



HAL
open science

The impossible modernization of legitimate monarchy after 1830: the journalists Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie and Eugène de Genoude

Estelle Berthereau

► **To cite this version:**

Estelle Berthereau. The impossible modernization of legitimate monarchy after 1830: the journalists Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie and Eugène de Genoude. *History of European Ideas*, 2021, pp.1-11. 10.1080/01916599.2021.1913027 . hal-03206546

HAL Id: hal-03206546

<https://hal.sorbonne-universite.fr/hal-03206546v1>

Submitted on 23 Apr 2021

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Catholics and dissident French royalists from the beginning of the nineteenth century around the journalists F. de La Mennais and P.-S. Laurentie wanted to reconstitute a new Catholic monarchy against the compromise made by Louis XVIII. It was necessary to renew the links with the *ancien régime* against the revolutionary legacy, and to compensate for the monarchy's more distant flaws, caused according to them by the distancing of the Church's power.

After the July Revolution in 1830, these royalists reconfigured a modern monarchy behind 'Henry V' to make a Third Restoration possible. But there were many disagreements among the Legitimists: between the Parisian "Henriquists" and the absolutist *émigrés* who favoured Charles X, war raged after 1830, not to mention the opposition they waged against the Orleanists. These neo-legitimists then decided to open up more to modernity and demanded freedoms of association, religion and the press, inspired by the followers of La Mennais. They also sought unity with Catholics and wanted to participate in elections. But this political line was opposed to that of Genoude and the absolutists. Later, Montalembert separated Catholics and royalists and shattered any hope of unity and the creation of a large party under the July Monarchy.

The Impossible Modernization of Legitimate Monarchy after 1830: The Journalists Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie and Eugène de Genoude

Estelle Berthereau
Centre d'histoire du XIXe siècle Sorbonne

Catholics and royalists were divided right from the early years of the Bourbon Restoration in France, after the Napoleonic wars. The ultra-royalists defended the ideal of the phantasmagorical Catholic monarchy and Church of the Middle Ages, behind the public figure of Félicité de La Mennais and more modestly next to the young journalist Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, while royalists supported the pragmatic and modern monarchy behind Louis XVIII. Félicité de La Mennais (1782-1854), who signed 'Lamennais' after 1834, was inventor of social and liberal Catholicism, great polemicist, journalist, theoretician and philosopher. Famous under the Restoration for these volumes of the *Essai sur l'indifférence*, and favourable to a true Catholic restoration, he decided, seeing the successive kings unable to carry it out, to initiate a 'Catholicization' of liberalism after 1830 behind the Pope. Much less famous, Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie (1793-1876) came from the Gers (South-West of France). Trained by the Church and supported by the Congregation, an influential Catholic association, he began a dual career in Paris in 1817 as a teacher and journalist, and ended up as national editor-in-chief of *La Quotidienne*.

Around these two people are other members of the Congregation, association coupled with the Knights of Faith (Chevaliers de la Foi) with a desire to promote a traditional Catholic monarchy. These ultras¹ certainly wanted to reconnect with the former monarchy of the *ancien régime*, but above all they denied the lessons of the French Revolution and compensated for the more distant flaws of the monarchy, which were caused, according to

¹ According to Guillaume Bertier de Sauvigny in *Le comte Ferdinand de Bertier et l'énigme de la Congrégation* (Paris: Les Presses Continentales, 1948), 337, if the same people could belong to both organizations, the Knights of Faith had exclusively the role of a secret society wishing to place their recruits in the highest positions in the State, with relative success.

them, by the distance between the Catholic Church's power and royal power in the early modern period.² For this reason, they fiercely attacked Louis XVIII's favourite Minister, Decazes, in 1817, who betrayed their conception of the union between the throne and the Catholic Church.

From a modest background, Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie began his career, like his eternal and clever rival Antoine-Eugène Genoud³ in the royalist and Catholic newspapers and magazines of the Bourbon Restoration. Arrived from the Dauphiné, Antoine-Eugène de Genoude (1792-1849) managed to enter the salons of the suburb of Saint-Germain where he was introduced to Mathieu de Montmorency, the head of the Congregation, by Polignac. 'Doubly ennobled' as Louis XVIII liked to say, Eugène de Genoude abandoned a military career that did not satisfy him⁴ to become journalist. At the head of the Knights of Faith, Montmorency introduced him to Chateaubriand who engaged him in the administration of *Le Conservateur*. He also participated in the newspaper *Le Défenseur* with La Mennais in 1820. Editor-in-chief of *L'Étoile* thanks to the ministry Villèle, the polemicist was also the author of a translation of *Les Évangiles*. As ultra-ministerial, and fervent defender of Villèle, he directed *La Gazette de France*. He was ordained a priest in 1834 but continued his career as a publicist. He was still the author of many books on the history of Catholicism.

Laurentie and Genoude both met at *Le Spectateur* a magazine which was published in 1819. This magazine directed, especially for the second version, by Laurentie, the *Religious and Political Spectator* was probably financed by the Earl of Artois, like *Le Conservateur*. The first issue was published in August 1818 and the newspaper appeared irregularly. Fayet, the journalist who supported a State Church, and the young Laurentie, Lourdoueix, Genoude and Rattier were part of the editorial team, with the already famous name of La Mennais, shareholder of the magazine, as a guarantee. They did preparatory work on formulating their ideas before they joined, with the rest of the young royalist guard, the famous journal *Le Conservateur*, which was more the place for celebrities like Chateaubriand. This famous semi-periodic welcomed all the great Catholic and royalist names around La Mennais, Villèle who became chief of government, Chateaubriand, Baron de Vitrolles and occasionally Laurentie and Genoude.

Both disciples of La Mennais, these young journalists Laurentie and Genoude were his great admirers and were inspired by him in their books and articles in *Le Défenseur* among others. No ministry of either Decazes or Richelieu had satisfied them. However, in 1821, Genoude diverged from Laurentie and supported Villèle's ultra-pragmatic ministry in his newspaper *L'Étoile*. On the other hand, Laurentie dissented against this same ministry with the newspaper *La Quotidienne*, directed by Joseph Michaud, its historical journalist, at the height of counter-opposition⁵ in 1824.⁶ He and Genoude were both committed to the uncompromising minister Polignac in 1829. Genoude who was first, since his newspaper, *La Gazette de France*, was particularly privileged,⁷ found himself as well as Laurentie unable to weigh in with the government, which at that time was engaged with the July Ordinances from an absolutist perspective.

² Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *De la légitimité et de l'usurpation* (Paris: Bricon, 1830), 18.

³ See Pierre Triomphe's note in Jean-Clément Martin, *Dictionnaire de la contre-révolution* (Paris: Perrin, 2011), 276-7.

⁴ He was a former aide-de-camp of the emigrant Polignac, future minister ultra of Charles X.

⁵ Some ultras struggled for a more traditional monarchy against Villèle, who was also an ultra. This represented the rift between the more traditional monarchy behind the Congregation and La Mennais and the more royalist ultras who were with Villèle.

⁶ Fonds Malouet-Laurentie, 372AP 21 file 6.

⁷ The newspaper was created by the merger between *L'Étoile* and the *Journal de Paris* in 1823, according to the *Grand Larousse Universel* of the nineteenth century, article 'Genoude', vol. 8, 1872, p. 1166.

Upset by the July Revolution in 1830, these journalists reconfigured a modern monarchy under the Duke of Bordeaux, Henri V, to make a Third Bourbon Restoration possible. René Rémond,⁸ in his definition of right-wing families,⁹ which was further substantiated, presented the different conceptions of the monarchy that then clashed between the Legitimists and the Orleanists with Louis-Philippe at the head of the cadet Bourbon branch. But even within the Legitimists, there were many oppositions: between Parisian 'henriquinquistes', Legitimists in favour of Henri V, and absolutist 'émigrés' who, from abroad, were supporters of Charles X, the war raged after 1830, not to mention the opposition they led against Louis-Philippe. It is now necessary to specify the conceptual changes within this idealized monarchy that these former ultra-dissidents, now neo-legitimists, were able to make after 1830. The opening to the freedoms of association, religion, of the press and more generally to modernity was inspired by La Mennais, while these royalists sought unity with Catholics and wanted to participate in the elections despite the fact that Louis-Philippe was in power.

However, why did these attempts to modernize the legitimate monarchy fail to predominate within the French legitimist movement?

The July Revolution in 1830 put these royalists in competition with each other. They were divided between moderate legitimism and 'Genoudisme', which first withdrew and then became fully part of modernity. These legitimist sensibilities were put to the test in 1835 against absolutist 'émigrés', then especially in 1848 with the Revolution and the establishment of the Second Republic and in 1851 with the Coup d'État of Napoleon III.

Defend the neo-Legitimists after the July Revolution

The July Revolution in 1830, with the fall of Charles X, placed Laurentie against history: journalist by profession, he found himself supporting the legitimate king while the printers and other journalists of Paris were making their revolution¹⁰ against him. He watched helplessly as the king, the Minister Polignac and their immediate entourage failed to act.¹¹

He saw in it the urgency of a necessary modern redefinition of the legitimate monarchy. He then accepted the question of the oath to Louis-Philippe and, with the famous lawyer Berryer-son, developed a legalistic or parliamentary Legitimism that invited the Legitimists to form themselves into movements in the Chamber of Deputies (I quote Laurentie addressing Berryer): 'I remind you of 1830 and 1831; it is always the same position. Alone, we fought against proud fools, and we made way for a Right wing in a revolutionary chamber'.¹² It meant inciting royalists to run for election and even swear an oath of allegiance to a fought regime, to represent the legitimate monarchy. However, there was no question of adhering to Orleanism. Son of royalist lawyer Pierre Nicolas Berryer, himself involved in this profession and often referred to as 'Berryer-son', Pierre Antoine Berryer was the great defender of the royalist cause both in the courts and in the parliamentary gallery: he allied himself with Laurentie, his pen, to defend a legalistic, and therefore parliamentary legitimism. He also became the representative of social legitimism, defending workers and their demands for better working conditions. They both opposed the legitimists 'of action' who supported the Duchess of Berry by the use of force. They were

⁸ René Rémond, *Les Droites en France* (Paris: Aubier, 1982).

⁹ See Jean-François Sirinelli's work.

¹⁰ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Souvenirs inédits publiés par son petit-fils* (Paris: Bloud et Barral, 1892), 104.

¹¹ Louis Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, vol. III (Paris: Pagnerre, 1843), 240.

¹² Berryer Fonds 223 AP 5: Laurentie's letter dated July 30, 1852, addressed to Berryer-son.

henriquinists (in favour of Henri) but legally and had to combine with the court in exile of Charles X, the absolutist legitimists who financed their actions and their newspapers.

Laurentie's experience in two new newspapers of his creation, *Le Courrier de l'Europe* and *Le Rénovateur*, consisted in advocating, together with the Duke of Fitz-James, a Parisian legitimist sitting in the Chamber of Peers, a moderate neo-legitimism. Édouard, Duke of Fitz-James (1776-1838) was an emigrant, an officer of Condé's army during the Revolution and a Knight of Faith. He became aide-de-camp and first gentleman of the Count of Artois, then marshal of camp in 1823 and led the ultras peer group in the Chamber. After 1830, he became one of the leaders of Laurentie's parliamentary legitimism. As supporter of the Duke of Bordeaux, he opposed the absolutist policy of the exiled court of Charles X. While they were initiating with Berryer-son the authorization of the oath to Louis-Philippe to participate in the elections, Laurentie and Fitz-James were finally overtaken from the left by Genoude.

Yet the inspiration Laurentie had drawn from his master La Mennais since 1820 should have helped to serve the cause of the journalist who wanted unity between the Catholics and the legitimists. In *Le Rénovateur*, in March 1832, Laurentie called for an alliance with the Catholic Mennaisians: the neo-legitimists and Catholics of the future had to be able to join forces to defend the common cause of a re-catholicization of society served by the return to the throne of the legitimate branch of the Bourbons. La Mennais refused to work for two different newspapers, *Le Rénovateur* and *L'Avenir*, but recognized Laurentie's merits in his approach 'to introduce ideas of freedom into the minds of a few royalists'.¹³ But because of the first excommunication of the theses of *L'Avenir* in 1832, and even if *Le Rénovateur* became the replacement newspaper for the former subscribers of *L'Avenir*, Laurentie took, by necessity, his distance from his master. However, Laurentie supported him in spite of everything,¹⁴ with other elders of the Congregation, until *Paroles d'un croyant* appeared in 1834.¹⁵

In 1832, the journalist and writer Balzac joined *Le Rénovateur*, solicited by Laurentie with the help of the Duke of Fitz-James and Berryer-son to finally compensate for the loss of another celebrity, La Mennais. Nevertheless, Balzac went beyond the editorial advice given by Laurentie and in his article 'Du gouvernement moderne',¹⁶ whose theories were developed in the *Médecin de campagne*,¹⁷ he advocated an absolute representative government led by an aristocracy composed not of "well-born" noblemen but of cultivated commoners drawn from the nebula of journalists in which he worked. Laurentie censured him and tempered his remarks by demanding a new interpretation of the moderate legitimist government from Louis de Bonald.¹⁸

Another point of disagreement with other legitimists was the question of European intervention by foreign troops to restore Charles X or his successor in office. Laurentie was pushed to his limits by the absolutist shareholders who financed his newspaper: he was forced to stop relaying the ideas of the Duke of Fitz-James who wanted to rebuild a Third French and

¹³ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Le Rénovateur* (Paris, 1832), first delivery, vol. 1, p. x and 372 AP 21, letter from Lamennais dated 15 April 1832, addressed to Laurentie.

¹⁴ 372 AP 21, file 2: letter from Laurentie dated 9 December 1833.

¹⁵ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *De la révolution en Europe* (Paris: Dentu, Bricon, 1834).

¹⁶ 372 AP 7, file 3, letters of 1831-1832: letter from Balzac to Laurentie dated 7 September 1832 and in the *Correspondance* de Balzac, Roger Pierrot and Hervé Yon (Pléiade, Paris: Gallimard, 2006), vol. 1 (1809-1835), 633, letter 32-181.

¹⁷ Marion Mas, 'Le grand homme selon Le médecin de campagne : une figure "antimoderne" ?', in Boris Lyon-Caen and Marie-Eve Thérenty (eds.), *Balzac et le politique* (Paris: Piro, 2007), 85. See Chapter III entitled 'The Napoleon of the People' in *Le Médecin de campagne*. Doctor Benassis criticized the representative regime and parliamentarism while developing his programme on a social order based on inequalities: only merit could bring valuable men to the higher spheres. See Bernard Guyon, *Un inédit de Balzac: le catéchisme social* (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1933), 32.

¹⁸ Article by Bonald in *Le Rénovateur*, vol. 2, p.145-159.

Parisian Restoration around Henri V and the neo-legitimists, against a forced return of the ‘new émigrés’. On this point, the Duke of Fitz-James regretted Laurentie’s overly ‘European’ position,¹⁹ which certainly was due to economic pressures.

Laurentie's editorial line was in fact tightening up with the absolutist legitimist ‘émigrés’, led by the Duke of Blacas. At first, it was easier for them to identify with the line of another royalist Alfred Nettement. Historian of the Restoration and French literature, Alfred Nettement (1805-1869) belonged to the generation that succeeded Laurentie’s one. Son of a diplomat who worked with the Prince of Polignac, he became a journalist at *L'Universel*. He had taken over the editorial line of *La Quotidienne* in 1830, while Laurentie was ousted, even though he still kept a link with the newspaper he had eventually directed at the end of the Bourbon Restoration.²⁰ Alfred Nettement certainly strongly supported the Duchess of Berry's uprising.²¹ The latter came to France to restore her son Henri d’Artois, the Duke of Bordeaux, then count of Chambord to the throne by force, what Laurentie and Berryer refused to do. The Duchess of Berry counted on the support of the regions of Vendée and Bretagne, which she thought were still legitimists. However, the support was insufficient and she was arrested, imprisoned and threatened with a lawsuit. Besides, Alfred Nettement also advised his troops to refuse the oath, committing them to non-participation in the elections and ‘emigration from the inside’.²² Going against this program while not adhering to Orleanism, Laurentie felt the need to write in 1832 his *Histoire des ducs d’Orléans*,²³ a story that also legitimized his action as a parliamentary legitimist alongside the royalist lawyer Berryer-son. This did not appear to be a sufficient pledge.

Disqualified then in his modernism and especially financed by absolutist legitimists, Laurentie was constantly called to order during the years 1833 and 1834, until a breaking point when *Le Rénovateur*, too open to different royalist sensibilities, was reduced to his ‘personal business’²⁴ at the economic level.

This moderate neo-Legitimism was, moreover, competed by ‘Genoudisme’.

“Genoudisme” against moderate neo-legitimism

On the other hand, Genoude had managed to free himself from the financial protection of absolutists or other legitimists and was fulfilling Laurentie's dream: to become the owner of his own newspaper. And not just any newspaper, the oldest then still in operation, *La Gazette de France*, created in 1631 by Théophraste Renaudot. Successful and popular, Genoude gained a relative independence of mind and writing, since he had made his fortune in 1823 with the privilege of being able to send his newspaper by post five hours before all the others and to have a printer’s certificate. Genoude, also a disciple of La Mennais, imitated him by translating the *Bible*, writing a *Life of Jesus Christ*, and becoming a priest in 1834.²⁵

In 1830, Genoude relaunched hostilities between modernizers of the legitimate monarchy. *La Gazette de France* attacked Laurentie over the opening deemed too pronounced in favour of the July monarchy, which further confronted the two journalists. The call for unity seemed difficult to undertake and positions were hardening: *La Gazette* refused the

¹⁹ 372 AP 9: letter from Fitz-James dated 8 May 1835 to Laurentie.

²⁰ 372 AP 7, file 2: letter dated 19 November 1830 from La Villerouët to an unidentified correspondent.

²¹ See the work of Laurent Morival, *La dernière guerre de Vendée: La duchesse de Berry et les légitimistes 1830-1840* (La Crèche: Geste éditions, 2020).

²² Berryer 223 AP 26 fonds: manuscript of Berryer-son’s ‘mémoires’, 49.

²³ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Histoire des ducs d’Orléans* (Paris, Béthune, Bricon, 1832).

²⁴ 372 AP 9: letter from Pradel dated 2 October 1835 to Laurentie.

²⁵ *Grand Larousse universel* of the 19th century, notice ‘Genoude’, 1166.

alliance proposed by *Le Rénovateur*²⁶ and judged that *Le Rénovateur*'s ideas contained principles that contradicted the spirit of 'the old French constitution'.

After having been in the background on the oath issue while Laurentie was fiercely defending it, Genoude changed his mind. His newspaper *La Gazette de France* therefore rallied on this point to Laurentie and published a *Declaration of Electors* on 1 June 1831, which removed all sacred and religious character from the oath in order to justify this fragile balance for the legitimists: taking the oath to Louis-Philippe while not joining the July monarchy. This oath was made possible because it was addressed to a king who came to power officially in the name of popular sovereignty and not of divine right. Genoude's disciple, Honoré de Lourdoueix, published, in his wake, an *Appel à la France* against the division of opinions.²⁷ Genoude then became particularly active during the elections, when he did not hesitate to embody a 'popular royalism' that prevailed over the legitimism of Laurentie and Balzac, whose candidacies ended in bitter failures. Laurentie's correspondence testified to the bitterness of these legitimists in the face of the modern troublemaker Genoude, who alone served his own cause, against that of his movement but with the same or even greater efficiency as he had against Louis-Philippe.

This 'popular royalism' constituted the basis of the 'republican national royalism' based on universal suffrage that Genoude elaborated under the horrified eyes of Laurentie, who meanwhile also launched, with Berryer-son, into the alliances of Carlo-republican circumstance. Indeed, Berryer, supported by Laurentie, had not hesitated to contact the Republican candidates in the elections after 1830 in order to defeat the Orléans' candidacies. Agreements had been made even if they were ideological enemies. Fearing that legitimists like Laurentie and Berryer would open themselves to the moderates, Genoude, launched into a race for modernity, asked Odilon Barrot's left wing for a confrontation. Laurentie cried out to the madness of his rival Genoude who preferred to unite with the dynastic left rather than with the legalistic legitimist current: 'The country wants order, and if one attacks the company order with the left or without it, one must perish in this way...'²⁸ While he had opened up to conservative Orleanists, Laurentie redefined his position which proved hostile to the alliance that Genoude undertook with the dynastic left: 'Our system is to fight on the right wing with the principles of the right wing, to sympathize with the ideas and interests of order, instead of embracing anarchic principles and recruiting the men of disorder of the left wing'²⁹. The local legitimist committees were divided on the attitude to adopt in this dispute over legitimism.

But all the legitimist youth finally rallied around Genoude.³⁰ The journalist Lourdoueix, close to Genoude, also embodied this particular royalist position that Laurentie fought as ardently as the Orleanists in power. Jacques-Honoré Lelarge, Baron de Lourdoueix (1787-1860) was a well-known publicist, editor-in-chief of the *Gazette de France*, trained at the Collège de Pontlevoy. Royalist, he nevertheless wanted to reconcile the monarchy with modernity. Head of the Department of Fine Arts at the Ministry of the Interior in 1821, then Royal Censor in 1827, he was also an associate of *Le Spectateur* and the *Mercure de France*. He ended up supporting Louis-Philippe. Later, he was an associate and then director of the *Gazette de France* from 1849 to 1860, and director of the *Défenseur du peuple*, a political, agricultural and industrial newspaper from 1850 to 1852. Laurentie participated in incessant struggles in the columns of his newspapers or magazines and put all his intelligence into

²⁶ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Le Rénovateur*, first volume (Paris, 1832), 194.

²⁷ Jacques-Honoré de Lourdoueix, *Appel à la France contre la division des opinions* (Paris: Bureaux de la *Gazette de France*, 1831).

²⁸ Laurentie's article in the *Courrier de l'Europe* of 4 January 1833.

²⁹ *Idem*.

³⁰ *Grand Larousse universel*, article 'Genoude'.

ostracising Genoude and Lourdoueix within the legitimist movement. Even the very diplomatic Berryer-son did not succeed in attenuating this political animosity, as he was himself unconvinced by the political biases of Genoude whose tendency was called ‘Genoudisme’ by his opponents. They denounced a personal drift in the defence of their cause.³¹ They thus talked about a ‘Lamennais monarchique’³², as heretical in politics as his former master, advocating the revolutionary pre-square as natural borders with notably the Rhine in the East. Their confrontation was also about social issues. Laurentie instigated a social legitimization that Berryer-son vigorously disseminated at the Chamber,³³ especially as Genoude and Lourdoueix advocated the creation of pension funds. Admiring Catholic economists like Villeneuve-Bargemont, Laurentie supported the diffusion of the latter’s theories in his newspaper. Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont (1784-1850) was a supporter of the action, in favour of the uprising of the Duchess of Berry. He was considered one of the founders of social Catholicism, with the publication, in 1834, of his *Christian Political Economy*. He was then elected deputy for Lille in 1840 and became the rapporteur of the law limiting child labour in factories.

Nevertheless, the lack of popularity of the movement embodied in the press by Laurentie, who issued only a few hundred copies of his *Rénovateur*, contributed, together with the attack on Louis-Philippe and the laws of September 1835,³⁴ to the end of the journalist's attempt to modernize royalism. After the failed attack on Louis-Philippe and laws restricting the freedom of the press, Laurentie needed more than ever the financial support of the absolutist legitimists of Charles X’s Court in exile. He became almost totally dependent on their decisions. Consequently, legalistic legitimism prevailed but not neo-legitimism in its ideological openness to social and liberal Catholics or royalists.

The impossible union between Laurentie and Genoude, at the origin of the failed modernization of legitimate monarchy after 1835?

In 1835, Laurentie returned to *La Quotidienne*, where he took over the management and worked for the unsuccessful union between the legitimist movement and the Catholic party, after the rupture with Lamennais. For Laurentie, the agreement between the legitimists and the Catholics appeared feasible only around the unifying theme of freedom of education. The former disciple of La Mennais, Montalembert,³⁵ who was liberal Catholic wanted this issue not to remain the monopoly of the legitimists. In 1831, Charles de Montalembert was appointed Peer of France, an admirable parliamentary, royalist and Catholic orator. With his friend Lacordaire, a Dominican, and the eminent Lamennais priest, they founded the newspaper *L’Avenir* in which they demanded freedom of conscience, freedom of education, freedom of the press and freedom of association. After the encyclical ‘*Mirari vos*’ promulgated by Pope Gregory XVI condemned these new ideas and doctrines, Montalembert, leader of the Catholics, participated in an important way in the recognition of the freedom of secondary education which was voted on March 15, 1850. It was the Falloux law which recognised two kinds of schools: public schools, founded or maintained by communes,

³¹ 372 AP 9: letter from Lostanges dated 17 June 1834 to Laurentie.

³² 372 AP 12: letter from Guérard dated 1843, addressed to Laurentie.

³³ Berryer Fonds 223 AP 21: file ‘Socialism, social issues’.

³⁴ 372 AP 9: letter from Germain Laurentie to his brother following the publication of the laws of September 1835.

³⁵ See the work of Sylvain Milbach, *Les Chaires ennemies l’Église: l’État et la liberté d’enseignement secondaire dans la France des notables (1830-1850)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2015).

departments or the State; free schools, founded or maintained by individuals or associations. He died on 13 May 1870.

Montalembert allowed the alliance of Catholics with Laurentie, while Genoude once again expressed his popular royalism by choosing electoral reform as the main political battle. Once again going his own way, Genoude nevertheless was aware of the rise of the claim among the people through the banquets that were at the origin of the overthrow of Louis-Philippe's government. Here again, much more than Laurentie and Berryer-son, Genoude embodied a 'popular royalism'.

Against this appellation, Laurentie developed, in his *Memoirs*³⁶, the notion of 'royalism of enthusiasm' that he reckoned to be a kind of class struggle expressed within his legitimist movement.³⁷ Like Balzac, he defended a victory for 'the intelligent ones', clever commoners, over an old, worm-eaten nobility, without succeeding in detaching himself from his elitist image as a royalist and an uncompromising Catholic at the head of his newspaper.

On the other hand, for Genoude, the newspaper had to correspond to a popular movement from below, and not to a position discussed from above by the elite. Popular royalism was however only rarely practiced among the legitimists around Berryer and Laurentie. Criticism was growing. The Duke of Valmy thus reproached *La Quotidienne* for merely responding to his detractors instead of issuing ideas and also for lacking 'the support of courageous and popular men'.³⁸ Laurentie's articles were truncated, or unpublished and he appeared to be banned from elections. The Duke of Valmy, mediator between the newspaper's shareholders and Laurentie, then criticized him for questioning the policy of the royalist movement: 'You attack the royalist party, you accuse them of scorning writers, they who let themselves be led by Genoude, you accuse Mr. de Lévi of not answering you. Finally, you are accusing the committee on the account of candidacy'.³⁹ Indeed, by tearing each other apart, these legitimists had difficulty in establishing *La Quotidienne* as the newspaper of the royalist party, Genoude winning in the end.⁴⁰ This was especially the case as Laurentie was reluctant to merge the absolutist newspaper *La France* with his own to weigh more against his rival.⁴¹ In addition, Crétineau-Joly and La Rochejaquelein created a new royalist newspaper, *La Nation*, at the cost of 30 francs, which made them fear the worst:⁴² losing more readers. Publisher Bricon then summarized the role of the journalist Laurentie: 'Boxing every day against friends and enemies is the occupation of journalists'.⁴³ Boxing in the columns of a newspaper or in the Chamber of Deputies was certainly the main occupation, especially since even Berryer was not sure of keeping his influence in the Chamber.

Genoude further developed his notion of 'national royalism' and gave rise to an increasingly precise programme around freedom of association, education, political equality, Catholicism or fraternity. Pragmatically, he supported the periodic holding of general estates (États-Généraux), wished the administration to be free of charge and granted a role to the communal electoral assemblies then to the provincial assemblies, which themselves elected a national assembly. Offended, Laurentie and his entourage tried to isolate Genoude and took subscriptions to *La Gazette* with *La Quotidienne*.

But this undermining work had no effect: while Laurentie was politically defeated in the Southwestern elections, Genoude was elected in the South as Deputy of Haute-Garonne in 1846 and with his 'Société des réformistes', he worked to increase his electorate. In the end, it

³⁶ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Souvenirs inédits, op.cit.*, 26.

³⁷ B. de Viviès, *Les Droites en France en 1851. Ideas and History* (University of Orléans, 2018), 532-541.

³⁸ 372 AP 12: letter from the Duke of Valmy dated 1 July 1842 addressed to Laurentie.

³⁹ *Idem*.

⁴⁰ 372 AP 12: Valmy's letter of 16 August 1842 to Laurentie.

⁴¹ 372 AP 12: Laurentie's 1843 letter to the Duke of Valmy.

⁴² 372 AP 12: Blossenville's 1843 letter to Laurentie.

⁴³ 372 AP 12: letter from Bricon to Laurentie dated 17 July 1843.

seems that the royalists of Southeast and Southwest France followed Genoude more than Berryer and Laurentie, if we believe the number of *La Gazette de France* subscriptions which was higher than that of *La Quotidienne*. In 1832, subscriptions to *La Gazette* exceeded 7486 while *La Quotidienne* was satisfied with just over 3432 and in 1841, *La Gazette* was at 4007 while *La Quotidienne* fell to 1907 subscriptions.⁴⁴ *La Gazette* reached more royalists. Nevertheless, these figures must be put into perspective, since both *La Quotidienne* and *La Gazette de France* reached more readers and were put in competition with the industrial press.

Laurentie and Genoude met at the Press Conference of which Laurentie became president, Genoude having skillfully given way to his nomination.⁴⁵ A kind of short-term truce was established and made it possible to start overhauling the legitimist press. Nevertheless, Laurentie refused to merge with *La Gazette de France* until the end. Following a controversy, involving Laurentie, who denounced the absence of the most loyal servants of the heir to the throne just because they were commoners, the journalist was invited to Frohsdorf in 1846 where the Count of Chambord resided and received him following the customary Ancien Régime etiquette. Then began a correspondence in which the pretender to the throne sought Laurentie's opinions and advice on how legitimacy could be theorized and defended: a traditional vision then prevailed. And this had to be reflected in the press. Finally, *La Quotidienne* merged with *L'Écho français* and *La France*, two absolutist newspapers, the second of which had been particularly successful because of its prevalence over *Le Rénovateur*, and to compensate, Laurentie was placed at the head of a single body, *L'Union monarchique*, in 1847.

The February 1848 Revolution marked a turning point. Laurentie, however, did not take it in the same way as he did in 1830. At the age of 55, he did not think of entering into a power struggle and reduced the event to 'Louis-Philippe's business'. Perhaps then the legitimists no longer believed in their ability to re-catholicize and royalize post-revolutionary society: this political despair or disenchantment was reflected in this inaction even if *L'Union monarchique* then took the name *L'Union*. A meeting was held at the home of the Marquess of Pastoret, leader of the Parisian legitimist movement, to find out the participants' agreement with the presidential election of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte: to his great surprise, Laurentie who had legendary mistrust of the Empire, foresaw that Bonapartism would prevail. He warned that an emperor was about to fly on his own.⁴⁶ He was convinced of the imminent arrival of the Bonapartistes in power because of their organizational and theoretical superiority since they succeeded in combining 'order and equality'.⁴⁷

His personal failure in the elections of 1848 and 1849 proved once again his inability to multiply, like many of his contemporaries, the titles and tasks: this former professor, who tried in vain to gain fame as a writer, existed only as a journalist of the order, too monarchist to be able to persuade his opponents to rally and too much of a commoner and Parisian to think he could win in the Gers over the networks of the local nobility who won mandates as Deputies. By necessity, while he desired unity between Catholics and royalists, he was overtaken by 'Genoudisme' on his left wing and did not embody at all the popular, commoner and enthusiastic royalism he claimed.

In 1849, Genoude's death gave complete way to Laurentie in the royalist press, even though the young guard entered the newspapers' editorial offices. Lourdoueix⁴⁸ took the direction of *La Gazette* after Genoude. He also defended the *Appel au Peuple*, which

⁴⁴ Jean-Pierre Arguet, 'Le tirage des quotidiens de Paris sous la monarchie de Juillet', *Revue suisse d'histoire*, 10 (1960-2): 216-286.

⁴⁵ Hugues de Changy, *Le soulèvement de la duchesse de Berry* (Paris: DUC Albatros, 1986), 51.

⁴⁶ P.-S. Laurentie, *Souvenirs inédits publiés par son petit-fils*, *op.cit.*, 170.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁴⁸ *Grand Larousse Universel* of the nineteenth century, article 'Lourdoueix', vol. 10.

Laurentie found unrealistic:⁴⁹ a plebiscite had to be organized to choose between a republic or a legitimate monarchy. In response, Laurentie made Henri V's voice heard by writing for him anonymously, *La Politique royale*.⁵⁰ A few months later, in 1850, the Count of Chambord condemned Lourdoueix's doctrine of the *Appel au Peuple*, which undermined the principle of heredity in the Wiesbaden circular also called the Barthélémy manifesto.

The events of 1851 with the Coup d'État of Napoléon III proved him right, but Laurentie nevertheless realized that he had failed, even with regard to 'Genoudisme'. After 1830, he was a supporter of a parliamentary monarchy supported by the Church of Rome, while Genoude laid the foundations for a monarchy based on democratic principles and a religion less dependent on Rome, which Lourdoueix agreed upon. Laurentie expressed to Berryer-son his royalist opponents' triumph:

'[Lourdoueix] has won; and our policy of 1831, in *Le Courrier de l'Europe*, and yours, my dear friend, for 20 years in the Chamber, all this movement printed with the most rebellious ideas, all this is defeated; it is national law that wins⁵¹!'

Despite the openings made to monarchical law, the law resulting from a legislative process according to the principles of representative democracy was more convincing. Within the very heart of the legitimist movement, the monarchy and its fundamental law were definitively relegated to the memories of a bygone old France.

Laurentie's correspondence testified to the feeling of the end of a world that was constantly disintegrating, especially since his best support within *L'Union*, the Duke of Valmy, joined the Emperor after the Coup d'État of December 2, 1851. Laurentie was then shaken in his deepest convictions and ended up freezing his royalist theories, out of fidelity.

Internationally, Laurentie had been hoping since the beginning of the July monarchy that his newspaper would be 'officially approved' in Russia.⁵² In contrast to the period of modernization 1830-5, the years 1850 and 1860 were years of journalistic struggles, of an uncomplicated alliance with the Emperor of Russia that had kept embarrassing these royalists because of their Catholicity, faced the most intransigent and Russian representative of order and counter-revolution in Europe.

His repeated attacks in the press against Napoleon III earned Laurentie imprisonment and discussions with Blanqui 'the prisoner' ('l'Enfermé') in 1862, who, moreover, accused him of having sacrificed all honour in working for an alliance with Russia.⁵³ The origin of this alliance was based on the fact that it was unacceptable to Laurentie that freedom mixed with order was better represented by Napoleon III than by his own camp.

He then developed theories to fight against atheism in the State, which he believed was the source of the evils of the whole society, and launched a struggle of ideas against Ernest Renan, while acknowledging his failure in *La Gazette de France*. He clearly acknowledged the loss of subscriptions for *L'Union* in Paris and in the whole country. This steady decrease was attributed in part to the active propaganda carried out by *La Gazette*: 'The friends of *La Gazette* are more skillful and active than we are'.⁵⁴ But the real reason was evoked by another royalist who noticed that in the whole country, their royalist propaganda fell on barren ground: 'It should have the possibility to address convictions or even passions, there is nothing left but economic interests'.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ 372 AP 21 file 6, active correspondence from Laurentie: letter from Laurentie dated 21 September 1849, addressed to Colonel Mac Sheeby.

⁵⁰ Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, published anonymously, *Politique royale en France* (Paris: Lagny, 1848).

⁵¹ Berryer fonds 223 AP 5: Laurentie's letter dated 30 July 1852, addressed to Berryer-son.

⁵² 372 AP 19: Valmy's 1866 letter to Laurentie.

⁵³ 372 AP 10: letter from Lostanges of August 1838.

⁵⁴ 372 AP 19: letter from Chesnier du Chesne dated 3 September 1867, addressed to Laurentie.

⁵⁵ 372 AP 19: Lapasse's letter of 18 June 1867 to Laurentie.

Aging but respected within his movement, Laurentie now embodied royalist immobility and the impossible theoretical reform of the legitimate monarchy through the White Flag affair after 1870 when the count of Chambord refused to come back on his throne because he was tied to the white flag of the monarchy and hostile to the tricolour flag, despite his action during the defeat and fall of the Empire and the Commune.

To conclude, Laurentie's moderate legitimist political line after 1830 was opposed to Genoude and the absolutists. Too close to the Orléans monarchy without adhering to it, these neo-legitimists saw their finances cut off in 1835 by the absolutists. Subsequently, Montalembert shattered any hope of unity and for the creation of a large conservative party under the July monarchy by separating Catholics and royalists.

Also, these attempts to modernize the legitimate monarchy were not successful because they surpassed, especially with 'Genoudisme', the very legitimist movement. This was a scandal for conservative people like Laurentie, who could not envisage a monarchical republic and whose open-mindedness did not go further than advising a modern prince.

The new hypothesis that emerges from this work is that Genoude prefigured an exit from the French left/right-wing cleavage (which Laurentie totally rejected) with the claim of a kind of 'republican monarchy', a real innovation in terms of a political system combining monarchy and universal vote. On the other hand, Laurentie, the Duke of Fitz-James and others thereafter, remained in a traditional post-revolutionary cleavage. Caught up by absolutism and 'émigrés', Parisian legitimists did not really impose their vision of legitimism. Nevertheless, if Genoude did instill radical modernization into legitimism, he was marginalized by his movement's leading personalities. The impossibility of the union between moderate legitimism and Genoudisme, for which Laurentie was in part personally responsible, sealed the end of a legitimist right wing in phase directly with modernity and the people.

Bibliography

Sources

Fonds Malouet-Laurentie 372 AP

Berryer Fonds 223 AP

Louis Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, vol. III (Paris: Pagnerre, 1843)

Correspondance de Balzac, Roger Pierrot and Hervé Yon (Pléiade, Paris: Gallimard, 2006)

Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Le Rénovateur* (Paris, 1832)

Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Histoire des ducs d'Orléans* (Paris, Béthune, Bricon, 1832)

Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *De la légitimité et de l'usurpation* (Paris: Bricon, 1830)

Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *Souvenirs inédits publiés par son petit-fils* (Paris: Bloud et Barral, 1892)

Pierre-Sébastien Laurentie, *De la révolution en Europe* (Paris: Dentu, Bricon, 1834)

Laurentie's articles in the *Courrier de l'Europe*

Jacques-Honoré de Lourdoueix, *Appel à la France contre la division des opinions* (Paris: Bureaux de la *Gazette de France*, 1831)

Others

Jean-Pierre Arguet, 'Le tirage des quotidiens de Paris sous la monarchie de Juillet', *Revue suisse d'histoire*, (1960-2)

Hugues de Changy, *Le soulèvement de la duchesse de Berry* (Paris: DUC Albatros, 1986)

Hugues de Changy, *Le mouvement légitimiste sous la Monarchie de Juillet (1833-1848)* (Rennes: PUR, 2004)

L. KAPPES, 'Un oublié : Genoude', *Revue mensuelle publiée par l'Association d'Études et d'Échanges* (1938-4)

Marion Mas, 'Le grand homme selon Le médecin de campagne : une figure "antimoderne" ?', in Boris Lyon-Caen and Marie-Eve Thérenty (eds.), *Balzac et le politique* (Paris: Pirot, 2007)

Marc Méraud, *Lamennais et les hommes de la Restauration (1814-1824) ou dix ans d'un malentendu* (Paris X Nanterre, 1979)

Sylvain Milbach, *Les Chaires ennemies l'Église: l'État et la liberté d'enseignement secondaire dans la France des notables (1830-1850)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2015)

Laurent Morival, *La dernière guerre de Vendée: La duchesse de Berry et les légitimistes 1830-1840* (La Crèche: Geste éditions, 2020)

René Rémond, *Les Droites en France* (Paris: Aubier, 1982)

Guillaume Bertier de Sauvigny in *Le comte Ferdinand de Bertier et l'énigme de la Congrégation* (Paris: Les Presses Continentales, 1948)

Jean-François Sirinelli, *Histoire des droites en France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992)

Olivier Tort, *L'impossible unité : la droite française sous la Restauration (1814-1830)* (Paris IV, 2007)

B. de Viviès, *Les Droites en France en 1851. Ideas and History* (University of Orléans, 2018)