Religion and Republican Principles in the Climate of 1848:
Debate and Division within French Protestantism

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The association of French Protestantism with the political Left since 1789 is well established.¹ In view of their historical experience of state and religious persecution and their identification with liberty of conscience, as well as Reformed doctrine and traditional church organization,

French Protestants, as a group, have been seen as natural advocates of republican principles. If Protestant notables largely supported the *juste milieu* ideal of the July Monarchy, most French Protestants nevertheless favored the progressive moves toward democratization of the nineteenth century and enthusiastically embraced the Third Republic. This straightforward association of Protestantism with developing republicanism, however, overlooks the complexities of the relationship during the Second Republic, when French Protestants took advantage of the revolutionary climate to press their claims about the character of the French nation and the Republic. But these claims were by no means homogeneous. The Protestant community was deeply divided on important—and in their minds, interconnected—political and religious issues.

Political fault lines were drawn along theological divisions, contested in the press, petitions, and political campaigns, and reflected in the preparations for and execution of the first national synod (general assembly) of the Reformed Church since 1659. Divisions manifested themselves over three specific issues: in competing plans for reorganization of the church, in the question of a confession of faith, and, most fundamentally, in beliefs about the proper relationship between church and state. In each case, those who held the more orthodox religious position took the more democratic stance, while the more theologically liberal Protestants took the more conservative position of arguing for the status quo. In both cases, their

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institutional activities paralleled their civic impulses and reflected their vision of the body politic.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the status quo reflected the historical position of the French Reformed Church: the state determined the conditions and relative liberty of its existence.\(^3\) Like the other officially recognized confessions—the Catholic Church, the Confession of Augsburg (Lutheran), and the "Israelite culte"—the Reformed church functioned under the ecclesiastical system instituted as a result of Napoleon's Concordat with the Pope in 1801. According to the Organic Articles of the Protestant Churches of April 1802, pastors (like Catholic priests) were paid by the state, temples and seminaries were likewise provided and maintained by the state, and Protestant ministers for the first time were invited to participate in public ceremonies. While giving a new degree of liberty and support to Protestants, the Organic Articles also reinforced the state's power to organize religious life and practice. Their regulations divided Protestant churches into consistories, corresponding to Catholic curiae, of 6,000 members each. These bodies were governed jointly by state-appointed pastors along with six to twelve wealthy lay elders "chosen from among the most

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substantial citizens, determined by direct taxation.\textsuperscript{4} Because the seat of the consistory was generally in the largest city in the consistorial area, village shopkeepers, craftsmen, and peasants played little if any role in the decisions and direction of the consistory since leadership naturally devolved to the wealthiest and most educated bourgeois members.\textsuperscript{5}

The Organic Articles empowered the state to regulate not only ecclesiastical structure and function, but confessional doctrine as well. The state appointed and financially supported pastors and the professors who taught them at seminaries. Consistories were allowed only a small role in recruiting local pastoral candidates. More explicit was the requirement of state authorization for changes in teaching or publication of church dogma, including confessions of faith, and for internal discipline and regulation of consistorial functions. Moreover, the Articles disregarded the fundamental principle of reformed ecclesiastical organization, that of a national synod in which church representatives gather to decide ecclesiastical matters. Under the Articles, five consistories, rather than all the nation's consistories, formed a synod, and "synods will be allowed to assemble only if they have received the permission of the government." Imposed with little consultation and no negotiation with church representatives, the Articles thus altered traditional church structure and greatly limited self-governance. At the same time, the Articles restricted civic liberties of speech and, in


\textsuperscript{5} See André Encrevé, \textit{Protestants français au milieu du XIXe siècle} (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1986), 60-84.
conjunction with various laws on association, the right of assembly.\textsuperscript{6}

It is unsurprising that Protestants, as a whole, greeted the developments of early 1848 with optimism, assuming that the Republic promised not only religious liberty but all fundamental individual liberties and the realization of the "principles of 1789."\textsuperscript{7} Consistories expressed this anticipation in responses to an official circular of 11 March, which declared the provisional government's commitment "to associate the consecration of the religious sentiment to the grand act of reconquered liberty" and requested prayer for the government and its institutions.\textsuperscript{8} Some responses were circumspect, citing their "duty" to pray for the country. Most were more effusive, such as this statement from the consistory of Castres (Tarn), which expresses members' expectations of the state in relation to their historical condition:

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The Protestant clergy and all our adherents can only salute with joy and thanksgiving this new Era of liberty, equality, [and] fraternity and we have complete confidence in the declarations of the provisional government and in the liberal institutions that the national Assembly will establish. Freed from a long and cruel servitude by the first revolution, we are certain that the revolution of 1848 will irrevocably assure, in its entire legitimate sphere, all our civil, political and religious rights.  

This initial optimism seemed justified. The introduction of universal suffrage, emblem of the state's principle of equality of all citizens, offered legitimacy to their religious and civic demands. It appeared they had an ally in Alphonse de Lamartine, the Romantic poet cum president of the provisional government. In a speech three years earlier to the Chamber of Deputies, he had declared himself an opponent of Napoleon's "regressive" religious legislation, which had reinstated "the theocracy of state religions," "yoked church and throne," and "made holy things the instrument of government."[11]

If French Protestants agreed on the liberal potential of the Second Republic, this was virtually their only point of agreement. Long-standing theological divisions became the basis for bitter religious dissent with political overtones. On one side of this divide were the theological liberals. Influenced by Enlightenment rationalism and Germanic natural theology, they assigned human reason the

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9 Responses to the circular of 11 March are found in "Circulaires ministérielles," AN F/19/10018; Castres, 21 March 1848 (#4549).
fundamental role in finding and understanding God, embraced the Reformation ideal of the free examination of the Scriptures, and consequently rejected such traditional tenets as supernatural revelation, predestination, and confessions of faith. To their detractors, this position merely provided a philosophy of life, a utilitarian moral code of personal effort. The major figures of the liberal current in Paris were the pastor Athanase Coquerel, père, and his brother Charles, who edited the "mouthpiece" of the party, Le Lien, founded in 1841 to combat their religious opponents. The brothers were closely associated with the consistory of Nîmes, the historic Huguenot stronghold in the south; this consistory served as the editorial board of the journal.

Their opponents, widely known as "evangelicals," were influenced both by the Romantic reaction against Enlightenment and by the Réveil, the religious "awakening" that had swept from England through southern Germanic and Swiss lands into France. Their theological position was termed "orthodoxy," because they drew heavily from sixteenth-century Reformation dogma, particularly that of Jean Calvin. This group emphasized the importance of individual faith and piety, emotional response in personal conversion experiences, the Bible as the divinely inspired guide for daily life, and obligatory confessions of faith,

written creeds that included traditional tenets rejected by the liberals. Principle representatives of the evangelical current included Edmond de Pressensé, a pastor who in the Third Republic would serve as both a deputy and senator, and Henri Lutteroth, a descendant of a Huguenot family exiled during Louis XIV's reign. Together they headed the Parisian journal, *Le Semeur* ("the Sower"). More moderate evangelicals included Jean-Henri Grandpierre, a pastor in Paris from 1827-1872, and the editorial staff of *L'Espérance*. Those who would ultimately prove most radical in the revolutionary climate of 1848 were Agénor de Gasparin, a deputy representing Corsica, and Frédéric Monod, pastor of the Reformed Church of Paris and editor since 1824 of the *Archives du christianisme*, which had been founded in 1818 and was the largest Protestant journal.13

Whatever their differences, both groups claimed to be representatives of true Huguenot Protestantism with liberty of conscience as their guiding principle. In the spring of 1848, they took their claims and debate simultaneously into both the political and religious arenas. Like many other groups in this revolutionary political culture, both factions formed political clubs, circulated petitions to the government, produced placards and tracts, and recruited and campaigned for political candidates.14 Expecting that

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14 Encrevé briefly describes these clubs in *Protestants français*, 174-75, and in "Un nouveau groupe de protestants "libéraux": le milieu..."
the new political freedoms of association and self-direction would extend to their religious practice, on 26 February leaders of the Paris consistories announced plans for a national assembly to discuss the Organic Articles, address their grievances to the government *en masse*, and debate doctrine, structure, and "the bases of a new organization of our churches." To plan for the larger meeting in the autumn, an Assembly of Delegates was called to meet in Paris in early May. Factional differences immediately came to the fore in the question of how delegates would be chosen. In keeping with the political climate, the moderate journal *L’Espérance* quickly proposed election of consistory representatives by universal male suffrage within local churches. The liberal consistory of Nîmes responded with a project proposing that consistory boards appoint their representatives from among board members - in essence, retaining the old forms of the Organic Articles. Evangelicals denounced this proposal as oligarchic. To break the looming impasse, in mid-April the main consistory of Paris successfully proposed a compromise: since the Assembly was only preparatory, with no pretense...
of representing French Protestantism as a whole, each consistory would determine the number of delegates and method of choice it wished. This obstacle overcome, 108 delegates convened from 10 May through mid-June. They had been chosen by a variety of means and were comprised of roughly equal numbers of pastors and laymen and represented eighty-six of the ninety-two consistories.\(^\text{18}\)

The question of representation was, of course, not solved by this compromise. The composition of the synod remained the main issue facing the delegates. Indeed, the question was central to the larger objective of the national meeting, that of reorganizing the Reformed Church in conformity with their desires for "a more real organization," because the synodal model and structure adopted at that time would set the precedent for those they expected would follow.\(^\text{19}\) Several plans began circulating in April, most reflecting the liberal/orthodox polarity as well as a few more centrist proposals. The most widely circulated and discussed liberal proposal was that of the consistory of Nîmes, which simply redistributed its prior project. Declaring that it rejected universal suffrage and arguing that it would be too difficult to change "ecclesiastical and administrative habits already in place," the Nîmes plan mapped consistories into groups, with the combined notables designating delegates.\(^\text{20}\) In the

\(^{18}\) Archives du christianisme reported extensively on the preparations and meeting of the delegates. Encrevé, Protestants français, 181-96, narrates delegates' preparations and decisions.

\(^{19}\) "Projet de Loi Organique, présenté au Gouvernement par les députés des Eglises réformées de France. Exposé des Motifs." AN F/19/10172.

\(^{20}\) "Appel adressé aux présidents, . . . 24 mars 1848," AN F/19/10172. See also the consistory's brochure reviewing the 1848 synod, "A Messieurs les pasteurs et messieurs les anciens des
evangelical camp, support coalesced around the proposal from Bordeaux, which the *Archives du christianisme* applauded for "having taken the initiative to introduce the democratic principle into the reconstitution of our churches."\(^{21}\) In this plan, members of local churches would vote for pastors and lay representatives, who in equal numbers would form a "constituent synod." Orthodox partisans argued that such a plan would answer both the autocracy of the Nîmes plan and its assertion that universal suffrage was impracticable for those in isolated areas who would not travel to consistory meetings. With local elections, the faithful would gladly exercise their right to vote in church matters as in politics.\(^{22}\)

Neither plan was ultimately adopted by the Assembly in June, even though the majority of delegates identified themselves as theological liberals. More moderate liberal and orthodox delegates effected a compromise, but the Nîmes-led faction gave little ground in agreeing only to indirect universal suffrage. Church members would vote in geographically proximate groups of consistories, rather than by local bodies, for electors - pastors and notables - who would then choose delegates. Though debate over these various plans continued throughout the summer, the final project reorganizing national synods passed in the autumn was, in fact, very similar: delegates to regional and national synods would be appointed by general consistories and would meet every three years. In most other respects, the Organic Articles would be little altered; consistory elders, for example, would be chosen by limited suffrage,

\(^{21}\) *Archives du christianisme*, 22 April 1848.

\(^{22}\) *Archives évangéliques* (Montauban), 15 April 1848.

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"consistories des églises réformées de France," Nîmes, 8 Oct. 1850. AN F/19/10021.
but pastors would still be appointed and supported by the state.  

These organizational decisions taken before the synod adjourned on 7 October were largely anticlimactic in view of the more divisive doctrinal controversy that had led to schism in September. Given the growing theological division within the church, the pressing question for the orthodox camp was that of a confession of faith. The liberal faction, as represented by the Coquerel brothers and in *Le Lien*, was opposed in principle to any written creed, the scriptures and human reason being sufficient to reveal the things of God. An obligatory statement of faith, they argued, was a "yoke," inspired by a "spirit of darkness," and "contrary to Christian tolerance." For the evangelicals, as Gasparin wrote in a series of articles in the *Archives* and argued with equal passion on the floor of the synod, the issue was one of both corporate faith and individual decision. It did not have to be the traditional Confession of La Rochelle, still the nominal creed of the French Reformed Church. In fact, they would have preferred a newly drafted statement befitting conditions of the nineteenth century. But a confession was necessary, they argued, in the interest of unity, because without personal adherence to a statement of doctrine, the people would lapse into dependence on the state or the clergy to

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23 Elders were to be chosen by members at least twenty-five years of age, who had been part of their local church for at least one year and assented to the statements in the address, but property qualifications were abolished. See "Projet de Loi Organique." The final text was published in *Archives du christianisme*, 28 Oct. 1848. Encrevé, *Protestants français*, provides a synopsis, 209-14.

decide convictions for them. Several delegates did favor the adoption of a confession of faith, especially for a church that was reorganizing, but as in the organizational question, a compromise offered by moderates carried the day. Sixty-seven of the eighty delegates present, with ten absent, voted to maintain for the time being the status quo (the Confession of La Rochelle) but to appoint a commission to draft a "statement of principles" to be submitted to the consistories for consideration. On 27 September, deputies accepted a settlement that recognized Christ as Redeemer but not himself divine, gave doctrinal authority to scripture alone, and urged unity. For the most radical evangelicals, Frédéric Monod and Agénor de Gasparin, this move was untenable; even before the final vote on the confession they had withdrawn from the assembly and immediately began to organize a movement of independent churches.

Their action highlights the fundamental issue underlying both the organizational and doctrinal questions and the theological and political divisions between factions in 1848 - that of separation of church and state. This should not have been an issue in September, the question having been decided almost unanimously in favor of union at the

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25 See Gasparin's articles in the Archives du christianisme of 24 June, 8 and 22 July, 5 and 19 Aug., and 2 Sept. 1848; and the transcript of his speech of 18 Sept. in Ibid., 14 Oct. 1848.

26 The vote was seventy-three in favor, ten abstentions, with seven absent. The Archives du christianisme reported in great detail on the synod; see especially the issues of 30 Sept. and 14 Oct. Encrevé's account in Protestants français, 196-209 is based largely on the reportage in the Archives.

27 Monod's and Gasparin's letters are reproduced in the Archives du christianisme, 14 Oct. 1848. On the movement to establish free churches in France, see Koehler, 317-23.
May Assembly. The relationship of church and state had been a subject of polemics in the Protestant press in 1843-44 but arose again in March 1848 with pronouncements by the orthodox Le Semeur that "separation of church and state is probable" and that the new government ought to fulfill its revolutionary mandate by reproducing the separation established in the Constitution of 1795. Separation would certainly remove the problems of strict control associated with the Organic Articles, but in the opinion of the liberals would introduce other more serious problems. For the writers of Le Lien, Reformed churches could not do without state support, and they argued from early March on that their evangelical opponents wished to throw their fellow pastors into poverty, ruin the church buildings, and return to the dire conditions experienced under the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Moreover, the present system was necessary to allow the state to oversee the moral and intellectual education of all its citizens, which was its highest duty. The church, for its part, owed the state its "loyal and sincere support, for the progress and moral advancement of republican principles." The relationship, as Athanase Coquerel put it, was "a treaty of peace" and "an obligation contracted by pastors, overseers, and the

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30 Le Lien, 4 March and 1 April 1848.
faithful."32 The moderate orthodox *L'Espérance*, though not a theological ally, declared that it would not fear separation, but that the time was not right for it, and the journal staunchly supported the current system of state support.33

For the extreme evangelical faction, none of the liberals' arguments were valid. In their view, continued state support was completely unnecessary, because adherents would gladly support a vital church with voluntary offerings of money and time. Furthermore, it was "unjust to obligate any citizen to contribute to the expenses of a religion he does not practice." Separation would not only return France to the goals of the first Revolution but would reduce national expenditures!34 In these arguments they saw themselves in good company, citing writers as diverse as Lamennais, Tocqueville, and Lamartine in support of their position that only separation could ensure complete liberty of conscience and individual development and produce greater social and political harmony.35 Most importantly, the state had no legitimate role in regulating any aspect of "religious society," based as it was on the individual's spiritual affiliation. The state's sole

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32 Athanase Coquerel, *Projet de discipline pour les églises réformées de France avec une introduction historique et des notes présenté à la commission du conseil central par le pasteur Athanase Coquerel* (Paris: Cherbuliez, 1861), 8, 75. Brochure held in AN F/19/10188.
33 *L'Espérance*, 16 March 1848; Grandpierre advances this argument in his *Mémoire présenté au consistoire* and summarizes it in *L'Espérance*, 6 July 1848.
34 Placard produced by the Société pour l'application du christianisme aux questions sociales, reproduced in *Le Semeur*, 8 March 1848 and *Archives du christianisme*, 11 March 1848.
35 See "De la Séparation de l'église et de l'état," *Le Semeur*, 5 April 1848.
responsibility was to ensure conditions for the full development of individuals and their liberty of religion; the church's sphere was to see to religious education and ecclesiastical life. Only when state and church functioned as they naturally and legitimately should, each in its own sphere, would the whole of society reap the benefits of the revolutionary principles recovered with the new regime.  

The link between these three issues, so closely intertwined in the minds and passions of mid-nineteenth-century French Protestants, hinged on the relationship of the individual citizen to the state, specifically the question of the extent of the state's legitimate authority and oversight in matters of individual conscience in the context of a revolutionary republican political climate. In essence, this concerned the right of self-governance. In the case of the confession of faith—the most paradoxical of these matters—both factions claimed to speak for individual choice. This is unsurprising, given traditional Protestant identification with individualism, but each side understood and applied this concept quite differently in both their civic and religious lives. Liberal Protestants championed the sovereignty of rational free examination, a position that fit well with the political liberalism of the 1840s but did not necessarily accord well with the notion of democracy. For evangelicals, the issue was more explicitly related to universal suffrage. French citizens now had the right to choose political affiliation through their vote, and political partisans' statements, or creeds, of belief and philosophy

36 Le Semeur, 12 April 1848.
37 Pierre Rosanvallon, for example, argues the importance of the sovereignty of reason in Le Moment Guizot (Paris: Gallimard, 1985). Guizot, however, was associated with neither the liberal nor the radical evangelical faction in the 1840s but maintained a moderate orthodox stance.
informed their choice. The Reformed faithful must have that same right in the religious context, for, in the words of the Consistory of Orléans, "in a Church composed of all those who adhere to its confession of faith . . . universal suffrage is not only a right, it's a duty."\textsuperscript{38} Gasparin explicitly linked the religious questions to the political questions of the day in both his rhetoric and vocabulary: "our religious constituent and the political constituent exist side by side."\textsuperscript{39} For him and Monod to remain in the national church under these circumstances, when church/state union had been affirmed and doctrinal clarity denied, would be to acknowledge the state's right to continued oversight and authority. Whether a national body drafted a statement of principles or a written creed and submitted it for official approval, or a government committee imposed one outright, the result would be the same: control by the state of an area of human existence over which it had no legitimate authority.\textsuperscript{40}

What was most at stake, for French Protestants as for other groups in 1848 grappling with the sudden multiplication of voices implicit in the newly established Republic, was the concept of the nation. The liberal faction, even those from Nîmes, may have accepted universal suffrage in political elections but feared what they called "the invasion of politics into religion" as a source of inevitable "dissolution and anarchy."\textsuperscript{41} The Coquerel

\textsuperscript{38} "Rapport au Consistoire d'Orléans sur le projet de loi organique voté par le Synode de Septembre 1848," 27 Dec. 1850. AN F/19/10021.
\textsuperscript{39} Gasparin's speech of 18 Sept. 1848 is reproduced in the \textit{Archives du christianisme}, 14 Oct. 1848.
\textsuperscript{40} See Gasparin's and Monod's letters, \textit{Archives du christianisme}, 14 Oct. 1848.
\textsuperscript{41} "A Messieurs les pasteurs et messieurs les anciens des consistoires des églises réformées de France," Nîmes, 8 Oct. 1850. AN
contingent could claim that diversity, particularly as found in "the right of all to believe whatever they themselves find in the Bible," was "good." But without limits, could not that diversity also lead to "anarchy"? According to Athanase Coquerel, in uniting church and state the Organic Articles had wisely given the state the authority to ensure uniformity of ritual and structure within each of the recognized religions in France, which, in his view, brought "a spiritual unity, a more intimate and moral tie (lien)" than any statement or creed. By the century's mid-point, the potential of unrestrained diversity had spread beyond the factional divide as the appeal of more populist revivalist meetings threatened even greater challenges to traditional Reformed order and would only be magnified with separation of church and state. For the orthodox party, this challenge to traditional corporate identity understandably would not prove troublesome. In working for a democratic constituting of the Assembly and the synod, they had aimed to bring together and give a voice (a vote) to the local bodies and divergent strains of thought in French Protestantism. For them this was only natural, since church members were also citizens. Civil society and religious

F/19/10021. Encrevé, Protestants français, 189 notes, but does not explain, these contradictory positions.
42 Athanase Coquerel, fils, speech to the synod, 16 Sept. 1848. Archives du christianisme, 14 Oct. 1848.
43 Coquerel, père, Projet de Discipline, 89.
44 James C. Deming, Religion and Identity in Modern France: the Modernization of the Protestant Community in Languedoc, 1815-1848 (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999) explores some of these issues in the context of southern France, particularly the consistory of Nimes; his analysis considers internal factional divisions but does not directly address the external political implications they held for separation of church and state. On the issue of dissident sects and their influence on the question of separation, see Koehler, 273-90.
society now shared a certain relationship, they asserted, "which translates into reciprocal rights and duties." Their religious life had become a mirror of the body politic, in which "all the French will be free and equal in religion as they are in politics." After adjourning in October, the officers of the synod submitted their completed plan to the Ministry of Public Instruction and Religion to be considered in the expected official project of reorganization. Although the government had watched the proceedings with interest, it maintained that the unauthorized synod had "no official character" and thus no real authority. Nevertheless, the government requested and received statements on the reorganization plan from consistories until the end of 1850. Some were longer and more theoretical than others, and several were published and circulated as brochures arguing for their particular position. All evidenced the political apprenticeship born of their experience in consultation, petitioning, politicking, and voting during the spring and summer of 1848. But their anticipation of a "more real organization" was premature. The law of 26 March 1852, which reorganized the French Reformed Church, was in most respects more dictatorial, restrictive, and arbitrary in its imposition of state supervision than was the previous

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46 Le Semeur, 8 March 1848.
48 “Réponses des consistoires réformés à la circulaire du ----. Examen d’un projet de réorganisation de la loi organique des Églises réformées.” AN F/19/10021.
system, and the great majority of Protestants opposed it.\(^{49}\) That only a few of their suggestions were included in the official reorganization was a grave disappointment, but it did not crush their objectives or resolve.\(^{50}\) It did lead to a reevaluation of strategies and a reconfiguration of increasingly complex liberal-moderate-orthodox divisions in the later nineteenth century.

This analysis of dissension within French Protestant ranks advances two important reinterpretive points with regard to nineteenth-century political divisions and the broader character of the political culture. Attention to institutional infighting is not new, of course. But what this analysis shows is that the model of resurrected civil society as manifested in institutional politics arises not in the 1860s but rather with the "political apprenticeship" of 1848-49.\(^{51}\) In demonstrating this complex and counter-intuitive relationship between theological and political beliefs, this paper thus also suggests the need to rethink the widely

\(^{49}\) "Ministère de l'Instruction publique et des cultes. Décret portant réorganisation des cultes protestants. 26 mars 1852." AN F/19/10172. See also Encrevé, *Protestants français*, 516-533.

\(^{50}\) Philip Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995) argues that Louis-Napoleon's 1851 coup "shattered republican networks" (9), which then had to be rebuilt. For Protestants, it was more a matter of networks going temporarily underground, so to speak, into seemingly non-threatening institutions such as the Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français (April 1852).

\(^{51}\) This is Nord's argument in *The Republican Moment*; on French Protestants see 90-114. Encrevé's studies cited here, particularly *Protestants français*, narrate the institutional infighting but do not analyze its relationship with the broader political culture. Nor does Osen, "The Theological Revival," 43-47, who examines only the theological divisions. I take the now-classic term "political apprenticeship" from Maurice Agulhon's *1848 ou l'apprentissage de la République 1848-1852* (Paris: Seuil, 1973).
accepted perception of French Protestants, in particular liberal Protestants, as uniform in their commitment to republican principles.\footnote{See also Sudhir Hazareesingh, \textit{From Subject to Citizen: The Second Empire and the Emergence of Modern French Democracy} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 251-55.} In 1848, they engaged in a war of principles, just as did much of the broader general public, an ideological conflict over the essence and definition of the nation, which for them encompassed both church and state. Ultimately this contest would have its denouement in the formal separation of church and state in 1905. But in the mid-nineteenth century, in modeling competing ideas of the state in various proposals for church organization, in contending over doctrine, and in effecting an early separation of church and state by establishing independent churches, French Protestant activism was a microcosm of the broader, increasingly polyvocal political culture.