

# Le Parlement des Huguenots

## Organisations et synodes réformés français au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle

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THE HUGUENOTS, who have been called the inventors of our modern parliamentary systems, were reintegrated into the nation by the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but without their historical institutions. Yet, the need for restoration was neither continuous nor free from prejudices. Ignorance of history, centralist temptations taken from the Lutheran model, and certain leaders' thirst for power dictated the pace of redress. Amidst territorial rivalries between different Churches, and between provinces, there came a growing need for regrouping and organization. Committees undertaking major works, pastoral conferences and confidential correspondences structured the formation of ecclesiastic political parties—hitherto badly identified, though similarly defined in other Protestant settings of the same era. Yet, whereas elsewhere these currents flowed freely, French Reformers had to battle for the recovery their institutions. Eventually, between a re-tailored attachment to the past, the strength of the *Discipline* and various contingencies of the moment, they finally came to invent new means of ecclesiastic regulation. Disloyal to history, but strongly loyal to the concept of *historical rights*, they finally reconquered their identity through diversity.

In this investigation, which spans the entire century, analyses of politics and political parties were employed to illuminate an object *a priori* of religious history—thus redirecting our understanding of socio-political communities, traditionally viewed through the prism of sacred symbols.

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