MATERIALITY, THE MODEL, AND THE MYTH OF ORIGINS:

PROBLEMS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN TERRACOTTA

AND ITS RECEPTION

by

LAUREN R. CANNADY

(Under the Direction of Alisa Luxenberg)

ABSTRACT

The value of terracotta as a sculptural medium has never been a monetary one; rather, its worth is found in its intrinsic malleability, allowing sculptors to work quickly in capturing an idea, likeness, or expression. While historically sculptors have chosen terracotta as a preferred medium for making models, or *bozzetti*, it has also long been associated with finished portrait busts. This thesis traces the rise in prominence of terracotta as a material of finished portrait sculpture in the late eighteenth century, culminating in the busts of the French academic sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon. By examining contemporaneous trends in the fine arts as well as literature, it is possible to understand eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts as reflections of the increased appreciation for the material qualities of terracotta and the creative and unique touch of the sculptor.

INDEX WORDS: Terracotta, Terracotta portrait busts, Jean-Antoine Houdon, Pliny the Elder, The Corinthian Maid

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B.A., University of Montevallo, 2004

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2006

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August 2006

DEDICATION

With my most sincere gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to my family – Michael, Catherine, and Allison Cannady – you have been behind me in this venture as I know you will be in the future. I would also like to dedicate this project to my fellow students, colleagues, and, above all, closest friends – Matt McKinney, Sarah Crain, and Shannon Pritchard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I offer my deepest gratitude, appreciation, and admiration to my advisor, Professor Alisa Luxenberg. Her continuous support, encouragement, and guidance are reflected in the pages of this thesis. I would like to thank my committee member, Professor Shelley Zuraw, for her guidance in all aspects in the realm of sculpture, as well as her courage to undertake an eighteenth-century topic, perhaps against her own better judgment. I am also grateful to Professor Isabelle Wallace, my final committee member, for her valuable insight, creative perspective on the topic, and, most importantly, her sense of humor.

In addition to my professors at the University of Georgia, I would like to express gratitude to several curators without the assistance of whom I would not have been able to conduct such thorough provenance research. I would like to thank Ms. Denise Allen, Associate Curator of the Frick Collection, for allowing me to spend valuable time examining the terracotta busts in the collection. I would also like to thank M. Guilhem Scherf, curator of sculpture at the Musée du Louvre, for granting me access to all the related dossiers regarding Jean-Antoine Houdon. Both of these experiences provided me with information invaluable to my project.

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Introduction: Materiality and Modeling

In recent years, a surge of scholarly interest in three-dimensional terracotta models has led to a series of major exhibitions which, in turn, have produced several excellent catalogues that I have relied on in my own research. These catalogues include: *From the Sculptor's Hand: Italian Baroque Terracottas from the State Hermitage Museum*; *Earth and Fire: Italian Terracotta Sculpture from Donatello to Canova*; and, *Playing With Fire: European Terracotta Models, 1740-1840.*[1] These exhibition catalogues are comprised of extensive essays on the history of terracotta modeling, including the practices of sculptors and the functions of their models, and the collecting of such models by amateurs and connoisseurs. As their titles suggest, the aforementioned catalogues almost exclusively address the terracotta models created in Europe and, in particular, Italy and France, two nations that led academic sculptural production in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet, scholars have thus far not distinguished the terracotta portrait bust from other works in terracotta. Such a distinction, I believe, is necessary because the terracotta portrait busts created in the eighteenth century differ from other works in clay in terms of both appearance and function. The genesis of this thesis arose from my exploration of an already-noted development: the existence and proliferation of finished terracotta portrait busts executed by French sculptors in the period of the 1770's to 1790's. This thesis proposes to address several questions: how are these busts to be accounted for, what was the significance of such works, and why were they created in this material at this specific moment?

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[1] Ian Wardropper, ed., *From the Sculptor's Hand: Italian Baroque Terracottas from the State Hermitage Museum*, exh. cat. Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1998. Bruce Boucher, ed., *Earth and Fire: Italian Terracotta Sculptures from Donatello to Canova*, exh. cat. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001. James David Draper and Guilhem Scherf, eds., *Playing With Fire: European Terracotta Models, 1740-1840*, exh cat. Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003.

In a painting entitled *Houdon in His Studio* (fig. 1), executed in 1803-4 by the French genre painter Louis-Léopold Boilly, the contemporary French sculptor is depicted in his studio actively modeling the likeness in clay of the sitter seated before him.[2] The studio space and the shelves lining the walls above the central figures are filled with art objects, including various portrait busts executed in a range of sculptural materials. Works created in what appear to be the earthy color of terracotta, the white of either plaster or marble, and the patina of bronze allude to the sculptor's proficiency in and mastery of each material. The sculptor, located in the center of the image, is absorbed in capturing the sitter's image, but, the viewer's attention, rather than being focused on the sitter who appears in profile, is directed toward the sculptor, his creation, and his actual working process. Although created after the period of interest to this paper, Boilly's painting is relevant in its particular representation of the sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon (b.1741-d.1828), one of the foremost French portraitists of the late eighteenth century, a figure who is central to my discussion of eighteenth-century terracotta portraiture. The painting foregrounds Houdon's work by not idealizing the figure of Houdon (although one could argue that the seemingly-fictional green draped fabric in the studio lends a classicizing, and, thus, idealizing element to the painting); hence, it was the sculptor, in the process of working that merited depiction. This painted image of the sculptor diverges from earlier seventeenth- and eighteenth-century representations of scultpors,

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[2] Boilly actually executed two versions of his painting entitled *Houdon in his Studio*. Aside from the painting from 1803-4, today in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, he painted another version circa 1803 (Musée d'Art Thomas Henry, Cherbourg) in which Houdon appears exactly as he does in the 1803-4 portrait, but rather than modeling a portrait in clay, he models a full-length nude from an actual sitter before him. The other figures in the studio are also different; instead of Houdon's wife and children who are depicted in the Paris version, there area group of young men, presumably students, surrounding him, sketching while he models in the Cherbourg version. Houdon's sitter in the Paris painting has been identified as the mathematician and astronomer Pierre-Simon Laplace. Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon – Sculptor of the Enlightenment* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2004), 342.

such as Gabriel Revel's 1683 portrait of *François Girardon* (fig. 26), in that Houdon is

not aggrandized or elaborately dressed; rather, he is depicted as slight of stature in

working clothes and with his hands actually engaging with the material. The

identification of the sculptor's profession does not rest exclusively on the tools of the

trade accompanying his figure as in those other depictions: rather, Houdon's identity as a

sculptor is confirmed through the visualization of his working practices. Furthermore,

Houdon is depicted modeling in clay, which would later be fired to create terracotta, as

opposed to working in more costly and valuable materials like marble or bronze. The

significance of this image, and those that are roughly contemporaneous to be discussed in

the final chapter, in which sculptors are also represented in the process of modeling a

portrait in clay, is manifold. Such depictions suggest a broadening appreciation for the

sculptor, his technical abilities, and, perhaps most importantly, terracotta as the sculptural

material most prominently associated with the creative process of a portrait bust. The

moment when the sculptor first modeled a portrait in clay was considered one of primacy

and immediacy because it was from this first model that all subsequent versions or casts

of the portrait bust were realized. But how did one arrive at an understanding of

terracotta as the material most closely associated with the hand of the sculptor and the

idea of authenticity?

To speak generally of clay, it is an abundant natural resource and had long been

a preferred medium for sculpted models which were, traditionally, not highly valued

because of the material's universal availability and its relative fragility. Due to its

intrinsic malleability, an attribute which allowed the material to be re-worked on

numerous occasions, clay was generally thought to be well-suited for the working-out of

formal problems in sketches and models that functioned as preparatory exercises on the

path to the final work. The association of clay with the preparatory stages of the

sculptural process, rather than as a material for finished sculptures, is illuminated by two

eighteenth-century art theorists, the German Johann Joachim Winckelmann and the

French Louis de Jaucourt, both writing in the 1760's. Their texts can be understood as

representative of the general atmosphere of the visual arts in the period immediately

preceding the one of most concern to this thesis. In the *History of Ancient Art*, first

published in German in 1764 and then translated into French in 1766, Winckelmann

articulated his perception of the function of clay,

> Modeling in clay is not the execution itself, but only a step preparatory to it,
> the term "execution" being understood as applying to works in gypsum,
> ivory, stone, marble, bronze, and other hard materials.[3]

Louis de Jaucourt's article entitled "Modèle" from the *Encyclopédie*, published in its

entirety in 1765, has an analogous conception of clay in the artistic process,

> Les Sculpteurs nomment *modèles*, des figures de terre ou d'argile, de plâtre,
> de cire, qu'ils ébauchent pour leur servir de dessein, et en exécuter de plus
> grandes, soit de marbre, soit d'une autre matière.[4]

Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art* and the *Encyclopédie* were widely circulated

across Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century and numerous artists and

patrons alike were aware of the theories and conceptions of the visual arts in them.[5] Clay

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[3] Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art*, tr. from the German by G. Henry Lodge (Boston: J.R. Osgood, 1872), 79. Winckelmann's *Geschicte der Kunst des Altertums* was first published in Dresden in 1764.

[4] Louis de Jaucourt, "Modèle," in Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert,eds., *Encyclopédie*, vol. 2 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1985), 910. "Sculptors call models those figures of earth, clay, plaster, or wax which they rough out in order to serve as the design in order to execute larger works, either in marble or some other material." All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[5] Etienne-Maurice Falconet, an articulate and self-educated eighteenth-century French academic sculptor, contributed the article for "Sculpture" in the *Enclyclopédie*. In discussing the essential and practical nature of the sculptor's model, Falconet wrote, "Among the difficulties of sculpting there is one, well known and

models, in their preparatory capacity, were equated by theorists like de Jaucourt with drawings; both were seen to serve as part of the sculptural process rather than as independent works of art.[6] However, the notions of the function of clay put forth by Winckelmann and de Jaucourt are problematized by the actual existence of and proliferation of finished terracotta sculptures or, to be more concise, terracotta portrait busts: finished works of art executed in a traditionally preparatory material.

French terracotta models began to be collected by amateurs in the first part of the eighteenth century, but as the century progressed, an increasing number of art patrons sought out finished works of art in terracotta. I will argue that late eighteenth-century French terracotta portrait busts were increasingly appreciated not for the real value of their actual material, but for the association of terracotta with the *première pensée*, or the first thought of the sculptor and the physical mark of his genius. In the same article entitled 'Modèle' from the *Encyclopédie*, Louis de Jaucourt elucidates the function of terracotta as the sculptor's sketch for a work in another material,

> Modeler en terre ou en cire; c'est, parmi les Sculpteurs, l'action de former
> avec de la terre ou de la cire les modèles ou esquisses des ouvrages qu'ils

deserving the greatest attention of the artist. This is the impossibility to go back on himself and to make fundamental changes in the whole or in parts of the composition once the marble has been roughed out: a strong reason for deciding on establishing his model and for determining it in such a way that the sculptor can carry out his marble with assurance." Although Falconet does not mention clay specifically in his discussion of models, he does emphasize that a finished sculpture is one that is executed in marble; hence, the execution of models aids in avoiding mistakes in marble which could be irreversible, costly, and time-consuming. Although Falconet was a practicing artist, rather than an art theorist like Winckelmann and de Jaucourt, he seemed to have shared the opinion of these two theorists that finished sculptures should be executed in valuable materials, like marble. It is interesting to consider that the notions of what constituted finished sculpture suggested by Falconet, himself an academic sculptor, were reflective of the ideals upheld by the French Académie in a general sense. If such a hierarchy of sculpture materials did exist within the Académie, then the emergence of finished portrait busts in terracotta executed by French academic sculptors, like Houdon, is highly consequential. Falconet's text is cited in translation by Rudolf Wittkower, *Sculpture: Processes and Principles* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 221.
[6] Thus, the term "rough sketch" is applicable to both two-dimensional drawings and three-dimensional clay models. At the French Académie, painting and sculpture students attended the same classes to learn to draw the human figure; drawing was seen as the uniting practice of the different media.

veulent exécuter, soit en marbre, soit en bois, ou en fonte.[7]

Although Claude-Henri Watelet, an author and art collector who also contributed to the *Encyclopédie*, was referring to the two-dimensional sketch of the painter in his article on 'Esquisse,' he evokes the association of the sketch with the concept of genius,

> L'Imagination, maîtresse absolue de cet ouvrage [esquisse], ne souffre qu'impatiemment le plus petit ralentissement dans sa production. C'est cette rapidité d'exécution qui est le principe du feu qu'on voit briller dans les esquisses des peintres du génie ; on y reconnaît l'empreinte du mouvement de leur âme.[8]

From these two Encyclopédie entries, the first relating to sculpture and the second to painting, it is clear that the term *esquisse* was used interchangeably in discussions of the fine arts and, thus, the implications of the two-dimensional sketch with genius was also applied to the three-dimensional sketch in the eighteenth century. It is my contention that terracotta portrait busts became more prominent and more patronized in the late eighteenth century due, in large part, to this association of the material with the modeler's hand and the increased importance and value given to the visible signs of the hand left on the surface of terracotta as a result of the working process.

While this thesis treats the works of several late eighteenth-century French portrait sculptors, Jean-Antoine Houdon will serve as the paradigm for my argument because he was so prolific in his production of terracotta portrait busts. Houdon was a veritable virtuoso, working in a range of sculptural materials from bronze and marble to terracotta and plaster. The exhibition catalogue, *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the*

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[7] Louis de Jaucourt, 'Modèle,' in Diderot and d'Alembert, eds; *Encyclopédie*, 910. "Modeling in clay or in wax; amongst sculptors it is the action of forming with the clay or wax models or sketches of works that they would like to execute either in marble or wood or iron."

[8] Ibid., vol. 1, 1246. Entry by Claude-Henri Watelet (b.1718-d.1786). "The imagination, absolute master of this work (the sketch), suffers only impatiently the slightest slowing down of its production. It is the rapidity of execution which is the principle of the fire that one sees burning in the sketches of the painters of genius; one recognizes in the sketch the imprint of the movement of their spirit."

Enlightenment, edited by Anne L. Poulet and published in 2004, has been a valuable

resource for Houdon's working practices and his œuvre, in particular his terracotta

portrait busts.[9]

Relevant to my discussion of terracotta portrait busts are the mythical origins of

modeled portraiture in clay, as related by Pliny the Elder, and especially the eighteenth-

century treatments of his tale in visual and textual sources. While much scholarly work

has been devoted to Pliny's tale in relation to the origins of painting and the depictions of

that theme, no one has studied the connections between the tale and late eighteenth-

century terracotta portrait busts. In my exploration of this theme, I have drawn on the

work of Robert Rosenblum, in particular, his article, "The Origin of Painting: A Problem

in the Iconography of Romantic Classicism," published in the *Art Bulletin* in 1957, the

first study directed specifically at the various representations and interpretations of the

legend of the Corinthian maid in the visual arts, and his article is still considered an

authoritative work on the subject.[10] Whereas Rosenblum and the scholars who advance

his argument have succeeded in identifying various works of art that engage the

Corinthian maid theme, they have neglected to address the ways in which these

depictions suppress Pliny's tale of the origin of clay modeling in favor of his other one of

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[9] Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon – Sculptor of the Enlightenment* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2004).

[10] Robert Rosenblum, "The Origin of Painting: A Problem in the Iconography of Romantic Classicism" *Art Bulletin* 39 (December 1957): 279-290. While Rosenblum identified images of the 'Corinthian Maid' from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, the works at the fringes of this time span served as illustrations to art treatises and, later, as comical interpretations of the origin myth. (Rosenblum, 282). The two principle articles written in response to Rosenblum's "Origin of Painting" are George Levitine, "Addenda to Robert Rosenblum's 'The Origin of Painting: A Problem in the Iconography of Romantic Classicism," *Art Bulletin* (December 1958): 329-331 and Frances Meuke, "Taught by Love: The Origin of Painting Again," *Art Bulletin* 81 (June 1999): 297-302. In the fall of 2005, I attended a lecture presented by Lisa Saltzman at the University of Georgia in which she discussed Pliny's tale of the Corinthian maid at length. That particular lecture was based on her forthcoming publication entitled *Making Memory Matter: Strategies of Remembrance in Contemporary Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

the origin of drawing/painting. As I hope to demonstrate in this thesis, late eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts can be regarded, in part, as inheritors to the sculptural tradition established in Pliny's familiar tale. If the mythical first sculpted portrait was executed in terracotta, then terracotta was inherently linked to the moment of the origin of sculpted portraiture and, in turn, validated as a material appropriate for finished portrait busts.

Chapter One: The Sculptural Function(s) of Terracotta

A rough sketch and a finished portrait bust can both be made of clay; however, despite this use of a common material, they are disparate objects. The sketch exists to serve in a strictly preparatory capacity while the finished portrait is an independent work of art. This fine distinction between the terracotta model and the finished sculpture is important considering the number of French terracotta portrait busts of the second half of the eighteenth century that functioned as autonomous works of sculpture rather than as preparatory models. As opposed to other works in clay, such as rough three-dimensional sketches or even preliminary models for portraits to be executed in other materials, these later French terracotta portraits differ in their degree of finish, their function, and their audience. The consistent, yet evolving, use of terracotta for sculpting portraiture should be analyzed in order to determine how the appearance and function of the eighteenth-century busts depart from those of portraits that were created earlier. Likewise, the changing function of the medium, even when used for works other than portraits, must be assessed.

The seventeenth-century Italian sculptor Gianlorenzo Bernini's three-dimensional models for the *Angels* of the *Ponte Sant' Angelo* in Rome (fig. 2) can be taken as an example of the function of clay in the sculptural process. Models ranging from partially fragmented, rough sketches in which finger and tool marks are clearly visible to those that are more complete and smoother, such as the two *bozzetti* in the Kimbell Museum collection, reveal the development of his creative process.[11] Bernini's models serve as a

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[11] Bernini executed numerous versions of his *Angels* bozzetti, all with differing degrees of finish, which date to circa 1667-8 and range in height from 30 to 33cm. Two examples of the *Angels* are the Louvre pair, which are rough and highly sketchy in appearance, and the pair at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, illustrated here, which represent a more final stage of the sculptor's modeling. Both of the

sort of record of the artist's evolving concept for a sculpture before he decided on a final composition. In its capacity as a preliminary sketch, the clay model executed by the sculptor can be equated with a drawing, often made as a two-dimensional sketch by the painter. Both forms of the sketch acted as early visualizations of the artist's ideas and, because of this, the two- and three-dimensional sketch had associations with the primacy and originality of the artist's first thought.[12]

Like many sculptors who operated large workshops, Bernini did not intend his models to be autonomous works of art; rather, he made them as a means by which to bring his ideas into three-dimensional existence as well as to facilitate their translation by his assistants into a more permanent medium. Often, models created by Bernini were handed over to members of his workshop who, rather than the master sculptor himself, executed a final version of the sculpture in marble or bronze.[13] Two conclusions can be drawn from this fact: first, that the clay model was potentially the last object worked by the sculptor's own hand, whereas the final work in another material might represent only his conception rather than his labor; and, second, that the intended audience for seventeenth-century clay sketches was generally not a collector or patron, but the assistants for whom the clay model served as a tool.[14] Although the processes of creating a clay model and a terracotta portrait bust were analogous and required the same agile

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corresponding marble *Angels* date to 1668-9 and are today located in the church of Sant'Andrea delle Frate in Rome.

[12] It should be noted that, while many sculptors would create their first sketch in clay, there are others, including Bernini who simultaneously created drawings along with clay models. However, Houdon, the sculptor principal to this discussion of eighteenth-century terracotta busts, did not create drawings, preferring instead to work directly with a three-dimensional model. Ian Wardropper, "The Role of Terracotta in Italian Baroque Sculptural Practice," in *From the Sculptor's Hand: Italian Baroque Terracottas from the State Hermitage Museum*, exh cat (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1998), 38.

[13] Ibid., 30-1.

[14] Bruce Boucher, "Bernini's Models for the Angels of the Ponte Sant'Angelo in Rome," in *Earth and Fire, Italian Terracotta Sculpture from Donatello to Canova*, exh cat (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 61.

skills, further conceptual or formal comparisons between rough three-dimensional models, such as Bernini's angels, and the eighteenth-century portraits must take into account the dramatically different motivations behind the creation of these works.[15] Autonomous portrait busts executed in terracotta, the material which had previously been almost exclusively associated with the model, were increasingly created, commissioned, and exhibited by the second half of the eighteenth century.

Terracotta has been linked with sculpted portraiture since antiquity. Perhaps the earliest reference to the modeling of portraiture in terracotta comes from the writings of Pliny the Elder (henceforth Pliny), a first-century Roman who wrote his *Natural History* circa 77 C.E. Of his three books devoted to the history of the arts, Pliny dedicates Book XXXV to *Pictura et Plastice*, or painting and modeling.[16] After a lengthy discussion of the origins of painting, Pliny shifts his focus to clay modeling and its origins,

> It was by the selfsame earth that Boutades, a potter of Sikyon, discovered, with the help of his daughter, how to model portraits in clay. She was in love with a youth, and when he was leaving the country she traced the outline of the shadow which his face cast on the wall by lamplight. Her father filled in the outline with clay and made a model; this he dried and baked with the rest of his pottery, and we hear that it was preserved in the temple of the Nymphs, until Mummius overthrew Corinth.[17]

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[15] Although I am using the English word 'model' to describe the clay works of Bernini, the most appropriate term for his models is *bozzetto*. This Italian term literally refers to the three-dimensional sketch, the term *modello* signifying the more finished "presentation" model. It is interesting to note that, as in English, there is not a proper distinction in the French language between the three-dimensional sketch and the more formal model. The term *modèle* is most often used for any type of clay model, while the term for the sketch, *esquisse*, is almost exclusively reserved for drawn sketches. For a more thorough discussion of the distinction between the *bozzetto* and the *modello*, refer to Irving Lavin, "Bozzetti and Modelli: Notes on Sculptural Procedure from the Early Renaissance through Bernini," in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte, 1964: Stil und Überlieferung* III (1967): 93-104.

[16] Pliny's chapter entitled *Pictura* begins on line 15 and goes through line 149 while *Plastice* is from line 151 to 158.

[17] *The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, trans. by K. Jex-Blake (Chicago: Argonaut, 1968), 175.

Thus, the daughter's two-dimensional tracing of the shadow is the model, while her father's portrait bust in clay is the final creation, or work of art.[18] Pliny's tale of the Corinthian maid and her father, Boutades, attempts to locate the historical invention of terracotta portraiture within the context of classical Greece and male artistic practice. The eighteenth-century portrait busts renewed this ancient validation of terracotta as a medium for sculpted portraiture.

One of the oldest extant terracotta portrait busts, dating to a century or so before Pliny's *Natural History*, was discovered in the region surrounding Cumae in Italy in the late nineteenth century.[19] The Cumae bust (fig. 3), a slightly less than life-sized head in the round made of gray-brown terracotta, is today highly valued as one of the few ancient busts in this fragile medium to remain largely intact. While neither the sculptor nor the sitter has been identified, the portrait has been dated to circa 50 B.C.E., during the Late Republican period. Some scholars, including Cornelius Vermeule, have suggested that the Cumae portrait was a life-mask by explaining that, while the right nostril is entirely open, the left nostril of the figure's nose is open, thus allowing for a breathing channel for the sitter as the cast of his face was being made.[20] If the Cumae bust had been a life-mask, then the initial cast of the face would have been made in plaster; following this step, the sculptor would have filled in the plaster mould with clay. However, Diana Kleiner has recently argued that this Roman portrait could not have been taken from a

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[18] If the seventeenth-century construction of the sculpture process in which the master sculptor was responsible for the model while the assistant executed the finished work were to be applied to Pliny's tale, then it would seem that the Corinthian maid would, in fact, play the role of the artist or master since her drawing prompted the work of her father, who would become the assistant, or executor.

[19] There is another terracotta head of a man from the early first century B.C.E. today in the collection of the Louvre, Paris. For a reproduction of this terracotta head, see Diana E. E. Kleiner's *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), fig. 14.

[20] Cornelius Vermeule, *Roman Art: Early Republic to Late Empire* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1979), 37-8.

cast of the sitter's face because of the animation seen in the facial features and the sitter's

expression. Rather than being a life-mask meant to evoke a specific family member and

used in the ancestor-worshipping ceremonies of the ancient Romans, Kleiner suggests

that the Cumae bust was most likely a *bozzetto*, or model, for another more-finished bust

in either marble or bronze.[21]

Ancient Roman portraits, such as the Cumae bust, are often described in terms of

the verism they display, in which the portrayal aims to convey every nuanced

physiognomic feature, whether those features be flattering or not. David Jackson

provides a concise definition of this artistic verism:

> …[Verism is] usually characterized as a form of ultra-physical realism which
> avoids or rejects idealizing tendencies in preference for the prosaic, and which
> tends to make a virtue of rendering detail and tangibility: warts, moles, creases,
> and wrinkles appear as though facial texture was the artist's sole concern.[22]

The advanced signs of the sitter's age are quite prominent in the Cumae bust: the sagging

flesh of the cheeks and neck, the wrinkles surrounding the eyes. Even if the bust was not

created from a literal cast of the face, the sculptor of the Cumae bust was careful to

record many distinctive features of the sitter's likeness.

A marble bust of the ancient Roman philosopher and statesmen Cicero (fig. 4)

from the first century B.C.E. is contemporaneous to the Cumae bust and another example

of Roman Republican portraiture.[23] What is distinctive about this marble bust is that the

unique physiognomic features of Cicero are portrayed with a sense of idealization in the

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[21] Kleiner, 37-8. As of yet, no marble or bronze bust corresponding to the Cumae terracotta has been discovered to prove this hypothesis.

[22] David Jackson, "Verism and the Ancestral Portrait," *Greece and Rome*, 34, (April 1987), 32.

[23] The version of the Cicero bust today in the collection of the Vatican Museum (Chiaramonti Collection) is actually a second-century copy after the first-century B.C.E. original. James D. Breckenridge, *Likeness: A Conceptual History of Ancient Portraiture* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 156-9.

pensive gaze and tousled hair which allude to an intellectual and virile character. Thus, the Cicero bust combines three principal qualities of Republican portrait busts: idealization, verism, and masculinity.

The bust of Denis Diderot, first modeled in terracotta by Houdon in 1771 (fig. 5), makes it clear that the sculptor was aware of and had an affinity for the conventions of Roman portraiture.[24] Houdon could not possibly have been aware of the Cumae bust, as it was not discovered until a century after the *Diderot* was modeled, but he might have known the marble bust of Cicero, either the version in the Vatican collection or another similar one. It is logical to assume that Houdon would have been more familiar with ancient Roman marble sculptures which represent the vast majority of surviving ancient works, than the rare terracottas, which were more impermanent and fragile.

The *Diderot* bust is arrestingly similar in composition and conventions to the Cumae bust. Both portraits depict their sitter truncated above the shoulders and breastbone looking slightly off to their right, with tousled hair and a nude upper torso. The *Diderot* is also reminiscent, however, both stylistically and conceptually, to the bust of Cicero, a comparison first made by Guilhem Scherf. Scherf has argued that Diderot is depicted as the orator type, perhaps a modern Cicero.[25] This comparison is interesting considering that Diderot, like the ancient philosopher, was active in intellectual as well as civic pursuits.[26] Both Cicero and Diderot are depicted with a nude upper torso, but the *Diderot* bust has been truncated above the shoulders and breastbone, whereas Cicero's

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[24] Houdon sculpted Diderot's likeness in terracotta in 1771 and, following that initial bust, executed numerous other versions of the sitter in other materials, including marble, bronze, and plaster. For complete information on the dates, materials, and current locations of all the known versions of Houdon's *Diderot*, see Poulet, *Houdon*, 141-51.

[25] Poulet, *Houdon*, 147.

[26] Diderot, like many of Houdon's sitters, was the epitome of the Enlightenment thinker. The image of Diderot, himself a philosopher, writer, and critic, became iconic of the French and, in a more general sense, European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.

torso is fuller. Furthermore, the slightly furrowed brow and tousled hair, typical

conventions of depictions of intellectuals, of the Cicero bust reappear in Houdon's work.

The function of the bust of Cicero was not ancestor worship, but rather a public tribute to

an important civic figure. Similarly, Houdon created his bust of Diderot as an homage to

one of the leading philosophers and authors of the eighteenth century.[27]

That Houdon's bust of *Diderot* was perceived in the time of its execution to be a

convincing likeness of the sitter is clear in the remark of one critic of the 1771 Salon,

"The flame of genius brought that bust to life; there is a fire, an expression, that gives

striking resemblance."[28] The veristic qualities of Diderot's appearance, such as the

sagging flesh of his face, the bump of his nose, the slightly parted lips, and the hollowed-

out irises of his eyes, are combined with such idealizing features as the lofty gaze, large

forehead, and tousled hair which all allude to the sitter's importance as an intellectual.

In addition to the veristic qualities of the Diderot bust, this particular portrait by

Houdon also displays a strong sense of masculinity, especially when the bust is compared

to earlier representations of the philosopher. Diderot himself was pleased with Houdon's

likeness of him and stated that the bust was "a very good likeness" when he encountered

the terracotta version at the 1771 Salon.[29] However, when the French painter, Claude-

Michel Van Loo exhibited his painted portrait of Diderot in the Salon of 1767 (fig. 6),

Diderot's reaction was adverse and he stated that the portrait made him look like a "cute,

laughing, effeminate old flirt."[30] That Diderot was displeased with his painted likeness,

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[27] Furthermore, just as multiple copies were made after the original bust of Cicero, Houdon's bust of *Diderot* was reproduced numerous times at the request of patrons in France and abroad in honor of this important French figure.

[28] Poulet, *Houdon*, 146.

[29] Ibid., 141-7.

[30] Poulet, *Houdon*, 141-7.

but satisfied with the sculpted version later suggests a discrepancy between the successfulness of a two-dimensional versus a three-dimensional portrait as well as a gendering of each. Whether due to the element of color inherent in painting or the rich clothing Van Loo depicted him wearing, Diderot described himself as seemingly "effeminate." However, Houdon's sculpted likeness was more timeless due to the nude upper torso and, perhaps, more accurate, but also highly reminiscent of Roman Republican portraits of male figures.[31]

Houdon's reliance on the conventions of ancient Roman portraiture for certain stylistic elements of his bust of Diderot is not surprising; his true innovation, as well as that of his contemporaries, was to leave the surface of the terracotta unpainted and unglazed, but with a high degree of finish. The absence of almost all traces of the artist's finger or tool marks on the work's surface in combination with the careful and precise truncation at the shoulders give the appearance of a finished work of art. Houdon completed and exhibited this terracotta version of *Diderot* with its high degree of finish comparable to a work in marble, but then, just four years later, he executed a marble version of the same bust (fig. 7). The terracotta *Diderot* from 1771 was the first version Houdon made and it was this original terracotta that served as the template for all other versions in different materials, including marble, bronze, and plaster. Thus, like the preparatory clay model, this terracotta bust was the first thought, the first work executed by the sculptor, and the model for all other versions; yet, unlike Bernini's *Angels*, it was simultaneously an independent work of art.

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[31] Like in Pliny's tale in which Boutades fills in the daughter's outline drawing with clay to make the image of the departing lover more real, even more mimetic, perhaps Houdon's three-dimensional depiction of Diderot improved upon or even corrects Van Loo's painted image, making Diderot *seem* more real.

The significance of the terracotta *Diderot* being left natural, or, unpainted and unglazed, is made clear when Houdon's portrait is compared to seventeenth-century terracottas whose material was intentionally disguised. In several instances, seventeenth-century portrait sculptors painted their busts in order to make them more closely resemble expensive sculptural materials such as marble and bronze. Alessandro Algardi's terracotta bust of *Pope Innocent X* (fig. 8), circa 1646-49, has traces of varnish and gilding applied in layers over white paint, thereby simulating the smooth, reflective, luminous surface of polished white marble.[32]   By working in terracotta, Algardi was able to achieve the same details that he would have in marble, as seen, for example, in the delicate wrinkles on the sitter's face and the ornate embroidery on the clothing, but in a less time-consuming process than marble carving. The coat of white paint, rather than the natural earthy tones of the clay, created the impression of a fine and expensive marble bust. While it can not be asserted that terracotta busts such as Algardi's were painted so as to deceive the viewer, the sculptors did seem to want to emulate surface qualities of finer materials like marble.

The critical point is that Houdon, early in his career, established a practice of executing terracotta portrait busts as finished works of art. Eventually, Houdon's patrons sought and commissioned works in terracotta, rather than other materials, such as marble or bronze. Even though terracotta as a sculptural material was employed in the creation of portrait busts well before the eighteenth century, it was not until the second half of that century that a phenomenon occurred in which life-sized terracotta portraits left unpainted and unglazed were exhibited and sold as autonomous works of art. The trend of

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[32] The distinctiveness of Algardi's terracotta bust is that it is thought to be the final version of the sculpture rather than a preparatory model. Boucher, in agreement with Bruno Contardi, argues that this terracotta bust is an early example of works in this medium functioning as finished art objects. Boucher, 190.

collecting terracotta models began in Italy in the seventeenth century and carried over to France in the first part of the eighteenth century, perhaps creating an aesthetic value for unpainted terracotta portrait busts. As the following chapter will aim to establish, eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts created by Houdon and his contemporaries can be seen as reflections of the increased appreciation for the particular material qualities of terracotta as well as for the sculptor's creative and unique touch.

Chapter Two: The Evolution of Terracotta Sculpture in the Eighteenth Century

The finished terracotta portrait busts created by Houdon and his contemporary, Augustin Pajou, in the second half of the eighteenth century were preceded by a general interest in collecting terracotta models, an interest that was initiated by amateurs and collectors in France earlier in the century. In the first chapter, I argued that terracotta portrait busts should be understood as disparate objects from clay models; however, I would like to suggest that the sensibility for finished works in terracotta in late eighteenth-century France developed from the already-established interest in and appreciation for the material qualities of terracotta as displayed in three-dimensional models. The purpose of this chapter will be to emphasize the shifts in the reception and collecting of terracotta models in France throughout the eighteenth century. In order to do this, I will first begin with a discussion of the collecting trends in Italy in the seventeenth century, where an appreciation for terracotta models by master sculptors was developed before it was in France in the first decades of the eighteenth century.

The interest in collecting terracotta models that became increasingly prevalent in the eighteenth century largely grew from the collecting patterns established in Italy in the preceding century. Ian Wardropper has argued that, in general, Italian connoisseurs in the seventeenth century sought out more finished terracotta models rather than those that were rougher and sketchier in appearance.[33] However, whereas seventeenth-century patrons seemed to prefer more finished models, artists and workshop assistants would often seek out the rough sketches by master sculptors such as Bernini. It is due, in large part, to workshop assistants that these less finished models, or *bozzetti*, have been preserved. While many three-dimensional clay models were either not fired or were

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[33] Wardropper in *Sculptor's Hand*, 42.

discarded in the seventeenth century because they were perceived as being of little value, those that were preserved were most often saved for practical reasons, for use as teaching tools or as examples of successful compositions to follow. Sculptors would often re-visit a model in order to recycle certain compositional elements for a future commission or, frequently, workshop assistants would make exact reproductions from a master sculptor's original model.[34]   This is not to state definitively that rough, preparatory terracotta models by prominent sculptors like Bernini were never collected by connoisseurs prior to the eighteenth century and never valued as works of art in their own right.[35] However, in France, in general, it was not until the early years of the eighteenth century that terracotta models began to be collected and displayed in noticeable numbers rather than serving as mere functional objects.

By the 1730's, amateurs and connoisseurs in France had begun to appreciate preliminary works like drawings and clay models as works of art.[36] It is not coincidental that the Paris Salon began to occur regularly by end of the 1730's, thus allowing viewers who might not have had access to artists' models and sketches before, to be privy to drawings and clay models which were sometimes exhibited with finished paintings and sculptures in marble or bronze. Around this same time, circa 1730-50, honorary admission to the Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, a status known as *honoraire amateur* and, later, also as *associé libre*, was given to amateurs such as Jean de Julienne,

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[34] Wardropper, 30-1.

[35] One of the most important collections of terracotta models, both highly finished and sketchy in appearance, was formed by the Venetian collector, Filippo Farsetti, in the mid-eighteenth century. Farsetti's impressive collection was deposited at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg in the early years of the nineteenth century and remains there today. For further information on the Farsetti collection, see the exhibition catalogue *Alle Origini di Canova – le Terrecotte della Collezione Farsetti*, exh. cat. (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1991).

[36] Guilhem Scherf, "'Terracotta is the concern of genius': Conoisseurs and Collectors of Terracottas," in *Playing With Fire: European Terracotta Models, 1740-1840*, exh cat. (Paris : Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003), 17.

the Comte de Caylus, and Ange-Laurent La Live de Jully. Guilhem Scherf has posited

that the increased access of these honorary amateurs to the Académie's sculptors and

their studios encouraged the former to acquire, even salvage, terracotta models that

otherwise might not have been preserved.[37] Thus, the interest in France for collecting

terracotta models can, in large part, be attributed to the taste of these amateurs who,

through their associations with the Académie, were some of the first to collect the models

of academicians.

That terracotta as a sculptural medium was elevated in status in the eighteenth

century depended, in large part, upon the direct association of terracotta with the hand of

the master sculptor. An appreciation for the artist's hand was a sensibility that began in

France in the first decades of the eighteenth century, but was not fully developed until the

second half of the century. Donald Posner has argued that, in an attempt to intellectualize

the works of academic artists in order to elevate them above the guild's artisans and

craftsmen, art theorists associated with the young Académie largely discouraged works of

art that were deemed overly sketchy and were principally appreciated for their technical

qualities.[38] Sketchy surface qualities placed emphasis on the manual rather than

intellectual production of the work of art, so a high degree of finish was essential to most

academic instruction and theory.[39] This intellectualizing of the artist and his work

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[37] Scherf, 17-18.

[38] Donald Posner, "Concerning the Mechanical Parts of Painting and the Artistic Culture of Seventeenth-Century France," *Art Bulletin* 75 no. 4 (December 1993), *passim*. Posner noted that there existed factions in the French art world, beginning around the 1640's, whose amateurs and connoisseurs were developing an appreciation for more painterly and brushier surfaces because such surfaces were thought to be more reflective of the artist's creative process. Amateurs began to value the visible "touch" of the painter's hand as a mark of originality. In this respect, the amateurs of the seventeenth century can be regarded as precursors to the French amateurs and connoisseurs of the 1730's who began to collect the two and three-dimensional sketches of academicians – both the painterly touch and the drawn or modeled sketch reveal the hand of the master artist.

[39] Posner, passim.

supported the founding of the French Académie which aimed to establish itself as superior to the guilds. By the first few decades of the eighteenth century, the Académie had indeed succeeded in becoming an established institution, and academic artists were understood to be intellectuals rather than craftsmen. Henceforth, the expressiveness and genius of the artist began to be seen in the unique touch, the artist's particular and singular mark on the surface of a work of art.[40] If applied to sculpture, the materiality of terracotta allowed the surface of a sculptural work literally to bear the imprint of the sculptor's fingers, the counterpart to the signature brushstroke of the painter.

The appeal of terracotta models to collectors like Julienne, Caylus, and La Live de Jully was their association of such models with the sculptor's innate genius. In a catalogue of his private collection published in 1764, La Live explained his interest in collecting works in terracotta, "I had collected terracotta models of certain sculptures, and found that these models were often superior to marbles, for they conveyed even better the fire and true talent of the artist."[41] Like other collectors, he believed that the clay model was the first physical embodiment of the sculptor's creative process. A good modeler was understood to be one who could articulate his ideas in three-dimensions by relatively quickly constructing an entire successful composition, and, above all, demonstrating facility in manipulating the material. The implications of clay as the medium which

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[40] It is important to recall the language of Claude-Henri Watelet in his entry on the 'Esquisse' in the *Encyclopédie* in which he wrote of the imagination as the supreme master of the sketch and described how the mark of the spirit a an artist of genius can be found in the sketch. "L'Imagination, maîtresse absolue de cet ouvrage [esquisse], ne souffre qu'impatiemment le plus petit ralentissement dans sa production. C'est cette rapidité d'exécution qui est le principe du feu qu'on voit briller dans les esquisses des peintres du génie ; on y reconnaît l'empreinte du mouvement de leur âme. » Even though my argument is for the transference of these very ideals of the three-dimensional sketch to the finished work of art in terracotta, it is significant that, by the 1760's, the sketch and the unique mark of the sculptor are valued rather than downplayed. Diderot and d'Alembert, eds; *Encyclopédie*, 1246.

[41] Ange-Laurent Lalive de Jully, *Catalogue Historique du Cabinet de Peinture et Sculpture Française de M. de Lalive* (Paris, 1764), 7; in English translation by Scherf, 4.

revealed the "fire and true talent" of the sculptor remained firmly associated with terracotta sculpture throughout the eighteenth century. Despite these models' lack of finish, which was an important value of academic artistic practice, certain aspects of terracotta, such as its materiality and the associations with the mark of the sculptor's genius, became increasingly celebrated and, as a result, the aesthetic value of terracotta was elevated. At this moment, the workmanship, technique, and mark of the master sculptor were becoming equally as important as the identity of the sitter to the value assigned to the portrait. Rather than celebrating the sitter and only the sitter, eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts were seen to reflect the sculptor as well.

The collections of clay models formed by amateurs as well as the proliferation of terracotta cabinet statuettes contributed significantly to the interest in terracotta sculpture in general by art patrons in France in the late eighteenth century. Terracotta statuettes were also popular by the mid-eighteenth century because they were more affordable and more readily accessible than miniature works in bronze. The increased production and market for terracotta statuettes, such as those by Clodion (b.1738-d.1814) created from the 1760's to 1780's,[42] were due in large part to the renewed interest in ancient sculpture and their classical themes facilitated by the Académie de France à Rome. Established in 1666 by Louis XIV, the Académie in Rome quickly assembled one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of plaster copies and casts made from antique sculptures for use as learning tools.[43]

Clodion arrived in Rome in 1762 and spent the majority of his career there, executing small-scale terracotta sculptures for an extensive international clientele drawn

[42] Claude Michel, called Clodion.
[43] Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 37-8.

to Rome as part of the Grand Tour.[44] Seeing works of ancient and contemporary art while in Rome, Grand Tourists from Britain, Germany, France, and Italy were eager to make purchases to take home with them, including reduced copies of famous works of antiquity. Clodion developed a large patron base for his terracotta statuettes which were either copies after ancient prototypes or original creations. His small-scale sculptures were single or multiple-figure compositions of classical and mythological themes. The sculptor executed countless versions of his Greek-style vases, Bacchus and satyr figures, and vestals draped in antique-style drapery. An example of one of Clodion's statuettes is the *Bacchant Offering a Plate of Fruit to a Female Bacchante Holding a Child* (fig. 9)*,* circa 1780. The terracotta Bacchant statuette, which measures 17.5 inches in height by 9 inches in width, consists of the two full-length followers of Bacchus, both semi-nude, and the young child grasping for fruit from the plate the male figure offers. The sculpture is delicately modeled and the surface has been carefully smoothed out so as to remove any trace of the roughed-out surface of the clay. Clodion's terracotta sculptures were seen as classicizing not only because they made reference to antique themes and subject matter, but since they were not painted, they were also reminiscent of the pale, monochromatic surface of marble or plaster copies of antiquities.

Étienne-Maurice Falconet, a French sculptor and personal acquaintance of Denis Diderot, expressed the general eighteenth-century opinion that the surfaces of sculptures should be left natural and unpainted in the essay on *Sculpture* that he contributed to the *Encyclopédie*, published in 1765, "Each of the arts has its own means of imitating nature:

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[44] Anne L. Poulet, *Clodion* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1992), 15.

color is not that of sculpture."[45] However, unlike plaster casts, terracotta sculptures were understood to be original products of the artist's hand rather than multiples and were thus considered to be unique, one-of-a-kind art objects. The substantial market for Clodion's terracotta sculptural works would not have been possible without the appreciation for clay models already developed by the 1760's.

A generation younger than Clodion, the Lyonnais sculptor Joseph Chinard, traveled to Rome on several occasions and executed two small-scale terracotta sculptures of *Saint Paul* and *Saint Augustin* (fig. 10-11) in 1781, today in the collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Although Chinard did not work exclusively in terracotta, his two *Saint* sculptures are thought to be the final versions of the works he was commissioned to create for a small private chapel in Lyon.[46] The *Saint Paul* measures approximately 23 inches in height and depicts the Saint in full-length drapery holding one of his attributes, the scroll, while *Saint Augustin* is two inches taller and depicts the Saint in similar dress with a bishop's hat and holding one of his own texts. Although Chinard's terracotta *Saints* are slightly taller than most of Clodion's multiple figure statuettes, both

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[45]Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie*, "Sculpture," 315. Likewise, Diderot voiced the same opinion that sculpture should not be painted, "What sort of effect would be produced by introducing the most beautiful, the truest painted color onto a statue? A bad one, I think. First, there would be only one vantage point from which the statue's coloring would be convincing. Second, there is nothing more disagreeable than the immediate juxtaposition of the true and the untrue, and the color's truth would never coincide perfectly with the truth of the object." John Goodman, ed., *Diderot on Art, Vol. I*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 238. Although today it is understood that many of the marble sculptures from ancient Greece and Rome were painted, it must be remembered that this was not the way in which the eighteenth century understood ancient marble sculpture.   Without the advanced scientific processes that allow modern archeologists and art historians to determine whether or not certain sculptures were once polychrome, eighteenth-century archeologists and antiquarians believed all antique marbles were intended to be pure white like the recently discovered marble sculptures at Herculaneum and Pompeii. Thus, classical (and classicizing) sculpture was believed to reflected in the pure white surface of marble. For a discussion on the painting of ancient sculptures, see Colette Czapski Hemingway's "Coloring of Marble Sculpture in Antiquity," in *Sculpture Review* 52 (Fall 2003): 10-15.

[46] Chinard's two terracotta *Saint* figures were commissioned by M. Charcot of Lyon for his private chapel in Lyon and remained in the family until the twentieth century. This information came from a personal correspondence on June 9, 2006 with Marietta Carbareri, Associate Curator, Art of Europe, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

sculptures are signed and dated as an indication of their conception as final versions rather than models. Clodion's *Bacchante* sculpture and Chinard's two *Saints* are not only comparable in both dimensions and date, but the surfaces of both artists' works reveal a relatively high degree of finish, thus also suggesting that they are finished sculptures. Although terracotta statuettes are not the focus of this paper, they can be regarded as an integral example of the eighteenth-century acceptance of terracotta as a material for finished, autonomous sculptures, including portrait busts.

Some of the earliest unpainted, finished terracotta portrait busts created by French academic sculptors in the eighteenth century were depictions of other artists and were gifted to the sitter or a family member of the sitter, a practice that continued to develop throughout the century. In practical terms, terracotta was an inexpensive material for use in the creation of a portrait bust that was a gift rather than commissioned by a patron. A sculptor could potentially model a portrait in terracotta in one sitting without having to spend much time away from his more expensive, or even official, commissions. Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne's over life-sized terracotta portrait bust of the painter *Noël-Nicolas Coypel* (fig. 12) from 1730 is one of the earliest and most impressive examples of a depiction of an artist in terracotta.[47] The *Coypel* bust is very much in the dynamic, late-Baroque tradition; the sitter is coiffed in a wig that envelopes his face and, following the curve of his neckline, falls down his back. The billowing drapery appears to swirl around his upper torso. Lemoyne incorporated the physical space surrounding the bust by forcing the viewer to move around the entire sculpture in order to take in all the visual elements. While the front of the sitter's body is positioned toward its right, the sitter's face is turned in the other direction, and his gaze is directed over his left shoulder in a

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[47] The bust is signed "JB Lemoyne fecit 1730" and inscribed "NN Coypel, peintre ordre du Roi."

sidelong direction. Because the bust is so dynamic and involves so many visual planes,

Lemoyne gave an equal degree of finish everywhere as a single front and back view are

virtually nonexistent. The energy that the portrait seems to exude comes not only from

the formal elements of the composition previously described, but also from the treatment

of the surface of the terracotta itself. Tools marks made in opposing directions on the

hair, drapery, and edges where the shoulders have been truncated complement the

generally smoother surface of the sitter's bare skin. While the surface is somewhat

rough, as is most often the case with more informal terracotta portrait busts, the actual

pose in which the sitter is depicted is idealized due to the distant and lofty gaze, tumbling

curls, and classicizing, timeless drapery. Lemoyne made several terracotta versions of

his bust of *Coypel*; however, the version in the Louvre collection was originally in the

possession of Coypel's sister, Anne-Françoise Coypel.[48] Although Lemoyne's *Coypel* is

a somewhat grandiose depiction of the painter, terracotta portrait busts of fellow artists

became less idealized and more personal and informal as the eighteenth century

progressed.

Augustin Pajou, a student of Lemoyne, paid homage to his master by executing a

terracotta bust of him in 1759 and exhibiting it at the Salon of the same year, just after

returning to Paris from his stay in Rome.[49] In Pajou's bust of *Lemoyne* (fig. 13), the sitter

is jovial in appearance as seen in the closed-mouth smile and resulting laugh lines and

wrinkles around his mouth and eyes. As compared to the noble, far-off gaze in

Lemoyne's bust of *Coypel*, the casual smile of *Lemoyne* is more informal in nature.

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[48] *Sculpture Française II – Renaissance et Temps Modernes Vol. 2* (Paris : Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), 464.
[49] James David Draper and Guilhem Scherf, *Augustin Pajou – Royal Sculptor*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 68.

Pajou's bust is a somewhat less idealized depiction of the sitter than Lemoyne's *Coypel*,
but the classicizing drapery loosely knotted around the sitter's torso does glorify the
image of Lemoyne by associating him with ancient imagery. Pajou executed several
versions of his *Lemoyne* bust in both terracotta and plaster, but at least one version, the
one today in the Nantes collection, must have been given directly to Lemoyne as it
remained in the sitter's family until the mid-nineteenth century.[50] Like Lemoyne's bust
of *Coypel*, Pajou's *Lemoyne* can be regarded as a bust made for close acquaintances and a
private, perhaps artistically-inclined audience. In addition to his bust of *Lemoyne*, Pajou
also executed and exhibited terracotta busts of other fellow Academicians, including the
French painters *Elisabeth Vigée-LeBrun*, exhibited in the Salon of 1783, and *Hubert
Robert*, modeled in 1987 and exhibited in the Salon of 1789.[51]

As the busts of *Coypel* and *Lemoyne* demonstrate, French sculptors quite often
executed and even exhibited the portrait busts they made of their fellow Academicians.[52]
James David Draper has argued that portraiture became the important enterprise that it

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[50] Draper, 68-70. The Nantes version of Pajou's portrait of *Lemoyne* had a layer of bronze paint removed
from its surface sometime before 1953, almost certainly because the paint was not original to the bust.
There is another version of the *Lemoyne* bust in plaster that was also given by the sculptor to the sitter's
family and was subsequently passed down through the family until the early twentieth century. A bronze
version of the *Lemoyne* bust, truncated at the shoulders and, thus, minus the knotted drapery, was executed
by Pajou's studio in 1797 and, according to Guilhem Scherf, most likely given as a gift by the sculptor to
Pierre-Hippolyte Lemoyne, son of the sitter.

[51] Ibid., 254; 264.

[52] The increased importance of the individual in the late eighteenth century as well as the ideal that the
individual him/herself was worthy of being depicted in a portrait resulted not only in the proliferation of
sculptures depicting fellow academicians, but also resulted in a trend to depict family members of
academicians as well as member of the sculptor's own family. In 1786, Houdon executed a portrait of his
wife, Mme Houdon. The original portrait is believed to be the extant plaster version, but there also exists a
terracotta version that has been dated 1787, one year after the plaster. In her portrait, Mme Houdon is
depicted in a strikingly casual and informal manner as her opened-mouth smile reveals her teeth and her
dimpled cheeks. The casual nature of this portrait and the familiar smile of the sitter is reminiscent of
Pigalle's portrait of *Aignan Desfriches*. However, the rough textured surface of Pigalle's portrait is absent
for the most part in Houdon's portrait of his wife; both the plaster and terracotta versions have surfaces that
appear more smooth than textural. It is interesting to note that Houdon also executed portrait busts of his
children in their infancy, ranging in date from 1788 to 1791 and in materials from terracotta and plaster to
marble and bronze.

did in the eighteenth century due in part to the interest in celebrity and personal ego.[53]

Perhaps then, the increased production of portraits of artists and artists' family members

can be seen not only as tributes to close personal friends, but as a reflection of the

generally higher esteem in which Enlightenment artists, especially sculptors, held

themselves. One could argue that the increased appreciation for the sculptor and the

mark left by his hand somewhat obscured the sitter's own importance. In this sense,

terracotta portrait busts represent a celebration of the individual in a dual sense: the

individual could be the sitter or the artist.

The progression charted in this chapter is one of the production and reception of

eighteenth-century terracotta sculpture that began with three-dimensional models and

evolved to include statuettes, both copies and original creations, and original "finished"

portraits. The affinity for terracotta that was developed throughout the century seems to

have originated within the Académie with a few advanced and forward-thinking artists,

amateurs, and connoisseurs, and developed into the acceptance of terracotta as a medium

for finished sculptural works, including portraits. Because terracotta portrait busts seem

to have been, in large part, first created by and for other artists within the Academic

system, the professional relationships between Academicians such as Lemoyne, Pajou,

Clodion, Boizot, and Houdon must be investigated.[54] While these sculptors were all

certainly aware of one another's work from studying at the same time in Paris and Rome,

and were often close personal friends, it is Houdon's portrait busts, patrons, and working

methods which will be the focus of the following chapter. As one of the youngest

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[53] Draper, 221.

[54] These sculptors were associated with one another in various different manners. Lemoyne was the master of Pajou as well as Falconet, Caffieri, and Pigalle. Clodion, Boizot, and Houdon were all in Rome together in the second half of the 1760's and Clodion and Houdon even lived together for a period. In addition to studying with Michel-Ange Slodtz, Houdon also studied with J-B Lemoyne and Pigalle.

sculptors of the previously mentioned group, Houdon may have been the most cognizant of the tactile qualities of terracotta amongst eighteenth-century patrons and was, thus, most prolific in his production of terracotta portrait busts.

Chapter Three: Houdon's Multiples and the Problem of the "Original"

Jean-Antoine Houdon's career flourished with official and private commissions

from patrons at home and abroad. His commercial success was due in large part to his

virtuosity in working in a wide range of sculptural materials coupled with his willingness

to accommodate his patrons. This chapter will address the multiple versions of Houdon's

portraits, both in terms of composition and materials, as well as the sitters he depicted

and his patrons. The evolving importance of terracotta was made manifest in Houdon's

work and, because of this, his œuvre, in particular, is integral to the topic of terracotta as

a material for finished portrait busts in the eighteenth century.

In his monograph on Houdon from 1975, H. H. Arnason asserted that, although

Houdon excelled in working in a variety of materials, he had the strongest affinity to

modeling in clay, as opposed to other sculptural processes like carving marble.[55] As was

his custom, Houdon would first model a portrait in clay from life in most often one, but

occasionally multiple sessions with the sitter. Houdon so preferred to model his portrait

from life that, later in his career, he was quite hesitant to model a likeness without having

his sitter in front of him.[56] This was the case with his portrait of Catherine the Great,[57]

which had to be modeled from an enameled image of the Empress because Houdon was

unable to make the journey from Paris and St. Petersburg to model the portrait from life.

Following this experience, the sculptor strongly requested that he always have his model

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[55] H. H. Arnason, *The Sculptures of Houdon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 21.

[56] Thus the reason for his trip to America in July of 1785 in which Houdon insisted on make a life mask and modeling the portrait of George Washington in person. Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2004), 263.

[57] The marble bust of Catherine the Great was commissioned by the empress circa 1771 and was completed by 1773. Today the bust remains in the collection of the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Poulet, *Houdon*, 54.

in front of him in the preliminary stages of sculpting a portrait.[58]   After modeling a portrait in clay and firing it, Houdon created plaster molds from the original terracotta and retained both the terracotta and the first plaster mold in his studio in order to make copies, or multiples, in different materials at the request of his patrons.[59]

By guarding possession of terracotta and plaster versions of certain portrait busts, Houdon was able to use an original bust modeled years earlier to make replicas at later dates, most often at a patron's request. This working process is highly evocative of Pliny's tale of the origin of modeled portraiture in which the clay portrait was created in order to reconcile the absence of the departing sitter. Thus, the absence of Houdon's sitter from the actual production of future versions of a portrait is rectified by the presence, or existence, of the original terracotta, which served as the model and which Houdon almost always kept for himself for this very reason. The original terracotta, modeled from life, is intrinsically associated with the source, the "original" original, the sitter. Following Houdon's original terracotta bust of *Diderot*, first modeled in 1771, at least three marble versions, two bronzes, and eight plasters of the bust were executed in Houdon's workshop during the 1770's and the 1780's.[60] Houdon continued to make multiples of his portrait busts as long as there was a demand for them from patrons.[61]

The numerous versions and copies of Houdon's work in various materials make one thing clear: Houdon's sculptures could be and were reproducible on multiple

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[58] Charles Henry Hart and Edward Biddle, *Memoirs of the Life and Work of Jean-Antoine Houdon, Sculptor of Voltaire and Washington* (Philadelphia, 1911), 18.
[59] Arnason, 21.
[60] Poulet, *Houdon*, 148-50. Included in this count of the multiples of the Diderot bust is an excellent plaster bust painted terracotta color which dates from the 1780's and is, today, in the collection of the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm. For a color reproduction, see Poulet, *Houdon*, cat. num. 22.
[61] Arnason, 21.

occasions, but even as such, multiples were still valuable and sought after by patrons.[62]

A terracotta portrait could be easily replicated by use of a mold in which the elastic clay

would be fit into in order to produce a copy. However, once the clay was removed from

a mold, it was not finished. The material itself allowed for, even required, reworking

before the clay could be fired. Houdon almost always re-worked his terracotta surfaces,

even when the portraits had been made from a mold rather than modeled from an original

block of clay in front of the sitter.[63] The principle function of a mold was to facilitate

replication; this process was drastically different from the process of modeling a portrait

because it merely requires fitting clay into the mold, but both techniques required the clay

to be worked by the sculptor and, thus, terracotta portraits, whether the product of a mold

or the original, modeled version were seen to reveal the hand of the sculptor. Houdon

would make seamless the edges created from the mold, smooth out delicate facial

features, carve out the irises of the eyes, his signature element, and rough up the hair.

In a letter from 1836 in which he describes having purchased for the city of

Angers one of Houdon's terracotta busts of the French military general *Dumouriez*,

David d'Angers explains the value of terracotta, "I was quite happy to have made the

acquisition of a terracotta executed by the famous Houdon: that is to say a manuscript,

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[62] Two of Houdon's terracotta busts, of *Molière* (1781) and *Jean de la Fontaine* (1781), were reproduced multiple times in terracotta, as well as in other materials. Both busts exist in three terracotta versions in addition to the original terracotta which served as a model for all the works, including the plaster and marble versions. Both Molière, the great seventeenth-century playwright, and Jean de la Fontaine, a poet and contemporary of Molière, had been deceased almost an entire century before Houdon sculpted their portraits. What is interesting about both of these busts is that Houdon had to rely on painted images of the sitters in order to capture their likenesses. One can again recall Pliny's tale of the origin of portraits modeled in clay in which the potter, Boutades, was prompted to create the three-dimensional likeness traced out by his daughter. Similarly, Houdon's busts of these two French literary figures were prompted by previously-existing two-dimensional paintings. Houdon's preference for working directly from life is further problematized by the fact that he was working from paintings rather than an actual sitter. Poulet, 109-117.

[63] Arnason, 20. I have not come across an instance in which Houdon's hand has not been detected on a terracotta original or multiple that was created during his lifetime and either signed by his own hand or affixed with a *cachet d'atelier*.

clay was the work of the artist alone and his *première pensée.*"[64] The tactile qualities of

terracotta were not merely understood by Houdon's patrons as literally having been

touched and manipulated, but as being intrinsically associated with the artist's creative

thought process and his own touch; a unique original. David d'Angers' letter is dated

1836, and because of this relatively late date in comparison with Houdon's

contemporaries, his nineteenth-century judgment can not be assumed to correspond with

the opinions of all eighteenth-century patrons. Even so, the high esteem in which

d'Angers held Houdon's terracotta portraits, as records of the artist's *première pensée*, is

analogous to the desirability of the terracotta surface for Houdon's patrons of the German

nobility, whose commissioned works will be discussed later in this chapter.

The largest portion of Houdon's œuvre is made up of his portraits of major

Enlightenment figures: in addition to his bust of *Diderot*, a co-editor of the *Encyclopédie*

and critic of the Paris Salons, Houdon executed portraits of *Jean le Rond d'Alembert*

(circa 1778), Diderot's co-editor for the *Encyclopédie*, the satirist *Voltaire* (1778-80), and

the philosopher and writer, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1778). Houdon's sitters included

foreign politicians and diplomats like *George Washington* (late 1780's), *Benjamin

Franklin* (1778), the American ambassador to France, and *Thomas Jefferson* (1789),

Franklin's successor. Houdon also executed portraits of other Enlightenment figures

including the German composer *Christoph Willibald Gluck* (1775) and *Georges-Louis*

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[64] Poulet, 312. This passage is quoted in Poulet's *Houdon* in the provenance information under the catalogue entry for the terracotta bust of Charles-François du Périer, called Dumouriez. The Dumouriez bust was executed in 1793. I translated the passage from David d'Angers' 1836 letter, as quoted in Poulet, which reads as follows, « J'ai été assez heureux pour faire l'acquisition d'une terre cuite exécutée par le célèbre Houdon: c'est pour ainsi dire un manuscrit, la terre étant l'oeuvre de l'artiste seul et sa première pensée. »

Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1781-2), a mathematician and member of the Académie

Française.

Some of the previously mentioned portraits were commissioned from Houdon,

but others were created by the sculptor on speculation, without a particular patron in

mind, but in anticipation of attracting one. It is actually not certain whether Houdon

received a commission to create his bust of *Diderot* or whether he initiated the idea to

model the portrait himself, but it is known that later, throughout his career, Houdon

sanctioned the production of innumerable multiples of the bust from his workshop.[65] His

busts of Enlightenment figures like *Diderot* proved to be a successful venture and helped

to develop Houdon's career by attracting patrons at home as well as abroad. Through his

acquaintance with Diderot and Baron Melchior Grimm, Houdon found patrons among the

minor German princes of Saxe-Gotha as well as Catherine the Great.[66] By purchasing or

commissioning portraits of *Voltaire*, *Diderot*, or *Buffon* and by developing important

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[65] Arnason, 18 and Poulet, 141. H.H. Arnason has suggested that, perhaps, Houdon did not receive a commission for the bust of Diderot, rather, creating it on speculation. However, Guilhem Scherf is of the opinion that Houdon most likely received a commission from Prince Dimitrii Alekseevich, the Russian minister to the French court, either for himself or on behalf of Catherine the Great. In addition to the question of whether or not the *Diderot* was commissioned from Houdon, scholars are actually not even certain whether Diderot ever sat to Houdon, although Scherf is quite certain he must have due to the realism displayed in the bust. (Poulet, *Houdon*, 147). It is interesting to consider that, while Houdon would later prefer to model portraits only from life, he might have had to rely on a pre-existing image of Diderot in order to capture his likeness. Such an image did exist; Louis-Michel Van Loo executed his half-length painted portrait of Diderot, mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, in 1767.

[66] Melchior Grimm and Denis Diderot knew each other through their shared activity in Grimm's *Correspondence Littéraire*, a cultural newsletter that was circulated to many noble families throughout Europe. Subscribers to Grimm's publication included Princess Louise of Saxe-Gotha and Catherine the Great, whose personal liaison for all things cultural in Paris and St. Petersburg Grimm eventually became. As acquaintances of Houdon, Grimm and Diderot were in a position to recommend the sculptor to potential German patrons who traveled to Paris. For further information on the relationship between Houdon and his German patrons, see Ulrike D. Mathies' essay "Houdon and the German Courts: Serving the Francophile Princes," in Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2004): 41-9. Another connection between Houdon and the German court was Johann Friedrich Reiffenstein, Winckelmann's successor in Rome and the artistic advisor to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha who might have been one of Houdon's protectors for a time until he began to disapprove of Houdon's style. Reiffenstein is mentioned briefly in Mathies' essay and the author does not elaborate on the relationship between the artist and German art advisor (Mathies, 44). The information that Reiffenstein was actually one of Houdon's protectors comes from one of the feuillets from the Salle Houdon produced by the Sculpture Department at the Louvre. (Feuillet n. 5-02)

collections of contemporary art, these foreign rulers were aligning themselves with the French Enlightenment as well as paying homage to these relevant figures portrayed.[67] While Houdon's foreign patronage assisted in advancing his career early on, he also found many private French patrons eager to purchase portraits of leading Enlightenment figures who were, in some instances, close personal acquaintances of the sitter.

Between 1778 and 1780, Houdon executed more than twenty-seven versions of his bust of *Voltaire*, one of the most highly-regarded Enlightenment figures the sculptor depicted. In March of 1778, shortly after returning to Paris from exile, Voltaire sat to Houdon for his portrait. The sculptor created the multiple versions of *Voltaire* in varying sculptural materials as well as differing compositions and treatments from the two or three sessions he had with the sitter in March 1778, as recorded by Grimm in the *Correspondence Littéraire* dated May 1778.[68] In all the versions, Houdon depicted the sunken facial features, wrinkled skin, and a protruding lower lip of the aged Voltaire with a high degree of verism, while still capturing a certain sense of vivacity in the sitter's good-humored smile. Houdon produced the most busts of Voltaire in the two variations known as *à l'antique.* The first version of *Voltaire à l'antique*, a marble version of which is at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Angers (fig. 14)*,* and that which Houdon replicated the most often, depicts the sitter with a bare head, *tête nue*, and truncated just below the collarbones; without any type of clothing or drapery, quite similar in composition to the *Diderot* portrait.[69] In the second and fuller version *à l'antique*, of which the marble

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[67] Poulet, *Houdon*, 163-5.

[68] Poulet, 153-4. From these same few sittings with Voltaire, Houdon also created his monumental versions of the full-length portrait *Voltaire Seated*, one in marble intended for the Académie Française and the other in terracotta intended for the Théâtre-Français in Montepellier, as well as multiple reductions in plaster, terracotta, marble, and bronze, all circa 1778. Scherf, *Playing With Fire*, 235-6.

[69] For the locations of the other versions of Voltaire *à l'antique*, *tête nue* other than the Angers marble, see Poulet, *Houdon*, 155-6.

version at the Hermitage is a typical example (fig. 15), Voltaire's head is again bare, but the bust extends to include the sitter's shoulders and torso, and he is clothed in antique-style drapery.[70] At the urging of Grimm in 1778, Catherine the Great purchased a bronze *Voltaire à l'antique* without shoulders and commissioned a marble bust of *Voltaire à l'antique* with shoulders.[71] Houdon's other treatment of *Voltaire*, known as *à la française* (fig. 16), depicts the satirist in an eighteenth-century wig with contemporary clothing, seen in the vest, or *gilet*, and a kind of cloak that alludes to both contemporary and antique-style dress.[72]

Alexandre Lenoir, a museum official and connoisseur active in the collecting of French art and the founding of public art museums during the years of the Republic and Empire, recorded in his journal, per an unknown contemporary document, the manner in which Houdon sold his portrait busts, "Citizen Houdon possesses [busts] of Voltaire, Buffon, and Franklin. He sells them for seventy-two francs apiece, if one would like only a head, and ninety-six francs if one wants [a bust] with shoulders."[73] From Lenoir's passage, one has a better understanding of the enterprising business aspect of Houdon's

[70] Scherf, *Playing With Fire*, 154-6. The marble in the collection of the Hermitage is the original version that Catherine the Great commissioned from Houdon in 1778. In addition to the marble version reproduced here, there is a similar plaster painted the color of terracotta in the collection of the Schlossmuseum, Gotha. Houdon produced seven marbles, four bronzes, three plasters, and one terracotta of *Voltaire à l'antique* without shoulders and one marble, one bronze, and one plaster with shoulders and drapery. Perhaps the reason that the bust of *Voltaire à l'antique* without shoulders was the version most often reproduced was because the head and chest required less materials and less time to execute than a bust with drapery and/or a wig. Thus, this version might have been more feasible for many of Houdon's patrons.

[71] Poulet, *Houdon*, 156 and 165.

[72] Anne Poulet has suggested that the drapery worn by Voltaire in the versions *à la française* is some kind of cloak-like garment. Ibid., 157-61. There are two marble, one terracotta, and two plaster versions of Houdon's *Voltaire à la française* with vest and antique-style drapery and three marbles, one terracotta, and one plaster version of Voltaire only wearing a French-style vest. The Berlin marble is illustrated here; however, there is also an excellent terracotta version of Voltaire *à la française* in the collection of the Musée *à la française* des Beaux-Arts in Orléans.

[73] Louis Courajod, *Alexandre Lenoir: Son Journal et le Musée des Monuments Français* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1887), 376. '« Le citoyen Houdon, » dit un document contemporain, « possède ceux de Voltaire, Buffon, et Franklin. Il les vend 72 Fr. chacun, si l'on ne prend que les têtes, et 96 Fr. si on les veut avec les épaules. »'

"custom" portraits; presumably, Houdon's patrons could choose a sitter to be depicted, a material for the sculpture, the style of dress, and whether the portrait would have shoulders or not. Lenoir's passage also strengthens Arnason's argument that many eighteenth-century patrons desired a sculpture even if it had been copied many times because they placed value on the authenticity of a work by a particular sculptor, whether it was an actual unique version or a copy. Rather than being invested in the concept of the unique original as later periods would be, eighteenth-century patrons generally considered the copy produced in the workshop and either bearing the artist's signature or wax seal, to be an authentic work of art by the master himself.[74]

Houdon executed a large number of portrait busts in less costly materials such as terracotta and plaster and he consistently fulfilled more private commissions than official ones. Yet, throughout his career, Houdon never ceased to seek out and compete for official commissions and he was successful on several occasions.[75] For instance, in 1776, Houdon was commissioned by the Comte d'Angiviller to execute a marble statue of the Maréchal de Tourville for the Great Men of France series.[76] However, the majority of Houdon's portraits were created for private French patrons and foreign nobles. In this sense, Houdon's career was very similar to that of Clodion who was so successful working in Rome and creating terracotta statuettes and miniatures for private patrons that

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[74] Arnason, 18.

[75] Ibid., 16.

[76] Poulet, *Houdon*, 289. Comte d'Angiviller was the Directeur des Batiments du Roi. Early in the 1770's he initiated a monumental sculptural program, the Great Men of France, in order to honor important military and intellectual leaders from French history. In the same year, 1776, Houdon received commissions from Mmes. Adélaïde and Victoire, the sisters of King Louis XV, for their portraits in marble. (Poulet, *Houdon*, 283). Houdon also received official commissions from the Consulate and Empire of Napoleon I. In 1806, he was commissioned to model the portrait of Napoleon for a colossal bronze statue as well as a pair of marble portrait busts of the Emperor and Empress Josephine. The terracotta herm-style portrait of *Napoleon* that Houdon executed from life from his sitting with the Emperor in St. Cloud is one of the sculptor's most brilliantly modeled terracotta portraits and is signed "Sa Majesté, l'Empereur et Roy, fait d'après nature, St Cloud Aoust 1806, houdon f." The *Napoleon* terracotta is today at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon. (Poulet, *Houdon*, 323-9)

he really had no need and, therefore, did not often seek out official commissions from the Crown. The reason Houdon and Clodion were able to be so prolific in the number of finished sculptures they executed in terracotta was because they both did not have to lavish time and attention on large-scale official commissions. Whereas the King's sisters or even Catherine the Great insisted upon the most expensive bronze or marble busts, Houdon's private patrons more often purchased terracottas or plasters.

In exploring the problem of the copy versus the original, interesting comparisons can be made between the sculptural copies made by Clodion in the 1760's and 1770's and those made by Houdon shortly thereafter. Dean Walker has argued that the modernist concept of originality as the supreme measure of value for a work of art did not exist in the eighteenth century.[77] Whereas copies are largely considered undesirable today, copies after works from antiquity or copies of pre-existing works from a sculptor's œuvre were often sought out by late eighteenth-century art patrons for whom "originality" was not yet a fetishized part of aesthetic discourse. By including a signature and date on many of their replicas, Clodion and Houdon were announcing their multiples to be independent works of art. Clodion signed and dated most of his terracotta statuettes and, in doing so, he differentiated between the clay model, which, traditionally, was almost never signed by sculptors, and the "finished" terracotta. Clodion often inscribed the year the statuette was executed and "Roma" on his works, thereby providing his Grand Tour patrons with the location where the sculpture was created and a reminder of having visited Rome. An example of such a signed work is Clodion's terracotta *Vase Decorated with Five Women Making a Sacrifice* which he signed "Clodion in Roma,

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[77] Dean Walker, "An Introduction to Sculpture in Rome in the Eighteenth Century," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Edgar Bowers and Joseph Rishel (London: Merrell, 2000), 217.

1766" (fig. 17). Houdon also signed and sometimes dated many of his terracotta portraits. Dating Houdon's works is sometimes confusing as his replicas were not always given the date of the original and molds often were given the date of the first version.[78] The important point is that Houdon, like Clodion, seems to have considered versions and multiples in terracotta and plaster to be finished works of art.

Thus far in this chapter, Houdon's terracottas and plasters have been generally grouped together in the discussion of multiples because these were less expensive materials than marble and bronze, but it is important to note that plaster was not regarded as highly as terracotta by Houdon's patrons. By the end of the eighteenth century, terracotta moved up in the hierarchy of sculptural materials and was no longer the least desirable or least expensive. Not only the amateurs associated with the Académie, but many of Houdon's patrons had begun increasingly to value terracotta as a material for portraiture.

The portrait busts in the collection of the Prince and Princess of Mecklenberg-Schwerin, in the Saxe-Gotha region of Germany, attest to the desirability of French terracotta portraiture at that time. The royal couple sat for their portraits (fig. 18-19) during a visit to Houdon's studio while on their Grand Tour to Paris in 1782; however, their commission was not for busts in marble or bronze, but for works in terracotta.[79] In

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[78] Plaster casts taken from an original mold were often given *cachet d'atelier*, wax seals declaring Houdon as sculptor and member of the Académie.

[79] *Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Jean-Antoine Houdon : Vermăchtnis der Aufklărung*, exh. cat. (Schwerin: Staatliches Museum, 2000), 190-1. The following quote from December 2, 1782 was taken from the journal of one Kavalier von Brandenstein, who accompanied the Prince and Princess on their trip to Paris, and is quite revealing about the manner in which Houdon's patrons visited his studio and commissioned portraits from him. The original text is in German, translated into French in the exhibition catalogue, and the translation from French to English in my own, "We passed by the house of M. Houdon, the famous sculptor, who had just recently finished the superb statue of Voltaire, for the foyer at the Comédie Française. There, Their Highnesses saw the busts of several of their acquaintances, and being struck by the resemblance, they resolved to have there portraits made as well." From Kristina Hegner's essay "Die

addition to these portraits, the couple also purchased from Houdon ten other busts of

well-known figures including *Voltaire* (fig. 20), *Rousseau* (fig. 21), *d'Alembert*, *Gluck*,

and *Buffon* amongst others, all ten in plaster painted the color of terracotta and dated

1778.[80] The elevated status of terracotta is made apparent by the fact that the plasters

were painted to deceptively resemble the natural, earthy pigment of terracotta. One can

deduce from these plasters that were painted a terracotta color that, if the appearance of

terracotta was desired, yet forged, the material must have been more costly than plaster

by this time. Unlike the seventeenth-century terracotta busts where the natural terracotta

surface was disguised to give the impression of a more costly material, such as Algardi's

bust of *Innocent X*, the terracotta-colored plasters reveal a heightened interest in and

increased aesthetic value of the natural appearance of terracotta in the eighteenth century.

Although minor German princes most likely would not have had the financial means to

acquire ten busts in marble or bronze, it is important to note that the plaster busts were

not painted to resemble these more expensive materials. The German prince and princess

were not alone. In 1789, shortly before leaving Paris to return home to Virginia, Thomas

Jefferson purchased seven plaster busts painted the color of terracotta, including busts of

Franklin, *Washington*, *Voltaire* and himself, from Houdon to display at Monticello.[81] By

this time, terracotta was not only a well-accepted material for finished sculpture, but also

a desirable one.

  For the most part, I do agree with Arnason and Walker that the eighteenth century

did not have the same desire for originality that the era of modernism did and that copies

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Werke Houdons im Staatlichen Museum Schwerin," in *Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Jean-Antoine Houdon : Vermächtnis der Aufklärung*, exh. cat. (Schwerin: Staatliches Museum, 2000),191.
[80] *Jean-Baptiste Oudry*, p. 170-99.
[81] Poulet, *Houdon*, 271.

were esteemed and sought after in the eighteenth century, as exemplified in the sculptures of Houdon.[82] However, it is my contention that terracotta portrait busts, whether modeled or taken from a mold, were seen as the literal embodiment of the authentic "original," as the material itself was inextricably linked by Houdon's patrons either to the idea of the original composition or to the unique touch of the master's hand. As is evident from the quotation by David d'Angers, the interest in collecting Houdon's terracotta portrait busts was not a uniquely eighteenth-century phenomenon, but one that continued after Houdon's death. At the sale of Houdon's studio after the sculptor's death in 1828, the French art collector François-Hippolyte Walferdin purchased terracotta portraits of *Diderot*, *Mirabeau*, and *Franklin*.[83]

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[82] Arnason, 18 and Walker, "Introduction", 217.

[83] The sale of Houdon's studio took place in Paris on December 15-17, 1828. Francois-Hippolyte Walferdin must have been a patron with quite a discerning eye as the three terracotta portraits he purchased from Houdon's studio are today considered among the best of the terracotta versions. At his death in 1880, Walferdin bequeathed all three terracottas to the Louvre, where they remain today. These terracottas were actually Houdon's original "originals" that he often kept with him in the studio as a model for future versions. This is significant because, as Houdon preferred to work from the sitter, the ultimate original, his original modeled portrait in terracotta served as a stand-in for the sitter so that even his multiples were based on some kind of original, either the sitter or the originally-modeled terracotta.

Chapter Four: Interpretations of Pliny's Tale of the Corinthian Maid in Text and Image

As the first part of this thesis has established, the rise in the prominence of

terracotta as a material for finished portraiture can be understood within the context of the

creation, theorization, and patronage of French sculpture of the late eighteenth century.

Interestingly and, I think, not coincidentally, a series of academic paintings depicting

certain elements of this particular tale of Pliny emerged in England and France in the

1770's through the 1790's, exactly contemporaneous with the rise in finished terracotta

portrait busts. However, while Pliny's emphasis was on Boutades' invention of modeled

portraits in clay, the late eighteenth-century paintings all focus on the amorous

motivation of the Corinthian maid to trace her lover's shadow, a romanticized

interpretation of the origin of drawing and, by extension, painting, rather than the origin

of clay modeling, or sculpture. This chapter will analyze the various translations,

interpretations, and, as I hope to prove, conscious manipulations of Pliny's tale by

seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers and painters. I will also explore why a tale

about the origin of modeled portraiture, a tale that would have been so profoundly

important to eighteenth-century portrait sculptors like Houdon, was manipulated to

become that of the origin of painting as well as the implications such a manipulation had

for both painters and sculptors.[84]

Before examining eighteenth-century interpretations of Pliny's writings on the

origins of the fine arts, it is necessary to establish a clear understanding of the text. As

previously mentioned, Pliny dedicated Book XXXV of his *Natural History* to *Pictura et*

Plastice, or *Painting and Modeling.* Book XXXV begins with a rather lengthy chapter on

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[84] While scholars have addressed issues of iconography in these paintings, they have neglected to address the apparent privileging of the origin of drawing/painting, or the two-dimensional arts, over the origin of modeling, or three-dimensional art, by late eighteenth-century painters.

painting in which Pliny writes of the obscure origins of painting and the difficulty in

attributing this feat to a particular nation or person. According to Pliny, not only did both

the Egyptians and the Greeks claiming the origin of painting as their own, but there was

even disagreement among the Greeks as to whether painting was first discovered in

Sikyon or in Corinth.[85] Although Pliny does not identify the precise location of the origin

of painting, he writes that "all, however, agree that painting began with the outlining of a

man's shadow." In the following line, he then gives an uncertain attribution of the

invention of linear drawing to either an Egyptian, Corinthian, or one of two Sikyonians,

all four men identified by name.[86] While Pliny identifies the traced outline of a man's

shadow as the origin of painting, he fails to associate this incident with one particular

person or include a reason as to when or why this invention took place.

Pliny's chapter on painting is directly followed by a much shorter chapter on clay

modeling. After acknowledging that he has adequately addressed painting in the

previous chapter and that he will now focus on clay modeling, Pliny gives his explanation

as to the origin of modeling,

> It was by the selfsame earth that Boutades, a potter of Sikyon, discovered, with
> the help of his daughter, how to model portraits in clay. She was in love with a
> youth, and when he was leaving the country she traced the outline of the shadow
> which his face cast on the wall by lamplight. Her father filled in the outline with
> clay and made a model; this he dried and baked with the rest of his pottery, and
> we hear that it was preserved in the temple of the Nymphs, until Mummius
> overthrew Corinth.[87]

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[85] *The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, trans. by K. Jex-Blake, (Chicago: Argonaut, 1968), 85.
[86] Ibid, 85.
[87] *The Elder Pliny*, 176.

In contrast to Pliny's explanation of the origin of painting, he gives a much more detailed account of the invention of modeling in clay and identifies Boutades by name.[88]

The most obvious point of intersection between Pliny's separate accounts of the origins of painting and clay modeling is the tracing of a man's shadow. However, while the tracing of a shadow is credited as the origin of painting, it is merely an impetus for the modeled portrait by Boutades, the true invention being the origin of clay modeling, not the daughter's traced likeness of her lover.[89] Not only does Pliny fail to name Boutades' daughter in his chapter on painting, he also does not credit her with having been the *first* to outline a man's shadow in his chapter on modeling. Through cautious comparison of these two chapters, it is clear that Pliny himself did not associate one origin story with another and that these connections are of a more recent date. This conscious manipulation of Pliny's text becomes evident in both the writings and paintings of the late eighteenth century.

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[88] Although I have yet to find evidence of a Sikyonian potter named Boutades who worked in Corinth being associated with any extant works, the setting in which Pliny places him is plausible. The ancient Greek city of Corinth was known to be a major center of artistic production, especially in the sixth century BCE, as was the city of Sikyon, incorporated into Corinth in the late fourth century BCE, which was also known for its thriving pottery industry. For more on Sikyonian pottery, see K. Friis Johansen, *Les Vases Sicyoniens* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1966). Pliny also mentions that Boutades' original modeled bust had been preserved in Corinth until the city was sacked by Mummius. In fact, Corinth was invaded by the Roman general Lucius Mummius in 146 BCE and it was to this event that the loss and destruction of many Greek works of art has been attributed. *The Elder Pliny*, 174 (Jex-Blake's footnote 8). Contrary to Pliny's account of Boutades and the above mentioned information on the ancient Greek pottery industry, Audrey Griffin has argued that there is no evidence of a Boutades from Sikyon, nor is there much ancient literature on a thriving pottery industry in Sikyon. If there was a Sikyonian Boutades, he would most likely have worked in Corinth which was known for its pottery production. Griffin believes that, more than likely, Boutades was a "fictitious inventor" and that, by saying he was from Sikyon but worked in Corinth, Pliny might have been attempting to quell an argument between the two cities as to which could claim the invention of clay modeling. *Sikyon* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1982), 99.

[89] A parallel can be drawn between the outlined profile traced by the Corinthian maid which served to prompt or inform the clay portrait by Boutades and the traditional function of clay as preparatory or preliminary in the sculptural process. However, eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts problematize this comparison because they simultaneously function as both the finished sculpture and the model for all future versions of portrait.

Pliny's *Natural History*, written circa 77 A.D., is the earliest surviving text to give accounts of the origins of painting and clay modeling, but a slightly varying account is given by the second century A.D. apologetic Athenagoras. An Athenian philosopher, Athenagoras converted to Christianity and wrote his *Plea For the Christians* around 177 A.D.[90] In his seventeenth chapter entitled "The Names of the Gods and Their Images Are but of Recent Date," Athenagoras explains that the names and images of the gods had only been recently invented, as they could not exist before the inventions of certain art forms. He writes that statuary, painting, and sculpture did not become common until the existence of several figures including the "Corinthian damsel."[91] Athenagoras attributed the invention of drawing in outline to another figure, Saurias the Samian, but he credits the invention of relief figures to the Corinthian damsel. Of her invention he writes,

> The art of making figures in relief was invented by the damsel who, being in love with a person, traced his shadow on a wall as he lay asleep, and her father, being delighted with the exactness of the resemblance (he was a potter), carved out the sketch and filled it up with clay: this figure is still preserved at Corinth.[92]

Unlike Pliny, Athenagoras credits the Corinthian maid, not her father, with the invention of clay modeling even though he acknowledges that she merely traced the outline and that it was her father who filled the outline in with clay. Whereas Pliny mentions Boutades by name, Athenagoras only writes that the father was a potter and he does not associate him with Sikyon. Other inconsistencies in the two accounts of the origin story include the role of the lover who, according to Athenagoras, is merely sleeping instead of going away as well as the destruction or preservation of the clay figure that Athenagoras

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[90] Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Christian Library:Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325 – Vol. II: Justin Martyr and Athenagoras*, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1870), 375.
[91] Ibid., 392
[92] Roberts, 393.

asserts, by the second century A.D., still existed in Corinth, in contrast to Pliny's account of it having been destroyed in the second century B.C. Although these conflicting details might seem insignificant to the origins of painting and clay modeling, they will shed light on the reading and understanding of the eighteenth-century paintings to be discussed.

While the purpose of this chapter is to examine the varying interpretations and manipulations of Pliny's texts on the origins of painting and clay modeling from the period of the 1770's through the 1790's, here it should be said that these creative interpretations were not exclusively an eighteenth-century phenomenon. Two Frenchmen who were writing in the second half of the seventeenth century, Charles Perrault and André Félibien, interpreted and classified Pliny's story in very different manners. In 1668, Perrault, a poet, architect, and honorary member of the Académie Française, authored his poem entitled *La Peinture*, a tribute to French painting.[93] Perrault ends his poem with the story of a young shepherdess and her young shepherd lover in the city of Paphos on the island of Cyprus. According to Perrault's poem, the two young people fall in love, but with the new season, the shepherd must move on, and leave his shepherdess. The shepherdess is in complete despair, but seeing her shepherd's shadow cast by a lamp, her hand is guided by love while she traces the cast shadow.[94] Without acknowledging Pliny in his account of the origin myth, Perrault takes Pliny's maid and her lover from Corinth, transforms them both into shepherds and transfers them to a rural setting on the island of Cyprus. Perrault neither mentions the maid's potter-father nor does he give any

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[93] Charles Perrault (b. 1628- d. 1703).
[94] The exact line of love guiding her hand reads, "L'Amour ingenieux, qui forma ce dessein, fut vû dans ce moment luy conduire la main. » As for the relevant portions of the poem, I have translated and very briefly summarized lines 583-657. Charles Perrault, *La Peinture*, ed. Jean-Luc Gautier-Gentès, (Geneva: Librairie Droz S.A., 1992), 135-139.

mention to clay modeling. Instead, *La Peinture* can be read as a highly romantic and non-intellectual interpretation that love caused the origin of painting.

André Félibien, an art theorist and contemporary of Perrault, wrote his *Des Principes de l'Architecture, de la Sculpture, de la Peinture, et des Autres Arts qui en Dépendent* in 1676. In the first section of the first chapter of *De la Sculpture*, he addresses the question of the origin of sculpture. After noting that it is very difficult to understand or know who first invented sculpture, he writes,

> In respect to the profane authors who wrote on sculpture, there are those who say that it was a potter from Sycione named Dibutade who made the first sculpture, and that his daughter created portraiture by tracing the image of the shadow of her lover that a lamp cast on a wall.[95]

By profane authors, Félibien is certainly referring to Pliny since his story mimics Pliny's with the exception of the change in name from Boutades to Dibutade, literally 'of Boutades,' (a misunderstanding on Félibien's part), the name that later became associated with Boutades' daughter who, otherwise, remains nameless. It is interesting that Félibien does not include the anecdote in his section specifically reserved for clay modeling, but rather in the section concerning the invention and origin of all sculpture. He also credits the daughter with the invention of portraiture, not drawing or painting in specific.[96] André Félibien was a prominent figure in the seventeenth-century academic art world and his treatise on the fine arts would have been taken seriously by eighteenth-century writers and artists.

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[95] André Félibien, *Des Principes de l'Architecture, de la Sculpture, de la Peinture, et des Autres Arts qui en Dépendent*, (Farnborough, Hants., England : Gregg Press Limited, 1966), 219-220.

[96] Félibien's version of Pliny's tale is interesting in that it further confuses the contributions of Boutades and his daughter to the origins of the fine arts. While Boutades' role is as the inventor of sculpture in its entirety, having been aggrandized from merely inventing sculpted portraiture, the invention of his daughter is reduced from drawing, or the two-dimensional arts, to the more specific realm of portraiture.

Writings on art from the mid-eighteenth century make it clear that Pliny's stories of the origin of painting and clay modeling were commonplace in the fine art discourse by this time, even if Pliny was not always identified as the source. Not only were the origin tales known from seventeenth-century sources, but numerous translations of Pliny were available to eighteenth-century Europeans. In Paris, *The Natural History* was translated from Greek to Latin in both 1723 and 1779. In 1634 it was translated into English in London. There were also translations into French in 1725 (published in London) and again in 1771 (published in Paris). Perhaps most significant is the fact that Étienne-Maurice Falconet, the French sculptor and close acquaintance of Denis Diderot, translated Pliny's three chapters on art into French in 1773. In addition to Pliny's text, Athenagoras' *Plea for the Christians* was translated into English in London in 1714 and published in Latin in Paris in 1742.

In his *History of Ancient Art*, first published in 1764 and widely read by the literati in Europe, including Paris, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (b.1717-d.1768) alludes to Pliny's text in Chapter 1 entitled "The Shapes With Which Art Commenced" from Book 1 on the "Origin of Art."[97] Recounting the history of the art of drawing among the Greeks, he writes that,

> The most ancient records teach us, that the earliest essays, especially in the drawing of figures, have represented, not the manner in which a man appears to us, but what he is; not a view of his body, but the outline of his shadow. From this simplicity, the artist next proceeded to examine proportions…[98]

Winckelmann does not recount the story of the Corinthian maid or Boutades, and, though discussing the origins of all art forms, he says that it was drawing that had to come before

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[97] The most recent and thorough investigation of J. J. Winckelmann's texts is Alex Potts' *Flesh and the Idea: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).
[98] J. J. Winckelmann, *Writings on Art*, selected and ed. by David Irwin (London: Phaidon, 1972), 107.

other art forms. Winckelmann's writing emphasizes the story of the outlining of the

shadow as the origins of all art forms.

One of the most consequential texts to come out of the mid-eighteenth century

was the *Encyclopédie*, edited by Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert and

published in its entirety in 1765. While different writers and thinkers were asked to

contribute entries which comprise the *Encyclopédie*, Louis de Jaucourt (b. 1704-d. 1779),

a French philosopher and writer, was responsible for both the articles on *Modeling*, or

Modélé, and on *Painting*. In his article on sculptural modeling, de Jaucourt explains that

the ancient sculptors made their models out of wax, but that,

> Nevertheless, one can not say that the method of making models in clay was
> ignored by the Greeks, or that they never even attempted it, because we even have
> the name of the first to try. It was Dibutade of Sicyone.[99]

Like Félibien, de Jaucourt mistakenly transforms the name of Boutades into Dibutade.

Eliminating all other elements of Pliny's text, including the tracing of the shadow, de

Jaucourt only states that the name of the first person to model in clay was Dibutade.

Similarly, in his article on painting, de Jaucourt again fails to cite Pliny as the

original author of his version of its origin, saying, instead more vaguely that,

> Man's imagination has been searching for the origin of painting; poets have
> created the most charming tales on this subject. If they are to be believed, this art
> was invented by a shepherdess who wanted to preserve her lover's traits and who
> with her crook traced the outline which the shadow of his face was throwing on a
> wall.[100]

De Jaucourt's text is highly reminiscent of Pliny's version of the tale, except that, in de

Jaucourt's version, the shepherdess draws the outline of the shadow with her crook, an

implement that Pliny does not mention. Perhaps de Jaucourt was referring to Perrault's

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[99] Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie*, 910.
[100] Ibid., 1307.

La Peinture, in the detail of the shepherdess (both Perrault and de Jaucourt refer to the Corinthian maid as a shepherdess) who was inspired and guided by love to invent the art of painting. A short poem on painting is included in the body of de Jaucourt's text which begins with the phrase, "Splendid painting is the daughter of love" and ends with, "And many other arts owe their birth to love."[101] De Jaucourt writes that such fables as he mentioned were "invented to explain the fact that objects placed before men's eyes seem to invite imitation."[102] He acknowledges the well-known tale of the origin of painting, but makes the tale less romantic and more credible by asserting that the invention of painting was motivated by the desire to imitate nature. Regardless, the connection between the origin of painting and the Corinthian maid (or shepherdess) is furthered by de Jaucourt even though no direct connection exists in Pliny's text.

Taken together, all of these texts share an acknowledgement of the ambiguities and uncertainties of the legend's validity, but the fact that the legend is consistently represented in some of the most important texts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reveals a continual fascination with tracing the origins of the fine arts, whether historical or mythical, and an intrigue with the romantic tale of the Corinthian maiden. If terracotta portrait busts can be understood to refer back to the origins of sculpted portraiture, then the apparent privileging of the Corinthian maid, or origin of painting, theme in late eighteenth-century paintings can be understood, in some sense, as painters looking back to the origins of their own two-dimensional art form.[103]

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[101] Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie*, 1307.
[102] Ibid, 278-9.
[103] The interest in origins of the second half of the eighteenth century was somewhat a byproduct of Enlightenment ideals and the desire for an encyclopedic manner of looking back to history and categorizing and locating origins.

      In considering the pervasiveness of the theme in European academic painting as well as the inconsistencies in various manipulations of Pliny's original text, I have chosen to discuss four paintings by two Scottish, one British, and one French painter done between 1771 and 1785. Rosenblum credits the Scotsman Alexander Runciman with the first painted representation of the Corinthian maid theme in 1771.[104] Runciman's *Origin of Painting* (fig. 22) depicts the Corinthian maid, with the assistance of an Eros figure, tracing the shadow of her lover's face cast by moonlight onto an ivy-covered ruin. Rosenblum points out Runciman's adherence to Athenagoras' text in which the lover was sleeping, not going away, as per Pliny.[105] Both ancient texts emphasize that the Corinthian maid was in love when tracing her lover's shadow, but Runciman made this literal as he included an Eros figure who actually guides the young woman's hand in tracing. The event has been moved from inside the potter's studio to an outdoor setting, removing all traces of Boutades, his pottery, or any associations with the invention of clay modeling. The Corinthian maid gazes directly at the cast shadow while the Eros figure concentrates on the actual face of the sleeping lover.[106] According to Duncan Macmillan, Runciman's interest in the legend of the Corinthian maid and the origin of painting arose from his exploration of linear drawing as the origin of the visual arts.[107]

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[104] Rosenblum, 282. There has been some debate at to the actual date of Runciman's *Origin of Painting*. The date fluctuates between 1771 and 1773, but for my purposes, I am using the 1771 date as that is the one that the majority of scholars have agreed upon. In 1771, Runciman departed from Rome where he had spent four years as part of his own Grand Tour, before returning home to Edinburgh. David and Francina Irwin give a date of 1771 while Duncan Macmillan gives a date of 1773. David and Francina Irwin, *Scottish Painters at Home and Abroad, 1700-1900* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 106 and Duncan Macmillan, *Painting in Scotland, The Golden Age*, (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1986), 52.

[105] Rosenblum, 282.

[106] The classicizing elements of Runciman's painting include the antique-style drapery of both the male and female figures as well as the emphasis on profile, as also seen in both figures.

[107] Macmillan, 106. Although Flaxman was working in Rome over a decade after Runciman, Flaxman's linear 'outline' drawings make an interesting comparison to the outline drawings of Runciman. Flaxman also created designs for the low-relief vases and profiles of Wedgwood's jasperware. Jasparware was really a fusion of linear drawing and low relief, important elements in Pliny's legend of the origin of clay

This explanation as to why Runciman would depict the legend of the origin of painting

seems reasonable, as by the 1770's literary sources had already intertwined Pliny's tales

of the origins of painting and modeling as one.[108]

 In an oval-format painting of 1773 entitled *The Origin of Painting* (fig. 23), the

Scotsman David Allan remained faithful in iconography to Pliny's tale, with the

exception of the absence of Boutades and the soon-to-be customary privileging of the

origin of painting over the origin of sculpted portraiture. Though the interior does not

bear the attributes of a potter's studio, a Greek vase sits atop a pedestal in the shadows to

the right of the figures.   One scholar, T. Crouther Gordon, has suggested that Allan won

a gold medal from the Accademia di S. Luca in Rome for his *Origin of Painting*. Gordon

does not specify for which competition at the Accademia di S. Luca the *Origin of*

Painting was executed, but he does assert that the theme decided on by the Accademia

had been announced as 'The Origin of Painting.' While Gordon is the only scholar as of

yet to put forth this information, it is intriguing to consider that 'The Origin of Painting'

might have been the theme of the 1773 Concorso Clementino which would have required

sculptors and painters to treat the same theme.

Undoubtedly, the most iconic depiction of the legendary origin of painting is *The*

Corinthian Maid (fig. 24) by the English painter Joseph Wright of Derby which was

begun in 1782 and completed in 1785. Set in the interior space of a potter's studio, a

bright light shines from what appears to be a lamp hidden behind a heavy curtain to the

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modeling. Rosenblum mentions the connection between the Neoclassical interest in line and Flaxman, but
he does not say whether or not Flaxman ever treated the theme of the Corinthian maid.

[108] Given that the first three painted representations of the origin of painting (by Runciman, Allan, and
Wright of Derby) were all the work of British artists, the significance of the British, and especially Scottish,
in ushering in the new theme is apparent. (T. Crouther Gordon, *David Allan of Alloa – The Scottish
Hogarth* (Alva: Robert Cuningham & Sons Ltd., 1951), 24.)

left of the composition. The light reveals the Corinthian maid kneeling on one leg to trace the shadow cast by her sleeping lover whose dog is also sleeping by his side. Near the figures are two large clay vases and, through the doorway to the right, a pottery kiln can be seen in use. As in Runciman's painting, the figures wear classicizing drapery.[109] At first glance, Wright's *Corinthian Maid* appears to follow Pliny's text the most closely. All the elements are present - the sleeping lover, the shadow cast by a lamp, the potter's studio in which the event unfolded - except for the exclusion of Boutades and his modeled portrait. But when viewed in the context of Runciman's painting, Wright's *Corinthian Maid* seems to be a combination of Pliny's legends of the origin of painting with that of clay modeling, as many eighteenth-century texts had already done. However, by giving the painting the title *The Corinthian Maid*, Wright's viewer is allowed to interpret his painting as depicting the moment before Boutades enters and becomes delighted with the traced outline and fills it in with clay.[110] While *The Corinthian Maid* is not an obvious manipulation of Pliny's text, the painting still privileges two-dimensional art by not depicting the moment clay modeling was invented.

In a letter written to the poet William Hayley, Wright stated that his inspiration for the theme depicted in his *Corinthian Maid* came from Hayley's 1778 poem entitled *An Essay on Painting* in which the author recounts the tale of the Corinthian maid.[111] In 1778, the same year as Hayley's poem, Wright suggested the theme of the Corinthian maid to his patron and the owner-founder of the Wedgwood manufactory, Josiah

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[109] Rosenblum argues that "one could not ask for a tidier list of Neoclassic stylistic attributes: the shadow is steady, the lamp clear, the wall even, and the line precise." p. 285.

[110] *The Corinthian Maid* is the original title Wright gave to the painting as per his own notes in his account book. However, in her catalogue entry for *The Corinthain Maid*, Egerton mentions an exhibition possibly held in Derby in 1866 in which the title given to the painting was *The Origin of Portrait Painting*. Egerton, 132.

[111] Ibid., 132.

Wedgwood, who agreed, on the condition that Wright include a potter's oven and a few vases.[112] Ann Bermingham has argued that this theme might have been particularly attractive to Wedgwood for the elevation and recognition of his own craft, since he was a potter like Boutades.[113] As was believed in the 1770's, the birth of drawing (and therefore painting) and clay modeling (sculpture) occurred at the same seminal moment in antiquity, thereby legitimizing the ceramic arts.[114]

In the same year that Wright of Derby completed his *Corinthian Maid* for Josiah Wedgwood, Jean-Baptiste Regnault executed his own version of the theme for another important patron, the French queen, Marie Antoinette.[115] That such prominent figures as Wedgwood and the queen of France commissioned paintings depicting the Corinthian maid or the legend of the origin of painting again attests to the high "tone" of the theme. Regnault was commissioned to paint *Dibutade Traçant le Portrait de Son Berger* (fig. 25) as an overdoor decoration for the Grande Cabinet de la Reine at Versailles.[116] The scene depicted in Regnault's *Dibutade* takes place outdoors during the daytime; instead of the young lover's shadow being cast by the light of a lamp, it is cast by the sun. As in all the paintings so far discussed, both Dibutade and her shepherd/lover are dressed in classicizing drapery. Dibutade is in the process of tracing the shadow which has been

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[112] Egerton, 134.

[113] Ann Bermingham, "The Origin of Painting and the Ends of Art: Wright of Derby and the Corinthian Maid," In *Painting and the Politics of Culture*, ed. John Barrell (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 146.

[114] Bermingham notes that Wedgwood would have had a vested interest in the Corinthian maid's association with art since she was a woman and Wedgwood relied heavily on female patronage of his jasperware. (Ibid., 146.)

[115] Rosenblum, 285.

[116] The painting was intended as a pendant to his *Pygmalion Amoureux de sa Statue*, also painted in 1785. Rosenblum has noted that both *Dibutade* and *Pygmalion* address artistic invention and creation as inspired by love which, according to Rosenblum, is a fittingly Rococo theme for paintings executed in a late Rococo style. (Rosenblum, 285-6). For further information on the myth of Pygmalion and its occurrences in the visual arts and literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Alexandra K. Wettlaufer's *Pen vs. Paintbrush – Girodet, Balzac and the Myth of Pygmalion in Postrevolutionary France* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

cast on either a low wall or the base of an architectural monument. While she focuses

intently on her tracing, the shepherd looks out directly at the viewer. Following neither

the text of Pliny nor that of Athenagoras too closely, Regnault takes creative license in

transforming the young lover into a shepherd, removing the scene from the potter's

studio, and making absolutely no allusions to Boutades or his modeled portrait at all.

Regnault titled the painting *Dibutade Traçant le Portrait de Son Berger,* and in doing so,

the name Dibutade, given to the Corinthian maid since she was not given a proper name

by Pliny, becomes her proper name even though there are no references to Boutades' in

the painting.[117]

The attraction of the Corinthian Maid theme to eighteenth-century painters may

have derived from the pervasive presence of the tale in the literature of the time, but also

to the interest in capturing the image of the human profile which became quite popular in

the second half of the eighteenth century. By tracing the outline of the shadow of her

lover's profile cast on a wall, the Corinthian maid was essentially creating a silhouette,

literally the outlined profile of a human head. The actual term for the process of the

silhouette was named after the Frenchman Étienne de Silhouette, who worked briefly as

the *Controleur Géneral des Finances* in 1759 to reform the treasury. Silhouette himself

was known to have made a hobby of creating and collecting inexpensive, cut-out profile

portraits and, because of this, such portraits became jokingly referred to as

'silhouettes."[118] Interest in the silhouette became *en vogue* in France during the 1760's,

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[117] In 1791, six years after Regnault's painting, another French painter, Joseph-Benoît Suvée was commissioned by the Société des Amis des Arts to paint *Dibutade Traçant l'Ombre de Son Amant*, or *l'Origine du Dessin*. It is interesting to note that the painting bore these two alternate titles at its inception, thus further confounding Pliny's tale of the origin of clay modeling with that of the origin of drawing. The iconography and Neoclassical treatment of Suvée's painting is much closer to Wright of Derby's treatment of the theme than Regnault's.

[118] Gary Apgar, *L'Art Singulier de Jean Huber : Voir Voltaire* (Paris: Adam Biro, 1995), 21-2.

but it was not until the next decade, around the time the first *Origin of Painting* canvases were created, that tools were developed specifically to aid in making a silhouette. In 1775, Sarah Harrington, a British writer and silhouettist, invented the silhouette machine, or pantograph, a device which allowed the sitter's cast profile shadow to be enlarged and then manually outlined.[119] Also published circa 1775-1778 was Johann Caspar Lavater's treatise on the science of physiognomy in which he explained how a person's character could be judged by their facial features as depicted in their profile and silhouette.[120] Following the invention of the silhouette machine was that of the physionotrace by Gilles-Louis Chrétien in 1786.[121] The physionotrace was a more advanced drawing machine which aided in capturing not only the outline of the profile, but also the detailed physiognomic features and costume of the sitter.[122] These mechanical devices and the desire of the time to capture permanently an image, especially a person's likeness, has been linked to the experimentation with early photographic processes.[123] The popularity of the 'Origin of Painting" theme in the later eighteenth-century paintings can in part be attributed to the contemporary interest in the two-dimensional profile silhouette.

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[119] Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw, Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 163.

[120] Lavater's text is entitled *Physiognomische Fragmente, zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Menschenliebe*.

[121] Bermingham, 163. Bermingham gives the date of Chrétien's invention of the physionotrace as 1784, and as one year after the completion of Wright of Derby's *Corinthian Maid*. However, the date of 1786 given by Helen Baird in "Miniature Mirrors of Profile Personality" is more perhaps more accurate as Wright's painting was only completed in 1785, making the date of the physionotrace 1786, and, therefore, one year after the painting.

[122] Helen Hickman Baird, "Miniature Mirrors of Profile Personality," *Antiquarian* 14 (April 1930): 46.

[123] Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning With Desire: The Conception of Photography* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1997), 112-3. Batchen makes the connection between the Corinthian Maid theme and preliminary advances toward photography in the late eighteenth century by noting that Tom Wedgwood, son of Josiah Wedgwood who commissioned Wright of Derby's *Corinthian Maid*, was one of the first known people in the period (around 1770 to the early nineteenth century) to experiment with photosensitive materials. Although he was not successful at fixing an image, his and his partner's experiments were some of the earliest to move "toward" photography. (Batchen, 114).

The only sculptural example included in Rosenblum's article is a bronze relief by the French sculptor Louis-Philippe Mouchy entitled *Dibutade* (fig. 26), also executed in 1785. Unlike the four paintings, Mouchy's relief is the only work to include the figure of Boutades, but instead of depicting him at work modeling the portrait, it represents him passively seated off to the side next to one of his vases. How, then, can the lack of sculptural depictions of Boutades' creation be reconciled with the large number of painted images depicting the Corinthian maid? Perhaps the answer is to be found in the existence of late eighteenth-century terracotta portrait busts.

In both the traditional sculptural process and the ancient legend, clay is the first material for sculpted portraiture. Eighteenth-century sculptors were becoming increasingly aware of not only the ancient tales of the origins of the fine arts, but also, increasingly, of their own status within the newly defined realm of the history of art. Although art treatises had existed prior to the eighteenth century, it was not until 1764, with the publication of Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art*, that a clear conception and chronology of the art of antiquity was made. The *History* illuminated the working practices of the ancients, including model-making and working in terracotta. Sculptors, accustomed to being proficient in modeling and aware of the value placed on modeling by the Académie, would have been familiar with the links between their working procedures and those of the ancients.[124] It is conceivable then, if eighteenth-century sculptors were in the process of becoming more aware of the history of art and their place within that discourse, that terracotta portrait busts themselves operated in their

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[124] One can imagine that a consciousness of a continuous history of art might have led eighteenth-century artists to become conscious of their own status within the art world. Perhaps these eighteenth-century sculptors were aware that terracotta as a material on its own was hardly worth anything, and the value of the material only came from the impression of the master sculptor's hand.

imaginations as visual manifestations of Pliny's tale of Boutades and his creation of the first portrait bust in clay. As the final chapter of this thesis will address, the privileging of one art form over another began in earnest in the debates of sixteenth century and had repercussions on both the painters and sculptors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Chapter Five: The Image of the Sculptor as Modeler

The debate over the supremacy of painting and sculpture, eventually termed the *paragone*, or comparison, began in antiquity and was originally concerned with the superiority of the sister arts of painting and poetry.[125] In the sixteenth century the *paragone* was established as a debate primarily concerned with the merits and weaknesses of painting versus sculpture. In reviving the *paragone* debate, Leonardo da Vinci made a strong defense of painting, inserting into the discourse a discussion of the importance and status of the artist. The role and status of the sculptor is relevant to the growing number of later eighteenth-century depictions of sculptors in the process of modeling in clay. Thus, painted portraits of sculptors from the 1770's and 1780's can be understood to underscore again the appreciation at that time for the competent modeler and the association of terracotta works of art with the modeler's hand and original thought.

The *paragone* was especially of interest to artists of the Italian High Renaissance because it was during this time that artists in Italy were beginning to transition from working in guilds to becoming members of the newly-formed art academies.[126] Artists, both painters and sculptors alike, sought to elevate their status from mere craftsmen to aristocratic, intellectual creators, comparable to that of men of letters. A rivalry then formed between painters and sculptors; painters sought to elevate further their status from that of the sculptor by promoting the art of painting as more intellectual because it was less invested in manual labor.[127]

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[125] Claire J.Farago, *Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 36-9. The *paragone* debate was not officially termed such until the nineteenth century. (Farago, 8).
[126] James Hall, *The World as Sculpture* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1999), 13.
[127] Farago, 13.

In his revival the *paragone* debate, Leonardo argued that painting was indeed superior to sculpture because painting was more cerebral, mathematical, and scientific,[128] whereas sculpture, he thought, was more physical and, therefore, easier to achieve.[129] In the following quotation, Leonardo expressed his differing opinions of the sculptor and the painter,

> The only difference I find between painting and sculpture is that the sculptor conducts his work with greater bodily fatigue and the painter conducts his work with greater mental fatigue. You can prove that this is true because when the sculptor makes his work he consumes the marble and other stone covering in excess of the figure enclosed within by effort of his art and by strokes of the hammer, which is a highly mechanical exercise, often accompanied by great amounts of sweat composed of dust and converted into mud. With his face caked and all floured with marble dust, he looks like a baker, and covered with minute flakes that look as though it has snowed on his back, and his house is filthy and full of chips and stone dust. Just the opposite happens to the painter (speaking of excellent sculptors and painters), because the painter sits in front of his work at great ease, well-dressed, and wielding the lightest brush with charming colors. His clothing is ornamented according to his pleasure, and his house is filled with charming paintings, and clean, and he is often accompanied by music or readers of varied and beautiful works that are heard with great pleasure without the uproar compounded of hammers and other noises.[130]

 From Leonardo's text, one can easily understand why sculptors of his time and those who came after would have been sensitive to the image they projected as artists and how they were received by other artists as well as their patrons.

While art academies were established as alternatives to the guild practices in Italy as early as the sixteenth century, the *Académie Royal de Peinture et Sculpture* in Paris was not founded until 1648.[131] From its inception, the Académie had a vested interest in distinguishing its artists from the members of the guilds, which functioned like trade

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[128] Ibid., 76.
[129] Farago, 94.
[130] Ibid., 257.
[131] Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art Past and Present* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 56.

unions. The treatises and doctrines on all art-related subjects written by important figures

from within the Académie, including Andre Félibien and Roger de Piles, validated the

intellectual pursuits of the new Académie.[132] Likewise, painted portraits of

Academicians from the second half of the seventeenth century generally sought to portray

the painter or sculptor as a person of elevated social status through fine clothing and

props. Books, three-dimensional models, folios of sketches, and measuring devices were

often included in artist portraits to identify the artist's profession and to refer to his

intellect and competence in his field.

Painted as his *morceau de réception* in 1683, Gabriel Revel's portrait of *François*

Girardon (fig. 27) is a fine example of a portrait of the gentleman sculptor.[133] Situated in

a pseudo-outdoor setting, perhaps some kind of portico, the sitter is depicted wearing a

wig and sumptuously elegant clothing as well as a billowing drape, all made of what

appear to be silks and brocades trimmed in golden thread and all in immaculate

condition. The sitter's far-off gaze is averted from the viewer in the conventional device

of representing lofty intellectual thoughts. His hands are occupied with a sculpted head,

which has been identified as a modeled copy of an antique bust of Julius Caesar, resting

on a tabletop.[134] His left hand is firmly placed on the top of the sculpture while his right

hand appears to be gently touching the chin of the sculpted head. Set off to the side of

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[132] Félibien, author of *Des Principes de l'Architecture…*(1676), is most noted for his *Entretiens sur les vies et les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes*, a ten-volume history of painting, published between 1766 and 1788. Felibien's contemporary, Roger de Piles, wrote a treatise on color entitled *Dialogue sur le Coloris* (1763), several works on Flemish painting (1760's to 1780's), and a work devoted entirely to Rubens, *La Vie de Rubens* (1781).

[133] It should be noted that just as portrait sculptors vying for admission to the Académie would choose other academicians as their sitters, it became a sort of tradition for portrait painters and pastelists to also execute works of fellow artists.

[134] *Les Peintres du Roi : 1648-1793*, exh. cat. (Paris : Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2000), 112.

the sculpted head are the sculptor's tools including a mallet, a knife, and some other kind of carving instrument.

The Italianate outdoor setting in Revel's painting, rather than the inside of a sculptor's studio which would have almost certainly been "dusty and sweaty" as per Leonardo, and the reference to antiquity seen in the copy of the ancient bust all emphasize the sculptor's classical training. Although Girardon is surrounded by sculpting tools and a sculpted head, these elements act mostly as props to allude to the work of the sculptor instead of allowing the viewer to see Girardon in the process of sculpting. It is difficult to discern whether Girardon is actually modeling the portrait, or if he is merely pointing to the tools of his trade. It is not clear if the bust of Caesar is a terracotta copied from an antique original; its material appears ambiguous since a terracotta sculpture would not require use of the sculptor's mallet. Regardless, it serves in this portrait not as an original creation that could be identified as a work from Girardon's hand, but rather as a reference to the classical tradition of sculpture and, in turn, ultimately elevate the sculptor's status as an academic artist.[135]

Throughout much of the eighteenth century, academic sculptors were more often than not depicted in a manner similar to Revel's portrait of Girardon as the gentleman sculptor posing rather than working. However, in the last few decades of the eighteenth century, more portraits emerged representing sculptors actively modeling. It would be an oversimplification to state that the attire of sculptors depicted in painted portraits changed

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[135] A comparable portrait of a sculptor is Hyacinthe Rigaud's portrait of *Desjardins* from 1692. In this portrait, the sculptor is also dressed in fine clothing with a lace collar. His left hand is placed on top of a colossal head which appears to also be terracotta. Although Desjardins is situated in some sort of interior space, a view of antique and/or classicizing ruins can be seen behind him. The ruins as well as the scroll placed off to his right all allude to the sculptor's classical training. For further information on the tradition of academic artist portraiture, see *Les Peintres du Roi* catalogue.

completely, but even when dressed in exquisite clothing, the sculptor was often depicted modeling - the moment of the conception of a sculptural project and the true measure of the sculptor's creative genius. An example of a sculptor in ornate clothing in the process of modeling is Étienne Aubry's portrait of the sculptor Louis-Claude Vassé (fig. 28) of 1771. Although in this portrait Vassé is dressed in a fine taffeta-like material, thus alluding to his elevated social status, he is also actively modeling a lifesize head of what appears to be a figure from classical antiquity, perhaps a diety. The sculptor's hands are both placed on the model as he works the clay with his right-hand thumb and holds a wooden modeling tool in his left hand. In this portrait, Vassé is a sculptor who works with his hands, but does so in a dignified and elevated manner.[136]

The debate over the supremacy of painting or sculpture went beyond the cerebral and physical associations of each to involve the issue of the nobility of the senses, in essence, sight versus touch. By the eighteenth century, an interest developed in reconciling the distinctness of the senses, namely sight and touch, with their dependencies upon one another with regard to human vision. Jonathan Crary has noted that the concept of vision which took the camera obscura as its model, a concept of pure visibility was, in some sense, antithetical to the "anti-optical" notion of sight developed in the eighteenth century,[137] a time in which vision "was conceived in terms analogies to the senses of touch."[138] The interest in the hierarchy of the senses in relation to vision related to the preoccupation with knowledge and whether knowledge depended on a single, more noble sense or whether attaining knowledge required an individual's senses

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[136] *Les Peintres du Roi*, 199-200.
[137] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1990), 59-62.
[138] Ibid., 59.

to work in unison. Vision, a faculty understood to relate to either sight, touch, or both, was frequently discussed by eighteenth-century art theorists. While the viewing and reception of painting appealed to sight, and, traditionally sight was associated with intellectual pursuits, sculpture appealed to touch, the lesser sense because it was understood to be more carnal.

In 1778, the German philosopher and aesthetician Johann Gottfried Herder published *Sculpture*, an essay in which he reversed the traditional hierarchy of the senses by privileging touch over sight. Herder wrote, "Sight reveals merely shapes, but touch alone reveals bodies: everything that has form is known only through the sense of touch and sight reveals only visible surfaces."[139] Herder upheld sculpture as being more truthful than illusionistic painting, "We may say that sculpture is truth, whereas painting is a dream. The former is all presentation, the latter, storytelling magic…The most beautiful painting is a magnificent story, the dream of a dream."[140]

Herder's essay on sculpture and his interest in the touch can be related to the increased production of finished terracotta portrait busts. The importance of the sense of touch is intimately associated not only with the viewer's engagement before a sculpture, but also with the sculptor's experience in making the work. Clay was at once associated with the sense of touch because it is the ultimate tactile sculptural material which demands to be manipulated and engaged with the sculptor's own hand. The growing number of portraits of academic sculptors created in the last few decades of the eighteenth century depicting the sculptor actively modeling may reflect Herder's privileging of the sense of touch in art.

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[139] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sculpture*, edited and translated by Jason Gaiger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002),35.
[140] Ibid, 45.

One such example is Adélaïde Labille-Guiard's pastel *Augustin Pajou with the Bust of Lemoyne* (fig. 29) which the portraitist executed as her *morceau de réception* in 1782. In this pastel, Pajou is depicted modeling the portrait of his master, the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne.[141] The terracotta bust is positioned so that the viewer can make out the identity of the sitter as well as view Pajou in the process of modeling. When compared to Revel's portrait of Girardon in which the sculptor is finely dressed and coiffed and makes no pretense to be working, Pajou, in what appears to be his everyday work clothes with his sleeves rolled up, is actively engaged with the terracotta bust and more concerned with modeling than projecting a gentlemanly, intellectual appearance. In portraits of the artist at work like that of Pajou, fine clothing and other adornments were no longer necessary to elevate the status of the sculptor from laborer to artistic genius. This status was established through his creative process and production, as seen in the easily identifiable and celebrated terracotta bust of Lemoyne.

To conclude by returning to Louis- Léopold Boilly's painting of *Houdon in his Studio*, I now hope to offer a more complex analysis of this image (fig. 1). The image of the sculptor himself is not aggrandized; he is dressed in what appears to be an artist's smock, with one leg propped up on his work table which is covered with a bowl of water and cloth towels to moisten the clay and several wooden modeling tools. Houdon the modeler is doing just that; he is not turned to face the viewer, but rather intently focused on capturing the likeness of the sitter before him. Like Boutades who filled in the traced outline of his daughter's lover with clay to create the mythic first sculpted portrait, Houdon is also in the process of modeling the portrait of his sitter, who

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[141] The terracotta *Lemoyne* was actually modeled by Pajou in 1759 and exists in several versions today, both with and without drapery in the antique style.

appears in profile to the viewer. However, whereas Boutades was absent from the eighteenth-century depictions of Pliny's tale, the sculptor in this image, Houdon, is the focal point of Boilly's painting. Rather than the obscure potter's studio in which Boutades worked, Houdon is working in a studio fit for an academic sculptor, in the Louvre, the seat of the Académie and, by this time, the national art museum in France, thus alluding to his important status as contemporary creator and inheritor of tradition. The impressive array of finished portrait busts that line the shelves of the studio, many of which appear to be works in terracotta, alludes to Houdon's proficiency in modeling as well as his custom of keeping his terracotta models, his "original" originals, for future versions.

The painting of *Houdon in his Studio* seems to be divided by gender as the female figures exclusively occupy the left half of the composition while the male figures are all situated to the right. To the far left of the composition, one of Houdon's daughters pulls a sketch, perhaps a study of a head, from a folio of drawings, but Houdon has his back to the drawing. Houdon's daughter, associated here with drawing and the two-dimensional arts, is reminiscent of the Corinthian maid while Houdon could easily be identified with Boutades as both men were identified as fathers working with three-dimensional art objects. Thus, the same father-daughter construction in Pliny's tale of Boutades and the Corinthian maid is repeated in Boilly's painting of Houdon and his daughters. However, unlike Boutades who modeled the first portrait after being prompted by his daughter's drawing, Houdon works not from a two-dimensional sketch, but engages directly with the

sitter as he models his likeness.[142]   While Boilly's painting is clearly divided in terms of

gender, it also suggests larger implications for the fine arts: the daughter is not

represented working, but merely holding the drawing, perhaps because two-dimensional

arts were more equated in the eighteenth century with femininity and even deception

whereas the bust Houdon sculpts acquires associations with masculinity, activity, and

physicality.[143]

In addition to the issue of gender in this painting, an interesting question of

memory also arises. The drawing held by Houdon's daughter appears to be a portrait of a

much younger version of Houdon's sitter. If so, could she be comparing the drawn image

to the actual sitter, now older and certainly different in appearance? The daughter's need

to compare the drawing directly with the sitter suggests an untrustworthiness of the two-

dimensional, perhaps rectified by the bust being sculpted by her father since sculpture

occupies actual space and is inherently more "real." Just as the drawing created by the

Corinthian maid was not sufficient and, thus, her father filled in the drawing with clay to

create a likeness closer to the actual appearance of the departing sitter, Houdon's clay

bust is presented here as a more trustworthy and successful likeness than the drawn

image.

One final comment remains to be made about the immediacy of touch, an issue

that has been central to the discussion of terracotta portrait busts. Houdon's daughter, in

an effort to mimic her father, has removed the glove from the hand with which she holds

the drawing so that she too can experience the primacy of touch with the material,

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[142] It is important to remember that Houdon left no known drawings and this has led most scholars to believe that he simply did not execute them. This is in contrast to a sculptor like Bernini who was known to create preliminary drawings in addition to his clay models.

[143] This interpretation goes against Leonardo's argument that painting was more elevated in status and intellectual while sculpture was more physical and the sculptor, thus, more a brute than intellectual.

although her experience is with a drawing, or paper, rather than clay. Although the date of this painting, 1803-4, is outside the period of the 1770's and 1780's that has been the focus of this paper, the relevance of this portrait of Houdon modeling a terracotta portrait from life speaks directly to the validation of terracotta that occurred progressively throughout the eighteenth century by sculptors, connoisseurs, and patrons.

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Fig 1. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Houdon in his Studio*, 1803-4, Musée des Arts Décoratifs Paris

Fig 2. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Angel with Superscription* (l)
and *Angel with Crown of Thorns* (r), clay bozzetti, c1667-8,
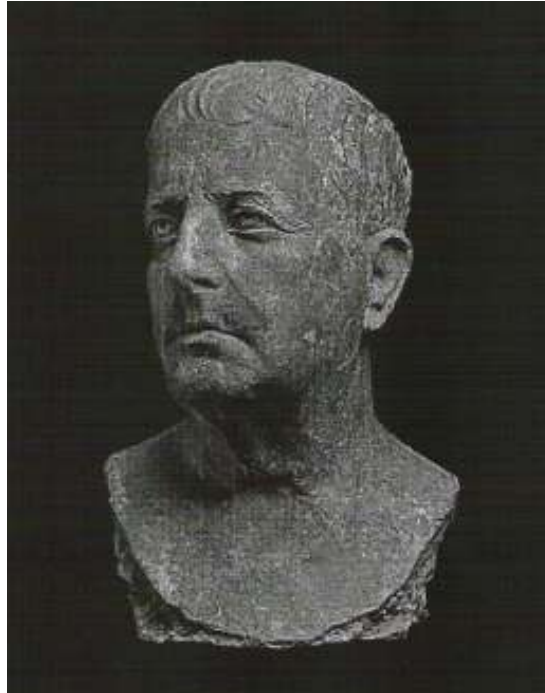Kimbell Art Museum, Ft. Worth, Texas

Fig 3. Late Roman Republican Bust from the area surrounding Cumae, Italy, terracotta, c50 BCE,
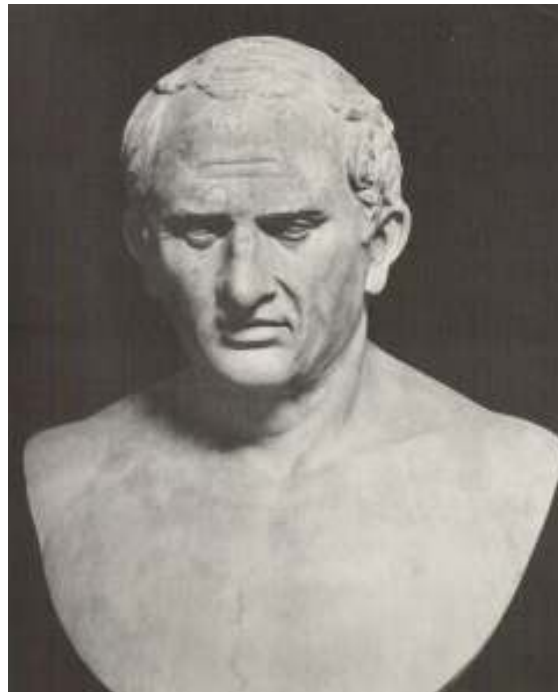Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Fig.4. Late Roman Republican Bust of Cicero, marble,
second century copy after first century BCE original, Chiaramonti Collection, Vatican Museum

Fig 5. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *Denis Diderot*, terracotta, 1771, Musée du Louvre

Fig 6. Claude-Michel Van Loo, *Portrait of Denis Diderot*, 1767, Musée du Louvre

Fig 7. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *Denis Diderot*, marble, 1775,
Musée National du Château et des Trianons, Versailles

Fig 8. Alessandro Algradi, *Bust of Pope Innocent X*, terracotta, c1646-49,
Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia, Rome

Fig 9. Clodion, *Bacchant Offering a Plate of Fruit to a Bacchante Carrying a Child*, terracotta, c1780, private collection, Switzerland

Fig 10. Joseph Chinard, *Saint Paul*, terracotta, 1781, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Fig 11. Joseph Chinard, *Saint Augustin*, terracotta 1781, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Fig 12. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, *Noël-Nicolas Coypel*, terracotta, 1730, Musée du Louvre

Fig 13. Augustin Pajou, *Bust of Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne*, terracotta, 1759,
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes

Fig 14. Houdon, *Voltaire à l'antique (tête nue*, marble, 1778, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers

Fig 15. Houdon, *Voltaire à l'antique*, marble, 1778, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

Fig 16. Houdon, *Voltaire à la française*, marble, 1778,
Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademinie der Wissenschaften Archiv, Berlin

Fig 17. Clodion, *Vase with Sacrifice*, terracotta, 1766, Musée du Louvre

Fig 18. Houdon, *Prince Friedrich Franz of Mecklenburg-Schwerin*, terracotta, 1782,
Staatliches Museum, Schwerin

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Fig 19. Houdon, *Princess Louise of Saxe-Gotha* , terracotta, 1782,
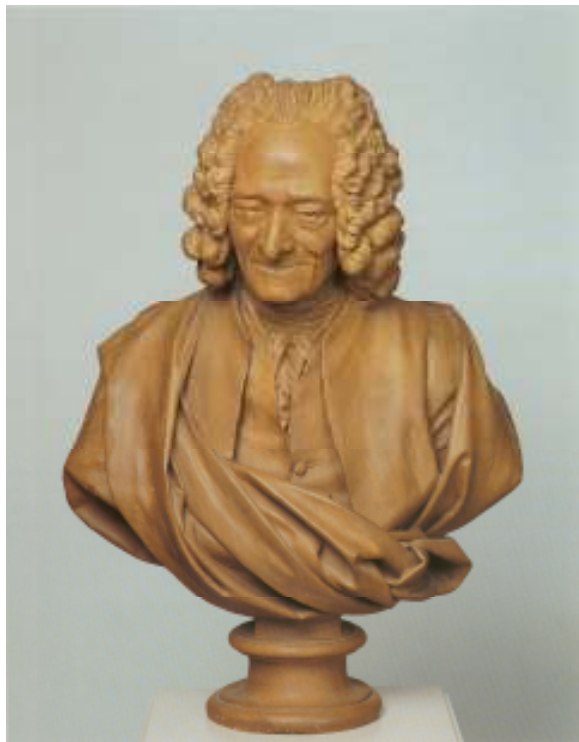Staatliches Museum, Schwerin

Fig 20. Houdon, *Voltaire*, plaster painted the color of terracotta, 1778,
Staatliches Museum, Schwerin

Fig 21. Houdon, *Rousseau*, plaster painted the color of terracotta, 1778,
Staatliches Museum, Schwerin

Fig 22. Alexander Runciman, *The Origin of Painting*, 1771, Penicuik House, Scotland

Fig 23. David Allan, *The Origin of Painting*, 1773, National Gallery of Art, Scotland

Fig 24. Joseph Wright of Derby, *The Corinthian Maid*, 1785, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

Fig 25. Jean-Baptiste Regnault, *Dibutade Traçant le Portrait de Son Berger*, 1785,
Musée National du Château et des Trianons, Versailles

Fig 26. Louis-Philippe Mouchy, *Dibutade*, bronze relief, 1785,
Musées Royaux de Peinture et de Sculpture de Belgique

Fig 27. Gabriel Revel, *Portrait of François Girardon*, 1683,
Musée National du Château et des Trianons, Versailles

Fig 28. Étienne Aubry, *Portrait of Louis-Claude Vassé*, 1771,
Musée National du Château et des Trianons, Versailles

Fig 29. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, *Augustin Pajou with the Bust of Lemoyne*, 1782, Musée du Louvre