



Pair Of Republican-style Candlesticks In Patinated And Gilded Bronze



2 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Height : 25 cm

Description

Pair of patinated and gilded bronze candlesticks whose barrels are surrounded by three clusters of lictors resting on three seated, leaning griffins. The quality of the cast iron and the dark color of the patina of these candlesticks alone suggest a French confection from the mid-19th century; however, their ornaments, combining the usual antique pattern of the winged griffin with the clusters of lictors, encourage us to see it as the mark of a work dating from the short-lived Second Republic, corresponding to the mandate of the first president of the French Republic, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, until the coup d'état of December 2, 1851. The "ancient bundles", whose use in republican propaganda was consecrated in 1848 by the institution of the Great Seal designed by Jean-Jacques Barré, had been

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chosen as emblems of France "one and indivisible" in 1790 by the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly had then chosen to misinterpret the Roman symbol of the beam carried by the lictors, a symbol of the royal imperium attested from the first decades of Roman history, during which the kings of Rome moved before their twelve lictors, that is to say, twelve guards, carrying an axe surrounded by several rods connected together by a belt, the rods being intended for flagellation, and the iron of the axe for decapitation. The lictors, as a result and in the republican era, continue to escort the Roman magistrates holding the imperium, that is to say the power to compel and punish, and under certain conditions, that of life and death on Roman citizens. In the Republican era, the magistrate was required to lower his beams before the assembly of the people. Also, when Sylla was invested with the dictatorial magistracy in the first century BC, he increased the number of lictors who accompanied him from twelve to twenty-four. The original meaning of the bundles is largely neglected in 19th-century France. The latter represent, most often, only the nascent institutions of the Republic.