Abstract

This paper examines the founding and early development of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris as an early French Protestant mission organization, which from its founding in 1822 until 1970, demonstrated the influence of Pietism and Methodist teaching and theology within France, despite many long-held beliefs to the contrary. The emergence of the Réveil, or revival, following an extended period of Roman Catholic domination of French politics, led to leaders such as Antoine Jean-Louis Galland and Jean-Henri Grandpierre, who played key roles in the development of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, and thus furthered the development and promotion of mission within French Protestantism. The Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was just the first of a number of organizations which grew out of the international blend of Pietists from other European nations and French citizens influenced by the Réveil to form an interesting and little-explored network for the advancement of Protestant ideas in France.

Keywords: Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, France, Protestant mission, Pietism, Réveil

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Introduction

Did the Pietists and Methodists influence French Protestant mission as they did mission in other areas of Europe and North America? This essay argues that the global Pietist network of the early nineteenth century, including influence from Wesleyan Methodism, was of capital importance for the establishment, identity, and praxis of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Founded on November 4, 1822 as the Société des Missions Évangéliques chez les Peuples non-Chrétiens, it published its first programmatic announcement on December 2, 1822.

One of the many Christian mission organizations established in Western Europe and Northern Europe during the early decades of the nineteenth century, its beginnings were quite modest and its resources quite limited. It was created in the context of a France torn by revolution, reeling from its Napoleonic defeat, with a government fearful of and repressive of dissent. It survived to witness the turbulent nineteenth and twentieth centuries of French history.

In the twentieth century, consciousness grew that non-Europeans were not enthusiastic about being administered by European Churches. The Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris ceased its traditional mission program in 1970. Two new initiatives were undertaken, beginning in 1971: DEFAP (Département Évangélique Français d’Action Apostolique, hereafter simply referred to as Défap); and, the Communauté évangélique d’action apostolique, now CÉVAA. DEFAP has evolved into Défap-Service Protestant de Mission. CÉVAA (now: Cévaa: Communauté des églises en mission) brings together the Protestant Churches of France, Italy, and francophone Switzerland with francophone (mostly) churches of Africa, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and South America. It includes a variety of denominations (Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists). The headquarters of this international organization is in Montpellier, France. It works to develop and implement partnerships in mission between the member churches. Défap, with headquarters in Paris, is the organization that coordinates the mission work of some of the Protestant churches of France, primarily within the framework of CÉVAA. The member churches are the Église Protestante Unie de France (EPUdF), the Union des Églises Protestantes d’Alsace et de Lorraine (UEPAL) and the Union Nationale des Églises Protestantes Réformées Évangéliques de France (UNEPREF). It works to encourage mission awareness and involvement in the French churches. It also supports the mission research center in Paris. All are members of the Fédération Protestant de France.
Historiographical Questions

Important to the history of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was its relationship with the Église Réformée de France as well as with the Lutheran Church in the Alsace. It was established as an independent institution and never accepted by the ascendant Liberal establishment of the churches; it was not under the juridical control by the churches and therefore it was resented, and besides it was related to the hated Methodists and to the Réveil (awakening, revival).

This separation led to the Mission being considered marginal in the history of French Protestantism. There are major exceptions to this generalization. The Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris has been the focus of two massive magisterial studies: that of Jean Bianquis, a three volume work that appeared between 1930 and 1935, and that of Jean-François Zorn (1993; 2nd ed. 2012). As well, the Encyclopédie du Protestantisme provides, thanks especially to Jean François Zorn, but also Jean Guiart, inter alia, accurate information with bibliography on French Protestant mission. The first two volumes of the work of Bianquis were limited to the first decade of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris; the third volume presented an analysis of the period 1831-1933. These gave a portrait of the history, policies, and practices of the mission. Both Zorn and Bianquis demonstrated that several religious and missiological influences were attendant to the founding of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris.

Apart from Bianquis and Zorn, the historiography of French Protestantism has not included the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris in the narrative except tangentially. Among the scholars who have noted its existence, but not devoted significant attention to it, are Guy de Felice (1861), Charles Bost (1925 and 1996) who did not connect it to the Réveil, Daniel Robert (1961), Emile Leonard (1964), René Blanc (1970), Alice Wemyss (1977), Jean Faure (1978) and Sébastien Fath (2005). Since the work of Alice Wemyss, there has been a move toward attributing more importance to the London Missionary Society and toward ignoring the roles of the Basel Mission, Pietists, and the Wesleyan Methodists in both the Francophone Réveil theological synthesis and in the development of the mission consciousness and institutions of the Église Réformée de France.

André Encrevé contributed an essay on the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris at a Colloquium on mission held at Lyon in 1980. In this important and useful essay he placed the phenomenon in the context of the nineteenth century, giving attention to its origins, the mission in Lesotho, and the issues posed by colonialism, closing with suggestions of the importance of the missionary enterprise for ecumenism. At the same event, Daniel Robert discussed the role of women, especially the Société Auxiliaire des Femmes in the early history of the Société des
The term Réveil is in many ways felicitous. Literally it means “awakening” or “revival.” In France it is considered to mean an essentially foreign revivalist perspective related to Pietism and Methodism. As such, it masks the nature and history of the French involvement in the international, interdenominational Pietist network active throughout Europe. It separates from the Réveil the earlier Pietist missionaries to France who came to support the beleaguered Huguenots, and it separates (for political reasons) the later Methodists.

Initial Contextual Issues

Protestants in France

The legal, cultural, and religious context in which French Protestants lived was quite different from that of other European Protestants. The French State had for centuries considered Protestants to be enemies, and cooperated with the Catholic Church to eradicate them. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, 18 October 1685, made Protestantism illegal in France. Clergy and laity were forced to convert or go into exile. Children could not be taught the Protestant faith. Parents of children not baptized Catholic were fined and the children removed from Protestant families, forcibly baptized and raised as Catholics. Protestant properties were confiscated. Persons who retained their Protestant faith were subjected to violence, sentenced to the galleys, or given life imprisonment. There was no tolerance in France for Protestant ideas or people.

Then came the Revolution. During the Revolution, Protestants were victims of the widespread anti-religious fervor but also gained significant rights. Napoleon, partly to express his anger with the Catholic Church, gave Protestants more freedom (1801-1802) and allowed Protestants to establish churches as well as a theological faculty at Montauban (predecessor of the present Institut Protestant de Théologie de Montpellier). The exhilaration of this freedom was short lived. French Protestants witnessed and participated in the destructive military campaigns of Napoleon, and with the rest of France experienced the devastating defeat and humiliation. After the defeat of Napoleon, the Protestants were victims of the...
“White Terror” as Catholics took out their anger on Protestants with selected ecclesiastically sanctioned acts of violence, including murders, rapes, burning of churches, and destruction of personal property. The very randomness of the terror accentuated its impact. Another wave of violent anti-Protestant activity in 1820 accompanied rumors and threats of another Catholic reign of terror in the south of France.17

In 1815 came the first steps of restoration of the monarchy. Louis XVIII struggled to pull the fragmented French nation together. The Catholic Church was recognized as the primary “religion of the state” (Article VI of the Concordat) but Protestants and Jews were to have freedom of worship (Article V). Finally in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, French Protestants perceived the opportunity of being integrated into French society, and of becoming contributors to the international development of Christianity. However, the government was none too secure in its authority and, fearing revolt, did not permit unsanctioned gatherings of more than twenty persons; a similar law during the revocation period had explicitly outlawed all private assembly for worship. The interpretations of and fears regarding the Penal Code had significant influence on French Protestant attitudes toward the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. It is also important to note that the anti-Protestant efforts continued throughout most of the nineteenth century and continued to shape Protestant identity.18

Religious Imports

Three competing currents of foreign Protestant Christianity gained ground in France after the defeat of Napoleon. None of these was absent from France earlier; it is merely that the comparative freedom of press and assembly gave each the possibility of more public expression and popular support. The first was “German Rationalism” which had long been central to German and Swiss (including at Geneva) Protestant theological scholarship. This stream of Protestant thought was adopted by many of the clergy in France and some of its proponents became the most hostile opponents of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris.19

The second religious import of importance was Wesleyan Methodism that had been reaching into France for some time. The British Wesleyan-Methodists became interested in Francophone mission through the reports of the preaching of John Fletcher (Jean Guillaume de la Fléchère) in the early 1770's20 and this intensified with the missionary programs developed by Thomas Coke who organized evangelistic efforts among French prisoners of war during the Napoleonic War.21 Methodism took on new roles in France under the leadership
of the Wesleyan Methodist missionary Charles Cook, first as a revival movement (with meeting places but no Eucharist) and then, with the establishment of regular worship services with sacraments, as a separate Protestant church.22

The other primary influence was what is understood as a Francophone combination of Pietism and Wesleyan Methodism, which took its distinctive form in Switzerland, France,23 Belgium24 and the Netherlands25 as the Réveil. Historians have argued that it is a synthesis of religious impulses transformed within the Francophone experience. The theological foci of the Réveil, with which Zinzendorf and Wesley could have agreed, were summarized by Daniel Robert:

1. The sinfulness and corruption of humans, who are unable to save themselves;
2. Redemption made available through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;
3. Sanctification of the convert made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit;
4. The scriptures are the inspired word of God;
5. Churches are assemblies of the faithful practicing believers.26

Protestant Mission across Europe outside France

Another contextual factor for the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was the development of Protestant mission organizations in the Protestant countries of Europe, primarily under the influence of Pietism and through the Pietist network. Most early Protestant mission work was done in support of expatriate colonialists and business persons, just as was most Catholic mission: for example the Danes in Greenland, India, and Ghana; the Swedes in Delaware and New Jersey; the British in North America, India, and Sweden; the Dutch in India, North America, and Indonesia. Mission agencies created in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries generally had colonial connections, but the goals were explicitly widened by the Pietist influence. The German, Swedish, and Danish Pietists, who were eager to send missionaries, sent missionaries to the British Empire, or to other places where they were protected by the British imperial interests, since the British had a large empire, the dominant military, significant funds to contribute to mission work, and insufficient eager missionaries of their own. Cabanel stated that the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was a latecomer to the ranks of mission organizations, but it was one of the earlier missions developed.
Catholic Missions in France

Important for the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was the presence of the culturally and politically powerful Catholic Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris, founded in 1658 at the behest of Louis XIV who wanted missionaries in French colonies that would be loyal to and supportive of French colonial interests. This linkage, modeled on the policies and practices of Spain and Portugal caused anxiety in the Papacy. The prospect of a third European power engaging in territorial conflicts using mission as a tool of influence coincided with the Pope’s effort to gain central control of mission. The compromise was that Louis XIV be considered the “protector,” not the director or patron of the Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris, which organized itself on the imperial business model, as William Carey would recommend for the British Baptists more than a century later.

Buffeted by the French Revolution and the loss of French colonies, the French Catholic mission sought ways to rejuvenate mission interest in France during the restoration of the monarchy (after 1815). The earlier efforts of the Pope to create distance between the mission and French international aspirations were only partially successful. Especially in the 19th century, when Catholic aristocracy controlled the French navy, persecution and/or martyrdoms of French Catholic missionaries became the pretext for French intervention in Viet Nam, China, and other areas. This symbiotic relationship between the colonial interests and the Catholic Church in France would have significant implications for the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Certainly French Protestants would have been aware of the Catholic promotion of mission in support of church and state. Interestingly enough, French Protestant historians seldom mention this well-funded, efficient, venerable cultural competition with its institutions, well-placed supporters, and governmentally sanctioned mission objectives. Certainly the name of the mission would suggest that the Protestants sought a certain cultural cachet and protection by eventually adopting a similar name.

Pre-1822 Mission Interest among Protestants in France: Evidence of Pietist Influences

The Pietist influence in France began long before the 1820s. Documenting or estimating the full extent of the influence is beyond the scope of this essay. However, some of that influence is seen in the relationships between the Basel Mission and people who became supporters of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Jean-Frédéric Oberlin of Ban-de-la-Roche was considered for the position as the first director of the Basel Mission. His congregation had regular prayer meetings and took up collections to support that Mission. The Archives du Christianisme, a Pietist/Réveil oriented periodical publication in Paris was initiated (1818) by Pastor
Henri-François Juillerat (sometimes, Juillerat-Chasseur), and from 1820 edited by Frédéric Monod who had his Pietist religious experience on a trip to visit Pietist mission projects in Denmark after long conversations with German Pietists on route. Archives du Christianisme devoted extensive space to reporting on mission and on revivalistic Christianity. Already in 1814, a doctor from St. Jean-du-Gard, the ancient Huguenot stronghold in the south of France, Dr. Rossignol attempted to study at the Basel Mission House, but could not deal with the German language. He returned home and was instrumental in the success of the Wesleyan Methodist missions in the Protestant heartland.32

Professor Pastor C.-G. Krafft, Director of the seminary at Strasbourg, noted that “for many years, we have had the pleasure of collecting, in the Alsace, offerings for the Institute of Missions established at Basel.”33 Jean-Daniel Kieffer, diplomat in the service of France (Swiss by birth), linguist, theologian, and translator, was one of the founders of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Translator of the Bible into Turkish, and a member of the Comité de la Société Biblique de Paris, he engaged in correspondence with Christian Gottlieb Blumhardt, director of the Basel Mission and later visited Basel. He became an important link between the Basel Mission and British mission interests, as well as between the Basel Mission and the developing French mission enthusiasm.34 Mission prayer groups throughout France and Switzerland also supported financially the Basel Mission. In France there were groups, in addition to the cities mentioned above, in Toulouse, Saverdun, Millau, Montpellier, and Nantes, inter alia.35 Expatriate French language congregations, including those in Basel, Copenhagen, Leiden, and Naples also contributed funds and prayers.

From these examples it is clear that the Basel Mission as part of the Pietist network was an important feature in the development of religious culture and institutions in France as it was in other countries. The Pietist networks that stretched from Stockholm, Herrnhut, and Basel to the Americas and Asia included France in their web!

Pietist Networks and the Founding of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris

The strength of the Pietist/Réveil/Methodist networks can also be seen in the lives of the founders of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Indeed the provocation for the organization of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was the visit of Christian Gottlieb Blumhardt on April 4, 1822, at the suggestion of Jean-Daniel Kieffer, to Paris where he was hosted at the home of an American business person, S. V. S. Wilder, in the same home where the Réveil in Paris first took form.36
Among those central to the early development of *Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris* already mentioned above were Frédéric Monod, Jean-Daniel Kieffer, and C.-G. Krafft. All of these had intense links to the Pietist/Réveil tradition. Other founders were also part of the Pietist/Réveil network.

Mark Wilks (1783-1855) was the son of a Methodist preacher turned Baptist farmer and nephew of Matthew Wilks, a founder of the London Missionary Society and the *Evangelical Review*. He was, according to the historian and theologian Jean Pédézert, the most anti-institutional of persons, and would submit to no authority, but was involved in the founding of several religious societies in Paris and served on the board of the London Missionary Society. He went to France at the time of the “White Terror” and reported on abuses of religious liberty to British periodicals. A Congregationalist, he became pastor of a small independent English language congregation that met in a room at the large Protestant Church in Paris, *L’Oratoire*. He was a passionate and effective supporter of the Réveil in Paris as well as of the evangelism center, soon a church, Taitbout, which was a major center of the Réveil in Paris. He hosted early meetings of the *Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris* in his rented space.

Philippe-Albert Stapfer (1766-1840) was a wealthy Swiss Reformed politician, diplomat, and theologian, son of a Swiss Reformed pastor, who moved to Paris in 1800 and remained there. As a result of his experience of religious intolerance in France, he became part of the Réveil, and a determined supporter of the *Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris*. His funeral sermons were preached by Frédéric Monod and Jean-Henri Grandpierre, second director of the *Maison des Missions* at Paris, both leaders of the French Réveil, and both with intense ties to German-Swiss Pietism and Réveil networks. Another indication of the international Pietist/Réveil network: the writings of P.-A. Stapfer were collected and edited with an introduction by Alexandre Vinet, the primary theologian of the Réveil and one of the intellectual architects of modern Switzerland.

Jean-Jacques Goepp (1771-1835), from the Alsace, studied theology at Strasbourg, and was ordained as a Lutheran pastor. From 1802-1808 he served as director of the seminary in Strasbourg. In 1808, he was called by his church to Paris where he was renowned for his work among the poor and orphans. Goepp was a devoted partisan of the Réveil.

Thomas-G. Dobrée was a French citizen, a Methodist convert originally from Guernsey who had become a wealthy ship-owner living in Nantes. A determined anti-slavery crusader, he sought to document and expose the continuing slave trade. He was treasurer of the Consistory at Nantes and with his colleagues there had planned to establish a French Protestant mission society with headquarters...
at Nantes, but they became enthusiastic and committed supporters of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris.\textsuperscript{42}

Jean Monod, père (1765-1836), father of Frédéric Monod, born to a French family in exile in Geneva, served as pastor of the French church in Copenhagen, where he married Louise de Coninck. He was not a partisan of the Réveil, but he supported his sons (blood is more important than theology!) and the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. His stature and participation, albeit less than enthusiastic, contributed both gravitas to the project and cultural/religious space.\textsuperscript{43}

Frédéric de Coninck (1779-1852) was both the brother-in-law and cousin by marriage of Jean Monod, père. He was, in contradistinction to Jean Monod, a determined proponent of the Réveil, and a contributing member of the Réveil-focused Taitbout Chapel. He and his son were generous supporters of the Paris Mission.\textsuperscript{44}

Charles-Henri VerHuell, Comte de Sevenaer (1764-1845), Vice Admiral of the French navy, and wealthy investor, was elected the first president of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris in 1822, a position he held until his death in 1845.\textsuperscript{45} After a colorful career as a military officer, during which he fathered two children out of wedlock, he converted to the Réveil understanding of Christian faith in 1819 at age 55. Frequently repeated were accusations that he had served his country as the young love slave of the renowned beauty, the Queen Hortense, and therefore was possibly the father of Napoleon III. These accusations have been demonstrated to be false by the Dutch historian Léo Turksma; which makes mission history all the less interesting!\textsuperscript{46} His colleague in the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, Jean-Henri Grandpierre, published a long tribute to VerHuell, which was sold to raise funds for the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris in the weeks after the Vice Admiral's death.\textsuperscript{47}

In addition to this core group, a large number of other Réveil-oriented haute-bourgeoisie Protestant business persons were prominent in their support of the Mission, including the Delessert family, the Vernes family, Henri Lutteroth, Louis Auguste de Staël, and his sister Albertine de Staël de Broglie, as well as the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries Charles Cook and Walter Croggan.\textsuperscript{48}

It is important to note that most of these persons, most of them quite wealthy, had been working together in the cause of church renewal, mostly in either the nascent French Réveil and/or in the international Pietist network, centered for their purposes at Basel and Geneva. Thus the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was founded by participants in Pietist/Réveil network, including Wesleyan Methodists. The Lutherans and Congregationalists involved were also part of...
the Pietist/Réveil network and sympathetic to and informed about both the Basel Mission and Wesleyan Methodist mission.\textsuperscript{49}

**Founding Directors: Antoine Jean-Louis Galland (1824-1826) and Jean-Henri Grandpierre (1826-1856)**

In the search for a director, the process began with a trip to Basel by the mercurial Mark Wilks. The first candidate was Jean-André Gachon who had been a supporter of the Basel Mission and was a participant in the Réveil. Gachon declined the appointment.\textsuperscript{50} A letter from Pastor Lissignol of Montpellier, another supporter of the Basel Mission and later of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, recommended Antoine Galland, Suffragant (Assistant) Pastor of the French church at Berne. Galland was part of the Réveil. After a period of correspondence and the complication of matters by the candidature of Pastor Krafft (see above), the Mission Committee offered the position to Galland who arrived in Paris in July 1824. He moved into the Maison des Missions on Rue Montparnasse. This appointment did not work out as hoped by either the Mission Committee or Galland. Bianquis observed that Galland was too timid to fulfill the public and teaching functions, and so he resigned in June and left Paris on September 27, 1824 without waiting for an eventual replacement.\textsuperscript{51}

Once again the Mission Committee turned toward the Pietist networks of Switzerland in their search for a director, despite concerns raised by non-Réveil pastors of the Église Réformée de France. The Liberal elements of the French church preferred a French national with fewer ties to the Réveil and to the Pietists, and who would be answerable to the Église Réformée de France. Francis Cunningham, European Agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society, delivered the message from Christian Gottlieb Blumhardt to the Mission Committee nominating Jean-Henri Grandpierre, Suffragant (Assistant) Pastor of the French church at Basel.\textsuperscript{52} Subsequent correspondence between Blumhardt and Frédéric Monod confirmed Blumhardt’s appreciation and respect for Grandpierre. Blumhardt was convinced there was no one better qualified to fulfill the job description for the directorship of the Maison des Missions.\textsuperscript{53} Blumhardt wrote:
depth of his scriptural and theological knowledge, the imminent and striking clarity of his writings, the ardor and, at the same time, the methodical clarity of his teaching, the facility with which he joins to a knowledge of ancient languages that of German and English; and, above all, his person and his gentle, lovable and conciliatory character, have much attracted me to this worthy friend, who is only 27 years old, and who, until now, by the grace of God, has been a distinguished blessing for our city.54

Not bad for a recommendation! No less enthusiastic was the letter of support written by Alexandre Vinet who spoke of Grandpierre’s abilities both as a writer and orator in the French language, and of the high quality of his preaching.55 C.-G. Krafft, who had his supporters for the position, wrote, “Take Grandpierre…; he is the man required.”56

After a period of negotiation Grandpierre was named director in December 1826. He took up residence in Paris on January 24, 1827 and set about re-establishing the Maison des Missions in Paris, which had been in “exile” in Lemé, kept alive after a fashion by the Réveil Pastor Antoine Colany (sometimes Colani) and his indefatigable wife (whose name I have not found) during the period when there was no director. An ex-officio member of the Mission Committee, Grandpierre became the perennial secretary. The minutes written in his elegant bold clear script are preserved in the archives in Paris at the DEFAP.

Grandpierre was well chosen. He was widely respected in the European Pietist/Réveil networks. He was personally acquainted with the leadership of the Mission House in Basel and understood how that institution functioned, educationally, ecclesiastically, and spiritually. He had a good education, having studied both at Neuchâtel and at Tübingen, a level of education denied to most Protestants of his age in anti-Protestant France. His linguistic skills allowed him to communicate fluidly with both the German and English mission interests. Because of the level of support from the Pietist/Réveil leaders in Switzerland, and the lack of viable alternatives, he negotiated with the Mission Committee from a position of strength and earned the respect of the group, and not a few concessions and promises of support, before he accepted the position.57

Crucially for our argument, Grandpierre was a deeply committed participant in the Réveil. He was early committed to evangelism and preaching as is revealed in a manuscript from his Neuchâtel education, *Exercise du S[ain]t Ministère* (DEFAP Ms. 9581), from 1818. His Réveil commitments are apparent in his published departure sermon delivered at the French church in Basel on December 24, 1826.58 In the 1826 sermon, he touched on most of the “verities” promoted
among the Pietists and by John Wesley and his Methodists. Its primary subject: sanctification, a total conformity to the will of God.

Grandpierre quickly established himself as a leader of the Réveil in Paris. Within a year he had transformed a private worship and prayer meeting into a vibrant evangelistic center, which evolved into the most famous Réveil church in France, Taitbout Chapel. He was instrumental in gaining government permission to hold Sunday evening revival services at the large Protestant Church, L’Oratoire, in Paris, the same church in which Mark Wilks used a room to preach to his small English language expatriate congregation. Grandpierre was the primary preacher at both venues, which attracted the elite of Parisian Protestantism.

Initially Grandpierre was not ordained in the Église Réformée de France, which both gave him independence and made him vulnerable to attack from critics of the mission enterprise. As a result of the continuous often vicious complaints regarding his ecclesiastical identity, an assistant, Jean Pédézert, was appointed (1836-1845). Pédézert was a French national, a graduate of the Mission House and a Réveil partisan of the Église Réformée de France. The two became life-long friends as well as colleagues in the causes of mission, revival, and religious journalism for the better part of three decades. He also was a founder of the Taitbout Chapel (see below) that became a major Réveil center in Paris after 1840. It is important to note that unlike his friend Alexandre Vinet or his colleague Frédéric Monod, Grandpierre was committed to a single French Protestant national church and was opposed to the separation of church and state.

Thus, the first two directors of the Maison des Missions were part of the Pietist/Réveil network. Both had close relationships with the leadership of the Basel Mission; both were known to leaders of the Réveil within France. Both continued to serve the cause of the Réveil while leaders of the Maison des Missions in Paris. Grandpierre especially was active throughout France and influential as a preacher, religious journalist, pastor, and eventually as a Parisian church official in addition to his roles as mission administrator, teacher, and mission theorist.

Early Structures

Organizations to promote Revival

As Alice Wemyss has ably demonstrated, by 1822 the Réveil network at Paris had been in the process of development for decades and active in a number of causes in addition to encouraging personal piety. A hallmark of the Pietist network in all European countries was its internationalist character. Pietists were willing, even eager, to reach across the political-linguistic divisions of the world to aid and abet the development of Christian life and help build the structures for
the expansion of the Christian tradition. The fact that the founders of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris were from a variety of countries is understandable in that context. One of the contributions of Pietism and of the Réveil was that it gave participants a larger vision of the world. The sciences of anthropology and cultural studies had not been invented yet, and so the cultural conflicts and misunderstandings within this network were often consequential, but the Pietist/ Réveil network seems to have been more effective and longer lasting than most internationalist projects before or since. While it took advantage of the cultural space created by the colonial structures, the networks were established for altruistic purposes although they eventually came to develop symbiotic relationships with the European states and their colonial interests.

The Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris was not the first or the last organization created by the Pietists/Réveilists in Paris. In 1818, the Société Biblique Protestant was organized and the Archives du Christianisme was founded. This was founded partially to preempt the less than culturally sensitive Société Continentale (Haldane and Drummond) that related confrontationally with Catholics, anti-religious interests, and Protestants holding different perspectives. They did so under the perceived protection of the British government, being free to leave France when necessary. The French Protestants had no such guarantees or mobility, protection, or exit. Through the efforts of the Réveil adherents in Paris, the Société Biblique Protestant was recognized as the official liaison with the British (and therefore American) and Foreign Bible Society. In 1824, a women’s branch of the Bible Society was established.

In 1821, two societies were founded: the Société de Morale Chrétien and the Société des Traité Religieux. The Société de Morale Chrétien was inspired by the Quakers and organized in the home of the American businessperson S. V. S. Wilder. Its goal was to convene persons of different perspectives to discuss pressing contemporary problems. Staël, Kieffer, and Wilks, all mentioned above, were among its participants as it worked to develop activism against slavery and create interest in prison reform. Wilks was elected secretary.

The Société des Traité Religieux was organized by the indefatigable S. V. S. Wilder and Frédéric Monod with the close cooperation of Henri Lutteroth (1802-1899). This organization produced an enormous amount of literature. In 1849, it was estimated that 11,800,000 tracts had been published and distributed. This was no mean feat given the low literacy levels in France during this period, and probably contributed significantly to the development of Protestant literacy. The most popular publication was an annual “almanac” with Bible readings provided for each day.
The cooperation required to create and sustain these instruments of revival strengthened the network of Pietist/Réveil believers in Paris and facilitated the foundation of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. Behind all of the organizations were the organizational gifts of the diverse group of businesspersons, especially Wilder, the support of Wilks and the spirituality and moral persuasion of the Pietists and Methodists.

Understanding of Mission
Mission was an assumed value in the Pietist tradition. For this reason there was no extensive discussion of the nature, tasks or goals of mission. Already in 1822, the project as lived in Copenhagen, Berlin, Basel, and London, having taken their cues from centuries of “modern” Catholic mission, was defined. There was a consensus that special training was required, but the nature of that special training was disputed between the British (who wanted missionaries educated in the tradition of University graduates) and the Basel Mission which was as concerned about the interior life as the scholastic achievements of the candidates.

For the partisans of the Réveil there was minimal difference between the pagans of Paris and the pagans of Africa! Grandpierre, in his interview with the Mission Committee, affirmed his excitement about the possibility of preparing preachers to preach to the pagans outside of Europe; he considered himself qualified, as did the Mission Committee, to undertake this instruction since he had carefully studied and practiced preaching and evangelism. In his farewell sermon at Basel, he did not distinguish contexts for preaching: “we have preached the truth, which alone can save your souls.” He discussed sanctification insisting on the interior transformation that results in a style of life consistent with one’s faith commitments: “This is why we have taught, fourthly, that [God] makes a great change, a complete change in the inclinations, the will and the habits of the converted soul, which is daily by the grace of the Holy Spirit rehabilitated in that state of justice and innocence in which it was first created.” Christianity was not conceived as a nominal commitment but a life changing total commitment to the divine program for the regenerated human. This was the goal of Christian faith wherever found; mission was not to be limited to conversion but should lead the believer into sanctification. In the period of colonialism and race-based cultural distinctions, this would eventually merge with the “civilizing” theme.

The understanding of mission within the Réveil, as within Pietism, was more than foreign mission although it included that. Therefore the myriad organizations, often directed by the same persons, but aimed at different issues,
were considered logical and the needs compelling. Throughout the period 1820-1870 numerous Réveil-oriented organizations were created.

**Periodical Publications for Réveil and Mission**

Religious and mission periodicals were the lifeblood of Pietism and the Réveil. In France, *Archives du christianisme* (1818), with the appointment of Frédéric Monod as editor (1824), became de facto a Réveil periodical. From early 1820, each fascicle contained an insert dedicated to news of missionaries around the world, which was designed to be read in prayer meetings throughout France. These texts introduced French Protestants to a wide variety of mission work and agencies in their own language. It inspired local committees to support the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris financially and, on occasion, and not always with good results, the groups sought to send students to Paris to study and become missionaries. It is that enthusiasm for sending students that the Mission Committee struggled to control by putting recruitment firmly in the hands of the Mission Committee.

From 1823, *Les Archives du Christianisme au XIXème siècle* included an insert entitled *Bulletin des Missions* that included news of mission. This was succeeded, in 1826, by the *Journal des missions évangéliques*. It was the French parallel to the journals of the London Missionary Society (1813: *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*), the Basel Mission (1816: *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften*) and the later Swedish Missionary Society periodical, *Missions-Tidningen* (1834). These journals shared the same goals: education of the laity and clergy about mission, reinforcing support networks, and developing enthusiasm for the mission project and for mission service. Other periodicals would follow. However, these, along with *Le Semeur* (1831) edited by Frédéric Monod and *L'Espérance* (1839) edited by Pédézert and then Grandpierre, were the primary supporting periodicals of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. There were other periodicals that continuously published the work of the anti-Réveil, anti-Methodist, and anti-mission writers, especially *La Revue Protestante* (1820) and its successor *Le Lien* (1840).

**Auxiliaries for Prayer and Funding Support**

After the founding of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, the provincial mission interest, prayer, and support groups inspired by the Basel Mission quickly established links and/or allegiances to the new mission organization in Paris. This was assisted by the periodicals. Steady, albeit not always ample funds, flowed to Paris. The development of the support network was almost instantaneous, just as it was a decade later for the Swedish Missionary Society.66 The Pietist/Réveil/base
of support for mission and for this religious perspective was strong and national in scope. The most important of these was the Women’s Auxiliary.

The Maison des Missions

The Maison des Missions, the name a literal translation of its Basel Mission House model, was organized like the Basel Mission. There was a director who had charge of all matters related to faith, personal habits, spiritual life, and education of the students as well as the daily management of the building. The educational program, proposed by Frédéric Monod in early 1826, and modified by Grandpierre to take into account the educational level of the students, followed the pattern of the Basel Mission educational program developed by Blumhardt.

Like the Basel Mission Training Institute, the Maison des Missions put a great emphasis on the interior life of the students. It was believed that only those who were truly converted (justification) and fully devoted to God (sanctification) could serve effectively to convert others and to lead them into a life of devotion to God. Daily worship, in the Pietist/Réveil tradition was the central part of the life of the Maison des Missions. As at Basel, the students were to look after each other, assist each other in their spirituality and to bring deficiencies or recurring problems to the attention of the Director and/or the Mission Committee. Bianquis indicated that the program for the development of the spiritual life at the Maison des Missions was modeled on the Basel Mission.

Taitbout Chapel

The Taitbout Chapel began as a Réveil service in the home of the wealthy businessman, Henri Lutteroth, a person of Huguenot descent whose family had made a fortune in Hamburg. After business training he moved to Paris and married a Catholic woman who supported his Réveil projects, which included assistance to Frédéric Monod on Archives du Christianisme au XIXème siècle. They started weekly Thursday meetings devoted to prayer, Bible Study, and evangelism in their home. When Jean-Henri Grandpierre moved to Paris to direct the Maison des Missions of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris he eventually moved into a house on the Rue Joubet, within a few meters of the home of Lutteroth on Rue Caumartin, which was two streets away from Rue Taitbout. He merged a service that he started at the Maison des Missions with the Lutteroth service, moved it to Sunday, and became the primary preacher. By 1840, the meeting at the Lutteroth home had outgrown the home.

The Taitbout Chapel was obtained as an evangelistic center, not initially as a church. Once again, it was organized by Réveil laypersons outside the control of
the Église Réformée de France. The goal was evangelism as well as support of the elite Réveil bourgeoisie who packed the 200-seat auditorium. Taitbout Chapel became a focal point of the Réveil in France. One regular visitor from Nantes, a businessman, wrote of Grandpierre’s ministry, that his sermons were “very good, with clarity and warmth. I was not as much satisfied with his prayers.”70 Grandpierre continued to be a primary force at the chapel until early 1843 when, under the influence of Frédéric Monod, inspired by Alexandre Vinet, it was decided to organize the Chapel as a non-state supported church, free also from the Église Réformée de France. At that time, Grandpierre, out of loyalty to the Église Réformée de France, withdrew. Thereafter the connections between the Taitbout Chapel and the Maison des Missions of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris became less intense.71 In 1844 he became pastor at the newly created church of Batignolles-Monceau, just outside the wall of Paris, in a working-class neighborhood. This church became the primary center for the Réveil in France.

These connections between the Réveil adherents and the Maison des Missions of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, and with the Basel Mission as a model, demonstrate the importance of Pietism and specifically of the Pietist Basel Mission for the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris.

**Early Responses to the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris**

The reactions to the founding of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris were diverse. The mission agencies in Basel were supportive (although probably disappointed to lose the bulk of the support of the French Pietists/Réveil), the London Missionary Society was supportive but cautious (having had complicated relationships with the Basel Mission) and the Wesleyan-Methodists were supportive but primarily interested in evangelization/revival within France. In all instances, relations were complicated by the unstable political situation within France and with its neighbors. The beleaguered French government chose to “look the other way” and ignore the violations of laws imposing limitations on meetings of more than twenty persons.

It was in the Église Réformée de France that the only significant opposition arose. That opposition had complicated roots. It was German influenced rationalists, the self-denominated Liberals, who were violently opposed both to the Réveil and most institutions spawned by the Réveil. They were anti-conversionist and dedicated to the forms and structures; such as they were, of the Église Réformée de France (which was attempting to develop into a national church) outside the Alsace. There was also the issue of fear: that the Réveil partisans and their missionaries would bring the
wrath of the State and of the Catholic Church down on the Protestants, which was not an unreasonable fear.72

The mode of the Liberals was to attack on several fronts, and it is this constellation of issues that is important for our argument. First, there were the attacks against the Methodists; then there were attacks on the foreign Pietist related leadership, and then on the church structures in cities where churches were sympathetic to the Réveil and supportive of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris. The attacks were vicious, dissimulating, and often anonymous or pseudonymous. There is extensive and generally unexplored anti-Methodist and anti-Réveil literature from the 1820’s until the Methodists were merged with the Église Réformée de France (1938). The attacks were led by the Coquerel family, who over generations continued their project. The strategy was to separate the Methodists from the Réveil and make it politically difficult for the two groups to make common cause or support each other. The attacks began with articles criticizing the organizational meetings published in Revue Protestante. They continued, for example, with the pseudonymous Lettres méthodistes published in 1833, which linked Mary Fletcher, Edward Irving, the Methodists in France, and the revival services in Paris churches with the Jesuits!73

Conclusion

The evidence presented here demonstrates that the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris grew out of the global Pietist network and participated in that network. It further demonstrates that the beginnings of the Réveil in Paris had deep roots in that same Pietist network, which included the Wesleyan Methodists. The birth of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris engaged participants from France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, England, and the USA. These persons shared a common faith commitment that transcended the imperial struggles of the earlier decades. While historians of Pietism may question whether Pietism had a French presence, or whether the Réveil is part of Pietism, it is clear that the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris had connections to Wurttemberg Pietism through the Basel Mission, and through the experiences of Jean-Henri Grandpierre at Tübingen. The earliest missionaries were sent out in cooperation with the London Missionary Society, which had already firmly planted itself in the global Pietist network.

The stories of the early participants in the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris suggest other elements of that Pietist network. The economic impact of numerous foreign bourgeois Pietist businesspersons working alongside Huguenot businesspersons returning to Paris from the diaspora is an important factor. With political power because of their money and intellectual achievements, they were the foundation of the ecumenical international structures of the Pietism expressed
in the Réveil as it developed in Paris. This also had implications for the legal status of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris as well as for the Église Réformée de France (including separatist elements) in France. Réveil Protestants had economic power and a shared theological vision, nurtured especially by Grandpierre, to devote themselves to the expansion of their faith in France and beyond, through the development of voluntary organizations independent of the Reformed and Lutheran (Alsatian) churches.

This in turn had an impact on ecclesiology. The Pietist empowerment of the laity manifested itself in this context. Many of the Réveil Protestant bourgeoisie were more highly theologically educated than the clergy and expected to play strong roles in organizations they supported. The struggle to bring the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris under the control of the Église Réformée de France is best understood as a struggle to assert clerical control over all Protestant ministries in France by the Liberals.

The global Pietist network had always understood itself as reforming as well as evangelistic and engaged in foreign mission. This was the case in Paris at the beginning of the 19th century. Thus it led to the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris and its related ministries.

End Notes:

1 Pietism is a contested term. See the helpful summary of the issues by Jonathan Strom, “Problems and Promise of Pietism Research,” *Church History* 71 (2002), 536-554.

2 “Circulaire,” in Jean Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, 1822-1829* (Paris: Société des Missions Évangéliques, 1930), I, 47-48. Note that the initial name circulated was designed to placate both Protestant and Catholic critics who feared that the Paris Mission would exacerbate tensions with Catholics by evangelizing in France.


4 “Action Apostolique” was used as a euphemism for “mission,” which was judged a word damaged by its associations with the colonialist enterprise. From the mid-1990s, the term “mission” was reappropriated.


6 “Liberal” was used by this party to designate itself. The first Liberal book length manifesto was the pseudonymous work: Ludwig Baucrn, *Lettres*
méthodistes (Paris, Genève: Ab. Cherbuliez, Librairie, 1833). This was written by the anti-revivalist, anti-Methodist brothers, Charles and Athanase Coquerel.


15 Frédéric Fabre, Protestantisme et colonisation: l'évolution du discours de la mission protestante française au XXe siècle (Homes et Sociétés; Paris: Karthala, 2011).


19 For example the Coquerel family, who produced the Lettres méthodistes and then engaged in a multi-generational propaganda war against the Réveil, evangelism and mission, primarily through their periodicals.

20 On Fletcher and his work in France and Switzerland, see Patrick Philippe Streiff, Jean Guillaume de la Fléchère, John William Fletcher 1729-1785. Ein beitrag zur Geschichte des Methodismus (Basler und Berner Studien zur historischen und systematischen Theologie, 51; Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York: Peter Lang, 1984), Albert de Montet, “Jean Guillaume de la Flèche,” Dictionnaire biographique des Genevois et des Vanois (Lausanne: Imprimerie Georges Bidel, 1878), II, 22-23. See also the autobiographical letter of Fletcher to John Wesley, 24 Nov. 1756, in Melvill Horne, ed. Posthumous Pieces of the Reverend John William de la Flechere (Philadelphia: Printed by Parry Hall, No. 149 Chesnut Street and Sold by John Dickens, No. 182, Race Street, near Sixth Street, 1793), 61-63. For a discussion of one of Fletcher’s audience, see Philippe Godet, “Un étudiant neuchatelois il y a cent ans: Henri-David Chaillot,” Bibliothèque universelle et revue suisse 45 (1890), 91-117.


27 Patrick Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants en France* (2012), 969: “une institution tardive et modeste.” More surprising, Cabanel attributes the lack of French Protestant scholars and educational institutions in the early 19th to the influence of the Réveil. This attribution has no connection to the rest of the volume that describes in some detail the Catholic/Government repression of Protestants that continued through most of the 19th century. This says more about current academic prejudice against Pietism, Methodism and the Réveil than it says about the values of the Réveil.


42 J. Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris* (1930), I, 8 (includes an extract from Dobrée’s address to the initial planning meeting of the *Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris*); Jean-François Zorn, *Le Grand siècle d’une mission protestante* (2012), 558.


45 [Jean-Henri Grandpierre], “Ce que l’amiral Ver Huell a été pour la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris,” *Journal des missions évangéliques* 20 (1845), 441-452. Note that his name is formatted differently in various primary and secondary sources.


54 Cited in Jean Bianquis, *Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris* (1930), II, 128. “Je ne connaissais aucun serviteur de Christ qui, à tout égard, me sembloit aussi parfaitement fait, organisé et préparé pour la Direction d’un séminaire évangélique que notre très digne et bien-aimé frère M. Grandpierre, suffragant de notre Église française depuis deux années. Ses sentiments et sa vie profondément chrétienne, son zèle éclairé et ardent pour Christ et pour le salut des hommes, ses vues larges et non exclusivistes, la supériorité de ses talents, son éducation classique, la profondeur de ses connaissances scripturaires et théologiques,
la clarté éminente et frappante de toutes ses compositions, l’ardeur et, en même
temps, la tendance strictement méthodique de ses instructions, la facilité avec
laquelle il joignait à la connaissance des langues anciennes celle de la langue allemande
et anglaise, et, avant tout, sa personne et son caractère digne, doux, aimable, et
conciliant, m’ont beaucoup attaché à ce digne ami, qui n’a que l’âge de 27 ans, et qui,
jusqu’ici, par la grâce de Dieu, a été une bénéédiction distinguée pour notre ville.”

55 Jean Bianquis, Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris
(1930), II, 129-130 (along with a photograph of the first page of the letter, between
pages 128 and 129).

56 Cited in Jean Bianquis, Les origines de la Société des Missions Évangéliques de
Paris (1930), II, 136 : “Prennez donc Grandpierre… ; c’est l’homme qu’il faut.”

57 The negotiations are not discussed by Bianquis, but the discussions and
letters are preserved in the minutes of the Mission Committee at the Archives of
the DEFAP, Paris.

DEFAP, 9581; J. H. Grandpierre, Sermon d’adieu, prononcé dans l’Église française de Basle 
le 24 décembre 1826 (Basle: Librairie Schweighauser, 1827).

misions évangéliques 80 (1905), 91-94 ; J. Pédézert, Cinquante ans de souvenirs religieux 
et ecclésiastiques 1830-1880 (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1896); idem, Souvenirs et 
études (Paris: L. Grassart, 1888); Jean Bianquis, Les origines de la Société des Missions 
Évangéliques de Paris (1930), I, 15, 37; II, 140; III, 216; André Encrevé, “Pédézert,
Jean,” Les Protestants, 378-380; Jean-François Zorn, Le Grand siècle d’une mission 
protestante (2012), 570, et passim.


62 André Encrevé, Protestants Francais au milieu du XIX siècle (1986), 
152; Alice Wemyss, Histoire du Réveil, 1790-1849 (1977), 136-137 et passim.

DEFAP, 9581; J. H. Grandpierre, Sermon d’adieu, prononcé dans l’Église française de Basle 
le 24 décembre 1826 (Basle: Librairie Schweighauser, 1827).

64 J. H. Grandpierre, Sermon d’adieu (1827), 7: “Nous avons prêché la vérité 
qui seule pouvoit sauver vos ames.”

pourquoi nous vous avons enseigné en quatrième lieu, qu’il se fait un très grand 
chéangement, un changement complet dans les inclinations, dans les volontés et dans 
toutes les habitudes de l’âme convertie, qui est journellement par la grâce de l’Esprit 
saint réhabilitée dans cet état de justice et d’innocence, dans lequel elle avait été 
primitivement créée.”

66 See, David Bundy, Visions of apostolic mission, 41-43.


71 Edmond de Pressensé, *et alia*, *Une Église séparée de l’État*.
