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'THE WORLD IS EMPTY AFTER THE ROMANS': THREE CASE STUDIES FOR THE RECEPTION OF ANTIQUITY IN THE WRITINGS OF ANTOINE SAINT-JUST

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INTRODUCTION

'If he had lived during the time of the Greek Republics, he would have been a Spartiate. His Fragments show that he would have chosen the institutions of Lycurgus; he suffered the same fate of Agis and Cleomenes. If he had been born a Roman, he would have done revolutions like Marius, but he would never have oppressed as Sulla did. He despised the nobility as much as he loved the people. '

When the ex-deputy Bertrand Barére[1] (1755–1841) sketched the portrait of his colleague Antoine Saint-Just (1767–1794)[2], he compared him to those figures of antiquity that Saint-Just admired and often quoted. This adoration for Greece and Rome was primarily used, especially in the writings of the Thermidorian reaction (or that use Thermidorian sources), to denigrate Saint-Just's *persona*, reducing him to a schoolboy because of his age[3] and because of his references to antiquity, which were regarded as a mere repetition of school-book passages. Later, Saint-Just's use of antiquity became, in the opinion of the French Revolution's detractors, evidence that his politics was just an attempt to copy the ancients: this view is still held nowadays (see Sellers 2010). This article aims to examine the way in which antiquity is used by Saint-Just, concentrating on three detailed case studies, chosen from the speeches of the period 1792–1794. The focus of this paper is the reception of classical texts and imagery and their reshaping in a political context: the perspective adopted, therefore, is that of the Classicist interested, by means of comparison, in investigating which texts were used, what relationships there are between the Latin (or Greek) originals and the French text and why such ancient texts were used. Due to space constraints, this articles excludes the *Fragments of Republican Institutions*, as this material would have to be treated separately at full length, which I wish to do elsewhere in the near future.

Influences on Saint-Just's speeches came from different sources; however, for the purpose of this article, I will consider only the inspiration Saint-Just drew from ancient sources and refer to modern texts[4] only where necessary. Rather than tracing the use of antiquity as a metaphor of political thinking (which was the object of discussions by Ipotesi 1984 and Linton 2010), I am particularly interested in examining the reception of classical models, ideas and institutions, confronted both with the original texts and with the interpretation that the Enlightenment gave them, and in exploring what aspects of antiquity triggered Saint-Just's reader response and if and how intertextuality might have played a part in the use of ancient texts as models.

The main part of Saint-Just's writing falls within the Parisian years (September 1792 – July 1794), corresponding to his political acme. It can be divided into collective works (CSP's documents and dispatches from the missions to the armies) and personal works of different genres (mostly speeches to different audiences, notes and a treatise). In this article I shall concentrate only on one genre – oratory –, focusing on the speeches addressed to the National Convention. The corpus so defined is composed by thirty speeches delivered between October 1792 and July 1794. Although they all belong to the genre of oratory, they fall into different sub-genres: we find deliberative speeches (in particular the *Discours sur la Constitution de la France* and the *Discours sur la police générale*) and mostly judicial speeches, particularly accusation speeches, which soon became Saint-Just's specialty[5].

CLASSICAL BACKGROUND

As most members of the French nobility and the upper ranks of the *Tiers État,* Saint-Just studied some Latin and possibly some Greek[6], even though the exact reconstruction of his educative background remains uncertain[7]. Saint-Just completed his secondary education (*collège*) at the *Oratoriens* in Soissons, where he was acquainted with mathematics, logic, literature and rhetoric. Latin culture was generally

taught by means of history and illustrious examples to show the moral (in a Christian sense) values of the ancients and to present examples of good behaviour to the students. Rhetoric was also an important part of the curriculum: it served in the training of the would-be lawyers and functionaries and constituted the highest level in the form of speech composition: in the more advanced classes mock-delivery constituted an almost daily routine. Saint-Just reflected this kind of training in his later works in a twofold way, by mastering the technique and by showing great disdain for the use of rhetoric. After the *Collége*, he attended the University of Law in Reims, but probably never graduated[8]. We can infer that he had at least mastered Latin, as the usual practice was to read and translate Virgil and Cicero, but it is not certain that he studied any Greek[9].

Precisely reconstructing which works – and which editions – influenced Saint-Just's writing is not always straightforward as the only evidence comes from his works; direct information about Saint-Just's readings is limited. The content of Saint-Just's library in Paris was catalogued after his death by Courtois, and according to the inventory[10] it contained: the orations of Demosthenes[11], the orations of Cicero (no information is given about which edition and whether it was a translation or a translation with the Latin text), the rest was mostly composed of contemporary texts, of which Bossuet's *Histoire universelle*, the works of Montesquieu and Rousseau's *Social Contract* were of particular relevance for their connection with antiquity. The absence of, for example, Voltaire and Plutarch is noticeable, two authors whom Saint-Just doubtlessly had read (and quoted) at some point.[12] However, this report is not trustworthy for three reasons. First of all, when Courtois made his report, in the days immediately after 9 Thermidor, he was primarily interested in finding proof of the "triumvirate's conspiracy"; with this aim in mind he altered what he found, as several studies have now shown, and destroyed what was not useful. He was less interested in books and possibly did not even bother to list them all. There are two more considerations: Saint-Just, like most Robespierrists, was not a Parisian and moved to Paris only on 22 September 1792; it is likely that he did not bring all his books with him. At the same time the delegates and particularly the members of the CSP could use the National Library, the newly named collections of the French Royal Library, which were still preserved in the *Tuileries*, where both the Convention and the CSP held their meetings. With all these caveats in mind, it is interesting to consider that the only books concerning antiquity are two unspecified volumes of speeches, one by Cicero and the other by Demosthenes.

THE USE OF ANTIQUITY IN THE SPEECHES: A CASE-STUDY.

Many scholarly works have explored the importance of antiquity in the development of revolutionary discourse, such as Parker (1937), Ipotesi (1984), Bouineau (1986), Mossé (1989), Linton (2010) just to name a few. As Linton (2010:395)[13] argues, Antiquity constituted a common ground of language, ideas and even models for the revolutionaries. Saint-Just, however, showed some peculiarities.

If we look at the raw distribution of references in the corpus of the speeches[14], the most prominent for the use of classical references are the *Rapport sur la conjuration,* the *Rapport sur la police générale* (26 germinal II), and the *Discours du 9ème Thermidor.* These are very different speeches, pertaining to three different sub-genres and written in very different circumstances; furthermore the first two were very carefully written, whilst the third was probably not. Nevertheless, they all contain many references to antiquity, demonstrating a common trait, which is the difficulty of their content in regard to the situation in which they were (or should have been) delivered, as they were all written in a time of deep political crisis[15]. I will therefore briefly examine some features of each of them, analysing them in chronological order.

The first speech was delivered on 11 Germinal year II (31 March 1794), against the *Indulgents*, and it has been rightly judged as one of Saint-Just's masterpieces[16] as well as one of his most controversial political speeches. It was carefully written after the CSP decided to arrest Danton, then reviewed by Robespierre, who composed a dossier to implement the speech, and later rewritten by Saint-Just, incorporating Robespierre's suggestions.

The speech was disputably forged to address Danton in the Convention; a fight is rumoured to have taken

place at a CSP meeting: Saint-Just argued for the arrest of Danton and his accomplices in the Convention, but in the end the CSP decided to arrest all of them during the night [17]. Being this fact or fiction, the speech directly addresses Danton *in absentia* (and only him of all those accused in it). This probably was not the result of Saint-Just's refusal to rework his speech, but it is due to him following a notorious classical model: Cicero's *Second Philippic*[18]. If we confront Saint-Just's (2004: 718) first address to Danton with Cicero's to Antony, the resemblance becomes clear:

> Danton, you will answer to the inevitable and inflexible justice. Let's examine your past behaviour, and let's show that from the start, you, accomplice of every crime, have always been against the party of Freedom. And that you conspired with Mirabeau, with Doumuriez, with Hébert, with Hereult-Séchelles. Danton, you served the tyranny: you were, it is true, opposed to Lafayette; but Mirabeau, d'Orléans, Dumouriez, all of them, opposed him as well. Would you dare to deny having been corrupted by these three men, the most violent conspirators against Freedom?[19]

In the opening of the *Second Philippic* Cicero similarly put Antony next to the worst enemies of Cicero himself and of the Republic, Catiline and Clodius, and argued that Antony was the worst of them all (Cicero, *Philippics* 2.1).

Quoting from ancient writers is not a novelty in revolutionary writing, but such a careful intertextuality as it is presented in this text is a new fact. Camille Desmoulins, in the third issue of *Le Vieux Cordelier*, may seem to engage in a similar operation with the text of Tacitus' *Annals*, but, as it was recently shown (Hammersley 2005: 156–158), Desmoulins' source is not directly Tacitus, but rather Thomas Gordon's *Discourses on Tacitus*. Citations were generally confined to shorter passages, as Robespierre did in the *Rapport sur les principes de la morale politique* (17 pluviose II), where he cited Cicero's position on the death penalty for the conspirators, using it in defence of the Terror.[20]

It is clear by just looking at a small sample of the two speeches how Saint-Just echoed Cicero not only in content, but also in style and, partially, in structure. The language is violent and uses an accumulation of allegations, examining both Danton's public and private conduct. His portrayal occupies the biggest portion of the speech, relegating all the other accused to the role of mere walk-ons or tools (this is specifically the case of Desmoulins).

The general structure of the two speeches is not identical, but it is comparable, although Saint-Just did not need to answer any personal accusations as Cicero did lurking in the background there is still the echo of the *Indulgents*' campaign against the Terror and the CPS. Both speeches can be divided into five parts: an *exordium*, where both orators address the need to act against the enemies of the state (Saint-Just 2004: 706–714); a first part, which for Cicero is the *refutatio* of the accusations whilst for Saint-Just it is an attack against some of the less important accused (Saint-Just 2004: 714–718), then in Cicero appears a *transitio*, where he mocks Antony's poor skills as an orator; this section is postponed in Saint-Just's speech to a later point (Saint-Just 2004: 727–734), where it serves as a transition from the accusations against Danton to a repeated picture of the conspiracy; both speeches culminate in a *confrontatio* (Saint-Just 2004: 718–727), followed by the ending, *peroration* (Saint-Just 2004: 735–737).

Saint-Just played with the Latin text and twisted it to fit his own needs. Not only did Cicero in the *Second Philippic* address Antony all along, but, as in the case of Saint-Just's speech, the accused was not present. Furthermore as Cicero's *Philippic* was conceived as a pamphlet against Antony, only presented in the style of an oration, so did Saint-Just follow the same method, as all of the accused are not present in the convention, and his long tirade had the single aim of reducing the Convention's support for the accused[21]. Cicero accused Antony of conspiring against the *res publica* by being responsible for the killing of many Roman soldiers (*Philippics* 2.55 'Thus, just as the cause of trees and shrubs is in their seeds, so you were the seed of this most lamentable war. You grieve, gentlemen, over the slaughter of three Roman armies, the slaughterer was Antonius. You mourn the loss of our most illustrious fellow countryman; Antonius robbed you of them too.' transl. Shackleton Bayley[22]); in the same way Saint-Just accused Danton of being responsible for the massacres of the Champs de Mars and of 10 August (Saint-

Just 2004: 719–20):

> You were the nominated writer with Brissot of the petition of the Champs de Mars, and you both escaped from Lafayette's fury, which massacred two thousand patriots. […] You, one of the authors of the petition; while those who signed it, some were reduced in chain, some massacred, were Brissot and you the object of gratitude for the tyranny, since you were not the object of hate and fear for it? […] But when you saw the storm of 10 August approaching, you withdrew once again to Arcis-sur-Aube. A deserter from the dangers that threatened Freedom, the patriots had no hope of seeing you again. However, pressed by shame and reproaches, when you knew that the fall of the tyranny was well prepared and inevitable, you came back to Paris on 9 August. You slept during that terrible night. Your section, which had elected you as its president, waited for you for a long time; they fetched you from a shameful rest; you presided one hour, you left your armchair at midnight when the *tocsin* began to ring; at that moment the tyrant's agents entered in the section and placed the bayonet on the heart of the man who replaced you: and you, you were sleeping.[23]Saint-Just was forced to be more cautious than Cicero, as he could not charge Danton with shooting on the rally of the Champ de Mars, but at the same time the juxtaposition between the two facts is strong enough to sound like an accusation; furthermore, we must bear in mind that, according to the *loi de suspects*, voted on 17 September 1793, not having done something for the *Patrie* was *de facto* equal to being guilty of treason. In the passage recalled above Saint-Just also engaged in a textual reprise of Cicero's *Philippic* (2.59): 'you were happy, if there can be any happiness in crime'[24], when he writes 'you led a happy life at Arcis-sur-Aube, as long as the man who was conspiring against his fatherland, could be happy'.[25] (Saint-Just 2004: 719).

Cicero indulges in the portrait of Antony's vices, which affected both his private and public life and took him as far as showing himself in public with a prostitute and mocking the institution of the *res publica* (Cicero, *Philippics* 2.70); in the same way Saint-Just did not forgive Danton for any moral weakness[26]:

> Wicked man, you compared the public opinion to a woman of questionable reputation; you said that honour was a laughing-stock; and that glory and posterity were nonsense: these sayings should have won the aristocracy for you; these were the words of Catiline.
>
> (Saint-Just 2004: 727)

In the Jacobin perspective offending moral values was a crime as serious as the mocking of Republican institutions was for Cicero. The entire section of the address to Danton, as it is shown by the reference to Catiline both in Saint-Just and Cicero, is modelled on the Latin precedent: Danton, like Antony, is accused of trying to subvert the *res publica* as well as showing a depraved behaviour in private life. Saint-Just of course did not use the justificatory part of the speech (where Cicero defended himself); it might also be the case that this parallel, familiar to Saint-Just's audience, reminded them of another accusation of 'false friendship': Robespierre[27] was accused to have betrayed not only a colleague such as Danton, but a long-time friend as Desmoulins. What might seems to our sensibility just a private affection, at the time had, as well demonstrated by Linton (2008), great political relevance[28].

As it is acknowledged, the style of Cicero's *Philippics* is inspired by Demosthenes' *Second Philippic*[29], but in Saint-Just's speech there is a further echo of another harangue by Demosthenes: the *De Corona*. In the *De Corona* Demosthenes probably accomplishes the most effective character assassination in Greek history by describing Aeschines' *persona* and turning everything Aeschines had done (which was more a historical success than Demosthenes' own conduct) into actions intended, consciously or unconsciously, to harm Athens. The same tactic was used by Saint-Just to sustain the guiltiness of Danton, going well past the evidence (which proved his bribery in the Affair of the India Company, but not his alliance with the Royalist party or with the English forces) and turning even successful actions (such as the uprising of 10 August[30] into proof of his cowardice, if not of his treason. This echo had the potential to be very well understood by Saint-Just's audience; besides recalling the contrast between Demosthenes and his opponent Aeschines, this may have worked as a symbol of an on-going well-perceived, if not clearly public, contrast between Danton and Robespierre. Saint-Just did not name Robespierre, since his speech

was delivered on behalf of the committee, and giving pre-eminence to one of its members would have been useless, if not even dangerous; nevertheless the delegates were well aware of the contrasts between the two revolutionary leaders. When depriving this opposition of the fictional narrative, which was built upon it, it remains that the two pre-eminent figures incarnate two different models of citizens and, ultimately, two different models of understanding the revolution itself (this contrast was sharpened after the election of Robespierre to the CSP in July 1793).

We have seen how the main references to antiquity in this text are Catiline and Cicero. The use of Catiline to define the enemy is wide-spread throughout those writings of the revolutionaries that make reference to Antiquity (Bouineau 1986:177; 144–5), but the novelty is given here by Saint-Just's use of references: Saint-Just used Catiline as a figure, but he also imitated, through the shaping of his writing and his rhetorical persona, the use that Cicero did of Catiline in the *Second Philippic*. In a sense, Saint-Just was impersonating Cicero, rather than just referring to him. This merits some consideration. As Bouineau (1986: 118) pointed out, references to Cicero are found in the writing of the *Conventionnels*, although with less frequency than expected. His figure usually embodied not only the most prestigious of Roman jurists, but also the perfect idea of politician, the platonic idea of the perfect Roman to the point that he became almost a myth. This was the sense when Robespierre referred to Cicero, and Demosthenes when mocking Desmoulins for trusting Philippeaux in December 1793.

> 'Camille admires the Ancients; Cicero's and Demosthenes' immortal works are his pleasure. A simple resemblance of words excites him. The Greek and the Roman orator wrote some Philippics, the first against the tyrant of Macedonia, the second against a criminal traitor. Camille thinks, reading Philippeaux' writing, that he is reading again the Philippics of Cicero and Demosthenes, but let him not deceive himself: the Ancients wrote the Philippics, and Philippeaux wrote nothing more than Philippatiques.'[31]

By ironically comparing Philippeaux to Cicero and Demosthenes, Robespierre is setting Cicero into a mythical past, conferring him a legendary status, which prevents further imitation; in other words, Robespierre is making Cicero the symbol of an ideal (and thus out of reach) model. The use Robespierre makes of the Ciceronian reference is exemplar of the way Cicero is generally used by the Conventionnels (cf. Bouineau 1986:118). Saint-Just did something different, as he impersonated Cicero, not only transferring the authority of his speech, but also attributing to himself all of Cicero's qualities.

Le *Rapport sur la police générale* includes more than ten nominal references to antiquity (from Cassius and Brutus, to Catiline, Caesar, and Antony), most of them to Roman antiquity, which are used as examples. The speech is quite complex as it aimed to demonstrate the necessity of the reform of the police (i.e. the creation of the Bureau de Police) by exposing the dangers that the *Patrie* faced when the wills of individuals were imposed upon the general will, especially in times when the economic situation of France was a disaster. This new institution was created in order to take away police functions from the *Comité de Sureté General* in order to limit misconduct and abuses, whilst in fact concentrating more power in the hands of the *Comité de Salut Public*.

In this speech Saint-Just deals with French economy, a topic he had already tackled in the two economic decrees presented in Ventôse (whose application was being delayed and was one of the reasons of division inside the CSP). For our approach this speech is interesting because it demonstrates that Saint-Just's use of classical materials was not limited to rhetorical texts and orations. There is a passage of the speech, one of the clearest and most important theorisation of the 'perfect revolutionary', in which we can find an influence of the classical world (Saint-Just 2004: 747–8):

A revolutionary man is inflexible. But he is rational, he is frugal; he is modest without displaying the luxury of false modesty; he is the irreconcilable enemy of all lies, all indulgence, all affectation. Because his aim is to watch the triumph of the Revolution, he never censors Her, but he condemns Her enemies without wrapping Her with them; he does not offend Her, but he enlightens Her; and jealous of Her purity, he observes himself when he speaks about Her because he respects Her; he pretends less to be equal to

the authority, which is the law, than to be equal amongst men, especially the poor. A revolutionary is full of honour; he is mannered without being dull, but because he is frank and calm in his heart […]. The revolutionary man does not deal with the bad, but he is sensitive; he is so jealous of his Nation's glory and of its freedom, that he never does something inconsiderate; he is the first to give battle, he sues the guilty and defends the innocent in courts; he says the truth in order for it to teach, not to offend; he knows that, to establish the Revolution, he needs to be as good as he once was bad, his probity is not a delicacy of the spirit, but a quality of the heart and a thing really well understood. I therefore conclude that a revolutionary man is a hero of good sense and probity.[32]

The passage recalls chapter 54 of *The Catiline Conspiracy*, in which Sallust presented the confrontation between Caesar and Cato[33]. Both the ideal revolutionary and Sallust's portraits connect the moral quality with the quality of the soul ('his integrity is a quality of the heart'[34]; 'they were equal for their magnanimity'[35]). Stoic influences are evident in Saint-Just's description, when the revolutionary is inflexible (cf. Sallust's 'his severity, for the integrity of his life'[36]), simple ('love for the moderation, of decency'[37]) and always solemn in every moment ('above all his love for the gravity'[38]). Stoic features are not sufficient for the modern revolutionary, who is also a man living in a society and caring for the others: it is not surprising that the passage was also inspired by the description of Caesar: the revolutionary is an enemy of the bad, as Cato was ('ruin to the evil'[39]), but he is also a friend of the poor and the innocent ('shelter to the poor'[40]).

Another feature of the revolutionary man was taken from Caesar's portrait: the readiness for war ('he rushes into the battle'[41]); for Saint-Just, in fact, the revolutionary man was also a man of action[42]. This characteristic was particularly important for Saint-Just, who, despite his training as a lawyer, soon enough specialised in the affairs of war[43]. This peculiar role assigned to Caesar is worth noticing, as in this period Caesar was generally cited as a negative model (Bouineau 1986: 144–5).

We can also find here the influence of another Stoic model and, according to revolutionary mentality, a proto-revolutionary, Marcus Iunius Brutus, Caesar's murderer. Indeed Saint-Just's description of the perfect revolutionary (which is also a description of his self-image) echoes Brutus' portrait made by Rollin in volume 47 of his *Histoire Romaine* (1738–48), the main text from which students in 18th-century France studied Roman history. In this text[44] Caesar's murderer was presented as a man doted by nature in both talent and moral strength, born into the family of Lucius Iunius Brutus, who freed Rome from the monarchy. He was characterised as following the Stoic example of Cato, being sweet, but also firm and passionate (as indeed Saint-Just presented himself both in private and public – in the early years of his career he imitated Mucius Scaevola by exposing his hands to fire while burning counter-revolutionary pamphlets; cf. Vinot 1985: 86-87 and Linton 2010: 309–400). Saint-Just's vehement temperament was recorded in the memory of his colleagues and, in more sympathetic portraits (see Pol-Duplay 1901), as loyal, but inflexible towards every kind of injustice; Brutus was also shown as learned, especially in philosophy, and devoted to a dry writing style, all elements that applied to Saint-Just's own *persona*[45]. In this context, the precise reprise of Marcus Brutus becomes particularly interesting if compared to the general confusion between the two Brutuses present in 1792–94, as Baxter (2006: 61–7) precisely illustrates; both Lucius and Marcus Brutus were regarded as multivalent symbols of virtue and often the name Brutus was used without further distinction (cf. also Linton 2010: 404-405; on the use of Brutus at Louis XVI's trial see also Andrew 2011: 157–159).

The last speech examined, the *Discours du 9 Thermidor* (27 July 1794), is a peculiar speech because it is Saint-Just's last accomplished work and was never fully delivered. It was redacted under an even greater pressure than the previously examined speeches and abruptly re-written, in the night between 8 and 9 Thermidor. This is possibly the best explanation for some of the incoherences found in some of Saint-Just's arguments.

The orator recurred on antiquity many times. The use of Peisistratos and Demosthenes is particularly interesting.

Peisistratos was mentioned three times in the speech (Saint-Just 2004: 774; 775; 780); Saint-Just reported that this was the epithet used by Billaud-Varenne for Robespierre, when the latter was not present. Saint-Just implicitly accused Billaud-Varenne of hypocrisy, as he was accused of speaking ill of Robespierre in his absence, but showed friendship to Robespierre in person. The report of such an offence against Robespierre seems to be in contrast with the attempt of reconciliation, set as a goal for the entire speech, but an exam of the role of Peisistratos may reveal part of Saint-Just's strategy. During the French Revolution Peisistratos was generally seen as a tyrant [46], however Bouineau (1984: 145) noted that in the rhetorics of the Convention there was a general tendency to ignore Greek negative models or show less interest in them than in their Roman counterpart. As Claude Mossé (1989:18–9) noted, the ancient judgment on Peisistratos' tyranny is not unanimous: all classical sources agree that Peisistratos' reign was a tyranny, but some retain a positive view on his conduct (for example Aristotles). Saint-Just, then, may have taken inspiration from this kind of classical sources and decided to use Peisistratos, regardless of it being the example really used by Billaud-Varenne or not: the mention of Peisistratos, although maintaining a negative connotation, did not possess the hateful strength of other figures such as Catiline, thus not completely preventing a reconciliation.

Moreover, this allegation allowed Saint-Just to proceed, by means of confutation, to the core of his argument, the defence of Robespierre against the charge of being a 'tyrant of the opinion' (Saint-Just 2004: 781).

The definition of 'tyranny of opinion' is rather unclear, and Saint-Just struggled to define it in a good portion of the text; Quennedy (2011) showed that the expression might have been forged by Saint-Just himself to resume the kind of claims made against Robespierre[47]. The term is ambiguous: the word 'tyranny' implies the allegation of the most terrible of political crimes, but at the same time being a tyrant of the opinion indicates that Robespierre's power did not use physical violence, but simply exercised a form of influence on the citizens' minds because of the virtue of his ideas. The ambiguity lays therefore in the term 'opinion', which might or might not (and this is the line of Saint-Just's argument) be identified with the general will. Saint-Just tried to avoid dealing with this ambiguity at first, by saying that Robespierre was not a Peisistratos, but rather a Lycurgus[48], who was chased from the community of citizens by envious (i.e. not virtuous) men; nevertheless connecting the two historical figures implies that they must have borne some resemblance, which weakened Saint-Just's argument. Conscious of this, the orator tackled the problem in another way, by saying that heavily influencing the public opinion simply means being persuasive. He illustrated this point by recurring to three classical examples. The first is Cato the Elder[49]. It is likely that Saint-Just's choice fell on him rather than on Cicero because Cato's Virtue had a less ambiguous reputation and could not be accused of being a tyrant of opinion (opposed to Cicero in the case of his conduct during Catiline's conspiracy in 63 BCE).

Short after Demosthenes was mentioned; this reference offered a good example of Saint-Just's manipulation of classical material. Demosthenes was cited to defend Robespierre from the accusation of being a 'tyrant of opinion'. Since Mably's *Entretien de Phocion* (1763), Demosthenes had been seen as a not completely positive example, as an excellent orator, but at the same time as man that, in order to pursue his own glory and eloquence, in fact put his nation into danger and in the end was responsible for the surrender of Athens to Philip of Macedon; he was also chosen as a symbol for the danger of demagogy leading to tyranny (one of the key themes of Jacobin ideology). Saint-Just, on the contrary, tried to twist an argument demonstrating that Demosthenes' eloquence was not dangerous and that he was not a demagogue, but was followed by people because he was persuasive, and therefore he was not a 'tyrant of opinion', but a saviour of the Nation. In doing so, Saint-Just avoided mention how the fight between Athens and Philip ended[50], but just pointed out that Demosthenes was responsible for maintaining the Greece's freedom for a long time. To strengthen this point, Saint-Just also created a situation where the Stoic Cato would have defended the eloquent speaker against his accusers, which were qualified as morally bad[51]. Ipotesi (1984: 34–43) argued that by using Demosthenes as an example, Saint-Just was forging his own persona for this speech on the model of the Attic orator, who tried with all his strength to preserve the freedom of his country.

Is is noticeable in this context the difference between Saint-Just's and Robespierre's conception of history: whilst Robespierre ultimately held the people responsible of their choices, Saint-Just argued that the people's nature is always good and their wrong decisions are to be attributed to ill-advice (either by internal or external corruptors, who do not belong to the People)[52]. But in his attempt, Saint-Just soon contradicted himself[53], firstly because, in a paradox, he admitted that Demosthenes could be considered a tyrant of opinion, secondly because he defended his position by taking up the Tacitean motif (present both in the *Annals* and in the *Dialogue of the orators*), of oratory being suppressed under the empire (while flourishing during the Republic; Saint-Just 2004:782): 'The silence is sovereign around the thrones, only amongst the free people one suffers the right of persuading his fellows.'[54]). In the mind of his audience the memory of the very same topic used against the CSP in the 4 issue of Desmoulins' *Le Vieux Cordelier* was probably still alive; moreover the politics of the last month of the CSP were directed against any voice of dissent.

Finally, Saint-Just resorted again to Cicero, this time quoting from the *Seventh Philippic*. To defend the consul C. Pansa (Cicero, *Philippics* 7.5), Cicero stated that he would not have thought him suitable for the consulship if had not been so, despite the tight boundaries of friendship between himself and Pansa; using the same argument, Saint-Just formulated his attempt to defend Robespierre[55] (Saint-Just 2004: 773):

> You should rather not believe that the idea of flattering a man has come out of my heart! I defend him because he seems irreproachable to me, and I would accuse him if he were to become a criminal. […] I vouch that Robespierre declared himself the solid support of the Convention, and he has never spoken in the committee, but gently, about damaging any of its members.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of some of Saint-Just's later works shows characteristics of his relation with antiquity: this is very dynamic and Saint-Just often sets himself against the mainstream trend, as in the case of Caesar, Demosthenes or Brutus.

Linton (2010: 397) illustrated on which levels the references to Antiquity act on Saint-Just's rhetorical discourse (ideological, tactical and personal) and how he made use of antiquity to inform his own political theory and to assert his role in the political context (Linton 2010: 418–9). The analysis showed that Saint-Just used different strategies to refer to antiquity; the most straightforward consists of nominal references to antiquity. Greek and Latin provided a common ground, shared by all the streams of the Convention, which could be understood easily[56]. These, however, in Saint-Just are always meaningful and not just ornamental.

As we have illustrated, antiquity often is not only referred to by naming a character, but is also embedded in the text, as a source of inspiration and a model of style.

Saint-Just also actively engaged in the debate on style and rhetoric: one of the leitmotifs of his political discourses was the danger of words and rhetoric (see Higonnet 1998, on the subject). For the Jacobin ideology words are dangerous , as they can often be misinterpreted, but at the same time rhetoric is the only way to convey those ideas to a larger public: this *aporia* draws Saint-Just to the traditional Greco-Roman discourse on the danger of rhetoric. The attempt to justify the use of rhetoric and to distinguish between a good and a bad eloquence using Demosthenes as a classic model, as in the Speech of the 9 Thermidor, was not successful[57].

Saint-Just seemed to overtly prefer the concise and elliptic style inspired by the Plutarchean Lycurgus (cf. Plut. *Lycurgus* 57) over Cicero, speaking through a series of formula and effective precepts (cf. Domine 1996) and yet, as we have seen in the case of the speech against Danton, he did not avoid echoing the Roman politician in at least two of his most important speeches, and a detailed examination of the whole

corpus would probably reveal more. In the case of the speech against Danton, the choice of Cicero was deliberate and served not only to consolidate Saint-Just's own argument, but also to shape his role as speaker in certain circumstances.

The shaping of the rhetorical persona[58], however, was adapted to the different situations and challenges: if sometimes Saint-Just adopted Cicero's posture, the bias of rhetoric and the focus on the danger of ambiguity, the precise choice of laconism as a mark, the austerity, frugality, impenetrability and inflexibility shown both as a representative *en mission* and at the tribune[59], the overall 'Stoic aura'[60] were all part of Saint-Just's self-image as well. Saint-Just's persona became a form of heroism, in which, as Abensour (1969) rightly pointed out, Saint-Just's embodied the two opposite tendencies of revolutionary heroism: the refusal of pre-existing models (Saint-Just himself in the *Discours sur la police générale* affirmed that 'heroism has no models'[61]) and at the same time, the creation of a new kind of hero to be emulated, which was also influenced by classical models, as we have seen in the case of the perfect revolutionary's description. Saint-Just maintained his image until his death, a decisive coherence of attitude (if we exclude perhaps a few lines in the speech of 9 Thermidor, where it seems as if emotions had won over rationality), when he chose silence as the only possible answer to the collapse of the Jacobin's political thought. From the clumsy turmoil of 9 Thermidor until his execution, he was the only one to maintain his dignity, without breaking down even in view of the scaffold.

Thus Antiquity was not received as immutable and unchangeable, but as a reservoir of ideas, models and theory which can be selected[62], shaped and reworked according to Saint-Just's own needs and used as an authoritative precedent for Saint-Just's newly exposed theories. It follows that Saint-Just actively chose his examples, shaping a reading of antiquity divided into good and bad, virtuous and evil men, although, as we have seen in the case of Caesar, the way he categorised these figures may not have been the same as the more traditional interpretation. This kind of active reception cannot be reduced just to choosing between Athens and Sparta and permits escaping from the dichotomy of the two as opposites: Saint-Just picked the best and worst of both of them, and did this also with Rome. Republican Rome in a vision of glory and decadence was typical of the Enlightenment from Montesquieu[63] onward; for Saint-Just it was the ultimate point of reference[64], not much because of its Virtue, but because it was the closest comparison to Revolutionary France, at least in terms of spatial extension. For the past was all the same: fictional, mythological and real, ancient or recent (e.g. Saint-Just 2004: 748): 'Codrus died by being precipitated into an abyss; Lycurgus had his eye plucked by the wicked of Sparta, who were against his strict laws, and he died in exile. Phocion and Socrates drank the hemlock, Athens itself, in that very day, crowned itself with flowers'.[65]). In his works there is little sense of historicity and chronology, everything is merged together and the temporal dimensions, as well as the context of each figure or quotation does not count anymore, and every element contributes to the abstraction of a world of ideas without chronological or spatial limits that lives on the dichotomy between virtue and vice, general will and peculiar will. Figures are also the means, like *biblia pauperum*, by which, without making use of words (which are by their nature mutable and dangerous), the orator can partially discard rhetoric and confide only in living figures and their stringent, logical and brief sayings.

The idea that French revolutionaries sought only to imitate the ancients and that they did so poorly is clearly limited and not applicable in the case of Saint-Just[66]; nonetheless it is true that amongst other more recent influences, antiquity played a vital role in the creation of revolutionary thought, and particularly so in our case. Resorting to ancient ideas was triggered by several factors, amongst which the most important were education and cultural milieu (the Enlightenment was also the era of Neo-Classicism), and so there was a sense of proximity, which enabled Saint-Just to draw from ancient sources. For the level of ideas as much as for the language, however, there was never uncritical imitation and dull acceptance of what the ancients said, but Saint-Just always took from the ancients what could be applied to his times and twisted his sources to suit his own theories at their best, as we have seen in the description of the perfect revolutionary. If we take into consideration this vision of history as omnipresent, where the chronological dimension is largely ignored and where the past is selected according to its utility, it becomes clear how easily the Greco-Roman world could be used as the means by which Saint-Just

promoted his self-image (how much of this was genuine and how much was a political technique we are unable to judge), as Barére, along with other contemporary witnesses, underlined (1843, vol. 3: 408).

The idea of a contrastive reception, opposing Athens and Sparta, is clearly an over-simplification: antiquity was a common ground that each politician used and twisted to best suit his ideas and personality. The term 'identification' must be handled carefully: it is dangerous to think that revolutionaries generally identified themselves with the ancients and tried to imitate them. The process of identification was much more complicated and self-aware, and discarding such nuances inevitably means, especially in the case of Saint-Just, falling back into Thermidorian propaganda (see Barére's judgment on the willing schoolboy) .

In the light of these considerations the famous phrase 'The world is empty after the Romans; but their presence fills it and prophesies the name of freedom' (Saint-Just 1984: 778)[67] is not (or not only) a nihilist affirmation or a justification, but it is also a judgment on the repetition of history, which naturally finds its apotheosis in the *Révolution*. The glory of the Roman Republic, Saint-Just was saying, is living with us a second (and better) life; this statement was clarified in the *Rapport sur la police générale*:

> If the Roman Republic were born again, it would be proud of us and would be much ashamed of all its other successors. (Saint-Just 2004: 753)[68].

These statements expressed strong belief in the *Révolution* and at the same time the self-consciousness of doing something comparable to the glory of the ancients or even better, because it would not repeat the errors of Rome (i.e. its moral decadence that led the way to the Empire), and it would do that thanks to the moral regeneration envisaged by Jacobin ideology. This moral reform would be carried out by giving new solid institutions to the French people. This belief was perhaps shaken in the days of Thermidor. Nevertheless, Saint-Just's appeal to the Romans' memory remained unconsciously prophetic, announcing the coming of the age of a new Augustus: Napoleon.

It has been demonstrated that Saint-Just did not just refer to antiquity, using it as a stock of exemples, but engaged actively with the texts. Moreover we have proven that, for example in the case of the speeches examined, Saint-Just engaged in an intertextual way with his chosen models, be them Sallust, Cicero or perhaps Demosthenes. Certainly we can argue that Saint-Just's choice of classical texts was not original as it fell on those authors that were an integral part of the élite's education in 18th-century France; however this assertion would be superficial. Saint-Just was instead an attentive and selective reader of the Classics and did not hesitate to play with the texts and re-making them according to his own needs. This is the case with the *Second Philippic*, where Saint-Just took only the portions functional to his own purpose and transposed them according to his own needs.

Saint-Just was a critic reader: the continuous intertextuality that he operated with his models (particularly with Cicero and Plutarch) shows that antiquity was not only a memory from schooldays, but part of Saint-Just's interests, as it is confirmed by the volumes found in his personal library. At the same time he also read the Classics not only as exemplary texts and certainly not as texts that contained the ultimate truth, but he was also ready to engage with them and twist them to suit both Jacobinism and his own political thinking.

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http://www.royet.org/nea1789-1794/ (Notes and Archives: online documents and materials on the French Revolution)

[1] (All translations from French are my own.).

'S'il eût vécu dans le temps des Républiques grecques, il aurait été Spartiate. Ses Fragments prouvent qu'il aurait choisi les institutions de Lycurgue; il a eu le sort d'Agis et de Cléomènés. S'il fût né Romain, il eût fait des révolutions comme Marius, mais n'aurait jamais opprimé comme Sylla. Il exécrait la noblesse autant qu'il aimait le peuple.' (Barére 1843, vol. 3: 408).

[2] Saint-Just had been Barére's youngest colleague at The *Comité de Salut Public* (Committee of Public Safety; from now on referred to as CSP), the executive organ that ruled France between July 1793 and

July 1794 (see Palmer 1989).

[3] Saint-Just became a member of the revolutionary government at 25.

[4] Particularly those of the Enlightenment.

[5] Amongst the judicial speeches, there is only one defensive speech, the (mostly) undelivered *Discours du 9 Thermidor*, which is primarily a defence of Robespierre.

[6] Bouineau (1986) spends the first part of the book describing the educative system which formed the revolutionaries; speaking about Latin and Greek teaching he underlines how Latin was still predominant: 'Au xviiie siècle, malgré l'apparition de quelques plans d'éducation, le latin occupait encore une place très importante, le grec commençait à regrésser […]' (Bouineau 1986: 26). On the study of Classics and the education of future revolutionaries the best source is still Parker (1937: 8-36).

[7] Unlike other revolutionaries, such as Robespierre and Desmoulins (cf. Parker 1937:11–2), for whom we have both school registers and personal recollections, the evidence for Saint-Just's education is scarce, see Vinot (1985: 34-43). There has been much speculation on the practical and psychological reasons that led Saint-Just to never mention his past; I think that the most reasonable is that, not having exactly being the 'virtuous' man he would proclaim himself to be during his political career – having been the author of a licentious poem and having been struck by a *lettre de cachet* because of his flight to Paris –, this past was likely to diminish his *préstige* as a Jacobin champion. Indeed this 'biographical incoherence' was sometimes a weapon in the hand of his political enemies.

[8] As indeed most of the revolutionaries-to-be. See Vinot (1985: 57-59).

[9] Evidence for the reading of Greek sources in Greek is limited, and the only one who said to be able to read Ancient Greek was Camille Desmoulins.

[10] Now ANF F17 1190 n.117.

[11] Unfortunately the list only says that it is a French translation, printed in 1791 and translated by a certain Jean. It might be the new edition of Demosthenes' *Harangues Politiques,* published by Gin in 1791 (Paris) with notes on the French Revolution's events.

[12] Voltaire is a clear inspiration behind two of Saint-Just's juvenile works: *Organt* (1789), which imitates Voltaire's *Pucelle* and *Arléquin Diogéne* (ca. 1789–90).

[13] 'Antiquity was the springboard for much of the political thinking of the 18th century. It was part of a common political culture, shared by all men who had had a formal education beyond the basic level. It legitimated the voice of would-be politician who were outside old régime governement.'

[14] To help the reader, when quoting or referencing precise passages from the speeches, I will refer to Kupiec-Abensour's recent edition, quoted in the bibliography as Saint-Just (2004).

[15] The speech against the Dantonists was written during the climax of the crisis of the Winter Year II, when the revolutionary government found itself challenged both by political groups on its left and on its right; the speech establishing the bureau of general police marked an important breaking point between the organs of the revolutionary government (the CSP advocating for himself some of the prerogative of the Committee of General Security); finally the speech of the 9 Thermidor was a last failed (as the speech was never fully delivered) attempt to pacify the division inside the CSP and to avoid the subsequent coup d'ètat.

[16] cf. Linton (2010:411) 'The speech denouncing the Dantonist was the most accomplished and the most skillfully constructed'.

[17] Vinot (1985: 249), despite judging the anecdote as truthful, reported that the source for it is Marc-Guillame Alexis Vadier, one of the members of the Comité de Sûreté Générale and opponent of the Robespierrists – without giving further specification, but Hampson (1991: 192 n. 9) traces the origin of this narrative to a Thermidorian source, Paul-August Jacques Taschereau-Farge's pamphlet *A Maximilien*

Robespierre aux Enfers 16-17, 1795-6 – An III, where the author claims that this is an oral tradition he collected directly from Vadier, which sheds light on the biased reliability of this source.

[18] The *Second Philippic* was a popular text; according to Parker (1937: 75) it is the classical text most quoted by Desmoulins.

[19] 'Danton, tu répondras à la justice inévitable, inflexible. Voyons ta conduite passée, et montrons que depuis le premier jour, complice de tous les attentats, tu fus toujours contraire au parti de la Liberté, et que tu conspirais avec Mirabeau, avec Dumouriez, avec Hébert, avec Hérault-Séchelles. Danton, tu as servi la tyrannie : tu fus, il est vrai, opposé à Lafayette ; mais Mirabeau, d'Orléans, Dumouriez, lui furent opposés de même. Oserais-tu nier avoir été vendu à ces trois hommes, les plus violents conspirateurs contre la Liberté? […]'

[20] 'A Rome, quand le consul découvrit la conjuration et l'etouffa au même instant par la mort des complices de Catiline, il fut accusé d'avoir violé les formes [...]. Punir les oppresseurs de l'humanité c'esta la clémence; et leur pardonner c'est barbarie.' Mon. II n. 139, p. 562, quoted in Bouineau (1986:144–5).

[21] Indeed the trial against the *Indulgents* put the revolutionary government in a problematic position; in the end, to overcome the danger of an acquittal, the Convention passed a law limiting the possibilities and the times of the defence.

[22] 'Ut igitur in seminibus est causa arborum et stirpium, sic huius luctuosissimi belli semen tu fuisti. Doletis tris exercitus populi Romani interfectos; interfecit Antonius. Desideratis clarissimos ciuis; eos quoque uobis eripuit Antonius*.'*

[23] 'Tu fus nommé rédacteur avec Brissot de la pétition du Champ-de-Mars, et vous échappâtes à la fureur de Lafayette, qui fit massacrer deux mille patriotes. […] Toi l'un des auteurs de la pétition, tandis que ceux qui l'avaient signée avaient été, les uns chargés de fers, les autres massacrés. Brissot et toi étiez-vous donc des objets de reconnaissance pour la tyrannie, puisque vous n'étiez point pour elle des objets de haine et de terreur? […] Mais quand tu vis l'orage du 10 août se préparer, tu te retiras encore à Arcis-sur-Aube. Déserteur des périls qui entouraient la liberté, les patriotes n'espéraient plus te revoir. Cependant, pressé par la honte, par les reproches, et quand tu sus que la chute de la tyrannie était bien préparée et inévitable, tu revins à Paris le 9 août. Tu te couchas dans cette nuit terrible. Ta section qui t'avait nommé son président, t'attendit longtemps ; on t'arracha d'un repos honteux ; tu présidas une heure, tu quittas le fauteuil à minuit quand le tocsin sonnait ; au même instant les satellites du tyran entrèrent et mirent la baïonnette sur le cœur de celui qui t'avait remplacé : toi, tu dormais.'

[24] 'felix fuit, si potest ulla in scelere esse felicitas'.

[25] 'tu fus couler d'heureux jours à Arcis-sur-Aube, si toutefois celui qui conspirait contre sa patrie, pouvait être heureux".

[26] 'Méchant homme, tu as comparé l'opinion publique à une femme de mauvaise vie ; tu as dit que l'honneur était ridicule ; que la gloire et la postérité étaient une sottise : ces maximes devaient te concilier l'aristocratie ; elles étaient celles de Catiline. […].'

[27] Linton (2008: 58–9) examined Robespierre's reply to such allegation; in Robespierre's speech friendship was seen in negative terms, as something that should be sacrificed to the love of the homeland.

[28] Linton (2008: 53) stated that 'friendship was central to revolutionary politics'.

[29] Cicero (2009: 52) In this regard, when compared with the speeches of the great, fourth-century Athenian orator Demosthenes, whose Philippics inspired Cicero to give his collection the same name, Cicero's *Second Phillippic* bears a greater resemblance to Demosthenes' autobiographical *Speech on the Crown* (*De Corona*) than it does to Demosthenes' *Phillippics* proper.

[30] This event determined the proclamation of the Republic.

[31] Camille est admirateurs des ancien, les écrits immortels de Cicéron et de Démosthènes font ses délices. La rassemblance des terms seuls lui monte à la tête. L'orateur grec et le romain ont fait de Philippiques, l'un contre le tyran de Macédon, l'autre contre un scélerat conspirateur. Camille croit, en lisant Philippeaux, lire encore les Philippiques de Cicéron et de Démosthènes, mais qu'il ne s'abuse pas: les anciens on fait de Philippiques, et Philippeaux n'a composé que de Philippatiques." *Le Moniteur* II, n.111, p. 466, quoted in Bouineau (1986: 145 n.79).

[32] 'Un homme révolutionnaire est inflexible. Mais il est sensé, il est frugal; il est simple sans afficher le luxe de la fausse modestie; il est l'irréconciliable ennemi de tout mensonge, de toute indulgence, de toute affectation. Comme son but est de voir triompher la Révolution, il ne la censure jamais, mais il condamne ses ennemis sans l'envelopper avec eux; il ne l'outrage point, mais il l'éclaire; et, jaloux de sa pureté, il s'observe quand il en parle, par respect pour elle; il prétend moins être l'égal de l'autorité qui est la loi, que l'égal des hommes, et surtout des malheureux. Un homme révolutionnaire est plein d'honneur; il est policé sans fadeur, mais par franchise, et parce qu'il est en paix avec son propre cœur; il croit que la grossièreté est une marque de tromperie et de remords, et qu'elle déguise la fausseté sous l'emportement. Les aristocrates parlent et agissent avec tyrannie. L'homme révolutionnaire est intraitable aux méchants, mais il est sensible; il est si jaloux de la gloire de sa patrie et de la liberté, qu'il ne fait rien inconsidérément; il court dans les combats, il poursuit les coupables et défend l'innocence dans les tribunaux; il dit la vérité afin qu'elle instruise, et non pas afin qu'elle outrage; il sait que, pour que la Révolution s'affermisse, il faut être aussi bon qu'on était méchant autrefois; sa probité n'est pas une finesse de l'esprit mais une qualité de cœur et une chose bien entendue. […] j'en conclu qu'un homme révolutionnaire est un héros de bon sens et de probité.'

[33] Cato was often quoted as a hero and a martyr of freedom (cf. Parker 1937: 176–7). Bouineau (1986: 110) pointed out that, as in the case of the two Brutus, often there was no distinction between Cato Uticensis and Cato Censorius, as they were both considered models of virtue.

[34] 'sa probité [est] une qualité de coeur.'

[35] 'magnitudo animi par.'

[36] 'severitas, integritate vitae.'

[37] 'studium modestiae, decoris.'

[38] 'maxume severitatis.'

[39] 'malis pernicies.'

[40] 'miseris perfugium.'

[41] 'il court dans le combat.'

[42] It is possible to read in this context one of the main differences between Saint-Just and Robespierre's theorisation of the revolutionary man; if, undoubtedly at least for the first months of the CSP, Robespierre incarnated the revolution itself, there was a new tendency, promulgated by Saint-Just and corresponding to his growing influence in the government, to promote a new kind of revolutionary: the man without a past, who was raised by the Revolution and who could deal with action and speech, but with a major emphasis on the first. Without raising this issue as a cause of division among the Robespierrists (as has been done by Ollivier 1954), it enlightens once again how it is erroneous to reduce different thinkers to a unitarian ideology.

[43] Amongst the delegates of the CSP, in fact, Saint-Just was probably the least present in Paris, constantly going into missions to the North front.

[44] Rollin (1752: viii.36-38).

[45] Saint-Just had already used Marcus Brutus as a model of virtue during his first speech against Louis XVI (Saint-Just 2004: 476), cf. Linton (2010:405–406).

[46] Bouineau (1984: 106) classified Peisistratos and his sons amongst the Greek tyrants.

[47] 'Nous n'avons pas de documents attestant que l'expression "tyrant de l'opinion"ait effectivement été employée contre Robespierre les mois précédent Thermidor [...]. La phrase de Saint-Just encourage plutôt à comprendre cette locution comme la synthèse de attaques portées contre Robespierre, attaques que nous ne connaissons pas précisément, mais qui concernaient l'influence que son éloquence, son autorité et son immense popularité lui donnaient dans les débats, tant à la Convention qu'aux Jacobins. Il est d'ailleurs probable que l'expression "tyran de l'opinion" ai ètè inspirée à Saint-Just par le scisourses que Robespierre fit en réponse à J.B. Louvet le 5 novembre 1972, dans lequel il s'etait défendu d'exercer un "despotisme d'opinion".' (Quennedy 2011: 199).

[48] The Spartan lawgiver (480–ca. 350 BC)

[49] 234-149 BC.

[50] In the same passage Saint-Just described Philip II's court as the place where all eloquence is banned, as in the court of a tyrant (Saint-Just 2004: 782 'Are you at Philip's court, you who are at war with the eloquence?' 'Êtes-vous donc de la cour de Philippe, vous qui faites la guerre à l'éloquence?').

[51] cf. Ipotesi (1984: 34–43).

[52] cf. Bouineau (1986: 105) and Ipotesi (1984:30).

[53] As well explained by Ipotesi (1984: 35), Saint-Just claimed that eloquence is essentially manipulation of the audience, because it touches the feelings, but then he discharged his own assumption, by saying that eloquence follows reason. Proceeding from this assumption. Saint-Just was ironically obliged to admit that Demosthenes (and thus Robespierre) exercised a form, however good, of tyranny.

[54] 'Le silence règne autour des trônes; ce n'est que chez les peuples libres qu'on a souffert le droit de persuader ses semblables'.

[55] 'Ne croyez pas au moins que'il a put sortir de mon coeur l'idée de flatter un homme! Je le défends parcequ'il m'a paru irréprochable, et je l'accuserais lui-même, s'il devenait criminel. […] J'atteste que Robespierre s'est déclaré le ferme appui de la Convention, et n'a jamais parlé dans le Comité, qu'avec ménagement, de porter atteinte à aucun de ses membres.'

[56] see Linton (2010: 395–397).

[57] According to Ipotesi (1984: 129) Saint-Just's whole attempt of transforming Antiquity to present his own political theory was unsuccessful.

[58] France (1990: 58) explained how theatricality was a core feature of Revolutionary Politics, more recently Friedland (2002) evidenced the connections between revolutionary politics and theatre.

[59] Even Elisabeth Le Bas, wife of Philippe Le Bas, who left a sympathetic portrait of the Jacobin leader, underlined that his inflexibility was so strong to cause worries to Robespierre, who preferred on two occasions to suggest to LeBas to accompany Saint-Just on a mission as to mitigate his character (cf. Stéfane-Pol 1901: 130–1).

[60] In the *Fragment* Saint-Just proclaimed that Stoicism is to be identified with Jacobin *Virtue* (Saint-Just 2004: 1137) 'Le stoicisme, qui est la vertu de l'esprit et de l'âme, peut seul empêcher la corruption d'une république marchande, ou qui manque de moeurs.' (transl. Stoicism alone, which is the Virtue of the spirit and the soul, can prevent the corruption of a commercial republic or of a republic that is lacking of moral institutions*).* A Stoic influence is also traditionally attributed to one of Saint-Just's phrases: 'I despise this dust which composes me and which speaks to you. This dust, you might persecute and kill it, but I defy you to rip me out this independent life that I gave myself in the centuries and in the heavens'. (`Je méprise la poussière que me <[…]> compose et que vous parle. On pourrait le persécuter et faire mourir cette poussière, mais je défie qu'on m'arrache la vie indépendente que je me suis donnée dans les siècles et dans les cieux.')

[61] Saint-Just (2004: 763): 'l'héroisme n'a point de modèles'.

[62] Ipotesi (1984: 93–7) argued that, especially in his theoretical works, Saint-Just sometimes challenged Antiquity and discarded those solutions which were not appropriate for France, as in the case of militarism in Ancient Greece.

[63] Cf. *Considérations sur le causes de la grandeur de Romains et leur decadence* (1734).

[64] Bouineau (1986:143) pointed out that references to Rome are more numerous than references to Greece in the rhetoric of the Convention.

[65] 'Codrus mourut précipité dans un abîme; Lycurgue eut l'œil crevé par les fripons de Sparte, que contrariaient ses lois dures, et mourut en exil. Phocion et Socrate burent la ciguë; Athènes même, ce jour-là, se couronna de fleurs.'

[66] I deliberately exclude here the discussion of the influence of Montaigne's *De l'amitié* and in general of Rousseau's thoughts on feelings on Saint-Just's theory. Montaigne's essay was an attempt to square his own theory with the views of Cicero's *Laelius*.

[67] 'Le monde est vide depuis le Romains; mais leur presence le remplit et prophétise le nom de la liberté.'

[68] 'Si la République Romaine renaissait, elle se glorifierait de nous, et rougirait beacoup de ses autres successeurs.'