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JULES FERRY AND HENRI MARET: THE BATTLE OF CHURCH AND STATE AT
THE SORBONNE, 1879-1884

BY

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TROY J. HINKEL

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University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
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JULES FERRY AND HENRI MARET: THE BATTLE OF CHURCH AND STATE AT
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the battle between church and state at the University of Paris, 1879-1884. Jules Ferry, the Minister of Public Instruction for the French Third Republic, wished to secularize education in France during his tenure in this position. Henri Maret, the Dean of the Theology Faculty at the Sorbonne, sought to prevent this. This dissertation examines the ensuing conflict between Ferry and Maret, along with an analysis of the strategies and rationale utilized by each. This battle produced ongoing ramifications for larger church and state issues, not only in France, but throughout Europe.

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Introduction

Efforts to craft a modern, democratic secular state ignited contentious battles in the early years of France's Third Republic, established on September 4, 1870. In no arena of government action did these struggles become more severe than in education. Although the French Revolution had cut many of the ties that bound the state and the Catholic Church to one another, in the domain of education church and state remained institutionally commingled throughout much of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, Catholic clerics—priests along with male and female members of religious orders—continued to do much of the teaching, in primary, secondary, and even in certain domains of higher education.

Republican leaders of the Third Republic sought to address this historical circumstance by imposing a standard of *laïcité*. For them, *laïcité* meant two things: removing any state-supported preference for one religion over another, and defining strict boundaries between the public and private spheres. The public sphere would be governed by the state, while the influence of religion was to be confined to the private sphere.¹ The effort received legal stature with the passing of laws initiated by the Minister of Public Education and Cults, Jules Ferry – known as the *Ferry Laws*. With these laws passed between 1879-1885, Ferry sought to wrest control over education from the Church and hand it to the developing French Republican state.

¹ Here I use the definition of *Laïcité* provided by Catherine Kintzler in *Qu'est-ce que la Laïcité?* (Paris: Vrin, 2007), 10-11. See also Marcel Gauchet, *Un Monde Désenchanté?* (Paris: Les Éditions De L'Atelier, 2004), 106-120. For an understanding of *laïcité* as it relates to the English usage of the term *secularization*, see Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2007), 209-211, 466.

After writing laws to achieve *laïcité* in primary and secondary education, Ferry shifted focus to higher education. His plan to *secularize*, or transfer governance of the University of Paris to a civil authority no longer interested in granting funding preferences or other social privileges to the Church had serious implications for relations between church and state and for higher education in modern France.² It also dramatically altered the university's identity. The Sorbonne, established in the Middle Ages, was a traditional center for theological study, and enjoyed an old and prestigious heritage of scholars and saints who hallowed its halls while providing an education that was the envy of all Europe. Ferry's project to impose *laïcité* implied an end to the Sorbonne's storied theology faculty, where priests had been trained for centuries. It transformed what had originally been a Catholic institution, albeit one supported by state funds since Napoleon, into a civil or public institution where religious questions might be *studied* but were no longer *taught*.

Laws to eliminate the theology faculty were written in 1880, but did not go into effect until 1884, the year that the dean of the theology faculty, Archbishop Henri Maret, died. My research uncovered evidence suggesting that Maret worked tirelessly in the last years of his life to delay the application of these laws. In the dissertation that follows, I tell the story of Maret's struggle to prevent the liquidation of the theology faculty in order to deepen our understanding of the complex politics of *laïcité* in France during the 1870s and 1880s, and to argue that Maret's efforts had long-term consequences that have not been widely recognized.

² The University of Paris is also known as the Sorbonne. These two terms will be used interchangeably throughout this work. Furthermore, the word *Church* will be used to denote the Catholic Church specifically. The word *church* will be used in a more general sense to simply refer to a corporate understanding of any group identifying itself as Christian.

My argument is that despite losing the battle for the theology faculty at the Sorbonne in the end, Maret's efforts did prove enduring and emblematic for the future of Catholic education in the modern West. The basis of this legacy is Maret's refusal to accept common assumptions held by both conservatives known as *ultramontanists* and anticlerical liberals regarding the necessary tenor of relations between church and state. This made Maret's views unique and foundational for developing new paradigms for such relations.

The competing political camps of the Third Republic assumed that the Catholic church and French state had antithetical goals and interests insofar as education was concerned. For example, camps on the left and right assumed that religious education precluded a rigorous education in modern science. They presumed that the hierarchical structure of authority within the church was at variance with democratic freedom and equality. They believed that church and secularized state were, in many respects, in competition for citizens' loyalties. Finally, they accepted the Enlightenment's ideological connection between secularization and modernity.³

Maret did not hold to these dichotomies. Rather, he believed that he could harmonize forces generally presumed to be incompatible. Ultimately it was Maret's synthesis that would prove to be normative for Catholic education in the West, finding fulfillment not only in the landmark documents of Pope Leo XIII between the years of

³ For cross-disciplinary analysis of the Secularization Theory, see Steve Bruce, *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); F. Champion, "Entre laïcization et sécularization: des rapports dans Eglise-Etat dans l'Europe communautaire," *Le Débat*, no. 77 (1993): 46-72; William H. Swatos Jr. and Kevin J. Christiano, "Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept," *Sociology of Religion*, vol. 60 no. 3, Autumn (1999): 209-228; Rodney Stark, "Secularization, R.I.P.," *Sociology of Religion*, vol. 60 no. 3, Autumn (1999): 249-273.

1884 and 1891, but also in the modern Catholic university system as a whole.⁴ In this respect, Maret's position stands out compared not only to the assumptions of Republican political officials, but also to that of his Catholic political confreres. His maneuverings to prevent the secularization of the University of Paris disclose the significance and distinctiveness of the religious and political landscape of the period.

In order to grasp the evolution of Maret's position, it is vital to understand the path traveled by Maret's interlocutor and opponent Jules Ferry. Ferry began his career as a left-leaning Republican, pushing vociferously for complete separation of Church and state. After achieving the position of Minister of Public Instruction and Cults in 1879, however, he allied himself with the Opportunist bloc of the Republican wing, who did not believe the time opportune for a strict separation between the two. This produced tensions within the anticlerical ranks, tensions that reveal deeper conflicts within the anticlerical side of republicanism.⁵ Ferry then initiated a series of legislative actions to end Catholic influence in the schools. These laws, as we will see, were expressive of certain broad convictions concerning the place of religion in a secular society, and, more narrowly, convictions about the institutional relationship of church and state, the potential conflicts between faith and modern science, and the tensions between Catholic and democratic notions of authority. Studying how these two men negotiated the political and

⁴ For a recent treatment of Catholic social teachings rooted in Pope Leo XIII's rapprochement with modernity in hopes of re-Christianizing society, a view articulated by Henri Maret, see Joseph Holland, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: The Popes Confront the Industrial Age 1740-1958* (New York, Mahwah New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2003), 107-140. For an investigation into Catholic higher education, see Phillip Gleason, *Contending With Modernity: Catholic Higher Education in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 105-114; 124-125. This work explores universities in the U.S., but nevertheless expresses the vision of Maret for higher education which is reflected in American institutions.

⁵ Recent historiography reveals cleavages and political divisions in the early Third Republic republican blocs. Some division revolved around gender, sexuality, and proper use of leisure in the Third Republic. See Jean Elisabeth Pedersen, *Legislating the French Family: Feminism, Theater, and Republican Politics, 1870-1920* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003) 42-45. For an assessment of the nature of the various political divisions, see James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: the Political Culture of the Early French Third Republic* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001) 35-58.

philosophical implications of their convictions casts new light on the problem of how France defined its specific form of secular state based on *laïcité*. It also illuminates the broader question of how modern democratic governance and Catholic education have learned to coexist.

The “Traditional Assessment” of church/state Relations in 19th Century France

This work is largely indebted – and in no small way responsive – to the great wealth of scholarship already devoted to the subject of the Catholic-Republican tensions of nineteenth century France. Some of the scholars reflect an older and long-standing strain of historiography that accepts at least implicitly many of the same tendencies assumed by anticlericals such as Ferry in the early years of the Third Republic. More recent scholarship has challenged these long-standing assumptions, arguing in various ways that an antithetical view of church/state relations depended on one’s philosophical interpretive framework. “A long tradition of republican historiography, focused on legislation and political battles, has accepted these interpretations (those of Ferry and Ernest Lavissee, who wrote historical text books used from 1884 until the 1960’s) asserting that the Ferry Laws established ‘L’École du peuple,’ freed France from an obscurantist church, and, for the first time, made schooling available to all.”⁶ Or, from Ferry’s perspective, he articulated the problem differently to the Chamber of Deputies in June of 1876:

“In effect, what is at the heart of this issue is not the claim of a liberty of the political and civil order, but the claim that there is a ‘mystical’ right, of

⁶ Patrick Harrigan, “Church, State, and Education in France, From the Falloux to the Ferry Laws: a Reassessment,” *Canadian Journal of History*, April (2001): 52-53. See also Patrick Harrigan and Raymond Grew’s *School, State, and Society: The Growth of Elementary Schooling in Nineteenth-Century France- A Quantitative Analysis* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1991).

a primordial right which would belong to Christian education solely, and not to any other worldly authority, except that of the Holy See.”⁷

Thus, scholars align themselves roughly into two historiographical camps: first, the traditional assessment camp which seems to accept at least implicitly some of the same anticlerical tenets of the past; second, the “reassessment” camp, which does not exhibit this tendency as strongly. Again, the question is whether the Church was inherently a hindrance to the civil, scientific, and most importantly for this work, educational goals of a democratic society.

I will examine these historiographical trends starting with the traditional assessment school with the following organizing schema: first, I will examine the broader principles of church/state relations, focusing on those scholars who view religion as hampering the progress of secular society; then I will narrow the lens, surveying those historians who see faith as stymieing science. Lastly, I will examine those who agree that the removal of religious faculties from education proved beneficial to France, explaining why each work is important to my problem, as well as where my work fits into these trends.

Antagonism Between Church/State Relations

This first set of scholars hold to the antagonistic view of church/state relations, a view which helped me identify and clarify my own interpretation of certain primary source material. These scholars tended to highlight perspectives found in the writings not only of Jules Ferry, but also of Louis Liard, Ferry’s man in charge of implementing

⁷ Jules Ferry, speech to the Chamber of Deputies during the National Assembly, entitled “La combat politique de l’État enseignant,” in *Jules Ferry: La République des citoyens*, Odile Rudelle, ed. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Éditions, 1996), 365.

laïcité in higher education, Ernest Lavisse, professor at the Sorbonne who wrote much of the history text books utilized in French schooling for almost 80 years, and the *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement* (R.I.E.), a journal established for the dissemination of republican ideas in the realm of education.

Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (1978) is an older work, yet his thinking about church/state relations and the influence of education to foster the process of modernization endures to this day.⁸

Weber's thesis is that prior to 1870, most of rural France was populated by impoverished, backwards, and linguistically heterogeneous peasants. This situation changed wholesale, he claims, in the period from 1880-1910 due to the development of better roads and railways, compulsory military service, and educational reforms that spread the French language.⁹ Homogenization of language to unify urban peasantry in its nation building program was certainly an important goal of the republicans. However, it was not the only goal of the French government. Establishing an anticlerical regime in order to remove the massive influence of the Catholic Church in education seems at least as important of a step in establishing national unity as homogenizing language and improving travel. The influence of the Catholic Church in French society offered unwanted competition for loyalty and civic priority, and explains equally well why the government wanted to reform education.¹⁰ Thus, Weber's book offers an interesting thesis regarding education reform as a component of nation building, although he did not account for possible further ideological or anticlerical motivations of Ferry.

⁸ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1978), xii.

⁹ Weber, *Peasants*, 338.

¹⁰ Jules Ferry, "Liberté de l'enseignement et anticléricalisme politique," in *Jules Ferry: La République des citoyens*, ed. Odile Rudelle (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Éditions, 1996), 353-373.

Scholars Jean-Marie Mayeur and Madeleine Rebérioux approach the founding of the Third Republic from a Marxist perspective.¹¹ They contend that the Catholic Church represented a monopolization of both social power and budgetary allocations in their educational pursuits. The republican bloc, made up of a diverse array of labor unionists, socialists, Marxists, and other radicals, along with Opportunists such as Ferry, realized their need to combine efforts to overcome this religious hegemony.¹² These scholars emphasize the unity achieved in the republican anticlerical bloc due to their battle against a common foe. Laïcité proved a great victory for this nascent Republican government.

Katherine Auspitz focuses on the nature of the *Ligue de l'Enseignement* (Teaching League) founded by educator and editor Jean Macé in Alsace in the 1860's.¹³ This organization, Auspitz believes, provided the impetus for educational reform in the early days of the Third Republic as it was a vehicle for organized and vocalized social change. Her dominant theme is that the Third Republic was quite revolutionary in its own right, not just an extension of previous revolutions, such as that of 1789 or 1848. She advances the idea that French anticlerical republicans concluded that “success would come only when all citizens – peasants, workers, and women as well as bourgeois men – believed themselves to be heirs of 1789.”¹⁴ The underlying presumption is not hard to perceive: the ecclesial *status quo* was holding things back. Auspitz's work provides a dramatic illustration regarding the religious battles over education in the Third Republic.

¹¹ Jean-Marie Mayeur, Madeleine Rebérioux, *Les Débuts de la Troisième République, 1871-1898* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1973.)

¹² Mayeur, Rebérioux, *Les Débuts*, 72-100.

¹³ Katherine Auspitz, *The Radical Bourgeoisie: The Ligue de l'enseignement and the Origins of the Third Republic, 1866-1885* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

¹⁴ Auspitz, *The Radical Bourgeoisie*, 3.

Historians François Furet and Mona Ozouf edited a work that builds on Auspitz's research by examining the philosophical underpinnings of the origins of the Third Republic.¹⁵ This work underscores the church/state controversy from Ferry's perspective. His conception of the nation as deeply connected to the rights of individual liberty meant that institutions like the Church, with its rigid expectations of allegiance to religious doctrines as he saw it, could only be viewed as adversarial.¹⁶

I classify Maurice Larkin in the traditional assessment category because he sustains the anticlerical view that Catholics both in and out of politics in the republic were to be viewed with utter suspicion due to their reputation for subversion.¹⁷ His research shows why it was so hard for Catholics to gain access to positions of political power within the government. There were many ultramontanist Catholics engaged in vitriolic attacks against the republic, but this is not true of all Catholics who opposed the anticlerical republican program.¹⁸ Larkin draws attention to Ferry's anxieties about his political situation and provides a narrative of the political infighting about education reform.

Faith vs. Science

This next set of scholars holds to the view that Church involvement in education stunted the growth science and thus ridding the educational systems from this influence

¹⁵ François Furet, Mona Ozouf, eds. *Le siècle de l' avènement républicain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993).

¹⁶ Furet, Ozouf, *Le siècle*, 250.

¹⁷ Maurice Larkin, *Religion, Politics and Preferment in France since 1890: La Belle Epoque and its Legacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 3-20.

¹⁸ Ultramontanism, or 'beyond the mountains,' was the nomenclature given to Catholics who looked 'beyond the mountains' or Alps to Rome for total control of the French Church. They were the ecclesiastical foes to Gallicanism, the view that the French Church was controlled by the Crown and his appointed Bishops. For a deeper understanding of these two movements, see C.S. Philips, *The Church in France, 1848-1907* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967), 2-37.

proved advantageous to France. Terry Nichols Clark examined the relationship between social arrangements like governmental departments of sociological statisticians and how these affect the institutionalization of ideas.¹⁹ Although he argues that sociologists were more influential via these governmental vehicles than in academic settings due to their ability to gather statistical data as government agents, the state-funded ministries enabled sociology to develop as an independent discipline outside of the academy. It was Durkheim who finally initiated the penetration of sociology as a new and more rigorous science into the university system as a whole. This, for Clark, established a truly modern university system. Secularization, specialization, and broadening the application of scientific principles into social analysis marked the dawning of this new era. This work emphasized the unique role of the Sorbonne in developing Sociology as an academic discipline. Clark seems to align his research with Ferry's thesis; namely, that Maret's faculty was holding up scientific progress in the university. Thus, fostering this progress would therefore necessitate the elimination of the theology discipline.

Dominique Maingueneau, a linguist, offers a cross-disciplinary perspective regarding the effective use of school textbooks in the early Third Republic.²⁰ He argues that, far from being a closed system of ideas, these text books used in the Third Republic interacted with a broad array of disciplines. A section from a grammar book, for instance, would be used again to explain science to pupils in primary or secondary grades.²¹ Thus, this work argues that if the texts implemented by Ferry et al. were any indication of the

¹⁹ Terry Nichols Clark, *Prophets and Patrons: The French University System and the Emergence of the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973) 99-112.

²⁰ Dominique Maingueneau, *Les livres d'école de la République, 1870-1914* (Paris: Editions le Sycomore, 1979).

²¹ Maingueneau, *Les livres*, 339.

educational accomplishment of the Ferry Laws, then Ferry's strategy to improve education for French pupils was a remarkable success.

Louis Greenberg also reflects the tendency to view a necessarily antagonistic relationship between the Church and the modern state. He examines the work of Emile Durkheim, who established the first faculty of sociology at the University of Bordeaux in 1895 before establishing himself at the Sorbonne in 1902. Greenberg argues that it was this move that introduced intellectual life, and that "higher education returned to France," and that the Third Republic was "restored to life."²² This return to life was marked by the victory of positivist science over metaphysics and religious doctrines, as well as the elevation of the sociology of religion in order to understand the world in such a way as to make it more useful for the various social classes and the power of the state.²³ The establishment of scientific credentials over religious dogma was for Durkheim, as well as for Greenberg, the achievement that set apart the "New Sorbonne." This work builds on Clark's argument that the replacement of theology with Sociology stands as an achievement of Ferry's vision to develop further domains for scientific influence in the academy. For Greenberg, sociology is the fruit both of the application of the scientific method to the study of human social experience as well as the transformation from teaching religious doctrine to studying religious experience.

George Wiesz contends that it was the reform of higher education throughout Europe, but in France more specifically, that solidified democratic forms of governance.²⁴ Thus, the university became the means to reconcile the republic with the people, and

²² Louis M. Greenberg, "Architects of the New Sorbonne: Liard's Purpose and Durkheim's Role," *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 1, Spring (1981): 77.

²³ Greenberg, "Architects," 90.

²⁴ George Wiesz, *The Emergence of Modern Universities in France, 1863-1914* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983).

new, political arrangements emerging from centralized forms of state control generated ideological needs. The academy claimed a special province regarding these needs, believing that its new mission was to offer the ideological training demanded by a modern state. The republican anticlericals, he argued, viewed science as the new social pacifier and unifier, replacing defective religious structures that formally held this role.²⁵

Wiesz's book underscores the position of anticlericals such as Ferry that a theology faculty could not coexist in a government-funded university, as the ends were different. A state-funded university supported the needs of the state, versus the needs of someone's soul, which Ferry held would be supported better in the home. Wiesz explores the circumstances that gave rise to this new political role of the university now that theological instruction had been abandoned.

Education Reform

André Tuilier examines the history of the University of Paris, from its founding in 1257 to the present.²⁶ He implies that the Sorbonne's history is one of continuity rather than discontinuity. He sidesteps the disruption caused by the French Revolution, as well as the bureaucratic model and its ramifications on academic life imposed by Napoléon. Tuilier also assumes the traditional view that secularization was the stepping-stone into the modern age, founded upon science and enlightenment notions of liberty. Thus, he believes that the history of the Sorbonne is one of continuous growth and development, as it responded institutionally to the progressive march into the modern age.

²⁵ Weisz, *Modern Universities*, 95.

²⁶ André Tuilier, *Histoire de l'Université de Paris et de la Sorbonne, volumes I, II* (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie de France, 1994).

Tuilier asserts that various conditions led up to the laicization of the Sorbonne, but that it was the loss to Prussia in 1871 and the political divisions within the conservatives and Pope Leo XIII that precipitated the legislation that brought about the dissolution of the theology faculty. French Republicans blamed the loss to Prussia in the war to Prussia's technological superiority, a fruit of its superior, science-enhanced, university system. Here again, Tuilier stands in the historiographical tradition that accepts the age-old antithesis between faith and science, secularization and modernity, and liberty and church authority. This work is the only modern history on the University of Paris. In this regard, it offers a framework in which to situate any study of the Sorbonne with reference to its long and illustrious history. A weakness of the work, however, is that Tuilier offers little by way of a deeper explication regarding the contentious battle over the dissolution of the theology faculty in 1885.

Robert David Anderson's *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*, argues that university reform was a priority under the Third Republic because education was at the center of the regime's values.²⁷ The university was seen as a natural home to science, which had a triple function: intellectual, economic, and social development. Hence, the goal of reform of higher education was, according to Anderson, an aspect of the goal of reform of society as a whole: a replacement of traditional values with those of science and its philosophical foundation, Positivism, would mediate the secular "public spirit" to the masses.²⁸ Anderson offers a solid contribution in the historiographical record regarding the influence of positivism as well as the centrality of scientific research in the project of higher educational reform.

²⁷ Robert David Anderson, *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914* (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2004), 181.

²⁸ Anderson, *European Universities*, 182.

Much of what these historians have to say on the topic is undeniably accurate. For instance, they rightly stress the connection between anticlericalism and republicanism, science and technological development, and the tensions between liberty and religious authority. However, my trajectory is informed by a different strain of historiography, one more consistent with Maret's view.

The "Reassessment" of Church/State Relations in 19th Century France

More recent scholarship overcomes these enduring adherences to apparent dichotomies. As Canadian scholar Patrick Harrigan states, "there is another way of interpreting the period between the Falloux and Ferry Laws, however."²⁹ Although much of Harrigan's work deals with primary and secondary education, his research applies to higher education as well. His main thesis is that schools dominated by teaching religious orders prior to the Ferry Laws were not hindering the development of science as what has previously been assumed. This conclusion was the result, he reasons, of a shift in the historical discussion from a "look at the rhetoric surrounding education," to a look "at the practice" of French schooling prior to the Ferry Laws.³⁰ The scholars examined in the re-assessment trend concur with this point. Furthermore, their research tends to focus on schools and popular sentiment found outside of major urban centers like Paris. Thus, they capture a picture of the Republican program much different than what emerged from the history written during this time period (which endured well into the twentieth century.)

I will investigate these scholarly works moving from broader categories like the relationship between secularization and modernization, to a more specific focus by

²⁹ Harrigan, "Church, State, and Education," 53.

³⁰ Harrigan, "Church, State, and Education," 53.

examining historians who deal with relations between Church and state. Finally, I will assess those scholars dealing with the role of the Church and education.

Challenges to Secularization and Modernization Theory

The work of this first group of scholars challenges the longstanding assumptions of the Enlightenment that secularization represented a uniform and progressive advance from a church dominated state to a more liberal, modern one. Scholars Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser edited an interesting volume on the secular-Catholic conflict in Nineteenth Century Europe.³¹ Advancing the Harrigan thesis, Clark states, “the days are long past when historians conceived of modernization in terms of a linear decline in religion,” there is still, nevertheless, a propensity to “view the phenomenon of religious revival as a detour, a distraction from the norm of an irreversible process of secularization.”³² Clark and Kaiser investigate what they perceive as a vigorous, innovative, and extensive trans-European Catholic and Christian revival. Catholics and Christians, they argue, more generally contributed to the politicization and thus to the modernization of wide segments of European populations by organizing into various political, social, and labor movements in order to maintain a civic presence. This, they argue, helped create processes often identified with the so-called modern democratic state.

³¹ Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds. *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 47-57.

³² Clark, Kaiser, *Culture Wars*, 12. For further exploration into Catholic revivalism during the process of wide-spread European secularization from a cross-disciplinary perspective, see Roger Finke and Patricia Wittberg, “Organizational Revival from within: Explaining Revivalism and Reform in the Roman Catholic Church,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 39, no. 2, June (2000): 154-170; and Margaret Lavinia Anderson, “The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany,” *The Historical Journal*, vol. 38, no. 3, September (1995): 647-670.

René Rémond offers similar insights to the topic of secularization and church/state relations. In *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* Rémond challenges the view that the modern state debilitated the power and influence of the Church during the end of the nineteenth century. He argues that the history of secularization takes into account only the loss of official positions of power held by the Catholic Church as is the case in education, but does not take into account other ways the Church's presence persisted in French society. For instance, Rémond contends that the establishment of labor unions, the explosion in the cult of Mary in devotional life, missionary efforts, and the organization of political parties in the early twentieth century all reveal the flexibility and creativity of the Church in maintaining social influence.³³ His work analyzes areas of religious influence often neglected by scholars. More specifically, Rémond's offers a remarkable claim: namely, that the Catholic religion benefited from the loss of its formal political status when it relinquished the alliance between throne and altar. In this way, the Church regained "an autonomy that had been lost or never possessed."³⁴ Thus, the Church acquired social influence in one arena, even though it lost influence in others, giving mixed success to the anticlericals. Rémond's research highlights the difficulties in assessing the success of the process of secularization.

Hugh McLeod's book *Secularization in Western Europe, 1848-1914*, offers an alternative perspective regarding the typical explanations on the rise of nationalism. He examines what he calls "pace-setters" in the process of secularization, namely, elites, intellectuals, radicals and "men as a group with distinct anticlerical, anti-religious feelings," who held significant roles in the transformation of religious beliefs by offering

³³ René Rémond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* (Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 204.

³⁴ Rémond, *Religion and Society*, 178.

rival belief systems.³⁵ McLeod contends that secularization was thus a rival belief system to religion, versus the notion that it was simply a neutral perspective devoid of any reference to a belief system. When these rival belief systems gained ascendancy, they became forces for nationalism. McLeod's perspective is similar to Ferry's in that he holds to an oppositional view between church and state, while sharing Maret's belief that the strong ideological currents of the democratizing forces resulted in unnecessary harm to the forces of religion. Thus, tendencies of secularization or nationalism are ideological in nature, and posed as a dangerous threat to religious belief in Nineteenth Century Europe.

Church and state relations

Dealing more specifically with church/state relations, historian Phillip A. Bertocci examines the "ill-liberal" facets of Ferry's secularizing policies, especially regarding his laws dealing with the universities.³⁶ His treatment of Jules Simon shows why the latter actually opposed the moderate Ferry and Jacobin-spirited Eugene Spuller and Paul Bert because they were too willing to dispense with the principle of freedom of choice within the education reform bills. Catholic and other private citizens who enjoyed freedom of education would, Simon thought, suffer from Ferry's insistence that education not only be free and laic, but also 'compulsory.'³⁷ Bertocci's book is very useful regarding the inconsistencies of Ferry with respect to his political strategies. While touting his credentials as a *filis de '89* and therefore an inheritor of the claims of individual liberty against absolutist authority, in practice he nevertheless resorted to more centralizing or

³⁵ Hugh McLeod, *Secularization in Western Europe, 1848-1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 285-286.

³⁶ Philip A. Bertocci, *Jules Simon: Republican Anticlericalism and Cultural Politics in France, 1848-1886* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1978).

³⁷ Bertocci, *Jules Simon*, 184-85.

absolutist means himself to achieve his educational ends. Bertocci's work uncovers an interesting irony concerning Ferry's legislative and political activity in the Third Republic. The process of developing a modern state involved an appeal to absolutist tendencies in order to achieve the desired liberal political goals.

Pierre Chevallier's work differs from previous research in that Chevallier pays closer attention to the Catholic Church's response to school secularization in France, using the writings of Pope Leo XIII as representative of official church position, as well as the private journals of Jules Ferry.³⁸ This work offers a further critique of the liberal claims of Ferry that a laïc republic provided the best means for modern, liberal state. Chevallier also examines the effect influences like positivism and freemasonry played in shaping Ferry's views.³⁹ A constant theme throughout the work revolves around his view that the republican liberalism of Jules Ferry was contradicted by his actions due to prior ideological commitments. "In a system founded on liberalism (which is its cardinal principle), how can one reject pluralism of opinions, beliefs, and doctrines (i.e. those of the Church)?"⁴⁰

James R. Lehning examines the rural influence in the church/state question. He challenges the notion that factors like compulsory military service, transportation, and language provided the best means of nationalization of the French. He focuses instead on the rural French identities which he believes were forged from political interaction between rural and urban centers.⁴¹ He defines political culture as a discursive process

³⁸ Pierre Chevallier, *La Separation L'Eglise et de L'Ecole: Jules Ferry et Leon XIII*; (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1981).

³⁹ See also Philip Nord's "Republicanism and Utopian Vision: French Freemasonry in the 1860's and 1870's," *Journal of Modern History* 63 (June 1991): 213-229.

⁴⁰ Chevallier, *La Separation*, 70.

⁴¹ James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Third Republic* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001) 33.

taking place within civil society, creating collective identities based on localized interests. In rural settings, these interests were more concerned with religious beliefs than in the urban. Lehning's main argument is that the republican elite rejected broad political participation out of fear of the masses, whose activity could degenerate into violence. Thus, the antagonistic view of the church and state had more to do with the political clout of the urban elite imposing their agenda than it did with rural political communities.

Jacqueline Lalouette is another scholar who fosters a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of church/state relations in the Third Republic. She argued that the divisions existing within the Republican bloc between anticlericals opportunists like Ferry and more left-leaning Republicans like Paul Bert who viewed Ferry as betraying the Republican cause, created legislative logjams for the goals of the separationists, those agitating for immediate separation of church and state.⁴² Her work showed too that the political process of secularization was not the uniform, united, and coordinated effort that it is often assumed to be. This is a very important as it means that things could have turned out differently.

Steven Kale takes seriously the often ignored terrain of French Legitimism as an authentic political option.⁴³ His main argument is that the nineteenth century in France was not solely a century for anticlerical Republicanism, but also that of Legitimism (belief that France should be ruled by a legitimate monarch.) As Kale shows, Legitimism was not a call for a return to the *Ancien Régime* or a revival of noble privilege, as republican opponents often charged, but organized elements “of radicalism and

⁴² Jacqueline Lalouette, “La séparation, avant la separation, ‘projets’ et propositions de loi (1866-1891), *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’Histoire*, no. 87, Jul-Sep (2005): 41-55.

⁴³ Steven Kale, *Legitimism and the Reconstruction of French Society, 1852-1883* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992).

experimentation, albeit for conservative ends, which is at odds with the traditionalism with which Legitimism has been identified.”⁴⁴ Legitimists objected to republicans because they were social atheists. Thus, Kale’s work offers greater credibility to the position of those who opposed anticlerical Republicanism. His work also sheds light on why both Maret and Pope Leo XIII had such difficulty winning Catholics over to their side when it came to rallying around the republic, as Legitimism was a powerful and well-organized Catholic political movement uninterested in compromising with a perceived dangerous opposition.⁴⁵

The Church and Education

Finally, we will survey various scholars who examine more specifically the relationship between the church, state, and education. Scholar John McManners offers an opposing view concerning Jules Ferry and the education battle with the Catholic Church.⁴⁶ He argues that the two components of Ferry’s education reform laws of 1879 – namely, to weaken the private system of education controlled by the Church, and to expel unauthorized religious teaching orders like the Jesuits and confiscate their monasteries, establishments, and schools – achieved mixed results. McManners concludes that Ferry’s chief success lay in his less sensational activities, in what he began to build – specifically, interparty consensus regarding his legislative plans – rather than in what he began to destroy, such as Catholic schooling systems controlled by religious congregations. “If the religious congregations were to be ousted, the state must take over the responsibility for

⁴⁴ Kale, *Legitimism*, 109.

⁴⁵ The name given to Pope Leo XIII’s program to unite Catholics to the Republic was called the ‘Raillement,’ or the *rally*.

⁴⁶ John McManners, *Church and state in France, 1870-1914* (New York, San Francisco, London: Harper/Torch Books, 1972).

education of every child in France, and Ferry put up the legislation which made the state system ultimately capable of taking over in every sphere.”⁴⁷ The problem, as McManners argues, lay in the practical implementation of such a program.

Patrick Harrigan contends that the concern from the republicans towards Catholic education was rooted in the desire to decrease competition in state schools, which were growing at a less rapid rate than their Catholic counterparts.⁴⁸ Harrigan provides ample enrollment statistics as a basis for his claim. He holds that the private and/or Catholic school systems not only attracted more students, but even more elite students who came from wealthy and influential families.⁴⁹ This was the kind of influence Ferry feared, and thus he had to act quickly in order to reduce such troublesome competition.

Françoise Mayeur, challenges the thesis that the Ferry Laws unified France. She contends that laicization represented a rupture. “The crucial issue was secularization,” and the Camille Sée Law (which followed upon the Ferry Laws) that removed religious instruction from the schools was “the last straw for Catholics,” one which revealed the true, aggressive, anticlerical motives of the government.⁵⁰ These motives, Mayeur contends, created divisions between the government and the countryside.⁵¹ A rigid division between religion and state – on this reading – was not the only option, and certainly not the ideal one. Her research scrutinizes the negative popular sentiment of French Catholics towards the Ferry program, thus bolstering the argument that the church/state divisions emerged from ideological over practical divisions. Furthering this

⁴⁷ McManners, *Church and state in France*, 52.

⁴⁸ Harrigan, “Church, State, and Education,” 68, with useful tables denoting enrollment data for Catholic schools between the years 1854-1901, 80-83. See also Patrick Harrigan, “French Catholics and Classical Education after the Falloux Law,” *French Historical Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, Autumn (1973): 255-278.

⁴⁹ Harrigan, “Church, State,” 262.

⁵⁰ Françoise Mayeur, “The Secular Model of Girls’ Education,” in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 4, edited by Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992), 239-244.

⁵¹ Mayeur, “The Secular Model,” 241.

viewpoint, Maurice Crubelher, a historian sympathetic to the idea that free, compulsory, and laic education brought about the unification of France, conceded that the belief that casting Catholic schools as “adversaries of the principles of 1789” is a biased reading of history, and that “secularization was not neutral but a way of choosing sides between two conceptions of state and private life.”⁵²

In her book *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France*, Sarah Curtis builds upon Harrigan and Grew’s work, arguing that the reforms to secularize primary and secondary schools were not as uniform as traditional scholarship would have us believe. The success of religious orders’ preparations for and the awarding of the *brevet de capacité* (teaching certificate) as well as their adaptation to teaching modern science reveals that the schools under Catholic auspices were not as scientifically and pedagogically incompetent as anticlericals asserted. In fact, in terms of establishing certain kinds of authoritative structures in the Third Republican schools, like the schoolmistress, the congregational Catholic schools provided the model due to the fact that “female religious communities gave unmarried women social standing and a sense of purpose.”⁵³ Her work gave further support to the argument that faith and science in education are compatible.

⁵² Maurice Crubelher, *L’École républicaine, 1870-1940: Esquisse d’une histoire culturelle* (Paris: Éditions Christian, 1993), 25.

⁵³ Sarah Curtis’ *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France* (DeKalb, Ill: Northern Illinois UP, 2000) 79. See also chapter 1 of R.D. Anderson’s *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*, where he admits that higher education in the ancien regime possessed certain characteristics identified with modern reform, as was the case with pre- Third Republican training in scientific research. Thus, these scholars assert that Ferry’s education reforms were not solely aimed at modernizing education, but at removing clerical influence in education.

Delphine Mercier, a scholar on French education, penned a recent work on the role of the school inspectors and moral education.⁵⁴ She examines the tightly controlled regimen on moral education French schools, arguing that the relationship between inspector, school, and parent, walked a fine line, or sometimes blurred the line, between fostering personal liberty, Ferry's stated goal for these inspectors, and governmental imposition.⁵⁵ This work helped identify a deeper complexity in Ferry's motivations for his laws. His methods for establishing his educational vision resorted to actions inconsistent with his commitment to liberal principles. This further reinforces an underlying argument that his commitment to positivism and anticlericalism provided the firmest motives for his actions.

Robi Morder develops the theme of Ferry's anticlerical program and de-christianization.⁵⁶ This work argues that Ferry's view of the secular school was "utopian," and fostered the process of de-christianization.⁵⁷ Thus, this scholar stands in the tradition critical of the Ferry project for meddling with school systems that may not have performed as poorly as what has often been claimed.

Sources and Methodology

I approached the resources for the material for this dissertation from the perspective of intellectual history as I am interested in ascertaining the intellectual and

⁵⁴ Delphine Mercier, "L'enseignement de la morale au quotidien: le rôle des inspecteurs primaires 1880-1914," *Histoire de l'éducation* 105 (2005): 45-66.

⁵⁵ Mercier, "L'enseignement de la morale," 63.

⁵⁶ Robi Morder, "La Troisième République, L'e'tat, l'e'cole: le mouvement ouvrier entre autonomie et compromis," *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 78 (2005): 27-35.

⁵⁷ Morder, "La Troisième," 30.

ideological rationale behind Ferry and Maret's understanding of church/state relationships, as well as the strategies employed to achieve political success.

In order to gain this understanding, I relied on information gathered from both published and unpublished material dealing with their political positions. I also examined material that would explicate their own philosophical foundations to reveal motivation, perception, and activity. I examined their published material in order to discover who their audiences were, as well as what possible effects they hoped to achieve with their speeches or writings. I studied unpublished manuscripts, letters, and correspondence to ascertain the connection between their public activities and strategies and their personal convictions and belief systems.

For published material, I utilized notes taken the proceedings in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate housed in the *Annales du Assemblée Nationale*, June 2 and 3 of 1876, the debate over the Law of Liberty of Higher Education. Some of this same material, like that of Ferry's speeches during this time, are also contained in volume I of a book entitled *Jules Ferry: La République des citoyens*, edited by Odile Rudelle as part of the *Acteurs de L'Histoire* series directed by Georges Duby of the French National Academy (*l'Académie française*) published by Imprimerie Nationale in 1996. I also employed materials from the *Journal Officiel de la République Française: Chambre et Sénat* (abbreviated J.O.C. and J.O.S. accordingly.) This newspaper-print text offers documentation of the legislative proceedings in the National Assembly.

I used further material for Ferry found in his published multi-volume work entitled *Discours et Opinions de Jules Ferry* with notes and commentary from Paul Robiquet who served as Advocate (legal counsel) for the State Council.

As for Archbishop Henri Maret, I accessed all of his published works contained in the *Maret Fonds* at the L'Institut Catholique de Paris. Maret penned these works mostly for a broad Catholic audience, with special attention given to the French episcopate from whom he wished to garner support for his plans. For most of his works published after 1879, it is clear that his publication strategy matched his political strategy. He wrote each work under a plethora of his many official ecclesiastical titles as an obvious display of his hierarchical credentials.

Private correspondence and other letters written either by or to Maret are contained in a three volume work entitled *Vie de Mgr. Maret: Son Temps and Ses Oeuvres*, by friend and colleague at the Sorbonne, L'Abbé Bazin. The first two volumes of this work are relatively easy to find. The third volume, however, the volume dealing with the crucial years 1879-1884, is almost impossible to find. I thank the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* for aiding me in acquiring it.

For unpublished material, I used materials taken from the *Archives Nationales de France* (A.N.) in Paris. I especially made use of the following series: Series AJ 16 2602-2632 and 4741, notes and correspondence from the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne; Series F 17 13070-13072, 13213-13215, and 13238 concerning reports from the Inspector General of Higher Education regarding Sorbonne faculty personnel, candidates, and faculty chairs; Series F 17 4405-4411, theology papers and conference notes, F 17 6675-6676 which concerns public instruction and Catholic institutions, F 19 4090 which are administrative reports from the *Administration des Cultes* dealing with the theology faculty, and Series C 3380, Texts of the projects of law from the Chamber of Deputies regarding the abrogation of the Concordat.

Outline of the Work

To properly understand the uniqueness and legacy of each man's work, it is necessary to detail the historical context of education at the rise of the Third Republic. As far as Maret was concerned, the originality of his contribution could not be understood without first explaining the nature of the debate from the perspective of the Catholic conservatives (those working for a return to the monarchy) serving in the Republic.⁵⁸ Thus, in chapter one, we will examine not only Jules Ferry's avowed educational program, but also the position of Albert de Mun, a Frenchman of noble heritage and a devout Catholic, as representative of the Catholic political voice of the day. He contended that the purview of education belonged most properly to the family and the Church, not the state. Ferry opposed de Mun, insisting that education was the proper function of the state. As teacher and patron of the sciences, he held that the state possessed the responsibility of forming its citizens.

Chapter two takes up the battle over education after Ferry became the Minister of Public Instruction. Once in office, he enacted a series of measures aimed at laicization of education at all levels. First, Ferry's legislation to remove all of the Catholic teaching orders from active ministry required a multi-layered strategy. He made it a requirement for all teachers to possess a *brevet de capacité*, or teaching certificate, and to be educated in the *écoles normales*, teaching schools wherein the *brevet de capacité* could be earned. Ferry also penned perhaps the most controversial of all of his legislation at this time, by

⁵⁸ For an assessment of the uses and changing nuances of the term conservative in the Third Republic, Michael Hawkins, "What's in a Name? Republicanism and Conservatism in France, 1871-1879," *History of Political Thought*, no. 26 (2005): 120-41.

attaching a very contentious article onto one of his measures, known as Article Seven. This article banned all non-authorized orders from active ministry in the country.

Chapter three explains the uniqueness of Maret's views within this divisive context. Maret belonged to neither of the standard camps. The reasons for this were somewhat complex. He was considered a liberal Gallican in the recent past, and this moniker plagued his efforts. Fortunately, he foresaw difficulties like this one in the previous governmental regime. Anticlericalism was nothing new, and battles with previous Ministers of Public Instruction only served to season him for Ferry's actions.

Chapter four examines the final battles of Maret, as well as his surprising influence on Ferry. Maret never waivered in his commitment to the idea that state and church not only could work together, but, indeed, should work together for the betterment of each. He continued his pursuits of canonical recognition under the auspices of Pope Leo XIII, successor to Pius IX and more favorable to Maret's work.

Chapter five investigates the ongoing influence of both Ferry and Maret, despite the latter's apparent failures. Ferry's legacy is more obvious, as his influence continues to this day. The school systems in France are still secular, but some concessions to the Church have been made. As for Maret, his view of the Republic found astonishing support with Pope Leo XIII. He wrote three encyclicals from 1884-1889 calling for Catholics in France to rally around the Republic. This program of *ralliement*, as it has been dubbed, was precisely the position of Maret. Further, the Pope's document reflects other unique attributes of Maret's work: the need to properly form the laity in theology, the need to train priests to better understand politics and society, and the correlation between the disciplines of theology and science.

For the Catholic universities too, still scattered throughout France as throughout the rest of the Western world, Maret's influence lives on. From the great universities of Louvain and Georgetown, of Navarre and Santiago, sacred and secular disciplines are taught side by side. It was he, not de Mun, Pius IX, or even Ferry, who rightly anticipated the future of Catholic higher education.

As one can see from the above outline, the question of church/state relations in nineteenth century France, and particularly in the area of higher education, is both controversial and nuanced. Is it the case that secularization and social progress are necessarily coextensive? Is there an ideological incompatibility with the Catholic and democratic systems? Can the Ferry Laws be categorized as an unequivocal victory for state against religion? As we will see throughout this work, Maret's answer to each of these questions came as a resounding "No!" His conviction, furthermore, was both emblematic and influential for the future of Catholic education, and the future of Catholic engagement in the democratic world. Maret did not adhere to the suspicions of the anticlericals that the goals of the Church and the state were incompatible. This work situates itself in the recent reassessment trends, as these explain best Maret's utter dedication to bridging the gap between church and state.⁵⁹ He believed whole-heartedly that his vision for collaboration between the two in the university was achievable.

Further, those opposing his initiatives did so more for ideological reasons. This was true for his opponents on both the right and the left. My research suggests that the Sorbonne possessed a respected science faculty prior to the dissolution of the theology faculty, and that Maret represented a position shared by other European Catholic

⁵⁹ Harrigan, "Church, State, and Education," 52.

intellectuals, scientists, and prelates, including the Pope, that faith and science could not only collaborate, but even prove mutually beneficial.

Henri Maret differed from many of the ultramontanists, especially those in politics, as Maret viewed the church and state as distinct yet complementary forces. His was a unique voice. This distinctive view set him apart during a time when forces within the state and the church seemed willing to part with the other. With a breach in this mutually beneficial relationship between the two, Maret believed, the end result would be the destruction of society. Thus, he viewed his mission to spare the theology faculty at the Sorbonne from suppression as extremely urgent, not only for the sake of the university, but for society as well.

Chapter One: The First Battle Regarding Higher Education

As dean of the Theology faculty, Henri Maret represented a distinct voice of opposition to secularization of the Sorbonne (also known as the University of Paris.) Maret believed there to be no opposition between loyalty to the Church and loyalty to the state, Church authority and individual liberty, or faith and science. Forces on both the left and right on the government, however, accepted most if not all of these dichotomies. Thus, it was taken as a given that these forces on both the left and right in the French Third Republic in the years of 1875-1879 viewed church and state as oppositional and antagonistic to each other. The issue was not how church and state could collaborate or even coexist, but rather which should control education in France, to the detriment of the other.

To contextualize Archbishop Henri Maret's unique arguments regarding church and state relations in higher education, this chapter explores the first and most contentious debate on the topic in the Chamber of Deputies. This debate came on the heels of a conservative victory in the legislature the year before in July of 1875, a victory represented by the law known as the "Law of Higher Education." It had given universities freedom to confer degrees with some independence from state control. Jules Ferry, who would eventually be appointed Minister of Public Instruction and Cults in 1879, was at this time a Deputy from the Vosges region in northern France. He was one of the most articulate and vigorous anticlerical *provocateurs* in the Chamber of Deputies, which had just passed to a liberal majority. Ferry made it his primary goal to reverse the

Law of Higher Education of 1875 in order to neutralize what he considered the dangerous influence of the church, and return control over higher education to the state.⁶⁰

Albert de Mun, a deputy representing Morbihan in Brittany, was Ferry's most eloquent opponent during this debate. De Mun's arguments were broadly representative of the conservative point of view.⁶¹ This chapter gives a detailed exposition of what occurred during the Chamber meeting, as it set the stage for all that would transpire regarding Henri Maret and higher education in the ensuing years.

Although some have assumed Maret shared the political sentiments of the conservative bloc of the republican government, his arguments were quite different from those espoused by both de Mun and Ferry. He accepted none of the supposed dichotomies between Church and state that both conservatives and anticlericals accepted. De Mun mistrusted the democratic state as much as Ferry mistrusted the Church. He therefore presented a carefully crafted defense of the 1875 Law of Higher Education, basing it on somewhat abstract views of the relationship between the Church and the individual citizen's right to education.

⁶⁰ My sources in this chapter are notes taken in the Chamber of Deputies during this time, now housed in the Archives of the National Assembly. All of Ferry's speeches during this time are found in two places: the *Annales de Débats La Chambre de Députés*, specifically 3 juin, 1876, pp. 279-290, and in volume I of a book entitled *Jules Ferry: La République des citoyens*, edited by Odile Rudelle as part of the *Acteurs de L'Histoire* series directed by Georges Duby of the French National Academy (*l'Académie française*) published by Imprimerie Nationale in 1996. When citing the conservatives like de Mun in the debate, or when further detail is provided, I refer to the debate proceedings from the archives of the National Assembly. I also utilize materials from the *Journal Officiel de la République Française: Chambre et Sénat* (abbreviated J.O.C. and J.O.S. accordingly.) This newspaper-print text offers documentation of the legislative proceedings in the National Assembly.

⁶¹ For an understanding of the development of the political formation of de Mun and French Legitimists, see Stephen E. Hanson, *Post-Imperial Democracies: Ideology and Party Formation in the Third Republic France, Weimar Germany, and Post-Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 87-122. For insight into the parliamentary system to provide a historical context to these debates, see Jean Marie Mayeur, Jean-Pierre Chaline, Alain Corbin, eds. *Les Parlementaires de la Troisième République* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2003), 240-247.

The Chamber debate over the Law of Higher Education occurred June 2 and 3, 1876. It was an early vituperative clash between the Republican majority in the Chamber and their conservative opponents after the election, and the hardening positions seem to foreshadow the 16 mai crisis. This debate reveals why the educational policy was at the center of the controversy, and shows how both sides viewed education in relation to state power.

Historical Context of the 1875 Law of Higher Education

The nineteenth century began with a diplomatic arrangement between the French government and the Catholic Church respecting education. Napoleon realized quickly that governing France would be much easier with the Catholic Church on his side. He sought cooperation from the Pope to create a landmark document regulating relations between church and state, the famous Concordat of 1801.⁶² Among the developments emanating from this document was the reinstatement of the University of Paris. The historic university had been closed during the French Revolution, and the Catholic Faculty of Theology had closed along with the parent institution. Because the Concordat referred to the Gallican articles of 1682, which had given the French government authority to appoint bishops along with other prerogatives perceived to protect state sovereignty, Napoleon felt comfortable with the faculty's reestablishment. The Catholic Church responded in kind, restoring its eldest jewel of higher learning, the Sorbonne. The

⁶² For a recent summary of historiography regarding the relationship between Napoleon, his Empire, and the Church, see Steven Englund's "Monstre Sacré: The Question of Cultural Imperialism and the Napoleonic Empire," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 51, no. 1, March (2008): 215-250. See also Rodney J. Dean *L'Église Constitutionnelle Napoléon et la Concordat de 1801* (Paris: Éditions A&J Picard, 2004), 640-665, and Michael Broers *The Politics of Religion in Napoleonic Italy: the War Against God, 1801-1814* (London : Routledge, 2002), 175-190.

Sorbonne or University of Paris had always enjoyed support from the Church, and its closing after the French Revolution had been interpreted as a great Catholic tragedy in Rome. Its reopening in the wake of the Concordat was a cause for Catholic rejoicing, viewed by the faithful as a sign that the Church had reestablished itself within the educational domain.⁶³

However, the spirit of cooperation and coexistence soon eroded.⁶⁴ A year later, Napoleon created what were termed the Organic Articles as an addendum to the concordat in 1802. Following this addendum, any Catholic religious community wishing to educate French children or function in any ecclesial capacity had to be approved by the government. Although religious communities such as the Jesuits and the Carmelites were never ‘officially’ approved by Napoleon, his rules were not strictly enforced as time wore on. Thus, although their educational activities were technically illegal, the schools operating according to these articles proceeded with their operations unimpeded.

The Falloux Laws instituted by the government of Napoleon III in 1850-51 furthered the amicability of church and state, at least on the education front. These laws reversed the illegality of unauthorized religious communities as outlined in the Organic Articles.⁶⁵ As a consequence, private institutions such as the Catholic Church took full advantage and gained operational control of many schools.⁶⁶

⁶³ Henri Maret offers a brief explanation of the Concordat in a short book detailing his Catholic strategy for keeping the theology faculty at the Sorbonne. He believed the Concordat offered the proper context for achieving his goals. See Henri Maret’s *Le Projet de Bulle*, (Paris: Delalain et Fils, 1875), 16-17.

⁶⁴ Jean-Pierre Chantin, *Le Régime Concordataire Français: La Collaboration des Églises et de l’État 1802-1905* (Paris: Éditions Bauchesne, 2010), 134-150.

⁶⁵ Patrick Harrigan, “Women Teachers and the Schooling of Girls in France: Recent Historiographical Trends,” *French Historical Studies*, vol. 21 no. 4 (1998): 593-610.

⁶⁶ For an investigation of the political context surrounding the Falloux Laws, see Jean-François Chanut, “La Loi du 15 Mars 1850, ‘du Comte de Falloux aux mécomptes de François Bayrou,’” *Vingtime Siècle. Revue d’histoire*, no. 87 Numéro special Jul-Sep (2005): 21-39.

The story of higher education featured similar swings. During the Napoleonic era, all universities in France were centralized under the *Université Impériale*. The Université Impériale was not so much a university as an administrative center, set up by Napoleon himself, as the centralized governing body to oversee all universities in France. This Napoleonic Model created a massive bureaucratic structure which enabled Napoleon (as well as the other 19th century kings and emperors who retained it) to keep tight control over the universities.⁶⁷ Thinking to dismantle this relic of the Imperial past, in July of 1875, the government of the Third Republic passed legislation ensuring Liberty in Higher Education.⁶⁸

Benefiting from the royalist-leaning Mac-Mahon presidency, the legislation liberalized the system established under Napoleon. The Freedom of Higher Education legislation gained widespread support from both conservatives in the Chamber of Deputies who hoped for greater influence for the Church in education, and liberals like Jules Simon, who simply wanted to avoid stifling academic freedom through a governmental monopoly.⁶⁹ Specifically, the 1875 law allowed *free universities*, the graduates of which were to be examined by juries made up of state appointed officials as well as professors from the free university itself. These mixed juries gave free universities the ability to confer degrees apart from state-controlled bureaucratic system established by Napoleon. Further, the new law allowed any French person of 25 years or older to offer courses if approved by the rector of the university or academy inspector.

⁶⁷ For more information on the Napoleonic Model of the French university system, see R.D. Anderson, *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*, (New York, Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2004) 39-56, and Walter Rugg, ed., *Universities in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries—1800-1945 vol. III* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 44-47.

⁶⁸ Evelyn M. Acomb, *The French Laic Laws, 1879-1889: The First Anti-Clerical Campaign of the Third French Republic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), 130.

⁶⁹ *Journal Officiel de la Senate (J.O.S.)* 27 décembre, 1879, No. 20; pp. 11579-81.

Political Shifts

In the 1870s, the French right suffered a severe decline in their clout, a decline which would lead to the change in the structure of French education. This loss of conservative power was prompted largely by the *Seize mai* affair.⁷⁰ To summarize: in 1873, a plan was attempted by conservatives, led by the President of the Republic, Patrice Mac-Mahon, a royalist at heart, to reestablish a monarch as the head of France. The key person to his scheme was none other than Henri Comte de Chambord, the Bourbon great-grandson of Charles X, the Bourbon monarch who reigned after the fall of Napoleon in 1815. As the head of the Bourbon dynasty, Chambord was supported by two camps in the Royalist party – Restorationists, who wanted to restore the monarchy, and Legitimists, who also wanted to restore the monarchy but only for a legitimate Bourbon – who controlled the senate and the presidency.⁷¹

The current president in the early days of the Third Republic, Patrice Mac-Mahon, claimed Irish nobility in his ancestry. He thus possessed a strong sentiment for restoring both the monarchy and nobility to their prized social position. After the bloody aftermath of the failed attempt of the Paris Commune in 1871, the political mood of French citizens turned conservative. Mac-Mahon's agreement to hand over power to another French King seemed timely and right; except for one small problem, the Comte de Chambord himself

⁷⁰ For a historical analysis of the relationship between the Seize Mai Affair and the Law of Separation of 1905, Jacqueline Lalouette, "La séparation, avant la séparation, 'projets' et propositions de loi (1866-1891)," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 87 Jul-Sep (2005): 41-55.

⁷¹ For an analysis of the royalist leanings of the political leaders of the early Third Republic, see James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 14-35.

refused to reign as a constitutional monarch. He also balked at the acceptance of the Tripart colors of the national flag as the standard of his rule. With his refusal to assume power, the hopes of Mac-Mahon and the conservatives were spoiled. Frenchmen responded by voting in non-royalists in the Chamber of Deputies.

Within this shifting framework, the issue of education became that much more controversial. The central issue surrounding the fending off the rising influence of opportunist Republicans in the Chamber was no longer simply the conferral of degrees, but which institute was best suited to oversee French education – the Church, which resumed its longstanding influential role as the nineteenth century wore on, or the state.

In January/February of 1875, former head of state Adolphe Thiers joined with the initiative of Jules Ferry and other moderate Republicans like Léon Gambetta to vote for the constitutional laws of the Republic.⁷² Republicans won the next year's elections, although the end result was not exactly what they had hoped. In the Senate, which gave disproportionate influence to rural areas, the majority was made up of monarchists, although the majority was a slender one; only one seat (151 against 149 Republicans.)⁷³ In the Chamber of Deputies, however, the overwhelming majority consisted of Republicans.⁷⁴

⁷² For recent works detailing Gambetta's role in the birth of the French Third Republic, see Jean Garrigues, *Les grands discours? parlementaires de la Troisième République: de Victor Hugo à Clemenceau 1870-1914*, Tome I (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004), and William Everdell, *The End of Kings: A History of Republics and Republicans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 219-245.

⁷³ Jules Ferry, "Liberté de l'enseignement et anticléricalisme politique," in Odile Rudelle, ed. *La république des citoyens: Jules Ferry, vol. I*, (Paris: Imperiale Nationale, 1996), 495. This work contains Ferry's political speeches from 1876-1884.

⁷⁴ May 16, 1877, when Mac-Mahon dismissed Simon as his Prime Minister and replaced him with Orleanist, duc de Broglie, he dissolved the French National Assembly. The French voters responded with land-slide victories in the various regions in late summer and early October of that year, giving the country over completely to the Republicans.

Mac-Mahon recognized the threat, as did other conservative Republicans. With the hope of reestablishing a Bourbon back on the throne dashed, right-leaning Republicans realized the urgency of safeguarding the role of the Church during the Chamber debates over education. Jules Ferry, a member of the Chamber of Deputies representing the Vosges region, recognized as well that education was *the* means for seizing and determining France's political future. Arguments in the Chamber grew increasingly contentious over education, especially higher education.⁷⁵ Ferry knew that a unique window of opportunity had arrived in the Chamber of Deputies. He believed, with many, that the interests of the new liberal establishment would best be served through an educational agenda.

On June 3rd, 1876, the Chamber of Deputies met to discuss the educational structure. Ferry, because of his political acumen, was chosen by Jules Dufaure (who was elected the President of the Council after Mac-Mahon's debacle to be rid of him) to address the Chamber regarding the needs of higher education. Like Dufaure, Ferry classified himself as '*anti-clerical*,' (versus anti-Catholic, or anti-religious,) a common distinction among those of the Republican left who considered themselves *opportunist*.⁷⁶ The opportunists disagreed with the radical side of their Republican wing, not wanting to implement a strict separation between church and state quickly for fear of a backlash which would favor the royalists. Recognizing the tenuous hold on the Chamber, Ferry

⁷⁵ Ferry, "*Liberté*", 356.

⁷⁶ The term '*anticléricalisme*' was coined by Félix Pyat, but became popularized as a result of Léon Gambetta's famous dictum, "Cléricalisme-voilà l'ennemi!" in his speech to the Chamber of Deputies, May 1873. It meant to want to be rid of the ecclesiastical influence within the political and social sphere in France. The term *Opportunist* referred to anti clericals who did not believe that the time was opportune for complete separation from Church and State. For more understanding of opportunism and anti-clericalism in the origins of the Third Republic, see Maurice Agulhon, *The French Republic 1879-1992* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1995), 11-48, and Jean-Marie Mayeur and Madeleine Rebérioux, *The Third Republic From its Origins to the Great War* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 79-90.

hoped that this distinction between anti-clerical and anti-Catholic would soften opposition to his educational restructuring.

Another matter connected to the education issues that was also hotly debated was the issue of the conferral of degrees.⁷⁷ The anticlericals and the conservatives had differing views regarding the authority of the free universities to grant diplomas. The current law for higher education allowed for what were known as mixed juries at the free, non-state funded universities, to offer accredited degrees. The mixed jury was made up of professors from both the state and private universities. Ferry voiced the opinion of the anticlericals that this was not acceptable, “Gentlemen, why do we not wish to renounce control of higher education and the conferral of degrees? Because we consider that public teaching...is essentially a social interest of the state.”⁷⁸

De Mun and the Conservative Case

Before Ferry rose to give his address, the Chamber of Deputies heard from Albert de Mun.⁷⁹ De Mun, a Legitimist of noble origin, argued in favor both of continuing the Falloux Laws and the recent law of 1875 which had given authorization to institutes of higher education to confer degrees apart from the state.⁸⁰ His arguments appealed not only to the Catholic conservatives of Restorationist bent, but also to those Legitimists who aligned themselves with the royalist cause because they feared what they considered

⁷⁷ Jules Ferry, séance 2 juin 1876, sommaire du séance, 273.

⁷⁸ Jules Ferry, séance 3 juin 1876, 285.

⁷⁹ Speech of Albert de Mun, entitled, “Liberte’ de l’enseignement et anticlericalisme politique,” *Annales de la Chambre des Députés Séance Du Vendredi 2 Juin 1876*, 275. De Mun was elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1876. He was also the founder of a Catholic social movement known as the *Cercles Catholiques d’Ouvriers*, which sought to unify workers with employers through spiritual and communal activities. As a legitimist loyal to the Church, he belonged to the conservative bloc in the Chambre des députés.

⁸⁰ Acomb, *The French Laic Laws*, 61.

the social atheism of the anticlerical position. Legitimists appealed to natural law as a moral system that could be known by all, whether Catholic or otherwise.⁸¹

De Mun's views were shared in principal by all from the right-wing bloc of the Chambre des Députés. The conservatives were divided into various camps. The Restorationists supported the restoration of the monarchy, regardless of who sat on the throne. The Orléanists supported the descendant of Louis Philippe of Orleans who ruled as king from 1830-1848. Bonapartists supported Napoleon III's heir, Jérôme, also known as the Prince Imperial. Finally, the Legitimists, who supported only direct descendants of the Bourbons such as the Comte de Chambord, a direct descendant of Charles X. Despite their political differences, all were agreed on their opinions of the republic. They loathed what they perceived as the tenets of left-leaning Republicanism such as individualism because it led to moral licentiousness, Legitimists believed. They supported the Church's social and educational influence. Finally, they desired a return of an absolutist form of government, which eventually proved their undoing.⁸²

In his remarks, de Mun laid out his argument regarding the need to allow the liberty of universities to confer their own degrees. The issue regarding mixed juries and the conferral of degrees was only apart of a much broader issue. For de Mun, (as well as for all in attendance, whether on the right or left) the issue was not simply the conferral of

⁸¹ Séance 3 juin 1876, 275. For a current analysis on the relationship between religion, morality, and society in the Third Republic, Michael C. Behrent, "The Mystical Body of Society: Religion and Association in Nineteenth-Century French Political Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 69 no. 2, April (2008): 219-243.

⁸² The Comte de Chambord, grandson of Charles X, died in 1883 leaving no heir, thus ending the Restorationist party's hopes. The Comte de Paris, heir to the Orléanist-side of the Bourbon dynasty, proved too divisive and open with regard to his ambitions to sit on a throne again, failed to gain wholesale support from all the various Royalist factions. Jérôme Napoleon, the hope of the Bonapartists, was too liberal and supported too openly the anti-clericalist policies of the Republican left. Hence, the conservatives had nowhere and no one towards which to turn for their political aspirations. See Acomb's *The French Laic Laws*, 245.

degrees, but also concerns concerning defining the essence of a university, as well as which entity, church or state, was the proper guarantor of rights regarding the good of education. De Mun also expressed his suspicion as to how able the state was regarding the moral formation of its citizens.⁸³ These were much deeper issues, and the role of the university provided the appropriate context for such issues to be decided. Hence, the University of Paris assumed primacy in this initial battle, as it was understood that the battle over higher education possessed broader implications. De Mun's argument offers insight into the intellectual perspectives of the conservative camp of the republican government at this time. De Mun hoped to show that state-sponsored education violated what he called 'primordial rights,' by which he meant rights that individuals hold prior to any claims that the state may make upon them. De Mun's argument thus illuminated why the conservatives viewed their relationship to the state as oppositional.

De Mun presented his argument as a counterpoint to the Republican notion that the university was essentially an arm of the state, or the "state teaching," as Ferry put it. De Mun argued for a different conception of education. He claimed that education was a natural human right – a right to knowledge and the formation of the soul. Further, this right existed prior to the state. De Mun thus viewed education as flowing from the primordial rights of the human person, who, by nature, had the right to achieve the good of knowledge. The role of education was therefore to foster the moral development of the person:

...when one works towards education, one is working towards a
knowledge that is not solely the teaching of law, literature, and of

⁸³ Albert de Mun, séance 3 juin, 1876, 300.

sciences, but moreover and above all, one works for the end towards which this teaching is directed, the development of the faculty of the Soul and for the entire formation of the moral man.⁸⁴

In other words, de Mun viewed higher education as having a different aim in mind than forming a citizen to function in a modern state. He viewed it as forming a person's soul. Thus religious doctrine, he believed, like what was taught at the Sorbonne under Maret's direction, played an essential role.⁸⁵

Furthermore, de Mun argued that the state's proper role was only to legislate appropriate laws that protected man's right to be educated in a way that respected the human conscience.⁸⁶ Thus, de Mun emphasized the grave responsibility of the Chamber to protect educational liberty. Legislation should have the good of France in mind, he argued, and this meant providing for the spiritual foundation for its citizens.⁸⁷ He pointed out that the law of 1875 allowed for mixed juries, meaning it was already the law of the land to allow for liberty in higher education. Further, since the right of education was tied to the right of individual conscience, which was the proper domain of God, it was the Church and not the state that had a better claim to oversee education. To abolish the mixed juries and replace them only with state approved juries, which was the project of Ferry and left-leaning Republicans, would turn higher education back into a state-run

⁸⁴ De Mun, séance 3 juin, 1876, 275.

⁸⁵ For a good general work on the founding of the University of Paris and its theological underpinnings, see Hilde de Ridder-Symoens *Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 420-435. See also Marcia Collish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition 400-1400* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 265-288. For a work representative of the age, see John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University: Nine Discourses Delivered to the Catholics of Dublin* (London: Basil Montagu Pickering Publishers, 1873), 19-99.

⁸⁶ Albert de Mun, séance 3 juin, 1876, 275.

⁸⁷ De Mun, séance 3 juin 1876, 275.

monopoly. This had been the lapse of liberty that the law of 1875 was designed to fix.⁸⁸ In this fashion, de Mun cast Ferry as the opponent of true liberty.

De Mun's next tactic was to argue the compatibility of faith and reason. This relationship, he stated, was flourishing in the free universities. To support his thesis, he produced a letter from the head of the Geology Faculty at the Sorbonne, Professor Albert-Auguste De Lapparent written in response to an article that appeared in the journal *XIX Siècle*. The article had been written by a journalist named Sarcey, who was sent to the University of Paris in order to report on the nature and competency of scientific teaching there.⁸⁹ Sarcey's exposé claimed that the geology faculty only taught according to the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and thus was not teaching science at all.⁹⁰

As far as De Lapparent was concerned, however, Sarcey already had his mind made up before he came. De Lapparent took great issue with the article, retorting that either the journalist did not know what he was talking about, or was willfully calumniating De Lapparent and his faculty in order to paint a negative picture for political purposes. De Lapparent defended his teaching by pointing out he had studied with the noted scientist Ebe de Beaumont, and that he had received nothing but accolades from the most respected men in his field. The article's accusations were unjustified, De Lapparent claimed, and his letter demanded an apology from Sarcey.⁹¹

In adducing De Lapparent's self-defense, de Mun was not only defending the ability of Catholic universities to teach science, but was also implying that the

⁸⁸ Séance 3 juin 1876, 277.

⁸⁹ De Lapparent and his family's work at the Sorbonne are still considered foundational regarding the geological sciences. See Christian Montenat, *Une Famille de Géologues, let :apparent: un Siècle d'histoire & d'aventures de la Géologie* (Paris: Vuibert, 2008), 63-80.

⁹⁰ Séance 3 juin 1876, 277. Note: this author could not locate the original article for Sarcey's quote.

⁹¹ Séance 3 juin 1876, 277.

accusations coming from the secularists were fictions composed with political ends in mind. Thus, de Mun hoped to persuade his audience, via the testimony of De Lapparent, that the anti-clerical accusation regarding the incompatibility between faith and science, was untrue.

Ferry and the Case for Laïcité

Ferry's response laid out the republican case for the primacy of the state towards its citizens. Ferry did not agree with de Mun or his conservative counterparts that education was not the domain of the state. For him, the state alone could guarantee proper education for France for several reasons: it was free from the dogmatic claims of the Church, the state was the proper teacher and patron of science, and that Catholic demands made upon French citizens prevented their loyalty to France herself. These professed antagonisms between church and state reveals the anticlerical rationale. As we will see, men such as Maret, thought these presupposed antagonisms were reflective more of Ferry's ideological commitment to philosophical positivism and materialism than an authentic appreciation of the true nature of faith and science. Ferry thus stands as a counterpoise to Maret, revealing the latter's intellectual uniqueness.

Ferry's political challenge was daunting. He had enemies from the conservative bloc, but also from his own side of the Chamber. The current laws ensuring liberty in higher education were supported by opportunist Republicans such as Jules Simon who opposed a state monopoly in education for left-leaning rather than conservative reasons.⁹² Ferry knew that a direct assault on the new law of higher education itself could prove too risky, as the Church was powerful and its current influence in the schools immense. Ferry

⁹² Philip Bertocci, *Jules Simon: Republican Anticlericalism and Cultural Politics in France, 1848-1886* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1978) 203.

needed to convince his audience that it was the Church, and not he, who threatened liberty for the schools. Thus, the approach he selected to make his argument

Ferry first addressed the Falloux Laws before aiming his sights on higher education and the mixed juries. He offered two sets of conditions in particular that he believed set apart the situation of the Third Republic from the previous Imperial reign of Napoleon III who enacted the Falloux Laws for primary and secondary education. First, Ferry reminded his fellow deputies of France's loss of face. The nation had all but lost the war to Prussia at the battle of Sedan on September 2 and 3 in 1870, leading to Napoleon III's exile and the establishment of the Third Republic the following day. Many Republicans blamed this loss on the scientific and technological superiority of Prussia, whose education systems encouraged scientific research through teaching and classroom experiments.⁹³ This model, known as the Humboldt system, gave Prussia technological military advantages, at least according to Ferry and other anticlerical Republicans.⁹⁴ The loss in 1871 was caused by France's inferior education system, they said, in particular to a system which lacked proper training in science and thereby granted Prussia technological advantage. With this argument, Ferry hoped to capitalize on the feelings of many Frenchmen regarding *revanche*, or revenge, against the loss of prestige and land (Alsace-Lorraine) to Prussia.⁹⁵ In the aftermath of the war reflected ideological bias, emerging primarily from positivist presuppositions.⁹⁶ The philosophical system known as

⁹³ For more on the Humboldt Model of education, see Robert David Anderson, *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914* (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2004), 243.

⁹⁴ Prussian Minister of Education Wilhelm von Humboldt, 1767-1835. For an explanation of the Humboldt Model for German higher education, see R. D. Anderson, *European Universities*, 51-66.

⁹⁵ For an assessment on the *revanche* as political motivation for education reform, see Bertrand Joly, "La France et la Revanche, 1871-1914," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, no. 2 June (1999): 325-347.

⁹⁶ Jules Ferry, P. Robiquet ed. *Discours et Opinions de Jules Ferry. Vol. III* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeurs, 1895) 194. (Hereafter referred to as 'Discours, vol. III') Ferry's says of Comte, "Comte shows

positivism, developed by Auguste Comte, asserted that the only authentic knowledge was a knowledge based on sense experience and visible (positive) verification.⁹⁷ Science provided not only the best means of gaining knowledge but the *only* means. Therefore, positivists held, if France were to compete with Prussia and enter into the industrial and military competitions of the modern world, science had to be taught in all of the French schools in a way satisfactory to positivist principles. The educational system in France had long been dominated by the Catholic Church, an institution that positivists considered unlikely to respect scientific knowledge and unable to teach proper scientific methods to French youth. As a result, they argued, education had to be secularized.⁹⁸ The Church was simply incapable of offering the necessary modern pedagogy.⁹⁹ Ferry raised the painful memory of war to stress this point.

Ferry's freemasonry may also have contributed significantly to his initial hostility to Catholic education. Ferry's initiation into the Grand Orient, France's largest Masonic

marvelously...that every society contains in its bosom a moral power which governs individual wills without courts and without force...For positivism, morality is an essentially human fact distinct from every belief concerning the beginning and end of things. Morality is a social fact, which bears within itself its beginning and end; and social morality becomes everywhere a question of culture, not only the culture which primary or higher education gives, but which results from good legislation and from the intelligent practice of the spirit of association." 194-95. See also Louis Lagrand, *Influence du Positivisme Dans l'Oeuvre Scolaire de Jules Ferry, Les Origines de la Laïcité* (Paris: M. Rivière Publisher, 1961).

⁹⁷ Comte, Auguste; Richard Congreve, translator. *The Catechism of Positive Religion* (London, Savill and Edwards Printers, 1858) 68.

⁹⁸ For an investigation of the relationship between philosophical positivism and the founding of the Third Republic, see Sudhir Hazareesingh, ed. *Intellectual Founders of the Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth Century French Republican Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2005), 23-85.

⁹⁹ It is interesting to note that recent scholarship is challenging the long-standing assumption of the inadequacy of Catholic-run schools to teach pupils in science. Most notably, Patrick Harrigan's "Church, State, and Education in France From the Falloux to the Ferry Laws: A Reassessment," *Canadian Journal of History*, April (2001), and Sarah Ann Curtis's *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth Century France* (DeKalb, Illinois: University of Northern Illinois Press, 2000). See also Anne T. Quartararo *Women Teachers and Popular Education in Nineteenth-Century* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 1995), 166. Quartararo challenges to the Ferry thesis regarding the inferiority of French Catholic education from the perspective of women's education. For a differing perspective of the limitations of the Church's role in women's education and the development of the feminist consciousness, see Paul Seeley, "O Sainte Mère: Liberalism and the Socialization of Catholic Men in Nineteenth Century France," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 70 no. 4 December, (1998): 862-891.

body, was a well-publicized event.¹⁰⁰ He was in good company. French masonry attracted many committed Republicans (forty percent of the Republic's civil ministers were masons) and nurtured a political party often called *radical utopians* by their political opponents.¹⁰¹ The French masons exalted reason, science, and rational education. Masons like those of the Grand Orient repudiated Catholic moral doctrine as an affront to individual autonomy, especially in the realm of the moral formation of the conscience. Moral training was to be done according to discernable rational norms which would be passed on in education. This, along with the teaching of science, would result in "universal conciliation."¹⁰² Thus French masonry was deeply committed to secular, universal and free education – focal points that matched Ferry's goals. Education was to be practical, moral, rational, and thus unifying for the Republic.

Whatever the philosophical underpinnings of Ferry's politics, the loss to Prussia provided rhetorical ammunition for Ferry to attack the current system. France could no longer afford to lag behind in this important endeavor to modernize education. More recently, the openings provided for Catholic institutions in the 1875 law establishing liberty in higher education provided a grand opportunity for Republicans to start the reform at the university level. The problem for Ferry lay in convincing the Chamber of Deputies to move in the direction of his secularist convictions.

It was not simply his views of science and faith that led Ferry to view the Church with such suspicion. He grew convinced, based on various Papal statements that the

¹⁰⁰ Philip Nord, "Republicanism and Utopian Vision: French Freemasonry in the 1860's and 1870's," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 63, No. 2, June (1991): 213-229. For an assessment of the relationship between Marxists members of the radical wing of the republicans and their competition with Catholic unions and labor movements over worker loyalty, see Robert. S. Stuart, "A 'De-Profundis' for Christian Socialism: French Marxists and the Critique of Political Catholicism, 1882-1905," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 22 no. 2 Spring (1999): 241-61.

¹⁰¹ Nord, "Republicanism and Utopian," 213.

¹⁰² Nord, "Republicanism and Utopian," 223.

Catholic Church was developing an increasingly intransigent posture towards modern notions of individual liberty. This “new Catholicism,” as he called it, presented the greatest threat to the Third Republic.¹⁰³ In his speech to the Chamber, Ferry referred to various recent decrees from the Church which he asserted revealed the intent of the Church to override the legitimate boundaries of the state.

At this point in the debate, Ferry mentioned the declaration of papal infallibility in the Vatican I Council, 1870-71. Ferry believed the doctrine of infallibility implied a desire for the pope to rule the Catholic world, a clear sign that the Vatican was overturning both the proper distinction between temporal and spiritual authority in France, as well as possibly abrogating the Concordat of 1801.¹⁰⁴ He appealed to longstanding French traditions and law (such as the Concordat of 1801 and the Four Articles of 1682) which clearly distinguished the two orders of temporal and spiritual-- State and Church-- in order to demonstrate the need for the state to “go on the offensive,” to free France from the specter of clerical control.¹⁰⁵ Prodding his enemies even more, Ferry alluded to a notorious document called “The Syllabus of Errors,” written by Pope Pius IX in 1864, wherein the Pope seemed to decry all things modern.

Ferry’s rhetorical strategy produced the fireworks he hoped for. The minutes of the Chamber suggest that critics such as de Mun and the Marquis de Castellane, another conservative member of the Chamber of Deputies, recognized Ferry’s strategy, and challenged his evidence, shouting, “The Syllabus! You do not even know what it is!”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Jules Ferry, “Liberté,” 355.

¹⁰⁴ Jules Ferry, “La Troisième République sera laïque,” in Odile Rudelle, ed. *La république des citoyens: Jules Ferry, vol. I*, (Paris: Imperiale Nationale, 1996), 360.

¹⁰⁵ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 357.

¹⁰⁶ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 357. Le Syllabus referred to one of the Papal Documents produced by Pope Pius IX condemning all of the errors of what he called, ‘*modernism*,’ referring especially to the influence of philosophical naturalism in science and ethics.

The conservatives, however, recognized their own dilemma: they were no longer the majority in the chamber and thus lacked the political power to block the liberals, in spite of enjoying one of their own in the Presidency and a majority in the Senate. Thus they had to be careful in their challenges not to be perceived as filibustering. Ferry, however, was ready for their protestations. After being interrupted by de Castellane, Ferry produced prepared texts from the Pope's own words to substantiate his claims about resurgent Catholic ambitions.

He chose Pius IX's infamous encyclical *Quanta Cura* as his further proof of the Church's meddling.¹⁰⁷ In the encyclical, the Pope condemned what he perceived as the foundational notions of modern culture: philosophical naturalism, social atheism, and absolute liberty.¹⁰⁸ Ferry argued that these recent Vatican statements were positive proof that the Church intended to usurp church/state boundaries established by the Concordat, and insinuate itself in the central power position. He pointed out several passages from this text as proof that the Church no longer respected the separation in France between temporal and spiritual authority, but wanted to override these long standing boundaries. He responded to de Castellane by reading a very long excerpt from the papal document. Here is a relevant section Ferry read from the Pope regarding the modern state:

For as you well know, venerable brothers, in our times there have been found a large number of men who by applying to civil society the impious and absurd principle of naturalism, as they call it, dare to teach that 'the perfection of reason for society and civil progress absolutely requires a human society constituted and governed outside of all consideration of religion.'¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Pope Pius IX; *Quanta Cura and The Syllabus of Errors*, 8 December, 1864, #6-12, in which the Pope condemned ideas such as separation of Church and state, religious liberty, and that he had to reconcile himself with the modern world. This and other pontifical citations taken from www.Vatican.va, date last accessed March 24, 2011.

¹⁰⁸ *Quanta Cura*, # 3.

¹⁰⁹ Jules Ferry, "*La Troisième*," 359.

In selecting this passage from the Pope's encyclical, Ferry was confident that his audience would be convinced about the antagonistic attitude that the Pope had towards the modern state.

Confident that the texts to which he referred offered more than ample evidence of the Church's threatening plan, he continued to hack away at the true nemesis of the Republic as he saw it, clericalism. Clericalism created an "intellectual Caesarism" as he called it, the new threat rising from the ashes of the political Caesarism that preceded it in the form of the altar/throne alliance.¹¹⁰ Since the abandonment of centralized rule by Frenchmen only frustrated ecclesial political goals, Ferry claimed that the Church therefore knew it had to cling to its long-standing educational domain. Its intransigence was the result. Ferry exclaimed, "We have to defend...liberty and the principles of 1789!"¹¹¹ These principles—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—would provide the basis for the new Republic after having been forgotten during the restoration of Nineteenth Century Absolutism.¹¹² Not only were these principles under attack, Ferry also claimed that Declaration of the Four Articles, a law signed into action by Louis XIV in 1682, was also threatened.¹¹³ Hence, he charged that the Catholic Church was scheming to knock down even the barriers erected by early modern kings to prevent the Church from encroaching beyond its own proper sphere.

As another blast across the bow of his opponents, Ferry quoted Louis Veillot, editor of the ultramontanist journal *L'Univers*: "When the liberals are in power, we ask

¹¹⁰ Jules Ferry, "*La Troisième*," 357. Ferry often motioned to his sympathizers during his speech to offer some sort of cat-call or insulting noise when interrupted.

¹¹¹ Jules Ferry, "*La Troisième*," 357.

¹¹² Jules Ferry, "*La Troisième*," 356.

¹¹³ Signed into Law by Louis XIV to limit the influence of the Gallicanist church in French affairs, and giving the king the right to appoint candidates to the Catholic Episcopate.

them for liberty, because it is their principle, and when we are in power, we refuse to give it to them because that is ours.”¹¹⁴ Statements such as these lent weight to Ferry’s claim that he was simply acting defensively out of a necessity to protect France and the Republic from the attack from the Church.

De Mun had argued during his time at the podium for a common understanding of human rights. He claimed that the right to education belonged to the family. Thus, the state had no governance over these rights. Furthermore, education had as a proper goal that of forming the soul. Since most families were Catholic, it was the Church, then, and not the state that was most responsible for education.¹¹⁵ The state’s role was auxiliary.¹¹⁶

Ferry, however, was convinced to the contrary. He believed that he had adequately explained the reason for state control over education, as well as the threat posed by the Church to the liberties of the Third Republic. Yet, the conservatives believed that his claim to protect individual liberty was the Achilles heel of Ferry’s argument because he was attacking liberty of higher education in favor of a state monopoly of education.¹¹⁷

On the contrary, Ferry argued that the Republic existed for the protection of individual liberties.¹¹⁸ In order for this to be accomplished, he had to first relieve the Church from its grasp on civil institutions in order to procure these liberties.¹¹⁹ It was thus the state’s duty to oversee education and ensure the proper training in citizenship. If this duty were left up to families and the Church, he feared that the goal of preserving and

¹¹⁴ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 357. The exact reference to L’Univers was not provided by Ferry.

¹¹⁵ Séance 2 juin 1876, 276.

¹¹⁶ Séance 2 juin 1876, 277.

¹¹⁷ Séance 2 juin 1876, 284.

¹¹⁸ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 368. See also Evelyn Acomb, *French Laic Laws*, 150-151.

¹¹⁹ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 368.

passing on the principles of the French Revolution would falter.¹²⁰ It was the French Revolution of 1789 that secured the idea of individual liberty, he continued, and the Constitution of 1848 and “it is the National Assembly of 1850 that abolished the monopoly of the university, and for secondary education as well!”¹²¹ Finally, it was the “Republic of 1875 that gives you liberty of teaching in higher education, and that abolished the last vestige of the university monopoly.”¹²²

When reminded by the right that the majority of left-leaning Republicans voted against the law that allowed for the establishment of free universities, Ferry explained that they were confusing liberty of education with the conferral of degrees, and dismissed the point by saying that he did not wish to take up this exhausted discussion again that day, but rather to point out the necessity of the state controlling education. “I am not afraid to say, gentlemen, that modern societies will return very quickly to barbarism if the state, if civil society, if the public power does not watch incessantly over education.”¹²³

Thus, in response to those who argued that Ferry wanted to reestablish the monopoly of the state over education, which the Falloux Laws were enacted to oppose, Ferry concluded that it was the Church, and not he, who wanted a monopoly on education; it was the Church and not he who sought to stamp out liberty; and it was the Church and not he who sought total control of education. Against these dangers, Ferry claimed he was merely trying to defend the rights of the state.

Whether or not Ferry believed his own claim that France was under attack by a “new Catholicism,” is uncertain. What cannot be denied, however, is that Ferry believed

¹²⁰ Jules Ferry, “*La Troisième*,” 356.

¹²¹ Séance 3 juin 1876, 285.

¹²² Séance 2 juin 1876, 285.

¹²³ Séance 2 juin 1876, 285.

that the kind of training needed for the youth in order to enjoy full entrance into modernity was training in the methods of science, and that he considered the state to be the only institution capable of successfully carrying out this all-important task. Since the youth of France represented the future of France, formation in professional and scientific learning ensured a thoroughly *modern* future. It made little sense to Ferry or to other Republican reformers, to allow institutes such as the University of Paris continue under clerical influence.¹²⁴

Ferry insisted that the power of the state over education had been recognized in the past in the public laws of France, dating back to the era of Louis the XIV.¹²⁵ If education were to be offered by the state to its citizens, then it had to be free and secular, and furthermore, compulsory. This not only affirmed his theory that it is the state that is primarily responsible for education.

Ferry concluded his address by reaffirming the traditional view of political theory that education was especially essential in a Republic, since its citizens must take part in governing the state and in defending its integrity. The obligation was especially sacred since the Republic had been won at the expense of so much toil and bloodshed.

I ask this Chamber, this republican majority which is listening to me, if the fatherland is not a portion of land that events can extend or diminish; and if, besides this fatherland, there is not a moral fatherland, a group of ideas and ideals which the government should defend as the patrimony of the souls for which it has charge? I ask them if there is not, in this French society, a certain number of ideas sprinkled with the most pure generous blood, for which for twenty-five years soldiers, men of letters, philosophers, orators, statesmen, have toiled, have poured out their blood; and if there is a heritage of which you are the guardians, a heritage which you ought to transmit to your children as your fathers have willed it to

¹²⁴ Louis Liard, *L'Enseignement Supérieur en France, 1789-1893, Tome II* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeurs, 1894), 297-333. Louis Liard was the former *recteur* of the Sorbonne and the head of higher education of France from 1884-1902.

¹²⁵ Séance 3 juin 1876, 285.

you? Well, these two or three ideas which are the foundation of a society derived from the French Revolution are the doctrine of the state; that is the manner in and extent to which the state should be the guardian of national unity.¹²⁶

With this last rhetorical flourish, Ferry connected the problem of education in the Third Republic to the First – founded during the French Revolution, and based upon Jacobin principles of equality, fraternity, and liberty—so as to argue that the future of France must embrace the modern, as he understood the term, and not risk another return to the old regime.

Conclusion

Despite Ferry's explosive rhetoric, his measure ultimately failed to become law. Long before Ferry had the clout as Minister of Public Instruction, he managed to convince the Chamber to adopt his position; it voted overwhelmingly for the measure, 363 to 133.¹²⁷ However, the measure was defeated in a close vote in the Senate that still maintained a slim royalist majority, earning 139 votes but falling victim to the 144 votes against.¹²⁸ Ferry had fought for the Republican bill to abolish the mixed juries in the conferral of degrees, arguing that it was essential to preserve this power to the state alone.¹²⁹ Ferry's effort to secularize would have to wait until he was appointed Minister of Public Instruction and Cults in 1879.

Ferry may have failed to achieve his goal initially, but the debate in the Chamber of Deputies in the summer of 1876 merits attention as the first major battle between the two main forces in the Republican government – anticlerical and conservative.

¹²⁶ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 66-67.

¹²⁷ Séance 3 juin 1876, 287.

¹²⁸ *J.O.S.* 22 juillet 1876, 5433-34.

¹²⁹ Séance, 2 juin 1876, 274. See also Louis Liard's *L'Enseignement Supérieur*, 300.

Arguments offered by Ferry, the opportunist Republican, and Albert de Mun, a Legitimist, represent the rationales that structure political debates during the ensuing years. An examination of the arguments of this first clash reveals the strategy offered by each side to grasp and maintain power in the fledgling Republic, as well as identifying what was most important in their program. Both sides believed that whomever controlled education controlled France. Education would be the key that each side felt it needed to possess in order to unlock the door for the future.

De Mun, as we have seen, sought to articulate a conservative position that defined liberty as imperiled by state influence over education. Whatever philosophical merits his position might have had, political momentum in the late 1870s belonged to the Republicans, not to those who wanted to restore an absolutist form of government led by a king or emperor. Conservatives' failure to navigate the political winds correctly contributed to the eventual victory of the Opportunist Republicans, and likewise for their educational philosophy. Ferry would be appointed to the Minister of Public Instruction and Cults in 1879 under the cabinet of Prime Minister Henry Waddington.

It is important for my overall argument to investigate de Mun's perspective, as it further explains three important elements: First, the uniqueness of Maret's understanding of church and state compared to other conservatives as he did not see the two as oppositional; second, why both he and later Pope Leo XIII had difficulty winning support from the Catholic political bloc for rallying around the republic; and finally, de Mun offers an argument similar to Maret's regarding the relationship between faith and science. This is one of the reasons why Maret allowed himself to be affiliated with the conservative bloc.

Chapter Two: Ferry's Success

This dissertation is about the battle between Jules Ferry and Henri Maret over higher education in France. This chapter will examine how Ferry launched such a confrontation and campaigned successfully to secularize the French educational system. It will show the various forms of opposition that he encountered and overcame. This will serve as a prelude to the introduction to Maret, whose counteroffensive marked Ferry's last ideological challenge.

The appointment of Jules Ferry to Minister of Public Instruction and Cults in 1879 marked a new chapter in the Third Republic church/state debates over education, as the laws would now reflect an official anticlerical program. After this appointment, Jules Ferry authored a series of laws known as the Ferry Laws, which succeeded in securing his goal of *laïcité* in primary and secondary education. This legislation prepared for his next endeavor, namely, to eliminate Catholic influence in higher education.

Before examining more explicitly Ferry's rationale and strategy for his legislative and political activity, it may be helpful to summarize the various laws he authored to implement *laïcité* in French education. This will also serve as a timeline within which this section of the dissertation can be situated. As the previous chapter explained, Ferry's political strategy was instigated by a legislative defeat before he assumed the Ministry position in Public Instruction. As we discussed in the first chapter, the Chamber of Deputies vigorously debated the freedom of higher education granted in a law of 1875. In 1876, a bill passed the Chamber of Deputies to disallow the so-called free universities – those institutions not governed by the state – from being allowed to confer degrees.

When this bill failed in the Senate the same year, Ferry realized that he would need to develop a different course of action once in power, as the Senate still possessed a conservative majority. In March of 1879, another bill sponsored by the anticlericals sought to once again prevent free faculties from conferring degrees. To this bill, Ferry added a controversial article, Article Seven, which forbade teaching orders such as the influential Jesuits from teaching in French schools.¹³⁰

In August of 1879, Ferry established what are called *l'écoles normales*, schools which provided professional training for teachers. This meant that any teacher teaching in a state school had to be certified through this new professional system. Thus, Catholic teaching congregations were no longer permitted to teach without first receiving training from his teaching schools.

Ferry authored a bill abolishing all fees for public primary education in June of 1881. Thus, French schooling was now free. In addition to this, he implemented a new requirement for all teachers. Not only were they to be trained in the training schools, but they also need a state-certified license to teach, known as the *brevet de capacité*. Whereas in the past being a member of a Catholic teaching congregation sufficed as a legitimate credential to teach in the schools, now only those with the *brevet de capacité* had authorization.

In March of 1882, Ferry put in place his law making education for all primary and secondary schooling compulsory. With this last act, Ferry achieved his goal of making French education free, compulsory, and laic. Thus, with this series of legislative measures, Ferry set the stage for his battle with Maret over higher education.

¹³⁰ The Falloux Law of 1850 gave permission to these unauthorized orders to reestablish their work and teach in schools in France.

Ferry's Promotion and Renewed Efforts

Ferry's appointment as the Minister of Public Instruction and Cults awarded him the clout and political power that he needed to achieve his educational goals. These goals, namely that education be free, compulsory, and laic, now made up the crux of his political agenda. After his appointment, Ferry knew that he still lacked the necessary clout in the senate to achieve all of his objectives.¹³¹

The law for the establishment of free primary education was significant in that it affirmed Ferry's view that the democratic state was primarily responsible for education, and not private institutions such as the Church. The principle of compulsory contributions (taxes) from all citizens in order to allow for the various functions of the state replaced the older form of voluntary offerings from the privileged classes who traditionally offered tuition or compensatory support to others out of a sense of Christian charity. This piece of legislation secured the rights of the state regarding the formation of its citizens over and against the view stated by the likes of de Mun, who thought education was a right belonging to the family versus that state, and therefore not the responsibility of the state but that of the family. The family should thus have the option of choosing schooling for their children.

Since Ferry's bill reflected his anticlericalism but he himself was not irreligious, he was willing to allow religious education offered by religious leaders and pastors within the school buildings themselves, according to the wishes of the heads of the schools. However, Paul Bert, who presided over the committee debating the bill, was not as accommodating as Ferry. Bert insisted on some amendments to Ferry's law, and his

¹³¹ *J.O.C.* 30 novembre 1880, p. 11729.

insertions in the bill were much stiffer. Religious education was no longer to be given in primary schools, but was optional in private schools. Public primary schools would be dismissed one day a week in addition to Sunday to permit parents to instruct their progeny in religion, should they choose to do so.¹³² This measure of Bert's reveals the level of antagonism that had developed between church and state.

Since free, compulsory and secular primary education was now viewed as essential to a democracy, higher education must also reflect these laws of the land. Even though Ferry quite agreed that the state should not have a monopoly in higher education, the point to which Simon took him to task, he nonetheless believed that it was the state alone that should have the power to confer degrees, as the state was the

...guardian of the terrestrial city, and that of guardian of human learning; it watches over it in the name of civil government, which could not have an ecclesiastical education hostile to its principle and perilous for its future; it watches over it in the name of Science, of which the state is definitely the most energetic, powerful, lasting, and above all, whatever one may say, the most liberal promoter. Dogma for the churches, Science for the state.¹³³

This would make private institutions such as Catholic ones powerless to attract students, as they would be powerless to confer the necessary credentials to their graduates.

¹³² *J.O.C.* 29 Marche 1882, pp. 1697-98.

¹³³ Jules Ferry, *Discours*, vol. III, 200. For an interesting critical examination regarding the republican commitment to the idea that social harmony is a fruit of modernity, see Anja Johansen, "Process of Civilization? Legitimization of Violent Policing in Prussian and French Police Manuals and Instructions, 1880-1914," *European Review of History*, no. 14 (2007): 49-71. See also Claire Lemerrier for a critical look at the Third Republic from the perspective of finance, "Les bourses en France au XIX siècle, symbols d'un pouvoir comerçant?" *Histoire, Économie, et Société*, no. 25 (2006): 51-66.

Conservative (and some Liberal) Resistance

The right feared that this legislation would cause the Church to lose its foothold in the formation of French youth. The implications were fraught with danger, they believed, and seemed communistic to them. For instance, the Catholic bloc in the Chamber of Deputies was convinced that Ferry's goal to make education free was aimed at undermining Catholic and private influence in the schools. Thus, during the June 1880 debates in the Chamber regarding the abolition of fees for primary education, Bishop Charles-Émile Freppel of Angers, a former professor in the faculty of Theology at the University of Paris and current deputy from Brest, responded that free education set a dangerous precedent. "Do you not fear that, after having demanded of the state the bread of intelligence, one may end by demanding the right to receive from the state just as freely the bread of the body, which, after all, is necessary?"¹³⁴

Others such as Émile Keller, a royalist deputy from the High Rhine Belfort region, wondered why this decision was either not left up to the citizens whose children were already in schools, or the schools themselves, who bore the brunt of financing their institutions. "Revenue for educational purposes should be divided between public and private schools according to the number of students enrolled in each."¹³⁵ Some opposition even came from the left feared that the financial burden placed on the government resulting from the law would arouse discontent with republican institutions.¹³⁶

On this point, the bloody results of the Paris Commune had turned many of the radicals more conciliatory to the conservatives, as they had supported the Law of Freedom of Higher Education as a sign of their distancing themselves from the violent

¹³⁴ *J.O.C.* 14 juillet 1880, p. 8154.

¹³⁵ *J.O.C.* 26 novembre 1880, p. 11488.

¹³⁶ *J.O.C.* 6 juillet 1880, pp. 7658-60.

results of their party.¹³⁷ Duc Albert de Broglie, a royalist member of the Chamber of Deputies from Paris, pointed out that the radicals:

...had attained power by revolutionary methods, and twice the principles of this party, the compromising language, the senseless acts of its leaders, excited such fear, such consternation in the material interests that, by a sudden reaction, power escaped from its hands, and the cup was withdrawn from its lips!¹³⁸

Indeed, it was because of the fear of the radical left that the political make-up of the government in early days of the Third Republic was decidedly conservative.

Thus, Ferry's desire for free education was more than just a little controversial. Royalists took this opportunity to charge him with the notion that he was merely operating with political and ideological agendas rather than for the good of France.¹³⁹

Some on the left questioned the Opportunist anticlerical program, pointing out that the fear of Catholic usurpation or invasion was preposterous. Jules Simon reiterated his opinion that the ousting of clericals from education and the desire to undo the 1876 Law on Liberty for Higher Education was a program designed merely to satisfy the extreme left, whose program he feared more than the clericalists.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ The Paris Commune was a government made up of Marxists and Anarchists that ruled Paris from March 28 to May 28, 1871. The Commune ended with a violent military intervention. For a recent perspective on the revolutionary relationship between the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolutions, Casey Harrison, "The Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian Revolution of 1905, and the Shifting of the Revolutionary Tradition," *History and Memory*, vol. 19, no. 2 Fall/Winter (2007): 5-42. For an exploration of the relationship between organization, published media, and the Commune, Gwladys Longeard, "L'Imprimerie nationale pendant la Commune de 1871," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. 52, no. 1 jun-mar (2005): 147-174.

¹³⁸ *J.O.S.* 21 juillet 1876, p. 5384.

¹³⁹ Acomb, *The French Laic Laws*, 132.

¹⁴⁰ Jules Simon, Lévy Calmann, Éditeur. *Dieu, Patrie, Liberté*, (Paris: Ancienne Mason Michel Lévy Frères, La Librairie Nouvelle, 1883, edition 15), 205.

Ferry and the Jesuits

Before going further, we should pause to comment briefly on Ferry's conflict with the Jesuits. Ferry's relationship with the Jesuits illustrates not only his deep commitment to *laïcité*, but also the degree of resistance he sometimes encountered. It is not surprising, then, that when he turned his sights to higher education, his demands were equally rigorous and resistance equally strong.

The much-contested law proposal of May 1879 aimed at preventing the free universities from being able to confer degrees to their pupils erupted into a fiery dispute in the June chamber debates. As if the proposal were not contentious enough, Ferry added what is known as Article Seven to the legislative proposal. This controversial article forbade unauthorized teaching orders from teaching in the schools. This article was aimed at a number of religious orders, but it was really the Jesuits toward whom the attack was particularly and forcibly directed. Ferry beefed up his criticism of the order as he viewed them as possessing the greatest threat to his plans.¹⁴¹ He accused them of constituting a "state within a state" because they answered to a foreign head. They were dubbed "the militia of the counter-revolution."¹⁴² Hence, the Jesuits could not be patriots since their teachings were contrary to the principles of the French Revolution. They were held responsible for the organization of the Catholic committees and Catholic workingmen's clubs, and publications like *Les Études Religieuses*, which supported activities that "ran counter to the spread of democracy."¹⁴³

Left-leaning Republicans continued to point out that the Jesuits were banished under *L'Ancien Régime*, and that their perpetual vows had been revoked as well.

¹⁴¹ Ferry, *Discours*, 271.

¹⁴² *J.O.C.* 12 juin 1879, p. 5015.

¹⁴³ *J.O.S.* 7 mars 1880, p. 2713.

Napoleon reworked these strong terms in the Concordat of 1801, and allowed religious associations that sought authorization by the government to return, but an ordinance of 1828 had forbidden unauthorized orders to direct or teach at any level of education. And since the Jesuits never secured authorization for their work, it could only be because they did not want to disclose their statutes, submit to ordinary jurisdiction, recognize civil formalities, and agree to temporary vows.¹⁴⁴ In other words, the Jesuits were dangerous and seditious, and Ferry wanted them removed from France.

To underscore the importance Ferry placed on removing this threat, it will be helpful to examine a speech Jules Ferry in April of 1879, one month before inserting Article Seven onto the higher education bill aimed at the free universities. Ferry went to Épinal, capital of the Vosges region which he had represented as deputy, to give a speech to both the general council of the region, as well as the municipal council, in hopes of gathering support for his new proposal.

In this speech, Ferry proposed the main elements of his educational laws which he would be articulate to the Chamber of Deputies and Senate in June. He made it clear the two main goals that he wanted to achieve in this bill: making the state the sole authority in the conferring of university degrees, and the expulsion of unauthorized teaching orders such as the Jesuits. It was this second goal that formed the crux of his speech.¹⁴⁵ Ferry recognized that the enrollment at Jesuits schools were on the increase.¹⁴⁶ These schools not only educated a large percentage of French youth, but 70% of the graduates from

¹⁴⁴ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 70-80.

¹⁴⁵ Jules Ferry, "L'Expulsion des Jésuites," in Odile Rudelle, *Jules Ferry La République des citoyens*, vol. I, 377.

¹⁴⁶ Patrick Harriagan argues that Ferry's opposition to the Jesuits was based on two reasons: he feared the competition, and the Jesuits had such a stronghold in the French elite and military. See Patrick Harriagan "Church, State, and Education in France, From the Falloux to the Ferry Laws: a Reassessment," *Canadian Journal of History* April (2001): 68,69.

École St. Geneviève in Paris served in public office.¹⁴⁷ Between the years 1854 and 1876, the percentage of secondary school attendees rose from 19.3 to 29.7 percent. The total enrollment for all Catholic education rose 121 percent in the same period.¹⁴⁸ This level of influence posed a major problem for Ferry's proposals, which may explain his particular vehemence against them.

Furthermore, schools controlled by the Jesuits were responsible for writing text books and history books critical of the French Revolution, and prepared numerous young men for service in the military and public office, and were accused by Republicans as a whole for their pro-monarchy sympathies. They were, as a whole, not disposed to French Republicanism either.¹⁴⁹ Ferry viewed them as "anti-modern," and "at war with the Modern State."¹⁵⁰ The Jesuits were responsible for the success of two of the most well-known schools, Vaugirard and École Sainte Geneviève, which both enjoyed indisputable success in preparing their students for professional colleges known as *Grandes Écoles*, as well as for the university.¹⁵¹ Ferry had a deep fear that French universities would be infiltrated by graduates from Jesuit secondary schools. Eliminating this menace was therefore crucial in achieving success in his goal to secularize higher education.

In his address at Épinal, he mentioned the threat that the Jesuits posed to a unified France. He knew that he could capitalize on French fear of weakness and disunity with the calamity of the war of 1871 haunting recent memory, since as previously mentioned, it was widely held by Frenchmen that the loss to Prussia could only be due to Prussia's

¹⁴⁷ John W. Langdon, "The Jesuits and French Education: A Comparative Study of Two Schools 1852-1913," *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 1. Spring (1978), 52.

¹⁴⁸ Langdon, "The Jesuits," 50.

¹⁴⁹ Langdon, "The Jesuits," 55.

¹⁵⁰ Jules Ferry, "L'Expulsion Des Jésuites," 380.

¹⁵¹ Langdon, "The Jesuits," 49.

superior higher education school system which was deemed more advanced when it came to teaching science and research (which translated into better military technology on the battlefield.)¹⁵² It was this claim of the ‘defense of France’ to which Ferry appealed to deflect accusations that he was attacking “liberty of conscience” and “liberty of parental control over education” for their children.¹⁵³

The support Ferry received from both the municipal council and the general department council at Épinal encouraged Ferry to pursue his plan of educational *laïcité*, as there were no voices of opposition to his concern regarding the Jesuits.

The Chamber Debate of June, 1879

As Ferry continued his anticlerical campaign against the Jesuits, he again encountered conflict not just from the right, but also from the left. Jules Simon agreed with conservatives such as Keller, de Mun, and other voices from the right who said the proposed Article Seven violated freedom of conscience. Simon’s support of Ferry’s anticlericalism and defense of the Republic only went so far. He accused Ferry of violating freedom of conscience. He cautioned,

The religion of the state oppresses the conscience and the education of the state, and thus understood, suppresses it...Freedom of thought is not the abstract right to have an opinion to oneself in the secret of his conscience...it is not for that that the martyrs have died and revolutions have triumphed; it is for freedom spread abroad by word and by book.¹⁵⁴

In other words, Simon viewed Ferry’s proposals as recreating a centralized state, at least in terms of monopolizing education, and thought that this model of the state

¹⁵² Jules Ferry, “L’Expulsion Des Jésuites,” 379.

¹⁵³ Jules Ferry, “L’Expulsion Des Jésuites,” 380.

¹⁵⁴ J.O.C. 27 décembre 1879, no. 20, pp.111579-81.

would crush liberty of conscience. Further, this form of government was one they were supposed to be eradicating, not one towards which they were returning. Many Republicans held that it was state-controlled education that led to the debacle of 1871. The Republican notion of liberty, Simon argued, had to be applied to education if freedom were to spread.

This is an ironic twist of the entire effort to secularize education in the name of liberty. In order to accomplish his goal, Ferry utilized a model of the state that too closely resembled the *ancien régime* for the likes of liberal Republicans such as Simon, who supported the rights of Catholics in education for that reason. Ferry knew that he had to rid the nation of the Higher Education Law of 1875 which allowed for free universities and broke the state monopoly on education in order to update France, bringing it into the ‘modern age,’ he believed. Additionally, the education needed to be legally subordinated to the state as its guardian and provider if his goals were to be met.

The debate in the Chamber of Deputies regarding this law was even more furious than the initial battle that took place in this Chamber when Ferry first proposed it in the summer of 1876 while a still a Deputy from the Vosges region. Now, as Minister of Higher Education and Cults, he staked his reputation and clout on passing this bill.¹⁵⁵ According to Paul Robiquet, the secretary for the debate, it quickly assumed the character of a “duel between democracy and the clerical party.”¹⁵⁶ His opponents seized upon the notion that Ferry was abandoning liberty for a return to the centralized system of Napoleon III and all other absolutists who ruled France in the Nineteenth Century. Despite the fierce resistance, the Chamber adopted Article Seven against the Jesuits by a

¹⁵⁵ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 60-61.

¹⁵⁶ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 61.

vote of 333-164.¹⁵⁷ Yet, Ferry knew that the Chamber was much more liberal than both the Senate and the departmental general councils, who would see the localized implementation of the law. Thus, during parliamentary holidays, Ferry campaigned publicly in defense of this controversial article, even with the danger of appearing anti-liberty.

Despite his passionate promotion of the legislation, the departmental general councils voted against it in August 38-28.¹⁵⁸ The Senate defeated the article in September of 1880, preventing Ferry and the Republicans from banning the Jesuits at this time.¹⁵⁹ Further, the cabinet of William Waddington, President of the Council, was replaced as reforms were moving to slow and he was blamed. Even though Charles de Freycinet, his successor, left Ferry in place, these election failures left Ferry with no legislative outlet to achieve victory for his plans regarding that Order.

Thus, his bill aimed against the freedom of higher education for free universities proposed in the summer of 1879 achieved only one of his two objectives; namely, to endow the state with the exclusive right to confer academic degrees. The other goal – that of prohibiting the public teaching of unauthorized religious orders such as the Jesuits – would require further planning.

Ferry knew the criticism that he defied liberty and sought a return to a centralized state was a serious threat to the passing of this bill. He had to defend himself from this accusation, as this was precisely the charge he aimed at his opponents. If the charge stuck, it would not only color his reputation but would also deprive him of the armaments he hoped to use against his foes. Thus, he countered with a subtle argument regarding

¹⁵⁷ *J.O.C.* 10 juillet, 1879, pp. 6319-25.

¹⁵⁸ *J.O.C.* 10 juillet, 1879, p. 3619.

¹⁵⁹ *J.O.S.* 16 mars 1880, p. 3062.

liberty and its relationship to a higher cause: namely, the good of France. He put forth the argument that freedom is a conditional liberty subject to the rights of public interest.

These rights were determined and governed by the state:

I agree that everyone has the right to ask the government, whose name I bear while possessing the floor at this moment, its principles of freedom...we are told today that there is not academic freedom without the freedom of congregations...Education is free. To teach is exercised under the guarantee of law and state oversight. This oversight extends to all educational institutions and teaching, without exception.¹⁶⁰

Unfortunately for Ferry, his savvy defense notwithstanding, his measure failed. He could not get the support in the Senate for his now infamous Article Seven. Yet, he was not defeated. Parliament was to reconvene in eight months, giving him time to rework his measure and reassess his support.

Another Effort and Another Disappointment

When Waddington lost his post just before Christmas in 1879, Ferry was retained, much to his relief, and he was able to continue his project. He knew, however, that there was much work to be done. The conservative majority in the Senate was preventing him from legislative success. He needed to cleverly devise another way of achieving his goals.

He re-crafted his bill on higher education in March of 1880. In some ways, the current measure went further in two ways than his original plan. First, the “free” universities such as the University of Paris, were forbidden to utilize the title of *university* or to become establishments of *utilité publique* except by special law. Second, he reworked the language in Article Seven, still the most controversial of all of the articles

¹⁶⁰ Ferry, *Discours*, vol. I, 62-63

in the new provision, hoping to prevent all unauthorized religious orders to participate in public or free education of any kind.¹⁶¹

Opponents of the bill yet again reacted strongly stating that the government was striking at the heart of freedom of instruction when it gave the state the exclusive right of conferring degrees. With regards to the aspect of the law that would forbid free universities from the title of ‘*university*,’ Bonapartist deputy from *Gers* Paul de Cassagnac argued that the bill actually attacked freedom of thought as students would not be examined by their own instructors. They would therefore be subject to the inquiries from those uninformed of the students’ formation.¹⁶²

During this legislative session in March of 1880, Ferry and his allies battled foes from left and right in hopes to get Article Seven passed. When Simon addressed the Senate, he sought to shatter this now notorious article. He found the article useless because the fears which Ferry had expressed had no foundation as far as Simon was concerned. He felt the measure not only ill-advised, but also unjust.¹⁶³

Furthermore, the question was put forth by Legitimist lawyer Ferdinand Boyer regarding the state’s ability to teach a consistent doctrine and consistent ethic. This seemed to him to be oxymoronic and impossible as the state “embraced so many different doctrines” itself.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, Boyer submitted an amendment which would permit both “free” and state faculties to confer degrees but with the requirement that graduates needed examination before a jury appointed by the Higher Council of Public Education for admission to public office or profession. The amendment was rejected.

¹⁶¹ *J.O.C.* 1 avril 1879, p. 2768.

¹⁶² *J.O.C.* 2 juin 1876, pp. 3764-66.

¹⁶³ Édouard Lecanuet, *Les Premières Années du Pontificat de Léon XIII*; vol. II (Paris: Félix Alcan éditeur, 1931), 43.

¹⁶⁴ *J.O.C.* 18 juin 1879, pp. 5319-25.

The intense argument which ensued over Article Seven lasted for two entire weeks. During these debates, the prerogatives of the state versus that of the Church and the religious orders was the focus of the disputes. The reform of higher education was barely mentioned during these protracted discussions, which seemed to indicate just how deeply the educational issue was entrenched within these larger questions.¹⁶⁵

Fearing a reversal of sympathy due to Simon's eloquence, Council President Charles de Freycinet intervened on behalf of Ferry. He took it upon himself to address the senate with these threatening words: "If this measure is not passed, the executive power will, in any case, be forced to apply laws much more harsh than these. Vote for Article Seven, it is the most moderate you can obtain."¹⁶⁶ Despite Prime Minister Freycinet's threats, the Senate voted against the article one year after Ferry first introduced the bill.

Ferry's Success

Ferry's plans were not entirely foiled. In addition to his legal activity in the spring of 1879 to challenge the free universities, Ferry was simultaneously working on reforming the Higher Council for Public Education, which had been established in 1873 and allowed clergy to sit on the board to supervise secondary education. Ferry believed that he had to change this policy in order to secure the proper ideological makeup of the Council. In commenting on the development, Ferry remarked that, "it is vital to the security of the future that the stewardship of schools does not belong to the bishops who have declared that the French Revolution of 1789 was guilty of deicide...and that the

¹⁶⁵ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 61

¹⁶⁶ Jules Ferry, *Discours vol. III*, 44

principles denied original sin.”¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, Ferry was determined to make good on his promise to laicize all education in the country, with or without the approval of the Senate.¹⁶⁸

After changing the council statutes so that he could remove the Catholic clergy at will, Ferry put in place men on the council loyal to his vision. After achieving the complexion he desired, the council members then appointed inspectors to investigate each school periodically to ensure legal propriety.¹⁶⁹

Now headed by Ferry, the council was given jurisdiction over programs, texts, administration, discipline, and most importantly, the conferral of degrees. In the non-state funded free schools, those that Ferry failed to disband with his challenge to the Law of Higher Education of 1875, this council now had the power to intervene by either forbidding certain texts or expelling teachers or students from the school. Thus, reforming this council proved to be a very clever move, for Ferry was promoted to *Président du Conseil* in September of 1880. With this role and having already succeeded in changing the Higher Council for Public Instruction in March of 1879, he now enjoyed more authority to accomplish his goals.

Furthermore, even though Article Seven was not passed as such, Freycinet told Ferry that he would strictly apply the existing laws regarding the unauthorized orders. This meant that all unauthorized orders such as the Jesuits would have to seek government approval or suffer the possibility of expulsion from France. Thus, if new laws regarding unauthorized religious orders could not be passed, a more strict enforcement of the old laws was a fall-back position. It turned out that current legislation

¹⁶⁷ *J.O.C.* 13 December 1880, p. 12793

¹⁶⁸ *J.O.S.* 28 February 1880, p. 2317

¹⁶⁹ Acomb, *The French Laic Laws*, 148.

could achieve the same end nicely. The Jesuits were thus expelled on June 30th, 1880 by executive decree.¹⁷⁰

In compliance with this command, the Jesuits fled to England and Belgium, abandoning twenty seven colleges and institutes and their students.¹⁷¹ Yet, this expulsion did not go unnoticed by Church officials and Frenchmen alike. Even the police precincts expressed their great dismay at being forced into this action by such a political heavy hand. The prefect of police in Andrieux, who was a free-thinker and not a practicing Catholic, described the ousting of the priests as a “painful matter for those responsible for its accomplishment. The police met with passive resistance, and had to turn defenseless priests into the street; their prayerful attitude, their calm, resigned expression contrasted painfully with the use of public-force.”¹⁷² Reports like these, far from what Ferry and Freycinet had hoped, occurred throughout France.

In Toulouse, a former army chaplain, ninety-year-old Fr. Guzy, was the first Jesuit expelled. Bearing on his chest the cross of the Legion of Honor for heroic duty in service, he was helped out, while the *gendarmes* who knew the old priest cried and saluted.¹⁷³ As stories like these amassed throughout France, a storm of indignation and protest ensued, resulting in Freycinet’s resignation just two months after the expulsions began. Fortunately for Ferry, he was able to retain his post as Minister of Public Instruction, allowing the brunt of the unrest to fall on the former Prime Minister.

¹⁷⁰ Jacques Gadille, *La Pensée et L’Action Politiques Des Éveques Francais au Début de la IIIe République 1870/1883. Tome II.* (Paris: Hachette 1967), 160.

¹⁷¹ John W Bush, “Education and Social Status: The Jesuit College in the Early Third Republic,” *French Historical Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1. Spring, (1975): 124-140.

¹⁷² Milorad Vuckovic. “The Suppression of Religious Houses in France 1880, and the Attitude of Representative British Press.” *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report*, no. 28. (1961): 15.

¹⁷³ Vuckovic, “The Suppression”, 15.

It is of no little historical significance that despite Ferry's work and legal and political maneuverings, Jesuit schools would once again find themselves involved in French education in just five years, as the conditions changed enough for a cautious re-entry into France. Twenty five of the twenty seven schools and institutes would be reopened under Jesuit auspices by 1885. Even more surprising, by 1888, Jesuit schools would experience an enrollment of 7,735, similar to that of the time period before Ferry's terms in power, when their enrollment was 9,131 in 1876.¹⁷⁴

It is an understatement that the expulsion did not come about in the fashion in which Ferry had hoped. It showed Ferry that clerical support was still a force to reckon with in France. When the Senate refused to pass the law, the government acted on executive order. This did not support the modern notion that a Republic was the grand alternative to the "top-down" approach of the absolutism of the *ancien régime*. Ferry's job remained, but his reputation was now deeply harmed. Senator Édouard de Laboulaye, head of the Collège de France (established by Napoléon in the earlier part of the Century to offer free lectures on science and scientific discover to the public) since 1873, led a contingent of the left of center to support an opposing bill offered by an Orléanist challenging this decision.¹⁷⁵ Some noticeable left-of-center senators who joined with Laboulaye were Jules Simon, who never supported Ferry's so-called "anti-liberty" maneuverings, Joseph Eymard-Duvernay, and Marcel Barthe.

Despite the harm to his reputation, Ferry did accomplish his goal of removing clerical control over education. The successful passing of the law of July of 1880 which prevented free universities from now calling themselves 'universities,' giving the state

¹⁷⁴ Bush, "Education and Social Status," 128.

¹⁷⁵ *J.O.S.* 12 juillet 1881, pp. 487-88; no. 356.

complete control over education as in the days of the Empire, and the suppression and expulsion of the Jesuits, placed education back in the hands of the French government. However, there was still the issue of what to do about the Faculties of Theology in universities such as the Sorbonne (the University of Paris) or the newer universities established as a direct result of the law of Liberty of Higher Education of 1875, such as Angers or Lille.¹⁷⁶

Paul Bert, former professor of physiological sciences at the Sorbonne, member of the Chamber of Deputies, an ardent anticlericalist, approved of Ferry's cleverness. He even went so far as to suggest the creation of chairs in the history of religions, Hebrew, and ecclesiastical law so that the "scientific" study of religion could supplant the "dogmatic study of faith" in the theology departments.¹⁷⁷ He further gave various reasons for the suppression of the budgets, the main being that the Catholic faculties offered degrees to a very small number of beneficiaries, most of whom were priests, because, he claimed, of Papal hostility to the influence of Gallicanism.

Oddly enough, Bert also mentioned Msgr. Maret by name, and stated that the latter was not "influential" in making his faculty relevant to the needs of France.¹⁷⁸ Conservatives responded that these faculties were sources of liberal thought, that Maret had long been considered a liberal by many in the French episcopate, and that the number of students at the Sorbonne was increasing. They contended that Bert was simply acting with anticlerical bias.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ For an examination of how his laws on higher education affected other universities, J.-F. Condette, "Entre science et coyances: L'image du Nord chez les universitaires français sous la Troisième République," *Revue du Nord*, nos. 360-61 (2005):401-422.

¹⁷⁷ *J.O.C.* 3 février 1882, p. 342

¹⁷⁸ *J.O.C.* 3 février 1882, p. 342.

¹⁷⁹ *J.O.C.* 14 mai 1882, pp. 597-98.

It is precisely the degree of Maret's competence, not only as an intellectual but also as a respondent to the secularizing force now looming, which the following chapters will investigate.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to explore in greater depth the political controversy surrounding the *laïcité* of education in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Jules Ferry revealed his deep commitment to remove church influence from the state, and had to overcome many obstacles in securing his educational ambitions. By examining these ambitions, we now have fuller appreciation of what Henri Maret faced when he sought to oppose Ferry. We also recognize the interconnected relationship between the education reforms. Ferry's laws for primary and secondary education, as well as his controversial Article Seven were all part of a concerted effort to eliminate the free universities.

The strange unfolding of events provides the proper basis for understanding the unique contribution to this debate of Henri Maret, Doyen of the Theology Faculty at the Sorbonne. Like de Mun et al, Maret wanted to preserve the educational laws as they were. He believed that these laws represented a true democratic state.¹⁸⁰ In fact, he argued that the education laws preserved the very goals of the French Revolution. Unlike de Mun and more consistent with Ferry, Maret supported in principle the idea of the Republic. He was not tied to the monarchy, and believed the current political form could

¹⁸⁰ Henri Maret, *Le Projet de Bulle de 1858 et La Liberté de L'Enseignement Supérieur*. (Paris: Delalain et Fils, 1875), 8.

serve well the goals of the Church and of the goals of the Republic.¹⁸¹ It is to this interesting personage and his impact in the education debates we shall now turn.

¹⁸¹Maret, *le Projet de Bulle*, 7.

Chapter Three: Maret and The Papal Bull Project

As we have seen, anticlericals such as Jules Ferry held to the opposition between liberty and Church authority, loyalty to the state and loyalty to the Church, and faith and science. Maret, as we will see, spent much of his career arguing against what he held to be false dichotomies. He believed that when understood properly, there is no antagonism between a modern, democratic state, and the Catholic Church.

Conservatives such as Albert de Mun also held to the idea that there existed direct opposition between the conceptions of church and state, at least in terms of how anticlerical republicans defined the state. De Mun argued that the secular state was a danger not only to education, but to families and society as a whole. He expressed well the fear of many of his Legitimist counterparts regarding what they viewed as social atheism in the anticlericals.

Now that the stage is set, this chapter examines Maret. I propose that Maret, in developing a strategy of resistance to the secularization of the Sorbonne, uncovered a workable paradigm to bring about greater cooperation between church and state, rather than enmity. Further, that this paradigm found concurrence in future Papal documents and decrees, as well as in Catholic universities around the world where theology is taught along side of science, sociology, and other secular sciences without apparent conflict or contradiction.

Maret's long experience as a theology professor at the Sorbonne prepared him for this arrangement. In fact, he began working towards harmonizing church/state interests

in higher education long before Jules Ferry, or the Republican government, for that matter, came into power. He had a long-standing project, which he called '*le projet de bulle,*' meaning, the project of the Papal Bull, which he began developing twenty years prior to his battles with Ferry. As far back as 1858, Maret began articulating a plan explaining the relationship of higher education in general, the University of Paris in particular, to the government of Napoleon III and the Vatican. He hoped that this document would receive full Papal approval, and be proclaimed in the form of a *Bulla*, or official declaration from the Vatican. Thus, Maret would have church approval for his theology faculty at the University of Paris, even though the university was directly controlled by the state.

In order to appreciate his project, it is important to assess it within the proper historical background. We will examine not only his efforts on behalf of Catholic higher education, but also those factors which stymied and assisted these efforts (i.e. his Gallicanist associations, Papal relationships, affiliation with the Sorbonne, and finally his Papal Bull project.) I will attempt to deal with these topics as lucidly as possible, which will require a presentation which is sometimes more topical than chronological. This structure will allow for a more accessible discussion of Maret's unique views regarding church and state, as well as how this view contributed to his project to keep the theology faculty at the Sorbonne. Lastly, it explains the basis for his direct confrontations with Ferry, examined in chapter four.

Henri Maret and Gallicanism

Although Maret became a major force for Rome's rights in France, he had actually been considered a Gallicanist earlier in his career.¹⁸² This is an important fact, for his early Gallicanism molded his political thought later in his career. It also hindered his efforts with Pope Pius IX, who did not trust him due to his political past. As Gallicanism waned in the middle of the century, Maret's views developed, and he became known as a liberal Gallican, and then as a Christian democrat, no longer adhering to the altar/throne alliance. This evolution in his political thought manifests itself in his dealings with Ferry, wherein we see the uniqueness in his understanding of the relationship between church and state. To understand these political influences, let us explore them in the proper historical context.

When Pius IX served as Pope from 1846-1878, Gallicanism had waned in France, and those that still held to that view were held with great suspicion by the Pope. Loyalty to the crown and loyalty to the Church were no longer one and the same thing. Maret was considered a Gallican earlier in his career for two reasons: he believed that the Gallican articles implied a distinction between the temporal and eternal spheres; and that the French Church should answer to the French bishops. To better illustrate this, let us examine the original articles.

In late 1682, the eloquent writer, orator and Bishop Jacques Bossuet, articulated what has been known as the "Four Articles" of Gallicanism. First, that kings are not subject to any ecclesiastical power in temporal matters, and they cannot be deposed,

¹⁸² For more on Maret's early political philosophy, see Claude Bressollette, *L'abbé Maret: le combat d'un théologien pour une démocratie chrétienne, 1830-1851* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977).

directly or indirectly, by the authority of the Pope; nor can the sovereign's subjects be dispensed from their obedience to their temporal sovereign. Second, that the power over spiritual matters conferred upon St. Peter and his successors remains, though checked by General Councils as laid down by the decrees of the Council of Constance. Third, that the exercise of apostolic power must be regulated by the canons of the Church and, in France, by the laws, rules and customs of the French Church. Finally, although the Pope enjoys the chief voice in questions of faith, his decisions are not necessarily infallible unless the consent of the Church is given.¹⁸³

These four points serve to generally characterize Gallicanism, which, for two centuries, remained the dominant political model in France for church/state relations. Circumstances altered this form in the early nineteenth century, however.

After the French Revolution, another movement began to overtake Gallicanism. In the early nineteenth century, Felicité Lamennais lent his pen and intellect to a movement that became known as French *Ultramontanism* (meaning the European Catholics would look 'beyond the mountains,' or Alps, towards Rome for their direction in both religious and temporal matters). Ultramontanists rejected Gallicanism, believing firmly in the long-standing view of Papal primacy and preeminence over Catholic doctrinal councils, the Pope's infallibility regarding matters of faith and morals, and that Pope had the right and duty to intervene in state matters when issues of ecclesial appointments and administration were concerned.¹⁸⁴ The views regarding Papal authority in ecclesial issues were consistent with centuries-old Catholic teaching, and thus did not stimulate wide-spread controversy throughout Europe. However the view of the Pope's

¹⁸³ James Livingston, Francis Schussler Fiorenza, *Modern Christian Thought: The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 329.

¹⁸⁴ Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 329-331.

political influence to prevent quasi-nationalized and autonomous Catholic churches was a model to which the Gallicanists were deeply resistant. Furthermore, Lamennais' desire for a complete separation between church and state created further controversy which extended into the Vatican itself. He pushed for a separation for what he dubbed the 'altar/throne alliance,' as he concluded that the throne impeded and complicated Church authority.¹⁸⁵

It was in fact the negative response of the Holy See that led Lamennais to abandon organized religion altogether. Pope Gregory XVI censured him in an encyclical entitled *Mirari Vos* in August of 1832.¹⁸⁶ These views were deemed too liberal by the Vatican and dangerous in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸⁷ By the end of the century, views similar to these were articulated by Maret, for which he not only avoided Vatican censure, but was even elevated to the title of Bishop.

Thinkers such as Lamennais and Montalembert, friend of Lamennais and a noted preacher and co-editor of "L'Avenir," who advocated an end to the altar/throne alliance, impressed this view of church/state relations on the young mind of Henri Maret during his formative seminary years.¹⁸⁸ Maret was not only friends with Montalembert but also with bishops such as Dupanloup of Orléans, another advocate of the separation of altar

¹⁸⁵ Félicité Lamennais, *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion* (Paris: LeBlanc, 1817), 99-148. For a more recent work examining the intellectual and political differences between Lamennais and his brother Jean, see Louis Le Guilou, *Les Lamennais: Deux frères, deux destines* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1990), 27-47.

¹⁸⁶ Gregory XVI. *Mirari Vos*, www.vatican.va, date last accessed, March 12, 2011.

¹⁸⁷ For a recent work exploring the liberal viewpoint of the ultramontanists in the early Nineteenth Century, Sylvain Milbach, "Les catholiques libéraux et la presse entre 1831 et 1835," *Le Mouvement Social*, no. 215 April (2006): 9-34.

¹⁸⁸ Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 333. See also Claude Bressollette, *Le Pouvoir Dans la Societe et Dans l'Eglise □ l'ecclésiologie politique de Mgr Maret, doyen de la faculté de théologie de Sorbonne au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Cerf Éditeurs, 1984).

and throne.¹⁸⁹ Dupanloup and Maret believed that the church and state each had its own proper domains, but should work together for the moral education of its citizens. Neither of them viewed the French Revolution and its aftermath with complete antipathy as did most of the other prelates during the Second Empire. Rather, Dupanloup and Maret believed that there were principles established during the reign of Napoleon I and articulated in the Concordat that would achieve their own personal goals: religious and educational liberty combined with cooperation with the state regarding moral formation of French citizens.¹⁹⁰

In contrast with the Gallicanism as articulated by Bossuet, the views espoused by Dupanloup and Maret reflected a change now known as Liberal Gallicanism. Liberal Gallicanism did not center itself on the divine right of kings, as did its philosophical predecessor. Rather, it relied on the political commitment of ordinary Catholics instead of the Christian character of the crown. In other words, Catholic citizens needed not align themselves politically with singular support of a monarchy, but could support other governmental forms like republics or democracies, so long as a close cooperation between Church and state were guaranteed somehow, e.g., through a document like the Concordat. Furthermore, he agreed with the national autonomy of the Catholic Church in France, at least in terms of identifying for itself the nature of cooperation between the church and the state. It was in this sense that Maret was considered a Liberal Gallican in his early writings. Recalling the first article of the 1682 declaration of Bossuet, Maret noted:

¹⁸⁹ Jacques Gadille, *La Pensée et L'Action Politiques des Évêques Français au Début de la III République 1870-183, Vol. I.* (Paris: Hachette, 1967), 16-28.

¹⁹⁰ Gadille, *La Pensée*, 21

To the extent to which this article confines itself to asserting the independence of peoples and their magistrates in the civil and political sphere, and enclosing the ecclesiastical authority within its just limits, then this doctrine seems one of the most glorious achievements of the French clergy and of Bossuet.¹⁹¹

This quote of Maret offers an interesting difference in his Gallican commentary compared with that of Bossuet. The phrase “the independence of peoples and their magistrates in the civil and political sphere” replaced the ‘Kings and princes’ language of Bossuet’s articles. For Maret, distinguishing church from state was not so much about limiting the scope and powers of the Church, but rather identifying the proper sphere of both church and state. He also supported the idea that the Church of France should be governed by the Bishops of France, offering a limitation to Papal power. In terms of France, Maret never denied the Church its role in the social and public sphere in terms of wielding a moral authority.¹⁹² His Liberal Gallicanism meant that his political views were not absolutist and monarchist, but were open to other forms of government, like republics. Also, it meant that he advocated for a certain level of political and social autonomy for the local French church – especially when it came to directing the theological faculty at the Sorbonne.¹⁹³

Another interesting feature of Maret’s thought was his emphasis on the education of all French citizens, thus challenging the Catholic Church’s exclusive reliance on monks, priests, or bishops for education, training, and evangelization. Lay people, Maret believed, had a very specific vocation in bringing to bear the tenets of their faith into the

¹⁹¹ Claude Bressollette, Emile Poulat, eds. *Henri Maret: L’église et l’état. Cours de la Sorbonne Inédit, 1850-51* (Paris: Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique Editeurs, 1979), 113.

¹⁹² Henri Maret, *Le Projet de Bulle de 1858 et La Liberté de L’Enseignement Supérieur* (Paris: Delalain etFils, 1875), 7-9.

¹⁹³ Bressollette, *Le Pouvoir dans la Société*, 23-47.

social and political sphere. This is why he desired so strongly to keep the theology faculty at the Sorbonne – in order to foster the Church’s goal to be free to educate and inform the faithful, both lay and clerical.¹⁹⁴

As traditional Gallicanism waned during the monarchy of Louis Philippe, ultramontanism grew. Maret did not support the ultramontane view of church-state relations, and thus now found himself battling not just forces from increasingly antagonistic governments, but also from forces within the Church itself. His Gallicanist views were more and more being considered dangerous and liberal, as were his friendships with Gallican-leaning prelates such as Archbishop Darboy of Paris, and Bishop Dupanloup of Orléans. In an 1869 essay, Louis Veuillot, the outspoken editor of the ultramontane journal *L’Univers*, denounced the political views of these clergy, whom he deemed ‘liberal Catholics,’ quipping, “liberal Catholicism was nothing but an illusion, nothing but a piece of stubbornness—a pose.”¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, this type of non-ultramontane Catholicism offered only a “false spirit of conciliation.”

Maret and Pius IX: Reclaiming His Reputation and His Program

Before proceeding, let us pause and reflect on the meaning of Maret’s reputation as a Liberal Gallicanist. During the pontificate of Pius IX, the Church experienced a great deal of turmoil both in Germany and Italy in the 1860’s and 1870’s. Thus, for Catholic prelates such as Maret, loyalty to the Church versus loyalty to the state was closely scrutinized. If Maret were not completely loyal to the Church, his entire program would be undermined. It was imperative, therefore, for Maret to display his Catholic credentials.

¹⁹⁴ Ira Katznelson, Gareth Stedman-Jones, editors, *Religion and the Political Imagination* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 192.

¹⁹⁵ Katznelson, *Political Imagination*, 198.

These credentials would become hotly debated during the Vatican I Council. If he were dubbed a dissenting voice by Pius IX, his efforts would collapse.

This is why Maret's political leanings captured the attention of the Pope Pius IX. Napoleon III appealed to his uncle's Organic Articles¹⁹⁶ and nominated Maret as a titular Bishop to Sura in 1861. It was common practice for respected clerics to receive appointments as bishops of a diocese which, for one reason or another, no longer existed as such. Thus, once appointed, the new bishop would not actually live in his appointed see but stay in his own local diocese, although now enjoying the title of bishop. In so doing, the Church leaders received another prelate amongst their ranks who could then assist the Archbishop of the titular appointee's own diocese with his own hierarchical duties. Furthermore, these appointments were a sign of honor and appreciation for the said appointee's work.

The appointment was likely due to his more liberal and Gallicanist past, his notoriety as the Dean of the Theology Faculty notwithstanding. Even though Pius IX was extremely uncomfortable with accepting this nomination, he acquiesced at the prompting of Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, who had been working with Maret for some time and developing a document regarding Catholic higher education in France.¹⁹⁷ Maret took full advantage of both the clerical and political clout presented him by this appointment. By continuing as the Dean of the theology faculty, he

¹⁹⁶ This legislative text was written by Napoleon in 1802 covering public worship. It gave the emperor authority to nominate clergy for Episcopal posts in the Church.

¹⁹⁷ L'Abbé F. Bazin, *Vie de Mgr Maret: son temps et ses oeuvres* vol II, (Paris: Berche et Tralin, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1891), 198. Bazin was a friend and colleague of Maret's, and his three volumes on the Abbé contain first hand accounts as well as personal letters regarding the life of the Doyen de Théologie de la Sorbonne.

now enjoyed the privilege of being counted amidst the ecclesiastical hierarchy as his confreres.

Although his nomination was eventually accepted by Pope Pius IX, the Pope nevertheless responded in a letter to Napoleon III on Christmas Day 1860, stating: “Your Majesty’s Government has presented two candidates whom I could not and cannot admit on account of the doubts to which both give rise in me,...I speak of the abbés Maret and Mounig.”¹⁹⁸

The Pope was concerned about Maret’s public and negative response to his controversial encyclical *Quanta Cura*. The Pope viewed the comments of Maret and Archbishop of Paris Darboy as Gallicanist, a disagreement which became public during the crisis over the publication of the Syllabus of Errors, Pius IX’s follow up document to *Quanta Cura*. Both Darboy and Maret urged Napoleon III’s minister to the Vatican – Pierre Baroche – to negotiate for modifications and explanations. They also petitioned the French government to stop publication of the said documents.¹⁹⁹

Maret’s appointment did nothing to stifle his penchant for airing his concerns that the Church was losing touch with modern society, and that the Concordat did a fine job of delineating, at least in France, the limits and nature of the relationship in Church and state politics for French Catholics. The Pope, he hoped, needed to know and respect this. He articulated these concerns in a letter to Pius IX in 1862 after his appointment.²⁰⁰ In the letter, he extolled the Pope for rightly, in his view, condemning errors such as materialism

¹⁹⁸ E. E. Y. Hales, *Pio Nono: A Study In European Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Image Books, 1962), 237. This is the best known Catholic work on the life of Pope Pius IX, containing actual correspondence between the Pope and other European officials of the day.

¹⁹⁹ Hales, *Pio Nono*, 301-02.

²⁰⁰ Bazin, *Vie de Maret, vol II*, 217.

and scientism, the belief that science alone brings certain knowledge, present in modern conceptions of the notions of liberty and reason.

However, he also tried to politely insert his concerns regarding the anti-modernist accusations prevalent against the Church, and hoped to avert the Pope from offering too general a condemnation regarding liberty per se. He pointed out that he was not only a clergyman in the Church, but was also a citizen of France which demanded its own sphere of influence.²⁰¹ This last statement reveals the evolution of Maret's unique view as far as the anticlericalist/ultramontanist camps were concerned, that the temporal and eternal spheres are distinct with regards to their authoritative structures, and that these structures were not necessarily oppositional. It was for this view that Maret had been accused by ultramontanists such as Bishop Pie of Poitiers of being a liberal.²⁰²

Pius IX did not miss Maret's insistence upon the distinction between temporal and eternal affairs with regards to proper spheres of influence for authority. It upset him, as he took it as Maret's denial of his role as the Vicar of Christ, who was the King of heaven and earth. He was also deeply concerned about the Church's loss of influence in the modern world, a world, he estimated, where revolutions and revolutionary ideas were on the increase. He immediately replied to Maret.

Pius himself was careful not to allow much in way of inflammatory remarks; he doubtless wanted to avoid fodder for his enemies, and so kept his letter to the Bishop of Sura short. He commended Maret for his defense of the Church in the face of materialism and the atheism. Maret's work on this subject was well known, and had been very effective in stemming the negative arguments coming from Victor Cousin earlier in the

²⁰¹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. II*, 217.

²⁰² Katznelson, *Political Imagination*, 198.

century with regards to Cousin's critical and vocal opinions on clerical influence in the university.²⁰³

Yet the Pope was conspicuously and coldly silent with regards to Maret's reference to citizenship and the need to respect French liberties in temporal affairs.²⁰⁴ His brief but curt letter nevertheless seemed to settle tensions between him and Maret. As the decade progressed, each man focused on other matters. The Pope was besieged with strife and upheaval in his native Italy as the papal-states were taken from him during the process of Italian unification. Maret's focus was centered on the Theology Faculty itself, seeking equal treatment for the Catholic theology faculty as that of the protestant faculty during the ministry of Victor Duruy, Minister of Public Education in the Second Empire. The two men's chief interests quickly converged, however, during the events leading up to the First Vatican Council.

In February of 1869, the Roman Jesuit periodical *Civiltá Cattolica* published an article stating that the bulk the Catholics of France were hoping that a "unanimous outburst of the Holy Spirit would define the Pope's infallibility by acclamation by the mouth of the bishops attending the council."²⁰⁵ Jesuit priest Carlo Piccirillo, the editor of the *Civiltá* journal, was also a personal assistant to the Pope, thus enjoying direct access. His purpose was to publish different attitudes of Catholics in various countries regarding the possible definition of Papal Infallibility at the upcoming Vatican Council. Once this article became widely known, the doctrine of Papal Infallibility was thrust into the

²⁰³ Henri Maret, *L'Église et la Société Laïque: Discours sur les Attaques Dirigées Contre L'Église* (Paris: V.A. Waille Libraire-Éditeurs, 1848), 28.

²⁰⁴ Hales, *Pio Nono*, 302.

²⁰⁵ Cuthbert Butler, William Bernard Ullathorne, *The Vatican Council: The Story from Inside in Bishop Ullathorne's Letters, Volumes I* (London: Longmans, Green Publisher, 1930), 109. Bishop Ullathorne of Birmingham, England (1850-1888) was present at the Council, and wrote many letters and diary entries during his time at the Vatican I Council, which Butler used in compiling this book.

spotlight. From the time of the publishing of that article until December, parties of bishops in all camps began to jostle and debate each other regarding the propriety of such a definition. Maret was soon swept up into the fray.

Upon reflecting on the issue at hand as presented in this Jesuit journal, Maret responded by penning a two-volume work entitled *Du concile général et de la paix religieuse* published in just prior to convening of the Vatican Council I in 1868-69.²⁰⁶ Although the purpose of the book was written to weigh in on the ongoing debate regarding the definition of Papal infallibility, he intentionally left the work broad in scope, repackaging and sometimes reshaping many of his older arguments on the church/state relationship. For instance, he spent some time responding to the new threat of atheism which he attributed to the influence of philosophical materialism and positivism.²⁰⁷ He still held to the Concordat as the best working document on the Vatican/government relations in order to avoid complete separation. He also developed thoughts on the relationship between faith and science.²⁰⁸ The incompatibility, he asserted, only seemed apparent when “egoism of modern man” makes of itself its own law.

However, he generated not a little controversy by weighing in again on the Pope’s perceived intransigence against modernity. In so doing, he articulated his position against the prospect of the declaration of Papal infallibility, which was being discussed in the theological circles for preparation leading up to the council.²⁰⁹ Maret argued that

²⁰⁶ Henri Maret. *Du concile general et de la paix religieuse: Memoire soumis au prochain concile Oecuménique du Vatican* (Paris: Henri Plon, Imprimeur-Éditeur, 1869). It should be noted here that Maret’s last work has a similar title to this work, *Verité Catholique et la Paix Religieuse: Appel a la Raison de la France*. Despite the similarity of titles, these are two different works.

²⁰⁷ Maret, *Du concile vol. I*, 21-22; 65-69.

²⁰⁸ Maret, *Du Concile, vol. I*, 65-70.

²⁰⁹ Maret, *Du concile, vol I*, 117, vol. III, 500-505.

Infallibility only rested in the Papacy acting in co-operation with the episcopate, and that the Papacy was not an absolute but constitutional monarchy, which he set out to prove by detailing every ecumenical council from Nicea in 325AD to the sessions of Trent in the 1540's.²¹⁰ He thus formally resurrected the Gallican decrees of 1682. When Napoleon III himself paid for the publication of the book, the situation could not get any worse with regard to Maret's standing in the Vatican. Could this newly appointed Titular Bishop of Sura receive official censure as did his colleague and fellow anti-infallibility provocateur Hans Doellinger of Germany?

Thus, with the decade of the 1860's preventing him from pursuing further an agreement between the French government and Rome due to the Italian wars of reunification, he chose to write about the direction which he hoped the Vatican council would take regarding the Catholic Church's stance towards modernity, which he deemed deleterious to social harmony, as well as to his work.²¹¹ Pius IX's controversial declarations in the document entitled the "Syllabus of Errors," a follow-up to his encyclical (no less controversial) *Quanta Cura*, gave a broad Papal condemnation of modern notions of liberty, reason, and religious liberty.²¹² As seen in chapter one, free-thinkers and liberal Republicans such as Jules Ferry referred to these decrees as proof of the Church's dangerous and contemptible view towards modernity.²¹³

Unfortunately for Maret, Louis Veillot, editor of the influential journal *L'Univers* and considered an avid proponent of ultramontanism, regarded Maret's book as extremely troubling. Veillot shared his views of Maret with his friend and fellow

²¹⁰ Maret, *Du concile, vol's II and III*.

²¹¹ Maret, *Du concile, vol. II*, 432.

²¹² For a deeper treatment of Pius IX's view of modernity, see Syllabus of Errors, 1865, www.vatican.va, date last accessed March 14, 2011.

²¹³ Jules Ferry, "La Troisième," 359.

supporter of papal infallibility Archbishop Henry Edward Manning of Westminster England, who asked Veillot to publish a *post scriptum* to his pastoral letter written for his English diocese in October of 1869. In this letter, entitled, “The Oecumenical Council and the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff,” Veillot vociferously attacked Maret’s views, calling them “anti-papal” and claiming that these views gave further support to the “*separationists*,” those anticlericals pushing for immediate separation between church and state.²¹⁴ Manning and Veillot extended their influence to the United States through a New York contact, James E. MacMaster, who republished this pastoral letter in his journal, the *Freeman’s Journal*.²¹⁵ Then Manning convinced Veillot to publish Manning’s own pastoral letter in its entirety in Veillot’s journal *L’Univers* in November of 1869, on the eve of the convening of the Council.²¹⁶ With these allegations now in general circulation, Maret found himself dead center in the eye-storm of controversy.

His friend and support Bishop Dupanloup of Orléans published two letters against Veillot and Manning that same month, stating that his and Maret’s concern was not doctrinal but one of prudence and a question of proper timing. He also made it clear that the accusations were unjust and caused much confusion to many, and demanded a retraction.²¹⁷

Despite the Pope’s concerns and Maret’s Gallicanist protestations against the Vatican I definition of Papal infallibility, Maret remained a faithful son of the Church.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Eugénie Cecconi, *Histoire du Concile du Vatican d’Après les Documents Originaux, vol. I*. (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1887), 378-385. Here the word **separationist** refers to those politicians who believed that France needed to separate church from state immediately, as opposed to the anticlericals known as *opportunists*, who did not believe the time opportune to completely separate the two.

²¹⁵ Matthias Buschkuhl, *Great Britain and the Holy See 1746-1870* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1982), 145.

²¹⁶ Cecconi, *Histoire du Concile*, 380.

²¹⁷ Cecconi, *Histoire du Concile*, 495.

²¹⁸ Bazin, *Vie de Maret, vol III*, 219.

His concern was with the 'anti-modern' image that was being conveyed in these ecclesial developments. He hoped for greater cooperation and evolution in church/state relations, and believed that the current Vatican trends would frustrate that goal. He recognized the necessity of maintaining a trustworthy reputation from the perspective of the Vatican, otherwise he could never garner the cooperation he needed to develop a plan to keep a credentialed theology faculty at the Sorbonne.

On November 15, 1870, the intensity of the situation eased when Maret gave his adherence to the doctrine of infallibility, reversing his previous position. When the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne resumed its work in December of 1871, the Dean signed a decree on behalf of all of the faculty demonstrating complete acceptance of "all of the decrees of the Vatican I Council and particularly the Constitution *Pastor Aeternus* relative to the doctrine of infallibility of the Roman Pontiff."²¹⁹ Furthermore, Maret had to disavow the contentious errors in *Du concile général et de la paix religieuse* in a letter to Pius IX in August of 1871. This final move reestablished the confidence of the Pope in the Bishop of Sura.²²⁰ After the his personal and political struggles prior, during, and after the Council, Maret continued his work on finding a *via media* between the ultramontane and Gallicanist camps within the issue of higher education.

Thus, Maret experienced challenges from the Church regarding his own reputation. In battling to keep himself in a position of trust, Maret distanced himself from his early Liberal Gallicanist leanings. Articulating his political views in a way that would put both officials from the church and state at rest would be a task that would require

²¹⁹ Claude Bressollette, "Les Derniers Combats de Mgr Maret Pour Le Maintien De La Faculté De Théologie De Sorbonne," in *Humanisme et foi chrétienne: mélanges scientifiques du centenaire de l'Institut Catholique de Paris*, edited by Charles Kannengiesser, Yves Marchasson, (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1976), 51.

²²⁰ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 250.

extreme caution and clarity. To assess these views, let us examine a long-standing project of Maret's to get his theology faculty's credentials accepted by both church and state.

Maret's political evolution worked to his advantage during the Third Republic. Unlike his other Catholic political colleagues, he was not tied to the monarchy. Thus, examining his Gallicanist history and his Papal relationships sheds light on the reason for his political differences.

Maret and the Sorbonne

Maret's profession as a theologian also played a significant role in battles with Ferry. He had plenty of time to develop and refine his understanding of church and state relationships, as his vocation was to think about these things. His work may have been considered largely abstract, but he had one very practical point of focus: to save the theology faculty at the University of Paris. Being a religious man of letters, Maret was no doubt motivated by a sense of honoring the traditional heritage of the university, which had always placed great emphasis on the theology faculty. The name Sorbonne, in fact, was originally applied to the theological faculty during the time of Richard of Sorbonne, the King's chamberlain in the 14th Century, for whom the faculty was named. In the 16th century, as the theology faculty grew in importance within the university, the name Sorbonne became synonymous with the institution as a whole.²²¹ The theology faculty, in fact, was the primary and central feature of the university. In order to understand why Maret worked so hard to preserve his faculty at the Sorbonne, it may be helpful to recount the university's storied past.

²²¹ André Tuillier, *Histoire de la Sorbonne*, 369.

The Sorbonne was one of the birthplaces of scholasticism, the dominant theological and philosophical system of the middle-ages. To be sure, this intellectual patrimony motivated the Dean of the faculty to fight against destabilizing trends. The university, founded in the 13th century, was the leading center of education for nobility, royalty, and even popes for centuries. Illustrious figures such as Popes Celestine II, Adrian IV, Innocent III, Catholic saints such as Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Thomas of Canterbury, and John of Salisbury, attended as students. The University was embroiled in the 15th century controversy surrounding Joan of Arc when distinguished members of the Theology faculty examined and denounced the young French maiden and abided by her sentence of execution in 1431, only to renounce its previous decision and rehabilitate her reputation.

The ancient university was to disappear with ancient France under the Revolution. On 15 Sept., 1793, petitioned by the Department of Paris and several departmental groups, the National Convention decided that independently of the primary schools, already the objects of its solicitude, "there should be established in the Republic three progressive degrees of instruction; the first for the knowledge indispensable to artisans and workmen of all kinds; the second for further knowledge necessary to those intending to embrace the other professions of society; and the third for those branches of instruction the study of which is not within the reach of all men."²²² Measures were to be taken immediately: This was the death-sentence for the university. It was not to be restored after the Revolution had subsided.

²²² "University of Paris" in The Catholic Encyclopedia, date last accessed March 1, 2011, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11495a.htm>.

The Sorbonne, along with all of the other universities, were replaced by a single center, viz., the *Université Impériale*. This was how Napoleon chose not only to control the possible dissemination of political thought he might find threatening, but also to train his ministers for bureaucratic positions in his ever expanding empire. Not surprisingly, the new system was less favorable to study, and without a philosophy faculty (not to be reestablished until the ascendancy of Louis Philippe in a coup d'état in 1830) the intellectual milieu of the once great center of intellectual work grew stagnant.

The theology faculty did not gain prominence until the young Maret was hired in 1841. He wrote prolifically on philosophical and theological subjects, in addition to co-founding the journal *L'Ére novella* in 1848, which was favorable to Christian democracy. He was well respected with the various Archbishops of Paris and surrounding regions, as well as with certain members of the government. As we will see, he made good use of his status as the Dean of the Theology Faculty at the University of Paris in his efforts on behalf of the Sorbonne.

Early in his career Maret's writings in defense of the Church's teachings had come under fire by none other than Victor Cousin, the most celebrated philosopher of the Sorbonne during the early to mid-part of the nineteenth century.²²³ Cousin desired a reduction in clerical influence at the university as a whole, while teaching a philosophy known as "Philosophical Eclecticism." Maret considered his work pantheistic, to which he wrote a lengthy work entitled "Essai Sur Le Pantheism" as a refutation in 1845. Maret also viewed Cousin's view of church/state relations as hostile to the ongoing and

²²³ For an explanation of his philosophy, James W. Manns and Edward H. Madden, "Victor Cousin: Commonsense and the Absolute," *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 43 no. 3 March (1990): 569-589.

longstanding relationship between the two.²²⁴ Thus began his career of developing a workable framework for understanding the Church's role in the modern state.

As the years passed, Maret emerged as a leading Catholic thinker with his work to support and help secure the right of higher education in general, the theology faculty at the Sorbonne in particular, along with his defense of the Church against the influential Cousin, and his work in the Second Empire for greater cooperation between Napoleon III and the Vatican.²²⁵ During the years between the Falloux Laws of 1850 which broke the monopoly of state-run primary schools allowing for private entities and individuals to operate schools instead, and the laws of 1875 which allowed the same for universities, Maret invested himself in the struggle to keep the state-sponsored theology faculty teaching at the Sorbonne. With the appointment of the anticlerical Victor Duruy as Minister of Public Instruction under Napoleon III, Maret realized the need to design and enact a plan that would keep happy the two powers that were beginning to grow ever more antagonistic towards each other.²²⁶

For Maret, the secularist agenda was founded on anticlerical biases that skewed the Republican understanding of church/state relations. The Dean instead held that this relationship was mutually supportive, with each entity enjoying its own domain.²²⁷ Without the Church, Maret feared for the moral future of his country. He also feared the loss of both an *authentic sense of liberty* and the *security of the rights and laws for Frenchmen*, (ironically, the very things Ferry believed would be secured with his laic

²²⁴ Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 49.

²²⁵ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. II, 172.

²²⁶ See Patrick Harrigan, *Mobility, Elites, and Education in French Society of the Second Empire* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 123-138.

²²⁷ Maret, *L'Église et la Société Laïque*, 18,19.

legislation and educational reforms).²²⁸ Maret worried that true liberty and legal rights could not be preserved apart from their origin in Catholic teaching itself. Although he did not agree with many of the events of the French Revolution, he did not find them completely foreign to the faith, either. Quite the opposite, Maret believed the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity were political versions of heart-felt and ancient Christian truths.²²⁹

At the same time, Maret held that if the Catholic hierarchy of France were not proactive, they would lose not only the cooperative arrangement of government, but would also see the demise of the faith of the working class.²³⁰ He further felt the need to include Rome more directly in the theological education at the Sorbonne in order to sustain Vatican approval and doctrinal credential. This would be a difficult task, as the Sorbonne was funded by the state and its theology professors were appointed by the state as well, in accord with the Concordat of 1801. Furthermore, the state was growing more resistant to ecclesial encroachment during the Second Empire. Maret foresaw that higher education, which had always been under the direct governance of the state, would become a victim of this growing tension between Paris and Rome if he did not do something. Thus began his quest to secure rights for the Sorbonne regarding its ability to offer a recognized theology degree, especially doctoral degrees, under the auspices of both church and state. This quest took the form in the aforementioned document, *La projet de Bulle de 1858 et la Liberté de l'Enseignement Supérieur*.²³¹ Not even he could envision just exactly what a protracted odyssey this project would be for

²²⁸ Jules Ferry, "La Troisième, 380.

²²⁹ Maret, , *L'Église et la Société Laïque*, p. 7.

²³⁰ Bressollette and Poulat, *L'Église et L'État*, p. 25.

²³¹ Maret, *La Projet de Bulle*. 2.

him, that it would in fact occupy the rest of his life.

Maret expressed his thoughts on education in several essays written over a period of forty years, 1845 to 1883, among them, the aforementioned *Le Projet de Bulle de 1858 et La Liberté de L'Enseignement Supérieur*, and *La Verité' Catholique et La Paix Religieuse Appel a la Raison de la France*. With regard to the controversy over education, the years of 1879-1883 were most likely the most turbulent years as far as his tenure at the Sorbonne was concerned, as he was no longer fighting for his ideas, but for his very way of life as Ferry and the Opportunist Republicans sought to disband the theology department at the Sorbonne.

Maret's Project to Sustain the Theology Faculty

In 1875, Maret published the history of his project on a Papal Bull which he and Cardinal Antonelli, Pope Pius IX's Secretary of State, penned originally in 1858, with the publication having been postponed indefinitely due to a number of events.²³² The reasons for the protraction of such a document will now be investigated. Maret began the project because he hoped that this Bull would offer a creative response to growing tensions between the state and the Vatican with regards to control and oversight over theology faculties at universities like that of Paris. Pope Pius IX grew suspicious of the French state under the direction of Napoléon III, whose cooperation with the Church at times fell between ambivalence and hostility. For his part, the Emperor felt equally mistrustful of the Pope. Thus, Maret believed the time opportune to develop a plan that would allow the Sorbonne to exist as a state-funded Catholic university.

²³² Maret, *Le Projet de Bulle*, preface.

It is interesting to note that Maret penned the document *Le Projet de Bulle de 1858* under the title of the Bishop of Sura. It was this kind of authority and respect from both state and church that he knew would be necessary in order to proceed with his plans for a Papal Bull detailing how to maintain a congenial relationship between the French government and Rome regarding the theology faculty at the University of Paris.

He first set forth his goals outlined in the Papal Bull as early as 1845. At the time, the government had control over faculty appointments, while the Vatican had final approval for the conferral of the doctorate in theology.²³³ In 1856, through his friend Marie-Dominique-Auguste Sibour, the Archbishop of Paris, Maret contacted Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, the Secretary of State for Pope Pius IX. His idea to articulate a plan pleasing to Rome regarding Church involvement in French higher education; he knew he would need as many allies as possible.²³⁴ Maret intended for his plan to be formally recognized by the Church in France by means of a Papal Bull, a formal decree from the Pope establishing official clarity on an important matters like the relationship between Church and state and Catholic influence in education. Pius IX was still considered more liberal and open minded at this time, and so Maret hoped his document would satisfy the needs of the Holy See, the French episcopate (the Bishops of France), and the state. His plan was to give oversight of the theology faculties at Catholic universities to the Bishops of France rather than the current configuration of complete state control, with the nomination of the professorships still being the responsibility of the state as in accords with the Concordat.²³⁵

²³³ Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 50.

²³⁴ Maret, *Le projet de Bulle*, 14-16.

²³⁵ Maret, *Le projet de Bulle*, 6.

The bull was a long-term project. Despite the title of his history of the bull, which makes reference to the years 1856-1858, the work was not fully completed until after the decade long interruption of the Italian wars of unification in the 1860's. While working with Marie-Dominique-Auguste Sibour, Archbishop of Paris from 1848-1857, as well as Papal Secretary of State Cardinal Antonelli in the years of 1856-58, Maret sought to reorganize the theology faculty at the Sorbonne in order to meet the growing yet adversarial demands of both Church and state. Each entity desired greater control over the university, and each entity threatened termination of the faculty if its demands were not met.

Anticlericals in the government believed the Church incapable of producing loyal Frenchmen, well formed in science and its methods. The Church on its part refused to acquiesce to what it believed was the rising tide of de-Christianization and *laïcité* within what had once been its sole domain – education. As the century wore on, however, this tension worsened.

Maret situated his own beliefs as the middle ground between Gallicanism and ultramontinism.²³⁶ He knew that if the Sorbonne was to carry on its patrimony as a university in the classic sense, theology was a must. He believed that faith and reason worked together and not separately.²³⁷ Further, Maret wished to carry on the tradition of the Sorbonne as being the central institution of formation for so many ecclesiastical members of the French hierarchy. For him, the Church's influence at the University of Paris ensured the Church's influence in the culture at large. The French Revolution, the revolution of 1848, and the ongoing struggle with anticlericalists impressed upon Maret

²³⁶ Tuilier, *Histoire de la Sorbonne*, p. 369.

²³⁷ Maret, *Le Projet de Bulle*, p. 23.

not only the growing threat of dechristianization, but also the powerful influence of higher education in this struggle.²³⁸ Thus, in 1858, he set about the goal of securing state support for the Sorbonne so constituted with the theology faculty, as well as the support from Rome so that ecclesiastics would still be trained there.

His first step was to prepare a document detailing a plan not only to retain the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, but to do so in a way that would be agreeable to both church and state. He realized that if this plan was to enjoy long-term success, he needed to seek out the assistance of two high-ranking prelates. This is why he worked closely with Archbishop Sibour. Sibour who was also instrumental in the writing and passing of the Falloux Laws, and Cardinal Antonelli who had direct access to the Pope. In order to bring the full weight of his office, Maret penned the document under the title of Bishop of Sura, so as to influence not only the other prelates and ecclesiastical officials positively, but also to gain approval from Frenchmen in general. Writing as a Bishop, Maret hoped, would offer more authoritative power than his role as the Doyen de Théologie.

In the original draft, he articulated a plan wherein both the interests of state and church can be carefully assured with respect with each other. He held that this could be accomplished precisely because of his belief that each serve complimentary, albeit differing roles, within France, as had been the case, in his view, from the time of the Concordat until the present.²³⁹

The basic thrust of Maret's proposal for the theology faculty was this: the state would continue to fund the faculty, and the Holy See would give it ecclesiastical

²³⁸ Maret, *Le projet de Bulle*, p. 7.

²³⁹ Maret, *Le projet de Bulle*, p. 8.

accreditation. The selection of the professors, direction and oversight over their teachings and methods, as well as the conferring of degrees would belong to the local Episcopal council within France. In order to appease the state, Maret recommended that the head of the state, Emperor, President or otherwise, would reserve the right to nominate the professors to be presented to the Episcopal council.²⁴⁰ This, it was argued, was the long-standing relationship between the Church and state since the Concordat. However, his notions were quite contentious as the bishops themselves were torn between rival ultramontanist and Gallicanist factions, and the anticlericals in the Second Empire were no less suspicious of the Bishops than of Rome.²⁴¹

The Vatican held these Episcopal councils with some suspicion earlier in the century due to the Gallicanist tendencies of many of the French hierarchy. However, the unpopularity of nineteenth-century Caesaro-Papism – the merging of state-church power, or also known as altar/throne alliance – had done much to unravel Gallican support. As the views of the French hierarchy changed, so too did Rome's views towards Maret and his fellow clerics. Thus, the timing of this bull coincided with the mutually improving relationship between Rome and the French bishops. Local episcopal oversight of the Sorbonne was thus more feasible than at any time since its closing during the Reign of Terror.

As far as concerns from the state, Maret realized that the state was growing more wary of Vatican influence within church affairs. Granting control over the approval of professors as well as the conferral of doctoral degrees to French bishops would alleviate state concern regarding the interference of Rome within internal matters of higher

²⁴⁰ Maret, *Le projet de Bulle*, p. 5.

²⁴¹ Note de Victor Duruy á Napoléon III, 30 aout 1858 F 17 13238, A.N.

education. This combined with assuaging Rome's concerns regarding the usurpation of ecclesial rights in the same field made the bull the ideal plan in which to invest. To this end, he hoped to journey to Rome to visit personally with Pope Pius IX.

However, Maret's plan met with major setbacks before he could even seek approval either from the Vatican or the state--setbacks which would stall this document for more than twenty years.

First, Archbishop Sibour was stabbed to death by renegade priest P re Verger over his support of priestly celibacy and the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, among other things. Verger attacked Sibour with a knife, escaping, only to be apprehended soon after. (He never denied his attack, assuming that the Emperor Napoleon III would grant him pardon. The pardon never came, and Verger was executed in 1857). Thus, Maret's chief ecclesial French ally was literally eliminated in one fatal stroke. Sibour was Maret's chief supporter within France itself, and was also influential in Rome due to his relationship with Antonelli.

Then, further complicating matters, the various Italian wars of unification along with the loss of the Papal states in the 1860's prevented both visitation to and interest from Rome regarding Maret's concerns. These events, coupled with the convening of the First Vatican Council in 1870, to which Maret was summoned, brought his plans to a halt.²⁴² He attended the Vatican I council, offering a voice of opposition to the council declaration of Papal Infallibility as was mentioned earlier.

Maret believed that defining papal infallibility at this time would only trigger a backlash from the government in the form of stricter controls over the Church, or even

²⁴² Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 51.

outright suppression.²⁴³ His plans for reconstituting the relational structure between the Sorbonne and the Church and state would thus be threatened and/or permanently derailed. This, he feared, would only result in the loss of Catholic influence in higher education as a whole. Yet, it would take Maret's public renunciation of his anti-infallibility stance in 1871 before his reputation would be rehabilitated enough for him to reassume his work on his *Papal Bulle* project.²⁴⁴

Then, another contretemps erupted within France itself – the Franco/Prussian War. In 1870, with his loss to Prussia at the battle of Sedan, Napoleon III fled to England, leaving a provisional government-the National Assembly- in place. This government's brief stint resulted from a lack of a dominant political bloc within the Chamber of Deputies, as well as the influence of Socialists, Marxists, and Anarchists within the Parisian labor force. These latter forces swelled into a provisional government of their own, overtaking and sweeping away the local Parisian governmental body in favor of their own, known as "The Paris Commune," from March-June of 1871. Although the Commune was eventually squashed with a bloody response from French troops, the situation in Paris and the country itself remained very unstable.

By now it had been well over a decade since Maret had first hoped to present his plans to the Pope and French authorities. Although there were obviously many political and ecclesiastical changes since the original crafting of the bull of 1858, the one constant remained the combative relations between Church and state. Maret's prospect of forging common ground on which both entities could agree regarding the role of theology in the university system looked bleaker than ever.

²⁴³ Maret, *Du Concile*, 3.

²⁴⁴ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 250.

Success at Last

Undaunted, Maret wrote a follow-up document to the original draft of the papal bull, *La Liberte de L'Enseignement Superieur* in 1874, reworking his original plan only slightly. In this document, Maret restated his long-standing plans of 1858, stressing the necessary foundation for state principles such as liberty, equality, and fraternity in the doctrines of the Church, and the deleterious result on those principles should the state separate itself from the Church, especially in the area of higher education.²⁴⁵ Yet, he also realized the view of the Pope and French Catholics towards the new Republican form of government. Mac-Mahon's election only encouraged legitimists and restorationists in their bid to secure a king for France yet again.²⁴⁶ The political climate gave Maret courage to restate the necessity for theology to remain at the Sorbonne. If removed, he argued, not only would the state be turning its back on the faculty it founded, not to mention the long-standing agreement contained in the Concordat, but it also would be vitiating the supreme success story, in Maret's eyes, of the enduring relationship between faith and science.²⁴⁷ The Sorbonne not only contributed countless notable figures into the ranks of the clergy, but also notable thinkers and figures in the fields of the philosophy and psychology, like Bautain, a philosopher who contributed much to the relationship between faith and science and a forerunner in the field of psychology, and Gratry, who occupied the chair at the Académie française once held by Voltaire.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Maret, *La projet de Bulle*, 7.

²⁴⁶ Maret, *La projet de Bulle*, 6.

²⁴⁷ Maret, *La projet de Bulle*, 5.

²⁴⁸ Maret, *La projet de Bulle*, premier appendice.

Furthermore, Maret contended vociferously that the loss of religion in the field of higher learning would also result in the loss of morals as well, as for him, religious formation included training in Christian morals. This loss, in his view, was too great a price to pay in order to appease the forces of positivism. Not only would this create a situation that would erode the long-standing rapport between church and state, he predicted, but it would also create a society based upon practical atheism and moral depravity.²⁴⁹ He concludes that the state simply cannot afford this result. To abrogate the role of Theology at the Sorbonne is to abandon the symbol of the unity existing between faith and reason itself.²⁵⁰

In 1873, Bishop Maret planned a meeting with Pope Pius IX in order to resume negotiations regarding his project. In January of that year, he penned a letter to the current Minister of Public Instruction, Oscar de Fourtoul, in order to accomplish this goal, as well as to redress a problem developing at the Sorbonne. The Protestant faculty of theology was allowed to develop its own special constitution within the university with regards to recommendations for professorial appointments and curricula liberties.²⁵¹ Maret demanded the same constitution for his faculty. He yet again faced opposition, this time not from the government, but from the French episcopacy, which was not willing to grant him much leverage when it came to professorial recommendations. The bishops wanted a say in the process as well. Furthermore, they wondered openly why the Sorbonne was needed when they now had a suitable seminary system for the training of priests. Maret addressed that problem by pointing out the need for more advanced studies in theology for priests, as well as the need to train laity in theology, a novel idea at the

²⁴⁹ Maret, *la projet de Bulle*, 7.

²⁵⁰ Maret, *la projet de Bulle*, 6.

²⁵¹ Lettres de Maret á Oscar de Fortoul, 25 mars – 19 juin 1873, F 17 13238, A.N.

time. To address their concerns, Maret offered to amend his request from de Foutoul to make courses at the Sorbonne elective for clergy, required only for certain ecclesiastical jobs.²⁵² Thus, the French seminaries would still be an available option for those prelates who wished to send future priests there for training, and the Sorbonne would be still be available for doctoral studies.

With the concerns of both the French episcopacy and government placated, Maret turned his attention to his trip to Rome, which finally took place in March of 1874. In this meeting, he hoped to gain official canonical status from the Holy See regarding his faculty. He knew that his reputation with the Holy Father was still held in some suspicion, but he also knew of the Pope's respect for his work on church/state relations in the past. After meeting privately with Cardinal Antonelli, with whom he had worked ten years previously on his project, he gained access to a meeting with the Pope where he could explain face to face all of the details of his plan. After some hours of negotiation, the Pope issued to Maret the following:

It seems wise to avoid sacrificing the existing theological institutions, which are founded, funded, and recognized by the state, despite the possibilities of future problems with the state. However, they can only be preserved if they are reformed to fall under the *Vatican* and the French episcopacy [italics mine].²⁵³

Thus, Maret was back to square one! The state would agree to allow the French episcopate to have a say in the Sorbonne, but not the Papacy. Now, Pius IX agreed to offer canonical status to the Sorbonne, but only if Rome had control over the conferral of the diplomas. He had still not resolved the problem of how to gain recognition from both Church and state regarding his theology faculty. Maret hoped that the current Third

²⁵² Lettre de Maret á Oscar de Fortoul, 12 janvier 1873, F 19 4090, A.N.

²⁵³ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 321.

Republican government, which was at this time more conservative and supportive of the Catholic Church than Napoleon III's regime, would be willing to accept these terms.

Oddly, Maret described the event differently in one of his essays, where he mentioned obliquely that this particular meeting with the Pope went "most favorably."²⁵⁴

Finally, the state yielded to the ecclesial demands. From 1875-79, Patrice de Mac-Mahon ruled as president of the French Third Republic, and, as has been much discussed already, in 1875 the Mac-Mahon presidency promulgated the Law of Freedom of Higher Education. The law not only gave independence from the state for the University of Paris, but also allowed for the establishment of the Catholic Institute de Paris, a theological institute directly supported by Rome.²⁵⁵ Now there would be two centers of Vatican theology in the nation's capital.

Maret's plan for the Sorbonne thus met, during Mac-Mahon's administration, the kind of success of which he had only dreamed. The conclusion of his project, to which he still referred as the Papal Bull of 1858, resulted in the agreement of the said principles, with both the state and the church being allowed to award degrees to Sorbonne theology students. The state's degree would be recognized civilly, and the Church's ecclesiastically, so that any theology graduate would have full approval for a teaching or priestly career in France.

Trouble on the Horizon

Now the paths of our two main characters cross explicitly for the first time. The liberalization of higher education in 1875, while it brought great satisfaction to Maret,

²⁵⁴ Maret, *la projet de Bulle*, 6.

²⁵⁵ For a recent work detailing the history of the Institute, Patrick Valdrini, *L'Institut catholique de Paris: un projet universitaire* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2000).

became the chief nemesis of Ferry's political career. To the dismay of both Catholics like Maret, and seculars like Simon, Ferry would make his political ascent in 1879. Ferry enjoyed success with both the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1880, as well as the establishment of the *écoles normales*, schools designed to train and accredit teachers with the *brevet de capacité*, the certificate now needed to teach in primary and secondary schools. Merely belonging to a teaching order no longer sufficed for teaching in the French school systems as had been the case with the Falloux laws. Ferry now had his sights set on the universities, and Maret stood as the most formidable foe.

Conclusion

The historical setting behind the development of what Maret called the *Projet de Papal Bulle* turned out to be much more complex than he had hoped. Achieving his goal of creating a document spelling out agreeable terms for both church and state regarding each entity's role in higher education in France during the last half of the nineteenth century would not happen quickly. The state reacted against the rising tide of ultramontanism in France and opposed the potential increase of Papal influence over what had always been state-funded institutions like the University of Paris. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, grew increasingly suspicious of the political direction of France based on the avowed anticlericalism of many French politicians, as well as the influence of philosophical positivism in the academy. Maret hoped to prevent an impasse between church and state, as that would not only effectively end his tenure at the

University of Paris, but also the intellectual and moral influence of the Catholic Church in the formation of French youth.²⁵⁶

By engaging in a protracted struggle for the survival of the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, the ideological underpinnings of Maret's thought crystallized, moving from a liberal Gallicanist view, whereby the state oversaw the needs of the church in France, to a more balanced and distinctive view of the relations between the temporal and eternal. He recognized that both church and state each had a legitimate sphere of influence; further, that these spheres were not competing with one another, but could work together. This is why he did not oppose, at least in principal, the philosophical underpinnings of the French Revolution.

In an essay written in 1845, Maret argued that the doctrines of the Revolution are rooted in Christian teaching.

Every Frenchman without doubt professes the political dogmas of equality, liberty, and fraternity and regards them as the precious victory of so many years of revolutions...but are they not obliged to admit that without the notion of moral liberty the notion of justice is not possible? Do they not realize that neither liberty nor morality is possible without first professing the Christian dogma of the rationality of God?²⁵⁷

In other words, there is no justice without moral liberty, and no moral liberty without God. These principles of the French Revolution, then, necessitate the profession in the existence of God, the guarantor of each, Maret argued. For him, the church and the state both require the other and can secure one another's interests.²⁵⁸

In order to succeed at developing a workable model on relations between France and Rome, Maret needed to discover an intellectual solution between these two

²⁵⁶ Maret, *la projet de Bulle*. 14-16.

²⁵⁷ Maret, *L'Église et la Société Laïque*, 8.

²⁵⁸ Maret, *L'Église et la Société Laïque*, 19.

increasingly contentious camps: anticlericalist Republicans, and ultramontanist Catholics. He was caught in the middle. The antagonistic tension created by these converging forces would either crush him or be the necessary elements for developing a new paradigm for church/state relations. Maret's ideas and work for preserving theology in higher education in France now had a much more important and broader application.

Chapter Four: Maret, Ferry, and the Battle for the Sorbonne

This chapter reaches the climax between the Ferry/Maret conflict. It lays bare the details of this conflict, as well as examines the breadth and depth of Maret's labors. Maret recognized that the Third Republican government posed a greater threat to him than what he had faced during the Second Empire. Jules Ferry had plenty of political power to go along with his secularist ambitions, and was also quite skilled in his political maneuvers. Maret realized the urgency of the situation. He feared not only for his faculty, but also for society as a whole. His response to resist the secularization of the Sorbonne would require all of his energy and skill. The years of fighting seemingly endless obstacles regarding his Papal Bull project certainly honed his political and intellectual proficiency, yet even this could not prepare him entirely for what lay ahead. Maret's challenge rested not only with the laic and anticlerical government, but also with the ideological misgivings of his own French hierarchy. To accomplish the task of achieving political victory for his faculty, he faced a daunting, two-pronged obstacle – the state *and* the Church. Articulating, adapting, and defending his program would require of him all of his energies.

I have shown thus far the uniqueness of Maret's position compared to de Mun's on the right, and Ferry's on the left. I have presented the reasons for his belief in the

compatibility between church and state, as well as the nature of his proposal to that end. In analyzing his arguments, Maret's uniqueness shines clear: he did not hold to the antagonisms as did other political players. This chapter reveals the final struggle by Maret for his project. The essence of his thesis was that it is false ideological commitments such as positivism on the left and royalism on the right that created the antagonisms which prevented collaboration. Even more, that these commitments were not necessary when put into the proper perspective of church and state relations. This is the heart of Maret's program, and the heart of this chapter.

Pursuing Canonical Recognition

As we saw in the last chapter, the 1875 law freeing the universities from state control entailed a significant victory for Maret. This law broke the monopoly of state-run universities, allowing them to either become privatized, or, if funded by the state, to have a mixture of faculty members from the private or *free* university along with members from a state-funded university in order to confer degrees on graduates. This law provided two options for the University of Paris: it could either seek full privatization, which would mean that it would need alternate means of funding, or it could still receive funding from the state, but with more allowances given to the Church with regards to the mixed jury system. This would also allow for canonical status of the university, which would achieve Maret's full vision—graduates whose credentials would be recognized both by the state and by the Church. Either option required a mixed-jury. This mixed jury seemed like an ingenious way to keep both state and church happy when it came to the conferral of degrees. This proved to be a very weak and vulnerable component of the law,

however, making the choice for a state-sponsored faculty with canonical approval even more risky should anticlericalism gain greater influence in the state. Despite the risk, Maret hoped to proceed with this plan and thus be a state-funded university that also received canonical recognition.²⁵⁹

On November 11 of 1875, Maret met with Minister of Public Instruction and Cults Henri Wallon, who was supportive of his plan. Maret asked him to contact the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Decazes, in order to re-open negotiations with Rome regarding the Papal Bull. Cardinal Czacki, who was the Pope's Secretary of the Congregation for Education, received the project, but did not respond with any urgency.²⁶⁰ He had been contacted by Bishop Pie of Poitiers, a known ultramontanist, who did not believe collaboration with the state possible. Czacki agreed with him, and thus sat on Maret's request to reopen negotiations for the project.²⁶¹

In response to this latest roadblock, Maret first prepared an untitled booklet aimed at the French bishops in which to defend his work on the project of the Papal Bull. He would later attach this work as an appendix to his larger essay, *Le projet de Bulle de 1858, et La Liberté de l'enseignement supérieur*. In this larger work, penned in 1875, he laid out a brief history of all of the years of labor invested in the Papal Bull project, as well as a new set of argumentation as to how and why the Sorbonne could and should be both state-funded and canonically recognized.

He then penned a brochure in December of 1875 called "*Aperçu des négociations pour l'institution canonique des Facultés de théologie*," in order to keep the project from completely dying. In this essay, he presented two general arguments. First, he laid out the

²⁵⁹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 277.

²⁶⁰ Maret, *le Projet de Bulle*, 11-15.

²⁶¹ Gadille, *La Pensée*, 32-33.

rationale as to why it was wise to preserve the rapport between church and state. Maret believed deeply that should a fixed separation occur between each entity, the societal result would be religious indifference, atheism, and immorality, as the relevance of the Church's moral and social doctrines would fade. Secondly, he challenged his opponents in the French episcopacy who were already taking advantage of the new law on higher education to create free universities and schools of law and medicine to recognize all of the work that he had already done in his project to achieve accreditation and official recognition from both Church and state. In offering support for his project, these bishops could avoid exerting much superfluous energy spent on accomplishing what he already achieved.²⁶²

In his larger work, *Projet de Papal Bulle et La Liberté de l'enseignement supérieur*, Maret developed his thought on the dangers he believed would ensue should the Church and state fail to cooperate within the sphere of higher education. Maret never wavered in his confidence that each entity could be mutually supportive as they had different but not necessarily competitive ends.²⁶³ He not only rearticulated the need for Church influence to shape and form moral citizens, but, even more interestingly, sought to examine the goals espoused by anticlericals in the Third Republic of liberty for intellectual inquiry as well as proper training in citizenship for French youth. He believed that formation in Catholic doctrine was the only way to inculcate such virtues.²⁶⁴ The state needed the Church as much as the church needed the state in order for each to remain viable in the modern world. This was a view unique to his time, when forces

²⁶² Maret, *le Projet de Bulle*, 7-9.

²⁶³ Maret, *le projet de Bulle*, 7.

²⁶⁴ Maret, *La Vérité Catholique de La Paix Religieuse: Appel a la Raison de la France* (Paris: E. Dentu, Libraire – Éditeur, 1884), 431-437.

within each entity seemed willing to part with the other. With a breach in this mutually beneficial relationship between church and state, Maret believed, the end result would be the destruction of society.²⁶⁵ Thus, he believed his mission to spare the theology faculty at the Sorbonne from suppression urgent not only for the sake of the university, but for society as well.

Maret and Ferry

Consistent with his historical experience regarding his project, and his arguments notwithstanding, Maret's apparent victory in the state with the 1875 Law of Higher Education was short lived. Within the year anticlericalist leaning Republicans were sweeping the elections, and the new deputy, Jules Ferry, gained prominence for his views regarding church and state. He immediately went on the attack with regards to this law. Ferry's goal was not without serious obstacles, however. Clerics such as Maret still had the advantage of having both the presidency of Patrice Mac-Mahon and the Cabinet of Prime Minister Waddington on their side. The majority of the senate also still favored a royalist and pro-Catholic majority. Apparently, Maret's Gallicanist past did not limit support from the Royalist conservatives in government, whose main concern was to check the rising tide of anticlericalism. Challenges to the state funding of the theology faculty could only advance so far.

It may be helpful to pause and reflect upon the strange circumstances in which Maret found himself at this point in the summer of 1876. His unique position left him vulnerable to criticism from all sides. He was considered a liberal by the ultramontanist Catholics who allied themselves with the Royalist politicians. Yet, the anticlericalist

²⁶⁵Maret, *La Vérité*, 440.

Republicans viewed him as belonging to the royalist camp since he was a priest and a bishop. Although Maret recognized the great danger coming from anticlericalism, he did not support the royalist cause, either. His hope rested on the fact that once emotions from ideological squabbling died down, that his *via media* between what he viewed as the extremes would appear as the most viable solution regarding the tensions between Church and state. He believed firmly that a republic was no more or less favorable to the Church than a monarchy, provided that the government recognized its own legitimate sphere of influence, allowing the Church its own sphere. From Maret's perspective, this was the goal for which the Concordat strove.²⁶⁶ He viewed education as the right of the citizen and it behooved his soul learn the doctrines of the Church both for a better life on this earth and the one to come, the Church had a legitimate role in education.²⁶⁷ For its part, the state had nothing to fear from this kind of formation, as its goals of fraternity, equality, and liberty were all consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.²⁶⁸ Yet, such nuanced views were not held by many, and the few possible allies that Maret enjoyed in the government were about to become fewer.

After the *Seize Mai* crisis of May 16, 1877, Mac-Mahon lost his office in 1879, being replaced by the anticlerical Jules Grévy. Once in office, Grévy appointed Jules Ferry to be the Minister of Public Instruction, and Maret found his aims yet again under attack. This time, however, the rising tide of political opposition seemed to be washing away for good the allies Maret had in the French government. He did not even enjoy support from the Archbishop of Paris, Joseph Guibert, who did not share Maret's

²⁶⁶ Maret, *le Projet de Bulle*, 8.

²⁶⁷ Henri Maret, *L'Église et la Société Laïque: Discours sur les Attaques Dirigées contre L'Église* (Paris. V. A. Waille, Libraire Éditeur, 1845), 6 NOTE: Maret included this essay with his *Le Projet de de Bulle* essay as a second appendix, originally written and published in 1845, re-published in 1873.

²⁶⁸ Maret, *L'Église et la Société*, 5.

enthusiasm regarding cooperation with the state.²⁶⁹ Fortunately, he would gain a most valuable ally in the Chair of St. Peter itself when Pope Leo XIII was elected to replace Pius IX following his death on February 7, 1878.

In April of 1878, Maret sent a letter to Pope Leo XIII regarding his long-term work in trying to forge a working relationship between the Church and state in France's higher education. He explained his desire to discover the means to utilize the university as an "organic liaison" between the Catholic Church and the Third Republic.²⁷⁰ The Pope not only welcomed the letter, but requested a meeting with Maret himself, which occurred June 8, 1878. Leo XIII agreed that the University of Paris should remain operative, and would write a letter to the bishops of France explaining as much.²⁷¹

Maret then wrote to Ferry seeking Ferry's promise not to suppress the theology faculties in the state universities. Ferry surprisingly agreed. Perhaps this was due to his grave concern about the "militancy and mysticism" of the younger clergy, which he blamed on the seminary system.²⁷² However much he disliked the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, he disliked the seminaries more, and he was willing to endure the former if it would undermine the latter. Ferry thus proposed to suppress the funding for the seminaries, hoping that if the state still supported the Sorbonne, perhaps clergy in training could receive a formation more sympathetic to the nation. Since Ferry was unable to secure his legislation to disband the state-sponsored theology faculties at the universities

²⁶⁹ Gadille, *La Pensée*, vol. II, 134.

²⁷⁰ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 370-373.

²⁷¹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 371.

²⁷² Textes de projets de loi de la Chambre des Députés à la l'abrogation du Concordat, Série C 3380, A.N. (Notes from this dossier were provided for me by Claude Bressollette in our meeting together.)

of Paris, Lyon, Aix, Bordeaux, and Rouen, he focused his attention on suppressing the seminaries.²⁷³

This gave Maret new life and renewed enthusiasm for his project. On August 1, 1878, he sent a memo to Archbishop Guibert of Paris, which was then forwarded to the entire Episcopal assembly of France. He proposed a slight but important change to the mixed jury system: in addition to the state-supported faculty members on the jury, the Catholic universities would also include faculty from the recently founded and canonically approved the Catholic Institute of Paris, founded in 1875. That way degrees earned from the University of Paris would be recognized by the state as well as by Rome.²⁷⁴ Maret believed that this proposition possessed the greatest chance of success for his long-standing project. He believed that this, at last, was a suitable solution for the Theology Faculty at the University of Paris. The state would be happy as they enjoyed the majority of mixed-jury appointments; the Catholic Church leaders would be happy as the other professors would be canonically recognized since they hailed from the Catholic Institute of Paris. Bishop Maret waited anxiously to hear back from the Episcopal Assembly.

In January of 1879, Maret's proposal was submitted to the Episcopal Assembly by the Superior Council of Bishops. They agreed that the long-standing history of the University of Paris proved a veritable service to the Church. Maret believed that its prestige and list of influential graduates validated the need for continued support from the bishops. For their part, the bishops shared Leo XIII's desire to preserve and defend the Sorbonne. However, as Archbishop Guibert explained to Maret in February of that year,

²⁷³ Acomb, *The Laic Laws*, 141-144.

²⁷⁴ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 373.

the Catholic Institute of Paris was too new and its future too insecure for Maret's proposal to work. It was therefore deemed too premature to assume that a mixed jury partially composed of that canonical faculty would be successful.²⁷⁵ Fortunately for Maret, Guibert did realize the need for a well-formed laity and for the study of Christian apologetics (the art of defending religious tenets from those who may attack them). Thus, even though Maret's proposal was not fully accepted, the bishops of France, including his own archbishop, were supportive of Maret in his efforts to maintain the Sorbonne's existence. As good as it was for Maret to have the French Episcopate on his side, their rejection of his plan left little doubt that he was back to the drawing board. What this meant practically speaking was left to Maret to figure out.

Defending the Sorbonne

As if this kind of empty support from the bishops was not bad enough, Maret faced yet another new and formidable challenge coming from the government. Paul Bert, noted scientist and anticlerical member of the Chamber of Deputies, submitted an amendment in March of 1879 to suppress the budget for the faculties of theology in the state-funded universities like the University of Paris. He challenged the importance and necessity of these kinds of subjects, as well as the national allegiance of the faculty.²⁷⁶

Maret responded to Bert's amendment by submitting a lengthy letter to the editor of the journal *la République française*, on April 5, 1879. He defended the importance of the theology faculties responding to the major objections forwarded by Bert. Maret argued that Bert's commitment to positivism made him biased in his ability to appreciate

²⁷⁵ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 373.

²⁷⁶ Acomb, *French Laic Laws*, pp. 136-138.

the benefits of these faculties. The significance of these faculties was indicated in the fact that 500 people a week participated in their classes. This was a large percentage of the overall students, Maret pointed out, indicating that theology generated a high level of interest. Further, all of the professors were loyal to France, and, though they were all Catholic, they felt united in one France. He ended by opining, “Let it not be said to an old bishop who has always been a friend to and servant of his country that the doctrines of atheism, materialism, and anti-religious passions are less dangerous and formidable to the new order...than the Church.”²⁷⁷

This latest threat propelled Maret to act quickly. He knew that he needed to obtain canonical status for the theology faculty. He also hoped to establish negotiations between members of the French government and the Holy See. To accomplish this, he first wrote to Jules Ferry on the 25th of April, 1879. Maret asked Ferry to contact the Pope in order to ascertain Leo’s willingness to work with the state based on the Pope’s favorable comments regarding Maret’s work on the Papal Bull.²⁷⁸ He hoped that Ferry would prove amenable to this latest rapprochement with Rome as Maret never waivered in his own belief that it was to both the French government’s and Rome’s mutual advantage to work together. Ferry was not as inclined as Maret had hoped, and responded that it was ‘inopportune’ to proceed in such fashion, as a move like this would leave his position “susceptible to political critique.”²⁷⁹

In July, Maret wrote to Ferry again, this time in a lengthy epistle. He developed a series of new arguments, offering several different reasons as to why it would be wise to

²⁷⁷ Fonds Maret, ‘yellow’ dossier, #11; Institut Catholique de Paris. Portions of the letter are also reprinted by Claude Bressolette’s chapter in Kannengiesser’s *Humanism et Foi Chrétienne*, 58.

²⁷⁸ Lettre de Maret au le Ministre de Cultes, 5 avril, 1879, F 17 13238, A.N.

²⁷⁹ Lettre de Maret au le Ministre de Cultes, 5 avril, 1879, F 17 13238, A.N.

negotiate with Rome. First, since Rome was now more of an ally to Maret than the previous papal court, it was safe to say that Leo XIII would be more cooperative with the Third Republican government. Thus, Maret insisted, pursuing a course of conflict with the Vatican when it was much easier to pursue one of peace made little sense, Maret insisted. Further, if the faculties were suppressed, this would abrogate the Concordat which neither Ferry nor the Chamber had legal grounds to do. This would also break a long-standing political precedent. He also pointed out that the Sorbonne offered the greatest possibility to school clergy in a proper political education. Maret was well aware that Ferry feared clerical influence, especially in their preaching, as much as any ultramontanist publication.²⁸⁰ He hoped that Ferry would realize the positive effect that the Sorbonne could have on the priests if the theology faculty remained functioning.

He finally called Ferry's attention to the fact that the Protestant faculty at the Sorbonne already had a good working relationship with the state, and it was simply a matter of justice and consistency that the Catholic faculty would receive the same rights as the Protestant faculty with regards to a working, state-accepted constitution. Thus, keeping the budget for the theology faculties was a matter of justice and equality, concepts Ferry claimed to uphold.²⁸¹

Although Ferry did not respond to this lengthier letter directly, good news came soon. The Bert bill failed in the Senate where a royalist majority still prevailed, and the state funding and accreditation of the Sorbonne theology faculty remained intact, at least for the fiscal year of 1879-80. This surprising achievement was followed by another accolade for Maret, prepared by his friends. Cardinals Charles Lavigerie, Archbishop of

²⁸⁰ *Annales de la Chambre des Députés, Séance du Vendredi 2 juin 1876.*, 280.

²⁸¹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret, vol. III*, 375.

Algiers, Guillaume-René Meignan, Archbishop of Tours, and Joseph-Alfred Foulon, Archbishop of Lyon, all outspoken supporter of Maret's work, publicly pushed for Maret to be elevated to the level of Archbishop, an important sign of approval for all of Maret's hard work. Cardinal Guibert of Paris, however, did not support this move, as Guibert was not so favorable to Maret's trust of the French Republic and the belief that church and state could work together so smoothly.²⁸² Thus, the impetus for such a move ended before it could gain steam. Lavignerie would try again three years later, in 1882, but with more positive results, as Maret would be appointed Titular Archbishop of Lepanto in the fall of that year.²⁸³

Despite surviving Bert's desire to suppress the faculty budget, the Catholic position remained tenuous. Passions flared in June of 1879 when debate in the Chamber over Ferry's Article Seven ensued. Recall, this was the article forbidding unauthorized teaching orders like the Jesuits from teaching in France. Ferry added this article onto an already controversial proposal to strip the free universities from being able to confer degrees. Ferry remarked that, "it is vital to the security of the future that the stewardship of schools does not belong to the bishops who have declared that the French Revolution of 1789 was guilty of deicide...and that the principles denied original sin."²⁸⁴ Even though Article Seven failed to pass the Senate in September of 1880, a key piece of the legislation did pass: free universities could no longer confer degrees or refer to themselves as a university.

This move proved to be a terrible blow to Maret's aspirations. If free universities were no longer considered universities, it was only a matter of time before his state-

²⁸² Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 377.

²⁸³ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 376.

²⁸⁴ *J.O.C.* 13 décembre 1880, p. 12793

funded university would be forced to disband. If that state did not recognize the theology degrees from any of the private Catholic institutions, there was no reason to believe that they would continue to recognize the Sorbonne's theology faculty.

This move gave anticlericals more ammunition needed to suppress the budget for the theology faculty without the need to battle the Senate. Once this news reached the ears of the faculty members, they urged Maret to ascertain whether or not he could seek a seat on the Higher Council of Public Education himself, as he was at least currently faculty member at a state university, at least until the budget was officially suppressed, and perhaps he could influence the council from within.²⁸⁵ Maret declined. He did not wish to alienate himself from his fellow bishops, who were now no longer allowed to sit on this council. He knew that he needed to stand united with the Church. Further, his only hope now was to turn to the Pope and at least acquire canonical status from the Vatican. This would allow his fellow faculty theologians to continue to teach, albeit solely with Vatican approbation.

In early May he traveled to Rome for a meeting as head of the Chapter of St. Denis, a community of clergy organized by Napoleon in 1806 to oversee the military basilicas and chaplaincies. While there, he submitted a communication to the Pope, recalling the work that they had already undertaken to seek canonical status for the Sorbonne theology faculty. He also notified Leo of the changes that had now taken place due to the actions of the Superior Council of Higher Education and the vote of the National Assembly in March. He then waited to hear back from the Pope, whose response

²⁸⁵ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 379-380.

was less than swift, as he was embroiled in his own predicament regarding state/church relations in Italy.²⁸⁶

It seems unreasonable to believe that Bishop Maret did not yet fully grasp the direction of the law regarding free universities. Yet, he was nevertheless unwilling to give up. He did not seem to recognize the full consequences that the growth of anticlericalism had for his faculty. Receiving canonical status from Rome for the theology faculty would mean very little if the faculty did not receive funding from the state. Perhaps this was due to his hopeful optimism that the state would never dissolve something that he believed had meant so much to the country for so long. Perhaps also he counted on the fact that the current law only affected free universities and not the University of Paris. Whatever the reason, he trudged on in his plan to at least acquire canonical status for his faculty.²⁸⁷

Bert's Accession

In the fall of 1881, the political situation in France proved to be an even more dangerous threat than previous elections to Maret's hopes, as the cabinet of Jules Ferry was ousted in favor of other left-leaning political factions, headed at first by left-leaning Léon Gambetta, and then by Paul Bert in November of 1881. Bert was even more anticlerical than Ferry. Ferry, after all, had limits to his anticlericalism; he realized after he assumed the head of the Council that the Catholic Church was still too powerful to attack directly, and became more amenable to the idea of keeping the Concordat in

²⁸⁶ Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 60.

²⁸⁷ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 379-380.

place.²⁸⁸ He found it politically expedient to have the Church's services with regards to missionary activity in places such as Indo-China, a restless French colony, which would boil over into war in 1884-85.²⁸⁹ Ferry also realized quickly that France did not have the resources to replace all of the religious teaching orders, especially in the all-girls schools, with lay teachers. For these reasons he carefully leaned in the direction of Maret's projects leading up to the elections of 1881. Paul Bert shared none of these views. He hoped for a radical division of Church and state immediately. When Bert replaced Ferry, however, Maret knew there would be no interest in following the Concordat.²⁹⁰ In fact, Bert's plan was to suppress the budget for the theology faculty as he knew that he needed no law passed in order to eliminate Catholic influence at the Sorbonne.²⁹¹

Bert gave several reasons for wanting to suppress the faculties of theology at the various state controlled universities. The faculties at Aix, Bordeaux, Lyon, Paris, and Rouen, he argued, were established by a decree of 1808, and were not established via the Concordat, which provided for only diocesan seminaries. Further, he claimed that the Catholic faculties had conferred only a small number of degrees from 1876-1880. The Protestants, he argued, gave far more degrees during this same time period. The Pope himself preferred to give canonical institution to the "free" faculties such as Lyon, Lille, and Angers, all established by means of the law of higher education in 1875, because he could not dismiss the faculties at the state universities as easily.²⁹² In other words, he

²⁸⁸ Alfred Rambaud, *Jules Ferry* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1903), 131-133.

²⁸⁹ For a recent work examining the practical contribution of Catholic missionary orders regarding French colonizing efforts and the challenge to Republican anticlericalism, J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 12-17, 247-255.

²⁹⁰ Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 60.

²⁹¹ *J.O.C.* 7 février 1882, pp. 341-342, No. 394.

²⁹² *J.O.C.* 7 février 1882, pp. 341-42.

argued that state-sponsored Catholic universities were pleasing neither to the state nor the church.

Maret had responded to such charges before, listing important prelates and priests who were educated at the Sorbonne from 1853-1875, as well as the number of doctorates conferred, which, he claimed was greater than those of the Protestant faculties during this same time period.²⁹³ Thus, he contended that the fruits of these universities were very evident to both church and state. To Maret, Bert was simply trying to persuade the assembly with rhetoric.

Ferry and Maret again

It was well for Maret that Ferry returned to the Minister of Public Instruction in January of 1882. Ferry was willing to abandon or at least alter Bert's plan if the Vatican was willing to come to the negotiating table.²⁹⁴

Maret wrote to Ferry in April of 1882. The purpose of his letter was two-fold: he wanted to explain to Ferry the rationale for continuing the theology faculties at the state universities; secondly, he wanted to respond to Bert's accusations directly to the Minister of Public Instruction. As to his first purpose, he contended that

...these faculties are necessary for both the Church and state...the Church needs priests who are learned and knowledgeable as much as it needs priests who are pious and prayerful. The State also needs priests who are learned and knowledgeable because instruction that is solid and broad is the best way to ensure moderation (in the priests).²⁹⁵

²⁹³ Maret devoted his first appendix to the important work of the theology faculty through the years in his book *Le Projet de Bulle de 1858 et La Liberté de L'Enseignement Supérieur*, 11-15.

²⁹⁴ Lettre de Maret au le Ministre de l'instruction publique, 12 janvier 1882, F 17 13238, A.N.

²⁹⁵ Lettre de Maret au le Ministre de l'instruction publique, 3 mai 1882, F 17 13238. See also Bazin, vol. III, 415-418.

He then pointed out that the number of doctoral dissertations published in the past 25 years filled “91 volumes!”²⁹⁶ The work that he accomplished on the project he called the *Bulle de 1858* was “therefore of immense interest, and the objections that have been posed to them could be resolved easily.”

In February of 1882, good news finally came to the beleaguered dean. Ferry responded in a very surprising way. He indicated to Maret that he was willing to resume negotiations with the Holy See on Maret’s project. In May, Maret received word from Rome that they were willing to continue the project, and would give canonical status to the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, provided that the state would not suspend the budget for the faculty, and that the subject matter offered at the university was not offensive to Christian doctrine.²⁹⁷ Bert was incredulous and angered by Ferry’s willingness to work with the clericals, but Ferry’s political rather than intellectual views determined his policy.²⁹⁸ Ferry faced too many other problems within the Republican bloc itself to pick too many and too large of fights with the Church. His pragmatism won out over his positivism.

It may be helpful to pause and reflect on the situation from both sides of the debate. Ferry and the French Republican government was now willing to work with the Church within the confines of the Concordat, which they viewed as protecting the interests of the state from the Church. The Vatican was equally willing to grant concessions to the state regarding the Sorbonne within the confines of the Concordat, which they interpreted as protecting the interests of the Church from those of the state. Convincing each entity that the Concordat and the Papal Bull would protect the interests

²⁹⁶ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, p. 415.

²⁹⁷ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, p. 416-420.

²⁹⁸ Rambaud, *Jules Ferry*, 132.

of each as the interests of each were not mutually exclusive unfolded as Maret's ongoing and intractable struggle. This is also what makes his figure so compelling, as his work epitomized the difficulties in finding a working relationship between Church and state throughout Europe. Now, however, it looked as though his labors were about to be rewarded with success.

The news from the Holy See may have expressed support for Maret's plan to begin negotiations with France, but the Pope was more than a little hesitant to work with Jules Ferry, who had been against the Concordat in his last stint as Minister of Public Instruction.²⁹⁹ It wasn't until Ferry was made President of the Council in 1880 that he lessened his political opposition to the Concordat. Unbeknownst to Maret, a formidable enemy in the person of Charles Boysset, friend of Bert's and a fellow deputy in the Chamber, was working on a proposal to be submitted in the Chamber in January of 1883, to abrogate the Concordat altogether.³⁰⁰ These political circumstances gave pause to the Vatican, as the Pope wanted to make sure that Ferry and the French government was at least willing to work within the confines of the Concordat. Maret secured the help of his friend Charles Lavignerie, Archbishop of Algiers, who was recently made a cardinal, to help convince the Pope of Ferry's cooperation.

In a July 4, 1882 letter, they wrote to the Pope in hopes of convincing him to move forward with granting canonical status for the Sorbonne theology faculty by pressing for a new proposal based on a recent papal move. Leo XIII had recently granted concessions the archbishops in the Archdiocese's of Orléans and Poitiers regarding the ability to confer degrees in their respective *free* universities. Both archbishops had

²⁹⁹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 427-428.

³⁰⁰ *J.O.C.* 18 novembre 1881, p. 2041.

requested that the Vatican give them individual ability to confer degrees, apart from Rome and Episcopal conference. The request was somewhat controversial, as the ultramontanist Archbishop Pie of Poitiers supported complete Papal control of all of the French Church. Archbishop Dupanloup of Orléans, a friend of Maret's and considered a liberal Gallican in his early years, also received approval for canonical status for his Catholic university. Each prelate realized the need for localized oversight for their free universities, as neither the state nor the Vatican had the desire or ability to administer. One key difference between these universities and the Sorbonne, however, was that these were not funded by the state. Fortune smiled on Maret, though, and the Pope responded in the affirmative. Both Ferry's and the Pope's openness gave Maret and Lavigerie great confidence, as they proceeded to secure the same concession for the Sorbonne.³⁰¹ Soon after sending this communiqué to the Pope, Lavigerie obtained from Leo XIII a verbal agreement that he was disposed to grant the Archbishops who requested it of him canonical status of the state-funded universities with a Catholic theology faculty.³⁰²

On July 21, 1882 Ferry consulted with his colleague Charles Duclerc, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, regarding Maret's and Lavigerie's request to for canonical status for their faculty. They were each disposed to the idea for political reasons, yet Maret's plans had up until now been star-crossed. Each time he appeared to achieving success, problems emerged either from the church or the state that delayed or derailed his plans. Unfortunately, this episode was no different. The plan received yet another delay just one week later when current President of the Council Freycinet's cabinet was overthrown, a pattern all too common in these tumultuous times of the Third Republic. It was under

³⁰¹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 428.

³⁰² Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 430. See also Gadille, *La Pensée*, vol. II., 135.

Freycinet that Ferry had been reappointed Minister of Public Instruction. Maret had to wait and discern the consequences of the new political fall-out.

Still, Maret's efforts did pay other dividends. In September of 1882, thanks to the persistence of Cardinal Lavigerie, Pope Leo XIII announced that Maret, Titular Bishop of Sura, was being promoted. He was elevated to the Titular Archbishop of Lepanto, the famed location off of the coast of Greece where the last major sea battle between Christian and Turkish Muslim navies took place 1571.³⁰³ The Christian victory was considered both a miracle and the singular event that prevented a Muslim Europe. Maret took the news of this elevation with his usual calm, yet he hoped that it would offer him even more clout to bring final success to his plan.³⁰⁴ Perhaps it was a fortuitous sign of the next great miracle needed for Maret to secure religion in French higher education?

In February of 1883, his patience paid off, as Ferry was once again appointed Minister of Public Instruction. It should be stated that Ferry was still committed to his anticlericalism personally. Yet, he was also a consummate politician and recognized the need to act according to the winds of opportunity. He knew that it was more opportune to support the concordat than to supplant it, as was Bert's goal.

Ferry agreed that the Faculties at the Sorbonne should function as they always had: the state would grant the diplomas, and that the Vatican would recognize canonical value in the degree. Maret and Lavigerie quickly decided to travel back to Rome in the same month to share the news with the Pope. They first met with the Comte Lefebvre de Béhaine, French Ambassador to Rome, in order to be certain that the French government

³⁰³ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 429.

³⁰⁴ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 431.

approved their ideas and so avoid traveling that great distance in vain.³⁰⁵ After this meeting, Maret left for Rome, February of 1883.

Upon his arrival, Maret met with Cardinal Luigi Pallotti, the Secretary for the Congregation of Education, and gave him the official memos from the French government detailing Ferry's agreeable statement. On February 25th, Maret met with the Pope, who was well aware of the events that had been transpiring in France regarding *laïcité* in education. The suppression of state-funding of chaplaincies and the Ferry Laws that had now affected all primary and secondary schools left the Pope with little hope that the Bull could succeed. Further, the Pope informed Maret that the bishops in charge of the free faculties at Lyon, Lille, and Angers were threatened by the Sorbonne, as it would be competing with them for the same kind of students.³⁰⁶ The Pope himself, nervous about anticlerical influence now filtering throughout the French government and education systems, could not bring himself to support the Sorbonne, a university still controlled by the state, when suitable and canonically vested institutes of higher education existed in other French cities.

With this news, Maret left the papal meeting obviously discouraged, but nonetheless unwilling to give up the fight. The Pope may not be willing to budge at his behest, he opined, but that did not mean that other Vatican figures felt the same way. Thus, Maret turned his attention to Cardinal Luigi Jacobini, the Vatican Secretary of State. When met with the same resistance as that of the Pope, Maret insisted to Jacobini in a letter in early March 1883 that if the Church gave up on the Sorbonne and simply attended to the Catholic institutes of higher learning, secularization would then be

³⁰⁵ Lettre de Duclerc au le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères 25 janvier 1883, F 17 13238, A.N.

³⁰⁶ Bressollette, "Les Derniers," 65. Footnote 94 on this page mentions that notes of this meeting are found in the Maret Fonds, which this author sought at the Institute Catholique de Paris, but without success.

complete. State and church would no longer have any practical interface. Further, and perhaps revealing the level of his desperation, Maret pleaded with Jacobini, stating his confidence that if the Church displayed good faith to the state in its willingness to work together, the state would respond in kind.³⁰⁷ He waited six weeks before receiving a response from the Cardinal Secretary of State.

In his letter to Archbishop Maret, dated April 23, 1883, Cardinal Jacobini explained his unfavorable response carefully. He understood Maret's concerns, as he shared them himself. However, he pointed out that Maret's plan was simply incompatible with French legislation, which, by now, revealed a steadfast direction of complete separation, at least in the area of education. Furthermore, since the French government would be responsible for appointing the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, the Church would have no ability to correct or dismiss any possible deviant teacher. Thus, there would be no way that the Church could grant canonical status to the university under these current conditions.³⁰⁸

Maret's energy and determination in the face of these refusals was quite remarkable. He still refused to quit and met with Cardinal Guibert of Paris soon after receiving the letter. Guibert agreed with Maret that it was important to maintain the faculty at the university, but, like Jacobini and the Pope, he feared that the French government would take advantage of this situation and install professors who could be dangerous to the goals of the Church.³⁰⁹ If the position of the Church were to change, Maret knew that he had to meet with Ferry again to see if a solution to the Church's problem could be developed.

³⁰⁷ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 448-449.

³⁰⁸ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 452-453.

³⁰⁹ Gadille, *La Pensée*, vol. II, 135-136.

On May 20th, Maret met with Ferry in hopes to convince him of the need to preserve the theology faculty. Unwilling to recognize the impossibility of the situation, he reiterated again to the Minister of Public Instruction the reasons why Ferry should keep the faculty intact at the university. Surprisingly, Ferry agreed to delay Boysset's January proposal to completely suppress the budget for the theology faculty for six months.³¹⁰ With incredible and dauntless energy, Maret went right to work.

A Final Effort to Preserve the Theology Faculty

In July of 1883, Maret penned a lengthy work aimed at Boysset. He entitled the essay, "*Mémoire sur les Facultés de théologie présenté a M. le Président de la République et les Ministres, Sénateurs, et Députés.*"³¹¹ Maret offered a defense for his theology faculty that entailed four points. First, he mentioned the authority of the Concordat, which, as yet, had not been officially or legally abrogated. Second, he claimed economic benefits of suppressing the theology faculties were fictitious. The college de France, the institute established earlier in the century to offer courses on science and scientific discoveries to the public at large, was certainly not economically viable, but was deemed valuable enough to preserve. The Sorbonne offered even more benefits to the workings of faith and science, which, for Maret, were not mutually opposed. This benefit was proving fiscally profitable, Maret concluded, if only the ministers in the government would take notice. His third point explained why their positivistic biases were unfounded. Faith and science work well together, he argued, and it was prejudicial to say otherwise. Finally, the Sorbonne is controlled by an Archbishop (namely, himself)

³¹⁰ Lettre de Ferry á Maret, 22 mai 1883, F 17 13238, A.N.

³¹¹ Henri Maret, Published by Delalain, Paris, 1883. This work is found in the F 17 13238 dossier at the Archives Nationales.

who had canonical status with Rome, thus making him the perfect liaison between the state and Rome to oversee the university.³¹² By the time this work was finished and published in the fall of 1883, Ferry had again been made the President of the Council. True to his word, he actually prevented the full suppression of the theology faculty.

Maret took this opportunity to work on the last great treatise of his long intellectual legacy, *La Vérité Catholique et la Paix Religieuse: Appel a la Raison de la France*.³¹³ This would be his most comprehensive and vigorous Christian apologetic. Maret's purpose for this impressive manuscript was to articulate with the utmost of clarity the proper relationship between the Church and modern society. Composed of large sections made up of systematic philosophical critiques, historical analysis, and moral exhortation, this treatise in many ways summarized the whole of his life's oeuvre. This, he hoped, would set the stage for final success for state and church acceptance of the Sorbonne.

The work itself was well-received by both bishops and distinguished members of the Academy. On March 8, the Deputy Alfred Mézières, who was also a distinguished member of the French Academy, wrote to Maret to thank him for this "beautiful and generous work...All that contributes to the pacification and union of souls will be of utmost benefit to our country."³¹⁴ The senator Pierre Jouin also sent his regards on the 28 of March. In his letter, he remarked that Maret "nobly and eloquently demonstrated the life and death of all of the philosophies which have turned from the truth and have

³¹² Maret, *Mémoire sur les Facultés*.

³¹³ Henri Maret, *La Vérité Catholique et la Paix Religieuse: Appel à la Raison de France* (Paris: E. Dentu, Libraire-Éditeur, 1884).

³¹⁴ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 491.

separated themselves from Christian doctrine.”³¹⁵ Thus, for the Catholic members of both the Academy and of the government, this work represented a true tour de force.

Enjoying the accumulating accolades for this work became the last great accomplishment for Maret. In June, due to the excesses of his work and travels, the Archbishop grew weaker and weaker. After a brief bout with an illness which left him bed-ridden, he died on the 16th of June, 1884. He was 79 years old. It was only after his death that Chamber of Deputies suppressed the budget for the theology faculty at the University of Paris, although retaining the Protestant faculties. Maret’s seemingly tireless efforts to fight not only for his theology faculty but for a deeper cooperation between Church and state as well as for a clergy well-schooled in church/state relations were summarized in a short passage from *La Vérité Catholique et la Paix Religieuse* published in 1884:

...the clergy should be convinced that the remedy for the evil which is at work in our society in political forms is not politics. Everything which favors the reign of light, justice, charity, peace, everything which contributes to the reconciliation of science with faith, of freedom with religion, should be the object of the clergy’s aspirations.³¹⁶

This commitment of Maret’s between the cooperative relations between church and state extended beyond the university; indeed, even beyond his death. Pope Leo XIII wrote two encyclicals directed at the French people offering the same insights. In *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*, coincidentally published in February of 1884, the same month as Maret’s magnum opus, the Pope enjoined the clergy to remain loyal to the Republican government while resisting its anticlerical measures.³¹⁷ While Maret may have lost the

³¹⁵ Bazin, *Vie de Maret*, vol. III, 495.

³¹⁶ Maret, *La Vérité Catholique*, 452.

³¹⁷ Encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII, *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*, 1884. article 4.

battle for the Sorbonne, his impact in the larger picture of church/state relations and French higher education remains significant.

Chapter Five: The Legacy

In the previous chapters, I have laid out not only the nature of the debate between Jules Ferry and Henri Maret regarding the existence of the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, but have also the strategies of each to achieve the desired ends. We have seen that the secularization of the Sorbonne was tied to much larger church/state issues, at least as far as Ferry and Maret understood it. Each viewed their goals for the Sorbonne as being affiliated to the more general principles of the relationship between religion and secularization as well as church and state. They also understood their program to be related to the more specific issue of the relationship between faith and science. As we have seen, Ferry viewed the relationship between these elements as antagonistic, whereas Maret viewed them as cooperative and collaborative.

This chapter seeks to appreciate the work of each man following the denouement of the contentious debate regarding the theology faculty at the University of Paris. After Maret secured a six-month postponement from Ferry in 1884, a surprising rapprochement between the two, his failing health never allowed him to take advantage of it. Although Ferry's legacy is more obvious – his ideas regarding education have subsisted in public school systems throughout the world – Maret's may not be so. This chapter examines each man's work in order to ascertain their long-term influence. As we shall see, each enjoyed some real measure of success in their respective camps. Although both were destined to die inauspiciously, they nevertheless passed on an enduring patrimony within the area of church/state relations and education.

Maret's Last Project

Before examining Maret's legacy, it may be helpful to turn attention to the circumstances surrounding the last few months of his life in order to more fully appreciate his contribution. *La Vérité Catholique et la Paix Religiueuse :Appel a la Raison de la France* established Archbishop Maret as a true defender of the faith in the minds of his detractors. It both summed up his life's goal up until that time while simultaneously establishing Maret as a leading voice in French church/state relations recognized by anticlericals and clericals alike. In this book, Maret established what he believed to be the intellectual foundation for justifying the existence of his faculty at the Sorbonne. He knew that the two sides of church and state would never resolve their squabbling unless groundwork was laid for the proper boundaries of each. He wanted to silence the secular skeptics concerning the role of the Church in the modern world by revealing what he believed to be the philosophical flaws in their assumptions. Their denial of the necessity of religion for society rested on baseless presuppositions, he argued. For the Catholic conservatives who were suspicious of him he hoped not only to display the authenticity of his faith and stature as a *homo-ecclesia*, but also to explain in full why true religion has nothing to fear from non-monarchical political forms.³¹⁸

Skeptic ultramontanists like his own Parisian Archbishop recognized *La Vérité Catholique* as a stellar piece of apologetic aimed at the critics of the Catholic Church. Cardinal Guibert wrote to Maret in May of 1884, congratulating him on such a fine work.

I want to tell you, without exaggeration, that I regard this work as one of the best and most solid apologies that has been published in our time, for the defense of our holy religion. You have refuted and put to death the diverse systems imported generally from Germany... You have not

³¹⁸ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 482-485.

accomplished this feat by offering general reasons...but by opposing these principles by the truth of the science of philosophy.³¹⁹

This compliment offered the greatest satisfaction to Maret, as it came from a prelate who had not always been the most supportive. Furthermore, Guibert finally seemed to recognize the *raison d'être* for the Sorbonne. Maret always held that intellectual components such as faith and reason, and disciplines such as theology, philosophy, and even science share differing yet complimentary roles in the academy.³²⁰ As the Dean of Theology of the Sorbonne, Maret strove to combine these elements in a rigorous program in order to serve a great need in both Church and society. Hence, this book was a major accomplishment for Maret. If Guibert's support for this work could translate into a deeper support for the existence of the Sorbonne, perhaps his goals would come to fruition.

As if Guibert's comments were not encouraging enough, Pope Leo XIII also expressed his deepest appreciation to Maret via Cardinal Luigi Jacobini, his Secretary of State. Through Jacobini, the Pope praised the work for its "orthodoxy expressed by a wise and serious theologian."³²¹ These approbations boded a favorable outcome for Maret's hopes. Finally, it seemed audiences from within and without the Church understood and recognized what he had been trying to accomplish all these years. This acclaim would be a fitting end to such a protracted struggle. By appearing to gain the Church's support for his written work, he now needed only to convince them of the importance for this kind of training to be offered to students at the Sorbonne. Once the obstacle of the Church was cleared, Maret had the encouragement needed to readdress the growing tensions with the state. Since Ferry had already postponed the budget meeting

³¹⁹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 498

³²⁰ Maret, *La Vérité Catholique*, 241.

³²¹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 500.

that would debate the fiscal outcome for the theology faculty for six months, he had time to prepare his next move.

Prelude to a Legacy

Alas for the distinguished Dean and Archbishop, the next move would never come. As had been the case for Maret throughout his career, misfortune stuck; this time, with singular finality. The lauds for *La Vérité Catholique* foreshadowed the final act for Maret's life. He grew ill on June 10th 1884 and died just six days later. With the leading voice and proponent for the existence of a state-funded theology faculty at the University of Paris dead, the battle for the existence of the theology faculty of the Sorbonne came to its ultimate conclusion. It took the anticlericals just six months, December of 1884, to take advantage of this great void and enact a budgetary regulation suppressing the theology faculty once and for all.³²² After passing the law suppressing the budget for the theology faculty, it took affect in January of 1885, removing the Catholic presence from the Sorbonne for the first time since its founding.³²³

The journal *La Défense*, printed an obituary extolling the life's work of Henri Maret. "The venerable prelate edified and assisted many by his vivacity, his faith, by his ardor and love for the Divine Master, as much as for his eloquent expressions."³²⁴ Presiding at his funeral were such ecclesiastical dignitaries as the Papal Nuncio Czacki, Cardinal Guibert, Bishop Freppel of Angers, and Msgr. D'Hulst, Rector of the Catholic Institute of Paris. Present also were notable academic figures like Octave Gréard, Vice-

³²² The Chamber suppressed the Catholic Theology Faculty on Dec. 15, 1884, but retained the Protestant faculty. See Acomb, *The French Laic Laws*, 153.

³²³ During the French Revolution, the entire university was closed. When Napoléon reopened the university in 1802, he reinstated the theology faculty.

³²⁴ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 506.

Rector of the Academy of Paris, M. Dumont, Director of Higher Education, as well as distinguished author Henri de Bornier. Chamber Deputy Edmond Robert commented that the loss of the Doyen of the Theology Faculty was tremendous, as “it was theology that made the Sorbonne.”³²⁵ This diverse display of affection and respect by so many figures exemplifies well the wide-spread acknowledgement and appreciation of the man and his work.

Three months prior to his own death, as if in a state of prophetic utterance, Maret decided to write a last will and testament in a private journal. He offered further commentary on his work and life’s goals:

After long years of work, I have directed all of my studies, works, efforts, and zeal towards the goals I believe most necessary: the reconciliation of science with faith; of modern society with the Church...I wanted to contribute to the foundation of an irreproachable liberalism, which is not intransigent in principle. I have combated...the excesses of the ultra-Catholic school, as it is full of incalculable dangers.³²⁶

Three aspirations are clear from this excerpt, aspirations that sum up his life. First, he believed in the reciprocal relationship between faith and science. These methods of gaining and ascertaining knowledge were not mutually exclusive or antithetical for him. Rather, they were complementary and worked together. Only those influenced by philosophical materialism and positivism, he argued, viewed them as opposed.

Second, he did not view the Third Republic as intrinsically opposed to the Church. Nor did he hold, as did many of his Catholic counterparts in politics did, that a governmental form that upheld such pronounced notions of liberty could ever be reconciled with a dogmatic religion. He believed, to the contrary, that liberty of

³²⁵ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 510.

³²⁶ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 516-17.

individual conscience implied belief in the existence of God and was a doctrine of the Catholic religion.³²⁷

Finally, he viewed ultramontanism as a danger not only to these goals, but also to the faith life of the Church itself. They constituted a threat to “moral and religious progress for the world.”³²⁸ Maret always held that any authentic theology dealing with church and state relations should respect the proper and distinct role between both temporal and eternal affairs. Ultramontanism, he feared, did not adequately account for this difference as it was too intransigent.

Although Maret’s death brought about the eventual failure of his goal to maintain the theology faculty at the Sorbonne, his insights regarding church/state relations and academic life were rich and broad enough that it is hardly true to say that he died a failure. He may not have achieved success in the secular academic setting, but his influence did reach beyond the grave.

Confluence of Ideas between Maret and Pope Leo XIII

The three goals articulated by Maret months prior to his death provide an excellent lens through which to examine his legacy. His views may have been considered radical and liberal at one time in France, but by the early 1880’s, other voices within the Church were echoing similar sentiments; most notably, Pope Leo XIII. The Pope was far more supportive of Maret than was his predecessor Pius IX, having offered full support of Maret’s elevation to the Titular Archbishopric of Lepanto.³²⁹ It may not be too much to presume that, given the subject matter and the scope of the exchange between Maret and

³²⁷ Maret, *La Vérité Catholique*, 434-435.

³²⁸ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 517.

³²⁹ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 430.

the Pope that the former's views left an impression on Leo. There was frequent and considerable exchange between the two. Further, what had been Maret's vision for 40 years was now in essence being articulated by the Pope. This constitutes a high degree of convergence of religio-political viewpoints. Therefore, it is hardly presumptuous to suggest that Maret's legacy found further representation in pontifical statements and decrees at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Pope shared Maret's sentiments that Frenchmen need not concern themselves with reestablishing the monarchy. This was a sharp contrast not only to Pius IX, but to almost every Pope prior to him. Leo's view of the French government was thus unique, and it was no coincidence that it mirrored Maret's. Both men recognized that working against the Republic in hopes of gaining a better political position for Catholics (as was the case in the days of the monarchies) was dangerous dreaming. After attending a Papal audience in April of 1883, royalist army Captain Hubert Lyautey described his disappointment that "not only is the Pope not a Legitimist, but he tries to dissuade others from being a Legitimist."³³⁰ In a personal conversation with the Archbishop of Besançon, Fulbert Petit, Leo quipped that "some Catholics want to destroy the Republic, but I am afraid that if they go on like this, it is the Republic that will destroy them."³³¹

In the Pope's encyclical letter *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*, published February 8, 1884, (the same month as Maret's magnum opus *La Vérité Catholique*) Leo articulated his official position on the political situation in France.³³² As was the case in Maret's work, Leo began by attacking the philosophical errors, as he understood them, which he

³³⁰ Adrien Dansette, *Religious History of Modern France Under the Third Republic, Vol. II* (Freiburg: Herder Publishing, 1961), 62.

³³¹ Dansette, *Religious History*, 62.

³³² Pope Leo XIII, *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*: Encyclical Letter on the Religious Question in France, 1884, www.vatican.va, last date accessed March 24, 2011.

believed created the hostility between Church and state. The Pope did not devote much of his energy to a systematic refutation of these so-called errors as did Maret in *La Vérité Catholique*, but he did recognize many of the same causes of division.³³³ The Pontiff echoed Maret's assertion that the hostility emanating from the government was due more to the influence of a "system of philosophy calculated the more vehemently to inflame the desires after unlimited license," than to outright incompatibility between the Catholic Church and the modern state.³³⁴

Despite his harsh criticism of what he deemed as atheistic philosophies, the Pope's political views regarding the Third Republic were nevertheless quite diplomatic considering the fierce anticlerical strains that made up the majority of Republicans. There are a couple of possibilities for this. For one, Italy had become rather inhospitable to the Church during the wars of Italian Unification in the 1860's, and had severed ties with the Vatican during the Pontificate of Pius IX. Even after having established better relations with the Italian government, the situation was not much better for Leo. Germany offered little possibility of support or openness to the Church after Bismarck's Kulturkampf in the 1870's. With a weakened Austrian empire after its loss to Prussia in the 1860's, France provided the most stable environment for the Church to seek to reestablish ties with a modern European government.³³⁵ No doubt, this is the most likely scenario for Leo's desire to write to France at this time to address the Catholic Question.

³³³ Nobilissima, articles #4 and 5. Maret, *Le Vérité* chapters 2-10 première partie.

³³⁴ Nobilissima, article #1. Compare the words of Leo with those of Maret: "The politicians who pretend to reform the Concordat... are in serious error. The two societies, the civil/temporal and the religious/spiritual, should be able to live in peaceful rapport...the two societies are complementary." *La Vérité Catholique*, 438.

³³⁵ For a well-researched work on Papal diplomacy during this time, see Jean-Marc Ticchi's *Aux Frontières de la Paix: Bons Offices, Médiations, Arbitrages du Saint-Siège, 1878-1922* (Rome: Collection de L'École Française de Rome, 2002)

Yet, the political situation does not offer the sole explanation for Leo's interest in France, as far as his view of the Republic. Archbishop Maret and Pope Leo's Secretary of State, Cardinal Luigi Jacobini, discussed the state of affairs in France several times both in person and via written correspondence between the months of February and April of 1883, the year prior to the publishing of *Nobilissima*.³³⁶ In these correspondences, Maret explained to Jacobini that the Third Republic was accommodating him in his plea for the ongoing support for the Theology Faculty, which gave room for optimism if the Pope would only support his efforts to offer the theology faculty canonical status. Further, to give up on the Republic at this time regarding diplomatic ties would most certainly end with complete secularization in France.³³⁷ Maret also warned Jacobini of dissension within Catholic ranks regarding oversight for the Catholic universities. The ultramontanists insisted on Papal control over all Catholic institutions, while Maret favored local Episcopal supervision as he knew that anticlericalists would never accept total Papal control.³³⁸ The disunity which he believed was sown by the ultramontanists would prove fatal to any hopes of Catholic revivalism with regards to its relations with the state.

These views are surprisingly articulated by the Pope in his encyclical. Leo also recognized dangers present in the Catholic political camps. He first addressed the Bishops in this encyclical, encouraging them to preserve the bond of unity among the faithful and avoid creating unnecessary hostilities animated by mere human considerations. Next he addressed Catholic parties who were tearing at this same unity via open and harmful disagreement with the hierarchy as well as using the media of the

³³⁶ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 448-49.

³³⁷ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 448-49.

³³⁸ Bazin, *Vie de Maret vol. III*, 451.

day to air these perceived grievances. As these were tactics common among the ultramontanist groups, it is obvious that it is to them Leo aimed these words:

There is certainly nothing more wished for by our adversaries than dissensions between Catholics, who should avoid nothing with greater care than any disagreement...Catholic writers must spare no effort to preserve this harmony in all things; let them prefer that which is of general utility to their own private interests.³³⁹

After the issuance of this encyclical, it became clear that the bishops as a whole were not in complete agreement with the Pope on these points. They obviously wanted a much less nuanced and diplomatic condemnation of the Republicans than what was offered. If the bishops lagged behind the Pope's lead in viewing the Republic with more openness, the ultramontanist journal *L'Univers* was absolutely opposed to it. Some months after the publishing of this papal document, *L'Univers* launched into a vicious diatribe against the recently deceased Bishop Dupanloup of Orléans. Dupanloup was a close friend and associate of Maret's, and the journal excoriated what, in their view, was his liberal and harmful support of the French government.³⁴⁰ The situation turned vicious quickly, and the divisions it caused brought the Catholic bloc to the brink of chaos. The Pope had to respond rapidly and decisively, and did so by writing on November 4, 1884 to Msgr. Camillo di Rende, the other (along with Cardinal Czacki) Papal Nuncio to France, that:

Responsibility for present day differences must in large measure be laid at the door of the writers and particularly the journalists. Their bitter polemics, personal attacks, accusations, and recriminations daily embitter the debate and make pacification and brotherly concord more and more difficult to achieve.³⁴¹

³³⁹ Nobilissima, #'s 8 & 9.

³⁴⁰ Eugène Veuillot, "Mgr l'èveque d'Orléans," *L'Univers*. Novembre 23 1884; no. 6185, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k705005p>, date last accessed March 25, 2011.

³⁴¹ Dansette, *Religious History*, 65.

Maret had found himself in the cross-hairs of this particular journal many times throughout the years, most notably after the Vatican I Council. Hence, ultramontanist journals such as *L'Univers* made it clear that they were not willing to end the conflict between the Church and the French Republic according to Leo's terms. The irony of the fact that their stated position clashed with their overall goal of giving complete Papal control over the Church in France – even when the Pope himself was against it – did not seem to register.

It is clear from these statements that the Pope and Maret's political goals for France shared a similar church/state view, and that these views were unique to each man as very few other French Catholic thinkers and politicians articulated a similar perspective. They also received the same opprobrium from the same political extremes. They were too conservative for the left, and too liberal for the right. Both men, however, were firm in their convictions regarding their commitment to the Church. It was this foremost conviction that each attributed the rationale for his view on the relationship between church and state.

On November 1, 1885, Pope Leo XIII issued his next encyclical regarding the nature of the relations between church and state in order to make this point crystal clear to his detractors. *Immortale Dei* was the Pope's next official attempt to lay out the doctrinal basis for this reconciliation.³⁴² It is obvious that he prepared this encyclical with situations in mind such as the one in France. He spelled out concretely the problem with anticlericalist governments without referring to them as such.³⁴³ His rejection of certain notions, such as the attempt to “keep the Church in bondage to the state,” or the “godless

³⁴² Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*,: *Encyclical Letter on the Modern State*, 1885, #'s 2-12, www.vatican.va, date last accessed March 22, 2011.

³⁴³ *Immortale*, #28.

education of youth,” were quite controversial in France. No wonder either, since it took little perspicacity to see that it was a program like Ferry’s which the Pope had in mind.³⁴⁴ Leo also sought to develop what he viewed as the proper understanding of human liberty and private conscience as related to “religious truth.”³⁴⁵

Maret had spent an entire chapter of *La Vérité Catholique* spelling out what he believed to be the conditions necessary for liberty in the modern state.³⁴⁶ He explained that modern notions of liberty rooted in materialist and atheistic philosophies, as well as religious indifferentism, were harmful not only to French citizens in general, but even to “the principles of 1789...as well as the Concordat.”³⁴⁷ Although Leo did not offer the same optimistic views of the principles of the French Revolution as did Maret, he did concur with that modern notions of liberty rooted in materialism viewed “liberty as license, a liberty of self-ruin.”³⁴⁸ The Pope developed this theme of liberty even more in his encyclical *Libertas*.³⁴⁹ With these documents, Pope Leo was establishing the conditions which eventually culminated in his final encyclical aimed at France, *Au Milieu des Sollicitudes*, published on February 16, 1892, 8 years and 8 days after *Nobilissima*.

This document came after almost a decade of constant political volatility and momentum changes, as the monarchists had gained seats in the Chamber in 1885, only to lose them again after the debacle of the Boulanger Affair in 1889.³⁵⁰ Leo wanted to

³⁴⁴ *Immortale*, # 29.

³⁴⁵ *Immortale*, # 37.

³⁴⁶ Maret, *La Vérité Catholique*, third part, chapter 4.

³⁴⁷ Maret, *La Vérité*, 437.

³⁴⁸ *Immortale*, # 37.

³⁴⁹ Leo XIII, *Libertas: On Religious Liberty*, 1888, #20, www.vatican.va, date last accessed March 23, 2011.

³⁵⁰ Georges Boulanger was a free-thinking, military general who garnered support from disparate sectors of French political blocs. From French communists known as “Blanquists” after Louis Blanc, to Legitimists and Bonapartists, these politically diverse groups all rallied around Boulanger in an attempted Coup d’Etat in January of 1889. The junta fell apart when Boulanger quailed at the prospect of leading and fomenting

address the Church and state relations at a time when the faith seemed to have recently lost ground that had been gained in the mid 1880's. His concern regarding the attempts to "annihilate the faith in France" as he saw it prompted him to address this situation once more, in hopes of achieving Maret's long dream of reconciliation between the Church and state.³⁵¹ The Pope echoed Maret's view that only religion could create a peaceful, social bond. "Otherwise...life consists devoid of reason and consists only in the satisfaction of sensual instincts."³⁵²

One of the more important and controversial declarations made in *Au Milieu* dealt more specifically with the relationship between Catholic citizens and the state. In *Nobilissima*, Leo clarified the proper distinction between the Church and state, distinctions Maret emphasized as well.³⁵³ In this document, he was much more to the point. He stated, "like other citizens, Catholics are free to prefer one form of government to another precisely because no one of these social forms is, in itself, opposed to the principles of sound reason nor to the maxims of Christian doctrine."³⁵⁴ Thus, Catholics need not tie themselves so tightly to monarchical forms of governance, a view articulated by Maret throughout his works.³⁵⁵ As innocuous as this statement may sound, it turned out to cause a firestorm of controversy.

an armed revolt and thus refused to act. He fled to Belgium and then to England in April in order to avoid being tried for treason. With hopes for a return to an absolutist form of government dashed, these political blocs experienced serious defeats in the upcoming elections. For an analysis of his plot as it relates to broader assessments of conspiracy theories, Frédéric Monier, *Le complot dans la République. Stratégies du secret, de Boulanger à la Cagoule* (Paris: La Découverte, 1998).

³⁵¹ Leo XIII, *Au Milieu Des Sollicitudes: On the Church and state In France*, 1892, article # 2, www.vatican.va, date last accessed March 23, 2011.

³⁵² *Au Milieu*, # 5.

³⁵³ *Nobilissima*, #4.

³⁵⁴ *Au Milieu*, # 14.

³⁵⁵ Maret, *La Vérité*, 485-487; *Le projet de Bulle*, 8,9; *L'Église et Société*, 3,7.

Leo's insistence that Catholic citizens in France were free to support political forms other than the monarchy became known as the "*Ralliement*." He hoped to prompt the Catholics of France to 'rally' around the Republic in order to bring an end to hostilities between church and state which threatened Catholic influence.³⁵⁶ This influence teetered on the brink, and if French Catholics weren't careful, Leo feared that the Church would lose influence once and for all. This, indeed, had been one of Maret's greatest worries.³⁵⁷ Yet, Leo underestimated the depth of royalist support in the Catholic ranks, clergy and layman alike. The *ralliement* became a cause of division between the Pope and French Catholics – not the outcome he had envisioned. Those who supported it were known as *ralliés*, and those who opposed *refractaires* (resisters).³⁵⁸

Two years prior, in 1890, Cardinal Charles Lavigerie of Algiers, another old friend of Maret's, offered the now famous "Toast of Algiers," where he addressed an assemblage of French officials, stating the obligation for French Catholics to sincerely adhere to the republican form of government.³⁵⁹ The speech instead served only to increase the divide within Catholic political circles. Perhaps the tumultuous response to this speech should have prompted Leo to avoid the topic altogether. However, his concern for the fate of the Church in France outweighed his fear from Catholic camps, many of whom made loyalty to his office the lynchpin of their program.

³⁵⁶ One of the issues that hindered Leo's attempts at rallying Catholics to the republic was the backlash created by the insistence of the government in 1890 for the Church to print all catechisms and religious instruction manuals for children in French, as well as to preach all sermons in French. Until that time, Church instruction was left alone by government officials. See Joan L. Coffey, "Of Catechisms and Sermons: Church-State Relations in France, 1890-1905," *Church History*, vol. 66 no. 1 March, (1997): 54-66.

³⁵⁷ Maret, *La Vérité*, 488.

³⁵⁸ For a critical analysis of the Church's attempts at rapprochement with the modern State, see Emil Poulat, *Liberté, Laïcité: La Guerre des deux France et la Principe de la Modernité* (Paris: Cerf, 1987).

³⁵⁹ For a contextual understanding of Lavigerie's politics as it related to the demographic crisis in Algeria, see Bertrand Taihe, "Algerian Orphans and Colonial Christianity in Algeria, 1866-1939," *French History*, vol. 20 issue 3; fall (2006): 240-259.

The Pope worked hard to maintain diplomatic ties with the Third Republic during the years when Ferry's program of *laïcité* enveloped education. Leo even reminded the French bishops of their obligation, according the Catholic doctrine, of remaining obedient to properly constituted civil authority.³⁶⁰ By 1890, the Pope believed that the time had arrived for French Catholics to change their attitude towards the Republican government, and the government should, in return, cease offering such vociferous opposition to the Church. Thus, he called for Catholics to be more cooperative, or *rally* around the republic. Unfortunately, he miscalculated the amount of resentment French Catholics harbored towards the government. Leo even won over the loyalty of one of the leading voices in the Legitimist party, Albert de Mun, who remarked to his fellow Legitimists, "In accepting the constitution, we are not entering any political party."³⁶¹ Yet, this was not enough to overcome the fierce resistance to Pope Leo's call for Catholics to disband royalist political parties.

Thus, this last encyclical became somewhat of an embarrassment. Those loyal to the idea of a monarchy were always ardently supportive of the Papacy. Now the Pope's words not only created a resistance to his doctrines but outward criticism of his competency to speak on political matters. Catholic prelates such as Bishop Charles-François Turinaz of Nancy, one who might have supported the papal program, due to the financial support for his parishes came from noble families from the old aristocracy, as well as from the middle class, most of whom were Legitimists.³⁶²

Leo's call to rally around the Republic did not end in complete disappointment. Although the Dreyfus Affair would bring collapse to the *ralliement*, these encyclical letters of the Pope's

³⁶⁰ Dansette, *Religious History*, 76.

³⁶¹ Dansette, *Religious History*, 103.

³⁶² Dansette, *Religious History*, 94.

did provide for his own on-going legacy: the social doctrines of the Church initiated by the landmark encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.³⁶³ This document established the first among a long list of important texts from the Catholic Popes regarding issues dealing with society, politics, economics, war, poverty and other social issues.³⁶⁴ The tradition flowing from this encyclical, known as “social Catholicism,” received its impetus from Leo’s previous encyclicals dealing with what Leo called the Catholic Question in France (what role will the Church play in the Third Republic). As has been demonstrated, these writings reveal deep convergences with the works of Archbishop Maret.

It is also interesting to note that, although after 1885 there was no longer a theology faculty at the Sorbonne, its theological influence did not evaporate with the budget. There were major 20th century theologians who received education from the Sorbonne, and brought with them seeds of influence that grew into fully developed theological systems. Jacques Maritain, who was instrumental in writing the Human Rights Declaration of 1948, and Etienne Gilson, who founded the Pontifical Institute on Medieval Studies in Toronto, Canada in 1929, were both very influential figures in Catholic theology in the 20th century.³⁶⁵ Although neither man attended the Sorbonne while Maret was there, each certainly benefited from the milieu that persisted despite the elimination of the faculty after the death of the Doyen.

³⁶³ Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum: Encyclical Letter on Human Work*, 1891, www.vatican.va, date last accessed March 23, 2011. For a recent investigation regarding the role of Catholics and the Dreyfus Affair, Ruth Harris, “The Assumptionists and the Dreyfus Affair,” *Past and Present*, no. 194 (2007): 175-211. For a cultural analysis of the gender rhetoric in the public debates, Christopher E. Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair and the Crisis of French Manhood* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

³⁶⁴ For a good historical survey leading up to what is dubbed “social Catholicism,” see Curt Cadorette, *Catholicism in the Social and Historical Contexts: An Introduction*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 161-181. Two other important works the development of what is called “Social Catholicism,” as relating to the Third Republic, Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War*, (New York: Crossroad Books, 1991), 150-165, and Ralph Gibson, *Social History of French Catholicism: 1789-1914*, (London, New York: Routledge Books, 1989), 59-75.

³⁶⁵ For a biographical sketch of each as well as their connection to the Sorbonne at the end of the nineteenth century, Raissa Maritain, Julie Keman, trans., *We Have Been Friends Together and Adventures In Grace: the Memoirs of Raissa Maritain*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1961).

Ferry's Legacy

Jules Ferry endured trials and tribulations, and well as ongoing successes, in his life. He was Minister of Public Instruction three different times ('79-81; '82; '83) and President of the Council on two different occasions ('80-81; '83-85), as well as other important ministry posts. His most obvious legacy is his eponymous education laws, known to this day as the Ferry Laws. Yet his political career came to an abrupt end less than one year after Maret's death. His foreign policy decisions as the President of the Council in Southeast Asia proved to be his undoing.³⁶⁶ The withdrawal of French troops from a region in Indochina called Lang Son led to what has been called the "Tonkin Affair." French soldiers retreated in March of 1885 from forces of the Qing Dynasty who claimed suzerainty over the Manchu provinces in what is now Vietnam, giving up land they had just won in a hard-fought campaign in the Sino-French War. Since French presence in this part of the world was due in large part to the conquest organized by Ferry, he took the brunt of a very public criticism due to the cost of so many lives for so little gains in such a far-away place.³⁶⁷

Ferry was violently denounced by newspaper publisher, Deputy, and future Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau and other radicals on March 30th that same year. Although Ferry was largely responsible in June of 1885 for negotiating the treaty of peace with the Manchu Empire in which the Qing Dynasty ceded suzerainty of the Southeast Asian provinces of Annam

³⁶⁶ For an investigation into diplomatic problems and consequences in the Third Republic, see T.G. Otte, "From 'War-in-Sight' to Nearly War: Anglo-French Relations in the Age of High Imperialism, 1875-1898," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, no. 17 (2006): 693-714.

³⁶⁷ For an assessment covering the inconsistencies of Ferry's foreign policies, C.M. Andrew, "The French Colonialist Movement During the Third Republic: The Unofficial Mind of Imperialism," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, series 5, no. 24 (1978): 143-166, doi: 230713679076.

and Tonkin to France, his political career was effectively over.³⁶⁸ Then, in December of 1887, an anarchist named Aubertin attempted to assassinate Ferry. Ferry developed complications from the wounds received, and died March 17th, 1893.

In March of 1883, Jules Ferry sent a letter to the teachers of France. This letter not only summarizes well his views of education, but disclose tenets fundamental to secular education as a whole:

The law of March 28 is characterized by two provisions which supplement each other and harmonize completely: on the one hand it excludes the teaching of any particular dogma; on the other it gives first place among required subjects to moral and civic teaching. Religious instruction is the province of the family; moral instruction belongs to the school... Our legislators did not mean to pass an act that was purely negative. Doubtless their first object was to separate the school from the Church, to assure freedom of conscience both to teachers and pupils, in short, to distinguish between two domains too long confused; the domain of beliefs, which are personal, free, and variable; and that of knowledge, which, by universal consent, is common and indispensable to all.³⁶⁹

In this lengthy quote, several points are realized: first, we see Ferry's commitment to laic education. His reasoning for laic education is based on his confidence of what he called the universal consent to knowledge – the kind of knowledge gained by science. His confidence in positivism led him to believe that science was not only a neutral approach to intellectual discovery, but through this means man could also ascertain and adhere to a commonly agreed to, consistent ethic.

Further, these ethical principals, derivative from this science, would unify the nation. The teachers in his educational system would teach only those ethics held to be common to all, not

³⁶⁸ For an analysis of the complexity of French opinion regarding French Imperialism as depicted in art, Hélène Gill, "Hegemony and Ambiguity: Discourses, Counter-discourses, and Hidden Meanings in French Depictions of the Conquest Settlement of Algeria," *Modern and Contemporary France*, no. 14 (2006): 157-72.

³⁶⁹ Letter reprinted in Ferdinand Buisson and Frederic Ernest Farrington, *French Educational Ideals of Today: An Anthology of the Molders of French Educational Thought of the Present* (Yonkers, NY: World Book Company, 1919), 6.

specified by religious particularities. As Ferry explained in his letter, “While you are relieved from religious teaching, there never was a question of relieving you from moral teaching. That would have deprived you of the chief dignity of your profession.”³⁷⁰ And further, “...the teacher is a natural aid to the moral and social progress of a nation, a person whose influence cannot fail to elevate in some measure the moral standard.”³⁷¹

Ferry’s view on the private role of religion explains his dedication to secular education. The proper domain for this religious instruction was the family. Certainly, there were plenty of Catholics who would agree with that. Ferry’s relegation of religion solely to the private sphere is what set him apart from his detractors on the right. Ferry often said that he was anticlerical, not anti-religious.

It is also clear as to why Ferry insisted that education be free and compulsory, two other hallmarks of current secular educational laws in the West. Free and compulsory education meant that the state would not be secondary to either Church or family, and would thus have full control over the formation of its citizens.

Ferry’s Victory

In the end, it is clear that French education conformed to the ideals which Ferry had worked so hard to establish. Today, education, which is compulsory in France through the sixteenth year, is as a whole supervised by the Ministry of National Education. Public and primary schools are staffed by state civil servants, making the entire system a subsidy of the government. While there are a handful of private schools which do not receive government subsidies, the overwhelming majority of schools fall into the class of *enseignement publique* and

³⁷⁰ Buisson, *An Anthology*, 6-7.

³⁷¹ Buisson, *An Anthology*, 10.

enseignement privé sous contrat. The educators within the latter two categories are bound to follow the B.O. (*Bulletin officiel*), which is a state publication that directs programs and teaching for schools throughout the country. Clearly, Ferry's vision of a state-controlled educational system has been realized.³⁷²

As to the secular element, religious instruction has been relegated to the extra-curricular sphere. Even as recently as December 2003, the Stasi Commission Report and the subsequent enactment of the corresponding legislation in March of 2004, reiterated yet again the model of secularism in education which has been normative for over one hundred years.³⁷³ The decisions of the report included a ban on all conspicuous religious symbols, manifesting a clear resolve to safeguard education and its environment from the influence of religion.

Although the state schools clearly conform to Ferry's model, it is also the case that Catholic universities have endured in France, and, moreover, throughout the Western world. And, if the public model of French education is that of Jules Ferry, it is no less deniable that the western model of Catholic higher education as a whole is that of Henri Maret. They are all pro-democracy. They are all animated by a desire to integrate faith and reason and to bring about a rapprochement between the secular and the religious spheres, in order to achieve the greatest fulfillment of both.

³⁷² To assess the impact of Ferry's Laws on the pedagogical development for modern France, see Alessandro Russo, "Schools as Subjective Singularities: The Invention of Schools in Durkheim's L'Evolution Pedagogique en France," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, no. 19 (2006): 308-37. Some contemporary research, however, has not been so complimentary to Ferry's legacy. For a critique of what has been called the "Ferry System," see Christian Nique, Claude Leliévres, *La République n' eduquera plus: La Fin du Mythe Ferry* (Paris: Plon, 1993), 72-95. See also Leon Sachs, "Finding 'L'École républicaine' in the Damnedest of Places: François Bégaudeau's *Entre les murs*," *Yale French Studies*, no. 111 (2007): 73-88.

³⁷³ Robert O'Brien, Bernard Stasi, *The Stasi Report: The Report of the Committee of Reflection on the Application of the Principle of Secularity in the Republic* (Buffalo, NY: William S. Hein & Company, 2005).

Both models have retained their vivacity despite the passage of over a century. The views of both Ferry and Maret continue to live on in the educational institutions that embody them.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have studied the debate between Jules Ferry and Henri Maret regarding the status of the theology faculty at the Sorbonne to elucidate the battle over *laïcité* that marked the early years of the French Third Republic. Maret's ideas about the relations possible between the Catholic Church and modern state set him apart not only from Ferry, but from pro-Catholic politicians active in the Third Republic.

Maret, as we have seen, sought means to smooth the antagonistic relationship between the state and church that was seemed inevitable to politicians such as Jules Ferry, Paul Bert, and even pro-Catholics like Albert de Mun. Maret's views heralded possibilities that would be realized most obviously in the evolution of Catholic political doctrine in the years after his death. It is this legacy that explains why the battle over state support of a Catholic theology faculty was more than simply an esoteric contest of funding allocation. Rather, as we have seen, the decision over reform of higher education intersected with grander issues. These higher education debates struck at the heart of the religious question as applied to the relationship between the modern state and the Catholic Church in France. With such implications, it is no wonder that the debate was extremely contentious. Due to these implications, Maret's efforts became enduring and emblematic for establishing new paradigms for future relationships between church and state.

As for Jules Ferry, the position he occupies in this work is no less significant. He enjoys a legacy of his own, as his laws are still operative in contemporary French

schools. Ferry's understanding of the role of the state school has also enjoyed an enduring influence. He began his political career as a passionate advocate of complete separation between church and state. Once elected first as a deputy from the Vosges region north of Paris, and then finally as Minister of Public Instruction and Cults, he turned his passion into a carefully implemented strategy.

By examining these men, this dissertation reveals some important features of the evolving relationship between church and state in the early French Third Republic. First, the contentious issue of *laïcité* in education revealed the enduring consequences of the association between throne and Church, and between Republican government and secularization, that emerged from the era of the French Revolution and its nineteenth century aftermath. Maret's significance arises in part from his observation that the antagonisms were more a product of political or ideological commitments than a result of necessary incompatibilities. Maret's reformulation of the possibility for church/state cooperation has only recently received deserved attention within the historiographical record. The process of confining the church to the social and political periphery was not, as much Republican history had it, essential to modernization, but rather was achieved through a complex interaction between various political and ideological forces.

Further, the forces involved in either removing or preserving church control in education were by no means uniform. Both Ferry and Maret received criticism from within their own respective political ranks regarding their plans. There were many divergent views, and political successes were often temporary, achieved by compromise, and determined in part by the contingency of events. This is important to realize, as the

view that the process of modernization and/or secularization was a steady march forward fails to adequately account for the complexity of the situation.

The controversy explored in this work also highlights areas for further scholarly research. For instance, it would be interesting to compare how other governments interacted with the Catholic or religious university systems within their respective countries. It would be fascinating to assess whether or if these same kinds of plans, either those of complete laicization or of harmonization occurred in other European universities. Louvain in Belgium became a theological center for the interaction for faith and science into the twentieth century. It would make an intriguing contrast to study this university and the Sorbonne. In Italy, the University of Bologna was founded in the eleventh century and enjoyed a long-standing Catholic tradition. It is now considered a state sponsored secular institution. Research comparing the process of transferring power from church to state with this university and other former Catholic universities is also lacking. Another area of interesting research would be to explore how non-Catholic countries viewed state funding of religiously affiliated universities.

In any case, the evidence presented above suggests that the incompatibility of religious and secular aims in French education was by no means self-evident for the instructors and university faculty who educated French youth. The diverse range of political views that vied to structure relations between church and state in the 1870s and 1880s is certainly suggestive of new directions for scholarship on Europe in the nineteenth century.

Appendix: Timeline of Events

- 1801:** Napoléon signs the Concordat detailing the relationship between France and the Catholic Church.
- 1830:** Henri Maret ordained to the priesthood.
- 1841:** Maret named professor of Theology at the Sorbonne.
- 1845:** Maret authors an essay entitled, “L’Église et la Société Laïque.”
- 1846-1878:** Pius IX serves as Pope.
- 1850:** Falloux Laws enacted, enabling private institutions or groups to establish schools apart from the state.
- 1856:** Maret begins working with Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, Pope Pius IX’s Secretary of State, on a project he calls, ‘*Le projet de Bulle.*’
- 1857:** Archbishop Marie Dominique Auguste Sibour is stabbed to death.
- 1861:** Maret appointed Titular Bishop of Sura.
- 1864:** Pope Pius IX issues *Quanta Cura* and the *Syllabus of Errors*.
- 1869:** Maret pens *Du Concile Générale et la Paix Religieuse*.
- 1869-1870:** The Vatican I Council occurs from December 8 to October 20.
- 1870-1871:** Franco-Prussian War from July to January.
- 1870:** On September 4, the Third Republic is established.
- 1871:** In February, Maret disavows anti-infallibility stance in a letter to Pope Pius IX.
- 1871:** Jules Ferry elected Deputy of the Vosges region in February.
- 1871:** Paris Commune from March-June.
- 1875:** In July, Law of Liberty of Higher Education is passed.

1876: Debate over the Law of Liberty of Higher Education takes place June 2, 3 in the Chamber of Deputies.

1877: Seize Mai Affair (May 16) when President Patrice Mac-Mahon tries to dissolve Parliament.

1878: Leo XIII succeeds Pius IX as the Pope. He serves until July of 1903.

1879: Ferry appointed Minister of Public Instruction in February.

1879: In May, Ferry attaches Article Seven onto a bill proposal to eliminate the ability of free faculties to confer degrees.

1879: In August, Ferry establishes teaching schools, *l'écoles normales*.

1881: In June, Ferry abolished fees for attending primary schools.

1882: In March, Ferry makes attending school compulsory.

1882: Maret is appointed Titular Archbishop of Lepanto.

1883: In March, Ferry issues his "Letter to Teachers."

1884: In February, Pope Leo XIII authors the encyclical *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*.

1884: Henri Maret dies on June 16. In December, the National Assembly passes law to abolish the budget for the Theology Faculty at the Sorbonne.

1885: Law to suppress the budget for the theology faculty takes affect.

1885: In November, Leo issues the encyclical *Immortale Dei*.

1887: Ferry is the victim of an assassination attempt.

1889: Boulanger Affair.

1891: Pope Leo XIII issues encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in May.

1892: Leo issues encyclical *Au Milieu des Sollicitudes* in February.

1893: Ferry dies from wounds received during assassination attempt.

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