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**A Republic in Fragments:
Montagnard Survivors and Saint-Just's Manuscript Remains**

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During the last decades of their lives, the two ex-Montagnard Conventionnels and friends Marc-Antoine Baudot (1765-1837) and Bertrand Barère (1755-1841) had to contend with bitter memories of their personal and political sacrifices ending in revolutionary failure: the Republic's fall followed by the creation of the Empire and the return of the Bourbons, which they experienced as the ultimate catastrophe.¹ Both were radical revolutionaries who, after serving on the executive (Barère) and as a representative on mission (Baudot) in the Year II, fell victim to proscription in the Thermidorian Reaction. During that time, Barère suffered political imprisonment and narrowly escaped deportation to French Guyana, while Baudot had to flee abroad. Twenty years later, the Restoration brought renewed persecution: as regicides, both were forced into hiding, then into exile to Brussels and Liège respectively. They were only able to return to France after the July Revolution.² As they grappled with the failure of their republican dreams during those difficult years, they had to confront their own role in it: their history not only as "survivors" but also as perpetrators of the violence that had destroyed their generation's leaders, such as the "Girondins," Danton, and Robespierre, all executed between 1793 and 1794. In the hostile climate of the Restoration and its aftermath, ensuring the survival of their version of the Revolution's memory and that of its key participants – alive and dead – became a primary concern for the two former Montagnards.

Like many fellow revolutionaries', Baudot's and Barère's long years of exile were filled with ruminations over the history of the Revolution and the many colleagues lost to the faction fighting, purges, and executions that troubled its turbulent decade. Remorse over their own role in these deaths merged with regrets over the Revolution's failure. Ensuring that the memory of the republic's major political achievements survived despite its catastrophic leadership loss, institutional collapse, and the silence imposed on its history by the Restoration was paramount. This was a legacy they shared with their lost colleagues, whether they had been allies or opponents. This paper explores the special interest that Baudot and Barère took in preserving the written legacy of one of their former Robespierriste opponents, Louis-Antoine Saint-Just (1767-1794). Barère had notably contributed to Saint-Just's premature death on 10 Thermidor. Yet as

¹ Dedicated to Bill Kidd (University of Stirling), in gratitude for introducing me to the history of individual and collective memory in France.

² For Barère's desperate attempts to evade the authorities by hiding with various friends in Paris between 1815 and 1816, see Leo Gershoy, *Bertrand Barère: A Reluctant Terrorist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 342–348.

their own lives drew to a close, he and Baudot read, annotated, and safeguarded their deceased colleague's political works, including several manuscripts in Barère's possession. For these men, Saint-Just represented the Revolution's greatest creative and destructive potentials, and thus acted as a lens through which his retired colleagues sought to understand the failure of their vision. Decades after the Revolution, and despite past personal animosities, these two surviving revolutionaries attempted to shelter their colleague's manuscripts and ideas amidst their own memoirs which they were preparing for posterity. In discussing Saint-Just's controversial ideas and role in the Year II, they broke the silence that generally covered the history of the "Terror" and the Republic during the Restoration. Their actions helped ensure not only the survival of one revolutionary's manuscript remains into posterity, but also affirmed the Montagnards' shared political heritage and their generation's collective republican endeavor.

"Forbidden Subjects:" Baudot and Barère in Exile and Retirement

During the Revolution, Marc-Antoine Baudot (Fig.1), a doctor by profession, was a member of the Legislative Assembly, then the National Convention, where he sat with the Mountain and voted for the King's death. In the Year II, he went on several missions to the armies, notably that of the Rhine. In 1795, Baudot was proscribed by the Reaction and exiled himself to Venice. During the Restoration, he was exiled again.³ Historian Edgar Quinet (1803-1875) met Baudot during those later years and was "mystified by this character." As a youth growing up in the early Restoration, he heard people "whisper the word Terror" in reference to Baudot, which had led him to "imagin[e] horrible stories." Yet, "in encountering that same figure on the staircase the next day, so smiling, so charming, the most amiable I have perhaps ever seen, I did not know what to believe."⁴ Quinet remarked on the "profound silence about the great [revolutionary] events kept by the very people who had carried them out."⁵ Baudot himself "never spoke of the Revolution." Quinet believed that it was a "forbidden subject" because he was "afraid of not being understood, or that he himself was bothered by his memories."⁶ But Baudot's and other ex-Conventionnels' reticence to talk about their revolutionary past was, in fact, critical to their surviving the Restoration, its hostile authorities and surveillance, which stretched even beyond France's borders.

Similarly to Baudot, Bertrand Barère, the former spokesperson for the Committee of Public Safety, avoided speaking to most contemporaries about his past. Persecuted during the Reaction, the Directory, and under the Bourbon monarchy, the ex-Conventionnel kept a low profile while living in his Brussels exile with his companion, Marguerite Lefauconnier, and their son, relying on a close circle of former colleagues and friends.⁷ He remained a particular target of the authorities, both French and Belgian, and refused to publish his memoirs for fear of reprisals.⁸

³ See also Bernard Gainot, "Baudot, Marc-Antoine," in *Dictionnaire des Conventionnels 1792-1795*, ed. Michel Biard, Philippe Bourdin, and Hervé Leuwers (Ferney-Voltaire: Centre international d'étude du XVIIIe siècle, 2022), 68–69.

⁴ Edgar Quinet, *Histoire d'un enfant (Histoire de mes idées)* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1903), 58.

⁵ Quinet, *Histoire d'un enfant (Histoire de mes idées)*, 58.

⁶ Quinet, *Histoire d'un enfant (Histoire de mes idées)*, 58.

⁷ See Maïté Bouysson, "Barère, exile exemplaire," in *Déportations et exils des Conventionnels: Actes du colloque de Bruxelles, 21-22 novembre 2016*, ed. François Antoine, Michel Biard, Philippe Bourdin, Hervé Leuwers, and Côme Simien (Paris: Société des études robespierristes, 2018), 33–34.

⁸ See Gershoy, *Bertrand Barère*, 348–349; 356.

When he returned to his native Tarbes (Hautes-Pyrénées) following the July Revolution, he felt ostracized by his own family and local community who rejected the Revolution. Writing to two friends in Paris in 1838, he described his profound isolation and concern for the survival of his written legacy:

Amongst my relatives, there is nobody suited or able to look after my memories; they know nothing about politics, nor about literature; they hate and misunderstand the Revolution because of some small properties that they have lost in it. I thus had to avoid with great care all contact with my fellow citizens and my relatives, who would not know what to do with my literary and political works, apart from selling them to the government or [au premier venu], for some Ecus.⁹

Outcasts in French society, and sometimes in their own families, many surviving revolutionaries withdrew into themselves.¹⁰ Baudot, himself practically abandoned by his wife and children in exile, described the former Conventionnels' "solitary" existence:¹¹ "[They] lived far out in the faubourg or in isolated houses outside of towns, declaring a taste and need for solitude."¹² Writing was a solace. A series of memoirs, notes, and other forms of recollections by the former revolutionaries were the results of these activities, many published in the more liberal climate of the 1830s and 40s. In the case of Baudot and Barère, these works contained their generation's "memory of the lost Republic," conversations with the dead, and efforts to ensure the survival of their collective political and intellectual legacy.¹³

"All Torn Up:" Baudot, Saint-Just's *Institutions*, and the Republic's Legacy

In 1838, Edgar Quinet "found himself at the deathbed of one of those survivors of the Convention (...). It was Baudot. He told me that, before dying, he had wanted to see me to entrust me with his *Mémoires*."¹⁴ During his last years, Baudot had written detailed *Notes* on the Revolution, wanting to ensure that an authentic version of the past survived.¹⁵ He told Quinet:

⁹ "Correspondance de B. Barère avec P.J. David d'Angers et H. Carnot, relative à la publication de ses Mémoires, donnant des précisions sur cette entreprise," Tarbes 18 May 1838, Bibliothèque nationale, [B.N.] NAF 24158.

¹⁰ The struggles of the "old Montagnards" was studied in detail by Sergio Luzzatto, in *Mémoire de la Terreur: Vieux Montagnards et jeunes républicains au XIX^e siècle*, trad. Simone Carpentari-Messina (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1991).

¹¹ See Karine Rance's research on Baudot's exile and memoirs: "'Ils nous parlent de regrets:' Marc-Antoine Baudot en exil et l'affrontement de deux visions du monde," in *Déportations et exils des Conventionnels*, 141–142.

¹² Marc-Antoine Baudot, *Notes historiques sur la Convention Nationale, le Directoire, l'Empire et l'Exil des Votants par Marc-Antoine Baudot, ex-Membre de la Convention Nationale*, ed. Hermione Quinet (Paris: D. Jouaust; I. Cerf, 1893), 38–39. This passage is also noted by Rance: "'Ils nous parlent de regrets:' Marc-Antoine Baudot en exil," 139.

¹³ "[L]e souvenir de la République perdue": remark by Philarète Chasles, son of the Conventionnel Pierre-Jacques Michel Chasles, in *Mémoires I-II* (Réimpression des éditions de Paris, 1876-1877; Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1973), 39.

¹⁴ Edgar Quinet, *Oeuvres complètes d'Edgar Quinet: La Révolution; précédée de La critique de la Révolution*, 3 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1909), 3:191–192.

¹⁵ Manuscripts of these *Notes* are at the B.N.: Marc-Antoine Baudot, "Souvenirs, Remarques, et objets divers, 1828," B.N. NAF 6526 and "XLVIII Marc-Antoine Baudot. Souvenirs, remarques et objets divers," described as "Copie par Hermione Quinet du manuscrit autographe de Baudot, donné par elle à la Bibliothèque Nationale, NAF 6526," B.N. NAF 15533 (2). Partial content of the manuscripts was later published as Baudot, *Notes historiques*. Karine Rance discussed in more detail the history of the manuscripts and their partial publication: "'Ils nous parlent

“Believe me that the last word of our history has not yet been written.”¹⁶ In passing his papers to a trusted friend, he hoped to preserve his own as well as his generation’s legacy. The Revolution had prematurely ended the lives of many of his colleagues, a tragedy that his friend Barère would describe in his own memoirs as a “mutilation.”¹⁷ Though Baudot had initially condoned the persecution of the “Girondins” as well as the purge of 9 Thermidor, he later believed that “the evil” had “started with the killing of deputies, whichever side they were on.”¹⁸ Lonely and perhaps remorseful, seeking out the company of long-lost colleagues became a daily part of Baudot’s life in exile. On pages entitled “Noms des Conventionnels qui ont péri de mort violente,” he listed all those who, to his knowledge, had perished because of the Revolution (Fig.2). He organized his tally in alphabetical form, rather than by “faction.” As such, his list was an early suggestion that the deeply divided revolutionary leadership, in the end, still constituted a collective. Together, they had founded the Republic.

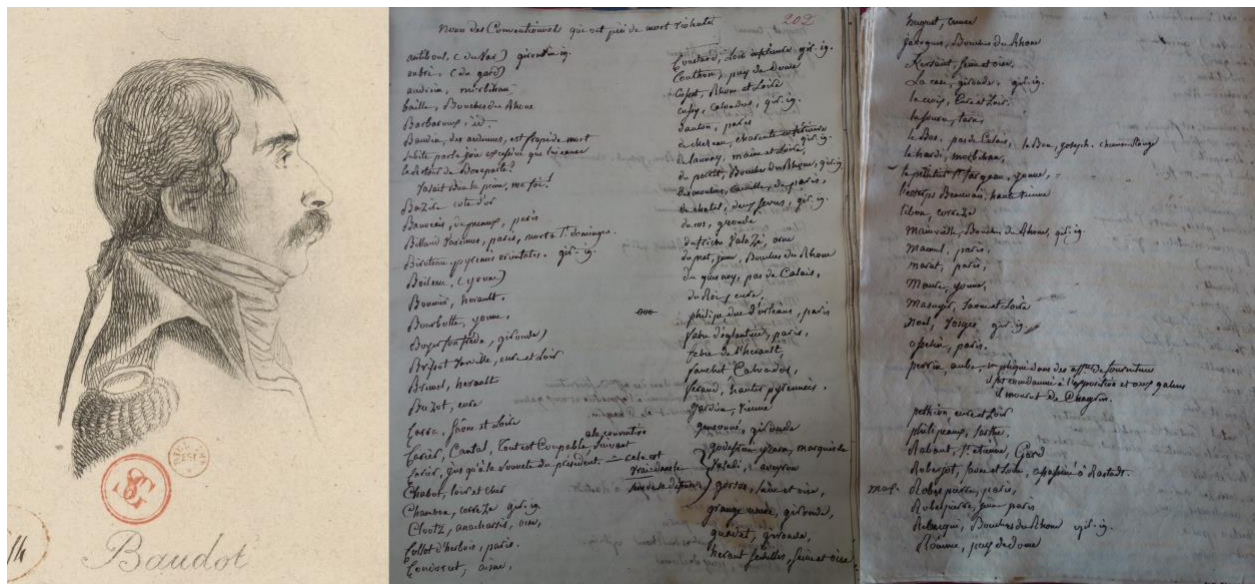


Fig.1 Anonymous, *Baudot* [d’après André Dutertre (1753-1842)], 18?. Engraving. Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, EST 85-2 RES (P.79). Rights: Public Domain.

Fig.2 Marc-Antoine Baudot, “Noms des Conventionnels qui ont péri de mort violente.” Marc-Antoine Baudot, “Souvenirs, Remarques, et objets divers,” 1828, B.N. NAF 6526. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

de regrets.’ Marc-Antoine Baudot en exil,” 142–143. See, in addition, Hervé Leuwers, “Des mots pour dire Robespierre. Le travail d’écriture du mémorialiste Baudot,” in *Mémoires de la Révolution française: enjeux épistémologiques, jalons historiographiques et exemples inédits: actes du séminaire de recherche Brest 2013-2015*, ed. Anne de Mathan (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2019), 197–207.

¹⁶ Quinet, *La Révolution*, 3:191–192.

¹⁷ Barère regretted the events of 3 October 1793 as “that day [when] the national representation [was] mutilated.” Bertrand Barère, *Memoirs of Bertrand Barère, Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety during the Revolution*, trans. de V. Payen-Payne, 4 vols. (London: H.S. Nichols, 1896), 2:316–317.

¹⁸ Baudot, *Notes Historiques*, 65.

In his *Notes*, Baudot also wrote countless entries that reminisced about his former colleagues, including Robespierre, Brissot, Vergniaud, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins. Though often bitingly critical, his dialogue with the dead indicated their continued place in his life and ensured the survival of realistic, rather than fictionalized, portraits of his revolutionary colleagues. Maximilien Robespierre and, especially, Louis-Antoine Saint-Just, both victims of the purge of 9 Thermidor, were a particular focus of his writings. Baudot had served alongside the latter as a representative on mission with the Army of the Rhine, and the two deputies, similar in age, had argued frequently. Baudot also held Saint-Just responsible for the proscription of his Dantonist friends in spring 1794, declaring that he would forever “bear the sobriquet of *Exterminateur*.”¹⁹ His *Notes*, however, still gave a complex portrait of Saint-Just as a visionary politician and fearless military leader whose potential had been destroyed by violence, both inflicted and endured.²⁰ To Baudot, his former adversary’s contradictions – hero and anti-hero of the Revolution – and his premature death embodied the lost promise of the revolutionary generation: Saint-Just had been “cut from the same cloth as a great man, but it was all torn up.”²¹ The conundrum of Saint-Just continued to preoccupy Baudot on his deathbed, when he recalled their military triumphs, which he attributed to their generation’s shared faith in the Republic.²²

When preparing his memoirs during the last years of his life, Baudot engaged deeply with Saint-Just’s *Fragments d’institutions républicaines*, a series of unfinished notes on the latter’s political vision for France, written in the months before his execution. Under Napoleon, an early attempt by the neo-Jacobin Pierre-Joseph Briot to publish Saint-Just’s *Institutions* had ended in the work being pulped for wastepaper.²³ A second version was successfully published by Charles Nodier in 1831.²⁴ Under the heading “Pensées de St. Just” in his memoirs, Baudot offered an extensive discussion of this text.²⁵ He critiqued many of Saint-Just’s ideas as “absurd” and “ridiculous,”²⁶ emphasizing their contradictions.²⁷ The *Republican Institutions* represented the Robespierristes’ vision for an austere political society, one which Baudot, who leaned more towards Danton’s approach, did not agree with. However, though frequently disparaging, Baudot’s comments also reflected sorrow over the Montagnards’ lost opportunity to imagine and shape an ideal republic together. Saint-Just’s *Institutions*, which would always remain fragmentary, were one example of their interrupted political dreams. In choosing to grant these ideas extensive space in his memoirs, and discussing their merit, Baudot helped ensure their survival into another age.

¹⁹ Baudot, *Notes Historiques*, 113.

²⁰ See, for instance, Baudot’s entry “Robespierre,” in Baudot, *Notes Historiques*, 3, which declares: “Saint-Just avait une tête bien autrement forte et plus puissante que Robespierre.”

²¹ Baudot, *Notes Historiques*, 327.

²² Quinet, *La Révolution*, 3:192.

²³ Briot printed 300 copies, but, after facing governmental pressure, destroyed the majority. Edouard Fleury, *Saint-Just et la Terreur* (Paris: Didier, 1852), 1:195–197, claims that the pulped paper was “employé aux plus vils usages.” The story is also mentioned in the preface of Nodier’s 1831 edition of Saint-Just’s *Institutions*, which were closely based on Briot’s version. A surviving copy of Briot’s rare version is held at B.N. LB41-3982 (A).

²⁴ Published as *Fragments sur les institutions républicaines, ouvrage posthume de Saint-Just*, ed. Charles Nodier (Paris: Techener, 1831).

²⁵ Baudot, “Appendice: ‘Quelques Notes de Baudot sur les pensées de Saint-Just,’” in *Notes*, 321–329.

²⁶ Baudot, *Notes*, 321–329.

²⁷ Various pages titled “Pensées de St. Just,” in Marc-Antoine Baudot, “Souvenirs, Remarques, et objets divers,” 1828, B.N. NAF 6526.

“Bring[ing] Back” the Enemy: Barère and Saint-Just’s Papers

A few years before his death in 1841, Baudot’s friend Barère was preparing to pass several sensitive manuscripts, including his memoirs, to his friends David d’Angers and Hippolyte Carnot (the revolutionary Lazare Carnot’s son) for posthumous publication.²⁸ He implored them to take care of his written legacy to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands.²⁹ And he added a surprising addition: pages of a *carnet*, or notebook, that his opponent Saint-Just had had on him on the day of his arrest on 9 Thermidor half a century earlier (Fig.3).³⁰ The *carnet* contained the revolutionary’s last political and private reflections.³¹ In addition to this important document, Barère possessed notes that Saint-Just had taken during his missions, and, possibly, the leather-bound manuscript “du droit social ou Principes du droit naturel”/ “de la nature du principe de la divinité, de la vie sociale,” written between late 1791 and late 1792, and which, as Miguel Abensour notes, represented “Saint-Just’s first, incomplete expression of the principles of his political philosophy.”³²

²⁸ They were published as *Mémoires de B. Barère, membre de la Constituante, de la Convention, du Comité de Salut Public, et de la Chambre des Représentants*, ed. Hippolyte Carnot and David d’Angers, 4 vols. (Paris: Jules Labitte, 1842-1844). An English edition was also published.

²⁹ “Correspondance de B. Barère avec P.J. David d’Angers et H. Carnot, relative à la publication de ses Mémoires,” 18 May 1838, B.N. NAF 24158. This correspondence and the fate of the majority of Barère’s papers is further discussed in Gershoy, *Bertrand Barère*, 375–383.

³⁰ The *carnet*, which Barère sent to his friends, as well as the other manuscripts by Saint-Just discussed farther below, are all held under the same code B.N. NAF 24158, “Manuscrits autographes du Conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barere de Vieuzac, de son ami Expert [Espert] et d’H. Carnot.” Albert Soboul discussed them in “Les Institutions républicaines de Saint-Just d’après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale,” *AHRF* 20, No. 111 (Juillet-Septembre 1948): 196–200.

³¹ This assumption has, however, been questioned by Anne Quenedey, in “Note philologique sur le manuscrit de Saint-Just faussement intitulé ‘De la nature,’” *AHRF* 351 (2008): 138–139. Her analysis suggests that the pages were from a much earlier date and did not, in fact, constitute a *carnet*.

³² See Miguel Abensour, “Saint-Just and the Problem of Heroism in the French Revolution,” in *The French Revolution and the Birth of Modernity*, ed. Ferenc Fehér (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), 133. The manuscript “du droit social ou Principes du droit naturel” was given to the Bibliothèque nationale together with the *carnet* and the military notes by Paul Carnot, a descendant of Lazare and Hippolyte Carnot, in 1947. It is therefore likely that the manuscript also came from Barère. An archivist’s note in B.N. NAF 24158, titled “Dossier Saint-Just,” suggests that it was, at some point, closely associated with the *carnet* and the military notes. And see Quenedey, “Note philologique sur le manuscrit de Saint-Just faussement intitulé ‘De la nature,’” 141 and 141, fn 42.



Fig.3 Pages from Saint-Just's *carnet* (notebook), found on him on 9-10 Thermidor, including those left blank after his death. "Six cahiers devant provenir de l'agenda que le conventionnel portait sur lui lors de son arrestation." B.N. NAF 24158, "Manuscrits autographes du Conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barere de Vieuzac, de son ami Espert [Espert] et d'H. Carnot." Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

In 1794, Barère, as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, was instrumental in sending Saint-Just to the guillotine alongside Robespierre. Yet he later became a steward of Saint-Just's manuscript remains and safeguarded them. In a note, likely written to guide David and Carnot, he explained this curious development (Fig.4).³³ After the Robespierristes' execution, Barère's colleague Jean Espert, a fellow Montagnard, had overseen the removal of the seals on Saint-Just's papers. Espert had taken several items, including the *carnet* and the military notes, from Saint-Just's abandoned rooms, perhaps to save them from the Thermidorian Reaction. Possibly as late as the 1830s, shortly before his own death in 1832, he had passed two of the documents to Barère: "I send you my dear barrere [sic] the 2 pieces that I told you about yesterday. Please keep them safe [*les conserver*]" (Fig.5).³⁴ At this time, the two ex-Conventionnels had been living in relative proximity: Barère, who had returned from exile, in Tarbes; Espert 180 kilometers away in a small community in the Pyrénées ariégoises.

³³ Soboul also mentions these notes in "Les Institutions républicaines de Saint-Just," 200.

³⁴ On Espert during the Restoration, see also Côme Simien, "La Convention interminable: les régicides au tribunal du passé (1815-1830)," *AHRF* 381, "Les conventionnels" (juillet-septembre 2015): 197. Restoration authorities regarded him as a former ally of Robespierre.

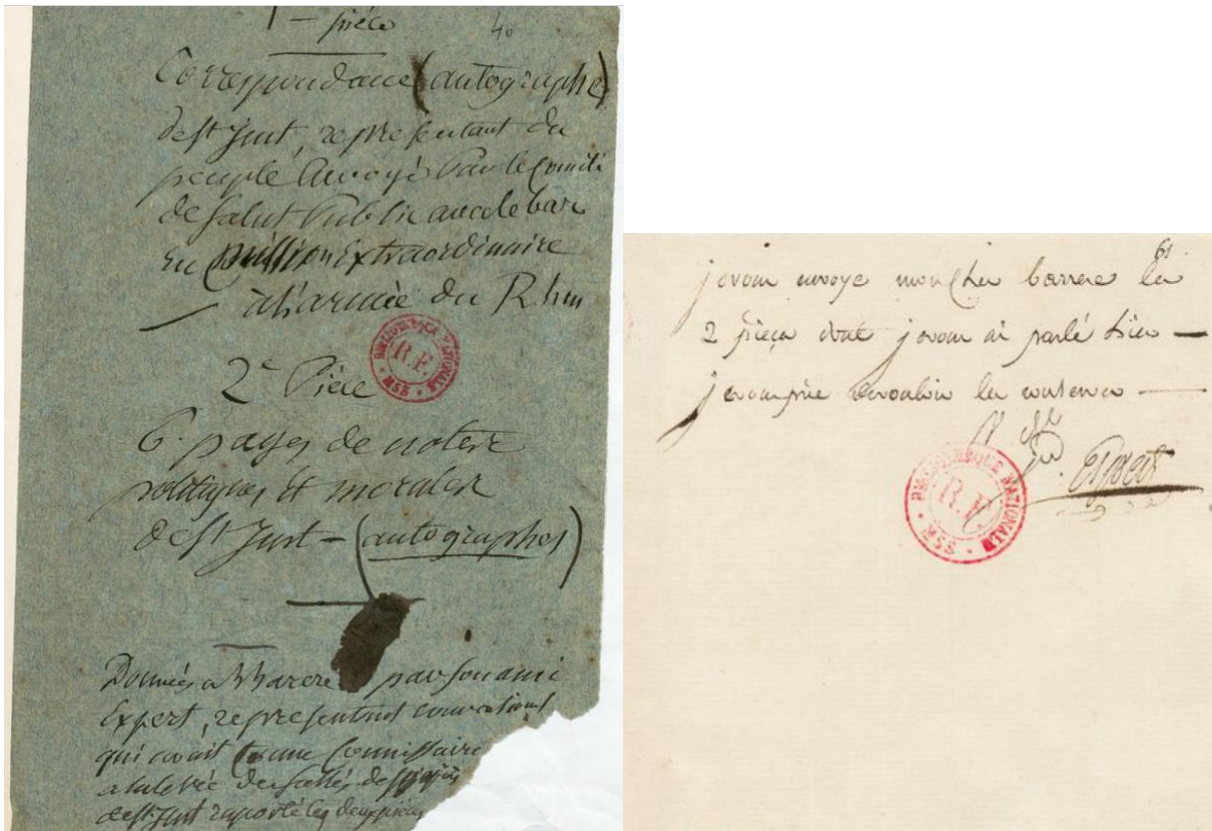


Fig.4 “Donnés a BBarere par son ami Expert, représentant conventionnel qui avait comme Commissaire a la levée des Scellés de St Just raporté ces ceux pieces.” Note by Bertrand Barère on the provenance of Saint-Just’s papers in his possession. B.N. NAF 24158, “Manuscripts autographes du conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac de son ami Expert et d’H. Carnot.” Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.5 “Je vous envoie mon cher barrere les 2 pieces dont je vous ai parlé hier. Je vous prie de vouloir les conserver.” Note by Jean Espert to Bertrand Barère concerning “the 2 pieces that I told you about yesterday.” B.N. NAF 24158, “Manuscripts autographes du conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac de son ami Expert et d’H. Carnot.” Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Given his previous role in ending their author’s life, Barère’s later custody over Saint-Just’s manuscripts was astonishing. Yet Barère saw it as appropriate. Like Baudot, he understood that violence had “mutilated” the revolutionary generation. As a survivor, he had personally experienced how this generation’s “mold” had been “broken” and its opportunities been lost.³⁵ Barère’s interest in Saint-Just’s papers might therefore also have been driven by a desire to salvage what remained of the Revolution’s most original voices, even if, in this case, Barère had

³⁵ Bertrand Barère, *Memoirs of Bertrand Barère, Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety during the Revolution*, trans. De V. Payen-Payne (London: H.S. Nichols, 1896), 2:34.

contributed to the loss. As he recalled, Espert had not pocketed, but rather “brought back” (“raporté”) Saint-Just’s writings from the latter’s apartment after his execution; the manuscripts had been returned to a legitimate home.³⁶ And though either Espert or Barère could have passed on the papers to Saint-Just’s family, they held on to them to “keep them safe.”³⁷ Fulfilling his promise, Barère carefully safeguarded Saint-Just’s *carnet*, which included sensitive personal writings, and ensured that it and his other writings passed into sympathetic hands. In preparation for his own memoirs, he collected information on Saint-Just’s career for a biographical sketch that praised the “genius,” “rare talent,” and “republicanism” of the man he had helped put to death.³⁸ An avid collector of literary quotations, he also took down lines from a poem by Jean-Jacques Nibelle, titled “The Turncoats” (“Les Habits retournés”), because they reminded him, as he noted, of “Saint-Just – (Conventionnel).” The poem expressed sympathy for “a young fanatic/whose ingenuous pride dreams of the republic/Whose mind filled with the Greeks and the Romans/ Opens dangerous paths to liberty.”³⁹ Barère’s memoirs would eventually house transcripts of some of Saint-Just’s “Military Notes” to preserve his former adversary’s and the Revolution’s memory.⁴⁰

Baudot and Barère were two of many surviving revolutionaries who attempted to preserve the Revolution’s legacy at a time when Napoleonic and Restoration authorities sought to silence its most radical political voices, both living and dead. Relatives of executed revolutionaries, too, carried out this work, as Marisa Linton’s discussion of Élisabeth Le Bas (née Duplay) in this Salon demonstrates. While most revolutionary survivors did not dare speak openly or publish their memories until after the Revolution of July 1830, Baudot’s and Barère’s *Notes* and *Memoirs*, used here as case studies, were written in preparation to eventually break the silence. Their engagement in these texts with the political thought of their former adversary Saint-Just was unusual given the ongoing division of the Revolution’s survivor communities amongst factional fault lines.⁴¹ It becomes intelligible only as an expression of remorse over the killing of their revolutionary colleagues; as a desire to preserve the Republic’s major voices and political visions for the future; and as an effort to protect the Jacobins’ legacy in the face of the

³⁶ Note by Bertrand Barère on the provenance of Saint-Just’s papers in his possession. B.N. NAF 24158, “Manuscrits autographes du conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac de son ami Expert et d’H. Carnot.”

³⁷ Note by Jean Espert to Bertrand Barère concerning “the 2 pieces that I told you about yesterday.” B.N. NAF 24158, “Manuscrits autographes du conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac de son ami Expert et d’H. Carnot.”

³⁸ Original French edition published in Paris by Jules Labitte in 1842. Cited here the English version, Bertrand Barère, *Memoirs of Bertrand Barère*, trans. De V. Payen-Payne, 4:333–338.

³⁹ “Je comprends même encor un jeune fanatique/Dont l’orgueil ingénu rêve la république/Et le cerveau rempli de grecs et de romains/Ouvre à la liberté de périlleux chemins. Je comprends cet amour qui le brule sans cesse/Je comprends tout Enfin, Excepté La bassesse. Le poete Nibelle”. The following final lines of the poem were not copied out by Barère: “Mes éternels regrets, mon coeur, sont au vaincu; J’honore un ennemi lorsqu’il est convaincu.” Jean-Jacques Nibelle, “Les Habits retournés,” *Primevères, lis et marguerites* (Paris: H. Delloye, 1838), 227. Bertrand Barère, “Saint-Just – (Conventionnel), [excerpts from Jean-Jacques Nibelle, “Les Habits retournés,” 1838],” B.N., NAF 24158, “Manuscrits autographes du conventionnel Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just (1767-1794) avec pieces annexes provenant de Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac de son ami Expert et d’H. Carnot.”

⁴⁰ Barère, *Memoirs*, 4:338–351.

⁴¹ See also Mette Harder, “Entre mémoire et histoire: les ex-Conventionnels et les premiers historiens de la Révolution,” in *L’écriture d’une expérience: Révolution, histoire et mémoires de conventionnels*, ed. Michel Biard, Philippe Bourdin, Hervé Leuwers, and Yoshiaki Ômi (Paris: Société des études robespierristes, 2015), 207–213.

Restoration. Barère's sheltering of Saint-Just's manuscript remains amongst his own papers – and the eventual publication of some of them – transgressed not only the political taboos of the 1820s, but also the Montagnards' own political and personal divides. Against the backdrop of revolutionary failure, preserving these remains “kept safe” their shared republican project for another age.

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