Theological education of nineteenth-century French Missionaries: an appropriation of the Catholicity of Classical Christian Theology

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Abstract

The limited research on the theological education of nineteenth-century Christian missionaries, including those of the Société des Missions Evangéliques chez les peuples non-chrétiens à Paris (hereafter PEMS), is of particular interest considering the surviving, significant manuscript collections related to the missionaries – their training and teaching in Paris, France and Morija, Lesotho. This article presents the theological trajectories and historical-theological context of the PEMS missionaries together with an in-depth analysis of a recently discovered notebook of Adolphe Mabille (1836–1894); and concludes with preliminary observations of the theological education of these missionaries.

Introduction

The contribution of nineteenth-century Christian missionaries to the enterprise of education around the world is of continuing scholarly inquiry. Despite this interest, the inquiry into the theological education of these missionaries remains a subject for further examination considering the historical background of the theological education of missionaries and the rise of nineteenth-century missionary societies. The limited research on the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society founded in 1822 Société des Missions Evangéliques chez les peuples non-chrétiens à Paris (PEMS) is, therefore, of particular interest considering the surviving, significant manuscript collections related to the missionaries – their training and teaching in Paris, France and Morija, Lesotho. Therefore, the introduction of this article contains a brief survey of the theological education of missionaries since the sixteenth-century Reformation. The introduction is followed by a historical-theological context of the first and second generation of PEMS missionaries and a critical in-depth analysis of a recently discovered notebook which belonged to a second generation missionary. The article concludes with a discussion on preliminary observations regarding the theological education of these missionaries.

Theological education of missionaries: a brief survey

Commencing with the era of the sixteenth-century Reformation, members of the Society of Jesus, including the Jesuit missionaries, established schools and universities from Canada (New France) to China. The Spiritual

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3 This interest is further heightened by the digitalization project of the Morija Archives, Morija, Lesotho, http://www.morija.co.ls/archives/ (accessed August 14, 2013).
4 Noah Porter, The educational systems of the Puritans and Jesuits compared. A premium essay, written for “The Society for the promotion of collegiate and theological education at the West” (New York, M. W. Dodd, 1851); Francis Parkman, The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century (1867); J.H. Kennedy. Jesuit and Savage in New France (New Haven: Yale University Press,
exercises of Loyola (1548) and Plan of studies (1598) were enormous and formative to the Jesuit’s theological training. The Plan accentuated the study of classical languages, in addition to the teaching of matters of faith and theology, classical literature, poetry, and philosophy – in sum, a codification of the curriculum devised by Renaissance humanists. The theological education of these missionaries was, furthermore, aligned with the theology as decreed by the Council of Trent (1545-63) expounded by the Roman Catechism (1566) and advanced by the Sacred congregation for the propagation of the faith (Sacra Congregatio de propaganda fide, 1622) and Society of Foreign Missions of Paris (Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris, 1658-63). The Protestant schola publica at Geneva (1559), on the other hand, was a form of Reformed higher education primarily for the training of pastors – among which were ‘missionaries’ to be sent to France and other countries in Europe, which resulted in the founding of the University of Leiden (1575), for example. Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), however, following the Roman Catholic tradition, proposed the establishment of a Protestant College for the Propagation of Faith (Collegia propagandae fidei) for the training of missionaries – a proposal that came to fruition by Antonius Walaeus (1573-1639), the founder and sole rector of the Seminarium Indicum (1622-1632) at Leiden University. The university seminary played a pivotal part in training clergymen who were sent to the trade areas of the seventeenth-century Dutch East India Company. The theological education, conform to the Synopsis of Purer Theology (Synopsis Purioris Theologiae, 1625) – a first Reformed systematic theology, and co-authored by Walaeus. However, no indigenous students from the trade areas from Batavia to Brasil were trained – a neglect that was partially attended to in the early eighteenth century, in that theological education was provided to the Ghanese, Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein (1717-47) at Leiden University. The theological curriculum reflected the teachings of Johann van den Honert (1693-1758), a representative of Reformed orthodoxy of the time, but followed Johannes Cocceius’ (1603-1669) main work that expounded the doctrine of the history of redemption or covenants. Important to Cocceius’ federal theology is the teaching of progressive revelation of the accomplishment of salvation in history which varied from other Reformed theologians of the time showing more interest in systematic theology and the application of redemption to sinners.

The training of the Post-reformation missionaries, – Roman Catholic and Protestant had a shared common interest: a classical Christian theological curriculum in a university setting. This model of theological education for European missionaries also resonated in seventeenth and eighteenth-century New England affirmed by the training of missionaries, such as, John Eliot (1604–90) at Harvard College, David Brainerd’s study (1717-47) at Yale College and that of Jonathan Edwards (1703–58). Both colleges at the time attested to a theological curriculum shaped by Post-reformation Reformed theology, in particular – a Protestant scholastic theology praised by Edwards, a missionary himself, in that he studied the works of Francis Turretin (1623–1687) and Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706).

Although the theological training of Jesuit missionaries remained fairly consistent from the Council of Trent deep into the nineteenth-century with teaching curricula approved by the church, the rise of Protestant missionary societies in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century shows a bifurcation of...
theological education of missionaries. On the one hand, a continuation could be discerned of university-educated missionaries instilled by a theological curriculum of the German Pietist and scholar, August Hermann Francke (1663–1727) appropriated by the Danish-Halle Mission (1706), the Basel Mission School (Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft Basel, 1815), and the Berlin Missionary Society (Berliner Missionsgesellschaft or Gesellschaft zur Beförderung der evangelischen Missionen unter den Heiden, 1824) – a successor organisation to the missionary training effort of pastor, revivalist, and mission educator, Johann Jäncke (1748-1827) who had prepared missionaries for work with other missionary societies including the London Missionary Society since 1800. On the other hand, Moravian missionaries, for example, were primarily trained outside the university context and followed the guidelines of August Gottlieb Spangenberg (1704-1792) Instruction for brothers and sisters who serve the Gospel among the heathen (1784). The scholarly need remains, however, to examine the content and course of theological education of the Protestant missionaries of the early nineteenth century. The demanding task of detailed archival work – though increasingly more accessible as a result of digitalisation of archival material – shows promise however. The archives of the Berliner Missionary Society, for example, contains lecture plans and an unpublished manuscript, Christian Dogmatics (“Dogmatik christliche von Inspector Wallmann, 1864”) of Johann Christian Wallmann (1811-1865), who was the Inspector of the Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft in Barmen from 1848 to 1857. The Morija Archives in Lesotho, to mention another example, also contains a didactic work – a notebook of the French Protestant missionary, Adolphe Mabille (1836-1894). The Morija Archives are indisputably important to the country, culture and church of Lesotho, and indispensable for the history of modern missions – confirmed by publications of David Ambrose, Tim Couzens, V. Ellenberger, S.J. Gill, R.C. Germond, J.M. Mohapeloa, Thomas Mofolo, E.W. Smith and Nabanyane SK. Tseuoa. The significance of the recently found manuscript of Mabille, dated 1856 is the arranged presentation of theology that differs from the Dogmatik of Wallmann’s, who discussed the topics of theology, anthropology, soteriology, and eschatology. The confessional Lutheran character of this work is evident in the chapter on the doctrine of salvation treating Christology, On Grace, Use of the Means of Grace, and the Ordo Salutis (Heilordnung). Mabille’s manuscript contains a footnote, “See president Edwards: [Who] we [will] follow almost entirely in this study,” which may provide insight into the theological training at PEMS Mission House directed by Eugène Casalis’ (1812-1891), and is the focus of this study in particular, though only a few PEMS admission requirements are known, such as the knowledge of Latin and Greek.


16 Dogmatik christliche von Inspector Wallmann, 1864. A. Theologie, 4-66; B. Anthropologie, 66-103; C. Soteriologie, 104-458 (I. Christologie, 104-177; II. Gnaden, 177-211; III. Von den Gnadenmitteln, 212-379; IV. Von gebrauch der Gnadenmitteln oder der Heilordnung, 420-457; D. Eschatologie 458-536. For difference with Mabille’s presentation of theology see this article: Mabille’s notebook: structure, sources and content Adolphe Mabille, Dogmatique [1856] (Morija: Morija Archives and Museum, 2010), 147, Voyez le président Edwards: Nous le suivons presque entièrement dans cette recherche.” The curator Mr. Stephen Gill and staff of the Morija Archives and Museum are gratefully acknowledged for their assistance during our research visits in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The Morija Printing Works, Morija, Lesotho is acknowledged for making a copy of Mabille’s notebook.


Mabile’s presentation of this theology with reference to the eighteenth-century New England preacher, theologian, philosopher, revivalist, missionary to the Housatonic Indians and college president, Edwards, however, problem and prospect. With regard to the former, the question arises about the relationship, if any, between the theology of the nineteenth-century French missionaries and that of eighteenth-century Edwards. Hence, a critical, in-depth evaluation of the notebook in its historical-theological context and the analysis of the structure, sources and content may offer a window into the education of the French missionaries.

Mabile’s notebook: the immediate historical-theological context

On November 1 1856 Casalis – the newly appointed principal of the Mission House of the PEMS, and former missionary of Basutoland, met five students in a lecture room of a residence on Rue Franklin at Passy. Three of the five students were Swiss: Mabille, Oscar Rau, and David Frédéric Ellenberger (1835–1919) and the other two were French: François Coillard (1834–1904) and the director’s son and medical student Eugène Casalis Junior. A couple of months later the director reported to the board of the PEMS that the students had been trained in classical studies, biblical exegesis, dogmatics (“dogmatique”) and church history relevant to the mission field, which reminded the board members of the work of other missionaries among which were Edwards.. The comprehensive approach to theological studies at the PEMS is unmistakably reflected in Mabile’s quarto-size notebook of 592-pages containing systematically arranged handwritten reflections of theology. The manuscript originated from a major historical-theological intersection of early nineteenth-century protestant theology in France: an interchange shaped by church, mission, theological education and systematic theology. A succinct and integral assessment of this multifaceted position from the perspective of students and teacher: Coillard and Casalis may suffice to place Mabile’s notebook within its time.

Coillard, on the one hand, was of Huguenot decent and attended the Protestant school at Asnières-les-Bourges, a city where John Calvin (1509-1564) had once taught law – and had studied at the Preparatory School of Theology (L’École préparatoire de théologie) at Paris (Batignolles) since 1854. The school which opened in 1852 was one of the two preparatory schools of theology for students to be admitted to a French state faculty of theology, including the evangelical-oriented college at Montauban. The school was directed by the Genevan pastor, Louis Boissoynnas (1820-1885), who was known for his aversion to theological newness and advocated orthodox Reformed theology joined with piety. Concerning the former, the rise of Protestant liberalism and the era of Romanticism – emphasising ethics over doctrine and experience over Scriptural authority, embracing and encouraging the higher biblical criticism of the modern Biblical scholarship of Friederich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) onwards affected theological education in France. At the same time, however, a revival of evangelical religion among the Protestants of southern France and French-speaking Switzerland promoted an experiential faith and personal piety. This revival became known as Le Réveil – a Protestant church renewal movement throughout Switzerland, France and the Netherlands. The movement was rooted in the Society of Friends (Société des Amis, 1810) at Geneva and was led by the local pastor; evangelical hymn writer and convinced Calvinist, César Malan (1787-1864). The Société was, among others, attended by Jean-Henri Merle D’Aubigne (1794 –1872), the later historian of the Protestant Reformation, and Louis Gaussen (1790-1863), the author of La Théopneustie, ou pleine inspiration des saintes écritures – an elaborate book on the inspiration of the Scripture. These works, contra the liberal Protestantism of the day, may represent two of the three interests of the Réveil – Scripture and (salvation) history. The third aspect of the movement, spiritual experience, was embodied in two other attendees, the brothers Adolphe Monod (1802–1856) and Frédéric Monod (1794-1863) – both of them became important experiential preachers in the French Reformed church. The attendees of the Société, were also strongly influenced by Robert Haldane (1764–1842) who lectured from 1816 to 1818 at Geneva and Montauban on Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans. Haldane was an exponent of the Scottish awakenings of the 1790s partially prompted when John Erskine (1720-1803) re-published in 1784. Edwards’s Humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God’s people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom (1747) to promote revival prayer. Erskine was the Scottish disseminator par excellence of the works of Edwards with whom he maintained a trans-Atlantic epistolary exchange for nearly ten years, and continued his interest in his American friend by posthumously publishing various sermons and treatises. Haldane, was familiar with Edwards, as shown in his published

missionaries, though mentioned by E.W. Smith. The Mabilles of Basutoland (Hodder and Stoughton 1939), 78, “A rather elaborate course of studies, to the extend over three years, had been planned.”

19 The street annexed four years later into the sixteenth arrondissement at Paris, and the area is known in early American history as the residential place of Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) during the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783).


21 The other school was Pension Lavondès at Nîmes favoring more liberal theology.

lectures at the Société. The Scottish evangelical revival was, furthermore, the impetus to world mission and led to the establishment of the missionary societies mentioned above, including the founding of the PEMS in England. Coillard whose intellectual and spiritual formation was indebted to both Protestant orthodoxy and revival piety attended a classroom of like-minded people at the PEMS Mission House.

Casalis, on the other hand, must have been appreciative of these revival developments on his return to Paris in 1854. Having been prepared for the ministry by the French Reformed revivalist Henri Pyt (1796-1835), who had not only introduced him to the revival hymns of Malan but more importantly trained him in classical and “dogmatic studies” including “various authors … with very heavy Latin, closely printed on paper yellowed by time”, as he recounted later. Furthermore, he recalled resentment of the philosophy of the eighteenth-century, and continued his interest in theology almost exclusively during his 1830-1832 studies at the Mission House under direction of Mr. Grandpierre. Although he was acquainted with the Catechism (Catechisme ou instruction dans la religion chrétienne, 1702) of the enlightened orthodox, Jean-Frédéric Ostervald (1663-1747), his interest in the Latin tones of theology was part of the intellectual endeavours of the French evangelicals at the time; a manuscript of the library catalogue of the Protestant faculty of Montauban provides insight into these endeavours. The library mainly consisted of works pertaining to biblical exegesis, church history, patristic, medieval and early modern theology, homilies, and also included works of Augustine, the Roman Catholic polemist Robert Bellarmin (1542-1621), Cocceius, and the Institutio Theologiae Elencitiae of Francis Turretin (1623-1687) and Theologia Christiana of Bénédict Picquet (1655–1724) whose works show the architecture of Post-reformation Reformed intellectual thought that included six loci of theology: theology proper (doctrine of God), anthropology, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology and eschatology. Last but not least, the library contained the works of Edwards, Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803) and Samuel Mather (1706-1785) of New England. One of the influential professors at the theological academy for the French evangelicals was Adolphe Monod; the pastor of Lyon had been dismissed due to a communion controversy. Becoming a professor in 1836 he reminded the students: “to study diligent the Scripture and classical sources of theology.” In 1847 he left for Paris serving the Reformed Church (Église Réformée, Oratoire) but died in April 1856 six months before the re-opening of the Mission House of the PEMS. His

24 V. Ellenberger, A century of ministry work in Basstolande, Edmond Ellenberger (transl.) (Morija: Sesuto Book Depot, 1938), 93. The Board of the PEMS requested in 1854 Rev. Casalis to succeed Mr. Grandpierre as director and re-open the Mission House that had been closed since 1848.
26 Eugène Casalis, Mes souvenirs (Paris: Fischbacher, 1884), 39, “A cela s’ajoutaient de précieuses leçons d’apologétique et de dogmatique que M. Pyt tirait de son propre fonds, ou dont je devais, sous sa direction, chercher la substance dans divers auteurs. Pour ce tte dernière partie, j’avais souvent affaire à du latin bien lourd, imprimé en lignes bien serrées sur du papier jauni par le temps.”
27 Casalis, Mes souvenirs, 15.
28 Casalis, Mes souvenirs, 46, “Je ne devais y rester que deux ans et demi, les études que j’avais faites sous les soins de M. Pyt me permettant de consacrer, dès le premier jour, presque tout mon temps à la théologie.”
29 Bibliothèque universitaire, Section de de théologie protestante à Montauban: catalogue (Université de Montpellier, Montauban: Université, 1890), 171, “Compendia theologiae Christiana (1754) in 8°.”
30 The faculty and students would travel at the close of the century with the director of the PEMS to Lesotho. Cf. Daniel Bolliger, Marie-Christine Griffon, Hélène Cotteverte (eds.), Histoire et richesses de la Bibliothèque de théologie protestante de Montauban (Toulouse: S.I.C.D, 2007), 15.
32 Bibliothèque universitaire, 88.
33 For example, Bibliothèque universitaire, 115-123. Listing of works of Augustine, Clement, Grégoire de Nazianze, Eusebius, Ireneus, and Tertullian.
34 Bibliothèque universitaire, 110-123 (Patristic), 125-131 (Medieval), 131-162 (Early Modern).
35 Bibliothèque universitaire, 194-203.
36 Bibliothèque universitaire, 203.
37 Bibliothèque universitaire, 88, “Bellarmin, De Scriptoris ecclesiasticis (1617).”
38 Bibliothèque universitaire, 168, “Cocceius, Opera Omnia theologica (Amsterdam, 1675) 9 v. in f.”
39 Bibliothèque universitaire, 172. See for other works of Turretin, 238.
40 Bibliothèque universitaire, 168, “Edwards, Christian doctrine of original sin (Glasgow, 1819).”
41 Bibliothèque universitaire, 170, “Hopkins, Doctrine of the two covenants (London n.d.), in 12.”
42 Bibliothèque universitaire, 181, “Mather (Samuel), A vindication of the Holy Bible (London, 1723).”
brother, Frédéric, preacher and pastor at Paris, and secretary of the PEMS became a leading churchman of the newly constituted Union of Free Evangelical Churches (L’Union des Églises Évangéliques Libres) of 1848: the revival in France brought unity and division. Amid the development of revival, mission, and the Reformed church in France, the life and thoughts of Casalis and Coillard, were theologically, shaped by Reformed orthodoxy, but joined with contemporary evangelical piety purported by Le Réveil movement.

The PEMS, director and students are, therefore, part of the transcontinental evangelical network of the nineteenth-century Protestantism, in particular Le Réveil – not unfamiliar to Mabille. With a background in classical studies at the Paedagogium at Bâle, Switzerland, Mabille studied biblical Hebrew and Greek under the former principal of the Vaudois missionary school and scholarly pastor, Samuel Thomas (†1867), but left for The Hague in 1854 – a centre for the Réveil movement in Holland, travelled to England and was admitted to the Mission House in 1856. The multifaceted meeting points of the lecture room of the PEMS Mission House late in 1856, therefore, constitute the immediate historical-theological context of Mabille’s dogmatique.

Mabille’s notebook: structure, sources and content

The provenance of Mabille’s notebook is still undetermined. On the one hand Casalis did teach systematic theology, and Mabille’s notebook may reflect such teaching. On the other hand, Couzens suggests that Mabille occasionally filled in for Casalis in lecturing. “He [Mabille] was,” Couzens asserted, “strong in classical languages, though a trifle weak, it seems, in Theology.” Therefore, the notebook may also reflect Mabille’s own lectures – though it is to be seen that his theology was “trifle weak.”

With reference to the structure of the notebook, each section or chapter contains a title heading in capital letters and a sub-title followed by clearly marked multi-level subheadings and numbered paragraphs leading the reader through the theological topic. Mabille’s manuscript subsequently includes the following main sections: On Election (De L’Élection); On the Work of the Redemption (De L’Œuvre de la Rédemption); and On the Church (De L’Église). The middle section comprises 400 pages covering topics such as, “Calling,” “Grace,” “Faith,” “Justification,” including the doctrine of adoption, and “Sanctification.” One instantly observes the contours and outline of classic Reformed theology. Concerning the topics presented as “work of redemption,” Mabille understood the arrangement of theological topics as a logical sequencing of the order of salvation – the redemptive benefits of Christ appropriated to the believer by the Holy Spirit. As such this concept is recognised as the ordo salutis, which was assumed by post-reformation Lutheran theologians such as Johann F. Buddeus (1667-1729) and was widely adopted in post-reformation Reformed theology, but contrasted with the seventeenth-century soteriology of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) in which, among other things, election was conditioned by a person’s faith or non-faith.

A closer look at the structure of Mabille’s Dogmatique reveals three aspects and concerns (1) the internal structure of a chapter, (2) the opening chapter (De L’Élection), and (3) discussion of the doctrine of salvation.

Internal structure

Concerning the internal chapter structure, many chapters are structured around specific questions the construction of which reminds you of (medieval) scholastic questions (quaestiones). A distinguishing mark of (medieval) scholasticism was its adoption of a common method of inquiry: the method of discovering and defending philosophical or theological truth by means of Aristotelian logic or dialectic. The dialectic method involved three basic steps: posing a question, arguments for and against answers proposed by earlier authorities, and a logically warranted conclusion. The quæstio method, also called disputations (disputationes), was employed to stimulate the student’s critical thinking. This sophisticated approach to the theological discourse does not only unite Mabille’s reflections of theology with the method of theological inquiry of Post-Reformation thinkers, such as Turretin and other Protestant scholastics, but also with medieval intellectuals.
such as Aquinas, and Scotus. Furthermore, the published form of disputations gave rise to the literary genre of the _quaestio disputata_; and a collection of such disputations was called the Summa – the precursor of the systematic handbook of theology or _dogmatique_. Mabille’s notebook can thus be characterised as the method of theology (methodus theologiae) and is, therefore, placed in a long-standing trajectory of the development of the system (systema) of theology.

On election

The opening chapter on the doctrine of election may underscore a possibly central and overarching dogma of Reformed theology. The nineteenth-century German dogmatician, Heinrich Heppe (1820-1879), among others, typified Reformed orthodoxy as a predestinarian system in essence; and, is therefore, different from Calvin’s thought – a position recently reappraised and contested by scholars such as Richard A. Muller, and others. Mabille’s meticulous written notebook provides some direction to this issue, however.

Although the pagination of the notebook is consistently placed in the top right corner throughout the entire manuscript, the document also contains the word “dogmatique” accompanied by a number placed at the bottom of some pages. The opening chapter, then, commences with page one but also indicates “dogmatique 52”, since the notebook concludes with “dogmatique 88” which can be found on page 577. The question, whether the notebook is only a part of the systematic theology that is presented, arises. Specifically when the length of the interval of 15 to 17 pages between the “dogmatiques” is taken into consideration. It may point to the length of the lectures – each of ca. 50 minutes. The inference can be made, that the 33 extant lectures comprise an extended semester, commencing in November 1856 and ending in June the following year. This assumption is underscored by Mabille’s pattern of handwriting which is fairly consistent apart from the breakpoints of intervals which coincide with a slight change in the colour of the ink, the slope of the letters and the spacing between the letters. The preliminary conclusion, then, seems to justify the other topics of theology such as the doctrine of God, humanity and Christ may have preceded the discussion on the doctrine of election.

However helpful this initial observation might be, it does not assist in appraising the essence of Mabille’s notes on the doctrine of election. Seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy on this theological subject deviated from Calvin’s teaching after all as suggested by the German neo-orthodox theologians mentioned above. Accordingly, in Calvin’s successor Theodore Beza (1519-1605) was found a leaning to argue a supralapsarian view of double predestination (election and reprobation). Mabille’s _Dogmatique_ evidently exhibit awareness of these theological distinctions and differences.

The chapter on the doctrine of election commences with an exposition from Scriptures on the various words used concerning the topic, such as predestination, foreknowledge, election and [eternal] plan. The classical education of teacher and student excels through this exposition which is strongly supported by a discerning use of original languages of Scripture. Furthermore, Casalis and Mabille were trained in Reformed theology which is confirmed in the notebook not only by the various _quaestiones_, but also by an extensive treatment of infra and supralapsarianism – a primary Post-reformation speculative distinction. The former, Mabille noted, understand the object of the decree of predestination, humanity, as not yet created and fallen but merely to be created. Instead of providing a more detailed discussion on this speculative theological distinction, Mabille noted: “I just say that election and predestination must be regarded after the fall…” whereby “after the fall” (après la chute) is firmly underlined in the manuscript, and is supported by the author with four reasons from Scripture, in particular of the Epistle to the Romans. This infralapsarian position, then, differs from the suggested diversion of Post-reformed theology of Calvin – and it is Calvin and Augustine who are cited by Mabille in this chapter.

Further examination of source references such as Augustine and Calvin, employed in Mabille’s _Dogmatique_ is prompted by two motives. First and foremost, it assists our understanding of the intellectual trajectories that may have contributed to the French missionary study of systematic theology. Secondly, such

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60 Mabille, _Dogmatique_, “Dogmatique 52” (page 1), Ibid., 53 (17), 54 (33), […] 56 (65), 57 (81), 58 (97), 59 (113), 60 (129), 61 (145), 62 (161), 63 (177), 64 (193), 65 (209), 66 (225), 67 (241), 68 (257), 69 (273), 70 (289), 71 (305), 72 (312), 73 (337), 74 (353), 75 (369), 76 (385), 77 (401), 78 (417), 79 (433), 80 (449), 81 (465), 82 (481), 83 (497), 84 (513), 85 (529), 86 (545), 87 (561), and 88 (577).
61 Mabille, _Dogmatique_, 10, 11, _Etude des 4 principales expressions employer par l’Ecriture au sujet de l’Election_, 1. de prédestination….2. de préconnaissance….3. d’élection….4. de dessein ou conseil….
63 Mabille, _Dogmatique_, 20, “Je ne crois pas devoir entrer ici dans ces distinctions et je me contente de dire que l’élection et la prédestination doivent être considérées après la chute pour les raisons suivantes….1. (Jean xv.19)….3. (Romains ix.21)….4. (Romains ix.22, 23).”
understanding may provide an assessment of the character of the formulated theology, which is foundational to early nineteenth-century missionaries.

Mabille’s notebook, furthermore, reveals a wide-ranging array of its sources, including an extensive exegetical use of Scripture. The latter, as argued earlier in this article, must not be interpreted as proof texts to an established doctrine, but standing in a firm exegetical tradition whereby doctrine arises from a careful analysis of Scripture. Concerning the former, Mabille referred to more than 50 different authors and publications from various theological traditions. A closer look shows the distribution of these references throughout the notebook whereby 60% is found in paragraphs in which questions are discussed. Secondly, authors such as Ambrose (ca. 340-397), Anselm (1033-1109), the Jansenist Antoine Arnauld (1612-1694), Augustine, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), Cyprian († 258), Prosper d’Aquitaine (c. 390-c. 455), the English defender of Roman Catholicism Thomas Stapleton (1535–1598), and Turretin are cited frequently. In fact, the leading author is Augustine (22% of citations). The cited works of Augustine include: On admonition and grace (De correptione et gratia, 7x), On the gift of perseverance (De dono perseverantiae, 1x), On the grace of Christ and on original sin, contra Pelagius (De Graia Christi et de Peccato Originali, contra Pelagium, 2x), and On the predestination of the saints (De praedestinatione sanctorum, 2x). Prominently but less favourably cited is Bellarmine and his work On Justification (De Justificatione), which accounts for approximately 15% of all references, and primarily found in Mabille’s notes on the doctrine of justification. There are only three references to Calvin; one to the Latin-edition of the Institution of Christian religion and two citations of the treatise Concerning the eternal predestination of God (De aeterna Dei praedestinatione). Furthermore, the notebook displays a wide knowledge of various theological traditions and movements such as references to the “docteurs de Rome,” Franciscans, Dominicans, Post-reformation Lutherans, such as Caspar Brochmann (1585–1652), George Calixt (1586–1656), Jesuits, Weslyans, Socinians, Arminians, Remonstrant, and most noted are “Pelagians” (les Pélagiens), and semi-Pelagians (“ancient and modern”). In addition, mention is made of the various ecumenical councils, such as Laodicea (363–364), Vienne (1311–12), which Mabille mistakenly wrote as Bienne – a reminder of his home country, Constance (1414–1418), Trent (1545–1563), and the Reformed Synod of Dordrecht (1618–19).

The Dogmatique attests to Patristic, Medieval, Roman Catholic and Protestant theology with an orientation to Augustine, and specific attention to the doctrine of justification – a theological subject reappraised during the era of the sixteenth-century Reformation, which Roman Catholic understanding was dexterously defended by Bellarmine. The attention, then, differs from the allegedly central predestinarian theory of Reformed theology, and could be explained to the position of nineteenth-century Protestantism in France within a profoundly Roman Catholic society, as well as the Huguenot descent of some students of the PEMS and its director, Casalis.

Of greater importance, is the writer’s quotation of the Latin phrase which Mabille attributed to Martin Luther in the chapter on justification.

[T]he article by which the church stands or falls; For other Christians, it [justification] is the basis of Christianity, the principal bulwark of the Christian religion (Articulus stantis, & cadentis Ecclesiae; Christianorum peculium, Christianismi basis, religionis Christianae propugnaculum)

However, the informed reader observes immediately that Mabille cited verbatim but partially from Turretin’s Institute of Elenctic Theology (Institutio Theologiae Elencticae). Mabille subsequently followed in structure and theological content Turretin exactly in eight of the ten quaestiones in the chapter On justification, excluding the two last questions on the time and certainty or assurance of this doctrine. The exposition of 55 pages or

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67 Mabille, Dogmatique, 90, 108, 414 (2x), 468, 587 (De correptione et gratia); 90 (De dono perseverantiae); 410, 412 (De Graia Christi...); 414 (De praedestinatione sanctorum).
68 Mabille, Dogmatique, 22, 114, 115, 481, 482, 494, 508, 515, 537, 565, 567, 581 (Bellarmine); 428, 437, 481, 482, 515, 537, 565 (De Justificatione).
69 Mabille, Dogmatique, 442 (2x, De aeterna Dei praedestinatione); 91 (Inst. lib. II, ch. 22).
70 Mabille, Dogmatique, 13, 406, 428, 432, 432, 481, 495, 497, 508, 511, 515, 526, 531, 536, 542, 547, 581 (docteurs de Rome); 22 (Franciscans, Dominicans), 24 (Brochmann); 23 (Calixt); 112, 506, 562, 565 (Jesuits); 565,569 (Weslyans); 434, 435, 450, 511, 515, 536, 562 (Socinians); 589 (Arminians); 443, 536 (Remonstrants); 14, 21, 23, 34, 108, 109, 111, 114, 415, 450, 562 (Pélagiens, semi-Pelagians).
71 Mabille, Dogmatique, 406, “Dans le Concile des Bienne (sous Clément V)...”
72 Mabille, Dogmatique, 492. Cf. Francis Turretin, Institutio Theologiae Elencticae (Geneva: Samuelem De Tournes, 1688), XVI.1 (De Justificatione), 691, “Luthero dicitur Articulus stantis, & cadentis Ecclesiae; aliis Christianorum peculium, & Christianismi basis non abs re vocatur, praecipuamque Religionis Christianaia propugnaculum, quo adulterato vel subverso impossibile est puritatem doctrinae in aliis locis retinere.”
10% of the entire notebook, furthermore, include identical primary source references found in Turretin’s *Institutio* and section on the same doctrine. On the one hand, the finding may temper any possible enthusiasm about the various sources Mabille utilised and lead to a more modest but noteworthy remark: Turretin’s work is characterised by opposing Roman Catholic teaching, polemically against Bellarmine, and mediated sources theology of the Patristic and Medieval era – a distinct feature of many *systema* of the Post-reformation Reformed period. On the other hand, Turretin’s work may have been instrumental in the training of the PEMS missionaries for Christian apologetics. Finally, however, all these source references, via Turretin’s *Institutio* or not, are found outside the section of Mabille’s notebook, *On the work of Redemption (De L’Œvre de la Rédemption).* In the 234-page treatment of this teaching, 40% of the entire *Dogmatique*, Mabille does not refer to any primary source, with one exception: Edwards of eighteenth-century New England.

While not apparent in his lifetime, Edwards’s expectant view of the eschaton, though not accepted commonly, served for the commencement of the modern missions movement. In 1784, English pastors Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and William Carey (1761–1834) gained access to *A humble attempt* and read it carefully in the task of taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. As McClymond and McDermott note: “Carey used the *Humble Attempt* to discount the contention that certain prophecies had to be fulfilled before the heathen could be converted.” Combined with Edwards’s *Life of David Brainerd* (1749) and *Freedom of the will*, Fuller and Carey found in Edwards a “grandfather” of modern missions. From those in England and America who read Edwards came the London Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society, the Scottish Missionary Society, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Less known is that Edwards was not unfamiliar in early nineteenth-century France. The preface of the 1823 French translation of *Humble Attempt* (*L’union dans la prière pour la propagation de l’Evangile: abrégé d’un humble essai*) contains an introduction to his writings and asserts a historical awareness of the Scottish revival of the 1880s, influential to the rise of mission work and missionary societies, but also stated:

Thus the plan of union in prayer, so strongly recommended by President Edwards is pretty much adopted by the Christian world. But there are probably too many reasons to awaken among the faithful zeal for this important duty of prayer, and, to this end, the editor choosing the most essential parts of the Essay of Edwards, the reduced to one dimension, it would hope, will reach a greater number of readers. Happy if these pages could engage millions of Christians in France to unite to present to God fervent prayers for the propagation of the Gospel and mission success!

If this publication aimed at the promotion of revival, another translation of Edwards’s work in 1838, *The life of David Brainerd* (*Quelques réflexions sur la vie du missionnaire Brainerd*) – cited by Mabille in a letter to his wife, Adèle Casalis (1840-1923),” may have aimed for a result of revival: missionary work. Brainerd, according

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Mabille, *Dogmatique*, 147-381.


Smith, *The Mabilles of Basstoland*, 83, “as Brainerd says somewhere, we shall never think it enough to live at the rate of ordinary Christians.” Cf. *WJE* 7:495, “don’t think it enough to live at the rate of common Christians!”
to the preface, “ought to be an example followed by the evangelical churches.” Other works of Edwards, such as the *Doctrine of original sin defended*, cited in *Evangelical Magazine* (*Magasin évangélique*), and *Freedom of the will* – familiar to Roman Catholics such as Abbé Grégoire (1750-1831) were known. Furthermore, according to French biographer L.G. Michaud, William Gordon (1729-1807) translated an abridge version of Edwards’s *Religious affections* in French together with “some sermons, and two pamphlets.” The French familiarity with these writings was for some “the celebrated Edwards,” and for others, such as the French historian, L.M. Chaudon, Northampton’s pastor was a “Savvy metaphysician but a rigid Calvinist” (Savant métaphysicien, mais rigide calviniste) whose thought on the doctrine of necessity – worked out Samuel Hopkins – was as heretical.

### Doctrine of salvation

Although Mabille may have been familiar with Edwards’s works, the major section on soteriology of the *Dogmatique*, the discussion on the so-called *ordo salutis*, is preceded by an extensive discussion on the history of the work of redemption. God is committed, “to deliver out of the fallen human race a people to himself to the praise of his glory by his grace in Christ. Mabille, wrote: “we have to see what he had to do, in time, to accomplish this deliverance.” Here, he underlined “dans le temps,” and noted distinguished marked times or periods throughout the redemptive history. It is at this point that Mabille placed the footnote to refer to Edwards: “See president Edwards. [Who] we [will] follow almost entirely in this study.” The question wherein was Edwards followed? arises. Did the footnote only refer to the text sentence, or did it refer to the paragraph or even a larger section?

A closer look at this section of the notebook reveals that the 204 pages preceding the treatment of *Des effets personnels de la Redemption* are divided into three major parts dealing with the history of the work of redemption, namely “From the fall to the incarnation of Christ,” “The time of Christ’s humiliation;” and “From Christ’s resurrection to the end of the world.” This is a chronological presentation of the redemptive drama; the first period is subdivided into six epochs or periods which deal with divine redemptive activity during the time: “From the fall to the flood;” the first epoch, followed by “From the flood to the calling of Abraham;” “From the calling of Abraham to Moses;” “From Moses to David;” “From David to the Babylonian captivity;” and “From the Babylonian captivity to the coming of Christ.” The second part concerning the era of Christ’s humiliation contains, besides a historic-doctrinal exposition of the centrality of Christ’s salvific work, a contemporary practical application which encourages the readers to trust in Christ for salvation. In the third period the author moves from the time of Christ and Constantine to the era of the sixteenth-century Reformation and the “present state”, and concludes with an eschatological dimension which deals with the future Millennium and Kingdom of God. The three-partite and its sub-parts of redemptive history, treated at length in Mabille’s *Dogmatique*, correspond identically with Edwards’s *A history of the work of redemption* – a posthumously publication by John Erskine in Edinburgh in 1774. This major treatise resulted from an ambitious series of 30 sermons, preached in 1739, casting a broad vision of salvific history. Human history from Adam’s fall to the final judgment was organised into distinct phases. Here, Edwards, though certainly unique in his time, may have relied on others before him, such as Cocceius and Maastricht – the latter partially presented theology in the form

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83 Louis M. Chaudon et al. (eds.), *Dictionnaire universel, historique, critique et bibliographique* ...(Paris: De Mame Frères, 1810), VI:172.
85 Mabille, *Dogmatique*, 146, “…de sa volonté a la louange de la gloire de sa grce: il nous reste à voir ce quil a du faire, dans le temps, pour accomplir cette délivrance.”
86 Mabille, *Dogmatique*, 381. The page contains the following title (sub) headings, *Des effets personnels de la Redemption; Des Bienfaits à sa resurrection*, 288-381 (De l’incarnation du Christ jusqu’à la consummation du siècle).
88 Mabille, *Dogmatique*, 252-288. This part is entitled by Mabille as “epoch” instead of “period.” The application is primarily found in the paragraph titled *Quelques observations dur cette 2e période* (286-288).
of a historical narrative that corresponded with Edwards’s outline of redemptive history. Contrary to what one may expect of a Post-reformation Reformed *systema*, Mastricht’s work lacks a chapter entitled “eschatology”; instead, the last chapter is on the dispensations of the covenant of grace (*De Dispensatione Foederis Gratiae*) – a grand narrative from the creation accounts to the author’s own time. Mastricht moves in three major sections from the dispensation under the patriarchs and Moses to Christ ending with a treatment of the dispensation of eternity. In the first section, he is concerned with the propagation, theology and heresies of the covenant of grace in the era from Adam to Noah to Abraham to Moses, followed by the discussion on the progress and regress of this covenant during the period of Moses to David; David to the Babylonian captivity; and the latter to the coming of Christ. In the largest part of the section on the dispensation of Christ, Mastricht blends theology, sacred and world history, typology and shadows, confessions and creeds, heresies, persecutions, schisms, the rise and fall of the antichrist, and Roman Catholic and Islamic theology into one continuing expanding narrative. Mastricht’s view on theology and history, or the development of the covenant of grace, is based on the work of redemption. He noted that the exposition of the dispensation of redemptive history rests on and extends the discussion of the personal appropriation of the work of redemption. In other words, the work of redemption, for Mastricht, has two intertwined dimensions: historical and personal – an understanding Edwards adhered to in his major treatise on the subject Mabille also followed...

Edwards’s interest in Post-reformation Reformed theology is best exemplified in a letter of 1742 to a ministerial colleague, Joseph Bellamy:

> As to the books you speak of: Mastricht is sometimes in one volume, a very thick, large quarto; sometimes in two quarto volumes. I believe it could not be had new under eight or ten pounds. Turretin is in three volumes in quarto, and would probably be about the same price. They are both excellent. Turretin is on polemical divinity; on the Five Points, and all other controversial points; and is much larger in these than Mastricht; and is better for one that desires only to be thoroughly versed in controversies. But take Mastricht for divinity in general, doctrine, practice, and controversy; or as an universal system of divinity and it is much better than Turretin or any other book in the world, excepting the Bible, in my opinion.

Thus Mabille’s use of Edwards *HWR* coincided that both were appreciative of Turretin, and paid attention to a form of salvation history as proposed by Mastricht.

Furthermore, Edwards’s exposition of the redemptive drama through history might have been appealing to the students at the PEMS Mission House. Edwards showed deep acquaintance with the history of the church in France attesting that:

> The Protestant church of France was great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise; this church is all broken to pieces and scattered, … in some respects perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestants there.

However, Edwards added, “the church will be revived” – something that the Protestants in France, and those attending the PEMS Mission House in particular, may have understood in their time since the Concordant of 1802, the rise of the Protestant church, and the founding of a Protestant mission society, theological faculty and religious book enterprise. In addition, Edwards’s work on the redemptive history, and particularly the section which concerns missionary and mission endeavours, might also have been inspiring. He clearly demonstrated a global interest in the propagation of the gospel considering his attention to China, East Indies, and South America. However, he expected of Africa not only to:
be enlightened with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civil, Christian and an understanding and holy people; 98

and in that order, but also shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail everywhere. It may be hoped that then many of [them] will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa – and not only very learned men, but others that are more ordinary men, shall then be very knowing in religion. 99

Last not but least, Edwards laid out a holistic vision for missionary work of which the gospel proclamation coincide with:

set[ing] up schools among them, and a printing press to print Bibles and other books for their instruction in their own language. 100

Mabille, however, would exceptionally and exemplarily work out Edwards’s vision at Morija.

The inquiry how Edwards’s important work became an integral part of the thought of Mabille’s Dogmatique may be answered in two ways: first, the Société des Livres Religieux at Toulouse, which was part of the evangelical network of Le Réveil and nineteenth-century French Protestantism, and publisher of many evangelical works including the Anglican JC Ryle (1816–1900), the Baptist preacher, C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892), and re-publisher of Bénédict Pictet works. 101 In 1854 this religious book society released a translation of Edwards’s work, Histoire de l’œuvre de la Rédemption. 102 It was distributed in Paris at three locations, including the library of Mr. J Cherubuliez at Place d’Oratoire – a member of Frédéric Monod’s congregation. 103 Secondly, Mabille and/or Casalis must have been familiar with the English edition of Edwards’s work on redemption history as the notebook, at times, renders a French translation of the English work rather than following a French edition. In conclusion, Mabille’s presentation of systematic theology was positioned in a long-standing theological trajectory, though he merged seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy with eighteenth-century theology of a New England revivalist, Edwards. This combined content of theology can hardly be called “trifle weak”.

On Mabille’s arrival at Morija in 1860, he continued what he was, a [morut] – a teacher, 104 attending to theological education of the Basuto’s, which included, among many things, producing a catechism, a translation of the Bible and Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s progress into Sesuto, and the publication of The little light of Lesotho (Leselinyana la Lesotho). 105 Besides the Scripture, his theological training at the PEMS Mission House was foundational for this enterprise, as reflected in the notebook – a Dogmatique. On the other hand, the notebook


104 Cf. Couzens, Murder at Morija, 119.
shows the catholicity of theology rooted in Augustine, advanced by transatlantic and transcontinental theological thought, merging Reformed and revival theology which originates from seventeenth-century Post-reformation theology; eighteenth-century New England Congregationalism; and early nineteenth-century Scottish Presbyterianism and French Protestantism woven together as an ecumenical and evangelical theological enterprise by a son of the Swiss Free Church, Mabille.

The examination of the notebook, offers a window into the theological intellectual formation of the French missionaries at the PEMS Mission House of the mid-nineteenth century. Although a university setting was absent, a classical and private theological education was adhered to – a training which lacked the liberal and public theological faculties of the time. The initial attempt of uncovering a primary source at the Morija Archives, furthermore, may offer new venues for further studies including a more detailed comparison of Mabille’s text of the *Dogmatique* and Edwards’s *History of the Work of Redemption* work published in English and French, as literal transcription variances, paraphrasing, and interpreting Edwards’s work have been noted. Finally, the reception of the eclectic, classical Christian theology appropriated in Mabille’s *Dogmatique* is a study of continuity and discontinuity of the theological formation of the missionaries and their work in Basutoland. In conclusion, further research concerning the context and content of systematic theology in the training of nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries, such as attested by Wallmann’s *Dogmatik* and Mabille’s *Dogmatique* may advance the understanding of the enterprise of education of these Christian missionaries and the transmission and reception of theological education on the mission field.

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