The opposition press: leaders and/or followers?

Did the double role of the opposition press during the period 1814-1830, and in particular during the July Revolution of 1830, fit into Eric Selbin's theoretical model on social revolutions?

OS III – Revolutions

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Index

Introduction

When the Arab Spring started a few years ago, it became clear very quickly that the (social) media played an important role in the outbreak of protests and the spreading of information. By using services such as Twitter and Facebook, developments that occurred and normally would have only been known to bystanders, now were read about by a growing number of people. This use of media made it possible that large-scale protests could be organised in several cities.[1] The Arab Spring became an example of the media as a 'revolutionary institution'. With this concept, I mean that the deployment of news sources was something that could not be overseen in the developments right before and during the actual revolution. Not only the traditional sources such as newspapers and news on the television should therefore be considered as news sources in the case of the Arab Spring, but the new social media and news coverage by non-journalists should also be included.

Within the framework of the media as a revolutionary institution, I want to dive into the history of the July Revolution in the year 1830. In order to research the main subject of my research – the media as a revolutionary actor during the July Revolution in 1830 – I had to oversee the longer run up to this revolution. It has become clear that the relationship between the press, the king and the government of France not only changed, but deteriorated during the period from 1814 until 1830. To find out what the role of the press actually was during this revolution, I have chosen to split my thesis into four parts. In the first chapter, I will introduce the theory on social revolutions as presented by Eric Selbin. This political scientist has studied a great number of revolutions and used this knowledge to create his own theory about this subject. In the second chapter, the historical background of king Louis XVIII and king Charles X will be elaborated on and their relationships with the press will be addressed. I will explain who these persons were in order to give a clear understanding of the information given in the rest of the thesis. The third chapter will serve as a detailed example of the changing dynamics between the government and the press. In this chapter, the term of minister Comte de Villèle (1821-1827) will be discussed with reference to the (censorship) laws that were introduced and abolished in an attempt to keep the press under control. Besides that, this chapter will also illustrate the growing influence of the opposition press and will show that the dual role of the press already started a few years before the July Revolution. The fourth and last chapter will focus on the outbreak of the July Revolution in 1830. The actors – the French government represented by king Charles X and the newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* in name of the opposition press – will be used to describe each of their roles during the revolution itself. By means of these two chapters, I hope to give a clearer image of what the double role of the opposition press exactly meant in the period before and during the revolution. By putting the main focus on the two-sided role of the opposition press during those months in 1830, I want to answer the main question: Did the double role of the opposition press during the period 1814-1830, and in particular during the July Revolution of 1830, fit into Eric Selbin's theoretical model on social revolutions? What I

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[1] H.H. Khondker, 'The role of the new media in the Arab Spring', *Globalizations* volume 8 issue 5 (2011) 675-679.

mean with this double role is that the opposition press met the characteristics of revolutionary leaders, as well as characteristics Eric Selbin uses for society as an actor. What the difference between these two actors was, will be explained in the first chapter.

To be able to study these specific subtopics in my thesis, I will mainly focus on secondary literature. The explanation of Eric Selbin's theory will be covered by using two of his works on this topic. These works give a good overview of the historical backgrounds, while showing different perspectives that the authors (may) have. Most of the other secondary literature treats the July Revolution and its actors in a broader perspective. This shows that it isn't possible to study the July Revolution by only looking at the events that happened in 1830. I will also use primary sources, but these will only return when they provide information the later texts can't, or in the case of very clear (political) opinions expressed in newspapers.

I   Theory on social revolutions

Eric Selbin is a well-known political scientist who introduced a new vision on revolutions. His main argument is based on the notion that the people who studied revolutions so far have been researching the wrong causes. Instead of looking at factual data such as political turmoil or economic crises, he argues that there is another story behind all these contributing factors. Selbin therefore uses his theory on revolutions to give a clear view on the social causes of revolutions and in particular individuals and their motivations. Although he uses the French Revolution (1789-1799) as the first illustration and therefore base of his research, the general features of his theory can be used to explain other revolutions. Below, I will present the main points of Eric Selbin's theory. Later on, this theory will be used to see if the July Revolution of 1830 fits the criteria of Selbin's work.

One of the first points that Eric Selbin mentions as necessary to make a development qualify as a social revolution is that there has to be a struggle for power. Often emerging from struggles between different classes in society, a situation is created in which the abilities of the ruling power are questioned. The second characteristic Selbin names, is the moment that control over the state is taken out of the old rulers' hands and a new individual or group of people start to govern the state. Finally, the enumeration ends with the concept of change throughout the whole society. A revolution can only be named as such when the impact is large enough to not only change political and economic structures, but also have a continued effect in the minds of the people and culture of the state.[2]

While these three factors create the conditions for the justification of the name 'revolution', Eric Selbin points out that there is another characteristic of revolutions that is woven through the revolutionary process. Selbin stresses the importance of actors. The presence of a coherent group of people thinking in the same ways and wanting to achieve similar goals is perhaps the most important part of the start of a revolution. He makes sure not to undermine factors such as political structures or ideological meta-narratives and combines all elements in his definition of revolution: "[revolution is the] conscious effort by a broad based, popularly mobilized group of actors, formal or informal, to profoundly transform the social, political, and economic institutions which dominate their lives; the goal is the fundamental transformation of the material and ideological conditions of their everyday lives."[3] To be able to establish such a fundamental change in society, a strong force is needed. This is also the reason Selbin makes an effort to explain the fundamental difference between revolutions and the similar processes of rebellions and resistance. This deeply-rooted passion to change something is what lacks in the last two concepts.[4] Only when these underlying motivations become clear, the revolutionary process can be understood in a more detailed way. Selbin does differentiate between leaders of a revolution and society. The leaders are the base of the start of revolution by providing a vision on what has to change and how to accomplish this. Next, (parts of) society unleashes the revolution and sets its pace by following the ideas given by the revolutionary leaders. This personal decision-making is something no

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[2] E. Selbin, *Revolution, rebellion, resistance. The power of story* (London 2010) 116.
[3] E. Selbin, 'Stories of Revolution in the Periphery', in: J. Foran, D. Lane, and A. Zivkovic (ed.), *Revolution in the Making of the Modern World: Social Identities, Globalization, and Modernity* (London 2008) 130-147, 131.
[4] Selbin, *Revolution, rebellion, resistance*, 15.

structure can explain: opinions are created by the actors themselves and they can influence each other. Whether or not they decide to give up the comfort of a known situation to start a revolution is something the state can't tell them to do.[5]

Although Eric Selbin makes a clear distinction between leaders and 'followers' – meant here is the society mentioned above which doesn't actively bring in ideology, but does have an active role in the progress of the revolution – in a social revolution, this difference is not always easy to see regarding revolutions in the past. The opposition press in France during the Bourbon Restoration fulfilled both of these roles. On the one hand it was backed by liberal politicians and therefore could build up a clear vision of what had to change in the French society. On the other hand, the speed with which the revolutionary events followed each other was also strongly influenced by what the newspapers did. To see which role fit the opposition press best in the July Revolution – according to Eric Selbin's standards – we first need to look at the changing dynamics between political rulers and the opposition press some more.

In the next chapter, the two kings of France during the period 1814-1830 will be introduced. In chapter three, we will see how the relationship between the press and the government changed when Comte de Villèle was France's prime minister (1821-1827). In the last chapter, the outbreak of the July Revolution will be discussed, with special attention to the role of the opposition press.

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[5] E. Selbin, 'Revolution in the Real World. Bringing agency back in' in: J. Foran (ed.), *Theorizing* Revolutions (London 1997) 123-136, 123-126 and 132-133.

II   The kings of France (1814-1830)

<u>King Louis XVIII (r. 1814-1824)</u>

Louis XVIII (1755-1824) was a brother of king Louis XVI. They grew up in the royal Court of their father, King Louis XV, and therefore received proper education. Although the Court itself was irreligious, the king's children also were educated in Christianity. When Louis XVIII grew older, his position in the Court wasn't so good: not only were he and his wife Marie-Joséphine unable to have children, the relationship with his brothers also deteriorated (partly caused by the fact that Louis XVIII was the only one of them unable to continue the Bourbon pedigree).[6] When his brother, who in the meantime had become king Louis XVI, got in trouble during the French Revolution, Louis XVIII managed to escape abroad in June 1791. Together with other *émigrés*, he stayed in the German city Coblenz, the centre of the counterrevolutionary movement. From within this town, the *émigrés* tried to get other countries to support their goals of restoring the French monarchy, but now with more power to the *émigrés*. King Louis XVI was executed in 1793 and his only son died in 1795. With only the daughter of the former king left, Louis XVIII was the first heir left to the Bourbon throne, of which the future was uncertain.[7] The Bourbon heir was still in exile however, and being far from home and often (nearly) broke, he became very dependent of the good will of other countries' rulers. The positive feelings many Europeans – both rulers and civilians – still had for monarchy did protect him during this period.[8] Although he officially was the king of France, Napoleon Bonaparte now ruled the country, with spies keeping an eye on Louis XVIII. In the beginning of Napoleon's rule, he and Louis XVIII kept a correspondence going, but with the expansion of Napoleon's empire, Louis XVIII's ties to France diluted.[9] While Louis XVIII stayed in England, Napoleon went on the failed mission to Russia and was soon defeated by the Allied troops. This meant that Louis XVIII could return to France and reclaim his right to the throne. While he took into account that the French people at first might not trust his intentions, a great number of people were happy with the end of Napoleon's empire. Louis XVIII knew he wanted a different style of monarchy than what the *Ancient Régime* had been like. However, pamphlets were used to make the people willing towards the return of the *Ancient Régime* and at the same time Louis XVIII was easily influenced by other politicians.[10] The result of this doubtful period was the Charter of 1814. In the Charter, the people of France were granted several liberties by the king. Freedom of speech and press seemed to expand, but it was clear that these new liberties had strict limitations: the king and people had to cooperate and protests that brought disorder would threaten both king and the people's rights.[11] Freedom of speech in general did improve under the new rules stated in the Charter. On the 5th of July 1814 however, minister Montesquiou submitted a press bill to the Chamber of Deputies. With his proposal, the minister wanted

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[6] P. Mansel, *Louis XVIII* (London 1981) 12-15.
[7] Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 53 and 56-76.
[8] Ibidem, 77 and 81-82.
[9] Ibidem, 128-129.
[10] Ibidem 176-180.
[11] *Journal des Débats Politiques et Littéraires*, 5 June 1814, 2.

to clarify the rules against misuse of the freedom of press that were spoken about in the eighth point of the 1814 Charter. Montesquiou did so by announcing that publications had to be checked by a special commission and that newspapers weren't allowed to come out anymore except for when they had the permission of the king to do so. The vagueness of the terminology used by Montesquiou to defend his bill meant that the opposition against it wasn't immediately silenced by the parliament. This did happen, though, when the lobbyists decided to used revolutionary tactics (if necessary) to stop the bill from becoming law. The prospect of anything that was related to revolution was enough for many opponents in parliament to switch sides and let the bill pass in October 1814.[12] From then on, newspapers and other writings with a regular publication needed the king's consent to keep doing this. Printers and book sellers needed a certificate too in order to keep carrying out their work. Also, short texts got imposed censorship.[13] The relationship between the king and the press did not start off well and wouldn't get better soon. After the Hundred Days return of Napoleon, France was left with a large sum of indemnities to pay the Allied troops that helped defeat Napoleon once again. While the popularity of the king dropped, Louis XVIII had to surrender to ultra royalist pressure when the Bourbon heir, Duc de Berry, was murdered. This, according to the ultra royalists, had only happened because the mild attitude of the king towards the liberals had given them a sense of liberty to act like this. Censorship rules were once again tightened and the liberal opposition press only felt more negative about the king. The fighting between the ultra royalists and liberalists via the press continued until king Louis XVIII's death.[14]

King Charles X (r. 1824-1830)
Comte d'Artois (1757-1836), who would only after his coronation be known as Charles X, was also a brother of Louis XVI and Louis XVIII. During the French Revolution, he had also been part of the *émigrés* and therefore followed a very similar route as his brother Louis XVIII. Comte d'Artois and his brother both led the *émigrés* in Coblenz, although Comte d'Artois was more passionate about his ideas and took up a more proactive role.[15] Also, it was him who came back to France first after the defeat of Napoleon and made the crowds enthusiastic for the arrival of their Bourbon king.[16] When Louis XVIII died after a 10-year reign, Comte d'Artois became king Charles X. The coronation ceremony itself was already worthy for the oppositional newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* to criticize. It said that omitting a large part of the ritual of 'the sleeping king' – a fictional sleep from which the king-to-be had to be woken from by priests – was a sign that the king thought himself to be on a higher rank than the priests, which made this ritual unnecessary. Although Charles X had done his best to make innovative changes to the ceremony, it still wasn't 'modern' enough for many, who had changed a lot more. The opposition press,

[12] I. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press in France 1814-1881* (Oxford 1959) 3.
[13] C. Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie 1815-1848* (Besançon 1960) 236-237.
[14] W. Fortescue, *Revolution & Counter-Revolution in France 1815-1852* (Oxford 1988) 18-19.
[15] Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 58-59.
[16] Ibidem, 176.

again, used this to criticize the king.[17] In what ways this relationship between the king and the opposition press changed, will be described in the next chapters more.

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[17] R.A. Jackson, *Vive le roi! A history of the French coronation from Charles V to Charles X* (University of North Carolina 1984) 194 and 199.

III   The Villèle ministry (1821-1827)

While king Louis XVIII wasn't too satisfied with the ultra royalists at the start of his reign, he had to resign himself to working together with them when the Comte de Villèle was chosen as minister of Finances and prime minister of the government in late 1821.[18] He was also the leader of the ultra royalists. Even though the intentions of the ultra royalists had caused unrest before, their new power gradually strengthened the appreciation the French people had for their government and king. The ultra royalists built up a strong army, that was even able to help the Bourbon dynasty in Spain to stay on the throne. What ameliorated the ultra royalist position even more, was the support they got from and gave to the catholic church and the nobility. Not only would these two groups back the government in their stance against revolutions, they also made up the largest part of the electorate.[19] The build-up of power was concluded when Louis XVIII died in 1824. His brother, the Comte d'Artois, was crowned king Charles X in May 1825. As seen before, he had had an active role in the contra revolutionary and ultra royalist movement since his time abroad during the French Revolution. When he became the king of France, two high positions in the government of the country had been taken by ultra royalists.

The Villèle ministry under king Louis XVIII (1821-1824)
While the political power of the ultra royalists had only just reached its peak, the first cracks had already begun to show. Villèle tried to run the country in a moderate way. However, a large part of his fellow 'party' members were former *émigrés*. These were people from the higher French nobility who had fled the country during the French Revolution of 1789. With Villèle as their representative in the parliament, they expected him to return some of their former privileges which they had lost when they left France. In order to meet their desires, Villèle introduced two new bills. One would have the state government pay for the lack of income the *émigrés* had suffered during their stay abroad, the other one would secure the ownership of land to the families of the nobility by making it obligatory to have the eldest son inherit the largest part of it, unless his parents would specifically point out that they didn't want this to happen. At first sight, these measures seemed perfectly suited for the *émigrés* to quickly regain their status in society. Reality proved to be different though. Villèle's plans got criticized from every corner. A large part of the *émigrés* were unsatisfied with the laws, because they got too little money or even nothing at all. Meanwhile, non-*émigrés* were left uninformed where Villèle would get the money to pay the *émigrés*. His political opponents used this unrest to frighten the people – for example by warning pensioners that their savings would be used for the costs of this new law. The second bill got to deal with so much opposition, that it wasn't made into a law. The biggest fear regarding this proposal was that it would make France return to the old feudal system and age of primogeniture. Although the ultra royalists had made a tremendously fast rise to power, their downfall had started just as quick. To keep

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[18] J. Fourcassié, *Villèle* (Paris 1954) 192, 194 and 201.
[19] T.D. Beck, *French Legislators, 1800-1834. A Study in Quantitative History* (University of California 1974) 172-173.

the people from protesting, Villèle took a cautious stance towards the very unpopular bill of censorship, which he saw as an extreme measure that could only be used temporarily.[20]

The most important threat to the ultra royalist rule was liberalism, a nineteenth century ideology that started out as a critical movement against absolutism. In the conflict with the French ultra royalists, this ideology quickly became politically loaded. This was the time when the press became more visibly involved in political matters. Liberals had for a long time been using the press to give voice to their opinions about the monarchy or the state of France in general. Their influence however had been barely naught, no more than a short pinprick according to liberal Cauchois-Lemaire.[21] In the 1820s, this changed. The more ultra royalists tried to suppress the liberties of the press, the more the liberals and journalists tried to find new ways to get around the ever changing press laws. Between the years 1819 and 1822 alone, new rules regarding journalism were introduced four times. The government started to control the press releases more and more. Censorship rules show this clearly: at first only political magazines and cartoons were subjected to this supervision, a year later all newspapers and magazines – no matter what they wrote about – had to stick to these rules. [22] It was important to notice this change of thought of Villèle, who had not been too keen on censorship himself only a few years before.

While the government's popularity diminished more and more, the liberals used the press to attack the Count of Villèle. The political opposition had an increasingly extreme philosophy to criticize the government. That was why the liberals used the newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* to give voice to their ideas. The start for this critique was the military expedition Villèle took upon to restore the Bourbon monarch's power in Spain. *Le Constitutionnel* gave off a warning to its readers that it was unacceptable that Spain was doomed to get in the same tricky situation as France was in, all the while France was supposed to deal with the negative consequences of the expensive campaign.[23]

The Villèle ministry under king Charles X (1824-1827)
One could argue about the influence newspapers like *le Constitutionnel* actually had during Villèle's time as a minister. Charles Ledré offered some interesting figures on this topic. He did so by showing the quantities issued by six newspapers that were in the hands of the government and six newspapers that were led by oppositional parties on two dates at the end of 1824 and in early 1825. These figures showed that the opposition newspapers had a print run that was almost three times as big as the governmental newspapers on December 15th 1824 and were even more than three times as big on the 12th of February the next year. About 42.000 opposition newspapers were printed against 'only' 15.000 newspapers by the government. This might not seem a lot, but the majority of the press was located in and close to Paris, which meant that their subscribers could also be found there. More than seven out of every hundred people living in Paris could read one of these newspapers. The number of readers grew

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[20] Collins, *The Government and Newspaper Press in France 1814-1881*, 36.
[21] Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie*, 26.
[22] Ibidem, 236-239.
[23] *Le Constitutionnel* no. 225, 13 August 1823, 3.

even more because people could share their newspapers in places such as cafes or reading clubs. Furthermore, the anti-government tactics of the liberal opposition seemed to work. While four out of six newspapers issued by the government lost at least ten percent of their readers, the same number of opposition papers got seven to thirty four percent new readers. Although with slightly different figures, Robert Tombs endorses this development. [24] One should notice here though that the readers of the newspapers were not spread equally among the citizenry of Paris. Because of the prices – which were considered high for many people – and the places where one could get access to these newspapers, only the upper middle classes and higher classes actually read the news.

In the meantime, the prime minister did not know how to handle the criticism anymore. Reluctantly, he agreed to cooperate with a plan made by Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld – an officer and politician – to buy every opposition newspaper. That way, they could be controlled by the government much easier. This could either be done by appointing a committee that could edit the newspaper or by buying the majority of shares. The major opposition papers were too strong to bribe, that was why Rochefoucauld's main focus lay on small newspapers and strengthening the ones that had already been in favour of the government's ideas. The censorship committee, however, was so strict in some cases that a few of the smaller newspapers disappeared. The bigger opposition newspapers did everything in their power to resist the ultra royalists from taking power over their editorials. The failed attempt to invade *Quotidienne*[25] not only increased the opposition's will to fight back, but the publications on this seizure of power by the ultra royalists made the readers of *Quotidienne* even more discontent with the current mode of governance.

Villèle had done everything in his power to reduce the influence of the opposition, but to no avail. He caught at a straw by again introducing a censorship law, with permission of king Louis XVIII. What Villèle hadn't foreseen was that Louis XVIII died soon after. King Charles X acceded to the throne and understood that he had to do something to improve his reputation. He immediately abolished the law that had been entered only a few weeks earlier. Amazingly enough, Villèle still didn't stop there. He now wanted to deal with the opposition by damaging them financially. The prime minister raised costs of supplies and printing licenses were withdrawn. Consequences were mostly felt on a personal level – i.e. people lost their jobs – but the new law had outraged the opposition.[26]
The measures taken by the Count of Villèle had been so unpopular that he no longer only had the liberal opposition press as his enemy. Some ultra royalists had also turned their back against Villèle.

Both in the newspapers and in his political function, Villèle's position had become untenable. King Charles X was the first to take action. He dismissed the Chamber of Deputies on the fourth of November 1827, which meant that the censorship was nullified and new elections had to be held. The combination of these effects caused a fierce anti-Villèle campaign by the opposition. *Le Constitutionnel* called upon

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[24] Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie* 242. Compare: Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, 345.
[25] Collins, *The Government and Newspaper Press in France 1814-1881*, 44-46.
[26] Ibidem, 47-51.

its readers to make change possible by using their vote: "[...] *nous allons prouver par nos votes. On va voir si nous saurons ramener le pouvoir dans des voies salutaires, ou se laisser s'égarer dans des voies de perdition.*"[27] After the elections, the new Chamber of Deputies was filled with politicians – even ultra royalists – who didn't want to work together with the prime minister. Villèle, though, was not allowed to resign by Charles X. The people in Paris were furious and riots broke out, which were quickly beaten down by the royal troops. Because the opposition had tried to keep people from starting a revolt or revolution – "*Les révolutions! voilà* [sic] *ce que tout le monde veut éviter aujour-d'hui!*"[28] – and didn't know how they felt about the riots taking place, the government press took its chance to condemn the events in Paris. Villèle made a last, desperate attempt to find people to form a Cabinet with, even among left-wing politicians. Finally he saw that there was nothing left for him to save and he offered his resignation to the king, who did accept it this time.[29]

Selbin's theory applied
What happened during the first three years of Comte de Villèle's term, was that the opposition press not only created a strong profile of itself, but almost simultaneously received political support from the growing liberal party. The time of learning what the press' limitations were, were over and the attack on the government could begin. The cooperation between the liberals and the opposition press had proven to work well and could now be actively continued against Villèle. Although he attempted to restrict the opposition's liberties several times, it still managed to spread the word. The counteraction by the prime minister also strengthened the morals of the opposition politicians and journalists. This passion is one of the most important elements of actors in a revolution Eric Selbin appoints in his theory. This process of Villèle 'attacking' the opposition newspapers and those newspapers ending up stronger than before Villèle's actions continued when Charles X became king. The difference with the period of king Louis XVIII's reign was that the number of readers had grown much, and therefore the influence of the opposition press on society had too. Although this sphere of influence grew, it was still the opposition that kept control over the progress they made in their battle against the government.

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[27] *Le Constitutionnel* nr. 311, 7 November 1827, 1.
[28] *Le Constitutionnel* nr. 311, 7 November 1827, 1.
[29] D.L. Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution in France. The role of the political press in the overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration 1827-1830* (Belgium 1973) 36-39 and 41-42.

IV   The outbreak of revolution

After Villèle had stepped down as prime minister, left-wing politician Jean-Baptiste de Martignac took his place. The actual center of the political attention now turned to king Charles X. He had not made the best decisions concerning his fellow authorities, but was correct in regarding Martignac's time in office only as temporarily. He therefore, partly persuaded by politicians like the soon-to-be prime minister, started negotiations to form a new and stable ministry while Martignac was still in function. By giving Jules de Polignac, prince of Polignac, the position of prime minister in the new Cabinet in late 1829, Charles X started a movement that went in the opposite direction than that of the events that had brought the Count of Villèle down. Not only was there an ultra royalist named prime minister, but Polignac also was a former *émigré* and so had profited a lot during Villèle's ministry at the expense of Frenchmen from lower classes.[30] The opposition was not at all happy with the direction the new government was going and had lost its faith in the king. "[…] *toutes les maisons de la France doivent être tendues en noir*"[31] is only one of the examples of this anger that was shown in the newspapers. The protection of the society's interests was also one of the reasons that a new group – the Bonapartists – joined the opposition. The Bonapartists gave former emperor Napoleon the status worthy of a hero, because he had been the emperor that cared for his people in between the Bourbon kings.[32]

The number of people opposing king Charles X and Polignac had grown so much that it was no longer possible for them to rule the country the way they wanted to. The tactics newspapers had used to get rid of Villèle – which were shown above and illustrated Eric Selbin's profile of revolutionary leader – were put in use again in an attempt to do the same with Polignac. He should have been the person to bring the ministers and the rest of the parliament closer together. To see if this had indeed worked, the king let the Chamber of Deputies cast its votes on this topic during the opening of parliament in March 1830. His wishes did not come true: the opposition groups – which made up for the largest part in the Chamber – made it clear that they wanted the political system renewed or at least more in tune with their ideas.[33] These voters became known as "the 221", the members of opposition who had dared to stand up to the king personally.[34] Also, the desired effect of the king's military expeditions to show the power of France turned out to have had little to no effect on the French society.

The only possibility left for the king to fully grasp his power again was by committing a *coup d'état*. During the time Charles X had to wait for his coup, the conflict between the opposition and government, fought out by the press, intensified. The liberals had understood the king's words during the opening of parliament as a direct threat to anyone who disagreed with him.[35] A period of publishing many articles and pamphlets started. The ministers on the other hand, had decided to fight the opposition press in courts. Anything that could be interpreted as disobeying the press laws or Charter was a reason to be

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[30] Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie 1815-1848*, 88. Also: Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, 348-349.

[31] Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie 1815-1848*, 90.

[32] D.H. Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830* (Princeton 1972) 49-52.

[33] P.H. Beik, *Louis Philippe and the July Monarchy* (United States 1965) 24.

[34] Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution in France. The role of the political press in the overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration 1827-1830*, 188.

[35] Ibidem, 162.

prosecuted. The fact that the opposition press was fought in two different ways, showed that its dual influence in society was acknowledged by the government.

In April and May of 1830, the tensions all over the country had almost reached their boiling points. People went on the streets in riots, tired of their persistent misery. The opposition press came together under false pretenses and planned on promoting the reelection of the 221 in the upcoming elections. Polignac confirmed to the king that he respected the law and people's liberties, while he sharpened the censorship and had journalists arrested. Because every case had to go to court, this 'persecution' attracted much attention.[36] Even though important people from the opposition press had been condemned or fined, the secretive meetings had their desired effect: in the June-July elections 202 of the 221 were reelected, which caused the opposition to have almost twice as many seats in the Chamber than the government had.

Then, the end of July arrived and the *coup d'état* still hadn't been carried out. Both the opposition and the government itself knew it would not take much longer. On July 25, the king and Polignac issued some ordinances. The press had, according to these documents, always had too much influence in politics while giving society a wrong impression of it that could have disturbing effects in daily life. To finish with the opposition once and for all, the press liberties were suspended. Also, the Chamber was to be dissolved. In order for them not be reelected, the electoral system was changed in such a way that only the current government could profit from it. While the journalists were certainly outraged by these ordinances, for once they weren't sure how to react. Newspapers like *National* were ready to take action, while *Le Constitutionnel* for example did not call for action in these direct words.[37] Some people went to protest on the streets of Paris, but it could not be seen as more than a protest yet.

July 27 was the first of what would be called *les trois glorieuses* – the three glorious days. Auguste de Marmont, the king's leading military officer in Paris, had not received clear orders of what to do against the growing number of people gathering in the streets close to the *Palais-Royal*. Only after Marmont found out that his men had fired on the protesters, who immediately didn't seem to be that innocent anymore, he started giving out orders for his troops to 'lock down' the city. During the afternoon and evening, the number of people protesting against the government and king only increased further, just like their use of violence. Marmont could only let his troops retreat at the beginning of the night. Although the king had been informed about the situation, he didn't deem it necessary to qualify this as more than a simple disturbance which would probably be gone overnight. The next morning though, on July 28, Marmont sent an urgent message to Charles X in which the term revolution was used.[38] The cooperation between the Parisians and the opposition press that kept fueling the revolutionary fire had created a situation that was hard to be controlled by the understaffed troops.[39]

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[36] Ibidem, 191-194.
[37] Ledré, *La Presse à l'Assaut de la Monarchie 1815-1848*, 105 and 107-108.
[38] Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830*, 103-110.
[39] P. Pilbeam, 'Upheaval and continuity, 1814-1880' in: M. Crook (ed.), *Revolutionary France 1788-1880* (Oxford 2002) 41.

The barricades and violence kept growing and Marmont decided to take matters in his own hands and send organized regiments to go through the streets and wipe them clean from protesters. It was prohibited for the soldiers to use violence against the protesters unless they were shot at, at least fifty times. The troops also were ordered to get or keep squares and important buildings in the hands of the government. It was a difficult task because the soldiers were outnumbered by the protesters and had to deal with ammunition shortages and related problems. Barricades blocked the roads and the troops had to be alert constantly, because every building could be a place from which stones were thrown or shots were fired. The 28th of July ended with a big clash between the soldiers and protesters that ended in favour of the revolutionaries, even though a cannon had been used. A few hundred people had died on both sides. Marmont made a proclamation in which he told the people he had also suffered the day before and that if they wanted to prevent a recurrence of that, they just had to go back home. This was exactly what not happened. The protesters attacked the *Tuileries* gardens and made their way to the Louvre palace. The troops that had to defend the palace failed their jobs. When these soldiers did not switch sides to the revolutionary forces, they simply surrendered to them or fled the scene.[40] The Louvre fell in the hands of the protesting Parisians and the Bourbon dynasty came to an end.

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[40] Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution in France. The role of the political press in the overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration 1827-1830*, 238-239.

Conclusion

The dual role of the opposition press during the period 1814-1830 isn't too clear at first sight. However, after some research, the elements from Eric Selbin's leaders and society become more visible. The process of growth that the opposition press went though in these years made it possible that they themselves became aware of their influence on society. Only after this knowledge had sunk in with the liberal journalists and politicians, they could start to work on enlarging this sphere of influence and in that way, try to achieve their goals.

From 1814 until the start of Comte de Villèle's ministry in 1821, the opposition press was barely visible in France. While the country reestablished itself after the defeat of emperor Napoleon Bonaparte – and all the trouble and costs it brought – The Bourbon king Louis XVIII started his reign. The press had to wait and see what he would make of it and could only then make their conclusions about it. The liberal party was still of little significance and was not in a position to offer support to the opposition press yet. Right before and during Comte de Villèle's time as prime minister, this image of the opposition changed drastically. Liberal politicians had quickly grown in numbers and could now support the opposition press openly. Because these two groups had worked together on a smaller scale for some time already, they had adapted the same ideas about a better France. Before king Louis XVIII's death in 1824, the 'attacks' by the opposition press on the government had been quite moderate, just as the counteractions by Comte de Villèle. When Charles X became king, both parties became more harsh in their treatment of the other. When Villèle had been replaced by Prince de Polignac in 1827, the ultra royalist front had become much stronger. Led by king Charles X and Polignac, everything was put into action to narrow down the liberties of the opposition as soon as possible. This treatment caused the opposition press to actively start protests in Paris. The July Revolution had begun.

Eric Selbin described a clear division between revolutionary leaders and society, with quite different roles. As we have seen, the opposition press before and during the July Revolution of 1830 alternated between these roles. The main question I have tried to answer here, was whether this double role of the opposition press during the period 1814-1830, and in particular during the July Revolution of 1830, fitted into Eric Selbin's theoretical model on social revolutions? I think the answer to this question is yes, although one has to be open to use Selbin's theory in a free manner. When the liberal opposition wasn't so big yet, it had no possibilities to start a revolution. What we could see here, was that the will to change things was present already. With the growth of the opposition, the journalists were able to – unofficially – declare themselves leaders of the July Revolution. With the awareness of their possibilities came the change of roles from 'society' to 'leader'. The opposition press, therefore, does fit into Eric Selbin's theory, if one is willing to see that (groups of) individuals can switch between the groups Selbin defined. With his preference to the role of individuals, I am sure that this wouldn't be a problem.

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