

THE DIALECTICS OF PROTESTANTISM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE

David George Mullan

The nineteenth century brought challenges that undermined the unity of French Reformed Protestantism. Evangelicals held to the great doctrines of Luther and Calvin, while liberals preferred a looser connection with the past and emphasized the libertarian character of the Reformation rather than its formal doctrinal content. Protestantism was deeply rooted in dialectical forms of thinking and expression, most obviously between assumptions of biblical truth and Roman Catholic idolatry and superstition. That same dialectic, supported by contemporary philosophies, would be turned inward as liberals sought to claim the Reformation as grounds for their freedom from traditional theological constraints while accusing evangelicals of a Catholic-like dogmatism.

Introduction

The cultural identity of Reformed Protestantism in France—including disloyalty and revolutionism—has been a contested issue since the beginning of the Reformation in that country, and for a starting point one might settle upon the year 1559. It at least marks the beginning of that synodal structure which is essential for the proper functioning of this species of Reformation Christianity. Of course, Protestant identity has a lot to do with Catholic identity, and it faced a strong headwind in a profoundly Catholic society. During the Renaissance, Claude de Seyssel (1515) identified the French as “devout and religious above all other people and nations,”¹ and a strong sense of being blessed by a very Catholic God was an important aspect of the early-modern national self-image. One Protestant device for the establishment of an identity was a historical dialectic that contrasted Reformation liberty with Catholic authority, but that same dialectic might also be turned inward as a means of asserting a particular and controversial tangent of Protestantism within French culture.

Historical Context: The Problem of Religious Identity

By the nineteenth century the Reformed made up perhaps two percent of the country’s population, and that proportion was more or less static. At the time of the Revolution, the Eglise Réformée suffered from a number of weaknesses inherited from preceding generations.² Louis

XIV had attacked the Reformed from 1681 with an unremitting savagery, and even after the middle of the eighteenth century, at a time when persecution was sporadic and mainly confined to the south, Huguenots might suffer cruelly. Guillaume de Félice writes that between 1660 and 1787 the Huguenots had been denied everything: barred from the professions, driven from various social corporations governing work, forced into only agriculture and commerce. The Revocation had deprived the community of its leading lights; those who stayed in France suffered quartering, fines, pursuit in the forests and mountains, denial of civil rights; they were “treated as a race of pariahs.” What remained after 1685 was hardly recognizable as the Reformed Church, dominated by uneducated preachers and given to enthusiasms gone to extents not typically seen amongst Calvinists.³ When a more orderly existence was restored, religious life had been reduced to an arid moralism, whether arising from the Enlightenment or from internal theological tendencies.⁴

But, in spite of all, it survived.⁵ A degree of civil recognition was granted in 1787,⁶ and further guarantees followed in the Declaration of Rights in 1789, with Article 10 on religious liberty written by the Protestant Rabaut-Saint-Etienne. Now, while the Revolution did influence Protestantism, it was Catholicism that provided the eye of the storm, the primary destabilizing factor in the country after 1789, and Napoléon was determined to settle the question as a means toward establishing a quiescent country.⁷ In the Organic Articles of 1802, a unilateral addendum to the 1801 Concordat with Pius VII, Napoléon decreed certain paragraphs addressed directly to the Protestants of France.⁸ Government authorization was needed for new churches and parishes, and likewise for an increase in the number of ministers (for whom the government would foot the bill from 1808). What this meant is that there was no true presbyterian structure, thus denying the resuscitated Reformed Church the power to govern its own internal affairs, a situation that pertained until the Third Republic and that made the church rudderless for decades. Furthermore, Title 1.4 states: “No doctrinal or dogmatic decision, no formulary under the heading of confession or any other heading, may be published or become matter of teaching, before the government authorize its publication or promulgation.”⁹

So the church could not regulate its own teaching. Some were gladdened by this alleged non-confessional basis of the revived church, but others deplored a supposed slide into coldness and indifference. In fact, the *tiédeur générale*, the general lukewarmness,¹⁰ of the Eglise Réformée was such that one could hardly identify its theological commitments. In opposition to this state of affairs there arose le Réveil,

the Awakening, led by Adolphe Monod, who, with his disciples, counterattacked with the Reformation and its emphasis upon *sola scriptura* and the doctrines of grace, justification, and sanctification.¹¹ Thus we observe people like Monod discussing the inspiration and decisiveness of the Bible at great length, although not necessarily agreeing on *théopneustie*, verbal inspiration.¹² Perriraz states: “So by the force of matters, le Réveil became a return to the past ... which would pose serious questions to the French theology of the 19th century.”

The construction of a Protestant identity in France would require more substance than an “aversion to Catholicism.”¹³ Especially now in an era of constitutional but sometimes uneasy religious pluralism,¹⁴ the counter-identity of Roman Catholicism, whether Gallican or the even less congenial Ultramontanism, would loom large on the horizon, calling forth the energies of an internally-divided minority group. Protestants presumed to “think big,” anticipating that France itself awaited the benefits of Reformed Protestantism, of whatever brand. It remains to be considered, in another context, however, whether the French were awaiting Protestantism with outstretched hands, or whether the future as imagined by descendants of the Reform was delusional.

Dialecticism and French Protestantism

Dialectical ideas were present in the Francophone world of the early nineteenth century. Michael Kelly observes that in Hegel’s own lifetime “his work was little known or studied in France,” and the bad odor of his pantheism or atheism led to his being ignored during the Bourbon Restoration.¹⁵ However, he was accessible to those Protestant clergy like Samuel Vincent who knew German,¹⁶ and consistent with this observation Pierre Macherey writes of “an avatar of the Hegelianism which was secretly circulating in a muted and watered-down form throughout French thought in the first half of the nineteenth century during the intellectual reign of Victor Cousin.”¹⁷ Even before Hegel there was the influence of Benjamin Constant, an outstanding figure, if not quite comfortably Protestant,¹⁸ in Napoleonic and Restoration France. One of his modern students, Pierre Deguise, writes that “one could imagine a Constant, Hegelian before Hegel, conceiving a dialectical truth and resolving antitheses in a higher synthesis.”¹⁹ Constant posits “le sentiment religieux,” which he regards as having something to do with a wide range of mysterious human feelings.²⁰ But he writes that “religion has been transformed, in the hands of authority,

into an institution of intimidation....Dogmatic religion, that hostile and persecuting power, has sought to subject to its yoke the conjectures of the imagination and the needs of the heart.” Thus he establishes a dialectic between religion and theology, the intimate and the external, the living and the dead, between freedom and authority, and given this striving toward the higher synthesis, *religion* is capable of becoming “an agent of progress.”²¹ Constant’s funeral was held in a Protestant Church in Paris where Athanase Coquerel *père*, a prominent liberal pastor, preached the sermon, declaring that Constant had actually come to believe in revelation.²² It is not hard to discern Constant’s influence in the development of liberal theological thought.

The dominant Protestant Francophone church historian of the time was the Genevan Jean-Henri Merle d’Aubigné (1794–1872), an evangelical who studied under Schleiermacher in Berlin without absorbing the theological liberalism of that environment. He has been called a Romantic historian,²³ and one may see him in relation to Hegel and the latter’s dialectical philosophy and method. He declares that the student of history needs to recognize both “matter and spirit”; history must be animated by “some principle of life.”²⁴ Now, while Merle would agree with Hegel on the importance of spirit—for Merle the Holy Spirit and the receptivity of the human spirit—he regards the positive history of Christianity as essential to the content of religion, not just an ephemeral physical and historical manifestation of some higher principle. Merle rejects such a principle derived solely from art and philosophy; it must be found in religion: “History must live by that principle of life which is proper to it, and that life is God. He must be acknowledged and proclaimed in history;—and the course of events must be displayed as the annals of the government of a Supreme Disposer.” Only when one aspires to such a height will the “confused chaos” of history become “a majestic temple, which the invisible hand of God erects,” not unlike what Lamennais said about the key of church polity.²⁵ A narrative needs a theme, and for men like Merle that was the old providential history with its Reformation-era antinomies now refurbished through an alliance with Romaniticism.

Merle is best known for his *History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, first published in French 1835–53, though he also wrote a continuation in the form of an eight-volume *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*, whose publication was completed only after his death. His narrative is a Romantic story of often tragic heroes²⁶—though John Roney prefers comic because of the divine possibility of salvation²⁷—set against a background of hideous corruption of Church and court and the constant threat of merciless

torment. In France he focuses upon Guillaume Farel, and gives many pages to Marguerite Valois and the ultimately unreliable Bishop Briçonnet. His favorite anti-hero is Noel Bédier, syndic of the Sorbonne, who represents the dark forces of medieval backwardness. He describes the Reformation as “one of the greatest revolutions ever effected in human affairs.”²⁸ He is well aware that *revolution* is a controversial word often identified with political revolt—at least since the French Revolution gave a new sense to the term.²⁹ “The Reformation, being the re-establishment of the principles of primitive Christianity,” he writes, “was the reverse of a revolt. It was a movement regenerative of that which was destined to revive...” Here he reveals the meaning of Protestantism in his own mind: a conservative movement,

of that which is to stand for ever. Christianity and the Reformation, while they established the great principle of the equality of souls in the sight of God, and overturned the usurpations of a proud priesthood which presumed to place itself between the Creator and his creature, at the same time laid down as a first element of social order, that there is no power but what is of God,—and called on all men to love the brethren, to fear God, to honour the king.

The first intent of the Reformation was spiritual, rooted in “the love of truth, of holiness, of eternal things.” Interestingly, he writes that it “is the evidence of a gradual advance in human nature,” referring to the human ascent from earthly interests to “spiritual and immortal blessings.” Of such progress “the Reformation is one of the most memorable days.... It is a pledge that the struggle of our own times will terminate in favour of truth, by a triumph yet more spiritual and glorious.”

According to Roney, “Merle studied the history of the Reformation not only because of its salutary principles, but because he saw a direct link between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries.”³⁰ If Merle can be harsh toward the institution of the Roman Church—“What regeneration has ever emanated from Rome?”—he reserves some of his criticism for modern Protestantism: “A notable uncertainty of doctrine prevails in many of those Reformed churches whose first members sealed with their blood the clear and living faith that animated their hearts.” He finds the vague resort to the Gospel to be without substance, open to a plethora of individual interpretations freely determined, and claims that the system of modern divinity is incapable of satisfying contemporary hunger: “Whilst the faith of Apostles and

Reformers discovers itself, at this day, everywhere active and effectual for the conversion of the world, this vague system does nothing,—throws light on nothing,—vivifies nothing.” But he is sanguine about the potential for both Catholicism and Protestantism through the great doctrines of the one and the Word of the other.

In 1823 the Reformed layman Charles Coquerel published the first edition (*Tableaux*) of what became his *Essai sur l’Histoire Générale du Christianisme*. Right from Roman times Christianity made itself subversive through its commitment to free examination,³¹ and Rome was alarmed by this new idea that took people back to “their primitive equality.” Up to the time of Trajan, Christianity developed in an unstructured environment, “without authority, without decrees, and without councils,”³² and until Constantine a lively faith continued with unlimited examination of theological ideas. But Constantine’s reign saw the outbreak of a struggle “between authority and imagination,” as testified by the Council of Nicaea (325) and its anathemas. Henceforth, free examination would be on the defensive as Europe descended into a theocracy, before the Renaissance introduced a new stirring. Coquerel states that people nowadays assume that the right to choose their own belief is inherent, which might be attributed to two antecedents: first, the advent of Christianity, and then the Reformation, or as he puts it, “the revolution of religious ideas in the sixteenth century.”³³

In 1829, the moderate liberal (or liberal evangelical) Samuel Vincent published his *Vues sur le Protestantisme en France*. Chapter 2 treats the “idea of Protestantism.” He begins: “For me, and for many others, the foundation of Protestantism is the Gospel; its form is liberty of examination.” This is the contested ground of nineteenth-century French Protestantism. One sees here the liberal tendencies of Vincent, for he claims that Protestantism lies beneath the “great system of modern individualism,” whereas Catholicism emphasizes the collective and suppresses individuality, most notably in “thought and belief.” If some people criticize Protestantism at this juncture, he cares nothing, for this is the liberty of that Protestantism that he loves. That religion can be approached from either of two perspectives. One is that it is a group of individuals who, having rejected Roman dogma, elevate their own teachings to a similar status. The other is a group who come together in their exercise of “liberty of conscience and examination,” and who, like the other group, reject not only Rome, but all other human authorities as well. The former are half-Catholic, while the others are the true Reformed, for they give the Bible its due, and to each individual his own dignity.³⁴

Coquerel had more to say. The Reformation put everything in question, but this was dangerous only to error. He does, probably unwittingly, point to an inherent difficulty in the program that he articulates. At the time of the Reformation when liberty of examination was so much in the air, the clergy had to give an account of their beliefs (i.e., to lay people). Thus freedom has its limits, and one is back to the original problem, especially given that the Reformers “advanced clear and definite propositions.”³⁵ However, the Reformation spawned various sects, and while unity might have been desirable, division is a clear testimony to the liveliness of free examination and the sincerity with which it was conducted. Diversity is a necessary and permanent feature of the Reformation and its heritage.³⁶ But Catholicism, Coquerel asserts, is stuck in time due to its pretension to infallibility which prohibits the advance of the human spirit: “thus ... it must remain well behind the rapid advances and the march of modern civilization.”³⁷

The Contested Protestant Past

Both evangelicals like Merle and liberals like Athanase Coquerel *filis* could find occasion to speak gently of some good Catholics, but their attitude was typically negative without a hint of modern ecumenism with its interest in institutions. However, in 1838 François Guizot (1787–1874), intellectual, politician, and Reformed layman, published an essay in the *Revue Française*³⁸ in which he envisioned a France where Catholicism, Protestantism, and philosophy might draw together in some kind of unity. His theme is that of demonstrating that people of any of the three parties can live together in an honorable peace, and indeed must do so because none can alter the other. In particular, Protestantism will not make much headway in converting others; he concludes that “France will not become Protestant.” Wherever one goes one meets with a Catholicism which has triumphed over “the worst shock which has ever struck a belief and a church.” Protestantism has survived persecution by Catholics and disdain by philosophy. Philosophy triumphed over the old world, and despite its failings it will continue in the new. All of these will accommodate themselves to changed circumstances and will survive. He admits that in some publications one may recognize a spirit of hostility, but there is no life left in it for stirring society up as in times past. He takes a rather benign view of Roman Catholicism, and while it has its faults—for example, elevating the institution at the expense of the religious life—it has been and is a great teacher of respect. As for Protestantism, he dismisses as unworthy of comment talk of a

conspiracy to turn France Protestant. Guizot, though theologically traditional, was the friendliest Protestant *vis-à-vis* Roman Catholicism.⁴⁰ Pierre Rosanvallon states that it was he who attempted to draw together “Catholics and Protestants in French culture,” but Guizot was, as André Encrevé notes, hardly representative of the Reformed view of the matter,⁴¹ at least at that time, during the Catholic revival in France.

Athanase Coquerel *père*, brother of Charles and minister at Paris, wrote against this prominent layman who was heavily involved in the life of Parisian Protestantism. He finds assurance in Guizot’s belief that Protestantism in France will not die, but he is adamant in his opposition to the assertion that the country will not turn Protestant. Why not? After all, only Protestantism is faithful to Christianity and liberty. How could Guizot have written that which seems to devote future generations of France to the way of error? Coquerel believes that “the age of religious progress has begun.” France will move slowly but surely toward Protestantism, that is,

toward Christianity freely sought in revelation and freely organized in the State. I believe that France is on the way toward this divine climax in the great drama of the Reformation ... I see everywhere, in the temporal and the spiritual, in the clergy and the people, in the Catholic Church and the Protestant Church, in knowledge, literature, and philosophy, the bursting signs of this great progress and the first glimmers of this great day of the truth. No one will convert France; but it will convert itself....⁴²

A few years earlier Samuel Vincent claimed that if one were to reduce Protestantism to its most distinctive element, *la tolérance*, then the Christian world has already become Protestant.⁴³ This glorious Reformation Christianity still faces the old foe, Catholicism, which remains an energetically proselytising faith, opposed to the dissemination of Protestantism. The Gallican Church once stood up for liberty against the papacy, but no longer, and it is now as exclusive as it has ever been, using all its instruments to withstand the challenge of Protestantism, even to the extent of trying to annul its rights. Presently Protestantism in France finds itself endowed with all the rights of citizenship and is even supported by the state treasury, but Catholicism cannot accept this and seeks a return to a “silent war” which existed before the Revocation. Its ability to make trouble has indeed been weakened, but can one be certain that no recrudescence is possible?⁴⁴ Coquerel opines that Catholicism has had its day, but humanity and

Protestantism have yet to speak, even though his imagined future might need centuries to appear. He was still at it a quarter of a century later: This same dialectic is heard in a sermon that he preached in Paris in 1864. Here an advanced liberal, complaining about the consistory's rejection of his son Athanase as pastor at Paris because of his liberal theological opinions, offers a simple and indeed simplistic dichotomy between the Catholic and the Protestant Churches: "Religious authority is Catholic; religious liberty is Protestant; there is nothing between the two."⁴⁵ He insists that the Huguenot past is the love and defense of liberty, and to this dearly-bought freedom he compares the habitual attachment which is so frequently the nature of Catholicism. The Catholic must give himself over to an external, institutional authority, and finds himself without his own conscience, compelled to follow the Church in everything, so that if he leaves the defined circle, "he is lost; anathema awaits him."⁴⁶

Ultimately of more direct impact in this era than the Protestant–Catholic dialectic was a similarly-shaped warfare occurring within Protestantism itself, and drawing upon the former opposition for its categories and ammunition. Coquerel finds forerunners of liberty in the Middle Ages, notably those Waldensian dissenters in the Piedmont, followed by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and others. They read the Bible and they disseminated it so that all might read it. Coquerel writes, "That was enough; religious liberty reappeared with it." To this must be added his earlier statement that its meaning for salvation is pellucid, and indeed must be:

Under the banner of the Reformation, the faithful person, between the Word of God and his conscience, sees no place for any interpreter who might confirm for him its assertions; he does not admit that it has need of a sanction which authorizes it, that it presents mysteries or lacunae which would be like traps of perdition; he does not abdicate before any explanatory authority; he persuades himself that the divine book can not be divine if it is not sufficiently clear for each person....

He concludes the thought with the citation of 1 Corinthians 10:15, "judge for yourselves what I say."⁴⁷ Coming to confessions of faith, he says that these resulted from the demands of rulers concerning what the Reformers believed, to which "the Reformers responded according to the light of the time, according to their understanding of the Bible and according to their conscience." Such was the origin of the French Confession, first articulated in 1559 and then renewed in 1571. "All the

pastors and ministers, all the elders and deacons, all the teachers, were held to sign it and were dismissed when they did not ... Who would sign it today, or indeed who has the mission and the right to choose there some articles and to compel our faith to see there the pure Christianity?"⁴⁸ Interestingly, if not shockingly, he writes that only two items govern the Reformed Church's existence in his day, namely the law of Germinal (Organic Articles) and the decree of March 1852 (amendments to the Articles, with respect to organization),⁴⁹ "and he who professes to the contrary, he who wants either more or less, he who gives himself expired powers, he who wants to set us again under the synodal regime of our predecessors—that one takes leave of his own time and commits an anachronism of intolerance." In those civil decrees there is no mention of doctrine in the catalogue of powers of the recognized institutions; only in the synodal powers is doctrine mentioned, and the synods can meet only by special authorization, which was not granted. Any attempt by a lesser body at imposing a confession of faith is contrary to the law. He writes that the truth of Jesus Christ has no need of such defenders; the faith defends itself. But this may be seen to contradict his statements about the clarity of scripture. If it is clear, why cannot it be reduced to a simple statement of *credo* or indeed *credimus*? He places his confidence in "the truth, the holiness, the beauty of the Gospel of Jesus."⁵⁰ He deplores the rise of division, and asks his hearers to rid themselves of this fatal spirit of exclusivism and intolerance. "Read the Gospel, admitting that to all the points of view an interpretation can be conscientious, agreeable to the Lord, useful to progress, when it differs from yours..." But does this not at some point suggest that all hearts and minds ought to move in a similar direction? If not, what of the utility and lucidity of the Bible?

Guizot and Athanase Coquerel *père* supplied contemporaries with a choice of narratives extending into the future, Coquerel doing so by helping to construct what Patrick Cabanel refers to as "the veritable myth" then under construction—actually since before the Revolution—of "the modernity of Protestantism,"⁵¹ while Philip Nord writes that the liberal vision was conceived of "as a series of oppositions" directed against backward evangelicals.⁵² In a work published in 1903, the educator and historian Ferdinand Buisson discussed the relations between free-thinking and liberal Protestantism.⁵³ He was himself both, and in fact identifies Protestantism as the sometimes unwitting founder of free thought. Lamennais, borrowing freely from Bishop Bossuet,⁵⁴ would have affirmed his view.

So in effect there were two Protestantisms for Buisson. One was true to the fundamental thrust of the Reform, that is "the method of

free examination,” and exemplified by the hero of his seminal work on Sebastian Castellio who wrote against Calvin for his role in the execution for heresy of Michael Servetus.⁵⁵ His collaborator Félix Pécaut agreed on the matter of free examination, and went so far as to deny that Jesus was the perfect being, asserting that he was delusional if he thought himself the Messiah.⁵⁶ The other was the Protestantism that closed up after the great founders, especially Luther and Calvin. Here was a dialectic: an open-ended Protestantism giving rise to the modern liberal form, and a dogmatic form of the Reformation which, after its separation from Rome, was struck with fear at its own audacity and the disappearance of “certainty, unity, authority, tradition, revelation, all the supports of which human fragility has need, and it re-established as quickly as possible, in whatever orthodoxy, an under-Catholicism, a purged Catholicism.”⁵⁷ Thus the churches of the Reform betrayed their founding principle and became again like that which they had rejected in 1517. He writes that, as of 1903, liberal Protestantism is the most legitimate and complete expression of the Reformation, “precisely because it consists not in a doctrine, but in an orientation of the spirit, because it breaks cleanly with the Catholic idea of having religion reside in a certain number of ‘revealed truths’ and that it brings it back to being a free ascent of the soul toward an ideal which grows ceaselessly with it.”⁵⁸

Conclusions

On the one hand the very existence of Protestantism was dependent upon oppositions between works and grace, tradition and Bible, authority and freedom, and so on. Protestantism was an antithesis to the thesis of the Medieval Catholic Church. Athanase Coquerel *fils* preached in the Temple de l’Alliance Evangélique at Neuilly on 1 November 1866, to mark the 349th anniversary of the Reformation. *Pourquoi la France n’est-elle pas Protestante?* begins with an affirmation that every religion must, over a period of time, fall into deviation and then reform itself. After the gradual growth of sentiment in the Middle Ages, “finally the day arrived where this torrent of light, liberty, and spiritual life overflowed the world, inundating and fertilising vast territories.”⁵⁹ Writers on both sides referred to the Reformation as a great revolution, but as with any revolution, and notably the French, the beginning of a revolution entails the question of the end of it. François Furet writes that “the French Revolution was continually revising the terms of the undertaking, deferring its final outcome or success...”⁶⁰ Who will draw it to a close and institute a new period of

conservation and conservatism? Merle saw the Reformation as something complete in itself with the renewal of doctrine and practice. Liberal Protestantism, however, would have nothing of the sort, and, beginning with relatively moderate expression by men like Coquerel father and son and ending with Pécaut and Buisson, the dialectic became an ever more rarified version of the initial revolution in 1517. Even a confession proposed by evangelicals in 1872 represents an eviscerated theological statement.⁶¹ Content was reduced to little more than the freedom to think freely. Liberals opposed it with feral energy, and a decades-long schism resulted. An old opposition was reborn, with liberals presenting themselves as the true heirs of the Reformation, and evangelicals as the descendants of medieval Catholicism and its dogmatism. They were the antagonistic Catholics in the midst, renouncing the freedom which the sixteenth century had begotten, while liberals were the paladins of Jesus' renunciation of Jewish religious authority.

All Protestants agreed on the theme of liberty and its centrality to the Reformation. It was a Protestant trademark and a battle standard. But for Merle and other evangelicals its effect was to liberate Christianity from the thralldom of Roman Catholicism and to lead to great oppositional doctrines such as grace over works, while for liberals of various stripes it became tied to a dialectical view of history where pairs like theology and religion, the former dogmatic and the latter affective, incurred an increasing alienation from the past. Each new dialectical pair discards more of the past as authoritarian, and thus the Reformation as a theological event becomes ever more rarified and evanescent.

Notes

1. Claude de Seyssel, *The Monarchy of France* [1515], trans. J.H. Hexter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 51.
2. Emile G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du Protestantisme, vol. 3, Déclin et Renouveau* (1964; Paris: Quadrige, 1988), pp. 217-76; André Encrevé, *Protestants Français au milieu du XIXe siècle: Les Réformés de 1848 à 1870* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1986); see also his essay, "French Protestantism," in Rainer Liedtke and Stefan Wendehorst (eds), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 56-82. Also, Steven C. Hause, "French Protestants, Laicization, and the Separation of the Churches and the State, 1802-1905," in Kathleen Perry Long (ed.), *Religious Differences in France* (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2006), pp. 141-59.
3. Samuel Vincent, *Observations sur l'Unité religieuse en réponse au livre de M. de la Mennais* (Paris: Treuttel and Wurtz, 1820), pp. 45-6.
4. Otto H. Selles, "Orthodoxie et Lumières au second Désert selon un sermon inédit," in Hubert Bost and Claude Lauriol (eds), *Refuge et Désert* (Paris: Champion, 2003), pp. 119-41.
5. Guillaume de Félice et François Bonifas, *Histoire des Protestants de France*, 7th edn (Toulouse: Société des Livres Religieux, 1880), p. 578. The last Book, no. 6, from pp. 699, was written by Bonifas. It treats the years 1861-74, and is an invaluable source.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 576.
7. Jacques-Olivier Boudon, *Religion et Politique en France depuis 1789* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007), p. 21.
8. Burdette C. Poland, *French Protestantism and the French Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 263-79.
9. Daniel Robert (ed.), *Textes et Documents relatifs à l'Histoire des Eglises Réformées en France (Période 1800-1830)* (Geneva: Droz, and Paris: Minard, 1962), p. 42; excerpted in Rémi Fabre, *Les Protestants en France depuis 1789* (Paris: La Découverte, 1999), p. 11.
10. Philippe Wolff and Janine Garrisson (eds), *Histoire des Protestants en France: de la Réforme à la Révolution*, 2nd edn (Toulouse: Privat, 2001), p. 236.
11. Louis Perriraz, *Histoire de la Théologie Réformée Française. 4: De Calvin à la Fin du 19 Siècle* (Neuchâtel: Editions Henri Messeiller, 1961), p. 202.
12. Adolphe Monod, *Cours de Morale Chrétienne*, p. 14, MS, Montpellier, Institut de Théologie Protestante; Henri Blocher, "Théopneustie", in *Encyclopédie du Protestantisme*, ed. Pierre Gisel

- (Paris: Cerf, & Geneva: Labor & Fides, 1995), p. 1563. See also Perriraz, *Histoire de la Théologie*, pp. 203ff.
13. Poland, *French Protestantism*, p. 260.
 14. Félice, *Histoire*, pp. 634-5.
 15. Michael Kelly, "Hegel in France to 1940: A Bibliographical Essay," *Journal of European Studies*, 9 (1981): 30.
 16. Samuel Vincent, *Du Protestantisme en France*, new edn (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860), p. 317; Ferdinand Fontanès, "Notice sur Samuel Vincent," in *Vincent, Méditations Religieuses* (Valence: Marc Aurel Frères, 1839), pp. xiv, xxxi, xxxvii.
 17. Pierre Macherey, *The Object of Literature*, trans. David Macey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 48.
 18. Gilbert Faccarello and Philippe Steiner, "Religion and Political Economy in Early Nineteenth-Century France", in Bradley Bateman and H. Spencer Banzhaf (eds), *Keeping Faith, Losing Faith: Religious Belief and Political Economy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 45.
 19. Pierre Deguise, *Benjamin Constant méconnue: Le Livre de la Religion* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), p. 261. Charles Coquerel recognizes his indebtedness to Constant in *Essai sur l'Histoire Générale du Christianisme* (Paris: A. Sautet, 1828), p. 21.
 20. Benjamin Constant, *Political Writings*, ed. Biancamaria Fontana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 279; Benjamin Constant, *Ecrits Politiques*, ed. Marcel Gauchet (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), p. 467.
 21. Helena Rosenblatt, *Liberal Values: Benjamin Constant and the Politics of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 28; Paul Bastide, *Benjamin Constant et sa Doctrine* (2 vols; Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), vol. 2, p. 614; Emile-François Callot, *La Pensée Libérale au XIX siècle à travers trois moments de sa formation: Benjamin Constant, Alexis de Tocqueville, Lucien A. Prévost-Paradol* (Lyon: L'Hermès, 1987), pp. 74-5.
 22. Bastide, *Benjamin Constant*, vol. 1, p. 481; Rosenblatt, *Liberal Values*, p. 242.
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27. Ibid., pp. 134-5.
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29. Roney, pp. 157-62.
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31. Charles Coquerel, *Essai sur l’Histoire Générale du Christianisme* (Paris: A. Sautet, 1828), p. 55.
32. Ibid., p. 59.
33. Ibid., p. 117.
34. Vincent, *Du Protestantisme*, p. 15.
35. Coquerel, *Essai*, p. 120.
36. Ibid., p. 132.
37. Ibid., p. 150.
38. “Du Catholicisme, du Protestantisme et de la Philosophie en France,” *Revue Française*, 7 (June 1838), 193-214.
39. But not according to Hegel’s dialectical progress. Franz Wiedmann, *Hegel: An Illustrated Biography*, trans. J. Neugroschel (New York: Pegasus, 1968), p. 28.
40. François Guizot, *Méditations sur l’Etat actuel de la Religion Chrétienne* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1866).
41. Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le Moment Guizot* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), p. 386; see also Encrevé, “French Protestantism,” p. 56.
42. Athanase Coquerel, père, *Lettre à M. Guizot* (Paris: Cherbuliez, 1838), p. 30.
43. Vincent, *Du Protestantisme*, p. 5.
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45. Athanase Coquerel père, *La Liberté Chrétienne et l’Autorité* (Paris: Cherbuliez, 1864), p. 14.
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51. *Le Pasteur Samuel Vincent à l’Aurore de la Modernité* (Nîmes: Société d’Histoire de Protestantisme de Nîmes et du Gard, [2003]), p. 68.
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53. On Buisson’s belief in God, see Jacqueline Lalouette, *La libre Pensée en France, 1848–1940* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2001), pp. 170-2. See also Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003), passim.

54. Vidler, pp. 46n, 63n, 75-6.
55. Ferdinand Buisson, *Sébastien Castellion, sa vie et son oeuvre (1515-1563): Etude sur les origines du protestantisme libéral français* (2 vols; Paris: Hachette, 1892).
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