

A Pair of Empire patinated and gilt-bronze candelabra, with “à l’antique” vestals supporting a oil lamp from which start three sconces on an octagonal granite base adorned with a chiselled and gilded rod, attributed to the bronzier Claude Galle (1759-1815) and made for the Russian market. Beginning 19th Century.

Height: 21 in. (53 cm)



Conditions: Very good conditions.

In the Empire period are present numerous bronziers: Thomire, Galle, Ravrio, Feuchère, Lefèvre to name a few. They manufacture for the French market, but since the end of the 18th century the demand in Russia is very important. The Russian nobility uses intermediaries such as merchants Lesage and Ruspini to buy the bronzes needed to furnish its palaces, but the prohibitive cost for imports resulted in the creation of bronze factories like that of Bergenfeldt, which competed with the best bronziers in France.

This motif of oil lamp is present on some of the achievements of Claude Galle as attested by this description of objects he presents in 1819:

Galle-fabricant de bronzes et dorures rue Colbert n°9 – objets présentés à l'exposition de 1819:

“Une paire de candélabres à figures portant sur la tête une lampe antique à trois becs et des cornets à têtes de vieillard dans chacune de leur main. Les bases ornées de moulures et d’ornements sont en griotte d’Italie. Haut 29 p° prix: 850 francs.”



The motif of the oil lamp made its appearance in the early 1780s, a motif that appears on a preparatory drawing attributed to P.P Thomire (collection of the Museum of Decorative Arts - Paris)



This motif will be used on the present torcheres in the palace of St. Cloud in 1805 and in the inventory of 1807: *deux paires de flambeaux , pieds triangulaires, ornés de sphinx, portant sur leur tête une gaine ronde ornée de figures surmontée d'une lampe antique, le tout doré or mat. (1)*



Claude Galle (1759-1815), one of Thomire's competitors under the Empire, was a source of inspiration for the Russian bronzeworkers, including a pair of candelabra now in the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg.

1- Marie-France Dupuy-Baylet, *l'heure, le feu, la lumière, les bronzes du mobilier national 1800-1870*, éd. Faton, 2010, n° 117, p.212. Ces candélabres sont donnés au bronzier Lefèvre