par le produit de sa vente, s’affligeant de ne pouvoir envoyer davantage. Son imagination ayant été vivement frappée de la peinture du triste sort des esclaves nègres, employés à la culture du sucre et du café, il résolut de ne jamais goûter ni de l’un ni de l’autre, et il s’astreignit à cette loi, quoique son estomac, qui en avait pris l’habitude dès enfance, eût beaucoup de peine à se faire à ces privations.” Lutteroth, *Notice* 46. In Britain, after Parliament rejected the abolition bill of 1791, abolitionists called for a boycott on slave-grown sugar, imported from the islands.

If Lutteroth's historical chronology is correct and the "Mission Society" that caught the Oberlins' interest emerged before the death of Mme. Oberlin in 1784, then it would refer to the missionary work of the Moravians or the Methodists in the Caribbean.¹⁴⁸

Oberlin was one of the first contacts that the British and Foreign Bible Society (London) used to distribute Bibles in France before the creation of the *Société biblique protestante de Paris* [Protestant Bible Society of Paris]. As soon as the British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804, Oberlin, who was struggling with only three Bibles in his extensive parish, wrote to tell them about his need. They responded by sending him a gift of 720 francs that he used to buy more Bibles.¹⁴⁹

In response to the British and Foreign Bible Society's generous gift, Oberlin wrote to thank them and to describe the first people to whom he would give a Bible. They were women of exemplary character and Christian testimony in his parish who went from house to house to read the Bible to peasant families.

¹⁴⁸ Dale T. Irvin and Scott Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement: Modern Christianity from 1454-1800*, vol. 2 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), 419-420.

¹⁴⁹ Daniel Lortsch, "Chapter 13: The Ministry of the Bible in nineteenth century France," in *Histoire de la Bible* (Paris: Soc. Britannique et Étrangère, 1910), accessed March 15, 2018, http://www.bibliquest.net/Lortsch/Lortsch-Histoire_Bible_France-3.htm.

Sophie Bernard had taken in another seven or eight children of “three several denominations” in addition to her own children.¹⁵⁰ She always lent out her Bible “in different Roman Catholic villages.”¹⁵¹ Marie Schleper was an extremely poor “mother, benefactress, and teacher to the whole village where she lives” who also lent out her Bible.¹⁵² Catharine Scheiddegger was a widow, “a mother to orphans, and [kept] a free-school (...) who instruct[ed] little children in a neighbouring village, in such knowledge as may render them useful members of human and Christian society.”¹⁵³ Oberlin’s moving description of the devout women in his letter inspired Mr. Dudley, a member of the London Bible committee, with the idea of forming women’s committees. Within only five years, Dudley had founded 180 women’s Bible society auxiliaries.¹⁵⁴ Sophie Bernard, Marie Schleper, and Catharine Scheiddegger were probably the first

¹⁵⁰ Lutteroth, *Notice*, 47; Letter from Oberlin, in John Owen, *The History of the Origin and First Ten Years of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (London: Tilling & Hughes, 1816), 151-154.

¹⁵¹ Letter from Oberlin, in Owen, *The History of the Origin and First Ten Years of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 151-154.

¹⁵² Letter from Oberlin, in Owen, *The History of the Origin and First Ten Years of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 151-154.

¹⁵³ Letter from Oberlin, in Owen, *The History of the Origin and First Ten Years of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 151-154.

¹⁵⁴ Lortsch, “Chapter 13,” in *Histoire de la Bible*.

documented Bible women in mission history.¹⁵⁵

In 1816, a little Bible society committee was formed in Waldbach to centralize the distribution of Bibles in France as a way to spread the gospel. The same committee, that included Oberlin, his son Henri, and Daniel Legrand, established Bible societies all over France. Thousands of Bibles and New Testaments were distributed to Protestants and Roman Catholics before the Protestant Bible Society of Paris was formed in 1818.¹⁵⁶

Bible Societies Lay the Groundwork for the *Réveil*

The *Réveil* is sometimes referred to as the “Second Reformation” in historical analyses of this period.¹⁵⁷ Just as one of the original catalysts of the first Reformation was the *ad fontes* movement—a “return to the original sources” of the faith, that is, the Bible—likewise the *Réveil* found its primary inspiration in a renewed interest in the reading and study of Scripture. The work of Bible

¹⁵⁵ Bible women became important agents of evangelization in foreign mission fields in the later nineteenth century. They were usually indigenous women who extended the work of the foreign missionaries to families and women, in particular. They were very successful because of their ability to communicate biblical truths clearly in the local language.

¹⁵⁶ Lutteroth, *Notice*, 46-47 ; Lortsch, “Chapter 13,” in *Histoire de la Bible*.

¹⁵⁷ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 11; Jean-François Zorn, *Le grand siècle d’une mission protestante: la Mission de Paris de 1822 à 1914*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Editions Karthala, 2012), 556.

societies was thus an important catalyst of the *Réveil* and a key element in evangelization. However, this evangelistic drive coming from the evangelicals quickly led to conflicts within the Protestant Bible Society because liberal Protestants would have nothing of this enthusiasm. The Protestant Bible Society's refusal to distribute Bibles to Roman Catholics eventually led to the withdrawal of all the evangelicals on the board.

The voluntary societies that had formed in Great Britain in the eighteenth century all had the objective of providing Bibles to the populations they were trying to reach.¹⁵⁸ In France, the centuries-long persecution of Huguenots had resulted in a serious shortage of Bibles throughout the country, even into the nineteenth century. In mid-eighteenth century Alsace, Rev. Stuber, predecessor of Oberlin, ordered fifty Bibles from Basle but, thinking this was too small a number, he divided each Bible into three parts, bound each one separately and distributed them to his parishioners. In 1802, English representatives of the London Missionary Society on an investigative mission could not locate a single

¹⁵⁸ These included: The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (fd. 1701), The Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge (fd. 1709), The Society for promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor (fd. 1750), The Bible Society (fd. 1780), The Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday-Schools (fd. 1785). Source: Owen, *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 20.

Bible in Paris after searching for three days. In 1825, in St. Hippolyte-du-Fort (Gard), there were only 100 Bibles or New Testaments for 5,300 Protestants. In another town, there was one Bible for 3,000 Protestants (1828) and in another, seventy-four Bibles for 3,464 Protestants (1831).¹⁵⁹

In 1792, the French Bible Society was founded in London with the goal of distributing Bibles throughout France to Roman Catholics, for little or no money if they were poor.¹⁶⁰ The London committee collected subscriptions to fund the endeavor and established contact with a Protestant pastor in Paris who found a respectable printer for the task. Nevertheless, the devastation of the Terror and the post-revolutionary years caused the Paris office of the French Bible Society to close. The printer went bankrupt, and the 4,000 pounds advanced to him for the project that had never gotten underway were lost. Disheartened, the French Bible Society used the remaining funds to buy Bibles for Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including some distributed by Dr. Thomas Coke of the Wesleyan missionaries.¹⁶¹ The doors of the French Bible Society were finally

¹⁵⁹ Lortsch, "Chapter 13," in *Histoire de la Bible*.

¹⁶⁰ Prospectus of the French Bible Society (May 1792), in Owen, *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 26-28.

¹⁶¹ Owen, *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 25-26.

closed in August 1803.¹⁶²

Various foreign societies in England, Basle, and Strasbourg printed and disseminated French Bibles in France in the following years. Daniel Encontre, the dean of Montauban Theological Seminary, the only Protestant seminary authorized by the Organic Articles, published the Martin Bible in 1809. From 1811 on, the German missionary-theologian Frédéric Léo made it his personal mission to buy or raise funds to purchase Bibles from Basle for Protestants in Paris, in particular for his parishioners at l'Église des Billettes.¹⁶³

The founding of the *Société Biblique Protestante de Paris* [Protestant Bible Society of Paris] was delayed until 1818 by the outbreak of violence against Protestants during the White Terror.¹⁶⁴ An additional delay came from the necessity to secure official government authorization to hold a meeting of more than twenty members. The first official meeting of the Protestant Bible Society took place on October 17, 1818. The minutes specified that the Society was a joint effort between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches of France and that Rev.

¹⁶² Owen, *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, 26.

¹⁶³ Lortsch, "Chapter 13," in *Histoire de la Bible*.

¹⁶⁴ Orentin Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris (1818 à 1868)* (Paris: Société biblique protestante, 1868), 75.

John Owen, secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, was advising them, on his passage through Paris.¹⁶⁵

In contrast with its predecessor, the purpose of the Protestant Bible Society was to provide Bibles only to *Protestant* Christians, and specifically Bibles “without notes or commentaries” as stated in the bylaws.¹⁶⁶ In 1826, the Marquis de Jaucourt, president of the Protestant Bible Society and a state minister, justified this policy in a speech to the General Assembly, in which he warned of the danger of biblical commentary: “Let us be wary (...) of letting ourselves be swept away by religious ardor that could set us on a perilous road. It is not the vocation of any of those who distribute the Holy Scriptures to try and impose on those who read them their own point of view (...)”¹⁶⁷ As mentioned before, the expression of religious enthusiasm was a source of ongoing tension between evangelicals and liberals.

¹⁶⁵ Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, 79-80.

¹⁶⁶ Bylaws of the Protestant Bible Society of Paris, in Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, 84-86 ; Many of the members of the executive committee also became founding members of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society several years later, namely Juillerat-Chasseur, Kieffer, Stapfer, Monod (son), Wilder, and Delessert, just to mention a few. See Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, 88.

¹⁶⁷ Original text: “Craignons (...) de nous laisser entraîner par une ardeur religieuse qui pourrait nous ouvrir une route périlleuse. Ce n’est la vocation d’aucun de ceux qui distribuent les saintes Écritures de chercher à imposer à ceux qui les lisent le point de vue d’où il part lui-même...” Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, 106.

The “Danger” of Religious Ardor

This “religious ardor” infused the women’s auxiliary society of the Protestant Bible Society, founded by Sigismond Billing and the duchess Albertine de Broglie, née de Staël, in April 1823. Of the eighteen women founders, at least two thirds would be involved in the women’s committee of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, starting in 1825.¹⁶⁸ By 1826, the yearly reports of the women’s Bible Society auxiliary read at the General Assembly were raising controversy. The reports were described as being “written in another spirit than those of the men” and containing “the language of the *Réveil*, little pious stories [“*historiettes*” — a disparaging term, often used for children’s stories] on every page.”¹⁶⁹ An unidentified “newspaper always devoted to the biblical cause”

¹⁶⁸ Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, “Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris,” 323. The 18 founders included the following women: “de Broglie*, Gautier Delessert*, Dominique André*, Baronness Matthieu de Faviens, Mandrot, Kieffer*, Frédéric Monod*, Jules Mallet*, Stapfer*, Juillerat*, François Delessert*, Baronness Hottinguer, Baronness S. de Berckheim*, de Salvandy, Countess Rapp, Scherer, Bartholdi née Walther*, Mark Wilks*.” The starred names are those of future members of the Paris Mission women’s committee or of spouses of Paris Mission executive members (sometimes they were both).

¹⁶⁹ Original text: “*rédigé dans un autre esprit que celui des hommes ; le langage du Réveil, les historiettes pieuses d’y retrouvent presque à chaque page.*” Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, “Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris,” 324.

published a “severe but just critique” of the women’s report of 1828 in these terms:

Who wouldn’t admire the active zeal, the fervent goodness of these worthy people, who, not content to simply serve as ornaments in our churches, also seek to be vessels of honor? It is only the deep pain we feel at seeing the Biblical Society take on such a tone [“color” was the term used here] in its communications and official discourse that prompts us to ask how such a piece as the Report of the Women’s Society (1828) escaped the vigilance of the censors and the attention of the Committee—this long piece of obscure indecipherable mysticism, a sample of fairly bad writing, that contains absolutely nothing new, nothing touching, nothing ingenious, in which the author dogmatizes in especially long terms, thus formally contradicting the Society’s statutes, all to announce a drop in subscriptions of 1,400 francs since the last financial period.¹⁷⁰

These scathing terms revealed the very real tension between liberals and evangelicals in the Bible Society, tensions that eventually resulted in a schism in 1833.¹⁷¹

Nevertheless, internal conflicts aside, the contribution of the Protestant

¹⁷⁰ Original text: “Qui n’admirerait le zèle actif, la bonté fervente de ces dignes personnes, qui, non contentes d’être l’ornement de nos églises, cherchent aussi à en être l’honneur ? Ce n’est que la vraie douleur que nous éprouvons à voir la Société biblique laisser prendre une telle couleur à ses pièces et discours officiels, qui nous porte à nous demander comment il a pu échapper à la vigilance de ces censeurs et à l’attention du Comité, que le Rapport de la Société des dames (1828) est un long morceau de mysticisme obscur et indéchiffrable, qui est assez mal écrit, qui ne renferme absolument rien de neuf, rien de touchant, rien d’ingénieux, et dont l’auteur dogmatise surtout très-longuement, en contradiction formelle avec les statuts de la Société, le tout pour annoncer un différence, en moins, de 1,400 fr sur les souscriptions du précédent exercice.” Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, “Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris,” 324.

¹⁷¹ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 201-202.

Bible Society women's auxiliary lay in their vision for the task of distributing Bibles. They developed a very effective strategy that facilitated the growth of women's Bible Society auxiliaries in the provinces (see chapter 3). By 1830, there were thirty-seven of these.¹⁷²

The dominant revivalism of the women's committee of the Protestant Bible Society of Paris put them out of step with many of their male counterparts on the executive committee. These same women found more support in the ranks of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society -- where they also began operating, from 1825 onward. In 1833, the evangelical members of the Protestant Bible society, both men and women, resigned *en masse*. They eventually formed a separate entity, the *Société biblique française et étrangère* [French and Foreign Bible Society] modeled on the more evangelical British and Foreign Bible Society.¹⁷³

The Réveil in Geneva: A Family Connection

Since the time of the Reformation, there had been a close connection

¹⁷² Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, "Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris," 324.

¹⁷³ Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, "Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris," 325 ; Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 201-202.

between the Reformed Church of France and the Church of Geneva.¹⁷⁴ Given this “family relationship,” it is not surprising that the two churches were significantly transformed by the effects of the *Réveil*. Historian Léon Maury argued that “it would be just as impossible to speak of the *Réveil* in France without first tracing the history of the one in Geneva as it would be to write the history of the French Reformation without speaking of Calvin.”¹⁷⁵ However, as I cannot do justice to the full history of the Genevan *Réveil* in the context of this brief overview, I will simply draw attention to some of the important agents whose influence and evangelism in France greatly contributed to the French *Réveil*. It is important to note, in the context of this study, that most Genevans, in the early nineteenth century, were French descendants.¹⁷⁶

The important figures of the Genevan *Réveil* were influenced by pietism and mysticism. Many different personalities had passed through Switzerland leaving disciples, such as Zinzendorf (Moravian pietism) and Mme. Krüdener

¹⁷⁴ Léon Maury, *Le réveil religieux dans l'église réformée à Genève et en France (1810-1850): Étude historique et dogmatique* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1892).

¹⁷⁵ Original text: “il serait aussi impossible de parler du Réveil en France sans retracer d'abord celui de Genève, que de faire l'histoire de la Réformation française sans parler de Calvin.” Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, vi-vii.

¹⁷⁶ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 42.

(mysticism). Ami Bost (1790-1874), who trained under the Moravian Brethren, was a leading proponent of the *Réveil*. He served as a pastor, as an itinerant evangelist, and he was a missionary of the Continental Society of London. His writing included his memoirs, a work that served as a history of the *Réveil* in Switzerland and France, an edited re-issue of *Les prophètes cévenols* [The Cevenol Prophets], and several polemical tracts. Bost and his friend Henri Empaytaz founded a *Société des Amis* [Society of friends] with local Moravian evangelists that attracted other Genevans drawn to mysticism.

For a short period, Empaytaz became a follower of the baroness Barbe-Julie de Krüdener, a mystic given to extreme devotion and visions. She was described as “the saintly friend of [Russian] Emperor Alexander, the prophetess of the downfall of Napoleon, the inspirer of the Holy Alliance, the repentant Magdalen who preached the forgiveness of sins throughout the length and breadth of Europe.”¹⁷⁷ After her brief visit to Geneva, the two of them paid a visit to Oberlin, whose ministry in Ban de la Roche deeply impressed Mme. de Krüdener.¹⁷⁸ Mme. de Krüdener was a leading female figure whose mysticism

¹⁷⁷ Clarence Ford, *The Life and Letters of Madame de Krudener* (London: A.&C. Black, 1893), 3.

¹⁷⁸ Ford, *The Life and Letters of Madame de Krudener*, 104-105. There were many female mystics who often began movements in the nineteenth century. Some examples are Ellen G.

contributed to what has been described as the “exalted” or “enthusiastic” spirituality of the *Réveil*.

Alexandre Vinet, another Swiss from Basle, became known as the theologian of the Paris *Réveil*.¹⁷⁹ His position on the separation of church and state would inspire the formation of an independent Protestant church in 1849. Henri Pyt (1796-1835), born in the Swiss canton of Vaud, worked as an evangelist and a missionary in France. He was the pioneer of the Baptist churches in the north of France and also served as the tutor to missionary Eugène Casalis.¹⁸⁰ Abraham-Louis Lissignol (1794-1851), a Pietist born in Geneva, became a charismatic pastor in Toulouse.

Other Swiss who became important actors in the French *Réveil* included Adolphe and Frédéric Monod (also Vaudois), the “evangelist of the Alps” Félix Neff, Henri-François Juillerat (known as Juillerat-Chasseur), Auguste de Staël (son of Mme. de Staël in whose salon the *Réveil* was first discussed), bankers François Délessert and Jules Mallet, and Philippe-Albert Stapfer. Most of these

White (Adventists) and Bernadette Soubirous whose vision of Mary led to the founding of the pilgrimage to the Lourdes grottoe.

¹⁷⁹ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 100.

¹⁸⁰ Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau*, 332. I do not cover the contribution of the Baptists to the *Réveil* in this study.

men were members of several voluntary societies in Paris, including the Paris Mission and the Protestant Bible Society.

Evangelist Henry Drummond and churchman Robert Haldane, both Scottish, also passed through Geneva before founding the Continental Society, a rigidly sectarian missionary society that sent out primarily Swiss evangelists such as Pyt and Émile Guers.¹⁸¹ Another influence of the Swiss *Réveil* came from the independent church of Bourg-le-Four that sent out missionaries that included Bost, Neff, Pyt, and Guers.

The Wesleyan Methodist Contribution to the *Réveil*

The work of Methodist missionaries in France from the early days of the *Réveil* had a transformative effect on the Evangelical Protestantism of the nineteenth century, softening the harshness of Calvinism and tracing new inroads in social outreach and community life. Methodist women also played pioneering roles in the revival efforts, especially among women and children. In the early nineteenth century, however, French Protestants would have considered the Wesleyan missionary undertaking to be the most blatantly

¹⁸¹ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 100.

foreign incursion into the homeland of Jean Calvin for theological, historical, and political reasons. For centuries, the Huguenots, who had remained faithful under persecution, had placed their hope in the fact that they were God's chosen people and that he would watch over them.¹⁸² The political context, after Napoleon's campaigns of conquest, had set France against the rest of Europe, with the United Kingdom as the great Enemy-in-chief, the leader of the European forces that had just crushed them at the Battle of Waterloo. From the 1820s on, revivalists of any stripe or nationality were often disparagingly called "Methodists." However, these Methodists had a rich contribution to make to the *Réveil*.

Precursors to the Methodist Mission on French Soil

The Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey had to wait thirty-five years for the Wesleyan revival to reach their shores from Britain in the 1770s.¹⁸³ In 1786,

¹⁸² This was the theology of predestination that was opposed to Wesley's arminianism or theology of free will.

¹⁸³ Pierre Sogno, "Les Débuts Du Méthodisme Wesleyen En France 1791-1825" (thèse pour le doctorat du 3ème cycle, Faculté des Lettres et Sciences humaines de l'Université de Paris [1970]), 29-30. Methodism began as a popular movement in the late 1730s. The delay may have been because both French and English were spoken on the islands.

Dr. Thomas Coke, John Wesley's right hand man in charge of foreign missions, visited Guernsey. While there, he arranged for a charismatic evangelist named Jean de Quetteville, who spoke French, to come over from Jersey where Methodism had recently borne fruit.¹⁸⁴ A few years later, in 1791, Coke himself undertook an evangelistic trip to Paris.¹⁸⁵ Unfortunately, his stay in Paris was a total failure.

However, the Methodist message finally reached France in 1790 or 1791 thanks to the visit of a Methodist merchant from the Channel Islands. Jersey and Guernsey produced several important Methodist figures of the *Réveil*, including the devout wife of prominent evangelist and historian Rev. Matthieu Gallienne.¹⁸⁶ According to historian Matthieu Lelièvre, Jean Angel from Guernsey visited a meeting of Protestants without a pastor in Courseulles, a small fishing

¹⁸⁴ Sogno, "Les Débuts Du Méthodisme en France," 34.

¹⁸⁵ G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Five Volumes*, vol. 4 (London: The Epworth Press, 1922), 444.

¹⁸⁶ Mathieu Gallienne, *Catherine Jeanne Gallienne, Epouse de M. Mathieu Gallienne: Fragments Biographiques Par Son Mari* (Guernsey: La Fosse Landry, 1886), 4. Born in 1817, she was a Huguenot on her mother's side. She was the daughter of an Englishman, Edward-Francis-George Bedford, who had settled in Jersey after a career as a sea captain of the merchant marine. The fact of her French Protestant lineage on her mother's side supports my thesis about the international connection between the Huguenot diaspora and the agents of the *Réveil* who returned to France. Her story shows that female lineage often remains hidden and that these women worked with children. The account written by her husband falls in the category of a spiritual hagiography.

village near Caen, and told them about his religious experience. When he asked if they would like to have a pastor who would live among them, they eagerly accepted. At Angel's request, William Mahy immediately set sail from Guernsey to Normandy.¹⁸⁷ Pierre du Pontavice, a Breton and former Catholic, also evangelized in Normandy and though he later became a Reformed pastor, he continued preaching a Methodist message.¹⁸⁸ Several years later Jean de Quetteville joined the work in Normandy.

Charles Cook

The Methodist mission to France began to flourish thanks to Charles Cook, whose forty-year ministry contributed greatly to the spread of Methodism in several parts of the country. Historian Merle d'Aubigné, in a letter to Rev. Matthew Gallienne, said of Cook, "The work which John Wesley did in Great Britain, Charles Cook has done, though on a smaller scale, on the Continent."¹⁸⁹ When Cook was first posted to Normandy in 1818, he encountered the

¹⁸⁷ Sogno, "Les Débuts Du Méthodisme en France," 40-44.

¹⁸⁸ Sogno, "Les Débuts Du Méthodisme en France," 67ff, 71-73.

¹⁸⁹ Quoted in Findlay and Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, 446.

restrictions that non-*concordataire* churches had to endure.¹⁹⁰ During his time in Normandy from 1818 to 1820, he made several missionary trips in the south of France where he met the most devout pastors of the region.¹⁹¹ As an Englishman, he was warmly received during his tour of the Gard where Protestants had benefitted from the generous collection of goods and relief funds from British churches after the devastation caused by the White Terror.¹⁹² Pastor Lissignol of Toulouse took Cook to visit several small societies of women and important locations in the Gard, including St. Hippolyte-du-Fort, where Gachon had first held Moravian-style meetings.¹⁹³

In 1821, Cook decided to settle in the small town of Caveirac, in the Gard, where he began a very fruitful ministry with support from the many local pastors such as Lissignol, Bonnard, Marzials, and Chabrand, who espoused a Pietist ethos. He was preaching in nine different churches by 1823, had started classes in Sommières and Congénies, and auxiliary Bible societies in Aigues

¹⁹⁰ *Concordataire* churches were those recognized in the Organic Articles of 1802: Catholics, Reformed and Lutherans. Other churches were not allowed to have assemblies of more than 20 persons.

¹⁹¹ Sogno, "Les Débuts Du Méthodisme en France," 116 ; Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 428.

¹⁹² Rev. Mark Wilks oversaw the distribution of this aid.

¹⁹³ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 109.

Vives, Sommières, and Vauvert.¹⁹⁴ However, he encountered opposition from the local secular authorities, concerned about the activities of “foreign ministers.” He also discovered a fierce antagonist in the person of theologian Samuel Vincent from Nîmes.¹⁹⁵

The Female Lineage of Julie Marzials: Methodism meets Reformed Pietism

Julie Marzials Cook is a leading example of the strong role Protestant women played as spiritual leaders in the *Réveil*. In 1826, Cook married Julie Marzials, the oldest daughter of his friend and colleague, Reformed pastor François-Maurice Marzials of Montauban, who had been influenced by the testimony of Moravian missionary Mérillat.¹⁹⁶ Charles and Julie moved to Congénies, a little town in the area of la Vaunage, a former bastion of propheticism where there was still a community of Quakers.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Jean-Louis Prunier, “La Constitution de La Conférence Méthodiste Française” (mémoire de maîtrise, Inst. Protestant de Théologie, Fac. de Théologie de Paris, Fac. de Théologie de Montpellier, 2003), 38 ; Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 432.

¹⁹⁵ Prunier, “La Constitution de La Conférence Méthodiste Française,” 38-39.

¹⁹⁶ Charles Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marzials, 1804-1844, fragments inédits de la biographie par son mari, Charles Cook: publiés et complétés par Matth. Lelièvre* (Paris: Delessert, 1907), 8.

¹⁹⁷ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 133.

In Congénies, Julie, an excellent pedagogue who also spoke the local *patois*, developed an extensive ministry with young women and the children of the Protestant parishioners, giving them religious instruction sometimes illustrated with missionary stories—mostly at 6 a.m.—and inspiring such vibrant faith in the children that their testimonies sometimes led to the conversion of their schoolteachers.¹⁹⁸ The fragments of Julie’s journal published in a short book edited by her husband Charles were full of descriptions of her classes with the children and her desire to see all the children and young women under her care receive a heart transformed for the gospel. She described her husband’s sermons and his ministry with missionaries such as Henri Pyt of the Continental Society to which Samuel Vincent was vehemently opposed. In 1826, she described a revival meeting that gave her such joy that she said afterwards to her husband, “I would like to die now.”¹⁹⁹

That night we went to N’s house...where a choir meeting was supposed to take place. There were seven converted pastors and close to fifty other people who know their Lord and want to glorify him in their body and in their soul. Never had I seen such a large number in one place. Also, I felt sensations that I couldn’t describe, but I think that I felt something like the happiness of those who are in heaven, who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and who will

¹⁹⁸ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 133; Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marzials*, 37.

¹⁹⁹ Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marzials*, 53.

only live to love and bless the Redeemer of their souls.²⁰⁰

This exalted and eschatological language showed how Julie Marzials was a revivalist of the Pietist strain, drawing from the legacy of the French Prophets and Methodist enthusiasm. In her journal, she always seemed concerned with the spiritual state of her own children and of the other youth she taught. Her various areas of public and private responsibility — supportive missionary's wife, mother of eleven children (six of whom died), teacher of dozens of youth, "parish assistant" — were no doubt very taxing and she made frequent allusions to her weak health in her journal. Indeed, she was not destined to live long. She died in Lausanne at age forty, shortly after the birth of her eleventh child, after years of ill health.²⁰¹ In addition to his many years of work in the Midi, Cook

²⁰⁰ Original text: "*Nous nous redîmes el soir chez N..., où il devait y avoir une réunion de chœur. Il y avait sept pasteurs convertis, et près de cinquante autres personnes qui connaissent leur Sauveur et désirent le glorifier dans leur corps et dans leur âme. Jamais je n'en avais vu rassemblé un aussi grand nombre. Aussi, j'éprouvai des sensations que je ne saurais décrire, mais je crois que je sentis quelque chose du bonheur dont jouiront dans le Ciel ceux qui auront blanchi leurs robes dans le sang de l'Agneau et qui ne seront occupés qu'à aimer et à bénir le Rédempteur de leurs âmes.*" Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marzials*, 53. This exalted language could often be found in the writing of pastor's and missionary wives.

²⁰¹ According to Wemyss (whose distaste for the *Réveil* makes her a harsh critic), Marzials was a romantically minded *ingénue* who had dreamed of missions when she married Cook. She basically worked herself to death, and Cook willingly accepted her sacrifice, with no remorse and very little awareness of her precarious state of health (Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 132). At the end of his wife's biography, Cook does express some regret at not insisting on taking her to a better climate where she might have gotten better, and also at not being a better spiritual companion to

evangelized in other areas such as Niort (near La Rochelle on the western coast), Paris, and Lausanne, thereby making a rich contribution to the *Réveil*.²⁰²

Jean-Louis Rostan

A significant itinerant evangelist in the Methodist movement in France, Jean-Louis Rostan was a “singularly interesting figure,” according to Maury, because as, “disciple and successor of Félix Neff [the “evangelist of the Alps”], he was, so to speak, the connecting point between the Genevan evangelists and the Wesleyan missionaries.”²⁰³ His friendships and ongoing correspondence with devout female figures revealed the active roles of women in the national missionary movement led by Methodists.

First a teacher in a mountain village, then a *colporteur* in the Alps where he also kept an eye on local parishioners, Rostan felt the call to ministry in 1833. Upon entering the ministry, he immediately visited la Vaunage to see the work

her (Cook, *Mme Julie Cook, née Marzials*, 98-99). Julie Marzials was not the first or the last missionary wife who died of exhaustion and ill health on the mission field.

²⁰² Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 434.

²⁰³ Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 434.

that Cook was doing. Cook was to become his supervisor.²⁰⁴ He also found spiritual support from Protestants in la Vaunage. This was especially important as Rostan often struggled with doubt about whether his call was truly “from God,” or whether he was equipped to preach “not only to the world but to mothers in Israel!”²⁰⁵ Perhaps the devout faith of the Congénies women’s societies had made a strong impression on him. Immediately after arriving, he wrote to his parents,

Here, in Congénies, I have found mothers in Israel, who will advise me and direct me as to the ways in which I should act. Without question, I have found fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters who love me and are as attached to me as you are yourselves.²⁰⁶

Rostan’s letters and biography frequently referred to his contact with specific women with whom he had a pastoral rapport, women’s societies, their activities, and their financial gifts. He also corresponded with a number of women such as Mademoiselle Henriette Maroger (a pastoral letter), Mme. Julie Marzials Cook (he wrote at the request of her husband who was too busy but included some

²⁰⁴ Matthieu Lelièvre and Jean-Louis Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan* (N.p.: Librairie Evangélique, 1865), 132.

²⁰⁵ Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 86.

²⁰⁶ Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 86.

personal small talk), Mme. de Jersey (news of his evangelism), Mme. Papinaud (a “sister” in Vauvert to whom he was sending news).²⁰⁷ He wrote to other evangelists to encourage them, especially when they suffered from ill health because of excessive work as he himself did.²⁰⁸ A letter dated December 1834 gave news of the revival that had taken place in Freyssinières, reported on the opposition he faced from other Protestants, and described a women’s class:

The women’s class is the most interesting one I have ever seen: sisterly love, simplicity and freedom reign and shine forth. The trust that all the members show towards their dear leader is remarkable. She does an honorable job of fulfilling the task she has been given. One could say this is an exemplary class.²⁰⁹

This short note underlines the importance of female small groups, an important contribution of Methodist missions. They were also essential in the promotion and fundraising efforts of the Paris Mission women’s committee.

While Rostan often found support and a deep devotion among women, he discovered they could also be fierce adversaries. They were prominent in the

²⁰⁷ Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 114-116, 120-121, 128-130, 133-135.

²⁰⁸ Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 122-123.

²⁰⁹ Original text: “*La classe des femmes est des plus intéressantes que j’ai [sic] jamais vues: l’amour fraternel, la simplicité et la liberté y règnent et y brillent. La confiance que tous le membres témoignent à leur chère conductrice est remarquable. Celle-ci s’acquitte dignement de la tâche qui lui a été confiée. On peut dire que c’est là une classe modèle.*” Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 136.

popular backlash against Methodists in Vauvert in 1834, just after the chapel was dedicated, in spite of Rostan's long work of evangelism in that town. The incidents, which are described as "the persecutions in Vauvert" in Rostan's biography, were emblematic of other similar incidents in the area, often prompted by jealousy and envy at the loss of parishioners to charismatic Methodist evangelists. The local Reformed pastor, preaching from the pulpit one Sunday, whipped his parishioners into a frenzied mob that almost tore down the new Methodist chapel, roughed up Rostan on his way home, threw rocks, and chased another preacher. The uproar went on for days, during which Cook, Marzials, and Rostan preached in their new chapel to the sound of rocks and wooden clubs hitting the walls.²¹⁰ Rostan even received a death threat.²¹¹ Finally, after several complaints from the Methodists, the authorities stepped in to calm down the situation.

Rostan, like Cook, his mentor, was a powerful evangelist whose ministry

²¹⁰ Sadly, the former Methodist chapel in Vauvert is now a garage. One can still see the tower and the tops of the austere stained glass windows but the front has been covered by a green sliding wooden door. It is within view of the main Protestant church in town, "le grand temple" [the big Protestant church—the more liberal denomination] as opposed to the "petit temple" [the little church] of the evangelical Protestants. This proximity may have been one reason for the antagonism, since Methodists were often loud in their evangelism campaigns.

²¹¹ Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 149-154.

spread to many regions beyond the Languedoc: the Alps, Paris, the Drôme, the Channel Islands, Lausanne. He had a tender heart for his calling and wrote caring letters to those under his care. He sent two deeply moving letters to his goddaughter, little Hannah Cook, after hearing of her conversion in 1844, a few months before the death of her mother Julie.²¹²

The Methodist Imprint on the Réveil

Methodism left a strong imprint on French Protestantism in its example of small group study, works of social outreach, the spiritual leadership of women, and the zealous itineration of its evangelists in the mission field of France. By 1852, when the Methodist mission established the French Conference that was divided into two districts (the North and the Midi), there were Wesleyans in eight departments, including two stations in French-speaking Switzerland. There were nineteen pastors, 100 places of worship, 865 members, 6,000 “auditors,” and 1,000 children in Sunday School.²¹³ In Maury’s evaluation,

In the North as in the Midi, the inexhaustible activity of the Wesleyan missionaries produced real results, and consequently, it seems less

²¹² Lelièvre and Rostan, *Vie de Jean-Louis Rostan*, 366-368.

²¹³ Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 436.

surprising that their work has come to be identified with that of the *Réveil* as a whole and that their name, and even, in some regions, the name of Charles Cook, has become the current label of revived souls.²¹⁴

The influence of Wesleyan Methodism on the *Réveil* was so deep that even Samuel Vincent recognized its lasting value, preferring to the “dark cloud” of the Genevan preachers the insights, character, and moderation of the Wesleyans who showed more gentleness in their dealings with other pastors, trying to avoid all that could disturb or hurt them.²¹⁵ Wesleyan evangelism created lasting communities in the North (Pas de Calais, Calvados) the Midi (Gard, Hérault), the East and Northeast (Hautes-Alpes, Drôme, Meuse).²¹⁶

Conclusion

The Huguenot historical legacy is replete with experiences of suffering

²¹⁴ Original text: “Au Nord comme au Midi, l’activité infatigable des missionnaires wesleyens a produit des résultats réels, et il deven dès lors moins étonnant qu’on ait identifié leur oeuvre avec celle du *Réveil* tout entier (3) et qu’on ait fait de leur nom, voire même, dans certains régions, du nom de Charles Cook, la désignation courante des âmes réveillées.” Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 436. Note 3 in the text says: “On a souvent, en effet, appliqué le terme de methodisme à l’ensemble du mouvement du *Réveil*.” [In fact, the term *Methodism* has often been applied to the totality of the movement of the *Réveil*.]

²¹⁵ Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 437. Maury quotes from Vincent’s *Vues sur le Protestantisme* (Nîmes, France: Bianquis-Gignoux, 1829).

²¹⁶ Maury, *Le réveil religieux*, 436.

that helped to prepare nineteenth century Protestantism for the “new birth” of the *Réveil*. The influence of women can be found throughout the recesses of the Huguenot historical record but it is easily downplayed because it may have originated in the home, or on the margins of public life, outside of the realm of male prerogative. Women provided continuity, keeping Huguenot identity strong both in France and in its international expression in the countries where the Huguenot exiles settled. While the agents of the Evangelical Revival who returned to evangelize France in the nineteenth century may not have been French “nationals,” they at least came from the same regions of vibrant piety where the Huguenots and the French Prophets had lived. Therefore the *Réveil* was not a foreign phenomenon — women made sure of that.

In all the movements that contributed to the *Réveil*, women played important roles either as teachers and evangelists (among the Pietists), as prophets and missionaries (among the French Prophets), as *colporteurs* (for the Bible societies), as thinkers, mystics, and writers (in the Genevan *Réveil*), and as spiritual leaders (among the Methodists). A woman’s spirituality was also destined to play an influential role in the *Réveil*.

**CHAPTER TWO: TRINITY IN A WOMAN’S SOUL: PROPHETIC
SPIRITUALITY AND THE MISSIONARY IMPULSE**

“Hear, O daughter, and listen carefully, for I want you to learn about yourself, to know in whose image you have been created.”¹ Thus began a fifteenth century devotional text written by Czech reformer Jan Hus to a local community of women. He began each of the ten short chapters of this groundbreaking text with “Listen, my daughter” in an effort to comfort and offer redemptive hope to his female audience. The pious practices that Hus taught in this text, written for women, later found parallels in the theological outlook of Moravian evangelists. The Moravian outlook influenced the piety of the *Réveil* and inspired the accompanying national and international missionary impulse.

The *Réveil* created new French Protestants who were no longer turned inward because of the wounds of a crippling history. Instead, here were Protestants who had gained a more outward orientation fueled by a renewed

¹ Dcerka, MIHO, vol. 4, 163. All of Hus’ Czech works have been published in volumes 1-4 of *Magistri Iohannis Hus Opera omnia* series, abbreviated as MIHO. This excerpt of Hus, entitled *Dcerka*, was translated from the French, in Thomas A. Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity: Reconsidering a Medieval Heretic* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015), 7. The expression “Hear, O daughter” was traditionally understood as a text addressed to the Church or a Mariological reference. Applying it to ordinary laywomen was a radical move for Hus.

spirituality.² The spirituality of the *Réveil* inspired followers with a great zeal for the “kingdom of God” that included both word (proclamation of the necessity of the “new birth”) and deeds (works of compassion; advocacy against social ills such as slavery). This evangelistic drive was also typical of women’s mission theory: “holistic, with emphasis on both evangelism and meeting human needs.”³

The expressions of evangelical outreach of the *Réveil* echo those of the “Poor of Lyons,” evangelists of the Waldensian reform movement that originated four hundred years before the Reformation. In the nineteenth century, many practices of the *Réveil* drew from a Waldensian ethos: a return to the Bible as the rule for Christian life, care for the poor, a strong evangelistic impulse, anti-clericalism, and an active role for women. When the Waldensians were forced into exile in the late 12th century, they made their way to Bohemia, where their teachings created a fertile ground out of which the Hussite movement grew.

² French Protestantism developed an Evangelical component later than Protestantism in other countries because the political and social upheaval surrounding the Revolution delayed the advent of Evangelicalism on French soil until the early nineteenth century. See Sébastien Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau: le protestantisme évangélique en France, 1800-2005* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2005), 70.

³ Dana Lee Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), xviii.

Later, the Moravian Brethren, heirs of Hussite theology, applied many of the same principles in their missionary work in France, starting in the eighteenth century.⁴ This theological genealogy, with deep roots in medieval spirituality, combined with other international influences from British Wesleyanism and Scottish Presbyterianism to create an expression of evangelicalism that was unique to France.⁵

In this chapter I will show that *Réveil* piety found an early source in the theology of Hus—a theological outlook that empowered women as equal partners with men in gospel work. The “prophetic spirituality” described in Hus’ *Dcerka* found many parallels in the beliefs and mission practices of the Moravian Brethren, active in eighteenth century France. Later, proponents of the *Réveil* who embraced the prophetic mission outlook born of this spirituality came together to form the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society.

⁴ Loïc Chalmel has identified a continuity of influence flowing from Hus to Oberlin who, according to Chalmel, “took up the torch of the spiritual leader of Bohemia mostly through the activity of his biblical society.” Loïc Chalmel, *La petite école dans l’école: Origine piétiste-morave de l’école maternelle française*, 3rd ed. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), 9.

⁵ I do not touch on the influence of Scottish Presbyterianism. My focus is on the Wesleyan contribution. Mark Noll notes that while evangelical traditions display the same major characteristics, the different streams demonstrate “a tremendous diverse array of emphases, relationships, and special concerns.” Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 20.

The Medieval Roots of *Réveil* Spirituality: The Waldenses, Jan Hus, and Prophetic Spirituality

The spirituality of the *Réveil* echoed that of the Waldensian movement that originated in 12th century France. In 1173, a rich man named Valdès, possibly a merchant from the city of Lyons, underwent a dramatic conversion that prompted him to rid himself of his belongings and take up a life of poverty.⁶ Having a great desire to read the Scriptures, he commissioned the translation of portions of the Old and New Testament into the vernacular. He used these biblical texts in his preaching.⁷ Soon Valdès' example of apostolic poverty and public preaching attracted a community of followers who called themselves the "Poor of Christ" or the "Poor of Lyons." The Poor of Lyons, dubbed by their detractors as the Waldenses or Waldensians, were one of the many movements

⁶ Various sources from the time record his surname as Waldes, Valdesius, Valdès, Valdo, or Vaudès. See Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c. 1170-c. 1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4; Church archives in Carcassonne, France quoted in Giorgio Tourn, et al., *You are my Witnesses: The Waldensians across 800 Years*, ed. Frank G. Gibson (Torino, Italy: Claudiana, 1989), 11; Maurice Pezet, *L'Épopée des Vaudois: Dauphiné, Provence, Languedoc, Piémont, Suisse*, (Paris: Éditions Seghers, 1976), 56. One hundred and fifty years later, documents referred to Valdès by the Christian name of Pierre or Peter, probably chosen by his followers in reference to his founding role (Audisio, *Dissent*, 8).

⁷ Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. Steven Rowan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 191.

of apostolic poverty that arose in the 12th century. At the time, the Roman Catholic Church was struggling, without success, to restore discipline and right behavior in the ranks of its clerics and bishops. The first Lateran Council of 1123 tried to address the church's besetting sins of simony and clerical concubinage. In the previous century at the Council of Rheims, Pope Leo IX had already made decrees against these transgressions, also prohibiting priests from exacting fees for most church "services" —burials, baptisms, receiving the Eucharist, and visits to the sick.⁸

After studying the Bible, Valdès came to the conclusion that, in order to purify the church, his followers needed to obey Jesus' call to take up a life of poverty and to preach the gospel. The three foundations of the mission of the Poor of Lyons were, therefore, the Bible, poverty, and preaching.⁹ They believed the Bible should be taken literally, without interpretation, which meant that their sermons were often simply composed of memorized Scripture passages. For the Poor of Lyons, a life of poverty meant a rejection of worldly riches and a life of

⁸ Decrees of the Council of Rheims (1049) in Gian Domenico Mansi, Louis Petit, and Joanne Baptista Martin, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, cujus Joannes Dominicus Mansi et post ipsius mortem, florentius et venetianus editores, ab anno 1758 ad annum 1798, priores triginta unum tomos ediderunt, nunc autem continuata et... absolutula*, XIX (Paris: Expensis H. Welter, 1903), col. 741-742.

⁹ Audisio, *Dissent*, 11-12.

self-denial. In other words, poverty was a way to be “hated by the world” as Jesus was.¹⁰ Preaching allowed the Poor of Lyons to spread their understanding of the gospel in the vernacular in a culture that reserved sermons for monks and the educated elites who understood Latin. Parish churches were focused on administering the sacraments and they neglected preaching.¹¹

Initially, because they were itinerant preachers, the Poor of Lyons did not work or even marry. They needed to be free to travel and preach. The earliest evangelists came from the upper strata of society but later they came in even greater number from the poorer classes. They refused to establish any hierarchies of leadership because they believed in the radical equality of believers. For a short period at the beginning, both men and women were itinerant preachers—a practice that greatly scandalized church authorities and, later on, inquisitors.¹² Women preachers were recorded in Montcuq and Montauban in the Languedoc

¹⁰ Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 74.

¹¹ J. K. Zeman, “Restitution and Dissent in the Late Medieval Renewal Movements: The Waldensians, the Hussites and the Bohemian Brethren,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44, no. 1 (1976): 9; Joseph Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London: Longman, 1992), 129.

¹² Audisio, *Dissent*, 113, 114. This egalitarian structure changed later when the Brothers (the itinerant preachers) took on more prominence than ordinary believers.

region of southern France, and they even outnumbered the men in Montauban.¹³

Within a little more than a decade, Valdès and the Poor of Lyons were excommunicated at the Council of Verona in 1184. However, they were not guilty of heretical teaching but of “dissident behavior” — such as continuing to preach in public places in the city of Lyons without official church authorization.¹⁴ And because this happened well before the creation of the Inquisition in the 1230s, the local authorities’ only recourse was to declare that the Poor of Lyons were schismatics and to expel them from Lyons.

The Poor of Lyons shared the vision of apostolic poverty and of many other practices with the Franciscan movement that followed them within a few decades. However, they differed in what they defined as their final authority. From the beginning, Francis intentionally voiced his submission to clerical authority—including unworthy priests (one of primary points of contention for reform movements at the time)—and his opposition to any form of heresy. Contrary to Francis, Valdès considered that Scripture was the final authority for

¹³ Pezet, *L'Épopée des Vaudois*, 78.

¹⁴ John H. Arnold, *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 445, 450.

the life of faith and he rejected the Church's mediating role in interpreting Scripture.

The originality of the Waldensian movement lay in the fact that they refused to be clerics. To them, this would have meant reproducing, in different form, the same type of educated and privileged class they believed was corrupting the church. Valdès' teaching was dangerous not only because to preach as a layman subverted clerical authority, but also because his literal use of Scripture could not be rationalized away as simply the teaching of one man. And because the devout lifestyle and biblical teachings of the Waldenses threatened the power, prerogatives, and lifestyle of the clerics, they had to be excommunicated.

From Lyons, the Poor of Lyons scattered southwest into Languedoc, east to northern Italy, and north to the border with Germany.¹⁵ In the late thirteenth century, the Waldenses also spread to Austria and then to Moravia and Bohemia, where their teaching influenced popular piety and practices, preparing the way for the socially radical theology of Jan Hus (1370-1415) and other Czech

¹⁵ Audisio, *Dissent*, 16.

reformers.¹⁶ Records of the Inquisition in Bohemia show that over half the people who were investigated for heresy between 1334 and 1355 expressed Waldensian ideas. Their rejection of the Constantinian idea of the church and their anti-clericalism influenced radical movements in Bohemia in the fifteenth century.¹⁷

Zdenek David contests the direct influence of the Waldensians on Czech reformers such as Hus, stating that the reformers' academic background "militates against the presumption of the influence of various folkish sectarians, such as Waldensians."¹⁸ However, considering some of the radically populist ideas that Hus was proposing (such as allowing all people to receive the wine during the Eucharist), it seems implausible that he wouldn't have been paying attention even to the teachings of "folkish sectarians." David argues that Waldensian teaching only influenced the radical branch of the Hussite legacy, the Taborite Church, rather than the moderate Ultraquists.¹⁹ Nevertheless, he

¹⁶ Euan Cameron, *Waldenses: Rejections of Holy Church in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 102; Craig D. Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren from Hus to Comenius* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2009), 44, 45.

¹⁷ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 43. The Constantinian idea of church is the "marriage" between official state power and the church as its instrument.

¹⁸ Zdeněk V. David, *Finding the Middle Way: The Ultraquists' Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003), 23-24.

¹⁹ David, *Finding the Middle Way*, 25.

points out that the *Unitas Fratrum* or Unity of the Brethren (the Moravian Brethren), a small group that separated from the Ultraquist Church in 1457, nurtured ongoing relations with Waldensians.²⁰ Therefore, it seems likely that Waldensians influenced Moravian ideas, whether directly through Hus, or from later contact between the Ultraquists and the Unity of the Brethren.

Jan Hus and his Theology of Women

In the fifteenth century, the Bohemian Reformation emerged from a highly charged context in which medieval lay piety and popular religious movements like the Béguines were flourishing.²¹ Popular preachers urged the local people to practice a rigorous piety that included asceticism, the sharing of belongings, sexual restraint, listening to sermons, Bible study, prayer, meditation, and frequent Eucharist.²² The first house of Béguines in Prague was founded in 1279,

²⁰ David, *Finding the Middle Way*, 40.

²¹ Béguines were religious orders of lay women—that is, generally unregulated or approved by the Catholic Church—who lived either in semi-monastic communities or independently in northern Europe in the later Middle Ages. They did not take formal religious vows. They were considered subversive by the authorities and the Roman Catholic Church tended to regard them with suspicion.

²² John M. Klassen, *Warring Maidens, Captive Wives and Hussite Queens: Women and Men at War and at Peace in Fifteenth Century Bohemia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 160.

and by 1415, there were at least eighteen such groups. Following their own spiritual rule of life, Béguines lived in wooden houses and subsisted on private donations or the proceeds of their handicrafts. They offered education for young girls and cared for the sick and the elderly.²³ Given Hus' popularity as a preacher, they probably came to hear his sermons regularly.²⁴

Hus' preaching would have been attractive to the common people because of his influence on liturgical reform and on the development of popular religion and lay piety.²⁵ The walls of Jan Hus' church, Bethlehem Chapel, were inscribed with many biblical passages and other instructive texts, including his reform program written in Latin and Czech, entitled *De sex erroribus* [meaning "On the Six Errors"].²⁶ The walls were also covered with paintings, some of which were copies of biblical scenes by Nicholas of Dresden and his followers. Influenced by Waldensian ideals, Nicholas of Dresden painted Jesus in all his humility, thus

²³ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 161.

²⁴ Thomas A. Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 58-59. Apparently, Bethlehem Chapel drew up to 3,000 listeners on any given day.

²⁵ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 52, quoting Thomas Fudge. One reform pioneered by Hus was the prominent use of congregational singing during the worship service.

²⁶ Apparently the text of "On the Six Errors" (of the church) was only rediscovered in 1949 when the church underwent reconstruction (Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 52).

shining a damning light, by stark comparison, on the rich lifestyle of the Roman clergy.²⁷

Women gathered in Bethlehem Chapel to hear Hus expound on his revolutionary ideas that prescribed leadership roles for women. Demand from local preachers and from nuns who wanted to read the lectionary, resulted in the translation of portions of the Bible into the Czech vernacular in the last decades of the fourteenth century. Eventually the demand was so great that the whole Bible was translated into Czech around 1414.²⁸

In the medieval theology of creation, girls and women were considered as socially and inherently inferior to men.²⁹ It was common for preachers and theology instructors to teach that the female body was not made in the image of God and that the woman was responsible for bringing sin into the world using her sexuality.³⁰ According to Gratian, God had only created man in his own

²⁷ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 52-54. Nicholas of Dresden had fled to Prague from Saxony to get away from the Inquisition.

²⁸ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 162.

²⁹ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 162.

³⁰ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 162.

image and therefore only man had the power to govern.³¹ Hus rejected these views, particularly the belief that women were not made in the image of God.³² Instead, he taught that men and women were equal and that, as worthy members of God's economy, women were fully competent to contribute to the life of society or any religious community.³³

While in exile between 1412 and 1414, Hus wrote a short booklet entitled *Dcerka* or "The Daughter," in which he demonstrated his high view of women.³⁴ Thomas Fudge includes *Dcerka* among the classic texts of late medieval spirituality.³⁵ Hus was writing to a small community of women, possibly Béguines, possibly reformed prostitutes, who lived near Bethlehem Chapel.³⁶

³¹ R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 27.

³² Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 162, 165.

³³ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 163.

³⁴ Paul de Vooght, "Un Classique de La Littérature Spirituelle: La 'Dcerka' de Jean Huss." *Revue d'histoire de La Spiritualité* 48 (1972): 275–314. This article contains a full translation of *Dcerka* from fifteenth century Bohemian into French. It took some work to locate *any* translation of *Dcerka*. I am grateful to Dr. Brown for locating the French translation above, embedded in Vooght's article. As there is no complete translation of all of Hus' works into English—and no English translation of *Dcerka*—few scholars have been able to study his work, including his theology of women.

³⁵ Thomas A. Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity: Reconsidering a Medieval Heretic* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015), 7.

³⁶ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 6.

Fudge believes that Hus may have been writing to these pious women “because of his conviction that women were sometimes more ardent proponents of religious truth than the theologians of Prague in the early fifteenth century.”³⁷

Hus believed that God had endowed women with exceptional religious insight, making them more devoted followers, just like the women in Jesus’ ministry.³⁸

Dcerka was probably conceived as a theological model or, according to Klassen, as “a popularized confession of faith.”³⁹ Each of the ten short chapters begins with the declaration “Listen/Hear, O daughter...” In the prologue, Hus outlined the themes of the book that were meant to encourage piety and devotion:

Hear, O daughter, and listen carefully, for I want you to learn about yourself, to know in whose image you have been created. Second, so that you can learn about your conscience. Third, so that you can learn about the misery of this life. Fourth, so that you can learn about the temptations of this world. Fifth, so that you can learn about the three enemies. Sixth, so that you can do penance properly. Seventh, so that you can respect the dignity of the soul. Eighth, so that you can realize that there will be a day of judgement. Ninth, so that you can respect eternal life. Tenth, so that you can love the Lord God more than anything.⁴⁰

³⁷ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 6.

³⁸ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 6.

³⁹ Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 165, 166.

⁴⁰ *Dcerka*, MIHO, vol. 4, 163, translated from the French, in Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 7.

Hus was offering the formation of a well-rounded theological worldview that included a healthy understanding of the self in relation to God, the contemporary spiritual and social contexts, the practices needed to combat evil, and an eschatological outlook. The final lesson was the “greatest commandment” — to love the Lord with all one’s heart — the guiding principle of the gospel.

For medieval women, the most powerful of Hus’ teachings in *Dcerka* was probably the first lesson because it emphasized that they, like men, were made in the image of God:

Listen, daughter, look and lend your ear to what I have said, that you must know yourself above all, knowing in whose resemblance you were created. (...) The soul has three faculties through which it remembers God, knows him and prays to him: the first faculty is memory, the second reason, and the third will. (...) And when these three things are united in the soul, then they hold in it the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity who has created you in its own likeness with power, wisdom and complete freedom. (...) Therefore you must remember that God created you in his likeness. Understand that he is the creator of the whole world, therefore bow before him alone because he is the supreme being, therefore he is the one you must love above everything else.⁴¹

⁴¹ *Dcerka*, in de Vooght, 284-285, my translation from the French. Original text: “*Écoute, ma fille, regarde et prête l’oreille à ce que j’ai dit que tu dois te connaître en premier lieu, sachant à quelle ressemblance tu as été créée. (...) L’âme possède trois facultés par lesquelles elle se souvient de Dieu, le connaît et le prie: la première faculté est la mémoire, la deuxième, la raison et la troisième, la volonté. (...) Et lorsque ces trois facultés s’unissent dans l’âme, elles représentent en elle l’image et la ressemblance de la Sainte Trinité, qui t’a créée semblable à elle, et cela avec puissance, sagesse et une entière liberté. (...) C’est*

This teaching would have been revolutionary. Medieval women had always been taught that they were unworthy because they had succumbed to the devil's temptation in the Garden of Eden and because they possessed the power to tempt men to sin by their beauty.⁴² Hus' likening the woman's soul to the holiness of the Trinity was powerful and redemptive because it made woman an autonomous being in her salvific relationship to God—that is, not dependent on man—and restored her to full humanity.⁴³ Chalmel states that, in this text, Hus underlined the role of women in the Czech reform movement and established them as “one of the pillars of the Church of Christ”—a contrast with the view of fifteenth century theologians used to considering the woman as “a sort of devil.”⁴⁴

pourquoi tu dois te souvenir que Dieu t'a créée semblable à lui. Comprends qu'il est le créateur du monde entier—et donc prosterne-toi devant lui seul—et qu'il est le bien suprême, donc c'est lui qu'il faut aimer par-dessus tout.”

⁴² Klassen, *Warring Maidens*, 162.

⁴³ On this point, it seems that Hus disagrees with Augustine. According to Bloch, Augustine argues that “man is undivided, asexual, pure spirit, while woman remains a divided being whose body does not reflect the reality of the soul.” Consequently, “if man is fully human because he is in the image of God while woman is human only in part, the specifically human comes to signify, is elided to, the side of the masculine. Woman is conceived to be human only in that part of her which is the soul, and which, as we shall see, makes her a man.” Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny*, 27.

⁴⁴ Chalmel, *La petite école dans l'école*, 9. Chalmel's expansive interpretation of the text of *Dcerka* makes me wonder if he had the original text before his eyes. The text does not, in fact,

Prophetic Spirituality

In *Dcerka*, Hus taught a spirituality that he considered was “essential to the reform and religious life of later medieval Christianity.”⁴⁵ The fact that this spirituality was developed in a work addressed to a community of women is of crucial importance. Fudge described *Dcerka* as a “profound witness to the vibrancy of medieval Czech spirituality.”⁴⁶ He also underlined that, although it is a devotional work comparable to Thomas à Kempis’ *On the Imitation of Christ*, Hus’ *Dcerka* is unknown and has received virtually no exposure in the scholarly community.⁴⁷ Initially, this was due to its limited circulation in the later Middle Ages because it was written in the Czech vernacular.⁴⁸ For contemporary

accomplish all that he claims that it does (such as highlighting the important role of women in the Czech Reformation), nor is it addressed to “women who joined the reform movement” (9). But Chalmel emphatically states that Hus was “the precursor of a profound change in the status of women in the Reformed Church” (9). This claim also seems somewhat hyperbolic since this “status change” seems to have been buried in the little known history of women’s roles in the Czech Reformation.

⁴⁵ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 5.

⁴⁶ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 7. Fudge classifies *Dcerka* as “neither an academic treatise nor a polemical text” but as devotional writing.

⁴⁷ Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform*, 86. He states that “even scholars of Hussitica sometimes ignore this book.”

⁴⁸ Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform*, 86 and note 66.

scholars, still, the only modern translation that exists was published in an article in *Revue d'histoire de La Spiritualité* [Review of the History of Spirituality] by Paul de Vooght, “*Un Classique de La Littérature Spirituelle: La Dcerka de Jean Huss*” [A Classic of Spiritual Litterature: The Dcerka of Jan Hus], published in 1972. As of June 2018, there is no complete translation into English.

Fudge considers *Dcerka* an important book among the writings of Hus and explicates the text at length both in *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia* and *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*. In the latter book, he offers a systematized understanding of the spirituality expressed in *Dcerka*, which he terms “prophetic spirituality.” What follows are some of its main tenets.

First, prophetic spirituality necessarily implied “eschatological disobedience”:

Jan Hus’ *The Daughter* teaches the duty of eschatological disobedience. (...) Eschatology implies that human society is condemned and that history itself is doomed and cannot survive the kingdom of God. Eschatology places demands on history and on spirituality. Hus understood this. Disobedience was not defiance but an integral part of spirituality. Hus (and the Taborites after him) refused to be complicit; therefore, they became disobedient both to church and civil authority.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 7. A Taborite was “a member of a militant group of Bohemian Hussite reformers who in 1420 gave the biblical name of Tabor (Czech: Tábor) to their fortified settlement south of Prague. Like their more moderate coreligionists, the Utraquists, they were strict biblicists and insisted on receiving a Eucharist of both bread and

This meant that obedience to civil and ecclesiastical authorities was conditional, based on a critical examination of their underlying motives. Herein lay the basis for Hus' radical social reform and the civil and religious disobedience that necessarily went with it. Hus believed that spirituality was not a retreat from the world or a means of personal detachment to seek individual unity with God. Instead, it brought together both life in the world and the possibility of reforming the church.⁵⁰ Prophetic spirituality valued truth that had practical implications rather than just abstract theological knowledge.⁵¹

Second, prophetic spirituality was both disciplined and active.⁵²

According to Fudge, prophetic spirituality was "a form of spirituality limited to activities which cultivate relation to the divine. (...) Spirituality is not withdrawal from the world or human affairs. Spirituality gives politics its moral structure and purpose."⁵³ As such, it was the basis for religious renewal in the Taborite

wine, though they denied transubstantiation and the Real Presence." Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Taborite – Religious Movement," accessed January 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taborites>.

⁵⁰ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8.

⁵¹ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8-9.

⁵² Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8.

⁵³ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8.

movement.⁵⁴ Prophetic spirituality functioned as a theological and moral compass intimately connected to realities in everyday life.

Third, those who embraced prophetic spirituality had to be ready to suffer as they embraced the consequences of their choice to act in society. Fudge explained:

Here we discover the relation of suffering and action to spirituality. Love and truth are goals, not the pursuit or application of power. Jan Hus seems to suggest that Christianity is neither doctrine nor mere adherence to it. Faith is not strictly theological compliance but relation to the one (Christ) or to the reality (ideas) which doctrine speaks of. Faith is a journey not the possession of truth.⁵⁵

The experience of suffering was connected to the relationship with Christ whose suffering the devout Christian shared out of love for the truth. This included a concept of spiritual struggle that appeared in the theology and writings of the early Hussite movement.⁵⁶ This underlined the fourth characteristic of prophetic spirituality—the understanding of faith as a heart relationship to Christ rather than literal doctrinal compliance. Fifth, prophetic spirituality had an outward orientation that emphasized orthopraxy (right action) over orthodoxy (right

⁵⁴ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8.

⁵⁵ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 8.

⁵⁶ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 23.

belief). Instead of focusing on the self, prophetic spirituality sought to respond to the needs of society, in the here-and-now, rather than worrying about the right theological ideas regarding the world to come or the kingdom of God.⁵⁷

Hus' prophetic spirituality, though containing a contemplative element, was a call to action meant to inspire obedience to God's will in the world.⁵⁸ As Fudge described it: "Prophetic spirituality cultivates active participation in an accepted and intentional *heilsgeschichte* wherein creation is restored, redemption is achieved, and history is overcome by the reign of God."⁵⁹ Later, the spirituality of the *Réveil* could be described in similar terms—the ushering in of the "kingdom of God" on the earth. These elements—critical obedience in relation to political and ecclesiastical authorities, disciplined and active social engagement, suffering for Christ, faith as a heart relationship with Christ, the emphasis on orthopraxy (responding compassionately to the needs of society) over orthodoxy, and the focus on the kingdom of God—were the key characteristics of prophetic spirituality handed down in the praxis and mission outlook of the Unity of the

⁵⁷ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 23.

⁵⁸ Fudge, *Jan Hus Between Time and Eternity*, 23.

⁵⁹ *Heilsgeschichte* is defined as "an interpretation of history emphasizing God's saving acts and viewing Jesus Christ as central in redemption."

Brethren and the later Moravians under Nicholas Zinzendorf.

Tracking Prophetic Spirituality after Hus

In his book *La petite école dans l'école* [The little school within the school], Chalmel constructs a long history connecting Jan Hus and Jean-Frédéric Oberlin to demonstrate the “complex network of relations between theologians, philosophers, pedagogues, and businessmen involved in the genesis and development of education for young children.”⁶⁰ In the midst of this genealogy, he quotes an excerpt from Comenius that contains a distant echo of three of the ten lessons in *Dcerka*:⁶¹

We search for God by noticing the signs of his divinity in the whole of creation... There is a triple source from which we draw this disposition of the soul... The source consists of:

1. the Holy Scriptures, [the tenth lesson—to love God above all else]
2. the World, [the second lesson—to understand one’s conscience]
3. Ourselves; [the first lesson—to know in whose image one is made]

That is, in the first case, the word of God itself; in the second its works; in the third, its inspiration in us.⁶²

⁶⁰ Chalmel, *La petite école dans l'école*, 5.

⁶¹ John Amos Komensky (1562-1671) was the last bishop of the Unity of the Brethren and an innovative educational reformer.

⁶² Original text: “*Nous cherchons Dieu en remarquant les signes de sa divinité à travers l'ensemble de la creation... Triple est la source à laquelle nous puisons cette disposition de l'âme... La source consiste: 1. dans les Ecritures saintes, 2. le Monde, 3. Nous-mêmes; c'est à dire dans le premier cas, la parole même de Dieu; dans le second ses oeuvres; dans le troisième, son inspiration en nous.*” Quoted

Searching for God in the Scriptures is a way to show love for God, by trying to know him better. Understanding one's conscience enables the Christian to choose righteous behavior that is pleasing to God. Knowing that all humans, men and women, are made in God's image is an intimate source for understanding God.⁶³

The Unity of the Brethren shared many of the same essential traits of prophetic spirituality, as described by Fudge.⁶⁴ They had a fluid attitude toward doctrine as they continually sought the most sound system of beliefs. They chose to focus on the essentials needed for salvation in an effort to maintain unity.

Atwood calls this the "foundation for their ecumenical activity," a quality that

from J. A. Comenius, *La grande didactique*, original 1657 ed. trans. by M. F. Bousquet, M. F. Saget & D. Jolibert (Paris: Kincksieck, 1992) in Chalmel, *La petite école dans l'école*, 20-21.

⁶³ While this link cannot be demonstrated by direct use of the text, I draw on the essence of the teaching to suggest a family connection between Hus' favorable teaching to women in *Dcerka*, passed down through Moravian teaching later, and the spiritual outlook of the *Réveil*.

⁶⁴ If the *Dcerka* is as important a text as Fudge argues, why it did not circulate, why it wasn't translated as part of Hus' theological legacy for his followers in the diaspora? Was it because it was a text clearly addressed to women? Did that fact contribute to it being dismissed and ignored? As a result, this textual gap makes it difficult to argue for the influence of Hus' ideas on women's practices beyond the 15th century if one has to produce a literary trail. On the other hand, this is very much the same challenge as that of uncovering traces of the influence of women since they usually did not document their work using texts. It was more often the fruit of their work that spoke to their influence. In like manner, it is the profile of the prophetic spirituality embedded in Hus' *Dcerka* that I am tracing from his time to the nineteenth century, as it emerges in the practices and theology of the Moravians and of the proponents of the *Réveil* in France.

was perhaps one of the reasons why they were so successful in their missionary outreach in France.⁶⁵ They were the “first truly voluntary church in Western history” — a sign of their critical obedience towards authority — and they prioritized the creation of loving communities.⁶⁶ They valued orthopraxy over orthodoxy and followed the principle of “faith without works is dead” from the epistle of James.⁶⁷

Moravians practiced prophetic spirituality because they believed that the priesthood of all believers, independence from state interference, social engagement, and “heart religion” were essential to faith. Women were highly valued as teachers and leaders in their community. Later, proponents of the Réveil in France — women like Albertine de Broglie and Emilie Mallet (see chapters three and four) — embodied prophetic spirituality.

The Prophetic Mission Outlook of the Paris Mission

As will be shown in chapter three, the founding of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society was the fruit of pietist and Moravian influences and its ethos

⁶⁵ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 16-17.

⁶⁶ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 17.

⁶⁷ Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren*, 17.

was shaped by prophetic spirituality. As a result, the Paris Mission dared to engage in “eschatological disobedience” from the outset, overstepping legal limitations on unofficial groups (no meetings over 20 people) and on the official churches (no relations with foreign entities). The Paris Mission was able to operate with more freedom of movement and integrity, faithful to its spiritual mission, than if the society had allowed itself to be tethered to a particular political or religious entity. Because the Paris Mission inherited its unique mission outlook from prophetic spirituality, one could call it a prophetic mission outlook.

The Paris Mission’s prophetic mission outlook opened doors to a wealth of collaborative partnerships thanks to the many connections of its eclectic executive committee. One of these led to the surprising choice of Lesotho as its pioneer mission field. Jacques Blandenier has written that the founding of the Paris Mission hinged on its “points of contact” outside of its national borders, especially French-speaking Switzerland, and that this led it to the Paris Mission playing a “unifying rather than a foundational role” in the history of missions.⁶⁸ Its initial work of training missionaries at the *Maison des Missions* was a unifying

⁶⁸ Jacques Blandenier, *L’essor des missions protestantes*, vol. 2 (Nogent-sur-Marne: Éd. de l’Institut biblique de Nogent, 2003), 17.

aspect of its young vision. The inter-relational aspect of this prophetic mission outlook fueled and was fueled by the work of the Paris Mission women's committee as they endeavored to build networks of relationships with Protestants of all classes, all over France, and to formulate a missionary vision for women.

Conclusion

Hus' theology of "trinity in a woman's soul" was a gift to women. The Bohemian reformer was the instigator of a reform movement that left a remarkable legacy, in spite of his execution by state and church authorities. Yet, he gave hope to women in his day with the text of *Dcerka*—a hope and a rule of life that women in later centuries could appropriate for their life of faith.⁶⁹ The idea of a trinity of memory, understanding, and will in their souls empowered women to work as co-equal divine image bearers with men. This engendered a dynamism, integral to prophetic spirituality, that was passed down through women's work in the Pietist and Moravian orthopraxy to proponents of the

⁶⁹ See Phillip Haberkern, *Patron Saint and Prophet: Jan Hus in the Bohemian and German Reformations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) for an interpretation of his influence on later religious reform movements.

Réveil. This engendered a template for mission—or “prophetic mission outlook”—that informed the work of the Paris Mission from its founding to its initial vision for a school of missions, and finally to the way in which it chose Lesotho to be its first missionary territory. I will show how this prophetic mission outlook spread in France by exploring the genesis of the international missionary movement in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: THE GENESIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY MOVEMENT IN FRANCE AND THE WORK OF WOMEN

While most nineteenth century evangelicalism included an international outlook, the French expression acquired a more intentional “internationalism” from the outset that it never lost. The Paris Mission initially collaborated with international mission co-workers in choosing their own mission field, Lesotho, that later came under British governance. However, at the time of the partitioning of Africa in the 1880s, they refused to simply accept the constraints of nationalism (remaining within French territories) or ecclesiastical loyalty (official affiliation with one specific church). They resisted aligning themselves with French colonial ideology and refused to abandon their “non-colonial” missions in Lesotho and in Zambia to British missions. One of the members of the Paris Mission’s executive committee stated that to do this would have been “a betrayal of the very spirit of our agency. The Church of Jesus Christ is not a national agency.”¹

In this chapter, I trace the origins of the international missionary

¹ Jacques Blandenier, *L’essor des missions protestantes*, vol. 2 (Nogent-sur-Marne: Éd. de l’Institut biblique de Nogent, 2003), 553.

movement in France through the influence of mission publications, the founding of the Paris Mission and its early educational work in the *Maison des Missions* [House of Missions], and the collaborative work of the women's committee. I examine the life and work of Albertine de Broglie and her contribution to the formulation of a practical mission strategy and a mission outlook, pioneered by the women's committee. I show how, from the start, women played a central role in the unfolding of the missionary movement as original leaders and thinkers, even as they pushed back at restrictive social mores intended to keep them in the shadows.

Spreading the Missionary Spirit: *les Archives du Christianisme*

Les Archives du Christianisme was a mission-themed journal, founded in 1818 by Pastor Juillerat-Chasseur, a product of the *Réveil*, soon followed by Frédéric Monod, the second editor. Monod was one of the key agents of the *Réveil* in Paris and he was supportive of women in the work of revival. Along with his brother Adolphe, both Reformed pastors from the Vaud, in Switzerland, he spread the message of the *Réveil* through his charismatic preaching in the Reformed Church. When Frédéric became pastor of the Temple de l'Oratoire (a prominent church in Paris), he instituted the revivalist practice of weekly prayer

meetings and started a Sunday school for children. His pastoral work included ongoing evangelism among children, as illustrated in his “Sermon preached in Paris in the Temple de l’Oratoire, Sunday March 27, 1836, for the annual receiving of catechumens into the church.”²

But Frédéric Monod exercised his greatest and most widespread influence in his role as editor of *les Archives*.³ As the first journal of Protestantism in French modeled on the *Evangelical Magazine* published in London starting in 1793, *les Archives du Christianisme* nourished evangelical fervor in the churches and the movement of interest in missions that accompanied it. *Les Archives* quickly had an influence on practices in Protestant circles. Prompted by news of revival practices in Britain and elsewhere, Protestants all over France spontaneously formed groups of “Friends of Missions” that met every first Monday of the month to discuss the content of *les Archives* or information they received directly from the recently founded Basel Mission (Basel, Switzerland, 1815), to pray for the raising up of missionaries to “pagan” lands, and to raise funds for the

² Frédéric Monod, *Sermon prêché à Paris pour la réception des catéchumènes* (Paris: N.p., 1836).

³ Alice Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil: 1790-1849* (Paris: Les Bergers et les mages, 1977), 113.

London Missionary Society and the Basel Mission.⁴

Mission was the main topic in every issue. Each new issue contained reports of the missionary work being done in foreign lands as well as national outreach. Historical articles also appeared frequently: on the history of the Moravian Brethren (issue 3, 1820), on John Wesley and the influence his mother Susanna had on her son's choice of ministry vocation (issue 5, 1822), and on the twenty-five years of the London Missionary Society (issue 5, 1822). Frédéric Monod's supportive view of women was evident in the numerous news items on the work of women such as the prison ministry of the women of Newgate, led by Elizabeth Fry (issue 3, 1820), Hannah More's writings (issue 2, 1818), and the work of women in auxiliary Bible societies. Since 1818 was the year of the founding of the *Société Biblique Protestante de Paris*, issue 2 (1818) of *les Archives* focused on the work of Bible societies in other European countries as well as the growth of auxiliary societies in different parts of France. Reports of the activity of women were striking news: 600 women from Liverpool had created eleven auxiliary societies and distributed 1,338 Bibles or New Testaments in the space of

⁴ Jean-François Zorn, *Le grand siècle d'une mission protestante: la Mission de Paris de 1822 à 1914* (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 553 ; Blandenier, *L'essor des missions*, 16.

three months; in Dresden, women had distributed Bibles in prison, hospitals, and to the sick, poor, and aged.⁵

A Journal that Set the Tone: Irenic and Inter-denominational

The journal intentionally set out to play a uniting role among Protestants, accepting submissions from all classes of people (not just the high classes and powerful) and to avoid divisiveness, as explained in their pilot issue:

[The voices of] lay people will be accepted as well as those of clergy (...) we believe we must warn [contributors] that this Journal, by avoiding all vain controversy and rejecting useless issues, aims to make Religion known and loved, to bring together and not to divide, to put balm on wounds and not to aggravate them or create new ones; the Journal will present dogma in a clearly orthodox light, always nuanced by the heavenly color of love, which is that of the Gospel.⁶

This earnest but irenic tone of *les Archives* as well as the desire to avoid divisive disputes became characteristic of the proponents of the missionary movement

⁵ *Les Archives du Christianisme au dix-neuvième siècle*, tome 1 (Paris: Imprimerie de Gratiot, 1818): 265, 268.

⁶ Original text: “Celles [les voix] des laïques y seront admises comme celles des ecclésiastiques, (...) nous croyons devoir les prévenir qu’être étranger à toute vaine controverse, et rejetant les questions inutiles, ce Recueil, destiné à faire connaître et aimer la Religion, à rassembler et non à diviser, à mettre du baume sur les blessures, et non à les envenimer ou à en faire de nouvelles, offrira dans le dogme une couleur franchement orthodoxe, où se nuancera toujours la céleste couleur de la charité, qui est celle de l’Évangile.” *Les Archives*, tome 1 (1818): 8.

because their priority was evangelism and holistic mission. Later, however, these moderate evangelicals lost supporters on both the liberal end and on the more radically conservative end of the spectrum.⁷ Allowing the voices of lay people to be heard as well as those of clergymen (who were exclusively male at the time) underlined the attention given to the voice of spiritual authority alongside institutional authority and opened the door to women. However, it is more difficult to track written contributions by women because, in contrast with male writers, their work remained unsigned.⁸

In 1822, Frédéric Monod became a founding member of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. However, already in 1818 *les Archives* played an influential role in the later formulation of the Paris Mission's vision and mission theology, modeled on that of the London Missionary Society (LMS, fd. 1795). In the 1822 issue, one article admiringly described the non-sectarian missionary

⁷ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 113. On the one hand, the liberals considered all evangelicals as "fanatics" and, on the other, the radical revivalists eventually pulled out of the Reformed Church to form a separatist church, the Union of Free Evangelical Churches of France in 1849. The "moderate" evangelicals never lost sight of their primary commitment to mission—the work of the "kingdom of God"—that required a common vision and collaboration across differences in theological outlooks and national boundaries.

⁸ Sometimes, as in the case of the Duchess de Broglie, the writing of powerful women, that may have been unsigned (or identified only with initials) in the original publication, could be republished in a collection in which they are identified as the author. For example, de Broglie's reports for the women's Bible Society auxiliary and the Paris Mission women's committee were not originally identified as being her work.

strategy of the LMS and its “noble and lofty principles” of self-determination for missionized peoples in the area of ecclesiology.⁹ The author also pointed out that the LMS was the first missionary society to encourage Christians of different denominations to come together to form religious associations, a collaborative effort that Paris women imitated in their early work for infant schools.¹⁰ The importance of inter-denominational and international collaboration became clear with the emergence of a French Protestant missionary agency.

The Founding of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society

The Evangelical ethos expressed in *les Archives* took concrete shape in the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (hereafter Paris Mission or PM), in particular in the composition of its executive committee, its relationship to state and church, its theological outlook, and its mission principles. Starting in April 1822, an American businessman named S. V. S. Wilder, who had settled in Paris, opened his home for all the meetings that led up to the constitution of the Paris

⁹ See subsection “Mission Principles” below that elaborates on this principle.

¹⁰ *Les Archives*, issue 5 (1822): 57. Chapter 4 describes the collaboration between Catholic and Protestant women in the work for infant schools. The LMS later lost their inter-denominational ethos when they affiliated with an English Congregational entity.

Mission. Later, as a member of the executive committee, he introduced to the fledgling mission society Rev. Jonas King, a young American missionary who was living in Paris to study Arabic before going to Palestine. Thanks to Wilder, the committee gave money for King's support, even before the Paris Mission was officially founded, thus making King, an American, their first missionary.¹¹

The Paris Mission arrived a little late on the scene of international missionary societies. Very early on, Anglicans formed the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1701. In the late eighteenth century, the first initiative came from the English Baptists (1792) led by pioneer missionary William Carey. The London Missionary Society followed in 1795 with the initial goal of remaining free of ties to any particular church or government. However, it eventually affiliated with English Congregationalists. The Church Missionary Society began in 1799. Across the Atlantic, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions came into play in 1810 and the American Baptist Missionary Board in 1814. In Britain, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society was organized in 1816. In

¹¹ Jean Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, 1822-1829*, vol. 1 (Paris: Société des Missions Évangéliques, 1930), 20. King is more well known as a missionary for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. It seems his stint as a missionary envoy of the Paris Mission is unknown or unrecognized in the historical record.

Switzerland, the Basel Mission emerged in 1815, and other European mission agencies began in Denmark in 1821, in Germany in 1824, in Sweden in 1835, and in Norway in 1842.¹²

In 1822, a future member of the Paris Mission, Alsatian Lutheran Professor Jean-Daniel Kieffer, a professor of Turkish at the Collège Royal de France, invited his friend Christian Gottlieb Blumhardt to come to Paris to meet with a group of people interested in “forming a Society with the goal of spreading the gospel among the pagans.”¹³ Kieffer had spent ten years working on a translation of the Bible into Turkish.¹⁴ Blumhardt, who was the director of the Basel Mission, had a vested interest in the formation of a mission agency in Paris because he hoped it would include a training school for young missionaries.

The first preparatory meeting took place on April 4, 1822. The *Registre des Procès-Verbaux* [minutes] of the meetings unfortunately did not list who was present at the first meeting, although it is probable that Blumhardt (Swiss), Kieffer (Alsatian, Lutheran), Wilder (American), Jean-Jacques Goepp (Alsatian,

¹² Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed., The Penguin History of the Church Series (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 214.

¹³ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 557-558 ; Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 23. It is not clear whether the decision to come to Paris was Blumhardt’s or Kieffer’s idea.

¹⁴ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 17-20, 10-13.

Lutheran), and Frédéric Monod (Swiss, Reformed) attended.¹⁵ However, the names of those who attended the second (August 1st) and third (September 6) preparatory meetings were recorded as well as those who attended the *Séance constitutive* [founding meeting] on November 4. At the September meeting, the twenty-three individuals present included many foreigners: one American (Wilder), one individual from Jersey (Thomas Dobrée), and (probably) eight British. Methodist missionary Charles Cook and his colleague Crogan were also present.¹⁶ At the constitutive meeting on November 4 (that happened to fall on the first Monday, the monthly prayer day for missions), twenty-nine men were present. Many of these bore foreign names: “MM. Goepp nephew, Bartholdy son, J.-G. Billing, Latrobe (Moravian), Wilks son (British, Congregationalist), Wurtz, Jackson, Hasper, Chester, Eli, Mann, Daussi, Couri, Horton, John Gréffülhe, Lewis Vay, Albert Vay, J. Armiger, J. Maberly.”¹⁷ At all the preparatory meetings, a wide range of denominations as well as nationalities was represented: traditional Reformed, Congregationalist, Methodist, Moravian, and Lutheran.¹⁸

¹⁵ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 23-24.

¹⁶ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 30; Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 558.

¹⁷ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 23-30.

¹⁸ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 557-558.

The first president of the Society was Admiral Charles-Henri Ver Huell, an officer in the Dutch marine who chose to serve in the French army and who had received the Legion of Honor from Napoleon Bonaparte. Elected in absentia, Ver Huell graciously accepted the nomination. The other members of the executive committee included men of different nationalities and church affiliations: Rev. Stapfer (Swiss) and Rev. Goepp (vice presidents); Rev. Soulier (retired) and Rev. Auschlager (secretaries); Wilder (treasurer); Bartholdi, father; Monod, father; Bartholdi, son; Rev. Boissard, Frédérick de Coninck, François Delessert, Haussmann, Rev. Juillerat, Kieffer, Rev. Marron (Dutch, naturalized French), Rev. F. Monod, Pope, de Staël, Mark Wilks.¹⁹

The leadership of the Paris Mission drew from the old nobility and the new bourgeoisie. The urban, noble, and bourgeois profile of this Protestant leadership marked a sharp rupture with the previous century and a half that had witnessed the overwhelming influence of rural, working class Protestantism from the South.²⁰ This discontinuity led to conflicts rooted in historical

¹⁹ The “de Staël” listed here was probably the son of Germaine de Staël, August, and half brother of Mme. de Broglie. Many of the members of the women’s committee, founded in 1825, were spouses of these executive members.

²⁰ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 559.

resentment and social class that the Paris Mission leadership had to resolve in order to unify French Protestants both spiritually and financially in support of the cause of missions. For the reason, it was as social mediators — connecting Protestants from the north and the south, higher and lower classes — that women would play perhaps their most important role in the early missionary movement, starting in 1825 with the founding of the Paris Mission women’s committee.

The Theological Outlook of the Paris Mission

From the start, the Paris Mission was an inter-denominational mission, not affiliated with any particular church. Although French missiologist Jean-François Zorn has stated that most of the founders were evangelicals who were too radical theologically, socially, or politically for the leaders of the Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church, many of them remained active members within the official churches.²¹ Others did not, like Frédéric Monod, who resigned his position as pastor of the Reformed Church in 1848 to found the Union des Églises Évangéliques de France with Agénor de Gasparin.²²

²¹ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 553, 563.

²² Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 5. Frédéric’s brother, Adolphe, chose to remain a pastor in the Reformed Church, convinced he was called to minister in that context.

The committee's theological dynamic had important implications for the relationship between the Paris Mission and the official *concordataire* churches. Zorn defined three areas of "suspicion" that shed light on this relationship. First, the official churches felt that the Paris Mission embodied an excessive revivalist tendency that clashed with the churches' rationalist theology. Second, the leadership of the Paris Mission, composed of highly visible and influential men, did not hesitate to bend or disregard the law on associations that prohibited meetings of more than twenty persons — without suffering any legal consequences. The large number of notables of the Protestant High Society on the executive committee may have prompted government officials to turn a blind eye.²³ The churches, on the other hand, were very careful to stay within the confines of the law for fear of losing their status or their privileges as state churches. Third, the Paris Mission cultivated relationships with mission-related individuals and agencies in many foreign countries, whereas the official churches

²³ The "Haute Société Protestante" [Protestant High Society] or HSP, a descriptive classification that originated in the nineteenth century, was comprised of the wealthiest Protestant families of the nobility and high bourgeoisie involved in banking, business, international trade, and investing.

were striving to develop a French national identity and to obey the 1802 prohibition of cultivating relationships with foreign entities.²⁴

This apparent disregard for government authority coupled with their lack of church affiliation placed the Paris Mission in a marginal position in relationship to the official churches. However, Paris Mission leaders were members of the official churches and did not feel compelled to shift their allegiance in spite of the church leadership's "lukewarm" view of the society.²⁵ Instead, Paris Mission executive members used their influence as parishioners and as notables to cultivate alliances inside the churches that would serve the cause of missions.²⁶

The *Circulaire* [memo], an early document published as part of a longer text, intended to announce the founding of the Paris Mission, in fact caused significant tension between the Paris Mission and the churches. This text, *Adresse du Comité de la Société des Missions Évangéliques chez les peuples non-chrétiens, établie à Paris, aux protestants de France*, [Address of the Committee of the Society for

²⁴ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 563. The Organic Articles (1802) prohibited French state churches from cultivating relationships with foreign entities or authorities (Art. II).

²⁵ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 563.

²⁶ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 563.

Evangelical Mission to the Heathen, established in Paris, to the Protestants of France] dated December 2, 1822, stated:

As soon as the revival... began to emerge in Great Britain in 1795, we saw true Christians draw closer to one another and to the disciples of Jesus who, until that time, had never known each other; they formed among themselves mission societies that soon became like havens of evangelical charity. At the same time, it became a regular practice for them to meet together, with the sole purpose of praying that God would shine over the whole earth the light of his Gospel and abundantly communicate the grace of the Holy Spirit to all the Christian Churches in the world.²⁷

Here the use of the expression “true Christians” signaled a revivalist ideology that the (non-evangelical) leaders and many members of the Reformed Church found offensive and divisive. Even though the *Adresse* was only meant to describe the practices of the Monday evening prayer meeting, it defined a certain ecclesiology and a spirituality typical of the *Réveil* that many of the churches rejected.²⁸

²⁷ Original text: “Dès que le réveil ...commença à se manifester, en l’an 1795, on vit les vrais chrétiens se rapprocher les uns des autres, et des disciples de Jésus qui, jusque là, ne s’étaient point connus, former entre eux des sociétés de missions, qui devinrent bientôt comme des foyers de charité évangélique. L’usage en même temps s’établit parmi eux de se réunir périodiquement, dans le seul but de prier Dieu de faire luire sur toute la terre la lumière de son Evangile et de communiquer en abondance les grâces du Saint-Esprit à toutes les églises chrétiennes du monde.” Quoted in Jean Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris, 1822-1829*, vol. 1 (Paris: Société des Missions Évangéliques, 1930), 62.

²⁸ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 560.

Mission Principles

When it came to defining the mission principles of the Paris Mission, the founding committee felt no need to write a “declaration of principles.” Instead, as Paris Mission historian Jean Bianquis explained, they placed themselves squarely in the tradition of their predecessors of the London Missionary Society who initially were committed to an inter-denominational missiological ethos.

The Paris Mission adopted two guiding principles taken directly from the LMS. The first was drawn from the “Plan of the Society,” point II, that stated: “The sole object is to spread the knowledge of Christ among heathen and other unenlightened nations.”²⁹ The second was penned after a brief interlude in which differences of opinion on theology and ecclesiology had threatened division in the society. The directors of the LMS composed what came to be known as “the fundamental principle” of the London Missionary Society that read as follows:

As the union of God’s People of various Denominations, in carrying on this great Work, is the most desirable Object, so, to prevent, if possible, any cause of future dissention [sic], it is declared to be a fundamental principle of the Missionary Society, that our design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other

²⁹ Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895* (London: H. Frowde, 1899), 30.

form of Church Order and Government (about which there may be differences of opinion among serious Persons), but the Glorious gospel of the blessed God to the Heathen: and that it shall be left (as it ever ought to be left) to the minds of the Persons whom God may call into the fellowship of His Son from among them to assume for themselves such form of Church Government, as to them shall appear most agreeable to the Word of God. (May 1796)³⁰

Bianquis' history quoted the translation of these two texts as the basis for the mission principles of the Paris Mission—non-sectarianism in doctrine and ecclesiology.³¹ In 1930, his assessment of the Paris Mission's record was that "Over one hundred years later, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society still holds to these principles."³² In this respect, the Paris Mission differed from the LMS who eventually abandoned their inter-denominational ethos.

The founding of the Paris Mission on November 4, 1822 was followed by a great deal of activity both within the society and in French Protestant circles as news of the fledgling society spread. An Executive Commission of the Paris Mission composed of vice-presidents Stapfer and Goepp, secretaries Soulier and Auschlager, treasurer Wilder, and members Wilks, Kieffer, and F. Monod,

³⁰ Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society*, 49-50.

³¹ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 43-44.

³² Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 44.

immediately began publicizing the new society both in France and abroad.³³ This resulted in the emergence of numerous auxiliary societies and organized prayer meetings all over France in support of missions.

In response to requests from churches and pastors that came to them less than two months after their constitutive meeting, the Paris Mission began publishing a monthly bulletin, starting in July 1823. The *Bulletin* started initially as an insert in *Les Archives du Christianisme* with extra copies printed for distribution in the churches, to supplement the limited circulation of *les Archives*.³⁴ However, since many people did not subscribe to *les Archives*, the Paris Mission felt it was necessary to produce the *Bulletin* as an independent mission-focused news bulletin.³⁵ The issues were fairly brief, numbering from fifteen to twenty pages each. They generally included Paris Mission announcements, letters from pastors, the text of presentations at Paris Mission meetings, and a section entitled "Abroad" [*Étranger*] with mission reports and letters. The editorial board included Stapfer, F. Monod, Goepp, and Wilks.³⁶

³³ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 44-59.

³⁴ *Bulletin de la Société des Missions Évangéliques établie à Paris*, no. 1 (Juillet 1823): 1.

³⁵ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 174. *Les Archives* was initially an enormous tome, with several hundred pages. The first issue was 431 pages long.

³⁶ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 175.

There was a total of thirty issues, with the last one coming out in December 1825. The *Bulletin* was succeeded by the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* that published its first quarterly issue in January 1826.³⁷

The Maison des Missions [House of Missions]

As their first major project, the Paris Mission started a school of missions that would use the “particular advantages of Paris for the study of foreign languages” and open its doors to missionaries from all mission societies.³⁸ This undertaking was dear to Kieffer and Blumhardt. When Blumhardt had come to Paris, his goal in encouraging the foundation of a mission society was driven by the hope that it would include a mission school so that candidates from the Basel Mission could be trained in Eastern languages in Paris.

To create this mission institute, the founders bought a house, the *Maison des Missions* and appointed as its first director Antoine-Jean-Louis Galland, a Swiss pastor from the Reformed Church in Bern.³⁹ Thus, during its first decade of

³⁷ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 185-186.

³⁸ Bianquis, *Les origines* (vol. 1), 243.

³⁹ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 559.

existence, the Paris Mission poured its energy into the training of missionaries from other countries, denominations, and mission societies. It was only eleven years after its birth that the Paris Mission sent out their own missionaries, graduates of the *Maison des Missions*, to identify a foreign mission territory for Protestant France. The *Maison des Missions* was yet another way in which the French missionary movement embodied a unique ethos of international and inter-denominational solidarity with the global missionary movement.

The Search for a Mission Field

After several years focused on training missionaries from other agencies at the *Maison des Missions*, the Paris Mission decided that it was time to send out their own missionaries. But where should they go? Beginning in 1824, the Paris Mission Committee considered such disparate projects as missions to Jews in the Middle East, to “heathens” in Mauritius, and to Catholic Francophone populations in New Orleans and Canada. In the meantime, the first group of missionary students was about to graduate.

In 1827, they decided to seek discernment for the direction of their mission outreach by founding a Commission of Foreign Mission Fields. It was led by

Mark Wilks, who was also an agent of the LMS in Paris.⁴⁰ The vision for their initial mission became clear thanks to the visit of Edward Bickersteth, secretary of the Anglican Mission in London, in August 1827 and of John Philip, superintendent of the LMS in Southern Africa in 1829. Here the international Reformed Evangelical movement assisted even in the sending of the first Paris Mission envoys.

In January 1829, as a result of discussions with Philip, who offered to shepherd the new missionaries, the Paris Mission decided to send their first three graduates, Prosper Lemue, Isaac Bisseux, and Samuel Rolland to southern Africa, north of the Cape colony. Several specific reasons informed this decision: 1) Huguenot settlers lived near the Cape and the Paris Mission believed they had a duty to reach out to them on account of their shared historic heritage; 2) the LMS was present in the area and could provide logistical help and guidance for the young missionaries; 3) French Protestants would support the project. Indeed, in 1829, the fact that there were already 149 voluntary societies in France showed the enthusiasm and the financial backing of the French churches. After being consecrated in Paris in Saint Mary's Reformed Church on May 2, 1829, the three

⁴⁰ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 362.

young missionaries set sail for London and then for the Cape.⁴¹ John Philip welcomed them upon their arrival in southern Africa.

Among these three precursors, Bissieux pursued evangelization work on two fronts: among Huguenot farmers on the one hand, and among African slaves on the other. Lemue and Rolland followed Philip's recommendations and settled at Kuruman in Bechuanaland so they could work with Robert Moffat. Moffat put them in charge of a mission station near Kuruman which eventually led to the founding of another station that they called Motito. They were forced to abandon this work when the second wave of French missionaries arrived because of the instability caused by inter-ethnic conflicts in the region.⁴²

The second group of French graduates from the *Maison des Missions* arrived in the Cape in 1833. Their names were Eugène Casalis, Constant Gosselin, and Thomas Arbousset. Once again, Philip was there to welcome them. After hearing the news from Philip about the conflicts and the destruction that had forced their colleagues to leave LMS territory, they were stymied and not sure where to turn.

⁴¹ Zorn, *Le grand siècle*, 362, 363, 365.

⁴² Blandenier, *L'essor des missions protestantes*, 242, 243, 245.

Fortunately, the new missionaries didn't have to wait long for direction. The *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* of 1834 opened on a joyful note, brimming with good news from southern Africa. In a letter dated July 31, 1833, Casalis described how the chief of the Basothos, Moshoeshoe, son of Mogachane, had heard of the missionary work being done in Philippolis and Kuruman and desired to have the same benefits for his own people as a way to find a solution to the incessant battles and famine that his people were facing.

From that moment, he resolved to use all possible means to bring missionaries to his homeland. After a long reflection, he gave two hundred heads of cattle to a few servants and ordered them to find *the great master of the whites* in order to obtain from him, in exchange for the herd, *men capable of teaching blacks*.⁴³

Unfortunately, the cattle were stolen by Korana raiders and the servants returned home empty-handed but unscathed. However, a mulatto hunter from Philippolis named Adam Krots, whom Moshoeshoe had enlisted as part of the expedition, kept his promise to the chief in spite of the losses suffered. Krotz sought out Casalis, Arbousset, and Gosselin when they arrived in Philippolis and told them

⁴³ Original text: "*Dès ce moment il résolut d'employer tous les moyens possibles pour attirer chez lui des missionnaires. Après de longues réflexions, il remit deux cents bœufs à quelques uns de ses serviteurs, et leur commanda d'aller trouver le grand-mâitre des blancs, afin d'obtenir de lui, à la place de ce troupeau, des hommes capables d'instruire les noirs.*" Casalis report, *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* (JME) vol. 9 (Paris: Henry Servier, 1834), 7.

of Moshoeshoe's request, even offering to guide them back to his territory.⁴⁴

Apparently, according to Casalis' autobiographical account, Philip had already gotten wind of this encounter on one of his earlier trips into the interior and had informed the missionaries of the invitation. But they had not taken the proposal seriously, thinking it too fantastic or unfounded.⁴⁵ Now, having heard Kotz' account firsthand, Casalis became convinced that this was God's calling for them: "Providence had spoken. As Adam Krotz offered to accompany us, we could no longer doubt the veracity of this account."⁴⁶ In his report to the Paris Mission committee, published in the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*, Casalis wrote: "We would have thought we had committed an unpardonable sin to refuse to submit to such a remarkable calling. The hand of the Almighty was visible; 'he was showing us the path on which we were to walk.' (Isaiah 48:17)"⁴⁷ The three missionaries set off right away and arrived in Basotholand, at Thaba

⁴⁴ Théophile Jousse, *La mission française évangélique au sud de l'Afrique: son origine et son développement jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. 1 (Paris: Fischbacher, 1889), 109-110.

⁴⁵ Eugène Casalis, *Mes souvenirs* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1886), 165.

⁴⁶ Original text: "Maintenant la Providence avait parlé. Adam Krotz s'offrant à nous accompagner, on ne pouvait plus avoir aucun doute sur sa veracité." Casalis, *Mes souvenirs*, 165.

⁴⁷ Original text: "Nous aurions cru commettre une faute impardonnable en refusant de nous rendre à appel aussi remarquable. Le doigt de l'Éternel était visible ; il nous montrait le chemin par lequel nous devons marcher.' (Es. XLVIII, 17)" Casalis report, *JME* 9 (1834), 7-8.

Bosiu, on June 28, 1833. That day marked the official beginning of the Lesotho Mission.

Women Join the International Missionary Movement

The report of the annual meeting of the Paris Mission's General Assembly in 1826 opened with the list of all those in attendance, including "the women of the Committee of the Auxiliary Society of women of Paris [who] occupied the first rows of chairs directly in front of the desk."⁴⁸ It was only twenty pages later in the report that the announcement of the creation of the Paris Mission women's committee was formally made, with much enthusiasm and feeling. Since its creation the previous year, the committee had already shown its influence, and the fruit of its work emerged in several parts of the report. On pages 24-25, the General Assembly report described several women's societies in the provinces, including the cities of Mens and Nérac.⁴⁹ With great excitement, treasurer Waddington's report mentioned monetary gifts from women's groups in Geneva

⁴⁸ Original text: "*Les dames composant le Comité de la Société auxiliaire de femmes de Paris, occupaient les premiers rangs de chaises en avant du bureau.*" *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale de la Société des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens, établie à Paris, April 14, 1826* (Paris: Imprimerie de J. Smith, 1826), 8.

⁴⁹ *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (April 14, 1826), 24-25.

and Bristol and from children in a school in Sainte-Foy. He could not hide his joy at the sacrificial giving of the children to the work of missions. He also noted “with great pleasure [that] women everywhere are beginning to create associations to come to our rescue.”⁵⁰ He highlighted a promising new fundraising method: little offering boxes, nicely decorated, placed on the mantle or elsewhere in the living room for serendipitous donations—no doubt a woman’s idea.⁵¹ He also voiced his hope that women and men would emulate each other in this “charitable work,” unlike the time when “the Women’s Bible Association, out of an excess of zeal, took away all of his subscribers” (from the small Bible Society of which he was president).⁵²

Of course, it is impossible to know whether or not the women “took away” all of Waddington’s subscribers, or whether they were simply more successful in inspiring their fellow Protestants to join the work of missions, in a spiritual as well as in a financial role. However, Waddington’s report did

⁵⁰ Original text: “Je vois également avec un extrême plaisir que, de toutes parts, les dames commencent à s’associer pour venir à notre secours.” *Procès Verbal de l’Assemblée Générale* (April 14, 1926), 50-51.

⁵¹ *Procès Verbal de l’Assemblée Générale* (April 14, 1926), 51.

⁵² Original text: “l’Association des dames, par excès de zèle, m’a enlevé presque tous mes souscripteurs.” *Procès Verbal de l’Assemblée Générale* (April 14, 1926), 51.

highlight the excitement and the energy that women's associations had brought to the work of missions in less than a year. The Paris Mission women's committee contributed leadership and vision to their newfound calling as partners in international missions. As the handwritten minutes of their first meeting stated:

The April 14, 1825 annual session of the Paris Mission (...) had deeply touched the people who had been able to attend – "All could see that in France, as elsewhere, the work of evangelical missions seemed to be the object of divine favor." Several women felt the strong desire to join this holy enterprise by forming associations...⁵³

The women who attended the 1825 General Assembly seemed to have experienced a powerful calling to international missions, a sort of "second conversion" to a wider vision that evangelicals were eager to embrace.

The women of the Paris Mission committee played an important role as the spiritual champions of the missionary movement by mediating regional and class differences between Protestants. As social mediators, they bridged the historic gaps between Protestants in the north and the south, the higher and the

⁵³ Original text: "*La séance annuelle du 14 avril 1825 dans laquelle la Société des Missions établie à Paris a rendu compte de ses travaux avait profondément touché les personnes qui avaient pu y assister. 'Chacune avait pu voir qu'en France, comme ailleurs, l'œuvre des missions évangéliques semble être l'objet de la faveur divine.' Plusieurs dames éprouvaient un vif désir de concourir à cette sainte entreprise en formant des associations.*" Comité des dames, "Première assemblée du 29 avril 1825," handwritten ms., archives of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society.

lower classes, the Lutherans and the Reformed. They nurtured and extended their local connections to inspire support for world evangelism in women's societies in the provinces.

Madame de Broglie was the visionary leader, theologian, and strategist of the women's Bible Society auxiliary and the Paris Mission women's committee. Her theological reflections on women in mission nurtured the vision shared by the other committee members and also inspired regional women's associations. Nevertheless, while her defense of women's leadership was unequivocal, a certain ambivalence remained in how she and later leading voices among Protestant women navigated their pioneering roles. Their calling to "evangelize" and fundraise for the sake of missions sometimes put women in the public eye, teaching and preaching for the sake of the gospel. Certainly, the annual General Assemblies of the Paris Mission gave the women's committee a platform for communicating their very detailed report, which often took the form of a narrative sermon. As tensions rose around the increasingly public and autonomous actions of these women, the challenge this represented to the acceptable social mores became an issue. De Broglie's spiritual vision and strategy guided the Paris Mission women's committee in their role as spiritual champions and social mediators among Protestants in France.

**Albertine de Broglie, Exemplar of Prophetic Spirituality and Female Pioneer of
the Missionary Movement**

Duchess Albertine de Broglie (née de Staël-Holstein) was the daughter of Germaine de Staël (the famous “Madame de Staël,” 1766-1817) and granddaughter of Suzanne Necker (née Curchod, wife of minister Necker, 1739-1794) who were both illustrious *salonnières* of the eighteenth century.⁵⁴ De Broglie assumed leadership of her mother’s famous salon after her death in 1817.⁵⁵ Wemyss noted that the *Réveil* had lost a prominent representative from the corridors of power when de Broglie died an untimely death in 1838, aged forty-one.⁵⁶ De Broglie and her husband were “at the very center of Parisian

⁵⁴ A *salonnière* was a woman of the nobility who hosted regular meetings in her home to discuss politics, literature, art, music, and other socially relevant topics with members of the nobility or the educated bourgeoisie.

⁵⁵ An interesting detail in de Broglie’s biography is her parentage. According to Renée Winegartner, de Broglie was the child of Germaine de Staël’s passionate liaison with Swiss writer Benjamin Constant. After her mother’s death, de Broglie destroyed any incriminating correspondence that would reveal her illegitimacy and damage her mother’s reputation. De Broglie shared this precarious social status with Julie-Jeanne-Eléanore de Lespinasse, one of the leading *salonnières* of the eighteenth century, also the child of an adulterous liaison. See Renée Winegarten, *Germaine de Staël and Benjamin Constant: A Dual Biography* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 100-101; Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 308.

⁵⁶ Alice Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil: 1790-1849* (Paris: Les Bergers et les Mages, 1977), 210.

Christianity” and both were on the executive committees of numerous evangelical societies or women’s auxiliary societies.⁵⁷ According to Wemyss, it was in de Broglie’s salon that “the marriage between pietism colored with mysticism and Anglo-Saxon ‘Methodism’ was consummated, giving birth to the Parisian *Réveil*.”⁵⁸ The grafting of pietism and Methodist holiness into French Protestantism from the east and the north, created the particular brand of Evangelical Protestantism that emerged in the nineteenth century.

In the eighteenth century, salons had played an important role in shaping public discourse on contemporary topics in literature and politics. For example, the salon of de Broglie’s grandmother (Madame Necker, wife of Jacques Necker, who was the Minister of Finance under King Louis XVI), was a major force in shaping the political discourse in the pre-revolutionary period.⁵⁹ Salons were “working spaces,” not merely venues of pleasure. Because their goal was to upgrade social gatherings from a life of dissipation, all gambling was absent.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Thomas Erskine in 1823, quoted in Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 112.

⁵⁸ Original text: “*C’est sous son toit que sera consommé ce mariage entre un piétisme teinté d’illuminisme et le ‘méthodisme’ anglo-saxon d’où naîtra le Réveil parisien.*” Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 112.

⁵⁹ Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 81.

⁶⁰ Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 74, 77.

Salons were spaces that brought together people of different ranks and social standing to facilitate interaction on an equal footing. The *salonnières* helped to socialize those wishing to establish ties with the nobility by maintaining strict rules of conversation so that exchanges between people of different social standing did not lead to conflict or misunderstanding.⁶¹ By providing this form of social service, the *salonnières* pursued not only an alternative to the dominant practices in society and politics in which women had no overt roles, but also an alternative to romantic love.⁶² Notable men who frequented their salons respected their leadership because they provided order by enforcing the rules of polite conversation.⁶³

Following the model of the eighteenth century *salonnière*, de Broglie would have played the role of the “governor” in her salon, the one who laid down the rules of conversation and determined the topics of discussion on any given day. Her role of *salonnière* gave her influential power in a mixed-gender, non-religious context that widened her reach beyond the various women’s

⁶¹ Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 97.

⁶² Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 84. Germaine de Staël, for example, was (unofficially) separated from her husband.

⁶³ Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 91.

auxiliary societies to which she later belonged—such as the women’s auxiliary society of the Paris Bible Society and of the Paris Mission. Her influence also extended to the most modest levels of society in her work with these women’s societies in the provinces, as will be seen below. She was the leader among many Protestant women of high social standing who, like her, embodied the prophetic spirituality of the woman of action in the church and in society.

While it may be true that in 1818, with the arrival of Frédéric Monod, revivalist pastor and future editor of *les Archives du Christianisme*, “the *Réveil* took root in the capital,” it is important to consider the pioneering role de Broglie played, beginning in 1817, in providing a forum for discussion of the new theological ideas in her salon.⁶⁴ De Broglie was in an excellent position, as the daughter of Mme. de Staël, a celebrated author and *salonnière*, to influence public opinion and play an evangelistic role in the spread of the *Réveil* among highbrow Parisians. But she was also an extraordinary figure, on her own merits, even if she was not as famous as her mother.

A woman of exceptional religious character and intellect, de Broglie left a

⁶⁴ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 113.

powerful impression on Alphonse de Lamartine, a renowned French poet, historian, and statesman who described her in this way:

As soon as I saw the daughter [of Germaine de Staël], I no longer regretted not having known the mother. She was astounding in everything. For me she was full of grace, indulgence, welcome. She had the kind of religious beauty that truly belonged in a sanctuary; all the thoughts that crossed her beautiful eyes seemed to come directly from heaven, and softened only when gazing on earthly things so as not to consume them and pulverize them with a look. Her soul, in fact, dwelled in tabernacles from on high: she was the mother that Raphaël might have painted, if the Virgin had other children than a God!

(...) Mme. de Broglie's character had in religion what her mother's, Mme. de Staël, had in genius: contained enthusiasm that was active and eloquent. She was the grave portrait of prayer, the woman of God, to apply to her this beautiful and simple expression for the most excellent of good men "This is a man of God."⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Original text: "*Dès que j'eus aperçu la fille, je ne regrettais plus de n'avoir pas connu la mère. Elle effarait tout. Elle fut pour moi pleine de grâce, d'indulgence, d'accueil. Elle avait une de ces beautés religieuses dont le vrai cadre est un sanctuaire; toutes les pensées qui traversaient ses beaux yeux semblaient venir directement du ciel, et s'adoucir seulement en regardant les choses d'ici-bas pour ne pas les consumer et les pulvériser du regard. Son âme, en effet, habitait les tabernacles d'en haut: c'était la mère de famille telle que Raphaël aurait pu la peindre, si la Vierge avait eu d'autres enfants d'un Dieu! (...) Mme. de Broglie avait en religion le caractère que sa mère, Mme de Staël, avait en génie l'enthousiasme contenu, actif et éloquent. C'était la statue grave de la Prière, la femme de Dieu, pour lui appliquer cette belle et simple expression des hommes de bien par excellence: 'C'est un homme de Dieu.'*" From Alphonse de Lamartine's "Exchange with the Reader" that served as a preface to his "Hymn on the Death of the Duchess de Broglie," a long poem dated 1839, published in his *Recueils poétiques* (Paris: Hachette, 1856), 11. The fact that Lamartine's highest compliment for Mme. de Broglie is to use the expression "This is a man of God" says something about the hierarchy of gender in nineteenth century France—men were considered examples of the highest religious devotion, not women.

A collection of de Broglie's essays published in 1840 under the title *Fragments sur divers sujets de religion et de morale* [Fragments on various topics of religion or morality] highlighted both her skill as a writer and some of the issues that she held dear. Among the essays were: 1) a preface to a history of the Quakers, in which she reflected on their pacifism, their social engagement, their desire to abolish social hierarchy, their attitude towards women as equal partners, and women's work in prisons and education; 2) prefaces to translations into French of three of Thomas Erskine's theological essays (a revisionist Calvinist); 3) an essay on the character of Christ; 4) her pioneering essay for the women's auxiliary Bible Society in which she defined a *modus operandi* for all the women's societies in general; and 5) four annual reports of the Paris Mission women's committee.⁶⁶ There are also several published volumes of her correspondence. In 1821, she wrote to William Wilberforce on behalf of her husband, in order to ask how the latter could contribute to the struggle against the slave trade.⁶⁷ Her "*Lettre d'une femme chrétienne à un savant incrédule*" [Letter from a Christian

⁶⁶ Albertine Ida Gustavine de Staël-Holstein Broglie, *Fragments sur divers sujets de religion et de morale* (Paris: Impr. royale, 1840). Erskine tried to devise a revised Calvinism that was less harsh and included universal atonement.

⁶⁷ Albertine de Broglie and Albert de Broglie, *Lettres de la duchesse de Broglie, 1814-1838* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1896), 91-95.

woman to an unbelieving scientist] probably written during her last illness, is evidence of her passionate evangelical faith. Other writing in her *Fragments* demonstrates that she was not interested in a rigidly sectarian Calvinism but that she admired the activist faith of the Quakers who cared nothing about the rituals and sacraments of the Christian faith but were “the most Christian by their actions.”⁶⁸ De Broglie’s intellectual acumen, her visionary spirituality, her charismatic personality, and her devout faith made her an ideal figure to lead the Protestant women of Paris in a missionary enterprise.

De Broglie Spearheads the Creation of the Paris Mission Women’s Committee

On April 29, 1825, deeply moved by the reports she had heard at the annual General Assembly of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society two weeks before, the Duchess de Broglie called a meeting in her home with the other women who had attended the assembly. This pioneer group was comprised of some of the most important women in the *Haute Société Protestante* [Protestant High Society].⁶⁹ Many of them were spouses of current or future Paris Mission

⁶⁸ de Broglie, *Fragments*, 3.

⁶⁹ The “Haute Société Protestante” [Protestant High Society] or HSP, a descriptive classification that originated in the nineteenth century, was comprised of the wealthiest

executive members: Mme. Gautier-Délessert (wife of Parisian banker Gautier), Mme. Juillerat (wife of a pastor from Nîmes, founding editor of *les Archives du Christianisme*, a brave figure during the White Terror of 1815), Mme. Frédéric Monod (wife of the charismatic pastor of Temple de l'Oratoire who was editor of *les Archives*), Mme. Galand (wife of the first director of the *Maison des Missions*), Mme. Guizot (wife of the future minister of education who would be the author of the 1833 Guizot Law on primary education), Mme. Randall, Mme. de Montigni, Mme. Bartholdi (future funder and member of the board of the Paris Deaconesses of Reuilly), Mme. Emilie Mallet (wife of banker Jules Mallet).⁷⁰ They discussed their role and the advantages of being a women's society in the work of mission (the details are not in the minutes).⁷¹

At the second meeting on May 14, 1825, they elected officers and

Protestant families of the nobility and high bourgeoisie involved in banking, business, international trade, and investing.

⁷⁰ *Comité des dames*, "Première assemblée du 29 avril 1825." Note: In researching this period, it is not always possible to positively identify the female actors because they were designated only by their social position relative to their male family members (i.e., maiden names and married names were used, not first names). Catherine Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie: Pauvreté, action sociale et lien social, à Paris, au cours du premier XIXe siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris: Comité d'histoire de la Sécurité sociale, 1997), 630-633.

⁷¹ *Comité des dames*, "Première assemblée." The information on the women's committee's activities comes from two sources: the handwritten reports of the monthly or bi-monthly meetings of the committee and the annual report that one woman of the committee was "nominated" to write—often after several others had refused the task (for unspecified reasons).

members: Juillerat (president), André (vice-president), Wilks and Galand (treasurers); secretaries de Broglie, F. Monod, de Berckheim, and Mallet; and regular members d'Ounous de Marveille, F. Monod, Bartholdi, Randall.⁷² Of this group, de Broglie, Gautier, Juillerat, F. Monod, Bartholdi, de Berckheim, Mallet, and Wilks were also founding members of the Bible Society women's auxiliary, organized in 1823.⁷³ They appointed a sub-committee to determine how they could advance the work of the *Maison des Missions* (the House of Missions, a residential seminary for aspiring missionaries)—the first project of the Paris Mission.⁷⁴

At their July 13 meeting, they read the rough draft of their by-laws. These by-laws established procedures for the committee and also served as a model for the many other women's auxiliaries that sprang up in the following years all over France. The *règlement* stipulated that meetings were to take place every two

⁷² *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms., May 14, 1825.

⁷³ Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, appendix 1, "Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris," 323. The full list of 18 (out of 20) founders included the following women: "de Broglie*, Gautier Delessert*, Dominique André*, Baronness Matthieu de Faviers, Mandrot, Kieffer*, Frédéric Monod*, Jules Mallet*, Stapfer*, Juillerat*, François Delessert*, Baronness Hottinguer, Baronness S. de Berckheim*, de Salvandy, Countess Rapp, Scherer, Bartholdi née Walther*, Mark Wilks*." The starred names are those of future members of the Paris Mission women's committee or of spouses of Paris Mission executive members (often they were both).

⁷⁴ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms., May 14, 1825.

months and were to include fourteen women (a president, vice president, two treasurers, four adjuncts and four secretaries), one of whom was a collector of subscriptions.

Between meetings, members committed themselves to going out and forming other women's associations, following the model of the women's Bible societies. Monetary subscriptions for missions could be taken by year, month, or week, with a minimum of two sous per week (a franc was worth 20 sous). The committee collected gifts in kind (linens, cloth, books, paper) that could be useful to missions or could be sold to raise money. The collectors were to receive the *bulletin* (presumably of the Paris Mission, with news of missions). Initially, it was decided that any money the women's committees collected would be donated, in part, to pay the expenses of the poor students at the *Maison des Missions*, and the rest would go to the Paris Mission itself.⁷⁵ Even though it was not specified in the by-laws, the Paris women's committee meetings always started with prayer (and sometimes the reading of Scripture) and ended with prayer. This was noted in the minutes.

⁷⁵ *Comité des dames, procès verbal, "Règlement pour la société auxiliaire de femmes,"* handwritten ms., July 13, 1825.

The women's committee functioned for six months without bothering to officially notify the Paris Mission executive committee of their existence and the mission they had taken on.⁷⁶ Finally, at the November 1825 meeting, Mallet proposed that the committee write a letter to the president of the Paris Mission to inform the executive committee of the creation of their committee and to report on their work that year. Committee president Mme. Juillerat wrote and signed the letter. They received a grateful response from the pen of the vice president, a letter that they read at their meeting of February 8, 1826.

The Divine Call to Missions: An Apologetic for Women's Equality?

The Paris Mission women's committee's first annual report of 1826, complemented by two brief appended documents at the end of the General Assembly minutes, expressed their spiritual vision and their newfound calling to mission partnership. De Broglie was the leading author of the report, no doubt with input from the committee. According to the minutes from April 5, 1826, the women's committee read and approved it before sending it to the executive committee. The other two documents were signed as being "from the Paris

⁷⁶ However, the Paris Mission executive committee no doubt was already aware of the existence of the women's committee.

Mission Women's Committee." It is probable that de Broglie worked on them, perhaps with help from Mallet.⁷⁷ Both of these women were revered leaders among the women in Parisian Protestant High Society for their integrity and their single-minded devotion to Evangelical endeavors in many different contexts—infant school education, the Bible Society, female prisoner rehabilitation, and later on, the deaconess movement.

De Broglie prefaced the annual report by addressing the all-male executive committee with a shrewd defense of their right, as women, to initiate the creation of their committee independently of male permission: "One might find, in our resolution [to create an auxiliary society to cooperate in the holy enterprise (of missions)] a sort of recklessness, since your consent didn't incite it; but the same goal, the same idea must, of course, produce the same efforts."⁷⁸

These words expressed a quiet and somewhat defiant confidence. The women's

⁷⁷ The handwriting of the minutes was faded and hard to read. The minutes of the women's committee meeting on April 5, 1826 specified that Mallet read the letter to the group and that de Broglie wrote "most of it." However, some of the language was directly taken from the monthly minutes that were probably written by Émilie Mallet, another theological powerhouse of the committee. Because de Broglie was not the sole author, the 1826 annual report was not re-published in her *Fragments*.

⁷⁸ Original text: "*On pourrait peut-être trouver dans cette résolution une sorte de témérité, puisque votre assentiment ne l'avait point provoquée ; mais un même but, une même pensée doivent naturellement produire les mêmes efforts.*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris*, included in the *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale de la Société des Mission Évangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens* (April 14, 1826), 59.

committee was clearly saying that they didn't have to ask anyone's permission to start their committee because they answered to God alone, in the fulfillment of their Christian calling. They considered themselves to be co-workers with their male counterparts, equally and directly accountable to God for their actions.

These women were so confident of their divine calling that they only elected to *inform* the executive committee of their existence and affiliation with the Paris Mission in November 1825, as a *fait accompli*, six months after they started their committee and when the by-laws were finalized.⁷⁹ These powerful women were not to be deterred from their new calling to international mission work.

This autonomous initiative on the part of the women's committee was a departure from the way other women's societies were managed at that time. For example, the Bible Society women's auxiliary was documented as being founded by "Sigismond Billing and Madame de Broglie" — with the man's name listed first — and Billing, presumably, remained the male overseer of the group. But

⁷⁹ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms., November 9, 1825. The minutes stipulate that Mallet proposed both writing a letter to *officially* inform the executive committee of the existence of their committee and reporting on their work in the first few months. Women's committee president Mme. Juillerat wrote and signed the letter. Of course, unofficially, one can assume that the women's husbands on the executive committee would have known about their project from the beginning.

with the Paris Mission women’s committee, from the start, there was no record of a male sponsor in the monthly minutes. Nevertheless, starting in 1828, the financial records of the Paris Mission listed subscriptions from the “Paris Auxiliary Society of Women by the Rev. M. Wilks” — usually a fixed sum of money — as a separate line item from the subscription simply of the “Paris Auxiliary Society of Women.”⁸⁰ In contrast to the power struggles women experienced with men in the Bible Society and in the ongoing management of the Paris infant schools (see chapter 6), it seems that the women in the Paris Mission committee found more freedom to exercise their leadership roles in this context and that they found more support among their likeminded, revived, male colleagues — many of them their own spouses.⁸¹

The Time had come for Women in Mission

The women of the committee were obviously reading current missionary literature like the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques (JME)* that had just published

⁸⁰ *Procès verbal de l’Assemblée Générale* (April 25, 1828), 82.

⁸¹ Emilie Mallet and the women’s committee of the infant schools struggled for several years (1835-1837) to maintain their ability to manage the Paris infant schools, especially in the hiring of teachers and choice of curriculum.

its first issue in 1826, the *Bulletin* of the Paris Mission (first issued in 1823), and the *Archives du Christianisme* (published since 1818). In particular, the pilot issue of the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* of 1826 published a long story (p241-277) on missions to India, including the arrival of the Judsons and the Newells in Calcutta in 1812 and their subsequent struggles. The report included a long letter (translated into French) from Ann Judson describing the two-year ordeal they suffered, Adoniram's imprisonment, and her advocacy and care for him. The story of her heroism as a missionary wife no doubt energized the new Paris Mission women's committee. In the absence of international mission news from the Paris Mission, the *JME* of 1826 devoted almost 300 pages (41-333) to mission work in all the regions of the globe except Central and South America and Antarctica.⁸²

Inspired by Ann Judson's story, the women's 1826 annual report noted that "this was the first time that women were called to take part in the work of Missions, because in the past unmarried priests were the only missionaries."⁸³

⁸² Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed., The Penguin History of the Church Series (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 212. Neill was referring to the global spread of colonialism when he wrote that "even the penguins were not left in peace" in Antarctica in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

⁸³ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 64.

Their report then launched into a passionate description of missions with the clear intention of recruiting women to the cause. They described how some (unnamed) women were called to brave deadly climates and savage peoples as missionary wives whose work included sharing their husband's work and helping to direct schools.⁸⁴ They might have been referring to the 1826 *JME* report on the education of women in Greece with a letter from Mrs. Kennedy addressed to Mr. Hartley, a missionary of the Anglican Church.⁸⁵

However, the report continued, the task for the many women who remained "in Christian countries" was "to assist them [the missionary women] by their prayers and through efforts that are not so difficult in their own countries" — in other words, to raise funds or support in kind.⁸⁶ One ingenious fundraising idea popular at this time was that of the "Cent Society" or "Mite Society" — women's associations that were raising funds for missions, penny by

⁸⁴ The 1826 issue of the *JME* also covered the LMS mission in Polynesia (201-218) as well as the Berlin Society's mission to Jews in Prussia (218-228), and the American mission efforts in Hawaii (363-365). These were just a few of the articles in a journal of 382 pages. The coverage was extensive when it came to the variety of denominations, national identities of the mission agencies, and locations of the missions (the entire globe) — with the exception that these were all Protestant missions.

⁸⁵ *JME* (1826): 282-288.

⁸⁶ Original text: "*les seconder par leurs prières et par des efforts bien peu difficiles dans leur propre patrie.*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 64.

penny—a method that was being widely used in America.⁸⁷ The idea had been disseminated by the *London Evangelical Magazine*, which described its great potential—showing how any good cause that “intended to promote the good of souls” might accumulate “a vast sum” using this method.⁸⁸ Also, in the United States, Mary Webb had pioneered the idea of women’s support for missions when she founded the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes in 1800, at the age of 21. Her group brought together thirteen women, half of whom were Baptists, half Congregationalists, a groundbreaking initiative in inter-denominational relations at the time.⁸⁹

The committee believed that, whether at home or abroad, zeal for the gospel should propel women into action, either as missionary wives or as members of auxiliary societies. The report argued that the missionary calling of women found its source not only in Jesus’ new commandment to love one another but also in the ideal of motherly love, “governed by a superior love,” like

⁸⁷ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1968), 13. The idea had been birthed during a dinner conversation at the home of Deacon John Simpkins of the Massachusetts Missionary Society in 1802. His wife became the collector of the first society.

⁸⁸ The *London Evangelical Magazine*, quoted in Beaver, *All Loves Excelling*, 24.

⁸⁹ Ruth A. Tucker, *Guardians of the Great Commission: The Story of Women in Modern Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1988), 64-65.

that of a mother placing her child “in the arms of this *God who Saves* [Dieu sauveur].”⁹⁰ This evoked the “mission of motherhood” embedded in the new nineteenth century Protestant model of the family as a tool for missionary outreach.⁹¹ The women’s committee believed that, as with the disciples at Emmaus, the eyes of Christian women everywhere would now be opened and they would no longer be able to remain passively in “sterile admiration” of missionary virtue, because their hearts also burned with the memory of what they had heard.⁹²

Women Make the Best Missionaries

Seven of the founding members of the Paris Mission women’s committee also belonged to the Bible Society women’s auxiliary. They would have been

⁹⁰ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 66. Italics are in the original text. The women of the committee had interviewed a young wife of a missionary student at the *Maison des Missions* and were in awe of her piety and wholehearted devotion to following her husband wherever the mission took them, to the point of laying down her life.

⁹¹ Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 124-131.

⁹² *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 67. The women’s report did not give the names of any of the missionary figures they referred to. However, it would not be too difficult to connect the allusions to the report published in the first issue of the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*, published that same year.

intimately acquainted with a document penned in 1824 by de Broglie for the Bible Society auxiliary, entitled “*Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes*” [Regarding Women’s Bible Associations]. Since this text was also republished in *les Archives du Christianisme* that same year, it is probable that all the women would have been quite familiar with it.⁹³ Using concrete examples and arguing from nature, the text reasoned that women possessed inherent skills that made them better suited than men for most tasks that had to do with missions and with charitable endeavors in general. This groundbreaking document was the direct inspiration for the 1826 women’s report to the Paris Mission General Assembly.

From the start, the title set the tone for the subversive ideas that de Broglie was developing regarding women’s status as equal, not auxiliary, partners in the work of benevolent outreach. The fact that she titled the document “Regarding Women’s Bible Associations” rather than “Regarding Bible Society Women’s *Auxiliaries*” signaled that she considered women’s work to be essential and autonomous rather than “auxiliary” to that of men. A year later, in the

⁹³ “*Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes*” in *Les Archives du Christianisme*, vol. 7 (1824), 8-18. This appeared in the “Miscellanea” (“Variétés”) section, at the beginning of the issue (giving it prominence) but without identifying the author, Madame de Broglie.

handwritten minutes discussing the founding of the Paris Mission women's committee in 1825, the preferred term the women used to describe the group was "the Committee."

De Broglie's text demonstrated why women's natural gifts and deeper piety made them better candidates than men for the work of missions. She rooted her arguments in her personal experience and in empirical observations regarding the way men and women functioned in society. The profile de Broglie painted of "Bible Women" (women who distributed Bibles) included the following characteristics: 1) Being detail oriented, women are better at running the household and are therefore more adept at distributing "assistance and consolation."⁹⁴ 2) They can do a lot of good "at very little cost."⁹⁵ 3) They can gain the trust of the poor and are less liable to be duped by false stories when giving out charity because they are better judges of character. They know how to treat others with dignity according to their economic status (e.g. the poor). 4) Therefore, women are capable of establishing relations between poor and rich that are not based on power dynamics "because they have no active role in the

⁹⁴ "Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes" in *Les Archives* (1824): 8.

⁹⁵ "Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes" in *Les Archives* (1824): 9.

social order” —in other words, the humble position of women is an advantage.⁹⁶

5) Women are more adapted to the long-range work of missions because they are more patient, “they are more made for prayer,” more persevering and gentle, not

given to having their dignity wounded.⁹⁷ 6) Women, not men, should reach out

to other women. They are better able to bridge the differences between social

classes because “there are already more ties between women of all classes.”⁹⁸

Their calling as Bible women has the “secondary advantage of creating a true

union between the different social classes.”⁹⁹ 8) As mothers and wives, their

common experience of suffering allows women to break through all social

barriers.¹⁰⁰ Because women have a deeper “internal life” and are drawn together

by “an eternal friendship,” they can develop and maintain friendships more

naturally.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824): 11-12.

⁹⁷ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824): 13.

⁹⁸ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824): 16.

⁹⁹ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824): 16, 17.

¹⁰⁰ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824), 17.

¹⁰¹ “Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes” in *Les Archives* (1824): 16, 17. The original expression is “une sympathie éternelle.” The term “sympathie” has several translations, including “friendship,” “sympathy,” and “empathy.”

De Broglie's profile of the woman as the "ideal missionary" in this document served as the foundation for the new international calling of French Protestant women. In their first annual report to the Paris Mission in 1826, de Broglie and the Paris Mission women's committee sought to demonstrate how their strengths as women could contribute to the missionary movement, specifically in their role as social mediators (bridge builders between social classes and regional groups), as advocates for international missions, and as agents of social renewal.

A Strategy for Social Mediation, Promotion, and Dissemination

The intent of the Paris Mission women's 1826 annual report was to demonstrate how valuable the women's committee's contribution was, even in the first year of its existence. It described how the committee immediately took up the defense of the cause of missions among French Protestants and began to break down obstacles to mission among the wealthy, while at the same time reaching out to the lower classes. The report noted that the women encountered the most opposition in their promotion of international missions among the wealthy who feared that the cause might "compromise the social position of

Protestants in France.”¹⁰² In other words, these women were intentionally undertaking the important work of spanning the social and regional divide in French Protestantism and of convincing Protestants of every social standing of their duty to support missions with both prayer and money.¹⁰³ This important aspect of their role was again emphasized in the 1829 annual report, when the Paris Mission women’s committee urged all categories of women to get involved in the work of missions: “Let us not allow social standing to be a pretext [for inaction].”¹⁰⁴

How were the women defining “missions”? Throughout their report, the word “Missions” was capitalized and always seemed to refer to international missions. One initial clue confirms this. At the beginning of their report, the

¹⁰² *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 60-61. This was probably the objection that international missions would take away funding from domestic missions.

¹⁰³ Historically, Protestants in Paris tended to be of the upper class and the nobility, whereas the bulk of the Protestants from the south were of more humble origins. However, southern Protestants were very proud of their historical legacy of resistance to persecution, in particular in the Cévennes area where peasants and farmers held out against the dragoons of Louis XIV for many years. During that same period, many northern Protestants had chosen either to go into exile or to abjure. As a result, there was an antagonism between southern Protestants and those in Paris because the southerners resented Parisian leadership. See chapter one for more historical background.

¹⁰⁴ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 44.

women justified the creation of their society by referring to the success of the Bible Society women's auxiliary after one year, stating that this gave them "hope that similar efforts directed towards Missions would not be entirely unfruitful."¹⁰⁵ The implied contrast between the work of the Bible Society auxiliaries in France (national missions) and "the work of Missions" indicated that their concept of "mission" was international.¹⁰⁶ Further confirmation comes from the story of a seven-year-old child who proposed the idea of bringing the "poor savages" to France to teach them the Christian faith. The report gently suggested that "he didn't yet understand the touching idea of Evangelical Missions" — that is, the idea of taking the gospel to foreign lands.¹⁰⁷ In addition, Wemyss noted that in the south, where eighteenth century Protestants endured the relentless and merciless efforts of the *missionnaires catholiques* to force them to convert to Catholicism, the painful memories of the past created significant resistance to the "missionaries" of the *Réveil*, even if they were Protestant.¹⁰⁸ This

¹⁰⁵ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 59.

¹⁰⁶ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 59.

¹⁰⁷ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 61.

¹⁰⁸ Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil*, 207.

suggests that nineteenth century Protestants would have avoided the use of the term “mission/missions” to distance their work of evangelism and their ministries of compassion in metropolitan France from that of Catholics. This was especially necessary because, starting with the Restoration (1814-1817), bands of radical Catholic *missionnaires* in the provinces “employed all the resources of religious revivalism in the cause of political reaction.”¹⁰⁹ These bands were influenced by Catholic Ultra Royalist ideology and strived to combat Protestantism by all possible means.

The women’s annual report illustrated the work they had accomplished in the first year with stories, mostly without giving names or locations. For example, the initial opposition to missions by certain unnamed wealthy Protestants had broken down under “the influence of divine grace”; a poor working woman was the first to subscribe to the support of missions; a rich woman in Nîmes gave her jewelry to buy a Bible for a “poor pagan.”¹¹⁰ The fact that a poor working woman was the first to donate to missions may have

¹⁰⁹ Charles Stanley Phillips, *The Church in France, 1848-1907: A Study in Revival* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967), 154-155. Phillips points out that the moderate Catholics found these *missionnaires* to be an embarrassment because of their militant and aggressive tactics.

¹¹⁰ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 61-62.

indicated the women's committee's knowledge of and desire to imitate the Foreign Missionary Society, a pioneer denominational agency in America that received their first legacy from Sally Thomas, a poor servant woman.¹¹¹ All the women's subsequent annual reports contained at least one story of contributions from destitute individuals and many examples of poignant piety, using quotes from the letters of humble, devout people.

The women's committee already had imagined an efficient strategy that would allow them to divide the task of promoting missions among as many people as possible. In 1823, the Protestant Bible Society women's auxiliary, led by de Broglie, had devised an organizational model to distribute Bibles and raise funds for the Bible Society:

The 20 women of the [Bible] Committee were each put in charge of one [Paris] district; they committed to making frequent visits to Protestant families to arouse zeal for the biblical cause, to incite gifts, and to distribute the Holy Scriptures. Each one of them was also to strive to form associations of 12 members at the most, of which she would be the treasurer; she would nominate in each group a collector in charge of receiving subscriptions of 10 and even 5 [entimes] per week.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Helen Barrett Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands: An Outline Study of Fifty Years of Woman's Work in Foreign Missions* (New York: Macmillan, 1910), 13. The Foreign Missionary Society was later absorbed by the American Board.

¹¹² Original text: "*les 20 dames du comité furent chargées chacune d'un arrondissement ; elles s'engageaient à faire des visites fréquentes chez les familles protestantes pour y exciter le zèle en faveur de la cause biblique, y provoquer des dons et distribuer les saintes Écritures. Chacune d'elles devait s'efforcer,*

This methodology proved to be invaluable and, furthermore, it allowed the women's Bible Society auxiliary to collect demographical data of the Protestant population in Paris.¹¹³ The Paris Mission women's committee used this strategy to provide a systematic structure for the creation of women's auxiliary societies throughout France.

A striking parallel at the time among Catholic women's initiatives was the influence of Pauline-Marie Jaricot (1799-1862), considered the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in 1822 in Lyons.¹¹⁴ She committed herself to a life of self-sacrifice and took a vow of perpetual virginity while remaining a laywoman.¹¹⁵ In the early 1820s, Jaricot began collecting one centime a week from her friends and recruiting them to pray for missions. She also played a role in the founding of the Association of the Holy Infancy that sought to inspire children to

en outre, de former des associations de 12 membres au plus, dont elle serait la trésorière, et qui nommerait dans leur sein une collectrice chargée de recevoir les souscriptions à 10 et même à 5 c. par semaine." Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, "Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris," 323-324.

¹¹³ Douen, *Histoire de la Société biblique protestante de Paris*, Appendix 1, "Société Biblique Auxiliaire des Dames de Paris," 324.

¹¹⁴ See Windeatt, Mary Fabyan, *Pauline Jaricot: Foundress of the Living Rosary and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books, 2009).

¹¹⁵ New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia Online, s.v. "Pauline-Marie Jaricot," accessed April 25, 2018, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08323b.htm>.

pray daily for missions and to contribute their centimes. Both of these organizations played supportive roles in the international missionary endeavor but never sent out their own missionaries.¹¹⁶ The women of the committee likely would have been aware of Jaricot's initiatives and may have drawn inspiration from them.¹¹⁷

The Paris Mission women's committee believed that nothing should stand in the way of equal opportunity when it came to the service of women in the name of the gospel, either at home or abroad: neither education, nor social standing, nor political opinions, nor even geography. As a sublime example of self-sacrificing service, the report quoted a passage from the diary of Harriet Newell, who died after childbirth at the age of nineteen, after being expelled from India with her husband.¹¹⁸ Newell was considered the first martyr of the India mission. Devout women from all walks of life who were caught up in the evangelistic fervor of the revival could identify with Newell's suffering. The

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), 1087.

¹¹⁷ There was at least one Catholic woman on the committee initially: the first Mme. Guizot (died 1827).

¹¹⁸ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 64-65. Newell is not mentioned by name but her story was well known.

story of her ordeal inspired many women to take up the missionary vocation. In the text for the women's Bible Society auxiliary, de Broglie had expanded eloquently on the unifying bond that suffering created between women:

Since Rachel, since Andromache up to now, the pain of a mother and of a woman has echoed with the same music. That which is true for different centuries is also true for different social classes; all creatures come closer to each other when they suffer, when they love; complete equality can be found there. While sorrows, worries, individual joys fill the lives of women more than those of men, they cannot be so easily changed by education and they are found more easily on common ground that crosses social barriers.¹¹⁹

Here de Broglie was capitalizing on the shared experience of all French women that allowed the women of the Bible Society auxiliary to build relationships with them and to solicit their support for the Bible Society.¹²⁰

Later, when the committee encountered the suffering of one of their own on

¹¹⁹ Original text: "*Depuis Rachel, depuis Andromaque jusqu'à nos jours, la douleur d'une mère et d'une femme a fait entendre les mêmes accents. Ce qui est vrai pour les différents siècles, est vrai également pour les différentes classes de la société ; toutes les créatures se rapprochent, quand elles souffrent, quand elles aiment ; l'égalité se retrouve là tout entière. Si les peines, les inquiétudes, les joies individuelles, occupent plus la vie des femmes que celles des hommes elles sont moins modifiables par l'éducation, et elles se rencontrent plus facilement sur un terrain commun à travers toutes les barrières sociales.*" "Sur les Associations Bibliques de Femmes" in *Les Archives* (1824): 17.

¹²⁰ Distributing Bibles would have been a cause dear to the heart of Protestant women as they historically had been the ones to lead family devotions when the men were absent due to wars or persecution.

the mission field — Mademoiselle Colany, who married Prosper Lemue — they played a pastoral role in their responses to her frequent correspondence.

Advocates for International Missions

The committee developed a theological apologetic defending international missions and the work of women in mission more fully in two documents attached to the end of the 1826 General Assembly Report (p143ff), ostensibly intended for distribution throughout France as a promotional tool. During this period, there was also a revival of mission going on in the Catholic Church that included the creation of several religious orders for foreign mission organized by women. Anne-Marie Javouhey, who founded the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in 1807, became known as the pioneer of Catholic missions to Africa in the nineteenth century.¹²¹ Sophie Barat founded the Society for the Sacred Heart of Jesus a few years before that, to provide female religious education. By 1818, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart had begun establishing schools in the southern United States.¹²² The Congregation of the Most Precious Blood and the associated Sisters

¹²¹ Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 223.

¹²² Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 224.

of the Precious Blood began in 1815 as well. These sisters focused on educating children and works of charity.¹²³

Not having the option of creating a female missionary order like the Catholics, the Paris Mission women's committee had to justify its role in the work of international mission. The first four-page document entitled "Regarding Women's Associations Supporting the work of Evangelical Missions to Non-Christian Peoples," was an eloquent theological and historical treatise that defended the work of the Paris Mission against certain general "objections" and advocated for the involvement of women.¹²⁴ First, the argument went, French Protestants were not too weak to follow the example of their British counterparts in missionary work because British voluntary societies did not compete with one another, but instead, worked in solidarity. In the same way, the women's

¹²³ Latourette, *The History of Christianity*, 1083-1084. A number of other Catholic mission agencies emerged at this time in France in the context of the Restoration (the return of the Bourbon kings). These included: The Society of the Missionaries of France (1815) with the goal of reviving French parish life, the Marianists who focused on education in the south of France (1815); the Oblates of the Immaculate Virgin Mary (1816) and the Society of Mary (1816) as missionaries to the de-Christianized masses. Other foreign mission initiatives began later in the century, such as the orders founded by François Marie Paul Libermann, Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie, Anthony Daniel Comboni, and Mary of the Passion.

¹²⁴ The document was identified as being "published by the Paris Women's Committee." Clearly, this document closely followed the model of the text "Regarding Women's Bible Associations," written by Mme. de Broglie to defend the necessity of women's Bible associations and published in 1824.

committee would assist the Paris Mission by raising funds and praying. These missionary efforts would not become obstacles to the work of other charity endeavors in France—possibly a reference to the work of the Bible Societies—but, the women believed, all would benefit from increased charity because “the more one gives, the more one wants to give again.”¹²⁵ Second, the work of mission societies was different from that of the Bible societies: both were necessary as separate but complementary entities, working together toward the same goal. This was an important point to make because many of the women in the committee also belonged to the Bible Society’s women auxiliary. Third, even though some argued that the work of missions was a long-range goal, the women’s committee urged the naysayers not to despair but to rely patiently on “the help from on high” and to trust that often humans could not discern the hidden work of God in missions.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1826), 63.

¹²⁶ *Sur les Associations de Femmes en faveur de l’œuvre des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples Non Chrétiens* in *Procès Verbal de l’Assemblée Générale de la Société des Mission Évangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens* (April 14, 1826), 143-145. They illustrated this last point with the story of how the crew of a British ship lost in the South Seas [in the late eighteenth century] had mutinied and killed the captain. Years later, another ship was forced to stop on the shores of an island in the same area “not yet reached by English missionaries.” To their surprise, the islanders greeted them in the name of Jesus. The sailors discovered that the mutineers had been stranded on the island. They had repented of their evil deeds and subsequently evangelized the entire population. This story probably referenced the mission news of *les Archives du Christianisme*, vol. 7 from 1823 that included the report of a “respectable traveler” who visited a seemingly

The last objection was more personal. Detractors wanted to know why separate women's societies were necessary to raise funds for missions. In response, the author relied on a quote from "Regarding Women's Bible Associations" where de Broglie had stated, "All the reasons that have been cited to prove that women are destined, by their very nature, to succeed in works of charity, apply equally to biblical work [and to the work of missions]."¹²⁷ The bracketed words were not in the original document, "Regarding Women's Bible Associations," but were added by the author (possibly Mme. de Broglie again) when she composed the piece for the Paris Mission women's committee. This tied into the closing point that the "ties of piety and charity that unite us [i.e. women] in one spirit" were the strongest foundation for the work of raising funds for missions.¹²⁸ In other words, the bonds of unity between Protestant

uncharted location in the Pacific named Pitcairn Island in December of 1822. There he discovered, to his surprise, a Christian population that had been evangelized by the repentant mutineers of the British ship, *the Bounty*. He reported that of the fifty-four inhabitants of the island, forty-nine were descendants of the mutineers. John Adams, one of the mutineers, was the leader of this "interesting population." *Les Archives* (1823), 567.

¹²⁷ Original text: "toutes les raisons qu'on fait valoir pour prouver que les femmes sont destinées, par leur nature, à réussir dans les œuvres de bienfaisance, s'appliquent également à l'œuvre biblique (3) et à l'œuvre des Missions." "Sur les Associations de Femmes en faveur de l'œuvre des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples Non Chrétiens" in *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1826), 145. Note 3 in the text cites the source of this direct quotation (*Sur les Associations bibliques de femmes*), slightly amended with the addition of the last phrase "and to the work of Missions."

¹²⁸ "Sur les Associations de Femmes en faveur de l'œuvre des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples Non Chrétiens" in *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1826), 145.

women across international boundaries made them highly effective in this work, more so, presumably than men. Their unity as a Protestant minority was essential with the rise of new Catholic missionary orders.

The second document, a mere two pages long, was entitled “*Sur les Missions Evangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens*” [Regarding Evangelical Missions to non-Christian Peoples]. It was a more general promotional piece that called all Protestants to join in the work of missions by making donations and praying, following the example of the women’s societies that had formed in favor of the Paris Mission.¹²⁹ The women of the Paris Mission committee, as spiritual champions of international missions, were calling everyone to follow in their footsteps.

Women as Sources of Social Renewal

The 1826 report was not the first or the last time women had to stand up to defend their right to work as equal partners in the task of missions. In 1828, the Paris Mission women’s annual report described the objections of “a great

¹²⁹ “*Sur les Missions Evangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens*” in *Procès verbal de l’Assemblée Générale* (April 14, 1826), 147.

number of people” who were only beginning “to tolerate the evangelical establishments founded in France” and continued to repeat that “women should limit their involvement to assisting, silently, through their offerings.”¹³⁰ These same people, apparently, found the women’s “innovations” dangerous.¹³¹

But the Paris women’s committee knew they could effect change in society. Most of them were already involved in other charitable endeavors to help street children, vulnerable women, the elderly, and the sick. They refused to be discouraged by critics who were certainly not among the revived Christians. They knew that they had powerful support behind them—charismatic figures of the *Réveil* like pastors Frédéric Monod, Henri Lutteroth, Juillerat-Chasseur, and Mark Wilks, as well as future education minister François Guizot, all members of the executive committee at one point or another.

In the 1828 annual women’s report, written by Mme. Juillerat, two years after their initial apologetic, they once again had to address attacks against their work for missions. This time they developed another theological angle that

¹³⁰ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 47. This was obviously also a reference to the tensions between the traditional Protestants and those who had been touched by the *Réveil*.

¹³¹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 47.

echoed ideas connected to infant education pedagogy. The 1828 document expanded the initial 1826 argument in favor of women's mission work by showing the connection between a woman's giftedness as a mother who shaped her children for good and that of a woman who exercised her beneficial influence on society.¹³² Women embodied a deep spiritual devotion and love for their heavenly Father that prompted them to great degrees of prayerfulness and closeness to Jesus. They drew their wisdom from "on high," recognized their faults in all humility (this appeared to be a veiled criticism of male pride), and advanced on the right path because they were mothers, intent on setting an example for their children.¹³³ This was an echo of the motherly Gertrude figure in Pestalozzi's classic book *Leonard and Gertrude* that became a bestseller after the first volume was published in 1781 and translated into multiple languages.¹³⁴ It seems that the women's committee was appropriating Pestalozzi's model of the

¹³² *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 51. This argument echoes Pestalozzi's belief that women, because of their natural biological function as mothers, were the best teachers of their own children.

¹³³ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 50.

¹³⁴ Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816), a well-known and respected British philosopher who wrote on education, endorsed Pestalozzi's educational methods in her last book *Hints addressed to the patrons and directors of schools principally to show that the benefits of the new modes of teaching may be increased by a partial adoption of the Plan of Pestalozzi* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1815).

mother as the supreme educator, teaching her children to be exemplary citizens who would exert a transformative influence on society.¹³⁵

Because the women were exercising their influence for the cause of missions, they argued that it would be wrong if they neglected to pursue this work. Therefore, the report continued, “As it is impossible to deny the influence of women and just as impossible to stop it, it seems reasonable to give it an eminently useful goal, that is, a religious goal.”¹³⁶ If women had duties to their family, they also had duties to God, went the argument. But then, “why, if it is possible, not accomplish duties both sets of duties?”¹³⁷ The ideal of the devout Protestant woman was to be able to serve both family and God for the sake of the gospel.

¹³⁵ Pestalozzi’s influence was widespread by this time, especially among women. The *Christian Advocate*, a weekly newspaper published by the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City in the nineteenth century, published an article entitled “The Influence of Pestalozzi” (William Wells, Oct 14, 1869) that chronicled the contribution of Pestalozzi to popular education.

¹³⁶ Original text: “Puisqu’il est impossible de nier l’influence des femmes et tout aussi impossible de la faire cesser, il semble raisonnable de lui donner un but éminemment utile, c’est-à-dire un but religieux.” *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 51.

¹³⁷ Original text: “Pourquoi, s’il se peut, ne pas accomplir et les uns et les autres ?” *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1828), 52.

The Paris Mission women's first annual report (1826) articulated the vision of the devout committee members, rooted in de Broglie's theological insights, concerning their work in international mission. The *Réveil* had imparted to the women of the Paris Mission committee a deep sense of their identity as equal partners with men in the work of missions—but partners working in their own realms of giftedness, as men or as women. Even though these realms were generally complementary, the evangelistic zeal of women sometimes caused them to push the boundaries of their socially acceptable roles, inspired by the leadership of Madame de Broglie. While these texts may have expressed an undertone of frustration at the limitations women experienced in exercising their natural gifts, the female authors never went so far as to “wish themselves a minister” as some American missionary wives did.¹³⁸ Instead, they were content, for now, to remain mostly within the spiritual and natural limitations they believed God had set for them. However, the difficulty of walking such a fine line created some ambivalence in their evolving identity as autonomous women. Sometimes these pioneering Protestant women exhibited an ambivalent

¹³⁸ Dana Robert quoted excerpts from the diaries of contemporary missionary wives Sarah Huntington and Harriet Lathrop that expressed their longing to preach, a role reserved exclusively to men at the time. Dana Lee Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 13.

“feminism” — that is, on the one hand, the desire to act as autonomous leaders, confident of their own inherent value, and on the other, an ambivalence about overstepping the boundaries set by contemporary social mores and gender roles in the church.¹³⁹ These women did not want to compete for the same roles in the church—at least not yet.

The Ambivalent “Feminism” of French Protestant Women

Geneviève Poujol struggled to describe the “feminism” of the Protestant women who were the subjects of her book *Un féminisme sous tutelle: les protestantes françaises, 1810-1960*—a title that I have translated “Bridled Feminism: French Protestant Women 1810-1960.”¹⁴⁰ The complex dynamic between French men and women prompted her to say that it was “impossible to formulate the [research] question in terms of dominant men and dominated women, nor even in terms of executioners and victims.”¹⁴¹ I have described this

¹³⁹ Geneviève Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle: les protestantes françaises, 1810-1960* (Paris: Editions de Paris, 2003). This is my understanding of the “feminism” of French Protestant women that Poujol struggles to define, which is developed in a later section.

¹⁴⁰ Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle*. The expression “sous tutelle” can mean “under trusteeship,” “under supervision,” “under protective [administration],” “under the authority of,” “under guardianship of [example: children]”.

¹⁴¹ Original text: “Impossible pourtant de s’interroger en termes de dominants et de dominées, ni encore moins en termes de bourreaux et victimes.” Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle*, 18. The word

“feminism” — a cause Protestant women never would have embraced at this time—as ambivalent because even though they increasingly transgressed social mores in the context of their work for missions as time went on, they never bothered to campaign for greater personal freedom and recognition. Rochefort has pointed out that there is no such thing as “Protestant feminism.”¹⁴² However, this form of Christian female “modesty” was not unique to French women but was also typical of Protestant women in other countries at the time.¹⁴³

In the preface to the English translation of Henriette de Witt-Guizot’s *Une belle vie, Mme. Jules Mallet, née Oberkampf. (1794-1856.): Souvenirs et fragments* (the title of the English version was: *A Christian Woman, Being the Life of Mme. Emilie Mallet*) published in 1882, British author Dinah Craik wrote that she hoped that the book would draw Englishwomen closer to their French sisters “by the bond of common womanhood.”¹⁴⁴ The fact that this book was translated into English is

“bourreaux” can be translated “executioners” or “torturers.” Pujol’s study focuses mostly on 20th century women, with very few references to the early nineteenth century.

¹⁴² Florence Rochefort, “Féminisme et Protestantisme au XIXe siècle, premières rencontres 1830-1900,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 146 (Janvier-février-mars 2000): 70.

¹⁴³ Dana Robert elaborated on these ideas in her chapter “The Missionary Wife” in *American Women in Mission*.

¹⁴⁴ Dinah Craik, Introduction, in Henriette de Witt, *A Christian Woman; Being the Life of Mme. Jules Mallet, Née Oberkampf* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1882), viii. I present a biography of Mallet in chapter 4.

significant and highlights the international reputation Mallet had in Britain, in particular, perhaps in part due to her friendship with social advocate and prison reformer Elizabeth Fry. Craik introduced Mallet as a paragon of female piety and faithfulness in fulfilling her duty both at home and in the outside world. She saw in this biography an opportunity to observe how such an admirable woman might deal with the contemporary ideas about “woman’s mission and woman’s rights.”¹⁴⁵ Curious to know “how they think of these things in France,” Craik’s opinion was that “the cause and its advocates [were] a mixture of good and evil; full of undoubted earnestness and equally patent extravagancies.”¹⁴⁶

De Witt-Guizot’s concept of the ideal woman, as described by Craik, certainly would have contributed to Poujol’s difficulty in describing the “feminism” of Protestant women:

Obviously, Madame Guizot de Witt is no advocate of “strong-mindedness,” but she has no foolish horror of it. Her sympathies are with the womanly woman, but not with the woman who is either feeble, or cowardly, or luxurious, or idle. She knows well—and paints clearly in her portrait of Madame Jules Mallet—that the utmost daring and the firmest self-reliance are compatible with refinement,

¹⁴⁵ Craik, Introduction, *A Christian Woman* (1882), vii.

¹⁴⁶ Craik, Introduction, *A Christian Woman* (1882), vii.

gentleness, and grace, and that to be “only a woman” is often times to be the strongest thing in all this world.¹⁴⁷

This paradoxical portrait combined “utmost daring” with “gentleness” and being “only a woman” with “the strongest thing in all this world.” How could one reconcile those extremes? Poujol quoted contemporary texts by John Stuart Mill and Jules Ferry, who accused Protestant women of emphatically claiming an inferior identity for themselves.¹⁴⁸ In the end, Poujol determined that there was a strange dance between power and influence in the dynamic between French men and women:

In the end, this inferiority [of women] was tactical vis-à-vis the man planted on his pedestal and whose power one did not threaten. (...) This model allowed women in “second” place to exercise significant power and probably to acquire a taste for it, even if they pretended not to touch it, being satisfied with their influence.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Craik, Introduction, *A Christian Woman* (1882), vii-viii.

¹⁴⁸ Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle*, 37-38. This was the position expressed in John Stuart Mill’s book, *The Subjection of Women*, which had been available in French since 1869. Mill, a British philosopher, was an early male proponent of gender equality.

¹⁴⁹ Original text: “*Cette infériorité est en fin de compte tactique vis-à-vis de l’homme établi sur son piédestal et dont on n’entame pas le pouvoir. (...) Ce modèle va permettre à des femmes en place ‘seconde’ d’exercer, de fait, un pouvoir important et probablement à y prendre goût même si elles affectaient de ne pas y toucher, se contentant de l’influence.*” Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle*, 37. This contrast between “power” (unacceptable for a woman) and “influence” (socially acceptable) is the origin of my title, “L’influence des femmes.”

In the early nineteenth century, Protestant women generally functioned according to this model—exercising their influence from a secondary position to effect change rather than to doing battle in the corridors of male-dominated power. De Witt-Guizot rejected the idea of women engaging in power struggles because it meant that those women had not known how to use the “means for action” available to them in the fulfillment of their natural duties. The indirect influence of women represented real “authority,” according to de Witt-Guizot.¹⁵⁰

It was expected that French Protestant women would avoid public roles, in contrast to feminist advocates, and do their work in the background. While the members of the Paris Mission women’s committee were always listed as occupying the front seats in the Temple de l’Oratoire at the yearly general assembly of the Paris Mission, as close to the all-male executive committee as possible, it was always a man who read their report. However, as time went on, women became more and more visible and their work drew more attention. And while de Broglie and Mallet may not have appeared in public *speaking* roles, both produced important documents that were published and widely distributed. The Paris Mission women continued to do their work of advocacy in the corner of a

¹⁵⁰ de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 3.

salon or at a social event, mining their many connections with the families and friends of all the notable Protestants of France and beyond.

A Study in Ambivalence: Henriette de Witt-Guizot

Mallet's biographer, Henriette de Witt-Guizot (1829-1908), was the elder daughter of François Guizot and his second wife Élisabeth Dillon.¹⁵¹ She was a renowned woman of letters, the author of several books, who worked closely with her father in his political work and intellectual endeavors.¹⁵² Writing in the last decades of the nineteenth century, de Witt-Guizot's underlying views of the role of women in society illustrated the ambivalent "feminism" of several generations of Protestant women that preceded her. She began her book *Les femmes dans l'histoire* [Women in History] with the statement, "I was raised to believe both in the disparity and in the equality of the sexes."¹⁵³ Here, de Witt-

¹⁵¹ François Guizot's first marriage was to Pauline de Meulan, a Catholic and an accomplished writer. Their marriage lasted from 1812 until 1827 when she died of tuberculosis. Guizot then married Élisabeth Dillon in 1828. She died in 1833, of complications due to childbirth.

¹⁵² "Henriette et Pauline Guizot," François Guizot: Une vie dans le siècle (1787-1874), accessed February 5, 2018, <http://www.guizot.com/fr/famille/enfants-de-guizot/henriette-pauline/>.

¹⁵³ Original text: "J'ai été élevée dans la croyance à la disparité comme à l'égalité des sexes." Henriette de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l'histoire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1889), 1.

Guizot began her introduction by expressing the doubtful “egalitarianism” of the complementarian view of the roles of men and women. She went on to explain that, even though she was raised among highly accomplished men and women of great intellect, her personal observations led her to believe in “female inferiority,” both intellectually and morally. She then quoted her mother’s letter to her aunt at length to illustrate her point. De Witt-Guizot pointed out that her mother, Élisabeth Dillon, wrote unsigned articles for *la Revue française*.¹⁵⁴ Her mother believed that “a ‘woman of great mind and wit’ [*une femme spirituelle*] probably had a lot to learn from a “mediocre” man whose “firm and calm” disposition could bring her happiness as a husband because he offered “the support and rest she needed.”¹⁵⁵ The fact that de Witt-Guizot chose to quote this passage that also referred, coincidentally, to her own marriage, revealed a powerful need to rationalize, somewhat artificially, male “superiority.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ François Guizot’s first wife, Pauline de Meulan, was also a brilliant writer who contributed to the *Publiciste*. “Pauline de Meulan,” François Guizot: Une vie dans le siècle (1787-1874), accessed February 6, 2018, <http://www.guizot.com/fr/famille/epouses-de-guizot/pauline-de-meulan/>.

¹⁵⁵ de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 1.

¹⁵⁶ A detailed description of de Witt-Guizot’s marriage can be found at “Henriette et Pauline Guizot,” François Guizot: Une vie dans le siècle (1787-1874), accessed February 5, 2018, <http://www.guizot.com/fr/famille/enfants-de-guizot/henriette-pauline/>.

But just two pages later in her introduction, de Witt-Guizot seemed to directly contradict her opening statements: “I said that I thought the virtue of a virtuous man was superior to that of his wife; I must add that I believe that women’s moral values are usually and in every case [*en masse*] superior to those of men, and their lives are governed by higher principles.”¹⁵⁷ Here, she made her case with an argument from nature: that women’s natural devotion to serving others as “mothers, wives, daughters, sisters” was a universal characteristic of women throughout history.¹⁵⁸ She closed with a theological twist that aimed to put to rest the medieval notion of the universal guilt of women for the sin of Eve. She argued that after Eve’s “weakness” that had condemned women to “the abuse of men’s strength and egotism” as slaves from the dawn of time, finally, the “day of recovery [*relèvement*]” came when the angel announced the grace shown to the Virgin Mary that “restored all women to their rank as companions and friends of men; and it was to women that God [had] entrusted men’s

¹⁵⁷ Original text: “J’ai dit que la vertu d’un homme vertueux me paraissait supérieure à celle de sa femme ; je dois ajouter que je crois habituellement et en masse la valeur morale des femmes supérieure à celle des hommes, et leur vie dirigée par des principes plus élevés.” de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 3.

¹⁵⁸ de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 3.

happiness in this world and often their eternal salvation.”¹⁵⁹ Surprisingly, with this statement, de Witt-Guizot concluded her introduction to a history of exceptional women by echoing the same female evangelical passion and sense of higher calling that pervaded the theological texts of de Broglie and the Paris Mission women’s committee. And like her predecessors, she implicitly placed the true authority of women in the spiritual realm under the authority and approval of God alone. In the end, a godly “feminism” seems to have triumphed over ambivalence.

Conclusion

The women of the Paris Mission committee proved to be keen visionaries and strategists on behalf of the missionary movement. Their formulation of a mission theology and strategy was foundational to the success of their initiatives because it was holistic and included the whole church family—men, women, and children. But they functioned in a male-dominated world that placed limitations on their vision and initiatives, limitations that they sometimes could not accept.

¹⁵⁹ Original text: “*qui devait replacer toutes les femmes à leur rang de compagnes et d’amies des hommes dont Dieu leu confie le bonheur en ce monde et souvent le salut éternel.*” de Witt-Guizot, *Les Femmes dans l’histoire*, 4.

However, they had strong allies among the prominent men of the Paris Mission executive committee who supported their vision. After their first public speech at the General Assembly in 1826, executive committee member Mark Wilks complimented the eloquence of their defense of the missionary enterprise saying, "The Report we just heard contains more conclusive responses to the objections raised against the work of Missions than any writings that I know of by men; because these ladies reason with the heart."¹⁶⁰ Wilks' reference to the famous dictum of seventeenth century Jansenist philosopher Blaise Pascal, "The heart has reasons that reason ignores," was both a powerful endorsement of the solid theological foundation of the women's argumentation and a critique of rationalistic faith untouched by the *Réveil*.¹⁶¹ But Wilks' reference was also a rebuttal of the disparaging notion that women were weak creatures, dominated

¹⁶⁰ Original text: "Il y a dans le Rapport que nous venons d'entendre des réponses plus concluantes aux objections soulevées contre l'œuvre des Missions, que dans tous les écrits, à moi connus, sortis de la plume des hommes ; car ces dames raisonnent avec le cœur." *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1826), 72.

¹⁶¹ The original maxime is "Le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas." Pascal believed that the heart was superior to the mind when it came to grasping religious truths and that it was only through the heart, not by cold reason, that unbelievers could come to faith. Because of the Calvinist leanings of the Jansenist movement to which Pascal belonged, Reformed Protestants in France had great respect for his writing. His charismatic type conversion in which he experienced a sensation of divine fire would have also made him attractive to evangelicals. See his "Memorial," in Blaise Pascal, *Pensees*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer, rev. ed. edition (London: Penguin Classics, 1995), 285.

by their emotions and incapable of reason. Here Wilks emphasized that the women were reasoning in the best possible way—with the heart. Therefore, they were worthy co-leaders in the male-female partnership for the cause of international missions.

**CHAPTER FOUR: HOW TO SAVE GAVROCHE? THE HEART STRINGS,
PURSE STRINGS, AND NETWORKS OF PARIS WOMEN**

In *Les Misérables*, set in the Paris of the 1830s, Marius sent the Paris gamin (street urchin) Gavroche from the barricades to deliver a message to his lady love, Cosette. When Gavroche found Jean Valjean, her adoptive father, in the dimly lit street in front of the house, he skillfully shattered the remaining street lantern with a stone, preferring the cover of darkness. Judging him a poor, hungry, motherless child of the streets, Valjean gave him a five-franc piece, an astronomical sum of money that dazzled the gamin. Gavroche, however, had his principles and refused the sou, thinking it a bribe for good behavior—he preferred to smash lanterns.¹

Some people or other had clothed him in rags out of charity. Still, he had a father and a mother. But his father did not think of him, and his mother did not love him.

He was one of those children most deserving of pity, among all, one of those who have father and mother, and who are orphans nevertheless.

This child never felt so well as when he was in the street. The pavements were less hard to him than his mother's heart.

His parents had dispatched him into life with a kick.²

¹ Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables in Three Novels*, complete and unabridged (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2008), 1027. Gavroche's parents were the notorious Thénardiens.

² Hugo, *Les Misérables*, 678-679.

This fictitious portrayal of Gavroche, the Paris street urchin, from the pen of Victor Hugo, portrays how life was for many young children as a result of poverty and the crisis of the family in early nineteenth century Paris. However, the Romantic literary tradition did not give any attention to Parisian street children until the later nineteenth century. Eugène Sue (1804-1857), author of *The Mysteries of Paris*, a serial novel that inspired and informed Hugo's *Les Misérables*, hardly mentioned them. Poor children were also absent from the dozens of novels in the *Comédie humaine* [The Human Comedy] of Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850).³

Beginning in the last decades of the eighteenth century, the plight of poor women and children inspired devout Parisian women, both Catholic and Protestant, to create the *Société de Charité Maternelle* [Society of Maternal Charity] to assist indigent children and mothers needing hospital care. This early female initiative in favor of poor children pre-empted the creation of voluntary societies and ministries of compassion that accompanied the advent of the *Réveil*.⁴ In this

³ Catherine Duprat, *Usage et Pratiques de la Philanthropie: Pauvreté, action sociale et lien social, à Paris, au cours du premier XIXe siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris: Comité d'histoire de la Sécurité sociale, 1997), 686.

⁴ This initiative by devout women, taken during a time of political instability, in response to dire social needs, can be compared to the movement in the late sixteenth to mid seventeenth

chapter, I argue that the plight of vulnerable children was the initial reason Protestant women engaged in ministries of compassion and the missionary movement, thanks to the leadership of Mme. Émilie Mallet. Mallet's ideas contributed to a holistic mission theory in favor of children's education (infant education, chapter 6) and women's rehabilitation (deaconess ministries, chapter 7). In this chapter however, I will show that Mallet was the force behind the formation of women's networks that served multiple charitable projects (infant schools, women's prison reform, Bible societies, Paris Mission) and provided access to philanthropy, real estate, and material resources.

After exploring early female philanthropy efforts in response to poverty in Paris, I will examine Oberlin's religious influence on the educational model of infant school pedagogy that was championed by Mallet. Her life story will serve as the chapter's narrative thread because she used her interpersonal relationships and her writing skills to rally women in the earliest nineteenth century efforts on behalf of poor children and in the work of mission. Finally, I will explore how

century when women formed new religious orders. The ascetic emphasis from the early period of the Catholic Revival developed into a religious charitable impulse as these female orders responded to needs of the many victims of poverty and war. Barbara Diefendorf shows how women at this time had many opportunities for leadership, in spite of the restrictions of the Church, in her book *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Mallet and the Paris Mission women's committee developed a strong network of auxiliary societies essential to the financial stability of the Paris Mission that, incidentally, helped to spread the enthusiasm of the *Réveil* all over France.

Poverty in Paris: The Context that Created the Need

In order to apprehend the extent of the poverty in Paris, it is necessary to look at the number of poor who were using the public hospital [*hospice*] services and those who were interred in common graves.⁵ Using that method of approximation, the number of poor and indigent Parisians in 1846 was around 635,000 or 67% of the population of the *département* of the Seine (that included Paris and its immediate suburbs).⁶ Before 1830, somewhere between 22 and 27% of Parisians were considered indigent (the poorest of the poor).⁷ Another frightening statistic was that only 50%, at most, of the indigent population had access to public services.⁸ One of the poorest districts of Paris was the Faubourg

⁵ Duprat, *Usage et Pratiques de la Philanthropie: Pauvreté, action sociale et lien social, à Paris, au cours du premier XIXe siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris: Comité d'histoire de la Sécurité sociale, 1996), 9.

⁶ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 1, 38.

⁷ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 1, 25.

⁸ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 1, 87.

St. Antoine where the deaconesses of Reuilly opened their first house in 1841.⁹

Another growing problem was the social epidemic of illegitimate children, described here by Catherine Duprat: “The Paris percentage [of illegitimate children] from 1815 to 1841, after culminating at 38% during the crisis of 1817, never dipped below 31% (the minimum of the years 1832, 1838, 1839, and 1840). In Paris, one out of three children was therefore an illegitimate child.”¹⁰ Many, if not most, of these children had been abandoned. In the whole country, the approximate number of abandoned children being cared for in the hospices was 40,000 in 1784 (estimate by Minister Necker); 67,966 in 1815; 99,349 in 1819; and 129,699 in 1834—a 91% increase between 1814 and 1834.¹¹ The *Conseil Général des Hospices de Paris* [General Council of Paris Hospices] for the *département* of the Seine reported that in the seven years from 1830 to 1836, the number of abandoned children reached 37,291, an average of 5,327 abandonments per

⁹ The Faubourg St. Antoine was also the neighborhood that Victor Hugo used for the uprising in *les Misérables*.

¹⁰ Original text: “le pourcentage parisien de 1815 à 1841, après avoir culminé à 38% lors de la crise de 1817, ne descendra jamais au-dessous de 31% (minimum des années 1832, 1838, 1839 et 1840). A Paris, un nouveau-né sur trois est donc un enfant naturel.” Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 592.

¹¹ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 594.

year.¹²

The First Female Initiatives Concerned with Children's Welfare

The problem of illegitimate and abandoned children was but one symptom of the crisis of the family. Alarming evidence pointed to the grave dangers undermining the integrity of the family: relationships had broken down due to abuse, incest, loss of paternal authority, children falling prey to the corrupting examples of their parents, rising rates of cohabitation, and an increase in illegitimate births and abandonments. A police report dated November 14, 1824 described the situation:

A crowd of artisans, day-workers, small merchants live together without being married...They separate as easily as they came together, on a whim or out of wantonness. In the suburbs and in the working districts, teenage girls are often dragged into lives of vice, both because of the examples set before them, and because of the temptation of luxury and enticements. It is not uncommon to find that some of them despise the estate of marriage, refuse to get married, and make a display of their mistake and their immorality.¹³

¹² "General Council of Paris Hospices": translations of the French term *hospice* include hospital, orphanage, old people's home, poorhouse; *Rapport du Conseil général des hospices de Paris sur le Service des enfants trouvés du Département de la Seine* (Paris: Bailly, Imprimeur des Hospices Civils, 1845), 6.

¹³ Original text: "*Une foule d'artisans, de journaliers, de petits, marchands, vivent en ménage sans être mariés...Ils se séparent comme ils se sont réunis, par caprice ou par libertinage. Dans les faubourgs, et les quartiers populeux, les jeunes filles sont fréquemment entraînées au vice, et par les exemples qui leur sont donnés, et par le luxe et les séductions auxquelles elles sont exposées. Il n'est pas rare d'en trouver que méprisent l'état du mariage refusent d'en contracter et font parade de leur*

Paris had the worst reputation for this kind of behavior.¹⁴

Starting in 1788, the founding of the Society of Maternal Charity (“Société de Charité Maternelle”) was an attempt to address the collapse of family structure among the poor. In the early nineteenth century, when the Society needed reorganization, the decree of May 5, 1810 created a new entity in Paris out of the legacy of the original institution, but this time under the protection of Empress Josephine. In addition, “the same decree announced the creation of maternal societies and councils to oversee them in the ‘forty-four good cities’, a project that soon spread to the capitals of all one hundred and thirty *départements*.”¹⁵ Two committees centralized the administration of this vast network under the authority of the Empress (president) and two vice-presidents, Mme. de Ségur and Mme. de Pastoret, both notable Roman Catholics.¹⁶

faute et de leur immoralité.’ (italics in Duprat’s text)” Police report A.N. F7 3878, quoted in Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 591-592. Duprat included a series of other reports that were increasingly dismal.

¹⁴ A neologism that described this moral laxity at the time in Mulhouse (Alsace) was the verb *Paristeren* (in German) or *pariser* (in French) that meant “to do like in Paris.” Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 592, reference in note 18.

¹⁵ Original text: “le même décret annonçait la creation de sociétés maternelles et de conseils destinées à les administrer dans les ‘quarante-quatre bonnes villes’, project bientôt étendu à tous les chefs-lieux des cent trente départements.” Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 616.

¹⁶ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 616.

In 1837, A. de Gasparin held up the Societies of Maternal Charity as models for a new and improved “home-based assistance program for mothers.”¹⁷ The goal of these Societies was to prevent children from being abandoned or from ending up in the *Enfants Trouvés* [Found Children]—a hospital for abandoned children, notorious for its exceedingly high death rate—and to provide a safe and hygienic environment where mothers could give birth. These services were aimed at the most vulnerable women who were without husbands or who might be tempted to abandon their child. However, to discourage sexual profligacy, residency candidates had to show proof of marriage.¹⁸

The creation of Maternal Societies revealed the extent to which women, both Catholic and Protestant, were aware of the crisis of poor children and families in the early nineteenth century. The Society of Maternal Charity, the “oldest of all Parisian female foundations,” served as a model for subsequent charitable ventures initiated by and operated by women.¹⁹ Duprat offers an inventory of the common characteristics of these female foundations, many of

¹⁷ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 615.

¹⁸ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 619. Duprat was critical of the idea of the dissolution of the working class family due to licentiousness, a discourse that was cultivated among religious orders (602).

¹⁹ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 627.

which shed light on the work of Protestant female philanthropists.

Euphemizing Women's Work

First, Duprat noted that the operation of female-led endeavors was poorly documented because “women did not write reports, give public speeches, or organize general assemblies.”²⁰ To mollify those who protested women leading organizations and holding public roles—actions that put them on an equal footing with men—an alternate vocabulary was developed and used when referring to the work of women: they were not “administrators” (“*administratrices*”) but “administrating staff” (“*administrantes*”) and their work was to “oversee” (“*surveiller*”), not to “sponsor” (“*patronner*”) the poor.²¹

Second, Duprat pointed out that a majority of the women philanthropists came from nobility and distinguished upper class dynasties: they were the wives, daughters, and sisters of male intellectuals, politicians, bankers, scholars,

²⁰ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 627.

²¹ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 627; During the Reformation period, women were allowed to join the diaconate although there was no separate office of female deaconesses. Women were approved to serve as deaconesses at the first Reformed synod of the Lower Rhine and the Netherlands in 1568 but it was only eleven years later, in 1579, that a proposal was put forward to create an “office of deaconesses.” Jeannine Evelyn, Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 166-167.

dignitaries of noble families, landowners, and magistrates. In the case of the Maternal Societies, the mix of women included Catholics and Protestants. The Protestant societies that are examined below were composed almost exclusively of Protestant women but many maintained active ties to Catholics, either through family relations or through common charitable interests elsewhere.²²

A third characteristic of these female societies was that the membership roster remained exceptionally stable because the attendees were exceptionally reliable, being devoted to the cause. Also, their small number fostered strong personal relationships.²³ This stability was much greater in women's than in men's organizations and continued on to the next generation as the daughters, daughters-in-law, and granddaughters later took over the work of their mothers and grandmothers.²⁴ Furthermore, their enterprises owed this stability, that lasted up to 1840-1841, to the fact that, as wealthy women, they had more time for volunteer work in what was viewed by the public as "inoffensive ladies'

²² Historically, from the Reformation on, high society Protestant women often found themselves in a mediating position between Catholics and Protestants, by virtue of their marital alliances.

²³ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 630-633.

²⁴ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 634. There are examples of this in the Paris Mission women's committee where some mothers and daughters were members at the same time or consecutively.

societies” that were non-threatening in a politically fluctuating century. Their societies did not suffer from the political vicissitudes of regime change in the early nineteenth century. Those very changes disastrously affected many of the men’s undertakings.²⁵

Duprat described a specific type of philanthropy common in France in the first half of the nineteenth century—“*le patronage*” [translated patronage, sponsorship, support] that she described as “the only institutional invention of French philanthropy in the early nineteenth century.”²⁶ Initially this form of patronage that developed between 1821 and 1843, as “assistance for training or learning” came to be defined as “protection, help that some associations give to the poor: ‘Sponsorship of orphan children.’”²⁷ Duprat noted that the idea of *patronage* applied exclusively to work among youth.

Duprat made another fascinating study of the terms *patron* and *patronnesse*, the latter term a neologism in the nineteenth century that shed light on the specifically feminine aspect of this form of philanthropy.²⁸ There was a

²⁵ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 696.

²⁶ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 671.

²⁷ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 672.

²⁸ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 672.

clear distinction between the masculine and feminine uses of the term. One of the newer meanings of the masculine term *patron* at the time was “master of the establishment” which corresponds to the modern meaning, still in use today, of “boss.” The feminine form *patronesse*, on the other hand, was used in the expression “*dame patronesse*” [patron lady] to describe a woman who organized charity balls to raise money for the poor. This idea of charitable impulse toward the poor was never an aspect of the masculine term in contemporary dictionaries: “The *patron* was never defined as one who, on a personal level or as a member of an association, exercised protective or educational tutelage over a poor child or anyone in a situation of weakness.”²⁹ The use of these terms, *patronage* and *patronesse*, with their specifically feminine designation in the contemporary French language, showed that well-to-do women played pioneering roles in the French philanthropic tradition, by founding charitable ventures specifically related to poor children and their education.

Mallet and de Broglie were among the most powerful of these *dames patronesses* and they led the missionary vision of their Protestant women

²⁹ Original text: “Le patron n’aura donc jamais été défini comme celui qui, à titre personnel ou en tant que membre d’une association, exerce une tutelle protectrice et éducative sur un enfant pauvre, ou quiconque se trouvant en situation de faiblesse.” Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2, 672-673.

colleagues. Mallet focused her early philanthropic efforts on the work of children's education and pedagogy. Through her father's Lutheran and German background, she would have known about the transformative work Pastor Jean-Frédéric Oberlin was doing in Alsace in early childhood education. His innovative methods in child pedagogy rooted in devout religious faith were to become important resources for Mallet's work.

Oberlin's "Knitting Stoves": A Model for Infant Schools and Women's Societies

Another precursor to *Réveil* initiatives was the above-mentioned Jean-Frédéric Oberlin (1740-1826). He contributed a model to the overarching work of missions—a model for communal education that served infant school pedagogy, the work of women teachers, and the development of women's auxiliary societies.³⁰ In the late 1760s and 1770s, a decade before the founding of the Society of Maternal Charity and half a century before the *patronage* endeavors of the 1820s, Oberlin developed a pastoral ministry in a rural area in eastern France that influenced revival-minded Protestants—women, in particular—for the next

³⁰ Oberlin's role in the development of infant pedagogy and his use of women as teachers will be more fully developed in chapter 6 on infant education.

century and beyond. The number of biographies of his life, written over a long period in multiple languages by writers from several countries, is indicative of the impact he had in the European Protestant community.³¹

Called as a Lutheran pastor to a severely impoverished, mountainous area near Strasbourg (Alsace), Oberlin began building schools in the several villages in Ban de la Roche under his care. In the process, he realized that the youngest children (ages two to six) were neglected and in grave danger while their siblings were away at school and their parents at work in the fields.³² At this point, stated Lucy Sarah Atkins Wilson in her *Memoirs of John Frederick Oberlin* (originally published in 1829), “he laid down a plan for the introduction of *infant schools* also; probably the very first ever established, and the model of those subsequently opened at Paris, and still more recently in this country [Britain].”³³

³¹ There are biographies of Oberlin’s life from the pen of Henry Lutteroth revivalist pastor, evangelist (1826); Mark Wilks, pastor, Paris Mission executive (1820); Lucy Sarah Atkins Wilson, British travel writer (1829, followed by at least eight more editions); Mme. Gustave Demoulin, teacher (an edition for schoolchildren, 1884); Camille Leenhardt, pastor (a thesis, 1896, and a book, 1911). These are only a few of the many biographies that exist, including a biographical account in English for the American Sunday School Union (1830).

³² The role of grandmothers in childcare is never mentioned. It is likely that any surviving grandparents were too old and infirm to help care for young children. On average, working people died relatively young at that time or they had to continue working until they were too sick to work—meaning they would have been unavailable to care for children.

³³ Lucy Sarah Atkins Wilson, *Memoirs of John Frederick Oberlin; With a Short Notice of Schepler*, 9th ed. (London: Ball, Arnold, 1838), 84-85. Wilson was a Quaker and a British travel writer whose work drew from several contemporary sources on Oberlin such as Lutteroth’s

To achieve his aim, Oberlin chose young women who were known for their moral qualities to become the teachers or *conductrices de la tendre enfance* [female guides of tender childhood]. With the help of his wife, he trained these young women, probably in their mid-to-later teenage years at least, and gave them an educational program. The *conductrices* took care of children, ages two to six, in large rooms heated by a stove in winter. The older children learned to knit or sew while listening to a reading of Scripture or sacred history, or learning a hymn. These gatherings were called *poëles à tricoter* or “knitting stoves.”

This was an innovative educational method that also empowered devout young women as teachers. When he established the first “knitting stove” in 1769, he created an educational model to respond to the needs of poor young children on the margins of society.³⁴ Knitting stoves were the prelude to educational

Notice (1826), Wilks' *The Ban de la Roche and its Benefactor* (1820) but also original manuscripts and letters either by or about Oberlin. She spent some time doing field research at Ban de la Roche (Wilson, preface page iii ff). The fact that this is the 9th edition of her book suggests an abiding interest in the pioneering work that Oberlin did in the field of infant education, by the invention of the concept of the *poëles à tricoter* [knitting stoves], in the late eighteenth century. Wilson also translated a few of Oberlin's hymns from German into English. There has been much debate as to when and where infant schools or *salles d'asile* originated ever since the early nineteenth century.

³⁴ Oberlin tried to create opportunities for income creation to help improve the financial situation of his very poor parishioners. He had been inspired by the example of a former servant of his predecessor Stuber, named Sara Banzet, who brought children into her home and taught the older ones to knit. Apparently she was the inspiration for the knitting stoves and she became his first *conductrice*. Reference: Thomas Fallot, “Oberlin,” *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire, publié sous la direction de Ferdinand Buisson* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1911),

developments in the nineteenth century in which women played key roles.³⁵ But knitting stoves also served as a model for the women's auxiliary societies that sprang up in poor, rural areas, particularly in the western mountainous regions, as interest in foreign missions grew. In winter, the women's societies in these regions met weekly around a stove to spin together while listening to a reading of the Bible or of a missions-related journal such as the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*, after 1826. They then sold their goods and sent the proceeds to the Paris Mission women's committee.

A few decades after Oberlin's innovations, another early step in the search for a solution to the plight of poor children in Paris was an initiative led by Mme. de Pastoret, the vice president of the Society of Maternal Charity, who established a *salle d'hospitalité* [hospitality room] in Paris for a dozen infants in 1801.³⁶ However, the actual genesis of the French tradition of infant schools,

accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3291>.

³⁵ Loïc Chalmel, "Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, Pédagogue Révolutionnaire?" *Revue Française de Pédagogie* 116, no. 1 (1996): 105. Oberlin's focus was on the education of children. He trained female teachers as a means to that end because they were key to the success of his infant school program, especially since he forbade the use of the local patois in the schools. Since the *conductrices* had to teach in French or in German, they would have had to have a solid level of education. It is not clear whether Oberlin provided fully for their education or how much they had attended school because Ban-de-la-Roche was a very rural area and the literacy rate was low.

³⁶ Jean-Noël Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au 19e siècle: De la salle d'asile à l'école maternelle* (Paris: Belin, 1997), 15.

called *salles d'asile* [literally, rooms of refuge], took place in 1826, once again, unsurprisingly, as the initiative of influential Catholic and Protestant women.

The Founding of the First *Salles d'asile* (French Infant Schools)

In 1823 and 1824, Marc-Antoine Jullien and Joseph-Marie de Gérando, both philanthropists and founding members of the *Société pour l'instruction élémentaire* [Society for Elementary Education] and of the *Société de la Morale Chrétienne* [Society of Christian Morality], paid separate visits to Robert Owen's infant school in New Lanark, England.³⁷ Upon his return, Gérando, enthused by what he observed, proposed to the *Conseil Général des Hospices de Paris* [General Council of Paris Hospices] to open establishments that followed the infant school model.³⁸ For unknown reasons, the Council rejected his proposal.

³⁷ Jullien wrote a report of the visit to New Lanark in "Notice sur la Colonie Industrielle de New Lanark," *Revue Encyclopédique* (April 1823): 4-18.

³⁸ The *Conseil général des hospices de Paris* [General Council of Paris Hospices], created in 1801, was an umbrella administration with oversight over hospitals, hospices, charity offices, and home services. The *Hospices civils de Paris* had been established under the Consulate to relieve "suffering humanity" — that is the victims of poverty, cold, malnutrition, epidemics at a time when only half of the French population lived beyond their 20th birthday. (This would have included services to the poor and homeless [men and women in separate "hospitals"], "found children," the sick, the aged.) The General Council was composed of a dozen influential men nominated by the minister of the Interior, under the authority of the Prefect of the Seine (Frochot originally). "Paris: les hôpitaux (première moitié du XIXe siècle)," Centre national de Recherche Scientifique, accessed February 10, 2018, correspondancefamiliale.ehess.fr/index.php?6452.

In April 1825, Gérando held forth on the merits of the British infant schools at an evening party at the home of Benjamin Delessert, a Protestant businessman who was also on the governing board of the *Banque de France*. Listening very attentively to his enthusiastic praise were Mme. François Gautier-Delessert (Benjamin's sister-in-law, née Sophie Gautier) and one of Benjamin's sisters (Madeleine or Caroline) who were both on the administrative board of the Society of Maternal Charity, as well as two of their guests, Mme. Émilie Mallet, wife of banker Jules Mallet, and her niece, Mme. Claude Nau de ChampLouis.³⁹

Inspired by Gérando's enthusiasm, these women went home and immediately began to lay the groundwork for the establishment of the first *salle d'asile* that eventually opened its doors in 1826. They read the infant school manuals brought back by Gérando.⁴⁰ Mallet translated or had some parts of the textbooks translated for her friends and wrote up a subscription form to solicit

³⁹ Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au 19e siècle*, 18. Luc seems to have mixed up Benjamin's sister and sister-in-law. I've made the correction here. Mme. Gautier-Delessert was his sister-in-law, not his sister. It is very possible that Madeleine was the one present as she eventually married the baron Bartholdi who was probably related to another powerful female figure of the Paris Mission and Protestant Deaconesses, Mme. Bartholdi-Walther. (See reference to Madeleine in "The Delessert Family," *Musée virtuel du Protestantisme*, accessed February 10, 2018, <https://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/the-delessert-family/>)

⁴⁰ One of these was a book on infant schools written by Samuel Wilderspin that became an influential source book for many proponents of the infant school system.

donations. Through their husbands and family connections, they reached out to *la dauphine*, the wife of the heir to the French throne, and wrote letters to the religious congregations. Mme. Gautier-Delessert (a Protestant) invited Mme. de Pastoret (a Catholic), who also had many powerful connections, to join the enterprise.⁴¹

By May 4, 1826, the women had formed the executive committee with Mme. de Pastoret, president, and Émilie Mallet, secretary-treasurer. Among the twelve female members, four were powerful Protestant figures (Mallet, Gautier, de Champlouis, Anisson-Duperron). This mixed committee of Catholics and Protestants cast a wide net to raise subscriptions of 7,000 francs from the Mallet bank and 3,000 francs from the General Council of Hospices. One religious congregation sent two nuns to become the first teachers. In the summer of 1826, the first *salle d'asile* opened in Paris, Rue du Bac, in the former 10th district.⁴² A few months later, Mayor Jean-Denys-Marie Cochin opened a second *salle d'asile*

⁴¹ This collaboration between Catholic and Protestant women was an important indication of the desire, on the part of Protestants, to rise above past religious conflicts for the sake of a greater cause. Also, Protestants were in smaller numbers and needed to nurture collaborative relationships with Catholics for political and financial reasons in order to accomplish their goals. During the Reformation, Marguerite of Navarre (sister of Francis I), a Catholic, worked with her daughter Jeanne d'Albret, a Protestant, to help the beleaguered Huguenots.

⁴² Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au 19e siècle*, 17-19.

in his own district.⁴³ In this endeavor, the pioneering role of women, in particular a Protestant woman, Mme. Émilie Mallet, is significant.

Madame Émilie Mallet, née Oberkampf (1794-1856)

In her introduction to the issue on Protestant women published by the *Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* [Society for the History of French Protestantism] (Jan-Feb-March 2000), Michelle Perrot highlighted the heavy silence that weighs on the history of women, including Protestant women.⁴⁴ Jean-Noël Luc reiterated this point particularly in relation to the life of Mme. Émilie Mallet, whose monumental legacy in early childhood education in France received little or no recognition until the late nineteenth century with the works of Protestants such as Henriette de Witt-Guizot or Frank Piaux.⁴⁵ The “partial

⁴³ Luc makes it clear here that Cochin was not the first nor the only originator of the Paris *salles d'asile*, an honor that other researchers have attributed to him, a Catholic and a man, thus overlooking the leading role of Emilie Mallet, a Protestant. When researching French religious history, it is important to pay careful attention to the Catholic bias among researchers who are not sensitive to the historic Protestant-Catholic antagonism that makes many Catholic or non-religious scholars minimize, overlook, or ignore the significant contribution of Protestants. This pattern of ignoring or intentionally silencing the Protestant contribution in French history adds to the pattern of ignoring the contribution of women, thus compounding the problem of creating an accurate and just historical record in this study.

⁴⁴ Michelle Perrot, “Avant-Propos,” *Bulletin de la Société l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 146 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2000), 9.

⁴⁵ Referenced in Jean-Noël Luc, “Madame Jules Mallet, Née Émilie Oberkampf (1794-1856), Ou Les Combats de La Pionnière de L'école Maternelle Française,” *Bulletin de l'Histoire Du*

rediscovery” of Mallet continued in the late 20th century with the work of scholars such as Catherine Duprat and Jean-Noël Luc.⁴⁶ In the 1997 volume of the *Dictionnaire du monde religieux dans la France contemporaine* [Dictionary of the Religious World in Contemporary France] section on Protestants, Daniel Robert’s brief article recognized Mallet’s contribution to infant schools in France but also her involvement in “all the works of the *Réveil*.”⁴⁷

In her biography of Mallet, Henriette de Witt-Guizot devoted fifteen pages at the beginning of her narrative to a description of the exceptional charity work of Englishwomen Elizabeth Fry, a friend of Mallet’s whose influence extended to several European countries. She also wrote about Caroline Chisholm, who helped vulnerable women in Australia, as an introduction to Mallet’s “crowd of benevolent enterprises” of which she was the self-effacing

Protestantisme Français 146 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2000): 16 ; Luc refers to Henriette de Witt, *Une belle vie, Mme. Jules Mallet, née Oberkampf (1794-1856.): Souvenirs et fragments, recueillis par Mme de Witt, née Guizot* (Paris: Hachette, 1881) and Frank Puaux, *Les oeuvres du protestantisme français: au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Comité protestant français, 1893).

⁴⁶ Duprat, *Usage et pratiques de la philanthropie*, vol. 2; Luc, *L’invention du jeune enfant au 19e siècle*.

⁴⁷ Daniel Robert, “Mallet (Madame) Emilie Oberkampf, Baronne Jules Mallet” in *Dictionnaire Du Monde Religieux Dans La France Contemporaine: Les Protestants*, ed. Jean-Marie Mayeur, Yves-Marie Hillaire, and André Encrevé (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1997), 233.

pioneer.⁴⁸ By so doing, de Witt-Guizot placed Mallet in an ongoing, international tradition of exceptional women philanthropists connected to each other through networks of personal relationships, affinity, or reputation.

Mallet's Role in Pioneering Infant Schools in France

Thanks to the work of Luc, Duprat, and other scholars, it is now possible to understand the vast contributions of Émilie Mallet to the cause of infant education in France. Luc offered a quick snapshot of her impact: within ten years of the opening of the first *salle d'asile* in 1826, there were 261 *salles d'asile* in France, including twenty-five in Paris, administered by the women's committee, of which she was the secretary-treasurer. In 1856, the year of her death, there were 2,500 *salles d'asile* in France, caring for over 300,000 children.⁴⁹ According to Luc, the letters of Mme. de Pastoret clearly showed Mallet's decisive role in the founding of the women's committee of the *salles d'asile*. Despite Mme. de Pastoret's prominence and her role as president of the women's committee, she

⁴⁸ De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 20. Interestingly, a Mme. Chisholm appears in the members of the Paris Mission women's committee.

⁴⁹ Luc, "Madame Jules Mallet," *BSHPF* 146 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2000): 18-19. Luc's article offers a rich portrait of the many good works of this remarkable woman and her rich inner life.

allowed Mallet to assume most of the tasks of leadership, though not without some mild irritation: “I have no secretary or office and I do not have the addresses of all the ladies. I am forced to allow you to give the orders, Madame, to set up the meetings,” she wrote to Mallet.⁵⁰ In 1820, even before the founding of the first infant school, the sixty-year-old Mme. de Pastoret was no match for the boundless energy, the numerous connections, and the strategic resources of the younger woman.

Not only did Mallet organize the meetings, but she penned several books and papers related to the work of the *dames patronesses* and the pedagogy of the *salles d’asile*, and she also collaborated regularly on the journal *L’Ami de l’Enfance* [the Friend of Childhood], published from 1835 on. She authored an anonymous brochure, *La direction morale des salles d’asile* [the moral leadership of infant schools], one of the first of its kind in France. The essence of her infant school pedagogy is a 120-page document simply entitled “*Appendice*,” embedded in the 3rd edition of the *Manuel des salles d’asile* by J-D. Cochin, published in 1845.⁵¹ In

⁵⁰ Original text: “*Je n’ai ni secrétaire, ni bureau, et ne connais pas toutes les adresses des dames. Je suis forcée de vous laisser donner vos ordres, Madame, pour faire les convocations.*” Luc, *L’invention de l’enfant au 19e siècle*, 24-25. Note 19: undated manuscript letters of Mme. de Pastoret.

⁵¹ This is yet another example of how women’s work was buried under the authorship of men. I was not able to obtain a copy of this particular issue of the *Manuel des salles d’asile* with Mallet’s *Appendice*, only available in French libraries.

addition, she drafted the documents needed to network with other official entities, and she served as a liaison between priests and district mayors in locating meeting places for the *salles d'asile*. She also served as the vice-secretary of the Higher Commission of the *salles d'asile*, established at the ministry in 1838. Luc emphasized that neither Cochin nor Mme. de Pastoret belonged to this commission, an important fact in the recovery of Mallet's legacy that has been eclipsed by the lesser roles of Catholics like Cochin and de Pastoret.⁵²

Like the majority of her French Protestant compatriots, Mallet attributed the original idea of the *salle d'asile* to Jean-Frédéric Oberlin and to Louise Schleppe (one of Oberlin's first infant teachers), both of whom were known to her because of her father's Alsatian and Lutheran connections.⁵³ From the beginning, her friendship with Mme. de Broglie bore fruit for the infant school project when the latter spoke to Mr. Guizot, a Protestant and the future minister of education, who expressed his eagerness to have a further conversation with

⁵² Luc, *L'invention de l'enfant au 19e siècle*, 24-25. Luc blames the silence around Mallet's role on Catholic commentators who want to minimize or erase "the Huguenot imprint on *salles d'asile* that repels [religious] congregations" (25). French national identity has always been intimately connected to its Catholic heritage. Protestants and their achievements are suspect, especially if it is possible to uncover a foreign connection, for example with the hated British who had so recently meddled in French political affairs in the Napoleonic wars.

⁵³ Mallet's private diaries, quoted in de Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 40.

Mallet.⁵⁴ As time went on, Mallet used her personal networks to further the cause of infant education and share information beyond French borders. In the 1830s, Mallet was corresponding with proponents of infant education in Italy and Denmark who sent news that four *salles d'asile* had been established in Copenhagen "all of them following the Paris model."⁵⁵

Mallet devoted her life to the spread of infant education in France and beyond, taking on private leadership roles but also stepping into public roles when necessary in order to advocate for the leadership of the women's committee or raise funds for the *salles d'asile*. When the Guizot Law was passed in 1833, placing schools under the purview of the state, it mandated that the *Comité central d'instruction primaire de Paris* [Central Committee for Elementary Education in Paris] take over the authority of the infant school women's committee to screen and appoint female teachers for the schools. The women's committee immediately perceived the danger of losing their pedagogical influence on the work of the schools. With the help of her friend Mme. de Broglie, Mallet intervened directly with Minister Guizot, on behalf of the

⁵⁴ Letter from Mme. de Broglie, quoted in de Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 50.

⁵⁵ Jean-Noël Luc, "La Diffusion Des Modèles de Préscolarisation En Europe Dans La Première Moitié Du XIXe Siècle," *Histoire de L'éducation*, no. 82 (mai 1999): 189.

committee, to keep the *salles d'asile* under the authority of the *dames patronesses* in order to ensure their “charitable, religious, and maternal mission.”⁵⁶

Mallet worked to ensure the continuity of the mission of the women’s committee because that is what set the *salles d'asile* apart from the palliative system of Paris Hospices that maintained social order by confining the poor and the sick inside the walls of their designated institutions. The religious and educational objectives of infant education offered opportunities for rehabilitation and social integration by shaping the hearts and minds of the youngest future French citizens—something the municipal programs failed to do. This is why, as Luc demonstrated, the French infant school system could not be reduced to an elaborate daycare system “conceived by the ruling classes during the Industrial Revolution, to respond to economic needs and preserve social order” by freeing up female labor and giving working families a second salary.⁵⁷ Otherwise, argued Luc, why were infant schools opened to upper class families, in neighborhoods outside of urban industrial zones?⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Luc, “Madame Jules Mallet,” *BSHPF* 146 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2000): 19 ; Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au XIXe siècle*, 29.

⁵⁷ Luc, *L'invention de l'enfant au 19e siècle*, 8.

⁵⁸ Luc, *L'invention de l'enfant au 19e siècle*, 8.

Her Spiritual Leadership and Role in the Réveil

Born in 1794, Mallet was the daughter of famous businessman Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf, descendant of a long line of Lutheran dyers in Wurtemberg, and his second wife, Élisabeth Massieu, who were married by a Calvinist pastor in Paris. In Jouy-en-Josas, in the suburbs of Paris, Mallet witnessed her father's deep compassion for the working masses who sought refuge in his factory from the occupying troops at the end of Napoleon's reign (1814). Oberkampf protected his workers and supplied their needs until he died of exhaustion and illness in October of 1815, followed by his wife a year later.⁵⁹

A few years after the closing of her father's factories, Émilie and her husband Jules moved to Paris, and there she quickly developed a dynamic social

⁵⁹ Oberkampf established his textile factory, *la manufacture de Jouy*, in the town of Jouy-en-Josas, on the outskirts of Paris. It became a thriving industry both nationally and locally. Its success revived the region for fifty years, starting in 1760. In 1791, he was elected mayor of the town against his will, with 30 out of 39 votes. He was awarded the Legion of Honor by Napoleon. After his death, his daughter Émilie bought his factory and turned it into a *salle d'asile*. (Alfred Labouchère, *Oberkampf (1738-1815)*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1874), 3, 4, 84) A fascinating literary detail is that, in 1834, Victor Hugo rented a house in Jouy-en-Josas for his mistress Juliette Drouet. His portrait of Jean Valjean as the benevolent inventor, entrepreneur, and mayor of Montreuil-sur-Mer bears an uncanny resemblance to the life of Oberkampf in Jouy. Did Mallet's *salle d'asile* in Jouy also inspire Hugo to include an important role for children in *les Misérables* when no other authors were writing about them at the time?

life and enjoyed the company of many friends.⁶⁰ However, grief drove her to seek comfort in the reading of the Bible that contained “those great truths which were the strong rock of consolation to the persecuted Huguenots.”⁶¹ Bibles could not be purchased in Paris, so she had to order one from Geneva. It seems that Mallet, in her mid-twenties, was coming to terms with her Huguenot heritage (from her mother’s side), and that her faith was ripe for the new energy that the *Réveil* brought to French Protestantism: “The truths of the Gospel, hitherto either coldly accepted or carelessly neglected, became once more a living power.”⁶² Her biographer, de Witt-Guizot, herself a product of the *Réveil* and well aware of the international character of the revival sweeping through France, described it this way:

The eighteenth century thought it had for ever [sic] abolished Christianity through its philosophical discoveries; the Revolution had drowned it in blood, and the Directory in pleasures; nevertheless, in spite of repeated blows and the long reign of religious indifference, it had once more emerged from the ruin which crushed it, and arisen, alive and vigorous, before the very eyes of those who had seen it descend to the tomb. (...) In Germany, Switzerland and England the same revival was on foot, and was seen in the over-filled churches and chapels. In France, with the old doctrines were revived the heroic

⁶⁰ De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 29-32.

⁶¹ De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 33.

⁶² De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 34.

memories of the past; charitable institutions sprang up on all sides, and the Société Biblique, although barely started, distributed, open handed, copies of this precious but too often deprived inheritance amongst the families of the very men whose blood had been so freely shed in its defense.⁶³

For de Witt-Guizot and other revival-minded French Protestants, the *Réveil* had brought the traditional Reformed faith back from the dead, reviving the “old doctrines” and the “heroic memories of the past.” Also a product of the new Evangelical Protestantism of the nineteenth century, de Witt-Guizot did not take exception to the international character of the *Réveil*, as if that somehow diminished or corrupted the identity of French Protestantism. In this excerpt, de Witt-Guizot simply underlined the spiritual and social consequences of the *Réveil* that echoed the central effect of the Reformation three centuries earlier: the return to the Bible as the core of Protestant faith. Mallet was at the heart of this renewal movement as a founding member of the Women’s Bible Society auxiliary and of the Paris Mission women’s committee.

Émilie Mallet’s deep piety, born of the *Réveil*, was essential to the founding, initial vision, pedagogy, and dissemination of the *salles d’asile* in France, but she also contributed to the spread of a renewed faith at home and

⁶³ De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 35.

abroad. Her pious initiatives to nurture children were part of a missionary passion for the whole family. In 1836, she published *Prières chrétiennes à l'usage des familles* [Christian prayers to be used in families], a simple book of morning and evening prayers based on Scripture that became a classic among Protestants and went through seven editions over the next five decades. She also wrote a book of Christian hymns and songs for the *salles d'asile*.⁶⁴

One of the first things Mallet did upon arriving in Paris in 1821 was to organize the women's auxiliary of the *Société Biblique de Paris* that was officially established in 1823. There and in her many other initiatives, she cultivated numerous friends among women of the Protestant High Society who shared the same revivalistic faith, missionary drive, and philanthropic instincts: Mme. Gautier, Mme. André Rivet, Mme. Guizot, Mme. Delessert, Mademoiselle de

⁶⁴ I could not locate a copy of Mallet's hymnbook. However, I found another book of songs for the *salles d'asile* that included songs with very simple lyrics that usually held a lesson for the children. The tunes were easy to remember, newly composed so as to avoid the use of old popular tunes that often had less than exemplary lyrics. See Fortunée Eugénie Chevreau-Lemercier, *Chants pour les enfants des salles d'asile* (Paris: Hachette, 1845); Robert, "Mallet (Madame)" *Dictionnaire Du Monde Religieux Dans La France Contemporaine: Les Protestants*; Ferdinand Buisson, éd., "Mallet (Mme. Jules)," *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire*, édition électronique (1911). The influential work of hymns at this time in spreading *Réveil* piety echoed a similar phenomenon at the time of the Reformation. As Christopher Brown showed in his book, *Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), hymns had a powerful impact at home in family devotions as a way to teach spiritual self-sufficiency and provide strong doctrinal roots that strengthened and maintained Lutheran identity in the face of persecution. Her father being a Lutheran, Émilie would have known the importance of hymns in Lutheran piety.

Chaband-Latour, Mme. Pelet de la Lozère, and Mme. Albertine de Staël (the Duchess de Broglie), just to mention a few. Some of them also became her collaborators in other endeavors. All of these women, for example, joined the Paris Mission women's committee when it formed in 1825. In her private diary, Mallet wrote that Mme. Rivet, Mme. Juillerat, and Mme. de Broglie were the instigators of that particular project.⁶⁵ Mallet's dearest friends were Mme. Pelet de Lozère and Mme. de Broglie, whose "noble and intellectual countenance" as well as her deep piety charmed her from their first encounter.⁶⁶ As a founding member of the Paris Mission women's committee, Mallet extended her influence even beyond France, to supporting infant schools for the African children of the Lesotho Mission.

The Paris Mission Women's Committee Creates a Network

Mallet's exceptional spiritual insight shaped the vision of the Paris Mission women's committee in tandem with Mme. de Broglie. Her gift for creating networks had already served her well in the creation of the Paris Bible

⁶⁵ Mallet's private diaries, quoted in de Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 38.

⁶⁶ De Witt-Guizot, *A Christian Woman*, 38-39.

Society women's auxiliary in 1823. The network of women's auxiliaries for the Bible Society laid the groundwork for the extension of the network on behalf of the Paris Mission, beginning in 1825.

The Paris Mission women's committee met every month from January to May 1826. The minutes indicate that these months were very active. The women drafted their by-laws, gathered information, wrote their first report for the Paris Mission General Assembly meeting in April, and received and sent letters. They also drafted two announcements to be distributed in churches all over France, included in the appendix of the 1826 General Assembly report. Several members traveled on behalf of the committee. The committee read with great interest a letter (not included) written by Mme. F. Delessert from London, that reported on the yearly meeting of the London Missionary Society. Even though it is not clearly stated in the minutes, one can deduce that members were using their personal networks to form women's auxiliaries in various parts of France—for example, northeast of Paris, in the department of l'Aisne (February) and in Montpellier (April).

The November minutes included a long handwritten report by Mallet on her trip to Bordeaux and the south of France to visit religious societies there: Toulouse, Montpellier, Nîmes (Protestant strongholds), and Marseille. She met

with various women involved in Bible society committees and newly formed women's mission auxiliaries, reported on their level of activity (or lack thereof, occasionally) and also met with Pastor Lissignol, a strong figure in the *Réveil* in Montpellier. In the following years, Montpellier became a hub of mission-related activities with many auxiliary societies that raised generous funds for missions. Like a good team player, Mallet was respectful of her committee colleagues and refrained from saying anything about the work going on in Nîmes because that was the home turf of Mlle. Chabaud and Mme. Guizot, who sponsored a girls' orphanage there. In Marseilles, where there was a Protestant remnant, she found no religious societies or monthly prayer meeting (signs of interest in missions and the *Réveil*) and came away with a general sense of "moral numbness and apathy [that] stifled all good intentions."⁶⁷ The lack of women's mission-related activity was so discouraging that Mallet proposed to the committee that they write a letter to encourage the women to organize Bible and mission-related committees. The financial reports in subsequent years indicate that Marseilles was slow in developing an interest in missions: auxiliary societies only made

⁶⁷ Mme. Jules Mallet, "Rapport de Mme. Jules Mallet, lu à la séance du 22 novembre 1826," *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (November 22, 1826).

their first contribution to the Paris Mission in 1832-1833—seven years later.⁶⁸

Overall, it is impossible to fully measure the influence Mallet's trip may have had on the churches in the south but one can assume that it sparked interest and raised awareness of the cause of missions. The other women of the committee also traveled back to their home regions to promote missions and foster the creation of women's auxiliaries. This network was essential in the spread of the *Réveil* to the rank-and-file Protestants of the provinces.

Mission Fervor Spreads the *Réveil* through Women's Auxiliary Society Networks

The Paris Mission women's committee was very aware of the fact that female giftedness lay in their ability to increase their influence through the development of personal friendships and, by extension, networks of relationships. As a result, from 1825 on, they focused their efforts on writing personal letters to the women's committees in the provinces to encourage their work. Their role in maintaining these contacts was essentially pastoral and they seemed preoccupied with donations only as a secondary concern. In 1834, their

⁶⁸ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (March 14, 1832). Mme. Ounous (sp.?) reported that there would soon be a women's auxiliary society in Marseille.

annual report indicated that their hard work seemed to have paid off because “everywhere” there was an increased interest in missions.⁶⁹

The women’s committee annual reports, as well as their monthly minutes, trace a growth in the interest in missions throughout the country in the first ten years of their existence. However, interest in missions was intimately linked with, and, in fact, was a result of, the revival of Protestant piety spreading through France at this time. The reports provide several means by which it is possible to measure this progress: the increase in women’s auxiliary societies, the levels of their financial contributions, and the content of the correspondence exchanged. While promotion and fundraising (socially acceptable female roles) were the ostensible goals of the women’s committee, they also indulged in pastoral encouragement and teaching (not socially acceptable tasks for women) in their correspondence to auxiliary societies composed of both women and men.

Growth of Auxiliary Societies

Between 1825 and 1835, the number of mission-related women’s auxiliary societies grew steadily all over France. Unfortunately, neither the handwritten

⁶⁹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris*, (1834), 61.

monthly reports nor the annual reports of the Paris women's committee give a consistent account of the cumulative numbers of women's auxiliary societies in the rest of France (the *départements*) during that decade. However, in virtually every annual report, the Paris women described growth in numbers or in spiritual vibrancy.⁷⁰ The Paris Mission women's 1827 annual report stated that there were 25 women's associations in Paris alone with "only" 180 subscribers, 8 new societies in the provinces, and 12 new branch associations in the south, with the city of Montpellier counting as many women's associations as Paris.⁷¹ In 1829, the number of women's societies in the *départements* rose to 21. In 1830, the annual report spoke of new societies in Vauvert, Bernis, Calvisson, and Boissières, as well as Orléans. Mens—perhaps the earliest of women's auxiliary societies to be established in France—had grown to include five branch

⁷⁰ It is also hard to tell what the numbers mean and one cannot always distinguish whether or not some figures are included in larger numbers. The women never created a table of statistics for their reports. The financial reports at the end of the General Assembly report only included some of the numbers for women's associations—in Paris and a few other cities—probably those reported by churches and pastors. From reading the Paris Mission women's reports, it seems that many women's associations in the rest of France were self-administered, and not necessarily under the authority of a male leader. However, we do not have the transcripts of the letters received from these associations so it is impossible to know the details of their relationship to institutional leadership.

⁷¹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris*, (1827), 44. In the report, the women state that "the number of our Associations in Paris is still very low, there are only 25."

societies.⁷²

In 1831, the Paris women wrote that their circle had grown and that they had received letters from 19 societies reporting their earnings. In 1832, no General Assembly report was filed because the outbreak of cholera in Paris suspended all assemblies and the women's committee did not meet for two months. In 1833, there was news that the large cities of Lyon, Bordeaux, and Marseille were now corresponding with Paris (no societies yet). Strasbourg already had four women's associations meeting weekly. In 1834, women's mission societies had started in Marseilles, Sauve, St. Hippolyte, and Cette. In 1835, societies were added in Besançon, Nègrepellisse, Montélimar, and Lamure.

Sadly, it is impossible to know how many missions-related women's societies there were in France at any given time. Only a handful of the women's associations mentioned in the women's annual report were listed in the Paris Mission financial report. Nor is it possible to know which of the 25 or so auxiliary societies that were consistently listed in the General Assembly financial report as standalone donors (that is, not listed in affiliation with a church) 1) may

⁷² Mens was and still is a small mountain town of fewer than 2,000 inhabitants that powerfully responded to Calvin's message in the sixteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, the ministry of Genevan pastor-evangelist Felix Neff brought revival when he replaced the town's pastor for a brief time in 1821.

have been mixed societies of men and women; 2) may have been made up of women but led by a pastor or another male leader and therefore were not listed as “women’s auxiliary societies”; 3) may have been inspired to start up as a reaction to the influence of women’s committees; 4) may have been communicating with the Paris Mission women but may not have been identified as “women’s auxiliary societies.”⁷³ The General Assembly annual report provided a list of the auxiliary societies throughout the country but it was not always up to date.⁷⁴ There is no written record of the many women’s auxiliary societies that corresponded with the Paris women. If they corresponded directly with the Paris women, then their letters were lost, because no archives were kept. If they wrote to the main Paris Mission office, it is possible some record would have been kept of the existence of the group. However, because the Paris Mission’s record-keeping was not systematic when it came to women’s societies

⁷³ There is very little information on the leadership and gender compositions of auxiliary societies but it is plausible that all these various configurations existed. For example, the women’s report of 1829 mentioned that in Anduze, a leading Protestant town in the south, “the women of the Committee very much wish to join their efforts with ours, and send us objects for our sale” (41). Anduze was consistently listed as one of the 25 or so contributing auxiliary societies in the Paris Mission financial report. Was the group all women or a mix of men and women? Or was this a separate group?

⁷⁴ In the financial report of the Paris Mission General Assembly of 1831, 61, there is a “notice” stating they were omitting the list of auxiliary societies that year because it had come to their attention that the list was out of date.

and because the women's committee also did not keep strict records, it is not possible to collect rigorous data to track the work of women's auxiliaries.

What the Numbers Show

However, the examination of the financial reports of the Paris Mission for a five-year period, from 1827 to 1832, yields some revealing data about the level of contributions of the women's auxiliary societies, that is, the Paris women's committee and a few groups from the *départements* that are identified in the report (see the table below).

In this five-year period, the average yearly income of the Paris Mission was 27,373 Francs. Among the various contributing sources, the report listed between 24 and 31 auxiliary societies all over France as standalone entities (not identified as belonging to a specific church) that included groups of men, women, and, possibly, mixed groups. The total average contribution of these societies was 11,584 Francs, which represented 42.3% of the Paris Mission's total yearly income. Women's committees contributed an average of 2,869F to this figure of 11,584F, which represented 10.5% of the Paris Mission's total income or 24.8% of the total amount collected by all auxiliary societies. In contrast, another telling figure is the total annual contribution of the consistories of Reformed

Churches. Between 34 and 69 consistories (representing more members than those of the auxiliary societies) contributed an average of only 4,487 Francs, a mere 17.7% of the mission's income.⁷⁵

In spite of the somewhat unreliable record keeping of the Paris Mission and the women's committee, at the very least, this small snapshot demonstrates the essential role of auxiliary societies, whether all-women or not, in funding the work of French missions.⁷⁶ By contrast, the number of churches and the paltry amount of their contributions reveals the sometimes less-than-wholehearted support of the Reformed Churches to the work of missions.

⁷⁵ Some of the auxiliary societies may have had undocumented church affiliations.

⁷⁶ The earliest American female fundraising efforts on behalf of mission began in 1800 with Mary Webb's Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes and the Cent Societies that were models for many women's fundraising groups that emerged in their wake. Other examples that would have inspired the Paris women in their fundraising efforts included independent societies founded by women: the Female Missionary Society of Southampton (1803, Congregational), the Female Mite Society of Beverly (1808, Baptist), the Salem Female Cent Society (1811, Baptist), the Female Foreign Missionary Society of New Haven (1812, Congregational), the Wesleyan Seminary Missionary Society (1819, Methodist), the Society for the Support of Heathen Youth (1823, Presbyterian). Auxiliary societies began in support of the LMS starting in 1796 both in the U.K. and abroad, in particular one in Cape Town in 1812. In 1837, Sarah Casalis reported that the Lesotho Mission had received money from the women's auxiliary in Cape Town in support of their schools (Paris Mission women's committee handwritten minutes, 1837). Lovett mentioned "pious efforts by females" in London auxiliary societies who were raising money using the "new method" of subscriptions. Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895*, vol. 1 (London: H. Frowde, 1899), 77.

DATE	Expenses	Income	Total Aux. Soc. Contrib. / Women's part**	From churches**
1827	20,781	26,977	10,021 (30 soc.) / 1,877	4,122 (34 ch.)
1828	18,369	23,756	10,399 (31) / 1,901	4,135 (45)
1829	21,418	31,382	13,435 (25) / 4,884	4,096 (41)
1830	24,902	31,141	13,392 (25) / 3,938	4,990 (69)
1831	26,403	23,609	10,673 (24) / 1,747	5,091 (61)
5 year average	22,375	27,373	11,584 (42.3% of income, incl. women) / 2,869 (10.5% of income)*	4,487 (17.7% of income)

Table 1: Comparative Table of Paris Mission Finances 1827-1832 (in French Francs)

* The sum of 2,869 represents 24.8% of the total amount collected by all auxiliary societies listed in the report.

** The number of auxiliary societies and churches that contributed fluctuated from year to year and is shown in parentheses.

Creative Fundraising

The Paris women took their role as the avant-garde of the missionary movement very seriously, strictly following their procedure established in the by-laws for taking minutes and reporting revenue. As attendance became irregular, they decided that committee members arriving over two and a half hours late to the meeting would be fined 25 centimes.⁷⁷ In early 1831, this

⁷⁷ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (Feb. 11, 1829). In the monthly report of March of 1829, the attendance list included a line drawn between a larger group at the top and a few names at the end. I deduced that they had started to enforce this new rule, thus the line separated the names of those who had arrived on time and the latecomers at the end.

ingenious new way of collecting money had raised 39F in fines over the previous year.⁷⁸ In their first year, they had conceived another clever means to raise money by designing collection boxes for missions to be placed in every home.⁷⁹ The income from the collection boxes became a line item in later General Assembly financial reports.

Children Join the Fundraising Efforts

The Paris women's annual report of 1829 sheds light on some of the activities of the other women's societies who wrote to describe the results of their fundraising efforts. The report described an auxiliary society composed of destitute little girls who donated the money they received as bonuses for their good behavior in school.⁸⁰ In southern France, in Congénies, Mme. Julie Cook, née Marzials, the wife of Wesleyan evangelist-missionary Rev. Charles Cook, had started a women's society and some young girls, 10 to 12 years old, met

⁷⁸ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (Jan. 12, 1831).

⁷⁹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris*, (1826), reported by Mark Wilks, 72. It is not certain where they got the idea of the collection boxes but it was probably current practice among women's groups.

⁸⁰ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 37. The report did not say where this society was located nor what woman was associated with it, just that they were students in "one of our schools of mutual learning."

every Thursday to work for missions: “their work [had] already earned 21F15c” —a considerable sum for a small group of children.⁸¹ Help was also coming from abroad for the Paris Mission. In a Protestant parish in Geneva, a group of *Friends of Missions* had formed, composed of the poorest villagers who pooled their money to take out a subscription. They met weekly to pray and to listen to a reading of mission news by a young schoolgirl they had enlisted, as most of them couldn’t read.⁸² The participation of children was the sign of the vibrancy of the *Réveil* and renewed piety among French Protestants.

Concluding the 1829 report, the Paris women expressed their gratitude for the way God had supported the growth of the missionary endeavor over the last seven years, with women’s groups being a part of it for the last four. They also reminded everyone that “the work of Missions is not a human undertaking but an undertaking entirely divine and spiritual.”⁸³ In their drive to recruit other women, they even encouraged them to consider the contribution of a one hour of

⁸¹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 41.

⁸² *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 42.

⁸³ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 43-44.

their time to work for missions as part of their example as Christian mothers and wives. Social class was not a pretext for inactivity.⁸⁴ Their pitch included a reprise of the argument used the year before by Rev. Frédéric Monod, who had argued that if 20,000 women gave one hour a week to raise two sous, they would raise 100,000F in one year.⁸⁵

Validation by Male Supporters

The eloquence of the women's 1829 report, read by Rev. Frédéric Monod and possibly bolstered by his charisma, so inspired the attendees that Rev. Réville, of Dieppe, spontaneously proposed that the assembly vote to have the women's report read from the pulpit of their churches, as he planned to do upon his return. He also launched into a powerful speech in support of the women's work:

No, no, the Christian ladies of Paris do not need our praise: what shall we do, Gentlemen? We will be quiet here; but upon returning to our Churches, we will declare, in a loud voice, what we have seen and heard; we will say that in Paris there are deeply compassionate women, full of ardent charity for the millions of poor creatures who

⁸⁴ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 43-44.

⁸⁵ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 43-44. This was a common Protestant fundraising strategy used in many countries.

are still wandering *among the shadows of death*; (...) women whose hearts, enlarged by the Spirit of God, embrace all of humanity; (...) we will say that the ladies of Paris have sworn that they will never rest until there is no longer even one savage who doesn't confess aloud and from the heart the *only Name by which we may be saved* (...) And Gentlemen, perhaps our words will awaken some sleeping soul...⁸⁶

It appears that the executive committee shared Réville's sentiments because the assembly voted unanimously to accept his proposal.

The 1829 report showed that the Paris women were not only growing the ranks of mission supporters among the grassroots throughout France, but they were also inspiring the leadership of the Paris Mission to reach out with evangelistic fervor to the Protestant members of their churches. This fervor was not new for the Protestant women of Paris and beyond; it had burned in their hearts from the very first time they attended the General Assembly in 1825.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Original text: "*Non, non, les dames chrétiennes de Paris n'ont pas besoin de nos éloges: que ferons-nous donc, Messieurs ? Nous nous tairons ici ; mais de retour dans nos Eglises, nous publierons à haute voix ce que nous y avons vu et entendu ; nous dirons qu'il y a dans Paris des femmes saisies d'une compassion profonde, et d'une charité ardente pour ces milliers de malheureuxs créatures qui errent encore parmi les ombres de la mort ; (...) des femmes dont le cœur élargi par l'Esprit divin, embrasse l'humanité toute entière (...); nous dirons que les dames de Paris ont juré qu'elles ne se reposeront jamais tant qu'i ly aura un seul sauvage qui ne confesse pas de la bouche et du cœur le seul Nom par lequel nous puissions être sauvés. Et, peut-être, Messieurs, que nos paroles iront réveiller quelque âme endormie...*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1829), 46.

⁸⁷ Even though at this early stage, the Paris Mission did not yet have their own missionaries in the field nor their own territory, the Paris women were fervently propping up the French mission efforts, encouraged by the work of international missions that they read about regularly in the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*. The early work of the American Board and American Baptist Missionary board—in particular, the work of the Judsons and the Newells, was

Conclusion

In *les Misérables*, as the tragic *dénouement* approached, Gavroche danced between the bullets, singing while he harvested precious ammunitions for his comrades on the barricade:

<p><i>Joie est mon caractère</i> <i>C'est la faute à Voltaire</i> <i>Misère est mon trousseau</i> <i>C'est la faute à Rousseau</i></p>	<p>Joy is my character 'Tis the fault of Voltaire Misery is my trousseau 'Tis the fault of Rousseau.⁸⁸</p>
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No Parisian mother stepped in to take the bullets that ultimately felled the joyful street urchin, Hugo's "grand little soul."⁸⁹ By contrast, the women of the Society of Maternal Charity and of the Infant School Association were desperate to relieve the misery of the many children like Gavroche in the city streets. They started the work of saving the children of France by providing a refuge and an

inspirational. But the female figures of Harriet Newell (the first missionary martyr) and Ann Judson who was an international hero in the mission world, especially fueled their pious imagination. Starting in 1829, with the influence of John Philip of the London Missionary Society in southern Africa, they also would have paid close attention to the LMS activities in that region, in particular the work of Robert Moffat in Bethelsdorp. Following the example of the many early women's support societies for missions in America, many of which did not send out their own missionaries, the Paris Mission women's committee persevered in their support. See note 75 for a list of early women's groups in the U.S.

⁸⁸ Hugo, *Les Misérables*, 1065.

⁸⁹ Hugo, *Les Misérables*, 1066.

education that, for many, would be redemptive. Émilie Mallet was one of the pioneers of this womanly rescue effort that was a gateway into the work of international mission and part of her holistic mission theology. Her spiritual insight and strong sense of vision made her the leader that the other women of the Paris Mission committee could emulate. The networks that she and the other women on the committee created in support of international mission work ultimately enabled them to reach beyond national borders to the children of Lesotho with the same redemptive vision for all of society through education.

**CHAPTER FIVE: THE KNITTING QUEEN UNDER THE SHADE TREE:
PROTESTANT WOMEN COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS**

The arrival on the mission field of a missionary's wife was a milestone in the history of the Paris Mission and the Lesotho Mission.¹ Founded in 1822, the Paris Mission sent out their first missionaries in 1829. They were Samuel Rolland, Prosper Lemue, and Isaac Bissieux. It was only in 1833, with the arrival of the second wave of French missionaries—Eugène Casalis, Thomas Arbousset, and Constant Gosselin—and the invitation of a local chief, Moshoeshoe, king of the Basotho, that the Paris Mission acquired its own mission territory in Basotholand.

The event that truly launched the missionary endeavor, both from the point of view of the mission society in France and the work in Lesotho, was the arrival of the missionary wives among the Basotho. With their arrival, Protestant women became more visible in their support of the heroic efforts of women like themselves, but who worked on the frontlines of mission. This chapter will examine how the arrival of the missionary wives re-invigorated the work of the

¹ Some of the text in this section was first presented at the 2017 Yale Edinburgh Conference in New Haven under the title "Women Missionaries, Intercultural Marriage, and Exile: Desert or Promised Land for the Early Work of the Lesotho Mission?"

Paris Mission women's committee and gave them an unflagging vision for their mission. Secondly, I will show how the work of the Lesotho Mission only began to flourish once the missionaries had wives because it allowed them to fully engage in holistic mission work. Finally, I will look at missionary marriages (their strengths and their challenges), from the perspective of the missionary wives. The presence of the women on the mission field allowed the Paris Mission women's committee to assume a pastoral role in the course of their developing relationship with the missionary wives.

Living Vicariously Through the Missionary Wives

In 1831, in their excitement over the arrival of their own missionaries in Africa, the Paris Mission women's committee wrote about the "intimate analogies" between the work of missionaries and their own work in France:

Missionaries fight with the weapons of faith, for example, through work and patience. They care for young souls, establish schools, and never tire of presenting the Gospel in its sublime simplicity. This is, again, how we must act. The powerful God who sustains, encourages, gives joy to our brothers in the midst of deserts; this same God will sustain us, will comfort us in the midst of the world and its dangers. But let us be true missionaries in the world for the name of *Christ*, for the Good News of salvation.²

² Original text: "*Les missionnaires combattent avec les armes de la foi, par l'enemple, le travail et la patience. Ils étendent leur sollicitude sure les jeunes âmes, établissent des écoles et ne se lassent jamais de présenter l'Evangile dans sa sublime simplicité. C'est de même encore que nous devons agir. Le Dieu*

The tasks mentioned here—the care of “young souls” (children), and establishing schools—were generally considered to be women’s work. These words show that the women’s committee understood themselves and all female missionaries to be co-equal partners with men in the work of missions. When, after 1832, Mademoiselle Colany, daughter of a leading pastor of the *Réveil* in Lemé, France, traveled to southern Africa to become the wife of pioneer missionary Prosper Lemue, the Paris women identified more closely with their missionary calling.³ They garnered courage for their work of supporting missions by living vicariously through the missionary wives.⁴ The female missionary calling was bound up in the work of the married couple, where the wife was meant to complement and augment the work of her husband. At that time, French Protestant women did not yet have a concept of the single female missionary.

puissant qui soutient, encourage, réjouit nos frères au milieu des déserts ; ce même Dieu nous soutiendra, nous consolera au milieu du monde et de ses dangers. Mais soyons-y véritablement missionnaires pour le nom de Christ, pour la bonne Nouvelle du salut. “ Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris (1831), 37. This is but the last section of a more developed analogy.

³ The Lemues did not move to the Lesotho Mission until 1847. This is why Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland was actually the first missionary wife of the Lesotho Mission.

⁴ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1968), 48.

Ironically however, the first missionary wife to arrive in Lesotho started her career as a single missionary. But then, she was not French to begin with.

The First Missionary Wife: Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland

First-hand accounts from the perspective of missionary wives are rare.

This is not surprising, considering that they were so busy that they generally did not have time (or the inclination) to keep a journal. However, the journals of the first missionary wife of the Paris Mission to arrive in Lesotho, Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland, were preserved by her family and published by Karel Shoeman in 1987. Lyndall's *Recollections* represent a work "of great value as a first-hand account of mission work by someone directly involved," according to Schoeman, who compiled and edited her "memories of life in South Africa," thus rescuing from obscurity the rare written work of a missionary woman.⁵ Schoeman underlined the added value of the down-to-earth quality of her personal narrative that was "considerably less glamourized than that provided in the mission journals and memoirs of the time."⁶ This quality alone adds significant weight to the

⁵ Karel Schoeman, "Introduction" in Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland, *The Recollections of Elizabeth Rolland (1803-1901): With Various Documents on the Rolland Family and the Free State Mission of Beersheba*, ed. Karel Schoeman (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1987), 8.

⁶ Schoeman, "Introduction" in Rolland, *The Recollections*, 8.

credibility of this account from the lips of an exceptional and highly educated woman. Lyndall started writing these recollections in 1871, at the age of 68, while caring for her failing husband, who died less than two years later, in January 1873.⁷

Born in 1803, in a village near London, Elizabeth Lyndall did not have an easy childhood as the tenth child of the family. Her father, Samuel Lyndall, was a dissenting pastor and a popular revivalist who was greatly influenced by the teachings of the Wesleyan Calvinist evangelist Rev. George Whitefield. Her mother, Rebecca Oliver, came from a wealthy family in Yorkshire and was a devout and beloved pastor's wife. Young Elizabeth accompanied her mother when she visited schools connected with her father's large congregation—schools that she superintended. These visits apparently had quite an impact on her as she wrote in her *Recollections*: "Very early indeed I cherished an earnest

⁷ Schoeman worked from two manuscripts, both owned by Lyndall's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Phyllis E. Reim. The first (version A) was written in a small exercise book, in a tremulous but legible hand—"a clean copy of the original manuscript, very probably by Elizabeth Rolland herself," in Schoeman's words. The second manuscript was copied by Mrs. Orpen, one of the Rolland daughters, and contained not only her recollections but additional information on the Rolland family and the Schreiners. Schoeman reproduced version A of the manuscript verbatim in the published *The Recollections of Elizabeth Rolland*, adding only a few minor corrections (punctuation, chronology) and the division into chapters. Version B was used to fill in gaps or to add notes on Mrs. Orpen's perspective (Schoeman, "Introduction" in Rolland, *The Recollections*, 10-12).

though then childish idea that I would devote my life to the teaching of poor children.”⁸ At the age of five, she suffered a leg injury that never healed properly and that caused her great suffering, delaying her education. Lyndall lost her mother when she was only seven years old.⁹

The Revival of her Faith

Her spiritual awakening came at the age of nineteen through the teaching of Edward Irving, founder of the “Irvingites,” also called the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church.¹⁰ Though she recognized him as a man “liable to err,” Lyndall judged his spiritual impact to be of some significance:

this eminent preacher of righteousness was raised up by God to arouse the influential and aristocratic circles to care for divine truths, to force them to quit their long indulged indifference to vital religion; (...) Edward Irving, more than any other man, was the means of shaking the religious orthodox world into deeper and truer Christianity than it had ever attained, into clearer views of revealed truth and better practice that it had of late indulged.¹¹

⁸ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 19.

⁹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 20.

¹⁰ Edward Irving (1792-1834) was a deposed Presbyterian minister said to be the “forerunner” of a religious group that called itself the Catholic Apostolic Church. During Irving’s ministry, there were said to be extraordinary works of the spirit such as prophecies, speaking in tongues, healing, and raising of the dead.

¹¹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 27.

The memory of her revivalist father probably made her realize the value of Irving's ministry for waking up those who were "indifferent to vital religion." Her awakening was therefore the product of a Pentecostal-type message.

After this experience she "tore herself away" from London's "intoxicating excitement" to accept a job as a tutor outside the city.¹² She began to gain experience as a teacher or tutor and might have been tempted by married life in a rural village had she not "from earliest childhood (...) admired the missionary lot, and had conceived a wish to go out alone into other lands for the sole object of teaching the heathen to read."¹³

The Influence of Mary Ann Aldersey

Lyndall first met Mary Ann Aldersey around 1827. Aldersey, who became a missionary to China and founder of a girls' school, was to have a powerful influence on her.¹⁴ While Lyndall was in Norwich, which she described as the

¹² Rolland, *The Recollections*, 28.

¹³ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 31. Aldersey remained a single missionary. Lyndall may have felt some affinity with her on this account and initially decided to remain single. The marriage proposal from Rolland later came as a shock.

¹⁴ Mary Ann Aldersey (1797-1868) was an independent pioneer woman missionary and possibly the first single woman missionary in China, originally from London. She was never employed by any agency but kept close ties with the London Missionary Society. She founded a

“headquarters of Quakerism,” she lived with a Quaker family thanks to letters of introduction from Aldersey. There she came under the influence of Ann Bevan, a single woman who was raising her two nephews on her own.¹⁵ She was so delighted by the strong Christian character of the Quakers, “those excellent and amiable Christians, fitly called ‘Friends,’” that she almost “cast in [her] lot with them.”¹⁶ She even described her secret love for someone she encountered in Quaker circles, a “noble heart who was devoting all the energies and talents of no common mind to the upraising of the once downtrodden and neglected classes.”¹⁷ Reflecting on it many years later in her *Recollections*, she attributed this failed love life to her utter ignorance at how to behave in such circumstances due to her lack of a mother and to her early context where people “treated matters of love with ridicule, and marriage with mystery.”¹⁸

school for Chinese girls that she ran from 1837 to 1861. Jocelyn Murray, “Mary Ann Aldersey,” *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998).

¹⁵ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 41-42.

¹⁶ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 41.

¹⁷ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 43.

¹⁸ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 41.

Lyndall was quite taken with Aldersey whom she found eloquent, fascinating, and utterly devoted to the cause of missions: "To see her was to love her, to listen to her flowing musical voice was to be convinced, as though a message from Heaven had been addressed to you, bidding you to follow its teaching."¹⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that Aldersey would inspire Lyndall to follow her missionary calling. One day, Aldersey called on Lyndall in her schoolroom with an earnest message: "I think God is preparing you to go and work for Him abroad."²⁰ This statement took Lyndall by surprise: "I was much impressed by these words, having never hinted to anyone a desire which had, however, frequently taken possession of my thoughts."²¹ She later wrote that Aldersey's friendship had changed the whole direction of her life. Now she was set on a missionary's course.

Around this time, a "society of ladies for the promotion of female education in the East" was forming.²² Aldersey encouraged Lyndall to answer

¹⁹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 44.

²⁰ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 44.

²¹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 44.

²² Lyndall left for Africa in 1829, before this society formed. A groundbreaking initiative, the British Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, was founded in 1834 to send single female missionaries to India and China. Aldersey was associated with this society in her work for schools in China, according to Dana Lee Robert in *American Women in Mission: A Social*

the request of the governor of Corfu to apply for a position as a teacher in a girls' school there. However, the opposition of her family caused this plan to fail. Nevertheless, she did not have to wait long for another opportunity to pursue her missionary vocation.

Headed for Africa

Shortly thereafter, she was introduced to John Philip of the LMS who told her of his desire to “introduce some system of infant education in CapeTown.”²³ Would she be willing to accompany him back to South Africa for this work? After much prayer and consultation with her family, Lyndall decided she would fulfill her missionary vocation in southern Africa, as an infant teacher for slave children. She accepted this calling with some misgivings but she dismissed them on spiritual grounds. Her work in Africa was considered a step down from the more respected work of missionary schools in the East.²⁴

History of Their Thought and Practice (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 126, 171, 192. This society inspired American women to found the Woman's Union Missionary Society in 1860, “the first truly nondenominational foreign mission-sending organization in America” (Robert, 191-193).

²³ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 49.

²⁴ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 50.

Calm and chastened as were my feelings under the new and strange vicissitudes of life, I still enjoyed many great and precious advantages. I had indeed stepped, as it were, out of my sphere into one the world would deem a lower one, but the consciousness that, if reproached, it would be for the cause of Christ, sustained my mind (...)²⁵

Lyndall must have felt this change in direction was an exercise in humility.

However, she was not one to be intimidated or shamed, because what mattered was “the cause of Christ.” Being slightly older than the average missionary candidate, she had singular insight into God’s propensity to work through the “most unfit” of instruments:

And even in the holy cause of missions, how many of those who have run “to and fro” have been actuated by various and mixed motives, upright and crooked both. Many doubtless have gone forth from a sincere desire to be the means of saving souls, but how many from discontent, ambition, and even curiosity and love of change. God, however, can and does work with all kinds of instruments, and knowledge being increased and spread abroad, it needs only the breath of his life-giving Spirit to make the weakest and even unfit agent productive of good.²⁶

These words illustrated Lyndall’s strong faith and her womanly humility: though a “weak and unfit agent,” she trusted God would equip her with his Spirit so she would be “productive of good.” Once she put her hand to the

²⁵ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 51.

²⁶ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 52.

plough, Lyndall never looked back.

At Philip's urging, Lyndall spent several months visiting the best infant schools in England, in particular in Chelsea, where Mr. Bilby and his wife were the teachers. She described her assignment:

It was about this time that the subject of infant education became very popular and engrossing in London. The writings of Pestalozzi and those of his way of thinking were widely circulated, and efforts were being made to carry out his system all over London. Dr. Philip had sent his two daughters to the institution of Dr. Mayo, and he wished me to look into all that was doing in London [sic] as a preparation for the work he hoped to accomplish in Africa.²⁷

From that point until her departure for Africa, she applied herself to learning Pestalozzi's pedagogy in order to use it in founding an infant school in the Cape, as Philip wished.

Lyndall arrived in 1829 in southern Africa, having traveled on the same ship with the first group of Paris missionaries that included Samuel Rolland. In 1833, after three years as a very successful infant school teacher, while on a well-deserved vacation, Lyndall received an unexpected proposal of marriage from her former traveling companion, Rolland. As Lyndall was a slightly older, independent-minded woman, she was quite shocked because the idea of

²⁷ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 50.

marriage “had been banished from [her] mind for many years.”²⁸ But somehow Rolland was able to convince her to marry him, in spite of the “decided refusal” she had rehearsed beforehand.²⁹ They were married January 2, 1834.

Lyndall was the pioneer of infant school education in southern Africa and later in Lesotho. She became the leader among the Lesotho missionary wives, training them in infant school pedagogy and shaping the early mission theology of the Lesotho Mission.

A Missiology of Marriage: The Husband-Wife Team

It was only with the arrival of the missionary wives in Lesotho that the mission “team” was complete and that work could begin in earnest. Initially, however, the importance of wives in the missionary team had not been clear to the Paris Mission. In 1844, James Backhouse published a lengthy account of his travels throughout southern Africa during which he visited many missionaries, including those of the Paris Mission. He remarked how “Both the Paris and Berlin Missionary Boards fell into an error, in sending out their Missionaries

²⁸ Rolland, *The Recollections* 60.

²⁹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 60.

single.”³⁰ This was an insight into African culture and missionary work that the Paris Mission did not grasp at the outset.

In 1833, while Eugène Casalis was in the process of moving to Thaba-Bossiu in response to Moshoeshoe’s invitation, he was still a bachelor. He was convinced of the impossibility of pursuing his mission there without a wife: “The only alternative facing me was to recognize either that I had been wrong to think that God had called me to serve him at Thaba-Bossiu or to get myself a spouse.”³¹ But the prospect of marriage terrified him: “Me, marry!” he wrote, “Me, already more than half savage.”³² He then resolved either to find a suitable wife or to ask the Mission to send him somewhere he could, “like Saint Paul, be a missionary without having a sister-wife” — a place like India or China.³³

Casalis traveled to the Cape to meet Sarah Dyke, a young British woman that Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland had mentioned to him. He discovered that she

³⁰ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., Paternoster Row, 1844), 427.

³¹ Original text: “*Il n’y avait devant moi que cette alternative, ou bien reconnaître que je m’étais trompé en croyant que Dieu m’appelait à le servir à Thaba-Bossiu ou bien m’adjoindre une compagne.*” Eugène Casalis, *Mes souvenirs* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1886), 293.

³² Original text: “*Me marier ! moi, déjà plus qu’à demi-sauvage.*” Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 293.

³³ Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 294.

possessed “intelligence and a heart of the kind he had dreamed of.”³⁴ After “six weeks of observation” to consider her suitability as his wife, Casalis decided that God “had arranged everything for him” and that they should marry.³⁵

Their marriage, on April 13, 1836, sealed Casalis’ missionary vocation in Basutoland. The Basotho men confirmed this when the newlyweds arrived in Thaba-Bosiu, according to Casalis: “‘Now you are a man,’ they said to me with an approving smile, ‘a man much more able to understand us and to help us than you were before, when you lived as a boy. You have a home, now, and what a home! You can certainly count on us coming there soon.’”³⁶ He and Sarah now had a missionary partnership that was indistinguishable from their marital partnership.

The Missionary Wife Was Key to the Mission

Casalis quickly understood what Sarah meant to the Basotho women:

³⁴ Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 323.

³⁵ Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 328.

³⁶ Original text: “‘Tu es maintenant un homme,’ me disaient-ils avec un sourire approbateur, ‘un homme bien plus capable de nous comprendre et de nous aider, que tu ne l’étais pendant le temps que tu as vécu en garçon. Tu as une maison maintenant, et quelle maison ! Tu peux bien compter que nous y viendrons souvent.’” Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 338.

“The female portion of the population, with the wisdom characteristic of both black and white women, immediately suspected that they had just found what they needed: *their own missionary*.”³⁷ He believed that Sarah was a full-fledged missionary, not just his “helpmate.” The Basotho women admired the fact that though she didn’t plow the fields with them, she sat in the shade near them doing a strange activity: she knitted. And because in Basotho culture only the men could weave, the women were eager to learn this skill. They concluded that Sarah, whom they called “Madame,” was therefore the queen because she was weaker and more beautiful: “If they take such good care of her, it is no doubt to preserve her longer.”³⁸

The above reaction of the Basotho indicated that, in their eyes, the arrival of the married missionary couple marked the true genesis of the Lesotho Mission in Thaba-Bosiu. In the assessment of missionary-turned-historian Théophile Jousse, the arrival of Sarah Casalis at Thaba-Bosiu in 1836 was “a date in the

³⁷ Original text: “*La partie féminine de la population, avec la sagacité qui caractérise les noires, aussi bien que les blanches, se douta de suite qu’elle avait trouvé ce qu’il lui fallait, son missionnaire à elle.*” Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 335-336. The italics are Casalis’.

³⁸ Original text: “*S’ils la soignent ainsi, c’est sans doute pour la conserver plus longtemps.*” Casalis, *Mes Souvenirs*, 335.

history of the Mission."³⁹ He explained that, "the Christian woman arrives and everything changes: as a woman, as a spouse, and as a mother, she is a living sermon destined to change pagan views on a gender they were used to despising."⁴⁰ Jousse and his wife opened the first post-primary school for girls in Thaba-Bosiu in August 1871. Years later, he wrote a multi-volume history of the early Paris Mission in which he praised the crucial role of wives in the missionary endeavor: "I can affirm, without fear of being contradicted, that the success of the Lesotho mission is due, after God, to the religious and social influence of these brave women whose lives were so nobly and courageously attached to those of their husbands."⁴¹

However, like many men of his time, Jousse believed that the usefulness of women was mostly limited to their status as wives. This was reflected in the statement of his aims for the Thaba-Bosiu Girls' School: "What I am seeking for

³⁹ Théophile Jousse, *La mission française évangélique au sud de l'Afrique: son origine et son développement jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. 1 (Paris: Fischbacher, 1889), 157.

⁴⁰ Original text: "*La femme chrétienne arrive et tout change: comme femme, comme épouse et comme mère elle est un prédication vivante destinée à changer les vues des païens sur un sexe qu'on s'était habitué à mépriser...*" Jousse, *La Mission Française Évangélique Au Sud de l'Afrique*, 158.

⁴¹ Original text: "*Je puis affirmer sans crainte d'être démenti, que le succès de la mission au Lessouto est dû, après Dieu, à l'influence religieuse et sociale de ces femmes vaillantes dont la vie a été si nolement et si courageusement attachée à celle de leurs époux.*" Jousse, *La Mission Française Évangélique Au Sud de l'Afrique*, 106.

the young girls is a practical education, an appropriate introduction to their future life as wives. When one reflects on the influence that woman exercises on man in all stages of life, one is astonished to see how little is done to make her able to exercise on him a healthy influence."⁴² Here was the same concept of indirect "female influence" of which de Witt-Guizot spoke.

Female modesty dictated that the Paris Mission women's committee sometimes use the same rhetoric in describing the roles of missionary women. In their 1837 annual report, they described the "noble vocation" of missionary women in enthusiastic and lyrical prose, joyful that now French women had joined the ranks of missionaries:

Gentlemen, is it not striking to see that while rash spirits rise up and demand rights and privileges for women that they are not destined for, God prepares for them, on all sides, a noble vocation for the advancement of his kingdom? We see them contribute to the dissemination of Sacred Books, children's education, and in the work of missions, what a beautiful career is open to them! A great number of British, American, and now we can say French missionary women, assist their husbands in difficult and dangerous work. They take care of schools for women and children; but, in addition, they announce the Gospel by demonstrating the Christian faith in all the details of family life.⁴³

⁴² Quoted in David Ambrose, *The History of Education in Lesotho: Six Brief Subsectoral Studies* (Roma, Lesotho: House 9 Publications, National University of Lesotho, 2007), 38.

⁴³ Original text: "*Messieurs, n'est-il pas frappant de voir, que tandis que des esprits téméraires s'agitent et demandent pour les femmes des droits et des privilèges qui n'appartiennent pas à leur destinée,*

Here the author of the report contrasted the idealized beauty of the missionary wife's self-sacrifice with the "rash" and "demanding" agenda of the incipient feminist movement. She described women's roles in somewhat reductionist terms—being simply spiritual helpmates for their husbands and their families. The wideness of de Broglie's vision for the mission partnerships of women was lost in this report. There was a hint at their evangelistic role, though it was within the context of the details of family life.

The Lesson of "Shared Humanity"

In his monumental ecumenical history of the church in Lesotho, Craig Hincks argues that it was when the Basotho understood the missionaries'

*Dieur leur prépare de tous côtés une noble vocation pour l'avancement de son règne ? Nous les voyons contribuer à la propagation des Livres saints, à l'enseignement des enfants, et dans l'œuvre des missions, quelle belle carrière leur est ouverte ! Un grand nombre de femmes missionnaires, anglaises, américaines, et nous pouvons maintenant dire françaises, secondent leurs maris dans leur difficiles et dangereux travaux. Elles s'occupent des femmes et des écoles d'enfants ; mais de plus, elles annoncent l'Évangile, en manifestant la foi chrétienne dans tous les détails de la vie de famille." Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris (1837), 39 ; In the Huguenot past, the role of the household was very important in preserving the faith in situations of persecution. Treasure points out that Huguenot witness was in household worship or clandestine wilderness meetings in the dark period "sous la croix" [under the cross] in the seventeenth century. Women played leading roles in maintaining religious family practices. There were a number of women *prêcheuses* [preachers] who itinerated in the countryside, baptizing, serving the Lord's supper, and leading desert assemblies. Anne Montjoye was a *prêcheuse* in the Périgord, captured and hung in 1688. Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 384.*

message of “shared humanity,” that is, that nothing—not race, economics, gender, education or power—made them any less valuable than the white missionaries themselves, a spiritual breakthrough took place and the gospel made sense to them.⁴⁴ The message of “shared humanity” emerged in the day-to-day relationships between missionary husbands and wives, and the Basotho people. The unity of male-female partnership was essential to the success of the missionary undertaking and facilitated the effective work of social renewal and evangelism among the Basotho.

Chief Moshoeshe of the Basotho understood the lesson of “shared humanity” well. Even though he was never baptized, he also exhibited a deep understanding of the Christian faith.⁴⁵ In 1858, when the Boers swept through his territory, they completely ransacked the mission station of Beersheba and destroyed a missionary house at Morija.⁴⁶ However, rather than respond with

⁴⁴ Craig W. Hincks, *Quest for Peace: An Ecumenical History of the Church in Lesotho* (Morija, Lesotho: Heads of the Churches in Lesotho and Christian Council of Lesotho, 2009), 108. Parenthetically, Hincks states that the population in Lesotho in 1833, with the arrival of the Paris missionaries, was about 25,000. By 1845, it had grown to between 50,000 and 60,000 (Hincks, 91).

⁴⁵ King Moshoeshe died on March 11, 1870, the eve of his baptism. He was to be baptized with ‘Mantsopa, a Sotho prophetess. David Ambrose, *‘Mantsopa, Prophetess of the Basotho Nation*, Lesotho Miscellaneous documents No 35, (House 9 Publications: University of Lesotho, 2010.)

⁴⁶ There are multiple detailed accounts of the devastation that the Boers caused in Basutoland at this time. The response of the Basotho warriors to the Boer attacks was so fierce (“they overran the Free State and captured immense herds of cattle, leaving a large number of

violence, Moshoeshoe sent a remarkable letter (of which this is only a brief excerpt) to the commander of the Boer army, Boschof, upbraiding him for the behavior of his men:

When you attacked the people of Beersheba who had done you no harm, I was amazed and afflicted beyond all manner of expression. (...) You call yourself a Christian in your letter to me. I have long known that you are a Christian; but the commandants of your army are not yet Christians, and if they persist in claiming that they are, they will force us to believe that there is no God. What! Would their Christianity consist in destroying Christianity? Have your warriors not sacked the beautiful station of Beersheba? Have they not burnt the house of the missionary at Morija? (...) No, the officers of your army are not Christians, for I shall never believe that Christianity consists in leading women and children to captivity, in firing point-blank on the old and the sick and that is what your children have done. (...)

What will the world say when it learns that the children of a Christian chief have sacked and destroyed churches, whereas the children of a heathen chief have not dared to lay their hands on the house of God?

It is customary in our country, when the people of a place have been to dance with those of another, to return the compliment to those who had invited them and, in accordance with this custom, we were about to invade the Free State from every direction and to set everything ablaze along our route. But the Lord has inspired you with the thought that it would be well to prevent us from returning evil for evil.⁴⁷

farms in ashes") that the Free State Government humbly requested a peace settlement from Moshoeshoe. (Hincks, *Quest for Peace*, 245). The latter consented to call back his warriors and settled for writing a letter (quoted above) to the military leaders.

⁴⁷ Moshoeshoe to Boschof, Thaba Bosiu, sixteenth May, 1858. Translated from the French version as reproduced in the *JME*. Quoted in Hincks, *Quest for Peace*, 246-247.

Moshoeshoe, the “heathen chief,” had taken to heart the lessons of Christianity and did not continue the dance of war, to his great credit.

In 1841, when Antoine Vermeil had stood up at the Paris Mission General Assembly to urge his European listeners to seek true heart conversion, he had also warned them that, one day, “savages may be [their] judges” —judges of their impoverished faith or total lack thereof.⁴⁸ It seems that day did finally come, in 1858, with the destruction of the mission station by “Christian” Europeans.

“The Martyrs of our Time”

The Paris Mission women’s committee and Jousse both described a view of the missionary wife’s life that was somewhat detached from the realities on the ground. In fact, the life of a missionary wife was much more complex than that vision, and often full of suffering, because of the numerous and more diverse demands placed upon her than on her husband, in the absence of a personal support system.

A functional husband-wife team was essential to the success of the missionary enterprise because of the self-sacrificial nature of the task. In 1838,

⁴⁸ “M. le Pasteur Vermeil, de Paris,” *Procès verbal de l’Assemblée Générale de la Société des Missions de Paris*, (April 29, 1841), 45.

Vermeil stood up and exclaimed, in his fervent response to the women's annual report at the Paris Mission assembly, that "Missionaries are the witnesses, the martyrs of our time."⁴⁹ In that context, his statement applied perhaps more poignantly to the experience of missionary wives than to their husbands. Did he say that in response to what he had heard in the women's reports? It seems very likely that he did.

The previous year, the Paris Mission women's committee reported the departure for Africa of Mademoiselle Éлиза Colany, the sister of Mme. Prosper Lemue, who had been the first missionary wife in Africa for the Paris Mission (though not the first in Lesotho).⁵⁰ They quoted a long excerpt of a letter that Mme. Lemue had written to her younger sister, to help her prepare for her missionary vocation:

Our task, as missionary women, is less noble than that of our brothers. We are not destined, as they are, to preach the Gospel in a loud voice; our work is more obscure. [long list of womanly tasks on the mission field] (...) Often as you perform all these lowly functions, you will wonder: Am I a missionary? A servant could have fulfilled this task! (...) You must expect much suffering; but God will be with you in all your suffering. If I had known all I would have to go through by

⁴⁹ "M. le Pasteur Vermeil de Bordeaux," *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (April 26, 1838), 55. In 1845, Vermeil joined the executive committee of the Paris Mission.

⁵⁰ Though Mme. Lemue was the first to marry a Paris Mission agent, she arrived in Lesotho after Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland.

coming here, I think I wouldn't have come...⁵¹

Mme. Lemue, an educated and cultivated women, seemed devastated by the stark realities of her life as a missionary wife. The author of the report followed up this letter with a succinct definition of the female missionary calling: "You see, Gentlemen, what daily, humble love the missionary wife must have of God's will, what submissive and disinterested faithfulness, what broken will..."⁵² The writer underlined that the broken will was all the more active because it was broken and because it made the missionary wife "love her task because God gave it to her, for this reason only and for none other!"⁵³

It seems that Mme. Lemue was preparing her sister through this letter for a harsh life of utter self-denial based on a candid description of her own

⁵¹ Original text: "*Notre tâche, à nous femmes missionnaires, est moins noble que celle de nos frères. Nous ne sommes pas, comme eux, destinées à prêcher l'Évangile à haute voix ; nos travaux sont obscurs. (...) Souvent en faisant toutes ces fonctions viles, tu te demanderas: Suis-je missionnaire ? Une servante eût pu remplir cette tâche ! (...) Tu dois t'attendre à beaucoup souffrir ; mais Dieu sera avec toi dans toutes les souffrances. Si l'on m'avait dit par où je devais passer en venant ici, je crois que je ne serais pas venue...*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1837), 37-38.

⁵² Original text: "*Vous voyez, Messieurs, quel amour humble et journalier de la volonté divine il faut à la femme missionnaire, quelle fidélité soumise et détachée, quelle volonté brisée...*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1837), 39.

⁵³ Original text: "*qui fait aimer sa tâche pare que c'est Dieu qui la donne, pour cela seulement et non pour aucune autre raison !*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1837), 39.

experience. One wonders if she had found any comfort in her husband as a companion and a partner-in-mission. The Paris Mission records did not give any other details on her experience, though Lyndall's *Recollections* provide some deeper insights into some of her personal struggles.

The women's annual report of 1838 contained a moving description of Lyndall—one of the “martyr” figures among the missionary wives. The women of the committee were in awe of her zeal, her devotion to her vocation, her love for the Bechuana people, and her tender care for the children of her schools. They quoted an excerpt of one of her letters in which she urgently requested the spiritual help of the committee: “I would like to fervently beg you *to work abundantly with us through your prayers*; because, in this way, we can be workers together in the work of the Lord!”⁵⁴

Lyndall was a missionary wife who was able to endure and even sublimate an unhappy marriage because of the strength of her own missionary calling. When she and Rolland married in 1834, John Philip evaluated the partnership pragmatically and believed their marriage was an excellent match:

⁵⁴ Original text: “*Je voudrais vous supplier avec ardeur de travailler abondamment avec nous par vos prières: car c'est de cette manière que nous pouvons être ouvrières ensemble dans l'œuvre du Seigneur !*” *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1838), 55. Italics are in the original.

“He (Rolland) couldn’t have made a better choice, and if his wife’s health holds up, I do not doubt that she will be a gain [French “*une acquisition*”] for the Mission... It will be a great loss for us, but I hope your Society will gain what we will lose.”⁵⁵ Lyndall, on the other hand, was candid in her assessment of her unhappy marriage:

In after years it was when, under the pressure of cruel disappointment, I discovered that my marriage was a mistake; but at the time it took place I freely offered up for the service of God my opinions, my tastes, and above all, hardest sacrifice of all, my nationality. According to the maxims of the world, our union could not be what is called happy; scarcely could two characters be more opposite than my husband’s and my own. Yet in devotion to the cause of the heathen we were one (...) [God] would teach me that in Himself alone was the only source of happiness. I had said “I will leave all.” He helped me to be true by destroying self, and all that had hitherto constituted my life. I was to be henceforth mentally and nationally *alone*.⁵⁶

Lyndall’s suffering was similar to that which Mme. Lemue had described in her letter.⁵⁷ However, the loneliness Lyndall felt, as a British woman, included her

⁵⁵ Original text: “*Il (Rolland) n’aurait pu faire un meilleur choix, et si la santé de sa femme se maintient, je ne doute pas qu’elle soit une acquisition pour la Mission... Ce sera pour nous une grande perte, mais j’espère que votre Société gagnera ce que perdrons.*” Quoted from an unpublished letter from Philip in Franz Balfet, “Un Pionnier de La Mission Du Lessouto: Samuel Rolland (1801-1873)” (bachelor’s thesis presented to the Faculté Libre de Théologie Protestante de Montauban, July 1914), 86.

⁵⁶ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 60-61. The italics are in the original text.

⁵⁷ Lyndall’s daughter, Mrs. Orpen, who annotated *The Recollections*, added a nuance to her mother’s memories of her life with Rolland: “After Papa’s death, all bitterness passed out of

loss of cultural identity. In marrying Rolland, Lyndall seems to have suffered keenly from the loss of community with her compatriots in the Cape. Her feeling of isolation may have been heightened by a lack of fluency in French that would have limited her ability to communicate adequately in her correspondence with the Paris Mission women's committee and she may have required her husband's help to edit or translate. In her personal suffering, her experience was that of the idealized, noble vocation of the missionary wife. She had accepted her "destroyed self" and had forsaken all to lay her "broken will" at the feet of Christ. But she knew her sacrifice would not be in vain.

Conclusion

With the arrival of Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland in 1834 and Sarah Dyke Casalis in 1836, missionary women finally entered the scene of French Protestant missions. Their visibility was of great importance both to the Protestant women of France and to the Basotho women at the Lesotho Mission. The Paris Mission women gained an enduring vision for their mission and the Basotho women gained their own missionary. The Paris Mission agents learned a classic principle

Mama's soul. She forgot the trials of her married life and remembered only the blessings, and her feeling for papa was one of deep love, tenderness, and veneration. She mourned him sincerely and truly to the end of her own life thirty years later." Rolland, *The Recollections*, 61, note.

of mission with the arrival of the missionary wives: that they could only minister to the husbands, wives, and children of Africa if their missionary teams included husbands and wives.

The transformative effects of the missionary wives' work on the social fabric of Basotho culture quickly became apparent. Sarah discovered that one of her best students was teaching her husband and children everything she was learning in school. Sarah reported that the "moral progress" of the Basotho women was "remarkable" and that women were now attending the worship service in larger numbers than men. They were learning to sew, once only the domain of Basotho men.⁵⁸ In addition, Eugène and Sarah Casalis also took Basotho children into their home to train them so that one day they might become teachers to their own people.⁵⁹ This was the classic Protestant missiology of the Christian family as a "living sermon" at work on the mission field.

⁵⁸ With their new sewing skills, the Basotho women began to sew their own clothes so they could dress and look like the missionary wives.

⁵⁹ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1840), 59.

**CHAPTER SIX: “NOTHING BUT A MERE SCHOOLMISTRESS OF
BLACKS”: WOMEN AND INFANT EDUCATION IN EARLY PROTESTANT
MISSIONS IN FRANCE AND BASUTOLAND**

In 1829, Elizabeth Lyndall set sail for the Cape in company of John Philip and three pioneer missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, one of whom later became her husband. Philip, superintendent of the work of the London Missionary Society in southern Africa and a fierce advocate of the rights of “free persons of color,” had recruited her to pioneer infant education among slave children. Recognizing her talents as a teacher, he had taken a great liking to Lyndall whom he called “his eldest daughter” and treated with the greatest respect. However, not all missionaries felt the same way and one day, while still in England, she “heard [herself] classed as ‘nothing but a mere school mistress of blacks.’” This slander, coming from a “low-minded fellow missionary” evidently infected by “the spirit of the world” did not surprise her.⁶⁰

Twenty-five years later, Lyndall’s contribution to the success of the Beersheba mission in Basutoland showed that she had been anything but a “mere

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Rolland, *The Recollections of Elizabeth Rolland (1803-1901): With Various Documents on the Rolland Family and the Free State Mission of Beersheba*, ed. Karel Schoeman (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1987), 50.

school mistress of blacks." In 1844, ten years after Lyndall began her infant school work in Lesotho, Philip wrote the following report for the *Journal des missions évangéliques* after a visit to Beersheba, the mission station where Lyndall had worked with her husband Samuel Rolland since 1834:

Among the facts that I observed during my last voyage, none seemed more surprising than the status of education in the missionary stations in the country of the Griquas and the Bechuanas. (...) there is something in the manner in which it advances among the Bechuanas, something so unexpected and so new, that it excites an interest that is deeper and more tender than in other parts. (...) Upon entering the school, I saw that there were no tables or benches; it was filled to overflowing; the students were seated on the ground in different classes with their instructors (...) The students were of all ages, from six to sixty. I had never seen people more occupied with their lessons and more eager to learn. (...) I said to Mr. Rolland, with a sort of impatience: "Where is the teacher?" – "There is none," he said. – "But then, how do they learn?" – "They teach each other." To understand what seemed so mysterious to me, one must understand that the excellent missionary and his wife were referring to the Infant School System that they introduced among these people, from the foundation of the mission.⁶¹

⁶¹ Original text: "Parmi les faits qui tombèrent sous mon observation pendant mon dernier voyage, aucun ne me parut plus étonnant que l'état dans lequel se trouvait l'éducation au sein des stations missionnaires au pays des Griquois et de celui des Béchuanas. (...) il y a dans la manière dont elle avance au milieu des Béchuanas, quelque chose de si inattendu et de si nouveau, qu'elle excite là un intérêt plus profond et plus tendre qu'ailleurs. (...) En entrant dans l'école, je vis qu'elle n'avait ni table ni bancs; elle était remplie à l'excès; les écoliers étaient assis à terre en différentes classes avec leurs moniteurs (...) Les écoliers étaient de tout âge, depuis six ans jusqu'à soixante. Je n'avais jamais vu gens plus occupés de leurs leçons et plus désireux d'apprendre. (...) je dis à M. Rolland, avec une sorte d'impatience: 'Où est le maître?' – 'Il n'y en a pas,' me dit-il. – 'Mais alors comment apprennent-ils?' – 'Ils s'instruisent les uns les autres.' Pour comprendre ce qui me paraissait si mystérieux, il faut savoir que l'excellent missionnaire et sa femme voulaient parler de l'Infant School System qu'ils ont introduit au milieu de ce peuple, dès la fondation de la mission." "Détails sur les Ecoles des Béerséba donnés à la ville du Cap par le docteur Philip," *Journal des missions évangéliques* (JME) 19 (1844): 223-226.

This passage explains the beauty and simplicity of the infant school system that was foundational to the early work of the Lesotho mission.⁶² The editors of the *Journal des missions évangéliques* and Franz Balfet, author of Samuel Rolland's biography, identified Lyndall as the first one to introduce the infant school system to southern Africa.⁶³ Philip himself was, of course, aware of her role as the pioneer.⁶⁴

The Paris Mission women's committee and Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland played a crucial role in the spread of infant education in the early nineteenth century, both in the dissemination of prevalent theories through women's networks but also in the implementation of the pedagogy in Europe and on the mission field. The groundbreaking educational systems pioneered by Pestalozzi and Oberlin, rooted in Pietist ideas, were transforming nineteenth century child

⁶² Infant schools were designed to teach small children between the ages of two and six, following a certain pedagogy, depending on the location. In France, they were originally conceived to care for poor children without parental supervision. Infant schools were precursors to kindergarten. The concept evolved differently in Britain and in France.

⁶³ Franz Balfet, "Un Pionnier de La Mission Du Lessouto: Samuel Rolland (1801-1873)" (bachelor's thesis presented to the Faculté Libre de Théologie Protestante de Montauban in July 1914).

⁶⁴ "Details," *JME* 19 (1844): 226n1; Balfet, "A Pioneer of the Lesotho Mission," 131. It is probable that Balfet is quoting the *JME* editors.

education and empowering women teachers. The pedagogical models they proposed were ideal for mission work, in large part because of their dual emphasis on child education and the leadership of women.

Led by Lyndall, the missionary wives of Lesotho used infant education to lay a strong foundation for the education-related mission theology of the Lesotho Mission. In their immediate situation however, the work in the schools was so successful that it also inspired revival among children and adults in the Protestant churches in France. African children, through children's mission magazines, were able to communicate with their peers in France.

In this chapter, I will offer an overview of the two educational models that informed the work of the missionary wives, and I will track their dissemination through women's networks to the Paris Mission and to Lesotho. I will analyze the work of the missionary wives and their use of infant education for mission work. Finally, I will look at the impact of the pedagogical materials that grew out of the educational work of the missionary wives on young Protestant children in France.

The Pedagogy of Infant Schools and Why it Mattered to Missions

Among the many theories circulating in Europe during a time of great

ferment around the topic of the education of children and women, two educational systems, one by Pestalozzi and one by Oberlin, were of crucial importance for the work of women in the Protestant missionary movement. For both men, the source of their thought was deeply embedded in the Pietist-Moravian revival movement that had made its way into France with the *Réveil*. This movement emphasized egalitarian gender roles, and the nurturing role of women in the education of children. The educational models of Pestalozzi and Oberlin shared many common features, especially their Christian basis (as God's creatures, all children are worthy of love), their teaching based on Christian morality (recognizing children were sinners), discipline, virtue, and responsibility, and the importance of female teachers. Their approach contrasted with the popular ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a proponent of "natural education" that argued for keeping children in nature, away from the corrupting influence of society. The following narrative trail establishes the importance of Pestalozzi's method and the spread of its influence to the future agents of the Paris Mission—Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland, the executive committee through Stapfer, and the women's committee through Mme. Guizot—via women's networks.

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)

Pestalozzian pedagogy overturned traditional ideas of early childhood education in the nineteenth century. It placed the child's interests in the center, created a positive learning environment, and eliminated the use of harsh physical punishments.⁶⁵ The role of the mother was central for Pestalozzi because she was the child's first teacher and she created a caring, homelike context that focused on the child's safety and well-being. This was Pestalozzi's idea of the *Wohnstube* [sitting room].

Infant schools were designed to care for and educate children from approximately two to six years old. In Pestalozzi's method, the goal was to balance teaching through "head, heart, and hand," which Michel Soëtard calls "three different ways of looking at this human species in its quest for autonomy."⁶⁶ Rather than using books, children learned by following their natural curiosity for the common objects of life. In this child-centered approach, there was a high regard for the children as "rational, intelligent

⁶⁵ Maria A. Laubach and Joan K. Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue: Pestalozzian Influences on Women's Education in the Early nineteenth century America," *American Educational History Journal*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2012): 366.

⁶⁶ Michel Soëtard, "Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)," *Prospects: The Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*, vol. 24, No. 1 / 2 (UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 2000): 6.

beings....destined to an immortal state of existencesubjects of the government of a holy God.”⁶⁷ They were taught a sense of right and wrong and of how to be obedient, but always in a loving environment, without the use of physical punishment, and under the friendly eye of the teacher—which was but one departure from the harsh methods used by “old school” practitioners.

The teacher greeted the children warmly at the start of the day and opened with prayer and a hymn that all the children sang. The foundational principle of this method was to train children “in religion and virtue” and to “lay the secure foundation of fixed religious habits... the highest aim of the teacher.”⁶⁸ The goal was to educate the whole child, not just the intellect. It was important to respect the children’s personalities and to guide them towards their own potential. Pestalozzi’s doctrine of *Anschauung* or direct concrete observation (awkwardly translated as “sense perception” or “object lessons”) replaced the excessive use of words.

⁶⁷ Mary W. Howland, *Infant School Manual; Or, Teacher’s Assistant Containing a View of the System of Infant Schools. Also a Variety of Useful Lessons; for the Use of Teachers* (Worcester, MA: Dorr, Howland and Co., 1834), 11.

⁶⁸ Henry Barnard, ed., *Pestalozzi and Pestalozzianism: Life, Educational Principles, and Methods of John Henri Pestalozzi, With Biographical Sketches of Several of His Assistants and Disciples*, reprinted from the *American Journal of Education* (New York: F. C. Brownell, 1859), 19. Barnard introduced Pestalozzi’s pedagogy to the American schools in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Ideas Rooted in Experience

Pestalozzi's ideas were deeply anchored in his own experience. He was born in Zurich in 1746 and raised by his mother after his father died when he was five. At university, he tried theology, then law and politics, but to no end.⁶⁹ During those years, he associated with reformists and became acutely aware of human suffering resulting from poverty and deprivation. As a result, he began to research ways to improve the social conditions of the most disadvantaged of society. This deep desire ultimately undergirded his educational pedagogy. The female figures in his life would also greatly influence his ideas: his mother; his wife; Elizabeth Naef—the family maid who raised him; and his female students later on.⁷⁰

In 1769, he married Anna Schulthess, the daughter of a wealthy industrialist in Zurich. She was an influential spouse and wise counselor who

⁶⁹ At the University of Zurich, he would have studied Reformed theology. Later, he became interested in Moravian theology and corresponded with Zinzendorf. He was in contact with several pastors who also linked him to Moravian pietist thought and made a connection between his educational system and that of Oberlin. Loïc Chalmel further develops the relationship between Pestalozzi and Oberlin and their two systems. Loïc Chalmel, *La petite école dans l'école: Origine piétiste-morave de l'école maternelle française*, 3rd ed. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), 184-189.

⁷⁰ Laubach and Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue," 367.

curbed Pestalozzi's most impractical ideas. His first educational experiment in Neuhof, based on the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Émile*, was a farm, ostensibly bankrolled by the Schulthess fortune, where he intended to educate poor orphans and provide a home for them.⁷¹ Their son, Hans Jakob, was raised according to the principles in *Émile*. Anna and one or two servants helped with the education of the girls, teaching them household skills, as well as knitting, sewing, and gardening. When the operation failed after only a few years, the family went bankrupt and Anna lost all her fortune and any rights to her father's inheritance.⁷²

This crisis led Pestalozzi into two decades of reflection and writing. His realistic novel, *Leonard and Gertrude* (1781), which told the story of the rehabilitation of a family and eventually their village thanks to the efforts of an

⁷¹ Rousseau's educational philosophy in *Émile, ou l'éducation* was essentially to socialize young children who started life as blank slates while preserving their natural goodness, leaving them largely to follow their own whims, to "eat, run, and play as much as they please" (p129). The child was considered "good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things" but "degenerates in the hands of man." Books, in particular, were potentially corrupting tools of civilization. There was an inherent paradox in this approach because it inevitably produced hopelessly conflicted individuals torn between their natural inclinations and their duties. In Rousseau's lifetime, *Émile* was misinterpreted as a childrearing book that led to disastrous results when people, like Pestalozzi, attempted to apply the principles therein literally to their own children. "Blind nature" was not always a good teacher.

⁷² Ludovic Pillonel, "L'épouse Discrète Du Pédagogue," *La Région Nord Vaudois*, August 18, 2015, <http://www.laregion.ch/lepouse-discrete-du-pedagogue/>.

exceptional woman, became an international bestseller and was translated into many languages. This work, along with *How Gertrude Teaches her Children* (1802), laid out his principles of education, principles that repeatedly emphasized the importance of the mother in early childhood education. According to Tröhler,

In this way, mothers are the preservers of the good in people, and they are responsible for their development of morality and religiousness. Against the background of a completely corrupt world, the good in the world—the republic of virtue—lies in the hands of (loving) mothers: in Pestalozzi’s conception, the educationalization of social problems is basically a motherly affair.⁷³

No doubt, this spotlight on the crucial role of women as educators would have attracted many women to his pedagogy at a time when their number was growing in the workforce. Pestalozzi soon realized the necessity to train women teachers if his education program was to be successful.

Several years of teaching among war orphans and impoverished children in Stans and Burgdorf allowed him to apply his educational ideas. At long last, in 1805, Pestalozzi was invited to open his institute in Yverdon, in the Vaud region (French-speaking Switzerland). Over the next twenty years, it gained international notoriety and influenced educational systems all over Europe.

⁷³ Daniel Tröhler, *Pestalozzi and the Educationalization of the World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 71.

Many intellectuals interested in education visited Yverdon, including Mme. Germaine de Staël.⁷⁴ French educationist Marc-Antoine Jullien sent three of his sons to Yverdon.⁷⁵ Soon Yverdon also became a center for women's education.

Training More "Gertrudes"

Pestalozzi's method depended on the availability of trained female teachers who would exercise their transformative influence on the children, and through them, on society as a whole, like the Gertrude figure in his novel. In 1806, two of his disciples, Hermann Krusi and Johann Hopf, founded a women's school in Yverdon. A year later, they handed over management of the school to Rosette Kasthofer (1770-1857) who eventually married Johannes Niederer, a close colleague of Pestalozzi, in 1814.⁷⁶ Kasthofer-Niederer's work in female education,

⁷⁴ Mme. de Staël was a leading woman of letters and an important theorist of Romanticism. An influential *salonnière* of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, she was also a renowned writer of plays, novels, essays, literary criticism, history, and poetry. Her daughter, Albertine de Broglie, took over her salon at her death in 1817. See chapter 3.

⁷⁵ Marc-Antoine Jullien was a French educationist who wrote prolifically in the field of education, including several works on Pestalozzi's method and pedagogy, popularizing his work in France. His first title on Pestalozzi was: *Esprit de la méthode d'éducation de Pestalozzi, suivie et pratiquée dans l'Institut d'Éducation d'Yverdun, en Suisse* (Milan: Librairie de l'Imprimerie Royale, 1812).

⁷⁶ Laubach and Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue," 369.

and her writing, were highly influential in the spread of Pestalozzi's ideas to other European countries and across the Atlantic to America.⁷⁷ Laubach and Smith have described Kasthofer-Niederer as the most influential but least known of Pestalozzi's disciples, one of the many women who "became the practical network for the spread of Pestalozzian ideas in Switzerland and the United States."⁷⁸

A Counterpoint to Rousseau's Education Model

It is important to underline the originality of Pestalozzi's contribution to childhood education in the context of this study of women, mission, and social renewal because his ideas served as a counterpoint to Rousseau's *Émile*, which had made its mark in intellectual circles. While Pestalozzi may have begun his work attempting to reproduce Rousseau's model in *Émile*, his failure in Neuhof underlined its inherent flaws, which led him to reject "Rousseau's aristocratic

⁷⁷ Laubach and Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue," 369-370.

⁷⁸ Laubach and Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue," 370. Pestalozzian ideas spread in the United States in American female seminaries, starting in the 1820s. Women such as Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, Zilpah Grant, and Mary Lyon disseminated his ideas in the institutions they founded: Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (Mary Lyon), Troy Female Seminary (Emma Willard). (Laubach and Smith, "Transatlantic Dialogue," 371-377.)

concept of freedom.”⁷⁹ Pestalozzi sought to ensure the education not just of individuals in their quest for freedom but also that of citizens as useful, responsible contributors to society. Pestalozzi scholar Michel Soëtard summarized the meaning of his Neuhof experiment:

Pestalozzi would only be happy when the last barefoot beggar child in Neuhof had found, in himself, the strength to journey alone towards his own ends. This is where we see the active charity of the Christian, but who would never be content with any other arrangement.

Pestalozzi thus ruptured, by his very attitude, the framework of the Christian state. He put himself, and others as well, in a social universe in which the infinite dignity of each child of God had to be effectively recognized by the total community. This was an insane project: established society, with its interests, power, and cunning, easily brought down such an enterprise—which was foolish to the point that its founder naively counted on society’s natural capacity to integrate its absolute pretense to freedom.⁸⁰

Soëtard describes the Neuhof period of Pestalozzi’s educational experiments as “a vast misunderstanding between the rousseauist dream—that could only have

⁷⁹ Michel Soëtard, *Pestalozzi ou La Naissance de l’Educatrice*, vol. 105, series 11, Pedagogy (Bern: Peter Lang, 1981), 6.

⁸⁰ Original text: “Pestalozzi ne franchira pas le seuil de son bonheur tant que le dernier des vau-pieds de Neuhof n’aura pas trouvé au fond de lui-même la force d’aller seul son chemin vers son propre achèvement. Où nous retrouvons la charité agissante du chrétien, mais qui ne s’accommodera jamais d’aucune mise en ordre.

Pestalozzi fait ainsi éclater, par son attitude même, le cadre de l’Etat chrétien, Il se pose d’entrée, et prétend installer les autres, dans un univers social tel que la dignité infinie de chaque enfant de Dieu soit effectivement reconnue dans la communauté de tous. Folie que ce projet: la société établie, celle des intérêts, du pouvoir et de la ruse, n’aura aucune peine à venir à bout d’une entreprise d’autant plus insensée que son instigateur mise en toute naïveté sur la capacité naturelle du monde social à intégrer la prétention absolue de liberté.” Soëtard, *Pestalozzi ou La Naissance de l’Educatrice*, 6.

been established by denying history and repudiating action—and the reality of the world.”⁸¹ Neuhof prompted an important shift in Pestalozzi’s thinking.

Female Philosophers Take Rousseau to Task

Contemporary women thinkers perceived flaws in Rousseau’s teaching and in the example of his life. Starting in the late eighteenth century, there were ongoing debates in intellectual circles and among educated women on the importance of female education. French Protestant women followed these debates and the content later surfaced in education and mission-related publications. Lyndall would have come across these ideas in her research on education and the infant school system. French Protestant women in Paris probably read and discussed the writings of female philosophers, perhaps even in Mme. de Broglie’s salon.

One Dutch female philosopher, Belle van Zuylen, critiqued Rousseau’s education model in *Émile*, in particular the role of Sophie, whom she believed was cast in an inferior role. Mary Malone summarized her basic critique of Rousseau: “van Zuylen points out that his supposed equality was concerned

⁸¹ Soëtard, *Pestalozzi ou La Naissance de l’Éducateur*, 11.

with men only and was based on ‘the natural inequality’ of women. (...) She accused Rousseau of being fundamentally anti-woman, using a sentimentalized form of ignorance to demean them.”⁸² Van Zuylen also underlined Rousseau’s supreme hypocrisy and his pretense as a great educator of children. He had disowned the children he fathered with Thérèse Levavasseur, his servant and sexual partner, and had sent them away to be educated in an orphanage.⁸³ In addition, when Rousseau died, his death was wrongly blamed on Levavasseur — a smear campaign spearheaded by Mme. de Staël.⁸⁴

Mary Wollstonecraft, another female philosopher, also took exception to Rousseau’s ideas. She had written *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* in 1786, where she emphasized that the role of women was to be virtuous. Her next book, however, entitled *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), written after she lost her faith during the French Revolution, argued that, because women were

⁸² Mary T. Malone, *Women and Christianity: From the Reformation to the 21st Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 160-161.

⁸³ Mary Malone, *Women and Christianity*, 160. Some sources say that Rousseau wasn’t sure they were his children because Levavasseur had a reputation for infidelity. Rousseau (1712-1778) only decided to marry her ten years before he died.

⁸⁴ Mary Malone, *Women and Christianity*, 160. Mme. de Staël began her literary career as an enthusiastic supporter of Rousseau. She believed Thérèse was the cause of his suicide. However, different sources offer conflicting accounts of the causes of Rousseau’s death and of his emotional state before he died. Several mention his paranoia, hypersensitivity, and mental instability at the end.

human beings on an equal footing with men, they should have equal access to education. Her *Vindication* contained a searing critique of Rousseau from a feminist viewpoint.⁸⁵

Probably the most powerful of women's voices at this time on the subject of women's education in Britain was Elizabeth Hamilton, an important female philosopher of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. She was the author of *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers* (1800), a satirical novel that criticized the limitations placed on women in education. Her two-volume work, *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education*, published in 1802 and 1803, was rooted in Enlightenment thought with very little consideration of religion. In volume 2, she stated that "the true end of education is to bring all the powers and faculties of our nature to the highest perfection of which they are capable."⁸⁶ She believed that the higher emphasis should be on the heart rather than on the understanding, that is, the acquisition of knowledge. These ideas resonated with Pestalozzi's pedagogy. She also argued that the education of women was inextricably linked to that of her children: "the woman who would educate her

⁸⁵ Mary Malone, *Women and Christianity*, 162-164.

⁸⁶ Elizabeth Hamilton, *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education*, vol. 2 (London: G. and J. Robinson, 1803), 1-2.

children with success must begin by educating herself."⁸⁷

Hamilton corresponded on multiple occasions with Hannah More, as shown in the bibliographic index of the *Literary Manuscripts and Letters of Hannah More*. More was a leading Evangelical figure associated with the Clapham Sect who had written numerous tracts and a two-volume work, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, published in 1811. More's letters and writing may have had some influence on Hamilton, who published her last work in 1815, under the long title of *Hints addressed to the patrons and directors of schools principally to show that the benefits of the new modes of teaching may be increased by a partial adoption of the Plan of Pestalozzi*. With this work, Hamilton recognized the benefits of Pestalozzi's Method and her views may have helped to legitimize it more widely in society. Incidentally, her imprimatur may have prompted Protestant women in France to take an interest in Pestalozzi, especially when one of their own, Mme. Guizot, a highly regarded writer, reviewed her work.

The Paris Mission Women's Committee and Pestalozzi

Another early trail connecting future women actors of the Paris Mission to

⁸⁷ Hamilton, *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education*, vol. 1, 21.

the theme of education can be found in the *Annales de l'éducation*, a journal that only saw six issues from 1811 to 1813 (two per year). In this publication, future education minister Guizot, his wife, Pauline Meulan Guizot (who signed PMG or PM in the *Annales*), and a few colleagues, published articles and short promotional notices on trends in the field of education, including essays on theorists, pedagogical practices, published works, and case studies.

Mme. Guizot, a future member of the Paris Mission women's committee, also wrote original stories that served as pedagogical allegories, or forums for debates on various aspects of education. She seemed to be very interested in identifying and promoting the best thinkers in the field of education and she was aware of the debates going on in Britain. In volumes 1 and 2 (1811), for example, Mme. Guizot summarized the thought of Elizabeth Hamilton in *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education*.⁸⁸ Even though Pestalozzi's work *How Gertrude Teaches her Children* had been translated into French by 1803, Mme. Guizot only mentioned Pestalozzi in the 1813 volume (no. 5) of the *Annales*.⁸⁹ It is possible

⁸⁸ "P.M." (Pauline Meulan Guizot), "Lettres sur les Principes élémentaires d'Éducation; par Miss Hamilton," [I 1st excerpt], *Annales de l'Éducation*, ed. F. Guizot, vol. 2 (Paris: Le Normant, Imprimeur-Libraire, 1811): 291.

⁸⁹ In volume 5, Pestalozzi is discussed at length in a series of articles written as allegorical stories that showcased a discussion between a husband and a wife on the benefits of Pestalozzi's Method for the education of their children, by Mme. Guizot. *Annales de l'Éducation*, ed. F. Guizot,

that she was skeptical because Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte had voiced his distaste for Pestalozzi's methods.

Philipp Albert Stapfer, the Swiss minister of education, philosopher, and future Paris Mission executive committee member, was very supportive of Pestalozzi's methods. However, enthusiasm developed more slowly in France.⁹⁰ Several short pieces published on Pestalozzi in 1804 were ignored in large part because of Bonaparte's indifference.⁹¹ However, in 1812, Pestalozzi finally gained recognition in France when French educationist Mark-Antoine Jullien, a distinguished member of the Legion of Honor, popularized his method in a multi-volume publication.⁹² The explosion of books published on Pestalozzi's

vol. 5 (Paris: Le Normant, Imprimeur-Libraire, 1811): 8-26 (PMG), 73-87 (PMG), 142-154 (PMG), 193-219 (PMG). Women were helping to disseminate Pestalozzi's ideas in France.

⁹⁰ Stapfer had been a strong supporter of Pestalozzi while he still lived in Switzerland. According to Tröhler, he coined the expression "the method" or "the Pestalozzi method" that designated all of Pestalozzi's education principles. See Tröhler, *Educationalization*, 68-69.

⁹¹ James Guillaume, "Pestalozzi," *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire publié sous la direction de Ferdinand Buisson (l'édition électronique)*, accessed February 16, 2017, <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3376>.

⁹² Marc-Antoine Jullien, *Esprit de La Méthode d'éducation de Pestalozzi, Suivie et Pratiquée Dans l'Institut d'Éducation* (Milan: Imprimerie Royale, 1812). He sent three of his sons to Pestalozzi's institute in Yverdon. See Auguste Jullien, Adolphe Jullien, and Alfred Jullien, *Lettres des enfants Jullien, 1812-1816, élèves chez Pestalozzi: onze lettres des enfants Jullien, alors âgés de sept à douze ans, adressées à leurs parents depuis l'Institut Pestalozzi d'Yverdon* (N.p.: Centre de documentation et de recherches Pestalozzi, 1985).

Method in the first decade of the nineteenth century had already confirmed its widespread popularity in Europe.⁹³ However, Pestalozzi was not the only influence on the educational practices of the Lesotho mission.

Oberlin and Child Education as Pastoral Strategy

Oberlin's ideas shaped the role of French Protestant women in education and mission in his expansion of the role of women teachers. He differed from Pestalozzi on the role of women because he believed that Pestalozzi placed an exaggerated emphasis on the role of the mother as the supreme educator of children. Not all women were necessarily gifted educators—especially if they were themselves victims of extreme poverty and illiteracy—such as the peasant women in Ban de la Roche, his parish. Oberlin's approach, therefore, was to choose young women for their moral qualities and to give them the care of young children “that most mothers had neither the time nor the inclination to instruct.”⁹⁴ From that point on, explains Loïc Chalmel, these young women, the *conductrices de la tendre enfance* [female guides of tender childhood],

⁹³ Tröhler, *Educationalization*, 76.

⁹⁴Loïc Chalmel, “Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, Pédagogue Révolutionnaire?” *Revue Française de Pédagogie* 116, no. 1 (1996): 106.

assumed the institutional responsibility to educate the young children in Ban de la Roche, confirming the role that the Pietists recognized as being the specific role of women in society. This was the start of the “poêles à tricoter” [the knitting stoves], actual schools for the little ones from the age of four, where they gathered around the guide, in the reconstituted universe of the “Wohnstube” [sitting room] dear to Pestalozzi.⁹⁵

The fact that Oberlin’s pedagogy expanded the role of the educator beyond the role of the mother (to any qualified woman) represented a significant development in the context of women’s missionary work.

Mme. Guizot wrote a description of Oberlin and his work in *L’Ecolier* (vol. 3) that was published in 1822.⁹⁶ In 1820, Mark Wilks, future member of the Paris Mission executive board, provided another link to Oberlin’s work. He wrote the introduction to a brief pamphlet of fifty pages entitled “The Ban de la Roche and its Benefactor M. Jean Frédéric Oberlin.” The pamphlet described the work of social renewal that Oberlin had carried out in his years of ministry, starting in the area of education of the youngest, then among children, girls, and adults.

⁹⁵ Original text: “assument dès lors la responsabilité institutionnelle d’éduquer les jeunes enfants du Ban de la Roche, confirmant le rôle spécifique reconnu aux femmes par les piétistes pour remplir cette fonction dans la société. Ainsi adviennent les ‘Poêles à tricoter,’ véritables écoles pour les petits à partir de quatre ans, au sein desquelles ils se retrouvent autour de la conductice, dans l’univers reconstitué de la ‘Wohnstube’ chère à Pestalozzi.” Loïc Chalmel, “Jean-Frédéric Oberlin, Pédagogue Révolutionnaire?” *Revue Française de Pédagogie* 116. No. 1 (1996): 106.

⁹⁶ Pauline de Meulan-Guizot, “Le Pasteur du Ban de la Roche, *L’Ecolier ou Raoul et Victor*, vol. 3 (Paris: Ladvocat Libraire, 1822), ch 17, 1-45.

Wilks dedicated this work to his father for its pedagogical value to missionary work:

In many of the methods and exertions of this evangelist, it is not the novelty of the discovery, but the wisdom of the application, that is to be admired; and in all, knowledge, industry, self-denial, courage, perseverance, sanctified by the motives of the Gospel, and devoted to the noblest end. Missionaries may learn how they should labour, and what they may effect; and those who direct missions may observe the character of that agency, which, with the divine blessing, they may hope to employ with peculiar advantage.⁹⁷

Because Oberlin's priority was the education of children, he built schools in every commune. There, they learned so quickly that the adults felt ashamed and "determined to devote part of the Sunday, and the long evenings of the winter, to the instructions of the masters."⁹⁸

Oberlin encountered initial resistance to his education plan for the region but soon the women joined him to work with children. His first *conductrice* was Sara Banzet, a former servant of his predecessor Stuber. According to Thomas Fallot, when Oberlin discovered that Sara had taught the village children to knit, he wrote in his journal that he experienced a feeling of "rapture" and

⁹⁷ Mark Wilks, *The Ban de La Roche and Its Benefactor, J. F. Oberlin, Lutheran Pastor at Waldbach, in the Department of the Vosges* (London: Francis Westley, 1820), vi-vii.

⁹⁸ Wilks, *The Ban de La Roche and Its Benefactor, J. F. Oberlin*, 10.

immediately went to persuade her father to let her come be his first teacher (1769).⁹⁹ This was the origin of the idea of the *conductrice*. A young peasant woman of fifteen, Louise Schleppler (1761-1837), was Sara's successor and served as Oberlin's faithful helper for the next fifty years.

Oberlin and Female Education

Oberlin realized that girls were not receiving training in household management or in womanly tasks because the women of Ban de la Roche "neglected the thousands of duties that prepare for the vocation of wife and mother, and contribute greatly to happiness in the home."¹⁰⁰ So, with the help of his wife, he began training future female teachers by organizing schools in every village, where young women learned knitting and other female handicrafts.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Thomas Fallot, "Oberlin," *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire, publié sous la direction de Ferdinand Buisson* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1911), electronic version accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3291>.

¹⁰⁰ Louise Scheppler, *pieuse et fidèle servante d'Oberlin*, trans. from German (Toulouse: Société des Livres Religieux, 1853), 8.

¹⁰¹ Louise Scheppler, 8. Another reason that may have contributed to Oberlin's use of women as teachers was the fact that men could not initially be persuaded to be teachers because the vocation had fallen into such disrepute. The last primary school teacher Oberlin met before he started his reform of schools was an illiterate, decrepit former shepherd who had been relegated to the job of watching the young children because he was too infirm to keep sheep (p7).

Loïc Chalmel describes Oberlin's infant education program as a "pedagogy of gentle constraint."¹⁰² His method with these female leaders was to put the little children in large rooms where they could play under female care. The older children learned spinning, knitting, and sewing. The local patois was forbidden and only French or German was spoken. They were taught Christian history and natural history.¹⁰³ There were two teachers in each village infant school: one to teach the older ones to sew, spin, or knit, and the other to watch over their lessons and play time.¹⁰⁴ Oberlin also developed Sunday Schools and a simple library system so that the children could borrow books to read.¹⁰⁵

In 1829, Baron Georges Cuvier, director of the Académie Française, awarded the Montyon Foundation's "Grand Prize of Virtue," in the amount of 5,000 francs, to Schlepfer for her work with Oberlin. In his tribute to her life's work, Cuvier attributed the original idea leading to the creation of the *salles*

¹⁰² Chalmel, *La petite école dans l'école*, 148.

¹⁰³ Thomas Fallot, "Oberlin," *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie*.

¹⁰⁴ *The Life of John Frederic Oberlin, Pastor of Waldbach, In the Ban de la Roche*, compiled and revised (Philadelphia, PA: American Sunday School Union, 1830), 38.

¹⁰⁵ *The Life of John Frederic Oberlin, Pastor of Waldbach*, 39.

d'asile to Schlepper.¹⁰⁶ However, she later denied that she was the originator of this idea and returned the credit to “papa Oberlin.”¹⁰⁷ Cuvier’s presentation also underlined the positive effect the *salles d’asile* had had, not only in Ban de la Roche but elsewhere in Europe by that time. However, the educational applications extended far beyond Europe, into the French Protestant mission field in Africa.

Mission Applications for Infant School Pedagogy

As Lyndall soon proved through her work in infant schools in the Cape and in Beersheba, these two complementary pedagogies had excellent applications for children’s education in the mission field.¹⁰⁸ Both methods

¹⁰⁶ Georges Cuvier, “Discours Sur Les Prix de Vertu 1829,” Académie Française, accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.academie-francaise.fr/discours-sur-les-prix-de-vertu-12>.

¹⁰⁷ “Schepler (Louise),” *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie*, accessed February 23, 2017, <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3598>. Note: the spelling of Louise’s name seems to vary depending on the sources. I have found Schlepper, Schepler, Schloeppe.

¹⁰⁸ The related pedagogy of “mutual schools” in France, even though very successful, was eventually replaced by other methods that emphasized authority, order, and the love of knowledge for knowledge’s sake. “The mutual school was created for the poor: a teacher for 80 or more students of all ages and a curriculum that condensed in three years a program meant for six. As soon as a student understood, he explained it to the others. Accused of not teaching the love of knowledge, mutual schools were closed.” From the abstract for Anne Querrien, *L’école mutuelle: une pédagogie trop efficace?* (Paris: Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2005).

addressed challenges such as large numbers of poor children and few instructors, the lack of books, the need for discipline, and activity by direct contact with nature. The teachers' use of kindness rather than harsh discipline reflected the love of Jesus. The fact that women were the prime educators corresponded to African realities where women were the main caretakers of children. Educating the youngest generation about the Christian faith ensured the sustainability of the work of the mission.

Samuel Rolland summed up the deep connection between educating children and the missiology at work in the Lesotho Mission in his report at the Thaba-Bossiu conference in 1844:

Among so many enterprises in the civilized world (...), there are few as important as those directly connected to our mission; I am referring to those whose purpose is the education of pagans, and in particular, the education of the youth. (...) If Christian and civilized States strive to give their youth a thorough education, how much more necessary is it that we not neglect this vital domain when it comes to pagan tribes, where a complete change will only take place if we work on the incipient generation. As a result of these principles, our brothers have devoted special care to the schools, without neglecting the other duties of our vocation. (...) From his pulpit and in his specific instructions, the pastor has tried to urge the locals to be more attentive to the education of their children. (...) In spite of the opposition they encountered, the efforts of our brothers have been crowned with success. They have succeeded in drawing into our schools children and adults, in such numbers that the buildings intended for the

lessons often cannot contain them.¹⁰⁹

According to Rolland, the education of the child was the linchpin of the ongoing effectiveness of the mission, the key to spreading the gospel to the whole African community. The fact that schools were full to overflowing with children and adults was the sign, for Rolland, that this was the best missiological strategy for their work in Lesotho, a holistic mission practice inspired by women.

Pioneering Infant Schools in Southern Africa

Lyndall pioneered infant school pedagogy in her early work under John Philip and the London Missionary Society in the Cape. In late October of 1829, the ship carrying Lyndall, John and Jane (Ross) Philip, and the three pioneer Paris Missionaries made land at the Cape. Philip did not waste any time finding a large building for Lyndall's infant school. Soon, Lyndall wrote that

¹⁰⁹ Original text: "*Parmi tant d'entreprises qui dans le monde civilisé (...) il en est peu d'aussi importantes que celles qui se rattachent directement à notre mission ; je veux dire celles qui ont pour but l'instruction des païens, et en particulier celle de la jeunesse.(...) Si des états chrétiens et civilisés s'efforcent de donner à la jeunesse un éducation soignée, à plus forte raison ne faut-il pas négliger cette branche indispensable chez les tribus païennes, où un changement complet ne peut s'opérer qu'en agissant sur la génération naissante. En conséquence de ces principes, nos frères ont donné un soin tout particulier aux écoles, sans pourtant négliger les autres devoirs de leur vocation. Le pasteur a tâché du haut de la chaire, et dans ses instructions particulières de rendre les indigènes plus attentifs à l'éducation de leurs enfants (...) Malgré l'opposition qu'ils ont rencontrée, les efforts de nos frères ont été couronnés de succès. Il ont réussi à attirer dans leurs écoles les enfants et les adultes, tellement que les bâtiments destinés à l'instruction ne peuvent souvent pas les contenir.*" S. Rolland, "Suite et fin du 9e Rapport de la Conférence des missionnaires français – Béerséba," *JME* 20 (1845): 41-42.

two hundred [children] were quickly gathered together in Union Chapel. (...) I was delighted with the bright activity and startling intelligence of these infant slaves: born under the yoke, accustomed to the rod, trained from their first years to some kind of work, they responded in a wonderful manner to the language of kindness and to the gentle influences of the Pestalozzian system.¹¹⁰

The school was so successful that it caused trouble with the Dutch owners of the little slaves who found “they were becoming too ‘slim’ [crafty, sly] under the English teacher.”¹¹¹ Soon Lyndall was asked to direct a school for the upper class children of the settlers, a task which she found much less rewarding: “The pampered children of the upper class of Cape residents had nothing of the preparedness of my bright little slaves. Nursed in the lap of luxury, spoiled by constant indulgence, it was long before my little patricians would bend to the order and discipline of the system.”¹¹² Influential gentlemen regularly visited the school to study her methods, causing her mild annoyance.

Lyndall’s next four years were, nevertheless, very fruitful and the infant school system gained many followers. In the Cape, she trained missionary

¹¹⁰ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 55. Philip had recruited her for the LMS to start infant schools for the children of Hottentot slaves in the Cape Colony, a British colony established in 1806.

¹¹¹ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 55.

¹¹² Rolland, *The Recollections*, 56.

daughters to teach in the infant schools and she enjoyed the company of British and missionary colleagues. She became good friends with John Philip's wife, Jane (née Ross), who would later serve as the administrator of the Paris Mission in southern Africa. She was also a close friend of Sarah Dyke, who married Eugène Casalis in 1836.¹¹³

After Lyndall's marriage in 1834, she and Rolland moved to Basutoland where they soon set up a mission station that they named Beersheba. The first infant school in Beersheba was a *lelapa* or an open space enclosed by reeds over which the parents peered to watch the progress of their children. "In the marching, singing, clapping of hands, &c. the little ones took keen delight, and there was from the first no difficulty in ensuring a perfectly regular attendance," reported Lyndall.¹¹⁴

Eventually, Lyndall found this location inadequate when the weather was contrary and took the initiative to commission a freed slave by the name of Aaron Joseph (or Joseph Arends) to build a schoolhouse that could accommodate 200 children. Mysteriously, she received the requisite £20 for the construction

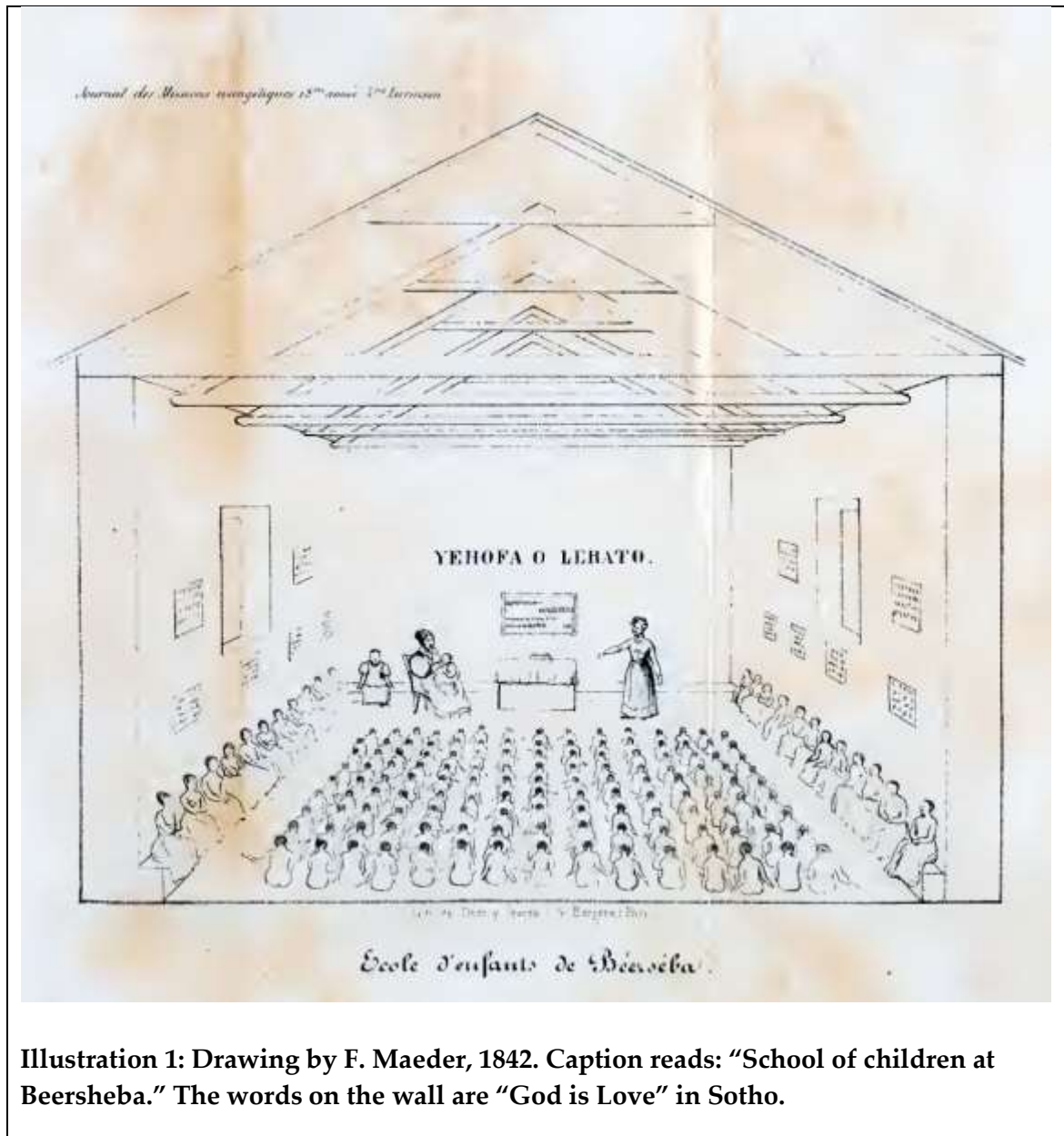
¹¹³ Eugène Casalis was the leading missionary and director of the Lesotho Mission.

¹¹⁴ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 73.

from anonymous donors in Manchester, England. They also sent a yearly £20 to pay the salary of the Mosotho teacher, Kastimane, or Ntletse Mokhati, who also became known as Mary Jackson. There are no details on Jackson's training, which she may have received in the Cape perhaps even under Lyndall's instruction.¹¹⁵ In 1842, missionary François Maeder made a drawing of the inside of the schoolhouse that was published in the 1843 issue of the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*, showing an orderly room full of children, with the mothers lining the walls. Up front, the drawing showed Lyndall holding her second child and Mary Jackson, teaching.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Rolland, *The Recollections*, 85, 99 (Appendix 1); David Ambrose, *The History of Education in Lesotho: Six Brief Subsectoral Studies* (Roma, Lesotho: House 9 Publications, National University of Lesotho, 2007), 17.

¹¹⁶ F. Maeder, Drawing of Beersheba infant school, *JME* (1843): 136.



The Impact of Missionary Wives

How, then, did the Lesotho wives, in their roles as educators, influence the work

of the Lesotho mission?¹¹⁷ Lyndall's *Recollections* do not give a clear sense of the impact of her work, whether from personal modesty or from a lack of overall perspective. She was always careful to give generous credit to her husband's work, as if that is what mattered the most in doing the work of God. After 1837, she received the help of Mlle. Delatte (who became Madame Maeder when she married) and of Mary Jackson. Jousse noted that at this time, the work in Lesotho was "slow but progressive; it was not yet the period of the great revivals."¹¹⁸ He credited the Beersheba schools with being the best of all the missionary schools.¹¹⁹

King Moshoeshoe, chief of the Sotho people, was moved to tears at the funeral of Sarah Dyke Casalis.¹²⁰ His tribute described the enduring influence her life and work had on the missionary endeavor:

[our missionary] says that, before she died, our mother expressed her conviction that the Gospel would soon triumph in this country. Perhaps this is a prophecy? And from the heights where she then was,

¹¹⁷ Théophile Jousse, *La Mission Française Évangélique Au Sud de l'Afrique: Son Origine et Son Développement Jusqu'à Nos Jours*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1889), 106.

¹¹⁸ Jousse, *La Mission Française Évangélique Au Sud de l'Afrique*, 168.

¹¹⁹ Jousse, *La Mission Française Évangélique Au Sud de l'Afrique*, 168.

¹²⁰ Moshoeshoe was the founder and paramount chief of the Sotho people, and one of the most successful southern African leaders of the nineteenth century. He invited the Paris missionaries to come and settle in his territory in 1833.

she could, no doubt, see things that we do not perceive. Our mother did not write books, but she left tracks [French: *des traces*] to follow.¹²¹

Moshoeshoe saw how the death of Sarah was devastating to Casalis—like a house collapsing. Ultimately, this was, to some extent, the effect on the Lesotho mission. Within a couple of years, Casalis returned to France to become the director of the Paris Mission. Even though the work he had begun in Lesotho continued, something of the initial energy he and Sarah brought to their work was lost.

The Work of the Missionary Wives Fuels Revival in France

After 1834, the reports of the Paris Women's Committee gave insight not only into the work in Lesotho but into the repercussions of the missionary work on French Protestantism, especially the work of the missionary wives. The yearly General Assembly reports of the Paris Women's Committee were steeped in a spirit of revivalism and deep piety, frequently containing mini sermons on mission theology and the role of women and children in the missionary effort.

¹²¹ Original text: "*Il nous a dit que notre mère, avant d'expirer, a exprimé l'assurance que l'Évangile finira par triompher dans notre pays. Peut-être est-ce une prophétie. Des hauteurs où elle était déjà, elle a pu voir des choses qui nous sont cachées. Souvenons-nous que si elle n'a pas écrit des livres comme son mari, elle nous a laissé des traces pour que nous les suivions.*" Eugène Casalis, *Mes souvenirs* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1886), 343.

They habitually incorporated long quotes from pastors, members of their national women's committees all over France and surrounding countries such as Switzerland or the Netherlands, as well as the Lesotho missionary wives. These women were passionately convinced that Paris missionaries were playing a crucial role in the revival of Christianity in France:

Let us say it again and thus respond to an objection that is sometimes presented against the Mission Society, this Society has been and still is daily one of the most powerful instruments of revival and of blessing for our dear France; it is not out of indifference for their country, forgetting its ills and its needs that our missionaries, instead of devoting their ministry to the home country, go preach the crucified Christ to the pagan peoples; these voices that reach us from the deepest deserts of Africa, resound with much greater force in our hearts.¹²²

This was not, as it may appear, the unfounded rant of revivalist fanatics. The Paris Women's Committee had been receiving letters from women's auxiliary societies connected to Protestant churches all over the country for a decade. The Paris women's committee, in fact, had their finger on the pulse of French

¹²² Original text: *“Redisons-le donc et répondons ainsi à un objection qu'on présente encore quelquefois contre la Société des Missions, cette Société a été et est encore tous les jours un des plus puissans instrumens [sic] de réveil et de bénédiction pour notre chère France ; ce n'est pas par indifférence pour leur pays, par oubli de ses maux et de ses besoins que nos missionnaires, au lieu de lui consacrer leur ministère vont prêcher Christ crucifié aux peuples païens ; ces voix qui nous parviennent du fond des déserts de l'Afrique, retentissent avec bien plus de force dans nos cœurs.”* *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1835), 37.

Protestant piety. The work of missions, especially after 1834 with Lyndall's and Rolland's marriage, excited great enthusiasm among Protestant women.

In addition to news of women's fundraising efforts in the furthest reaches of the country—from Oberlin's Ban de la Roche to the historic heartlands of Protestantism in Nîmes and Montpellier—more blatant signs of revival appeared in occasional correspondence from pastors. In 1853, the Paris Mission women's committee quoted a pastor's letter to defend, yet again, the usefulness of missions not only in reaching the heathens in Africa but also in reviving the faith of national Protestants:

A religious revival has started in our dear Church. Every month, a worker dedicates a day's wages to advancing the kingdom of God, and the children from my school collect among themselves a small subscription, the product of which is divided between Missions and the Society for the Encouragement of Primary Education.¹²³

Apparently, this pastor had not seen such enthusiasm in his church related to any particular Christian cause so this was, for him, a sign of "religious revival"—and fueled by children who were often agents of revival.

¹²³ Original text: "*Un réveil religieux se manifeste dans notre chère Eglise. Un ouvrier consacre, chaque mois, le prix d'une de ses journées à l'avancement du règne de Dieu, et les enfants de mon école font entre eux une petite souscription, dont le produit se partage entre les Missions et la Société pour l'encouragement de l'instruction primaire.*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1853), 41.

Women also could also be agents of revival now, at home and abroad. The Paris Mission women's committee continually expressed deep gratitude for the part that women could now play in missions:

There is no woman so poor, so destitute, that she cannot take part in the work of converting the world and rejoice in its present results and in the success that the future will bring, as her own heritage to which her faith grants her rights. As she knits stockings, the price of which will add to the common collection, she can, leaning on God's promises, let her hopes soar to the heavens—hopes that will never go beyond the promises, since God has said *that the earth will be covered with his knowledge, as the waters cover the earth; (...)* The Mission Society has many auxiliary societies of this kind. No doubt it is because the poor and the humble have shown such great tenderness that the Mission has received particular blessings from the Lord.¹²⁴

It is significant that the Paris women underlined the participation of “the poor and the humble.” Their contribution, like the widow's mite, represented a much greater contribution to missions than that of any rich person. Indeed, it was a contribution on a spiritual level as well, because they had thus gained “particular blessings from the Lord” for the Paris Mission by their “tender” generosity. It

¹²⁴ Original text: “*Il n'est pas de femme si pauvre, si dénuée, qui ne puissent prendre part à l'œuvre de la conversion du monde, et se réjouir de ses résultats actuels et des succès que l'avenir réalisera, comme d'un patrimoine auquel sa foi lui donne droit. Tout en tricottant sa paire de bas, dont le produit doit grossir le trésor commun, elle peut, s'appuyant sur les promesses de Dieu, donner un essor illimité à ses espérances, qui n'iront jamais au-delà des promesses, puisie Dieu a dit que la terre serait couverte de sa connaissance, comme le fond de la mer l'est des eaux qui le couvrent (...)* La Société des Mission compte beaucoup d'auxiliaires de ce genre. C'est sans doute parce que les pauvres et les petits lui ont voué une si grande tendress, qu'elle est l'objet des bénédictions toutes particulières du Seigneur.” *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1846), 69-70.

was a double blessing. The many small contributions of this kind, coming in from many corners of France, signaled the success of women's committees in bridging social differences in the ranks of Protestants.

Enlisting Children as Agents of the Missionary Cause

Lyndall's dedication to the work of the gospel both in Lesotho and in the homelands was unfaltering. She did not hesitate to enlist the support of children, as her 1837 letter to the Paris women's committee attested: "Will the young Christians of France not be willing to make some small sacrifice for the poor little Africans? Will they not come to our assistance in order to erect for these poor abandoned children a refuge where they may be instructed in piety and trained for heaven?"¹²⁵ The response of the women's committee was to write that they "would very happy to be able to write soon to Mme. Rolland that many young hearts had actively answered her call and that our children had, of their own accord, achieved her wish by imposing on themselves a few privations."¹²⁶

¹²⁵ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1838), 55.

¹²⁶ Original text: "*Les jeunes chrétiens français ne seraient-ils pas disposés à faire quelques sacrifices en faveur des petits Africains ? ne se joindront-ils point à nous pour élever à ces pauvres enfants délaissés un refuge où ils puissent être instruits selon la piété et formés pour le ciel ?*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1838), 55.

A Missionary Publication for Children

This desire to revive even the faith of the children of Protestants by enlisting them in the task of world evangelization eventually led to the creation of a small missionary publication for children called *Le Petit Messager des Missions* [The Little Messenger of Missions], first published in 1844. One cannot help but wonder whether the idea might have come from Lyndall, the other missionary wives, the women's committee—or perhaps a combination of the three?

Stories in *Le Petit Messager* were culled from missions all over the world but the only original material from the Paris Mission in the first two decades would have come from Lesotho. Who wrote the material? All the letters, reports, and articles for the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* were signed as being written by the male missionaries. However, because the material in *Le Petit Messager* was intended for children, it is plausible that the missionary wives had some part in providing and perhaps even in writing it. *Le Petit Messager* came out as a small book (approx. 3X5 inches, initially, then larger in later years), small enough to fit into a young child's hand. The intention, as stated in the 1844 pilot issue, was to educate Protestant children on all aspects of mission, to request their prayers (because they can be of a great help, and because God listens to all prayers from

a pure heart, like those of young Samuel in the Bible). The journal also encouraged them to raise money for missions and exhorted them to form their own volunteer societies following the example of British children.¹²⁷

In 1845, the Women's Committee reported that *Le Petit Messager* was having a positive effect on the children who could thus follow the good example of their parents (in their interest in missions, supposedly). As a result, one Paris Sunday School had started to collect funds that they divided between "the schools for the Bechuanas and the free schools of the Paris suburbs."¹²⁸ A decade later (1854), the involvement of children and youth had grown:

Le Petit Messager des Missions is exerting the most fortunate influence on all these youth who wait impatiently for it every month and who have responded with joyful eagerness to the call to provide books for the missionary children. The students of several Sunday schools have collected these objects between themselves, and the money and the books have arrived in great numbers from all parts of France, with good little letters full of zeal and affection.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ *Le Petit Messager des Missions* (1844), 8, 9-12, 12-14.

¹²⁸ *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1845), 59.

¹²⁹ Original text: "*Le Petit Message des Missions exerce la plus heureuse influence sur toute cette jeunesse qui l'attend chaque mois avec impatience et qui a répondu avec un joyeux empressement à l'appel qui lui a été adressé pour procurer des livres aux enfants des missionnaires. Les élèves de plusieurs écoles du dimanche ont fait entre eux des collectes pour cet objet, et l'argent et le volumes sont arrivés en abondance à Paris de tous les bouts de la France, avec de bonnes petites lettres pleines de zèle et d'affection.*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1854), 39-40.

By this time, the children of France and Basutoland had exchanged letters and *Le Petit Messenger* had provided rich material on the missionary work in Lesotho.¹³⁰

The very first issue introduced Mary Jackson, explaining her work teaching and translating “lessons and hymns” for the local students. The same issue printed large excerpts from letters that had passed between Basotho students and the children in a Sunday school in Manchester, England.¹³¹

Conclusion

Only a visionary teacher like Lyndall with an instinct for cross-cultural relations would have been up to the task of pioneering such a powerful mission strategy in the work of infant schools in Lesotho. Because infant school pedagogy was holistic and concerned with the spiritual well-being as well as the intellectual and emotional development of children in a loving environment, it was a perfect educational model for the mission field. The missionary wives were pioneering a revolutionary model that turned the tide for education in Europe.¹³²

¹³⁰ The first reports of letters exchanged between French and Basotho children were included in the next year’s (1845) issue of *Le Petit Messenger*.

¹³¹ *Le Petit Messenger des Missions* (1844), 87ff.

¹³² Laubach and Smith, “Transatlantic Dialogue,” 366.

Large numbers of young African children could now be prepared to move up through the school system to become church members and evangelists among their own people.

It is important to underline the contribution of women to creating a model for sustainable mission in Lesotho—a model that led to the formation of a self-propagating and self-governing church.¹³³ Following the pattern of global revivals, the work of the missionary wives among children led to a movement of renewal in French churches. Children educated and evangelized children as letters passed between France and Lesotho with great enthusiasm, as they encouraged one another. The second annual issue of *Le Petit Messager des Missions* reported on the letters exchanged, mostly between girls, since “it was mostly young Basotho girls who started the correspondence.”¹³⁴ One could say that young African girls were already leading the way to renewed faith—a

¹³³ This is a reference to mission theorist Henry Venn’s concept of the indigenous church that was defined as being self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing. The church that emerged from the work of the Paris Mission in Lesotho is the Lesotho Evangelical Church, currently the second largest denomination in Lesotho after the Catholic Church, with 278,000 members. (data from *World Christian Database*, ed. Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo [Leiden: Brill, 2018], accessed February 20, 2018, <https://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/>) According to the Global Ministries website (<https://www.globalministries.org/africa/partners/lesotho-evangelical-church.html>), LEC schools have contributed to an 83% literacy rate nationwide.

¹³⁴ *Le Petit Messager des Missions* (1845), 132-133. This statement came after the report that the Lesotho missionaries had received 23 letters from children in Geneva, Paris, Alsace, Bourges, the North, and Tubingen (Germany).

distant foreshadowing of the role of African Christian women in their churches today.

**CHAPTER SEVEN: REKINDLING THE EMBERS OF THE RÉVEIL: THE
MOVEMENT OF FRENCH REFORMED DEACONESSES**

On February 6, 1841, a morose Antoine Vermeil sat, alone, in his consistory in Paris, waiting for the elders of his parish to arrive for a meeting. They were late. He was feeling disheartened because, in contrast with the 1820s and 1830s, the vibrant effects of the *Réveil* were waning in the 1840s and internal tensions were mounting among Protestants.

That evening, Vermeil was writing a historic letter to Caroline Malvesin, a former parishioner from his church in Bordeaux (southwest France).

Since I have been in Paris, and the longer I am here, I have grown increasingly more afflicted to see from up close, and in the halls of leadership, the sad situation of our churches. The launch of *le Lien* ["the Link"], as the counterpart to *les Archives*, has made the situation more complicated by creating an ever greater divide between pastors and flock.¹

The new weekly journal, *le Lien, Journal des Églises Réformées de France* [The Link,

¹ Original text: "*Depuis que je suis à Paris et plus j'y suis, je suis toujours plus affligé de voir de près et dans les hautes régions la triste situation de nos Eglises. L'apparition du Lien, pour faire la contrepartie des Archives, est encore venue compliquer la position en scindant de plus en plus et les pasteurs et le troupeau.*" Letter from Vermeil dated February 6, 1841, in Caroline Malvesin and Antoine Vermeil, *Caroline Malvesin et Antoine Vermeil – Correspondance 1841: La fondation de la Communauté des Diaconesses de Reuilly* (Lyon, France: Éditions Olivétan, 2007), 21; *Le Lien* was a liberal journal founded by Protestant pastor Athanase Coquerel and launched in January 1841.

Journal of the Reformed Churches of France], launched on January 2, 1841, became the voice of liberal Protestants and the ardent enemy of proponents of the *Réveil* with their “lack of logic,” backwards, unscientific thinking, and exclusivism.² The first four issues—that Vermeil would have read by the time he wrote his letter—were full of dense theological articles that contrasted with the reports from *les Archives* or the exciting missionary letters from the *Journal des Missions Évangéliques*.³

For Vermeil, a passionate son of the *Réveil*, the faith reflected in *le Lien* was nothing but dead letter Christianity:

my meditations on our internal situation, on our struggles, our disorganization, led me to the conviction that what we Protestants are

² “Introduction,” *Le Lien: Journal des Églises Réformées de France*, No. 1 (Jan. 2, 1841), 1. Here editor A. Coquerel presented his breakdown of the three main categories of Protestants. There were the proponents of 1) *Ancient orthodoxy*: These were Protestant evangelicals but “hard liners” like Richard Haldane or César Malan, who held on to all the traditions of the Reformed faith, believed in the inspiration of the Bible, were strict Calvinists, etc. 2) *Intermediate orthodoxy*: These were the evangelical moderates, probably including Methodist-leaning Protestants, the ones who “lacked logic.” 3) *Modern orthodoxy*: These were the rationalists and the liberals who were opposed to all spirit of exclusivism. They touted themselves as representatives of the “true spirit of the Reformation” who believed Christians must “remain attentive to the signs of the times.”

³ A sampling of the topics in *le Lien* includes: articles defining “modern orthodoxy”—a euphemism for rationalistic, liberal Protestantism (a series in multiple parts); biblical questions (“Why was St. Paul added to the twelve apostles?” in two parts), and rarified intellectual musings on “Christianity’s Action in Social Reform.” *Le Lien*, Nos. 1-4 (January 1841). *Les Archives* from the same year included sections on the “Internal Religious Situation” (report of a pastor’s ordination), the “External Religious Situation” (events in Spain), and an announcement of the establishment of a Protestant Refuge for Women—the initial work of the Deaconesses of Reuilly. *Les Archives du Christianisme*, Series II, Vol. IX, No. 13 (July 10, 1841).

lacking and what our poor Church is lacking, after faith that contains all things, is the spirit of *renunciation* without which there can be no discipline, agreement, collective action, persevering and general works, etc.⁴

Vermeil argued that the spirit of renunciation he described was best embodied in the work of devout women who had given their lives to Christian service, that is, women who belonged to religious orders. Malvesin's response from Bordeaux, by return post four days later, mirrored Vermeil's aspirations to a higher spirituality: she expressed her deep desire to "devote herself entirely to the service of the Lord."⁵ She confirmed and enlarged his vision by declaring,

I sense that my ministry would be to work, through the Lord, in such a way as to hasten the happy moment when there will only be one flock guided by one Shepherd! Any ministry where there would be a spirit of coterie, a party spirit, a sectarian mindset, colored by anything other than the *great Christian color*, would be repugnant to my soul, would cool my zeal, and would paralyze my abilities to act.⁶

⁴ Original text: "*de mes méditations sur notre situation intérieure, sur nos luttes, notre désorganisation, résultait pour moi la conviction que ce qui nous manque, à nous protestants, à notre pauvre Eglise, c'est, après la foi qui contient toutes choses, l'esprit de renoncement sans lequel il ne peut y avoir discipline, accord, activité d'ensemble, œuvres persévérantes et générales etc.*" Letter from Vermeil dated February 6, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 23.

⁵ Letter from Malvesin dated February 10, 1841, Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 33.

⁶ Original text: "*Pour moi je sens que mon oeuvre serait d'agir par le Seigneur pour hâter le moment bienheureux où il n'y aura plus qu'un seul troupeau guidé par un seul Berger! Toute oeuvre où se trouverait esprit de coterie, de parti, de secte, de couleur autre que la grande couleur chrétienne, répugnerait à mon âme, refroidirait mon zèle, paralyserait mes moyens d'action.*" Letter from Malvesin dated February 10, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 35-36. Italics are in the original.

For Malvesin as for Vermeil, “the great Christian color” [*la grande couleur chrétienne*] was synonymous with Christian unity. Unity was very much a preoccupation of many Protestants at the time, even for the liberals at *le Lien* whose watchword, ironically, was “[Make] every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:3, NRSV)

At a time when the momentum of the *Réveil* had slowed and divisions ran through the ranks of French Protestants, the founding of deaconess communities in Paris and in Strasburg was an attempt to lead Protestants back to a deeper faith and a life of sacrificial service to God. The unity and love embodied in the deaconess communities enabled women to pursue, single-mindedly, the work of the “kingdom of God” in their contexts, through works of social renewal. In addition, the intention of the communities was to model a strong witness of unity and to embody cooperation between churches.

In this chapter, I will outline the context of instability and divisiveness out of which the deaconess movement grew. Then I will demonstrate how the Deaconesses of Reuilly in Paris and the Deaconesses of Strasburg were founded in an effort to redress flagging faith and unity among Protestants. Finally, I will

explore the controversies that emerged around the increased visibility and autonomy of the witness of women in these communities of deaconesses.

Factional Protestantism in a Decade of Political Turmoil

Following a decade that had witnessed multiple popular revolts, the 1840s were beset with conflicts, deprivation, and political instability.⁷ In 1839, a failed coup and brief revolt almost brought down the regime. The following year, Louis Napoleon, Bonaparte's nephew, landed in Boulogne (on the northern coast of France), raising fears of an uprising by former Bonapartists.⁸ In late 1846, the failure of grain and potato crops and the subsequent dramatic rise in prices pushed the working classes to take desperate actions such as attacking grain convoys or destroying the residences of grain dealers.⁹ Heavy-handed

⁷ Since the July Revolution of 1830, King Louis-Philippe of the House of Orléans ruled France in a new constitutional monarchy. This was the Second Restoration. Three days of fighting in July 1830 called "les Trois Glorieuses" [the Three Glorious (Days)] had put an end to the Bourbon monarchy. Louis-Philippe, endorsed by Lafayette, hero of the American Revolution, was seen as a leader who offered hope for a more liberal government as well as constitutional reform. But this hope was short-lived. Though a popular victory, the bourgeoisie stole the revolution from the people within a few months, leading to a long period of general unrest that included a failed uprising in 1832. Described as the "bourgeois king," Louis Philippe was ultimately unable to rally popular support and was forced out of power by the Revolution of 1848. (Peter McPhee, *A Social History of France, 1780-1880* (London: Routledge, 1992), 117).

⁸ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 129.

⁹ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 173-174.

government retribution did not help to assuage popular anger.¹⁰ Finally, generalized discontent culminated in the Revolution of 1848, a revolution that toppled Louis-Philippe's regime.

In that year, 1848, the Paris Mission suffered a budget deficit of 15,210 Francs.¹¹ To cut costs, the *Maison des Missions* in Paris had to be closed as well as the Teacher Training School in Carmel (Lesotho).¹² In the churches, leading figures of the *Réveil* like Ami Bost and Adolphe Monod were distressed that issues of administration and polity had taken center stage, completely eclipsing the concerns of faith.¹³ Longstanding tensions between "old orthodox" Protestants and liberal Protestants resurfaced. Simmering under this cracked surface was the question of the relationship between church and state that had originated with Napoleon's Organic Articles or "*Concordat*" in 1802, establishing

¹⁰ McPhee, *A Social History of France*, 175.

¹¹ Report of treasurer M. de Pressensé, *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale de la Société des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples non Chrétiens, établie à Paris*, May 11, 1848, 25, 44-45. Total expenses for that year amounted to 135,340 francs, of which only 120,129 francs were collected.

¹² *Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale*, April 26, 1849, 20. The closure was only for a year.

¹³ Gustave Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830 à Paris et les origines des diaconesses de Reuilly* (Paris: Ed. Association des Diaconesses, 1958), 108. Lagny was one of the pastors of the community of the Diaconesses of Reuilly in the mid-twentieth century. He wrote this account not only as the history of the community but because, as he said, the documents "brought back to life an entire period and a whole context: the period of the "*Réveil*" that enlivened our Churches in the second quarter of the last century." (Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, preface, 9)

the Reformed and Lutheran Churches as official state churches—dubbed *concordataire* churches. The *Concordat* had polarized French Protestants and marginalized all those who were *non-concordataire*, that is, religious groups not recognized as being official—the Quakers (in the Gard), Moravians (in Bordeaux, St. Hippolyte du Fort), Methodists (in Normandy), Anabaptists (in Alsace), and Baptists (in the north). These small minorities were regarded as dissident groups that were not allowed to hold meetings of over twenty people.¹⁴ However, in spite of the *Concordat*, a group of evangelicals decided to form an independent community, originally hosted by leading women of the *Réveil*, where prayer, evangelical preaching, and singing took place.

The Chapelle Taitbout

The first meetings of what would become the *Chapelle Taitbout* began in 1828 on Thursday evenings in the homes of *Mesdames* Wilks, Waddington, F. Monod, J. Hollard, de Pressensé, and Lutteroth, who each hosted a meeting in turn.¹⁵ Many of the women later involved in the organization of the Paris

¹⁴ Sébastien Fath, *Du ghetto au réseau: le protestantisme évangélique en France, 1800-2005* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2005), 88-90.

¹⁵ De Pressensé, Cordey, et al., *Une Église Séparée de l'état: Notice Historique Sur l'église Taitbout à Paris* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1890), 6, 7. The husbands of all these women were on

deaconesses and in the work in women's prisons (the *Comité de St. Lazare* [St. Lazarus Committee]) were members of the *Chapelle Taitbout*.

On the first Sunday of October 1830, a worship space opened at No. 4, Rue Taitbout in Paris. In the early years, the *Chapelle Taitbout*, thus named for its original location on Rue Taitbout, was the rallying point for the *Réveil* and the preferred place of worship for Protestants seeking an evangelical message. This is where the polemics surrounding the question of church-state relations later came to a head with the founding of the Union of Free Evangelical Churches of France in 1849.¹⁶ Initially, however, the founders did not intend to start a separate church.

The service at the *Chapelle Taitbout* abandoned traditional forms and worshippers sang songs—many composed by members. These songs were eventually published in a hymnbook, edited by Henri and Madame Lutteroth, entitled *Chants Chrétiens* [Christian Songs].¹⁷ The goal of the *Chapelle*, articulated

the Paris Mission Executive Committee. This short booklet (100 pages) was produced on the occasion of the fiftieth year anniversary of the chapel. As can be expected, this would not have been a critical or scholarly account.

¹⁶ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 112.

¹⁷ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 30-31. Henri Lutteroth, *Chants chrétiens* (Paris: J. J. Risler, 1834). The book contained 200 old and new hymns, sung on 100 different airs: some of the sixteenth century "Pseaumes de David" with updated language, the more popular ancient hymns, a small number from contemporary evangelist César Malan's *Chants de Sion*, and many new hymns.

by the first committee, was “to announce the good news of salvation in its divine simplicity to those of our fellow citizens who are prevented by indifference, doubt, or prejudices nourished by Catholicism from coming into our sanctuaries.”¹⁸ By 1833, there were two meeting places in Paris, both independent of the state, in districts distant from each other. One was frequented mostly by middle and upper class Protestants, whereas the other had a majority of working class people.¹⁹

It was only in 1839 that by-laws [*règlements*] were written. These by-laws stipulated that members of the *Chapelle Taitbout* committed themselves to 1) doctrinal orthodoxy as contained in the Confession de La Rochelle of 1559²⁰; 2) an individual confession of faith for all over the age of twenty-five; 3) independence

Contemporary Protestants among the composers included Ami Bost (5 songs), and two women, Mme. Hérault (2 songs) and Mme. Lutteroth (4 songs). Jean Bianquis pointed out that Lutteroth edited *Chants Chrétiens* in 1834 “with the help of his very distinguished wife.” It saw 10 editions through 1880. (Jean Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, 1822-1829*, vol. 1 [Paris: Société des Missions Évangéliques, 1930], 29.)

¹⁸ De Pressensé, *Une Église Séparée de l'état*, 8. The first committee was composed of Wilks, de Valcourt, Victor de Pressensé, Waddington, and Lutteroth, all members of the Paris Mission.

¹⁹ De Pressensé, *Une Église Séparée de l'état*, 9-10.

²⁰ There was an exception for article 39 because it granted secular authorities the ability to punish infractions to the first and second articles of the law. *Église réformée de France, La Confession de foi des Églises réformées en France: dite Confession de La Rochelle, en français moderne* (Saint-Germain-en-Laye: Église réformée de France, Comité des publications, 1963).

from the state (no subsidies); and 4) the duty to preach the gospel “generously and widely.”²¹

Influenced by a schismatic movement of Protestant Churches in the region of the Vaud in Switzerland and by Alexandre Vinet’s separatist theology popularized by Lutteroth from 1835 on, the leaders of the *Chapelle Taitbout* moved more and more towards establishing themselves as a church that was completely independent of the state. However, not all revival-minded Protestants agreed with this move. While Frédéric Monod embraced it heartily as a question of individual conscience, his brother Adolphe decided his divinely appointed place was within the established church, as did Henri Grandpierre, the second lead pastor at the *Chapelle Taitbout* and director of the *Maison des Missions* of the Paris Mission.²² Grandpierre, a charismatic preacher of the *Réveil*, withdrew from his pastoral functions at the *Chapelle Taitbout* in 1842.²³

The decision to form an independent church emerged after the Synod of Reformed Churches in May of 1848. However, the social, political, and economic

²¹ De Pressensé, *Une Église Séparée de l'état*, 16.

²² Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 112.

²³ De Pressensé, *Une Église Séparée de l'état*, 21.

disruptions of that year, due to the Revolution, delayed the official founding of the *Union des Églises Évangéliques Libres de France* [Union of Free Evangelical Churches of France] until 1849.²⁴ The polarization of Protestants in the long process leading up to the founding of the Union created an unhealthy atmosphere in which church loyalties became the focus of violent polemics. Even as they sought to foster unity in the church, the founders of the Deaconesses of Reuilly suffered from the fallout of these conflicts shortly after the community was created.

A Women's Revival Movement: The Deaconesses of the Reformed Communities of France

The movement in France was not the first effort to organize women into deaconess communities.²⁵ In 1831, Amelia Sieveking (1794-1859) tried to organize a Protestant Sisterhood of Mercy in Hamburg but was not able to muster enough female initiates. In 1832, however, she founded a society to care for the poor and the sick. Subsequently, she organized a colony for the poor and a children's

²⁴ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 111-112 ; De Pressensé, *Une Église Séparée de l'état*, 26.

²⁵ Jeannine Olson has written a comprehensive study of deacons and deaconesses in the church starting with the Early Church. Jeannine Evelyn Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008).

hospital. She spent her entire life in service of the needy.²⁶ She is considered the proto-deaconess figure of the nineteenth century.

Another early effort came from Pastor Johann Adolph Franz Klönne who felt the need to revive the female diaconate. He published a pamphlet on the revival of the deaconesses of the early church in 1820.²⁷ In 1835, he announced his goal to found a deaconess house in Duesselthal. But, once again, plans did not materialize. However, he did open a Rescue House in Duesseldorf.²⁸

The first house of deaconesses was founded in 1836 in the town of Kaiserswerth by Pastor Theodore Fliedner. Kaiserswerth was to become the most influential deaconess institution, sending trainees to start communities in other countries such as France, the United States, Switzerland, other parts of Germany, and in southern continents as well.²⁹ The first Kaiserswerth deaconess was

²⁶ C. Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement in the Christian Church* (Cincinnati, OH: Jennings and Pye, 1903), 40-42.

²⁷ Jane Marie Bancroft, *Deaconesses in Europe And Their Lessons for America* (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1890), 46-47.

²⁸ Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 43-44.

²⁹ After the Lutheran Church, the next American denomination to organize deaconess communities was the Episcopal Church, whose first initiative in 1855 was to open St. Andrew's House in Baltimore, Md., where two consecrated deaconesses resided. In 1889, the Episcopal Church voted a canon on the work of deaconesses. (Lucy Rider Meyer, *Deaconesses and Their Work: Biblical, Early Church, European, American* [Chicago, IL: Deaconess Advocate, 1897], 54-55, 57-58).

Gertrude Reichard, an experienced nurse and daughter of a physician.³⁰ Caroline Bertheau of Hamburg, who had been a student of Amelia Sieveking, became the first superintendent of the community at Kaiserswerth, a position she held for forty years (1843-1883).³¹ In addition to the motherhouse, the institutions at Kaiserswerth included a hospital, a teacher-training institute for women, schools for girls, an orphanage, and a preparatory school for deaconesses.³²

Next came the deaconess communities of Paris and Strasburg that were founded in 1841 and 1842, within a year of each other.³³ The two male founders,

³⁰ Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 60.

³¹ Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 48-50;

³² Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 61-62; Bancroft, *Deaconesses in Europe*, 61-68. The first Anglican sisterhood was founded in 1845 in the Church of England. See Henrietta Blackmore, ed., *The Beginning of Women's Ministry: The Revival of the Deaconess in the Nineteenth-Century Church of England* (Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2007). Fliedner was influenced by the work of Elizabeth Fry in the prisons and took that idea with him to found Kaiserswerth. Deaconesses in German Methodism began in 1874 as the Bethany Society. Florence Nightingale and Agnes Jones spent time at Kaiserswerth before starting their charitable work in England. Sisterhoods in the Church of England were more successful than deaconess works. Golder states that, for all their heroic efforts, Nightingale, Fry, and Jones "did not get beyond the founding of schools for the training of nurses" (Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 177). The deaconess institution at Mildmay Park, founded by Rev. W. Pennefather, grew out of a little house in Barnet opened in 1860. (Bancroft, *Deaconesses in Europe*, 40, 147, 157, 168) In 1849, Fliedner sent deaconesses to America where Pastor Passavant opened a house of Lutheran deaconesses in Pittsburg, PA, but it did not survive. Other Kaiserswerth Lutheran offspring include a house of German deaconesses established in Philadelphia in 1888, a deaconess hospital in Milwaukee, WI, a home and training school in Baltimore, MD, among many others. Deaconess communities in the United States developed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. (Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement*, 251, 264, 266, 273ff.)

³³ Deaconesses in the Wesleyan Church of England originated in the 1860s, initiated by Rev. Dr. Thomas Bowman Stephenson, who realized the need for trained Christian women to

Antoine Vermeil and François Haerter, were products of the *Réveil* and both were pastors whose sermons and social ministries had influenced many parishioners. Vermeil was from Nîmes, from a solid Huguenot family, even though his mother was a fervent Quaker. His parents had both celebrated their first communion during the period of the *Désert* (eighteenth century persecution, see chapter 1).³⁴ Vermeil studied theology in Geneva at the height of the Genevan *Réveil*, a movement that had a profound influence on his life and ministry.

Haerter, on the other hand, was born into a bourgeois family in Strasburg. There, in the “dry soil” of Protestantism influenced by German rationalism, Haerter became a Lutheran pastor. Both the early loss of his mother and a difficult childhood beset by frequent illness inspired Haerter to develop a deep spirituality even in his youth.³⁵

In the early 1840s, Vermeil and Haerter corresponded about their ideas on

take care of the poor London street children he had given shelter to. They became the Sisters of the Children, then the Wesley Deaconesses. These two groups were also established in the United States at the same time. (Meyer, *Deaconesses and Their Work*, 45-46.)

³⁴ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 37.

³⁵ Mme. Ernest Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1889), 5, 6, 9, 11.

creating a religious community of women. In 1842, Haerter visited Reuilly while on a fundraising trip before the opening of the house in Strasburg. While they shared a vision for women's service in society, the two communities differed somewhat from each other, perhaps most in the diversity of their social outreach, defined by their different urban contexts.

The Deaconesses of Reuilly (Paris)

Vermeil had arrived in Paris in mid-1840 to take a position as a Reformed pastor, after sixteen years of vibrant ministry in Bordeaux. In Bordeaux, Vermeil contributed in many ways to the growth of the Protestant Church, both through his preaching and through his social ministry initiatives. In 1829, he created an Office of Protestant Charity [*Bureau de Charité Protestante*] and a Charitable Society [*Société de Bienfaisance*] composed of thirty-six women, spread over several city districts. The following year, he started a Sunday School, then a Protestant elementary school, and a *salle d'asile* [infant school]. He also created a Savings and Assistance Society for widows and orphans [*Société de Prévoyance et de Secours pour les veuves et orphelins*]. He laid the foundations for the Protestant Christian Society of France [*Société Chrétienne Protestante de France*], whose goal was to disseminate Protestant evangelical influence. And, as if that were not

enough, he was also part of a group that was revising the old Psalter. While in Bordeaux, he met Eugène Casalis, who was on his way to Lesotho.³⁶ Thanks to his influence and support, the Paris Mission women's committee reported that the women's auxiliary mission associations in the Bordeaux area were among the most generous and most active in the country.

However, Vermeil's last few years in Bordeaux were overshadowed by dissensions and disagreements among local Protestants.³⁷ So, when he arrived in Paris in the summer of 1840 to confront the same state of divisiveness, he realized that a drastic solution was needed to solve the universal malaise of the Reformed Church. The searching letters he wrote to his co-founder Caroline Malvesin grew out of those dark years.

During Holy Week of 1841, Vermeil wrote his third letter to Malvesin in which he exclaimed, with his usual fervor,

And I didn't write you!... I couldn't do it (...) I kept quiet so I could listen to the Lord (...) Nevertheless, many things have happened that I believe point in the direction of His Providence, towards the goal that we both perceive only in part, and if there is nothing in your conscience, in your reflections, in your circumstances that has changed our projects, our wishes, I come to you now, calm but resolute, deeply convinced of God's call to you, I come to say: *God*

³⁶ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 40-41.

³⁷ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 41.

wants it! Come, my daughter in the faith, come into the path that the Lord is opening for you.³⁸

One cannot help but wonder whether this outburst was an expression of Vermeil's more impatient and exalted nature as opposed to Malvesin's calm, plodding disposition. Or did he calculate the timing of his declaration so that it coincided with Holy Week for greater emotional and spiritual impact?

Vermeil then went on to explain the "things that had happened" that convinced him that this was a "fertile seed [*un germe fécond*] to advance the kingdom of God."³⁹ Since his February 6 letter to Malvesin, Vermeil had met with a committee of women, the *Comité de St. Lazare* [St. Lazarus (prison) Committee] that included Mme. Émilie Mallet, Mme. Jacques Matter, and Mme. Pelet de la Lozère, all members of the *Chapelle Taitbout* and the Paris Mission women's committee.⁴⁰ In 1838 and 1839, these women had received the visit of

³⁸ Original text: "Et je ne vous ai pas écrit!... Je ne l'ai pas pu (...) Je me suis tu pour écouter le Seigneur (...) Il s'est fait cependant bien des choses qui rentrent toutes pour moi dans la direction de Sa Providence, vers le but que nous entrevoyons l'un et l'autre, et si rien dans votre conscience, dans vos réflexions, dans vos circonstances, n'est venu modifier vos projets, vos désirs, je viens à vous aujourd'hui, calme mais résolu, profondément convaincu de l'appel que Dieu vous adresse, je viens vous dire: Dieu le veut! Venez, ma fille en la foi, entrez dans la voie que le Seigneur vous ouvre." Letter from Vermeil dated April 5, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 65.

³⁹ Letter from Vermeil dated April 5, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 67, 69.

⁴⁰ The *Comité de St. Lazare* was started in 1839, after Fry's second visit to France. There were twenty women on the committee. They visited the Protestant female prisoners in the

British Quaker Elizabeth Fry, who was well known for her work among female prisoners in Newgate prison, and as a prison reform advocate. Inspired by Fry, they were trying to start a refuge for repentant female prisoners — that is, women who could be freed on parole as long as they were under the authority of an official rehabilitation home. But how? Who would undertake such work?

According to Lagny's account, as Vermeil talked with the women of the committee, he realized that several of them, Mallet in particular, longed to see an order of "Protestant Sisters of Charity" founded for this very purpose. Vermeil's version of the events in his letters is quite different, however.⁴¹ Vermeil reported yet other encouragements in his letter — similar communities of women forming in Strasburg and Germany. He was so certain of God's blessing on this project that he was charging ahead. He reported that he and his wife had already found a house to rent. The women of the *Comité de St. Lazare* agreed to pay half the rent.

notorious prison of St. Lazare. Mallet, Pelet de la Lozère, and Matter supported the founding of the Deaconesses because it was the solution to their wish to create a refuge for women prisoners.

⁴¹ This was, of course, a reference to the Catholic women's order (Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 44-45). Here Lagny's version of the exchange differs from Vermeil's letter. Lagny credits Mallet with having the idea of the Sisters of Charity independently of Vermeil from her contact with a Quaker woman in 1825. She shared this desire with her friends Pelet de la Lozère and de Broglie (Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 71). According to Vermeil, he was the one who suggested it to Mallet and Pelet de la Lozère and they embraced the idea with enthusiasm (Letter from Vermeil dated April 5, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 67, 69.)

And, according to Vermeil, they also believed that the founding of this women's community must be God's will.⁴²

Caroline Malvesin

In spite of Vermeil's exalted, but heavy-handed, assurances, Malvesin was not one to allow herself to be pressured into deciding her life calling just because her former pastor wrote to her with an emphatic, "God wants it!"⁴³ Her answer, in a letter dated April 12, was humble but firm:

My God, my God, I am so weak, so unworthy!
However, on my knees before Him on Thursday, yesterday at his holy table, today in the cemetery, I told him: here I am, Lord, ready to do your will! (...) But this divine will has not yet been clearly revealed to me; one more test, then, if he judges it to be good, I will obey...⁴⁴

More letters followed that allowed Malvesin to express what was on her heart.

Her faith in the proposed venture was solid but she needed time to consider

⁴² Letter from Vermeil dated April 5, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 67, 69, 71, 73.

⁴³ Malvesin was 34 at this time, unmarried and apparently self-assured enough not to yield to Vermeil's pressure until she felt convinced the time was right.

⁴⁴ Original text: "*Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, je suis si faible, si indigne! Cependant à genoux devant Lui jeudi, hier à sa table sainte, aujourd'hui au cimetière, je lui ai dit: me voici, Seigneur, pour faire ta volonté! (...) Mais cette volonté divine ne m'est point encore assez clairement manifestée; une épreuve encore, puis, s'il le juge bon, j'obéirai...*" Letter from Malvesin dated April 12, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 81.

wisely all the aspects involved. Vermeil, on the other hand, was a man of action and tended to rush into things a little too fast for her. More than once, she disagreed with the way he had taken initiatives before receiving her full agreement: "The speed at which you advance grieves me. (...) I wish to lay the foundations more slowly so that they will be more solid."⁴⁵

Born in Marseille, Malvesin lost her pious mother at the age of thirteen and was raised by her eldest sister. Her father, a businessman, had been ruined by the continental blockade.⁴⁶ When she lost her father at age eighteen, she had to earn her living as a tutor in a family in Saintonge. She moved to Bordeaux after seven years to live with her sister, Mme. Gérard, to work with her in a girls' boarding school.⁴⁷

Her spiritual awakening came after hearing a sermon by Adolphe Monod.⁴⁸ Troubled, she wrote him. He responded with a letter that was rich in

⁴⁵ Original text: "*La vitesse avec laquelle vous avancez me peine (...) je voudrais poser les bases avec plus de lenteur afin qu'elles fussent plus solides.*" Letter from Malvesin dated June 14, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 115.

⁴⁶ During the Napoleonic wars, Napoleon ordered a blockade of Great Britain between 1807 and 1811 to attempt to destroy their commerce. However, it also seriously damaged the business of some French merchants.

⁴⁷ Sarah Monod, *La Soeur Malvesin, Diaconesse 1806-1889* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1893), 5-7.

⁴⁸ He was professor at the Seminary of Montauban at the time and preached occasionally at Malvesin's church. Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 49.

quotes from the Bible. She read his letter on her knees and continued for many days to read the Bible that way until she had a conversion experience. That experience filled her with peace, joy, and an assurance that never left her, and prompted her to preach the Gospel to everyone.⁴⁹

Vermeil's admiration for Malvesin's deep piety and insight was well founded. In her third letter to him, less than a month after he wrote to her about his project of a women's religious order, she wrote back describing her vision for the ministry. Her vision included the theological foundation and the practical organization of the different branches that she wished to be part of their mission. She drew a tree with five branches to illustrate it:

You see, dear brother, the soil that nourishes the tree is Christ; the root is the executive committee; the trunk is the community; the sap is love; the pith is obedience; the bark is humility; the foliage is edification; the flower is perseverance; the fruits are works.

Branch no. 1 *teaching* would include the training school, the infant school, the school, the boarding residence (...).

Branch no. 2 *exhortation*: free classes, general Sunday School, visits.

Branch no. 3 *protection*: repentant girls, asylum for elderly, temporary asylum for unemployed servants, workshops for female laborers without work.

Branch no. 4 *relief*: hospitals.

Branch no. 5 *support*: housing for all those who do not have enough revenue to live alone.

⁴⁹ Monod, *La Soeur Malvesin*, 8-9.

All the branches could grow not all at once...⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Original text: *“La branche no 1 enseignement embrasserait école normale, salle d’asile, école, pension (un Montmirail perfectionné).*

Le branche no 2 exhortation: cours gratuits, écoles du dimanche générales, visites.

La branche no 3 protection: filles repentantes, asile pour les vieillards, asile momentané pour les domestiques sans places, ateliers de travail pour les ouvrières sans ouvrage.

La branche no 4 soulagement: hôpitaux.

La branche no 5 appui: demeure pour tous ceux qui n’ont pas assez de revenue pour vivre seuls.

Toutes les branches pourraient ne pas pousser à la fois...”

Letter from Malvesin dated February 24, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 51, 53.

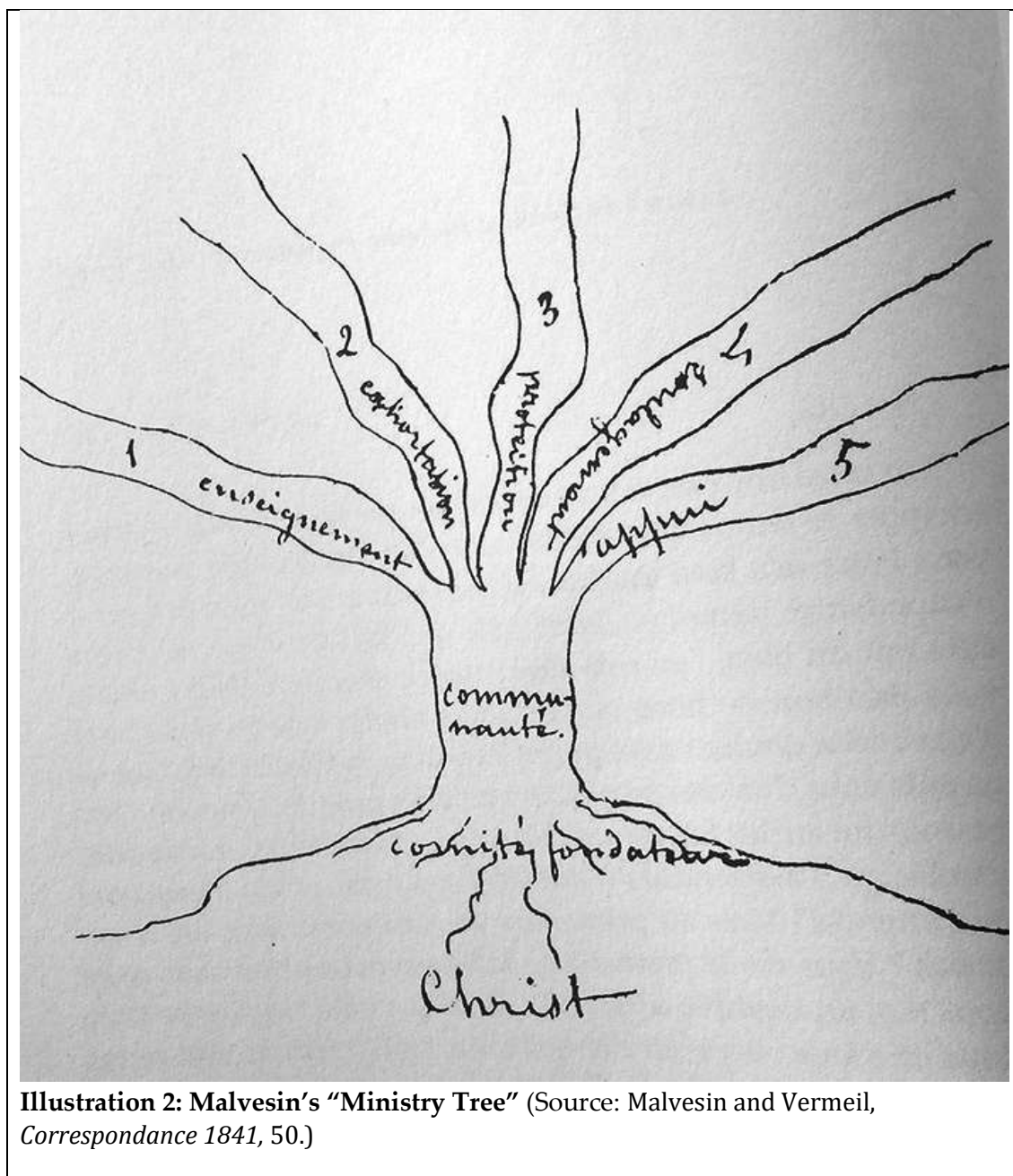


Illustration 2: Malvesin's "Ministry Tree" (Source: Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 50.)

After a long silence (she wrote three letters to his one), Vermeil responded with

full approbation of her vision, almost as a footnote to his long April 4 letter.⁵¹

While being proactive when it came to the logistics of their undertaking, it seems Vermeil deferred to Malvesin's vision for the inner workings of the community, in her role as future Sister Superior of the community.

The Founding of the Community

Having visited the first deaconess community founded by pastor Theodor Fliedner in 1836 in Kaiserswerth (Germany), Vermeil chose to distance himself from Fliedner's direct leadership model and to define his role as that of "Minister of the Church" rather than that of Director or Superior. He had the role of helping the community interface with the church, making sure all its needs were provided for, as a shepherd watches over his sheep.⁵² However, he was a member of the executive committee and attended all the meetings to report on his activities on behalf of the community (such as fundraising, promotion, and recruitment).

Starting in May of 1841, preparations for the founding of the women's

⁵¹ Letter from Vermeil dated April 4, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 77.

⁵² Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 47.

refuge and for the deaconess community ran parallel to each other.

Announcements for both went out during the summer of 1841. Vermeil and Malvesin discussed terms to describe the women—names that were included in the July brochure: “Protestant Sisters of Charity,” “Servants of the Lord,” and “Deaconesses.”⁵³ The descriptive name “Deaconesses of Reuilly” came after they moved to the Rue de Reuilly, a street in Paris. The rehabilitation of the house rented at 1, rue des Trois-Sabres was finished in late October, just in time for the first “repentant woman” from St. Lazare, Céline Brumaire (Marie), to move in, on November 6. Her arrival marked the unofficial beginning of the deaconess community and of the “Refuge” conjointly.⁵⁴ The official, public inauguration of the “House of Deaconesses and of the Refuge” [*Maison des Diaconesses et du Refuge*] took place April 24, 1842.⁵⁵

The founding executive committee, formed in October, after Malvesin’s arrival in Paris, was composed of Vermeil, Malvesin, Mme. Mallet, Mme. Matter,

⁵³ “Le prospectus,” Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 126-127.

⁵⁴ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 75.

⁵⁵ “Séance Solennelle d’inauguration de la Maison des Diaconesses et du Refuge,” *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur de la Maison des Diaconesses*, Sunday, April 24, 1842. This date was chosen because it was during the last week of April that all the benevolent societies held their annual meetings.

and Mme. Vermeil (the last three also on the *Comité de St. Lazare*). Lutheran pastor Louis Vallette was appointed as Vermeil's alternate in March 1842, and became vice-president in March 1843. He succeeded Vermeil after his death in 1864.⁵⁶

The first task of the committee was to write the Rule and the "Fundamental Principles" [*Principes Fondamentaux*] of the community. This text was broken into two main parts. The first part, the Fundamental Principles, reiterated the main points of the brochure that was published the previous July to announce the community. It also explained how this undertaking contrasted with similar Catholic endeavors. The second part, the "Excerpts of the Rules," contained about thirty points on the organization and internal discipline of the community.⁵⁷

In July 1841, a thirty-two page brochure, entitled "Establishment of the Protestant Sisters of Charity in France," [*Établissement des Soeurs de Charité*

⁵⁶ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 69, 70, 74. Later, other important figures that joined the executive committee or donated funds included: baroness Bartholdi-Walther, Mme. André-Rivet, Mme. André-Walther. Mme. Valérie de Gasparin was also supportive of the Deaconesses at the beginning but turned against them with her husband at the time of the constitution of the Free Evangelical Churches in 1848. She waged a polemical campaign against the Deaconesses in published articles and books.

⁵⁷ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 76.

Protestantes en France] was published, outlining the common vision that Vermeil and Malvesin had been refining in their correspondence. The five main points of the vision were: 1) “The vision of the Kingdom of God announced and promised” — that is, the need to extend the holistic work of the gospel. 2) “An unreserved consecration” — complete renouncement of self and sole commitment to the mission, including through celibacy.⁵⁸ 3) “Community life” — this section described the principles of the religious community: authority (of the Sister Superior), rule (or statutes, according to Malvesin), sharing of belongings (all income from members went to the community that provided for everyone’s needs), service (the first priority of the community), sobriety (simplicity of life, no luxury). 4) The “spirit of love, holiness, unity” — these three qualities were those of a missionary: sacrificial giving of self, prayer and devotional life, inter-denominational cohesion. 5) “An evangelical foundation” — the community took the Bible as “sole authority and guide,” was loyal to the “Evangelical churches of Frances” and “Reformed communities of France” but remained resolutely inter-

⁵⁸ This emphasis on celibacy was not an idealization of this state as indicating a greater degree of consecration as in pre-Reformation times (even though detractors believed it was a “restoration of monasticism”). Female celibacy was simply practical on a logistical level. Women who had any family responsibilities would not have been able to fully devote themselves to their work as deaconesses. This is an interesting contrast with marriage being the ideal state for missionaries in an African setting.

denominational while still belonging “to the church.”⁵⁹

Future deaconesses were admitted as *aspirantes* [postulants] before the executive council for a trial period of six months. Malvesin’s edits of Vermeil’s draft on this topic stated that, after six months, the postulant became a novice-sister for a one-year period. “Only after that,” wrote Malvesin, “can she become a *Sister of Charity*.”⁶⁰ According to Lagny, when the deaconess-sister entered into the community, on a religious level, she expressed her “unwavering decision to consecrate herself to God,” indicating her life-long commitment as a deaconess.⁶¹ On a social level, there was a two-year commitment to the community. The title of “deaconess” belonged to those who had made a definitive commitment.⁶²

⁵⁹ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 55-61. The headings in quotes are those of Lagny’s text.

⁶⁰ Letter from Malvesin dated July 25, 1841, in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 175.

⁶¹ In the Church of England, Bancroft underlined that there was a clear distinction between “sisters” and “deaconesses.” Deaconesses were not bound by vows and could break their ties with the community when there was good reason. However, sisterhoods were similar to the Roman Catholic model. Sisters took their vows for life and considered themselves “the bride of Christ.” (Bancroft, *Deaconesses in Europe*, 149-151) The Kaiserswerth deaconesses, after a three-year probation, promised to stay in the community for five year stretches at a time. However, they could leave if their families had need of them. (Meyer, *Deaconesses and Their Work*, 35).

⁶² Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 84. I found Lagny’s text unclear and ambiguous when it came to explaining exactly how binding the commitment was. This was to be one the main points of criticisms from detractors of the deaconesses. Later Vermeil had to scramble to soften the language relating to vows and celibacy.

However, part of Vermeil's draft, unchanged by Malvesin, retained the option of breaking these engagements before the end of the term either "by common accord" or by the decision of the executive council.⁶³

Beginnings

The work of the Refuge grew, slowly, alongside the deaconess community. By April of 1843, there were thirteen boarders.⁶⁴ In April of 1842, seven postulants to the status of deaconess were admitted: Caroline Thouin, Mrs. Delbouis (a widow), Églantine Mériier, Marie Portebois, Alexandrine Dombine (on April 10), Élisabeth Étienne, and Coraly Avienne (on April 19).⁶⁵

In the first four years, many other ministries were added to the work of the Refuge. A ministry of social and spiritual aid in the form of home visits to families in the district provided assistance, medical help, and spiritual guidance (Dec. 1841). A clinic for children either at risk or suffering from tuberculosis

⁶³ "Extrait de la Brochure," letter 7 from Vermeil, undated (probably July 1841), in Malvesin and Vermeil, *Correspondance 1841*, 175.

⁶⁴ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 77.

⁶⁵ "Séance extraordinaire," *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, April 10, 1841; *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, April 19 ; Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 78. Lagny's account states there were only six postulants but the minutes list the names of seven women.

opened in December 1842. The “*Disciplinaire*” [paraphrase: “Disciplinary home”] or home for girls between ages nine and thirteen opened in January of 1843. A Sunday School was opened for district children and those of the *Disciplinaire* (1843), in addition to a Women’s Health Center (1843)—the latter provided training for the deaconesses as well. The “*Retenue*” [literal translation: “detention”] for young women over the age of fourteen in “moral danger” opened in May of 1844.⁶⁶

Very soon, growth in both numbers and in the diversity of outreach efforts was being limited by space. In October 1845, the community began to move their operations into a large property with multiple buildings located on nearby Rue de Reuilly.⁶⁷ For the first few years, the work of the deaconesses was generally well received by the churches and the public authorities. Delegations visited and donations flowed into the coffers. In the minutes of the executive committee meeting on March 31, 1842, Vermeil reported on the visit of a consistory sub-committee who expressed their “full satisfaction.”⁶⁸ The minutes

⁶⁶ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 89-90.

⁶⁷ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 96.

⁶⁸ *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, March 31, 1842. Only Athanase Coquerel “made a few observations.”

continued:

Since then there have been two meetings of the sub-committee during which Mr. Coquerel repeated his remarks that did not seem very important, as they referred mostly to a tendency to return to the monastic spirit and to certain Catholic forms. As the Sub-committee did not take into consideration these observations, the report it decided to submit to the consistory will be favorable to the work and should contribute to its success.⁶⁹

This brief report sheds light on what seemed to be a generally positive attitude in the Reformed Church at that time towards the work of the deaconesses. Coquerel was the only critic on the sub-committee, and it seems that he stirred up negative opinions against the deaconesses only later, when he was able to publish a polemical article to a larger audience. Even the two Bible Societies (one liberal, one of the revivalist strain) both sent letters of support for the work of the deaconesses at this time.⁷⁰ Journal reviews in the *Archives* were positive as well.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Original text: "*depuis lors il y a eu deux séances de la commission dans lesquelles M. Coquerel a renouvelé [sic] ses remarques qui n'ont pas paru très importantes, s'étendant surtout sur une tendance au retour de l'esprit monastique et à certaines formes catholiques. La commission n'ayant point prise en considération ces observations, le rapport qu'elle a décidé de présenter au consistoire sera favorable à l'œuvre et devra contribuer à son succès.*" *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, March 31, 1842.

⁷⁰ *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, April 19, 1842.

⁷¹ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 99-100.

The Deaconesses of Strasburg

In 1842, as the House of Deaconesses in Paris was just getting organized, admitting postulants and starting ministries, François Haerter and the women in Strasburg were trying to do the same. In March, Haerter had written to the Paris committee to announce the start of a deaconess community in Strasburg. While happy to hear the news, the Paris committee expressed regret that the Strasbourgeois had not coordinated their efforts (perhaps a reference to their Fundamental Principles) with the Paris community.⁷² In April 1842, the Paris committee received a letter from Mme. Passavant in Strasburg requesting to see their by-laws and asking to know what their uniform was “in order to draw from this [information] what might be appropriate to the establishment of the Sisters of Charity of Strasburg.”⁷³ The Paris committee was happy to oblige and tasked Malvesin to write back, saying that they strongly desired to build relations with the community in Strasburg. The feeling was mutual and the Strasburg committee responded, “One of our most ardent desires is to be in close communion with you, dear sister, and, as the Lord has also put on our hearts to

⁷² *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, March 17, 1842 (probably actually the 10th—there seems to be a mistake in the date as March 17 appears twice in the reports).

⁷³ *Procès Verbal du Comité Directeur*, April 7, 1842.

love one another, I hope that we will work, with one accord, towards the advancement of the kingdom of God.”⁷⁴

Haerter had arrived back in Strasburg in 1829 after working as a pastor in Ittenheim, shortly after the tragic death of his young wife Élise. There he had accepted a post as pastor of the *Temple Neuf* [New Church].⁷⁵ Even though he was a seasoned pastor, he struggled with difficult theological questions that “caused him in the evening to desire not to wake up in the morning.”⁷⁶ One night, because he had no one in whom to confide his grief and pain, he wrote in his journal:

This [isolation] led me to speak directly to Jesus Christ, and to give myself to him unconditionally. Then my soul finally healed, and soon, buoyed by the grace of my Savior, I was able to cry out, as I experienced the feeling of a new birth: “I have received mercy!”⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Original text: “*Un de nos désirs les plus ardents, est d’entrer en communion intime avec vous, chère sœur, et comme le Seigneur nous a mis également au cœur de nous aimer, j’ose espérer que nous travaillerons de commun accord à l’avancement du règne de Dieu.*” *Lettre à Caroline Malvesin, supérieure de l’établ. des Diac. de Paris, 30 avril 1842, Correspondence 1842-1847, Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasburg.*

⁷⁵ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 59.

⁷⁶ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 68.

⁷⁷ Original text: “*Cela me conduisit à m’adresser à Jésus-Christ directement, et à me donner à lui sans conditions. Alors mon âme guérit enfin, et, avant longtemps, je pus, porté par la grâce de mon Sauveur, m’écrier dans le sentiment d’une nouvelle naissance: ‘Il m’a été fait miséricorde !’*” Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 68.

He started a prayer journal on that day, May 31, 1830, in which he wrote: “Oh my God, pierce my ears, take my whole heart for yourself, and possess and rule over my whole being. All my desire is you, oh, make me see your will as pleasant and perfect. Make me faithful...”⁷⁸ A few months later, his moving prayer was, “Oh, may I spread the good aroma of Christ and teach these dear children the inclinations of the lamb. Oh, may his mark be so distinctly imprinted on our souls, on our lips, and on our entire behavior, that all in me may glorify you.”⁷⁹

On Trinity Sunday of 1831, Haerter preached his first sermon on the eternal divinity of Christ, causing consternation throughout the city and an outcry against what some believed was exalted, foolish doctrine.⁸⁰ While some withdrew their children and their entire families from the church, others felt

⁷⁸ Original text: “*O mon Dieu perce-moi les oreilles, prends-mon cœur tout entier pour toi et possède et régis tou mon être. Tout mon désir c’est toi, o rends moi ta volonté agréable et parfaite.*” F. Haerter, entry May 31, 1830, *Journal de Prière 1830-1831*, handwritten ms., Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasburg. This handwritten prayer journal begins with “Journal started on May 31, 1830.” I have not found the exact date of Haerter’s first conversion in my sources (he had another breakthrough later). However, considering the language he used in his prayer — which is that of a “revived” soul — and the fact that he started the journal on that specific day, indicates that that may have been the day of his first “conversion.”

⁷⁹ Original text: “*O puisé-je répandre la bonne odeur de Christ et inculquer à ces chers enfans les dispositions de l’agneau. O que la marque soit si distinctement empreintée sur nos âmes, sur nos lèvres et dans toute notre conduite, que tout en nous te glorifie.*” Haerter, entry December 3, 1830, *Journal de Prière 1830-1831*.

⁸⁰ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 70. Trinity Sunday is the Sunday after Pentecost.

their hearts touched, like the parishioner who came up to Haerter afterwards and said, “Your sermon, like a double-edged sword, has penetrated deep into my soul. What must I do to be saved?”⁸¹ The question caused Haerter more joy “than if an angel had come down from heaven to bless him.”⁸² This sermon marked the beginning of the *Réveil* in Strasburg.⁸³

Genesis of the Community

Haerter was an exceptional teacher, especially in his religious instruction classes where he “moved souls.”⁸⁴ He took it upon himself to meet with recently confirmed catechumens every Tuesday to deepen the lessons they had learned in catechism. Out of these meetings, a young women’s union, called the “Young Women’s Association for the Promotion of the Kingdom of God” [*Association de*

⁸¹ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 70-71.

⁸² Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 71.

⁸³ René Voeltzel, a contemporary biographer, points out that Haerter struggled with chronic illness and went on to have other faith crises in later years. René Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur : La Vie et Les Œuvres Du Pasteur François Haerter (1797-1874)* (Strasbourg: Editions Oberlin, 1983), 53-57. Haerter, a pioneer of the *Réveil* in Strasburg, was also one of the founders of the *Société Évangélique de Strasburg* in 1834, a sister association to the *Société Évangélique de France*, founded in Paris the previous year. (Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 89.)

⁸⁴ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. 73.

jeunes filles pour la promotion du Royaume de Dieu] was created in 1836.⁸⁵ Their goal was to collect goods and money for the poor and sick. They were called “Servants of the Poor” [*Servantes des pauvres*].⁸⁶ One of these young women was Henriette Keck, who would be one of the original deaconesses and the first Superior of the community.

While Madame Roehrich attributed Haerter’s conversion to his first wife, Élise, she gave the honor of being “the true founder of his works” [*la réelle fondatrice de ses oeuvres*] to his second wife, Frédérique, a close friend of Élise.⁸⁷ Did Frédérique have a role in meeting with these young women, the Servants of the Poor, as many pastor’s wives might have done to support their husbands? History is silent on any role she may have played during her short life other than as Haerter’s beloved second wife. She died of tuberculosis in 1842, aged forty-three, two weeks after the inauguration of the Institution of the Deaconesses of

⁸⁵ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 122.

⁸⁶ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 122. The title *Servantes des pauvres* is feminine and thus means “Female servants of the poor.”

⁸⁷ Roehrich, *Le Pasteur F. H. Haerter*. ⁸⁶ Haerter and Frédérique were married in 1830. However, neither Roehrich nor Voeltzel say anything about a specific role she may have played in the founding of the deaconesses nor whether she was on the all female executive committee. Her name does not appear in any of the minutes.

Strasburg.⁸⁸

The first official meeting of the Servants of the Poor was held on May 29, 1836. For the next three years, the women met faithfully at Haerter's parish house and they presented a report every year to the Union of Young Women. They took three lifelong commitments—1) to care for at least three poor or sick individuals and to pray daily for the other members of the association, 2) to go through a probation period, and 3) to choose a Superior, nominated for life.⁸⁹ The only difference between the life of the Servants of the Poor and deaconesses was the fact that they lived at home.

On December 15, 1839, Haerter consecrated ten young women as deaconesses, using a formula that has been continually in use since then:

Be blessed, you who wish to serve Jesus Christ in his evangelical Church. May the Lord Jesus fill you with a rich measure of His grace, in the power of living faith so that you can accomplish the works of holy love and may He keep you faithful until the end in a holy hope, in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 52. Frédérique had been a loving stepmother to the two orphans of her friend Élise and then had borne three children of her own, one of which died at birth.

⁸⁹ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 122-123.

⁹⁰ Original text: "*Sois bénie, toi qui veux servir Jésus-Christ dans son Eglise évangélique. Le Seigneur Jésus te remplisse dans une riche mesure de Sa grâce, dans la puissance de la foi vivante pour que tu puisses accomplir des œuvres de saint amour et qu'il te garde fidèle jusqu'à la fin dans une sainte espérance, au nom de Dieu le Père, le Fils et le Saint-Esprit. Amen.*" Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 123 ; Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 15.

The following year, 1840, several of the women told Haerter they no longer wanted to give only their Sundays to the service of the poor and the sick, but their whole lives to the service of God, since they had no outstanding duties requiring their presence at home. Haerter received this news with great joy and thanked God for answering his ardent prayers.⁹¹

Since his youth, he had had the desire to create an association of women in the Protestant Church who would care for “the poor, the sick, and the abandoned,” – something similar to what existed in the Catholic Church.⁹² In 1820, the municipal council of Strasburg had attempted to re-organize the hospital and to solicit both Catholic and Protestant Sisters of Charity to care for patients of their own religion. But the Protestant pastors of Strasburg, including young Haerter, could not find any women with the requisite qualities, willing to devote themselves to such service, at that time. As a result, the Protestant patients had to be cared for by Catholic Sisters of Charity. Later, a Catholic doctor made the self-congratulatory remark that, “This flower from heaven

⁹¹ Charles Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu: Souvenir Du Cinquantenaire de l'Institution Des Diaconesses de Strasburg* (Strasbourg: Imprimerie Strasbourgeoise, 1893), 16.

⁹² Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 13.

cannot grow on the dry and sandy soil of the Protestant church.”⁹³ For many years, Haerter remembered that experience as a “painful thorn in the heart”!⁹⁴

But now, Haerter had a group of devoted women ready for service. He needed to raise funds and find a house to rent or buy. In spite of the obstacles that he could clearly see, he was determined to bring this project to fruition. However, a serious illness delayed preparations as he was forced to seek treatment in Switzerland for an entire year.⁹⁵

The Founding

Finally, in February of 1842, a small house in an old district in the Rue du Ciel was rented. In July, Henriette Keck and the other young ladies moved into the house and proceeded to take in ten patients and open a school for fifty children.⁹⁶ On March 3, when the executive committee of the deaconesses met for the first time at Haerter’s home, the purpose of the meeting was the “foundation

⁹³ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 13-14.

⁹⁴ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 13-14.

⁹⁵ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 16 ; Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 125.

⁹⁶ Handwritten “*Historique 1836-1846*,” Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasburg.

of a house of evangelical deaconesses."⁹⁷ There were only three women at the original committee meeting: Mme. Emma Passavant, née Klimrath (accountant), Mlle. Henriette Rausch (in charge of schools), and Mlle. Mina Ehrmann (secretary). Haerter was also present.⁹⁸ They opened with a "fervent prayer" and a teaching on the text from Isaiah 41:10: "Fear not, for I am with you."⁹⁹ Two other members were added at the second meeting: Mme. Pauline Schuré (née Blüchel) and Mme. Adèle Schneiter (née Lobstein).¹⁰⁰

From the beginning, according to notes of the first meeting, the committee seemed aware that, even as they ministered to their compatriots in a "local mission," they were joining an international movement of holistic evangelistic outreach, led by women:

The need to found such ministries is being felt in several places. At Kaiserswerth and in Paris, houses of this kind have opened, and in Échallens, in the Canton of Vaud [Switzerland], they are occupied with creating a similar ministry. For years, we have felt the desire, then the urgent need, to have an institution of this kind; the Lord is finally willing to open the way and he is now letting us examine the

⁹⁷ Handwritten "*Historique 1836-1846*," Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasburg.

⁹⁸ *Procès verbal 1842-1854*, handwritten ms., Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasburg.

⁹⁹ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 18.

¹⁰⁰ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 18.

means by which we may realize this ministry.¹⁰¹

In the first meeting, the most important task was to draft statutes. Haerter already had a proposal for statutes, in seven points, that was adopted at the following session. It laid out the principal traits of their evangelical and apostolic endeavor.¹⁰² Contrary to the Deaconesses of Reuilly, who kept adding different ministries over the years as needs arose, the Strasburg community clearly delimited their mission from the start. In the excerpt presented in the annual report of 1843, article 3 of the statutes described the two branches of their mission: 1) a school for girls aged five to fifteen and 2) an infirmary. The mission of the Deaconesses of Strasburg thus followed two tracks: those who trained to become teachers of young children or girls in their elementary school and those who became *garde-malades* or nurses, under the direction of the doctor of the House.¹⁰³ In the annual report, Haerter wrote that in the first year, of the six

¹⁰¹ Original text: *“Le besoin de fonder de pareilles œuvres, lisons-nous plus loin, se fait sentir en plusieurs endroits. A Kaiserswerth et à Paris, des maisons de ce genre on été ouvertes, et à Echallens, dans le canton de Vaud, on s’occupe de créer un œuvre semblable. Depuis des années, on a éprouvé le désir, puis le besoin impérieux, de posséder une institution de ce genre ; le Seigneur daigne enfin aplanir les voies, et il nous permet d’examiner maintenant les moyens de réaliser cette œuvre.”* Quoted in Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 19.

¹⁰² Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 19.

¹⁰³ “Extrait des Statuts,” *Établissement des Diaconesses de Strasbourg: Premier Rapport Annuel 1843*, (Strasbourg: Imprimerie Berger-Levrault, 1844), 3-4.

initial deaconesses, three were teachers and three nurses. The desire was to have the sisters specialize so they could become experts in their field, especially since the teachers had to be fully bilingual in German and French and earn a teacher's certificate.¹⁰⁴

In 1842, in the months preceding the official inauguration of the Establishment of Deaconesses, set for October 31 (chosen because it was the anniversary of the Reformation), the aspiring deaconesses prepared themselves for their specialization. Wilhelmine Bartholmès spent time at Kaiserswerth receiving training as a nurse—training she passed on to her colleagues Mina Schaller and Caroline Emmès. Henriette Keck, Cléophee Stern, and Julie Kübelé had to attend the *Académie* to get training for the primary certificate [*brevet élémentaire*].¹⁰⁵ The pedagogy of Jean-Frédéric Oberlin from nearby Ban-de-la-Roche exercised a strong influence on the deaconesses' work in the schools.¹⁰⁶

The process through which the women committed themselves to the

¹⁰⁴ Haerter, "Rapport," *Établissement des Diaconesses de Strasbourg: Premier Rapport Annuel 1843*, 11-12. Teachers had to have the *brevet d'institutrices* [elementary teacher certificate].

¹⁰⁵ Boegner, *Au Service de Dieu*, 20. The name of the sixth deaconess, Caroline Emmès (spelling of last name is unclear on the handwritten list of deaconesses), is only on the handwritten "Liste de diaconesses" from the Archives of the Deaconesses of Strasbourg.

¹⁰⁶ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 139.

vocation of deaconess in Strasburg also differed from the process in Paris: in Strasburg, after a successful trial period of “at least two weeks,” the women were admitted as novices for one year during which they could withdraw at any time. After that, the new deaconess did not take a vow, but “solemnly promised” her service in front of the whole community of deaconesses. She could still leave the community, if she desired, but had to give one year’s notice.¹⁰⁷ The issue of celibacy was not specifically mentioned but was implied in order to be a member of the community.¹⁰⁸

In contrast with Paris and Kaiserswerth, the unique feature of the Deaconesses of Strasburg was that, from the very beginning, they were led by a committee composed only of women. Haerter intentionally refused to be a member of the executive committee, though he often attended the meetings, and remained a full-time pastor.¹⁰⁹ Voetzel called it an example of an “authentic

¹⁰⁷ *Etablissement des Diaconesses, “Extrait des Statuts,” Établissement des Diaconesses de Strasbourg: Premier Rapport Annuel 1843, 3-4.*

¹⁰⁸ There was no emphasis on a lifelong vow or celibacy for the Strasburg deaconesses. With Reuilly, their initial use of vows caused adamant Protestant opponents to accuse the co-founders of abandoning one of the major gains of the Reformation—the rejection of monasticism, considered unbiblical.

¹⁰⁹ Haerter still had a lot of influence. He raised funds and promoted the community wherever he could. He authored the annual reports of the establishment, starting in 1843. He also had a strong hand in formulating the vision for the community and in writing the by-laws.

women's democracy" because early in the history of the movement, it was the only house of deaconesses that was directed exclusively by a committee of women.¹¹⁰ This was a revolutionary achievement for women at the time.¹¹¹

Other houses of deaconesses began in the region, with the help of Haerter, and they attracted women not only from the Lutheran Church but also from the Reformed Church (in French-speaking areas). Soon there were various deaconess ministries in Mulhouse, Guebwiller, Neuchâtel, Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, Colmar, Basel, Illzach, Montbéliard, Ribeauvillé, and Munster, among others.¹¹² But in terms similar to those of Reuilly, the Strasburg community stated that their character was "conform to the apostolic evangelical Church."¹¹³ This clearly indicated that their identity was inter-denominational rather than strictly Lutheran. The deaconesses soon outgrew their house at Rue du Ciel and, by 1844, had to rent a building on Rue Sainte Elisabeth. Continued expansion

¹¹⁰ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 131. Nevertheless, men were added to the committee, beginning in 1891. Some American deaconess communities were run by women but they only developed, at the earliest, in the 1860s.

¹¹¹ The progressive aspect of the exclusively female composition of the executive committee was probably more remarkable for deaconess communities in Europe where cultural mores dictated more pervasive male oversight.

¹¹² Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 150-155.

¹¹³ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 134.

prompted them to move again, to no. 5, Rue des Francs-Bourgeois a year later.¹¹⁴

Both deaconess communities grew slowly but surely in their ministries of compassion—in Paris, initially to female prisoners and girls in need of homes and education, and in Strasbourg, in hospital work and schools. Unfortunately, controversy was brewing over the work of these monastic-like communities of women.

Modeling Unity and the Holistic Work of Mission

The first public attacks against the work of the deaconesses came from the pen of Athanase Coquerel in 1845. Later, Valérie de Gasparin and her husband Agénor, who had originally been in favor of the undertaking, joined the fray. This polemical war revealed the fault lines in French Protestant identity in the early nineteenth century. Pre-nineteenth century French Protestantism had defined itself in opposition to its great enemy and persecutor, the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, to borrow any practice from Catholic tradition was to betray the legacy of the Reformation. One of Mme. de Gasparin's main criticisms of the deaconess community was that it represented an evil—

¹¹⁴ Voeltzel, *Service Du Seigneur*, 141.

monasticism—that was, for Protestants, “immense, irreparable, (...) the poison of Rome infused into our veins.”¹¹⁵ The first critical articles appeared in 1845 in *Le Lien*, a journal edited by Coquerel who thus had his own bully pulpit from which to launch his attacks. Coquerel faulted the institution of the deaconesses for being separatist by seeking to evade the authority of the church and for limiting the unconditional freedom of the individual.¹¹⁶

Another fault line in Protestant identity—the tendency towards sectarianism, coming either from the liberals or from the radical revivalists—fueled the outrage behind another criticism. In early 1846, Vermeil sent out an open invitation to all Protestant pastors in Paris to lead the Sunday afternoon worship service at the House of Deaconesses. The intent of the invitation was to show that “the Work belonged to the whole Church and not to any particular tendency.”¹¹⁷ Coquerel made a show of rebuffing the invitation publicly in *Le Lien* and refused to publish a response by Vermeil.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Valerie de Gasparin, *Des corporations monastiques au sein du Protestantisme* (Paris: Librairie de Ch. Meyrueis, 1854), 14.

¹¹⁶ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 116, 117.

¹¹⁷ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 115-116.

¹¹⁸ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 116.

Other critical articles appeared in *les Archives du Christianisme* along with articles in favor of the enterprise.¹¹⁹ The greatest collection of arguments against the institution of the deaconesses was in Mme. Valérie de Gasparin's *Des corporations monastiques au sein du Protestantisme* [On Monastic corporations within Protestantism]. However, even though Vermeil suffered personally from the attacks and a few of the women left the community, the Deaconesses of Reuilly weathered the storm.¹²⁰ The Deaconesses of Strasburg suffered less from the attacks. Important figures of Evangelical Protestantism continued to support the mission of the deaconesses throughout—figures such as Adolphe Monod, Henri Grandpierre, and Jules Pédézert.¹²¹

Another critique of the deaconesses that was never openly voiced was the fact that it was an autonomous, publicly visible women's community and, in Strasburg, run by a committee composed entirely of women. However, one

¹¹⁹ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 116, 129-131. *Les Archives* published Vermeil's response as well.

¹²⁰ Vermeil took the attacks too much to heart, according to Lagny, who also underlined that he was suffering from a "mysterious but tenacious illness" at the same time. (Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 114)

¹²¹ Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 129. By contrast, Frédéric Monod voiced his approval in *les Archives* (of which he was editor) of de Gasparin's *Des corporations monastiques* after it was published (Feb. 10, 1855). (Lagny, *Le réveil de 1830*, 122-123). Jules Pédézert was professor of theology at the Theological Seminary in Montauban.

particular incident within the Paris Mission might shed some light on the tensions that the idea of autonomous women leaders may have stirred up. A few years before the deaconess controversy broke, the Paris Mission women's committee ran into some problems at the General Assembly that could be traced to some of the same underlying objections against women's ministry: namely, the increased visibility of women in mission work and, possibly also, fear of female enthusiasm in public settings, such as the reading of their annual report.

Insights and Leadership from the Paris Mission Women's Committee

Certain tensions related to the work of women seemed to have penetrated even the ranks of the Paris Mission, where the leading female figures of the *Réveil*—Mme. de Broglie and Mme Émilie Mallet, in particular—had found support for their prophetic leadership. In 1841, for unclear reasons, the women's report, written by Émilie Mallet, was almost entirely suppressed in the Minutes of the General Assembly.¹²² That year, only one half-page excerpt of the women's report was read.¹²³ This was not the first time the women's report had been

¹²² *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (April 19, 1841), Archives of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. The notes here indicate that Mallet was the author of the annual report.

¹²³ "Lettre de Mme. Maeder," *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1841), 41-42.

shortened: in 1835 and 1836 also, only excerpts had been read. There were rumors of complaints that the women's reports were too long. Most likely, there were other reasons for silencing the women.

Since the genesis of the Paris Mission women's committee in 1825, the women's annual report was similar to a revivalistic sermon. It was theologically rich, illustrating the power of God's work in France but also in Lesotho, especially after the missionary wives arrived after 1833. In this respect, their account contrasted with the more sober reports made by the men throughout the minutes of the General Assembly, whose primary sources were reports by (male) pastors and elders. By contrast, the women included many poignant stories of piety, devotion, and generosity from the most vulnerable and the poorest individuals, from men, women, and children, from all over France.¹²⁴ These stories must have stirred the hearts of many in the assembly. The repeated "success" of the women's reports may have aroused jealousy in the hearts of the many pastors on the executive council of the Paris Mission. In addition, there may have been a sense that women were overstepping their role and *preaching* to the assembly. In fact, they were. There also may have been some fear of the

¹²⁴ Human relations were essential to women's mission theory and practice.

women's enthusiasm.¹²⁵ The women's committee must have felt they had to "preach" in order to sustain the spirit of the *Réveil* and the vision for missions in the face of flagging spiritual dynamism.

But the women's committee was essential to the work of the Paris Mission in France and the absence of their report was problematic. Agénor de Gasparin stepped in to defend the women by asking, "Why have we eliminated the reading [of the women's report] which is always so interesting?"¹²⁶ He pointed out that without the women's report, the assembly would not see the full picture of what the Paris Mission was doing. He explained,

Gentlemen, the influence of women is great in all the ministries of the religious revival but it is even greater in the most vast of all its ministries, that of missions. Endowed with particular gifts, having sensitive hearts, and a tender and expansive piety, they undertake ministry that we would not know how to do and they do it admirably. (...) Gentlemen, don't you feel refreshed, invigorated, when you think that, in the midst of so many intrigues and troubles, that there are little people, with their own faith who, with their eyes fixed on

¹²⁵ Reports of this fear of female enthusiasm among men are common in the history of women's missionary work. This fear prompted opposition to the successful ministry of women that resulted from their "enthusiastic" leadership and teaching. Evelyn Quema was such a successful Pentecostal preacher in the Philippines that five Protestant pastors came to try and stop her preaching. She resisted, telling them that her main ministry was not preaching but prayer—which women were allowed to do. Lottie Moon, a Southern Baptist missionary to China, had to fight for the right to do evangelism in China. In spite of the mission director's reticence, she was allowed to use her gift and she was very successful. (Ruth A. Tucker, *Guardians of the Great Commission: The Story of Women in Modern Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1988), 41-42, 238.)

¹²⁶ "M. le comte Agénor de Gasparin," *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1841), 40.

heaven, do their work, quietly and without drawing attention to themselves, and that, alongside worldly and lighthearted meetings, there are assemblies that start with prayer and close in the same manner.¹²⁷

However patronizing this may have sounded, de Gasparin's intervention was supportive of the women's committee and he highlighted their deep piety that was in short supply elsewhere. He also hinted at the "intrigues" of the times and the women's single-minded focus on their pious duties. Vermeil, who attended the assembly that year, pointed out the general lack of piety—perhaps even targeting those present—while also underlining the important lessons the women's report provided:

Let us take care, gentlemen, to listen carefully to them [the lessons of the Basotho children mentioned in Mme. Maeder's letter]; let us beware that one day these savages may be our judges (...) May each of us realize that there are two worlds to convert: the outside world, for which we request donations and prayers, and the world of our own hearts, into which the Holy Spirit will never completely enter unless our hearts are open to love, and through love become capable

¹²⁷ Original text: "*L'influence des femmes, Messieurs, est grande dans toutes les œuvres du réveil religieux, mais elle est plus grande encore dans la plus vaste de toutes ces œuvres, celle des missions. Douées de dons particuliers, d'un cœur sensible, d'une piété tendre et expansive, elles font une oeuvre que nous ne saurions faire, et elles la font admirablement. (...) Mesieurs, ne vous sentez-vous pas comme rafraichis, vivifiés, quand vous pensez qu'au milieu de tant d'intrigues et de troubles, il y a un petit peuple qui a sa foi à lui, qui, les yeux fixés au ciel, fait son œuvre, sans éclat et sans bruit, et qu'à côté de tant de réunions mondaines et légères, il est des assemblée qui se commencent par la prière et se terminent de même.*" "M. le comte Agénor de Gasparin," *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1841), 41. I translated "petit peuple" literally as "little people" because other possible meanings such as "weak" or "insignificant" might have intensified the patronizing tone even further. Note: The following years, the women's reports once again were read in their entirety.

of sacrifices.¹²⁸

Of course, unbeknownst to most of the assembly, at that very moment, Vermeil was in the midst of planning a community that would embody that kind of sacrificial love.

The next year, in their 1842 annual report, written by Mme. Lutteroth, the women's committee described how much they had learned from their close connection with the work in Lesotho—and not only them, but French children as well. They stated that, if “they” (was this a sly reference to all Protestants?) made the effort to identify more closely with the experience of their “sisters” in the mission field,¹²⁹

our life would become a shade more austere; we would not adjust so easily to this relaxed Christianity that more or less puts us to sleep after a while; we would understand better that the members of the Church should not be divided into two parts: the one that works, bearing the burden of the heat of the day, practicing renunciation, taking literally all the difficult precepts of God's Word; and the other that restfully admires the works that God inspires, and is moved by the devotion of other people but that lives a soft and easy life in which

¹²⁸ Original text: “*Et prenons garde, Messieurs, de les bien écouter ; prenons garde de ne point avoir un jour pour juges ces sauvages eux-mêmes (...) Que chacun de nous se dise qu'il a deux mondes à convertir: le monde extérieur, pour lequel on nous demande des dons et des prières, et le monde de nos propres cœurs, où le Saint-Esprit n'entrera jamais complètement s'il ne s'ouvrent à la charité, et par la charité ne s'élèvent aux sacrifices.*” “M. le Pasteur Vermeil, de Paris,” *Procès verbal de l'Assemblée Générale* (1841), 45.

¹²⁹ *Comité des dames, procès verbal*, handwritten ms. (March 18, 1842).

the enjoyment of luxury and vanity are not entirely banished.¹³⁰

In their skillful way, these women were condemning all the divisions that pitted Protestant against Protestant by underlining a different “division” — the only one that mattered in God’s eyes—between the Christians who lived lives of renunciation and service, and those who lived “easy lives” of self-indulgence.

Conclusion

The contribution of the French deaconesses is the last piece in this study’s attempt to restore the gap in the historical record of the *Réveil* and the missionary movement related to the influence of women in the shaping of nineteenth century Evangelical Protestantism. In the 1840s, deaconess communities were a new initiative, one that, it was hoped, would rekindle the flames of the *Réveil* in France and create unity among Protestants. International collaborations emerged as the deaconess movement grew beyond France’s borders, through the

¹³⁰ Original text: “Notre vie en recevrait une teinte plus austère ; nous nous accommoderions moins facilement de ce christianisme relâché où nous sommes tous plus ou moins portés à nous endormir après un certain temps ; nous comprendrions mieux que les membres de l’Eglise ne doivent pas être divisés en deux portions: l’une qui travaille, qui supporte le poids de la chaleur du jour, qui pratique le renoncement, qui prend à la lettre tous les préceptes difficiles de la parole de Dieu ; l’autre, qui admire dans le repos les œuvres que l’amour de Dieu inspire, qui s’emeut du dévouement d’autrui mais qui vit d’une vie molle et facile d’où les jouissances du luxe et de la vanité ne sont pas entièrement bannies.” *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1842), 55.

networking efforts of leading women like Émilie Mallet. The creation of these communities marked a new public visibility for Protestant women who were modeling a collective commitment to the work of social renewal in the name of world evangelism. The collective aspect of the deaconess movement highlighted the inter-denominational and international emphasis of the Evangelical Revival and the importance of the leading role of women.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

What did this study unearth about “l’influence des femmes” — the influence of women — on Evangelical Protestantism and mission in nineteenth century France? In chapter one, I argued that women played crucial roles in shaping and preserving historic French Protestantism from the time of the Reformation to the *Réveil*. Women preserved their Huguenot heritage either at home, under the pressure of persecution, or in exile, in the countries of the Huguenot Refuge. The long years of persecution kept the Huguenot faith burning and prepared it for the fires of the *Réveil*. In the precursor movements leading up to the *Réveil*, women were always at the heart of the action, leading the church to look beyond itself and extend its reach outward. In the seventeenth century, their influence spread throughout Europe as itinerant missionaries with the French prophets. Among the Moravians, they held leadership roles as teachers and evangelists. In Ban-de-la-Roche, they worked with Pastor Oberlin as teachers in the *salles d’asile* and as possibly the first documented bible women in mission history. Women mystics, thinkers, and writers from the Genevan *Réveil*, influenced many of the male leaders of the *Réveil* in France. In the Methodist missionary movement in France, women served as spiritual leaders and

pioneered practices such as small group Bible study that became important in evangelical churches.

In chapter two, I examined a little known devotional text, *Dcerka* [Daughter], written by fifteenth century reformer Jan Hus for a local community of women. *Dcerka* was a rupture in the prevalent teaching about women during the Middle Ages and even among later magisterial reformers.¹ Its' most important lesson—that women were created in the image of God—undermined a fundamental theological justification for the universally accepted view that women were inherently inferior to men. It is intriguing that the Protestant missionary movement did not grow after the Reformation even though, admittedly, it was a time of political and religious chaos. It was only two centuries later, within the Pietist movement that valued women leaders, that Protestantism began its global missionary expansion.² Hus' teaching for women in *Dcerka* was a foundational contribution to a “prophetic spirituality” that

¹ Even Calvin's position was that woman was created in the image of God but “in a secondary degree.” John Lee Thompson, *John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah: Women in Regular and Exceptional Roles in the Exegesis of Calvin, His Predecessors, and His Contemporaries* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1992), 102.

² The first Protestant missionaries were sent from the Pietist community led by August Hermann Franke, in Halle, Germany, to India in 1706. Their names were Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plütschau. Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed., The Penguin History of the Church (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 194.

became a catalyst for reform and for missions. It is also important to note that Hus entrusted this teaching to a group of women.

Chapter three documented the origins of the French Protestant missionary movement with the founding of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society which was soon followed by the Paris Mission women's committee. All the major actors in the missionary effort were evangelicals who valued inter-denominational cooperation and a generous international outlook favoring collaborations of all kinds, in spite of official restrictions.³ The women of the Paris Mission committee soon proved to be invaluable collaborators, through their fundraising, strategic organizational skills, and social mediation. Their role as social bridge-builders, mending historic rifts between northern and southern Protestants, and those of different social standing, may have been their most valuable contribution. In addition, their ability to create networks rooted in personal relationships was crucial to the formation of a sustainable missionary movement. Albertine de Broglie understood the special gifts of women in this area and her leadership was invaluable to the effort of rallying the first generation of mission-minded Protestant women.

³ Restrictions such as the prohibition against church relations with foreign entities (Organic Articles).

In chapter four, I argued that, before the *Réveil*, the compassionate drive for mission originated with initiatives by Catholic and Protestant women working together on behalf of poor street children in Paris. These initiatives led to the creation of the first female networks that facilitated fundraising, the allocation of resources (such as real estate and educational materials), and the building of political alliances. Émilie Mallet was the pioneer in the infant school movement—a pedagogy that later became essential in the work of the Lesotho Mission. Mallet served as a strong spiritual leader in the Paris Mission women’s committee as mission fervor spread with the growth of auxiliary societies throughout France.

In chapter five, I showed the essential role missionary wives played in missionary work in Africa, starting with Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland, the first missionary wife in the Lesotho Mission. Even though the Paris Mission had several male missionaries in southern Africa and they had just identified their own mission territory in Basotholand, they were not able to fully engage in their work until they had wives. The husband-wife team, which was often imperfect, was nonetheless essential for mission work in African communities because it enabled missionaries to minister to men, women, and children in culturally appropriate ways. Missionary wives also helped to encourage and revive the

work of the Paris Mission women's committee who now could get information directly from women in the field. As the committee shared the missionary wives' stories, French Protestants were inspired and encouraged in their support of missions.

In chapter six, I argued that women pioneered what became the most important and most effective mission practice in the Lesotho Mission: infant school education. The establishment of infant schools in fact became a way to pursue holistic mission in the field. Visionary women like Émilie Mallet and Elizabeth Lyndall Rolland saw the missionary application of the emerging child education pedagogies being pioneered by Pestalozzi and Oberlin. These systems, which favored women teachers, were another means of engaging women and even children in missionary work in Lesotho and also in renewal in the Reformed Church in France.

The final chapter offered an analysis of the role women played in reviving the work of the *Réveil* in France in the 1840s when religious enthusiasm had waned and division in the church was increasing. Pioneered by the vision of pastors Vermeil and Haerter, the deaconess movement developed differently in Paris than in Strasburg. While the ultimate goal in both cities was social renewal, the initial catalyst in Paris was the need to provide a rehabilitation home for

female ex-convicts. In Strasbourg, by contrast, the sisters engaged in the work of education and in nursing. These mission-minded deaconesses modeled a practice of social outreach that was meant to have a transformative effect on society and to renew religious faith. Although these autonomous communities of women were attempting to lead the way back to unity and to a vision of compassionate Christian service by their example, they could not heal the divisions between the radical revivalists and the liberals. It was during this decade that the Union of Free Evangelical Churches of France was born, the first Reformed Evangelical union of churches, independent of the state.

In summary, this study has demonstrated, first, that women were the backbone of the French Protestant missionary movement. Both in the preparatory years before the advent of the *Réveil* and at the founding of the Paris Mission, key women figures contributed their vision, leadership, and organizational strategies to the work of national and international mission. Without their tireless networking, fundraising, and social mediation, it is unlikely that the missionary movement would have gotten off the ground, given the extremely difficult political, social, and economic circumstances that plagued the country for most of the nineteenth century.

My second major finding was the importance of the male-female

partnership in the work of mission. This partnership took a different shape in the European and African settings. In France, it was important for men to allow their female collaborators to work with a certain amount of autonomy, eschewing the social restrictions on women in public roles, even though it sometimes threatened their own status quo. In Lesotho, the husband-wife partnership—co-equal spouses, created in the image of God—became the embodiment of the central message of Christian mission: God’s desire to bring love, peace, and reconciliation to the world. The description of Beersheba station before its destruction in 1858 offers an ideal picture of the kind of community this mission strategy could produce:

The population of the place numbered two thousand souls. (...) The inhabitants of these localities had built a chapel in a central situation, and a converted chief named Maleko directed the schools.

In the station proper, there were four hundred and eight communicants, one hundred and eighty persons recently awakened, thirty candidates to baptism, two hundred young catechumens baptized in infancy, five hundred adults and children attending week day and Sunday schools.

The entire population had adopted Christian marriage rites. Polygamy, circumcision, and other heathen customs no longer existed.

About eight to nine hundred people could read. (...)

The reports of the Boer commandants indicate that the population of Beersheba lived comfortably, not by means of theft, for not a single case of this nature could be found, but by its own work and industry.

The Boers removed four thousand head of cattle, four thousand sheep and four to five hundred horses. (...) the grain which was found

in the station and which can be evaluated at not less than four thousand bags.⁴

This was what the missionaries had accomplished in the space of only fourteen years. Beersheba station was a model of success under the leadership of Elizabeth and Samuel Rolland.

My third finding was that the success of the missionary enterprise hinged not only on the work of women, or successful male-female partnerships, but on structures that utilized and empowered women in their role as visionaries and leaders. It was the insight of women like Émilie Mallet and Elizabeth Lyndall that led to the adoption of infant school education as a foundational mission strategy in Lesotho. This strategy trained children to become the next generation of Christian leaders in a community context, much like the extended African family. Because Samuel Rolland learned the importance of this holistic mission approach—from his wife presumably—the work at Beersheba prospered and transformed the local culture. The vision and leadership of women were essential

⁴ Craig W. Hincks, *Quest for Peace: An Ecumenical History of the Church in Lesotho* (Moriija, Lesotho: Heads of the Churches in Lesotho and Christian Council of Lesotho, 2009), 250; Of course, not all mission stations or missionaries experienced the same success as Beersheba, under Samuel and Elizabeth Rolland, and Thaba Bosiu, under Eugène and Sarah Casalis. But this study has focused on the founding years and on the best case studies of the early years of the Paris Mission.

to the success of the mission. In 1831, as the first missionary wife was joining the work in Africa, the Paris Mission women's committee eloquently summed up the importance of their female contributions to the work of mission:

But let us be true missionaries in the world for the name of *Christ*, for the Good News of salvation. (...) these pious associations (...) can be compared to the links of an enormous chain, surrounding the world with its links of love. Each one of these links is necessary, indispensable, if one breaks, the chain is ruptured. "There is a diversity of gifts but there is only one spirit (...) given for the common good."⁵

The women of the Paris Mission committee were calling for the Assembly to grant proper recognition to the "indispensable" contributions of their "pious associations" because they knew that the work of women and of all the women's societies was essential to fulfilling the complete ("unbroken") work of the Spirit in global mission.

⁵ Original text: "*Mais soyons-y véritablement missionnaires pour le nom de Christ, pour la bonne Nouvelle du salut. (...) ces associations pieuses (...) que l'on peut comparer aux anneaux d'une chaîne immense, entourant le monde de ses liens de charité. Chacun de ces anneaux est nécessaire, indispensable ; s'il se brise, la chaîne est rompue. Il y a diversité de dons ; mais il n'y a qu'un même esprit (...) donné pour l'utilité commune...*" *Compte rendu au Comité central par le Comité de la Société auxiliaire des femmes de Paris* (1831), 37.

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