

imaginary glory and high-pitched homage ('Victoriarum Auctor et Ipse Dux' flattery dared to inscribe in praise of Louis XV on the very monument to Marshal Saxe), the two Russian sovereigns could stand by themselves and display a truer pride. Falconet instinctively understood it when he conceived that four-word inscription which Catherine immediately approved: 'Petro Primo/Catharina Secunda'.

Falconet was back in France when the monument was finally unveiled in 1782. Though he never saw it *in situ*, plenty of French visitors to St Petersburg did, and their disapproval is the best testimony to its originality. The monument's romantic bravura, its naturalness, departed from all the conventions of a royal equestrian statue as conceived in Paris. It is fitting that it should have inspired Pushkin's 'Bronze Horseman', for in many ways it anticipates Romanticism.²⁹ Yet it remains very much of its own century in its humanism, in its expression of the philosopher-king, not threatening but protecting his city with outstretched hand. Falconet's enshrining of such concepts in sculpture, like his friendship with Diderot and acquaintance with Voltaire, make him a new sort of sculptor in France; he is part of the Enlightenment in a way unparalleled by any other great artist except Pigalle.

But in one aspect he surpasses Pigalle – and every other French sculptor of the century – for Falconet is unique among his profession in his command of the written word. His writings are lively and original, and pungently polemical. He was, in his way, a *philosophe*; he admired Socrates, and pointed out that he too had been a sculptor. What is remarkable for a visual artist of the period in France is not only his holding of strong, often unconventional opinions but his determination to proclaim them. The first edition of his writings appeared in 1781, ten years before his death, and it ran to six volumes.³⁰

Pigalle could be no rival in literary terms. In the matter of sculpture it was otherwise, but the rivalry of the two artists was different from that of, say, Bouchardon with Adam. Intelligent taste rightly recognized that, wherever one's own preference might lie, Falconet and Pigalle were both great. Far from representing two extremes of style, their general idiom is remarkably similar, though pronounced in each case in a highly personal accent. They are commanding figures of the mid century. Surveying the Salon of 1765, it was of them that Diderot thought, to show posterity 'que nous n'étions pas des enfants, du moins en sculpture'. His own tendency was to prefer Falconet; and yet: 'Au demeurant, ce sont deux grands hommes.'

PIGALLE

Perhaps it was only when Pigalle died in 1785 that his greatness could be fully appreciated. Even if no one positively came forward then to claim him as the greatest French sculptor of the century, the testimonies to his ability and achievement were more sustained than for any other sculptor. On the invitation card to his funeral the titles and honours form a miniature biography, evoking a career that runs from the first tremendous success, that of his *morceau de réception*, the *Mercury*, the most successful ever in the Academy's history, to the final solemn inauguration of the Saxe monument. After the *Mercury* came the success of Louis

XV's monument at Reims – and that prompted Bouchardon to nominate Pigalle as his successor for the Paris monument to the king; the greatest sculptor of the age, in most people's eyes, singled out the next greatest. But Pigalle's wealth and honours were unparalleled: with Saly, the first sculptor to receive the Saint-Michel, he was one of the very few to become chancellor of the Academy, being in addition a member of the Académie royale at Rouen and honorary citizen of Strasbourg. No more indifferent to honours than to money, Pigalle fought hard for the official equality of sculpture with painting. Though the post of Premier Sculpteur du Roi, which he had envisaged, was never created, his impressive career is the triumphant culmination of sculpture's struggle for individuality and respectability within the framework of the arts in France as first devised under Colbert.

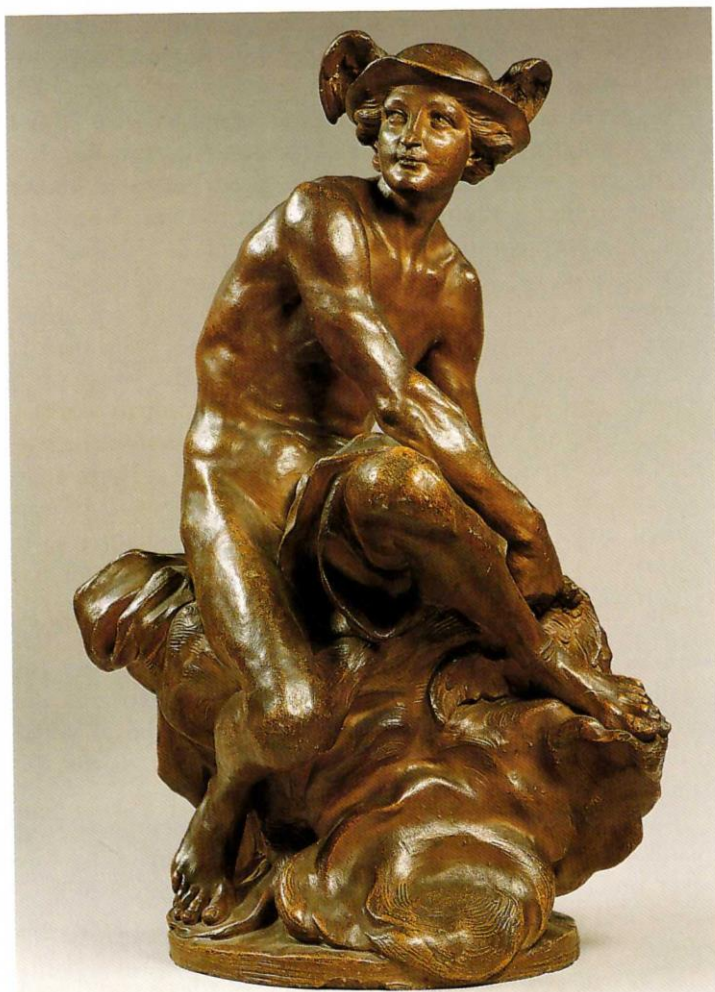
Although no one could perhaps fully realize it, a whole tradition died with Pigalle; his death signals the end of the French Baroque style, and with it the end of the system of royal patronage. The great court painters were long since dead. Of comparable sculptors it is true that Falconet lived on, but completely inactive. Vassé, Saly, Coustou le fils, were all dead, as was Lemoyne. 1785 was an eventful year, politically and artistically; politics and art were soon to be dramatically entwined, and meanwhile in that year France experienced the scandal of the Diamond Necklace and the instant success of the *Oath of the Horatii* [294]. Soon David was to challenge the authority of the Académie whose chancellor Pigalle had been; and not only royal patronage but royalty itself was to be overthrown.

A great distance, of more than actual years, separated those events from the world of Pigalle's birth in 1714. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, born while Louis XIV still reigned, had risen higher than any other sculptor but came from the very humblest rank of society, comparable in origin to that of Falconet. As with Falconet too, there is an unorthodox start to his career. Falconet never visited Italy; Pigalle was to go there under official auspices and yet, it seems, not as a royal pensioner. It was one of the last acts of d'Antin to sign the *brevet* on 7 October 1736 which allowed the young sculptor to work at the Academy in Rome, a considerable privilege, since he had failed to win first prize at the Academy Schools in Paris. Like Falconet, he was a pupil of Lemoyne; but before that he had worked under Le Lorrain, the first individualist among the century's sculptors. Neither of these masters could be claimed as 'correct'. Indeed, it was to be recorded by Pigalle's friend, the Abbé Gougenot, that Le Lorrain preferred pupils who were 'échauffés par la nature'; and that is the keyword for Pigalle's own style. From his earliest success onwards, he made nature his study; even the pictures which he collected in his prosperity proclaim an interest in the natural, and the names of Chardin and Greuze are prominent.

But the 'nature' that he sought needs definition and qualification. Closer to Falconet than to Lemoyne, he was never much attracted to portrait sculpture. His concept of nature had in it something of Rubens's Baroque vigour and warmth, and something also of his preference for the large-scale. It had a ruthless quality of honesty which could lead to the awkward result of the naked *Voltaire* but which gives tremendous symphonic force to the drama of the Saxe monument. Its force and almost rude power were best

displayed in masculine subjects, and it is noticeable how free is all Pigalle's work from slyly *galant* or erotic overtones. The *Mercury* is rightly famous, while the *Venus*, its pendant, was little esteemed from the first and deserves its obscurity.³¹ Even his work for Madame de Pompadour is, not altogether by chance perhaps, concerned with friendship rather than love. Vigour banishes from his style any of the century's tendency towards the pretty, just as – as far as possible – it concentrates on the big scale and avoids the statuette. Every aspect of his art is summed up in the Saxe monument, beginning with the sheer fact that the man commemorated was worthy of a great monument, and ending with the fact that it is concerned with an inescapable law of nature: death. Naturalness leads to the grim skeleton who prepares Saxe's tomb for him; there is no place for the comforting Slotz concept of Death Overthrown. Thus, for all the panache and the allegorical figures about Saxe, the central moment is intensely, poignantly, natural.

Hardly anything is established about Pigalle's early years in Rome, except that he seems to have benefited already from the friendship and generosity of Coustou le fils, who many years later was to be a witness at his marriage. His entry for a competition at the Accademia di San Luca resulted in his gaining a second prize, but he had entered against the French ambassador's wishes and had to withdraw. Neither Antiquity nor Bernini – those twin Roman lodestones – seems to have



137. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Mercury* (terracotta), 1742. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913

exercised much influence upon him, though he must have been fully aware of both. He was capable of copying the antique directly, as in the *Dice Player* (Private Collection),³² which was executed in Rome about 1738, and equally capable of contributing years later to the *mise-en-scène* at Saint-Sulpice with the Virgin and Child in a stucco glory.³³ Yet it is significant that neither of these works is truly typical of the sculptor: he is not of the party either of Bouchardon or Slotz; and the attempt to see him combating the Baroque by the classical makes him an 'engaged' artist of exactly the type he was not. As easily as Chardin, he sails between those two preoccupations of the century and emerges as attached to a third party – that of nature. He was distinguished by a 'surabondance de vérité' which was at times too pungent for some tastes but which pointed the way, rather like Goya's art, towards the new century.

Traditionally, the *Mercury* was executed or at least conceived in Rome during Pigalle's student years, which ended in 1739. There seems no real reason for this view, and the statue might equally well have originated during the period he spent at Lyon on his return from Italy and before settling in Paris. In 1741 he was back in Paris, and the following year the terracotta *Mercury* [137], now in New York, destined to be the preparatory model for Pigalle's *morceau de réception*, was exhibited at the Salon. Two years later he presented the marble version (Louvre) [138], to the Académie and became instantly famous. He received a royal command for large-scale marble versions of this and its pendant, a *Venus*, which the king was to despatch to Frederick the Great. But the *Mercury's* fame was not connected with that, and indeed the large-scale marble is of diminished power, just as the marble reception piece is itself a less impulsive and dynamic object than the preliminary terracotta.

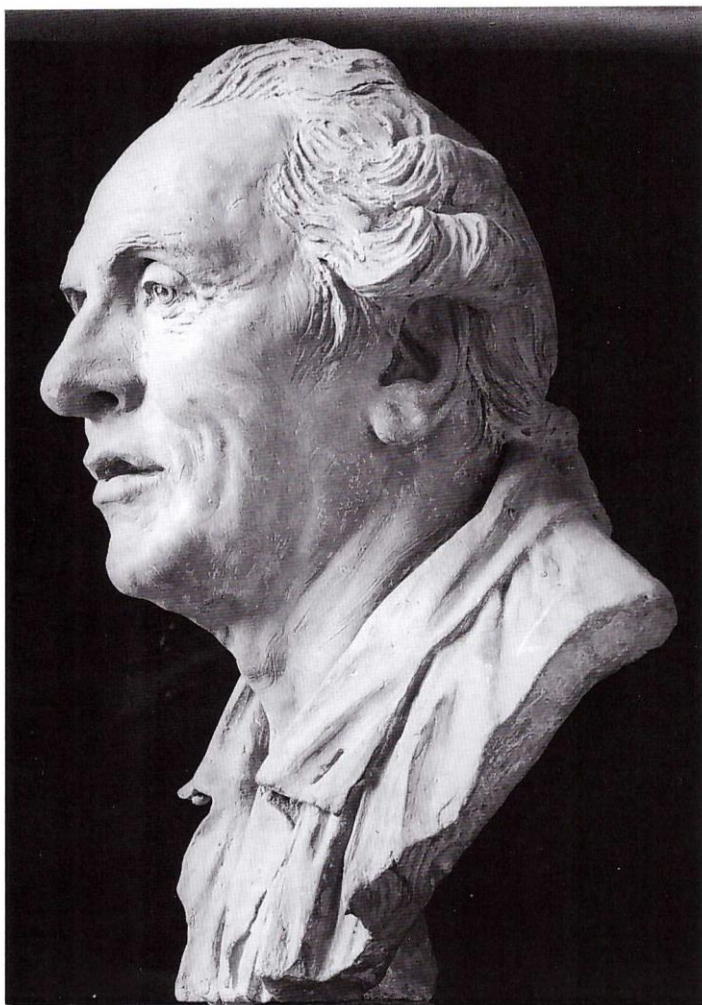
All Pigalle's art seems concentrated in this. There is a concentration of form, allied with the concentrated pose in which strength is held in potentiality; Mercury is the perfect allegory of speed and power, and though, when Pigalle added *Venus*, he attempted to tell a story, the statue is basically sufficient by itself. It is not a narrative of the kind displayed in the bravura of Falconet's nearly contemporary *Milo*, but the expression of all those qualities associated with Mercury. As has been suggested, the brilliant pose – worthy to have derived from Rubens – may well derive from Jordaens;³⁴ but it was a pose Jordaens had used for Mercury slaying Argus, whereas Pigalle retains the crouching pose and keen gaze as inherent in the concept 'Mercury', illustrating simply his character. The action of tying the sandal hardly matters; what is supremely summed up in the work is a sense of coiled power – the potential to take off which is locked inside the medium but communicates a vibrating sense of energy to the boldly-handled surfaces. The forms seem to relate to each other through a series of exciting, bumpy transitions – where the sculptor's ability as a modeller is felt – which flow together more gracefully in the marble but less forcefully. The rough, uneven contour of the hat brim in the terracotta version is not only closer to Jordaens' treatment but has a vigour which

138. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Mercury* (marble), 1744. Paris, Louvre



is smoothed away in the neat outline of the marble hat, under which too the hair has become more prominent, softening the original pulled-down effect which was part of its unconventional power.

Less literate and less pugnaciously a 'character', Pigalle was as much as Falconet unconventional by nature and perhaps *au fond* more stubborn in pursuit of his aims – both in life and art. His own self-portrait bust of 1780 (Louvre) [139] has a



139. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Self-portrait bust*, 1780. Paris, Louvre

heavy authority along with its pungent self-awareness. It is a face the very opposite of the mercurial, mischievous mask of Falconet; what in him was a biting quality of mind was in Pigalle a growling, bear-like tenacity. It is sufficient to instance Pigalle's obstinate refusal to change his Cupid on the Saxe monument into a genius of war; he appeared to yield, but finally left it, as he had always intended, a Cupid. Inevitably, Pigalle and Falconet ask to be compared; like Turner and Constable, or like Dickens and Thackeray, they share similarities for all their individual differences. They remain of their period, and in Madame de Pompadour they shared a patron.

In the years immediately following on the success of the *Mercury* Pigalle was to be very fully employed by the Marquise and by the Crown. No other sculptor received such a rich share of important commissions; they included portrait

busts of *Louis XV* and *Madame de Pompadour*, allegorical statues, a white and black marble crucifix for the dauphin, and finally the Saxe monument. It was in the statues for Madame de Pompadour that Pigalle came closest to comparisons with Falconet, and it was there also that he came closest to surrendering his own stylistic preferences. Several of the statues included her portrait in allegorical guise and more attractively than in the straightforward bust of her



140. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *L'Enfant à la cage*, 1750. Paris, Louvre

(1748–51, Metropolitan Museum) which is strangely waxen and impersonal. The much weathered but still tender *Love and Friendship embracing* (Louvre, signed and dated 1758) is probably the most ambitious of her commissions to Pigalle – apart from the *Education of Cupid* group, never executed on a large scale in marble. The *Love and Friendship*, for all its allegorical theme, has a naturalness that is maternal rather than anacreontic; it is conceived in terms of realism rather than prettiness. The pose of *Friendship* must always have seemed rather awkward, but the *Love* has still a childlike vivacious appeal, and originally its modelling must have added to the effect.³⁵

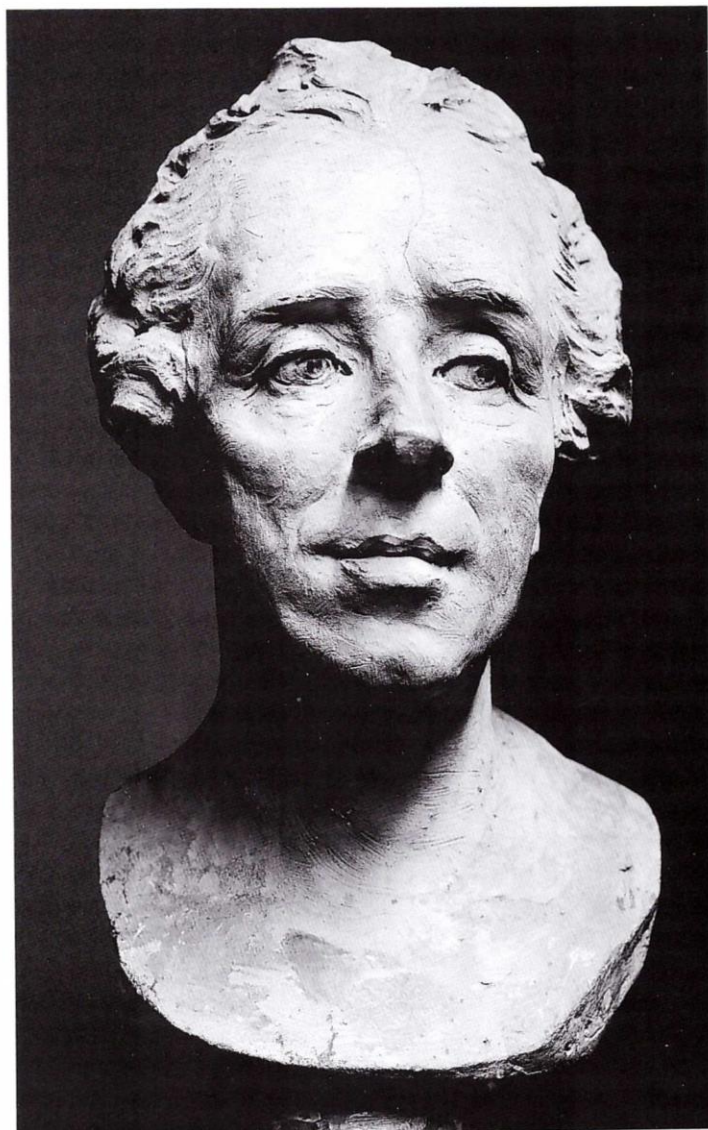
Pigalle had already revealed in the marvellously studied, unsentimentalized *Enfant à la cage* (Louvre) [140] how brilliantly he could convey not only infant flesh but even infant character. An actual portrait of the one-year-old son

of Pâris de Montmartel, it appeared at the Salon of 1750, and its popularity was so great that it nearly eclipsed that of the *Mercury*. This was Pigalle's first essay in what was almost a new genre, or rather a return to the antique Roman type of statues of children. Pigalle's statue became in fact a pendant to an antique one presumably already owned by the financier, of a child holding a bird. The statue's success led to its being duplicated and much copied, and Pigalle himself returned once or twice to the theme of children, now sitting, now standing, usually with fruit or a bird. They may be charming, but they seem separated from the first and most famous example by its pronounced, idiosyncratic portrait air. It is resolutely ungraceful and unidealized; indeed, it is, just as much as the *Voltaire nu*, the result of obsessive truth to nature. Although it has been claimed to possess 'une grâce alexandrine', it is distinguished from so many children and cupids and putti of the century exactly by its lack of that sophisticated air. Pigalle seems to have recognized its worth by buying it back later for much more than he had been paid; it was in his studio at his death and was the most highly valued of all the sculpture he then possessed.

Its public success was due to its having been exhibited at the Salon, but Pigalle was never to exhibit there again after 1753. Although he did execute a few small-scale decorative works, he left to Falconet the vogue for statuettes like the *Baigneuse* and the *Pygmalion*, and turned to the sequence of large-scale monuments by which he is best known. Yet he also found time to execute some busts, chiefly of writers and doctors – significantly not courtiers but people who had thought and worked, and who often were his friends. Technically less dazzling than Lemoine's busts, or Caffiéri's, they seem the result of profounder sympathies: personalities that had stirred Pigalle by some affinity with his own. There is never any virtuoso display, either in the costume or the sculptor's treatment of it; the neck and shoulders are treated with sobriety and the face too is sober, unsmiling, usually somewhat tense. The terracotta *Desfriches* (Orléans) [141] is probably the most outstanding achievement in its simplicity and worried lifelikeness. The physiognomy of this *amateur*, friend of Pigalle and Cochin, has a resemblance to Pigalle's own; it gives the same sense too of life's pressure upon the features, and all the working of the clay expresses the tensions which have gone to shape the exposed flesh, marked by lines about the mouth and heavy-lidded eyes. There is something naked and vulnerable about the effect which makes it moving.

But it is, finally, Pigalle's monumental art which raises him above his contemporaries and which illustrates also royal and official confidence in him. In 1750 Madame de Pompadour commissioned from him a full-length statue of the king and, though this was not completed until 1754, it may have combined with his other court work to gain him the Marshal Saxe commission which was confirmed early in 1753. Though Lépicié, secretary of the Académie, had proposed Coustou, it was Pigalle whom the young Vandières (not yet Marquis de Marigny) announced as chosen by the king. The resulting task was to occupy more than twenty years of Pigalle's career and is best considered outside the context of the rest of his work. But, once given, the commission singled out Pigalle as potentially the greatest sculptor in France.

It led to him receiving the commission from the city of



141. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Thomas-Aignan Desfriches*. Orléans, Musée des Beaux-Arts

Reims for the monument to Louis XV, preferred to the ageing Lambert-Sigisbert Adam and to the Caylus protégé, Vassé. In turn, the success of the Reims monument prompted Bouchardon to select him to finish the monument to Louis XV for Paris. In addition, Pigalle executed the statue of *Voltaire* (Paris, Institut) that had been commissioned by Madame Necker's circle in 1770 and which never found a public site, and also the confusedly sentimental tomb of Claude-Henry d'Harcourt, set up by his widow at Notre-Dame. To these actual works can be added two other monuments projected but never executed, the *Joan of Arc* for Orléans, which was to consist of two figures in bronze, and the grandiose plan for the Place Royale at Montpellier, which was to have four groups of *grand siècle* personages surrounding the equestrian statue of Louis XIV.

In each of these cases Pigalle produced new solutions: shocking people by the novelty of the *Voltaire*, which became, and has remained, something of an embarrassment. In the Harcourt monument, where he was tied by the widow's elaborate programme of conjugal reunion, there is an unexpectedly neo-classical, *larmoyant* tendency. That is his

last large-scale monument and in its execution shows no diminution of the high competence which characterized his handling of marble. Even if the programme of the monument was devised by the sorrowing widow, the result remains strikingly novel. It is a completely dramatic illustration of the same sentiment that had been commemorated less effectively in Coustou's monument to the dauphin – that too originally intended to immortalize marital devotion.

The novelty of the monument to Louis XV set up in the Place Royale at Reims was entirely Pigalle's own, and he set his personal seal upon it by including himself on the monument. The concept put forward by Adam was completely rejected – as completely as was Adam's choice of medium; instead of lead statues of the king in coronation robes, with Minerva and Remus (an allusion to the city of Reims), Pigalle executed in bronze the king clad in Roman military costume but with arm benevolently extended – 'pour prendre le peuple sous sa protection', said the sculptor. This theme of benevolence guided him in the figures below, also of bronze: not the conventional slaves signifying a conqueror which, as he pointed out, had been stigmatized by Voltaire, but emblematic figures of mild government and of a contented nation.³⁶ The latter was symbolized by a citizen [142] who is a portrait of Pigalle. While the woman who leads a tame lion, symbolizing France, is a rather trite and unconvincing piece of allegory, the *Citizen* is a powerfully modelled figure, admittedly in mood more like Rodin's *Penseur* than a happy man, which suggests the influence not of the antique, nor Bernini, but Michelangelo. The figure has a brooding, timeless, sense which lifts it out of all associations with the allegorical luggage around it, and with the rest of the monument. It is an enlightened reply to the chained slaves at the base of Desjardins' *Louis XIV*; yet, as it gazes out, uneasily posed, it seems to embody not so much exhilaration in liberty but awareness of the responsibilities that liberty brings.

Although the *Citizen* is individually memorable, and perhaps magnificent, the Reims monument must always have failed to make a single, coherent effect. It is doubtful if even the original statue of the king was satisfactory – the position of the feet in Moitte's engraving suggests a penguin rather than a man – and it was singularly detached from the huge allegories at its base. The ideas Pigalle was trying to express were not totally suited to a royal monument, not even one raised to the 'best of kings'.

In both the Reims monument, completed in 1765, and the quite different Harcourt one, of some ten years later, there is a tendency for the parts to be more effective than the whole. One of the achievements of the Saxe monument is that – at last, one is tempted to say – execution is matched by successful invention; the parts cohere into a striking whole, unique in its tremendous power [143]. Yet the concept is in fact the earliest of Pigalle's large-scale monuments. The king had selected and approved the design by 19 March 1753 and the model was completed by 1756, though another twenty

years were to pass before the final monument was inaugurated under Louis XVI. Even here the ultimate coherence of the design – and the effect from which it gains so much – came almost by chance. Pigalle had planned the marshal looking away to the left at the symbols of his defeated enemies; and it was a court suggestion, transmitted by Vandières, which proposed instead his gazing, 'avec la même fierté', at Death.³⁷

Maurice de Saxe, bastard of the elector of Saxony, marshal of France, brilliant soldier and victor above all of Fontenoy, had died prematurely at his château of Chambord on 30 November 1750. If the death of the aged Cardinal Fleury, seven years previously, had caused little grief except to the king and perhaps some far-sighted pacific spirits, the death of Saxe stirred all those associations of military glory and bellicose France which still continue to haunt that nation. Between Louis XIV and Napoleon there was Saxe; he gave a heroic tone to an essentially unheroic, but intelligent, age; and the widespread grief at his death was sincere, deepened yet further by his repute as lover as well as soldier. It was indeed his boudoir victories which had hastened his death. Although he died comparatively young he was, as well as great in himself, a link with the great past. As a boy he had been present at Mons and Malplaquet; he had served under Peter the Great; for him the title of 'Marshal General' had been revived, not having been used for anyone since Turenne.

All these considerations are relevant to Pigalle's eventual concept; and several of them were to find expression in his monument. He had read Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV* and studied the monument to Turenne (then at Saint-Denis) which he thought a poor tribute to a great soldier. Originally he planned two different designs for the Saxe tomb: one expressed the sense of his country's grief, and showed the hero dying in the arms of France – a clear echo of Girardon's Richelieu tomb – while the other emphasized the heroic rather than the pathetic. It was the latter the king chose. The marshal stands; even at the moment of death he seems invincible, and the proud isolation of the standing figure against the pyramid is the first and literally arresting effect of the monument.

Just as chance played its part in the marshal's pose, so chance governed the site of the tomb. Being Protestant, Saxe could not be buried in Notre-Dame or at Saint-Denis. Saint-Thomas at Strasbourg was chosen as a Protestant church on French soil, and reduced to being in effect a temple around the Saxe shrine, in a way that would not have been possible in either of the more important buildings. Alterations to the choir, re-arrangement of the windows, were made to achieve the concentrated central effect: the main door opens to reveal the well-lit monument filling the space of the apse. It can be approached only frontally – and its impact is increased by the movement of the figures towards the spectator, away from the wall. Pigalle has rejected the proscenium frame concept of Slodtz and Adam, in which the figures tended to be bas-relief-like, however fully modelled, and replaced it by a totally three-dimensional sense of the scene acted out in depth on different levels that descend towards us [145]. This sense is further increased by the powerful cutting of the marble, with its tremendous folds of thick drapery, manifested at its most powerful perhaps in the shrouded figure of Death [144]. Pigalle has conceived this with no gesticulating rhetoric,

142. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Monument to Louis XV*. Detail. Reims, Place Royale



143. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Monument to the Maréchal de Saxe*, designed 1753. Strasbourg, Saint-Thomas

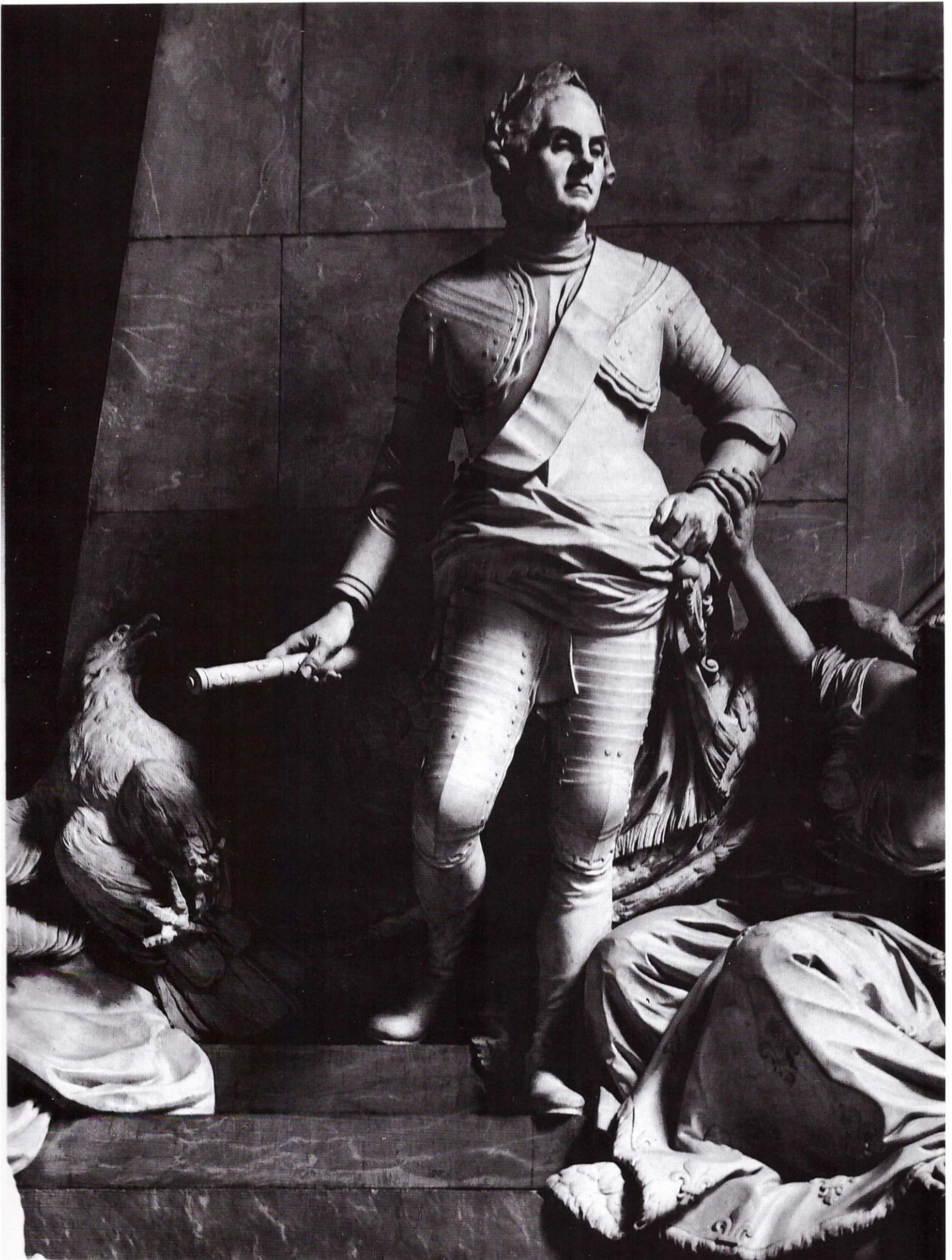
144. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Monument to the Maréchal de Saxe*. Detail, *Death*

145. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle: *Monument to the Maréchal de Saxe*. Detail



making it instead a compact and intensely sombre shape – inevitable mirror image of what even the heroic Saxe shall soon be. The weeping Hercules is conventional by comparison; and the animals symbolic of defeated countries are, like the huge standards, so many rhetorical flourishes which only decorate the main theme – the actual drama – of Death and the Marshal.

For the final stark but superb effect comes from Pigalle's concentration on that encounter, with scarcely any mitigating suggestions of Christian resurrection or immortality.³⁸ The opened tomb is there before us and cannot be avoided. But Saxe does not deign to glance at it; he steps forward at Death's summons, hardly restrained even momentarily by the imploring figure of France who vainly intercedes for him. He goes to death like Regulus back to Carthage, as calmly as if, in Horace's words, 'tendens Venafran in agros', but with the panache of his own century. His bravery consists exactly in facing the reality of death, in gallantly setting forward for a battle that is already lost.



This is only one way in which he anticipates another fighting lover, Mozart's Don Giovanni. Dissoluteness and bravery excite a sort of envy. When carried to the extremes of a Saxe or a Don Giovanni they lead to premature death and the retribution which is almost the same thing: 'Ho fermo il cor in petto/non ho timor, verrò.' Sculptor and composer both turn back to the Baroque for their treatment of the one subject that even the Enlightenment could not wholly rationalize. The honesty which runs throughout Pigalle's work is seen here at its most impressive, in the very place where the subject might tempt an artist to hyperbole. But Pigalle emphasizes *la condition humaine* which controls the hero as much as the ordinary man; the greatest glory ends in death. Even while recognizing this, Pigalle's Marshal Saxe re-mains also a character, a definite portrait not in generalized robes but positive armour, and set within a truthful perspective. When d'Angiviller commissioned statues of great men from several sculptors, Pigalle did not apply for a commission. In the monument to Marshal Saxe he had already created his concept of a great man – on an unparalleled scale.

BOUDARD, CAFFIÉRI,
TASSAERT, LECOMTE, MIGNOT,
DEFERNEX, ATTIRET

The second half of the century was rich in competence as well as genius; indeed, Patte declared in 1765 'les progrès de la sculpture au jugement des connoisseurs, passent pour être supérieurs à ceux de la peinture'.³⁹ There is a positively embarrassing choice of lesser sculptors who remain basically unoriginal but usually proficient. Few of them, however, were to prove very successful in working on a monumental scale – even when they were anxious to do so. The best that was produced therefore was some graceful, charming, decorative sculpture, often rather insipid, and many highly competent portrait busts. Several of these sculptors were outside the established circle of the Académie royale at Paris; thus Defernex belonged to the Academy of St Luke and was patronized by the Orléans faction, and Attiret, also a member of that academy, was active largely in Burgundy.

There were also other French sculptors who found employment largely outside France, among them Jean-Baptiste Boudard (1710–68), who settled successfully at the highly Frenchified court of Parma.⁴⁰ He had been a contemporary of Bouchardon and Slodtz at the French Academy in Rome, and after a period in Lyon went to Parma where he held the post of professor of sculpture at the local academy. For the city and court he produced some decorative work and several busts. Among the less grand but vivid of these is the terracotta of the Abbé Frugoni [146] of 1764, a bust worthy of Lemoyne in its frank, fleshy, and unidealized characterization, suggestive of an abbé more spirited than spiritual.

In France these middle years were awkward ones, marked by a slackening of artistic energy, a dissatisfaction with the verve and *manière* of the first part of the century, and an uncertainty which preceded the more 'engaged' discipline which involved the neo-classical. Meanwhile, an artist was safest in being natural and true, taking little imaginative

risk. It is no accident that the most successful category was 'natural' portraiture, acceptable to all ranks of society, and always saved by being a good likeness even when not very interesting art. Lemoyne went on exhibiting at the Salon up to 1771 and his influence remained potent. But aimlessness and lack of any definite style are most clearly revealed in the best known, if not in fact the best, of these sculptors, Pajou: drifting on the currents now of the Baroque, now the neo-classical, with no more difficulty than he had in serving first the king and then the Revolution.

It was to give sculpture a purpose, to revitalize the country with a tonic both artistic and moral, that d'Angiviller conceived the series of statues of the great men of France, the first group executed in 1777. The scheme is as much conscious reform as were the efforts at fiscal reform under Louis XVI, and no more successful, despite some individual achievements. The best of Pajou's work cannot be said to be his contributions to the series, and the same is yet more strikingly true of Caffiéri. It was genius which counted, and the unexpected success of the series as executed is Clodion's *Montesquieu* – showing also that genius needs no rules. Its energy can triumph when lesser talents are infected with a general lassitude.

Jean-Jacques Caffiéri cannot, however, be accused of any lack of vitality, either in life or art. In neither did he fully



146. Jean-Baptiste Boudard: *Bust of the Abbé Frugoni*, 1764. Parma, Accademia di Belle Arti