

CAMILLE CLAUDEL: THE STRUGGLE FOR
ARTISTIC IDENTITY

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University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2014

ABSTRACT

During Camille Claudel's lifetime, she pursued a career that was largely defined in terms of Auguste Rodin. This perspective of her work may be seen most notably in the reactions to her sculpture *L'Âge Mûr*. This work was interpreted as an allegory of two women's struggle for one man – the artist Rodin. The sculpture depicts an old woman on the left and at the apex, who leads away a middle-aged man. Reaching toward him is a young woman, appearing on bended knee. Claudel intended *L'Âge Mûr* to be the means for her to develop into an independent artist. The success of this ambitious sculptural group would also have meant a certain amount of financial independence and stability. However, the reception was not as she expected. Scholars interpreted the work within the narrow parameters of her relationship with Rodin despite the presence of themes of destiny and fate. Still today, when many scholars write about this piece, they emphasize Claudel's personal life and overlook the clues to a deeper meaning indicated by the title, her words, and in the context of her other sculptures.

This thesis addresses the impact of Claudel's personal and professional relationship with Rodin on her work first, but then considers *L'Âge Mûr* in a different light. The path she took to become a woman sculptor in nineteenth-century France will be explored. Her relationship with Rodin, her use of themes of destiny, and the educational and societal restraints on a woman sculptor in nineteenth-century France all inform our understanding of *L'Âge Mûr*.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences have examined a thesis titled “Camille Claudel: The Struggle for Artistic Identity,” presented by Julie Marie Stengle, candidate for the Master of Arts degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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INTRODUCTION

Camille Claudel (December 8, 1864 – October 19, 1943) became a sculptor at a time when more widespread educational and professional opportunities were becoming available for female artists. She was able to secure critical training in the studio of Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). During this time, Claudel and Rodin began a tumultuous relationship that left her largely on her own after they parted ways. In her quest to find her independence and support herself, Claudel worked to secure a state commission for an ambitious sculptural group of three figures. This work would be titled *L'Âge Mûr* (1902). The state commission would be suddenly cancelled and Claudel's fight for the sculpture she believed in resulted in her being at odds with the artistic bureaucracy.

There is speculation that *L'Âge Mûr* was interpreted by Rodin and state officials as the exposure of her relationship with Rodin, a man torn between two women – Claudel and Rodin's longtime partner, Rose Beuret. This interpretation has dominated modern scholarship. The work flows from right to left, with a young and beautiful woman on her knees reaching after a middle-aged man who is staggering away, led by an old woman with her hands firmly grasping his arms. Many scholars suggest that when it was exhibited, Rodin and the state officials interpreted the work within the narrow parameters of her relationship with Rodin.¹

¹ Angelo Caranfa. *Camille Claudel: A Sculpture of Interior Solitude* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999), 102; Odile Ayrat-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002), 147; John R. Porter, "The Age of Maturity or

L'Âge Mûr was intended to be the means for Claudel to gain independence as an artist. The success of this ambitious sculptural group would also have meant a certain amount of financial independence and stability. Claudel would never gain financial independence and her mental state would begin to decline, resulting in her being institutionalized in 1913, never to sculpt again.

This thesis will first consider her personal and professional relationship with Rodin that informed the biographical interpretations of *L'Âge Mûr*. Then, *L'Âge Mûr* will be considered in terms of symbolic and mythological references. Finally, educational restrictions on woman sculptors and the censorship on their works that Claudel had to navigate to become a sculptor in nineteenth-century France will be explored.

For the most part, scholarship on Claudel did not begin to surface until after her death. The one main article about Claudel during her lifetime was a monographic article about Claudel, titled “Mademoiselle Camille Claudel,” written by her friend Mathias Morhardt, a journalist, which originally appeared in *Mercure de France* in 1898.² Several years after her death, in 1951, her brother Paul Claudel wrote the article “Ma sœur Camille,” which provided the family perspective of her life, for an exhibition

Fate,” in *Camille Claudel & Rodin: Fateful Encounter*, ed. by Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 183-4.

² Mathias Morhardt, “Mademoiselle Camille Claudel,” in *Camille Claudel, 1864-1943: Madrid, Fundación Mapfre, 7/xi/2007-13/i/2008; Paris, Musée Rodin, 15/iv/2008-20/vii/2008*, ed. Aline Magnien, Véronique Mattiussi, and María López Fernández (Paris: Gallimard, 2008), 331-353. The entire article is reproduced in this publication.

catalogue at the Musée Rodin.³ Then, writings on Claudel largely disappeared for thirty years. It was not until the 1980s that scholarship began to be written on Claudel. Anne Delbée, Reine-Marie Paris, J. Adolf Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, Angelo Caranfa, and Odile Ayral-Clause discuss her life with Rodin, her relationships with family members, her mental struggles, and her sculptures.⁴ In 2003, Anne Rivière and Bruno Gaudichon compiled the letters she sent and received from family and friends. Through the preservation of this correspondence throughout her lifetime, we have insight into her struggles, her points of view, and the dynamics of her inner circle.⁵ By 2005, Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, in conjunction with an exhibition of Claudel and Rodin's works, published several essays which explored the mutual influence between Claudel and Rodin and the state of women sculptors in nineteenth-century France.⁶ The literature on Claudel primarily focuses on her relationship with

³ Paul Claudel, "Ma sœur Camille," in *Camille Claudel, 1864-1943: Madrid, Fundación Mapfre, 7xi2007-13i2008; Paris, Musée Rodin, 15iv2008-20vii2008*, ed. Aline Magnien, Véronique Mattiussi, and María López Fernández (Paris: Gallimard, 2008), 359-363.

⁴ Anne Delbée, *Une femme* (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 1982); Reine-Marie Paris, *Camille Claudel: 1864-1943* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); J. Adolf Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, *Auguste Rodin and Camille Claudel* (New York: Prestel, 1994); Caranfa, *Camille Claudel: A Sculpture of Interior Solitude*; Odile Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*.

⁵ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, ed. Anne Rivière and Bruno Gaudichon (Paris: Gallimard, 2003).

⁶ Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, ed., *Camille Claudel and Auguste Rodin, Camille Claudel & Rodin: Fateful Encounter* (Paris: Hazan, 2005). This book was published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title held at Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, May 26-Sept. 11, 2005 ; Detroit Institute of Arts, Oct. 2, 2005-Feb. 5, 2006 ; and at Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny, Mar. 3-June 15, 2006.

Rodin, similarities in her style to that of Rodin, and how his influence affected her career. However, Claudine Mitchell's article, "Intellectuality and Sexuality: Camille Claudel, the Fin de Siècle Sculptress," published in 1989, explores Claudel as an intellectual in her own right and discusses the censorship on representations of sexuality Claudel faced as a woman sculptor in nineteenth-century France.⁷ Overall, the literature is dominated by her life and work, put in the context of Rodin.

This study focuses on *L'Âge Mûr*, which was reportedly understood by Rodin and state officials to be a narrative about her personal relationship with Rodin. In order to understand the manner in which *L'Âge Mûr* has largely been interpreted by scholars, I first discuss her relationship with Rodin and how the relationship might be seen in *L'Âge Mûr*. Then, in a departure from the predominant autobiographical interpretations in the literature, I discuss the larger allegory in *L'Âge Mûr*, which did not refer specifically to Rodin. Finally, I examine the struggles of a woman sculptor in latter nineteenth-century France and how Claudel navigated her own path.

⁷ Claudine Mitchell, "Intellectuality and Sexuality: Camille Claudel, the Fin de Siècle Sculptress," *Art History* 12, no. 4 (1989): 419-447.

CHAPTER 1

L'ÂGE MÛR: PERSONAL EVENTS REVEALED

Camille Claudel's *L'Âge Mûr* (The Age of Maturity) (Figure 1), created in 1902, depicts a figure representing Youth on her knees, reaching after a middle-aged man who is led away by Old Age. This grouping of three is often interpreted as a reference to Claudel's personal life, where she depicts herself just out of reach of her lover, who remains in the arms of an older woman. Claudel contemplated each aspect of her sculptures and even made a change to *L'Âge Mûr* to distance the work from that of her life events. When first exhibited, however, it is believed this sculpture was viewed as an exposure of Rodin's relationship with Claudel by Rodin and state officials, rather than a viewpoint influenced by a woman's personal life experience, and the reaction to the sculpture by state officials caused the artist great professional frustration.

The relationship with Rodin that many believe inspired *L'Âge Mûr* began with an introduction from fellow sculptor Alfred Boucher. Boucher had been a mentor to Claudel since 1876, when she was approximately 12 years old.¹ This mentor relationship continued when Claudel's family moved to Paris in 1881, and he introduced Claudel to Rodin shortly after her arrival in Paris.² Claudel is recorded as a visitor in Rodin's studio

*All translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

¹ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 16.

² Caranfa, 32-33.

in February 1882 while he was working on *The Gates of Hell*.³ Around 1883, Boucher left for a six-month stay in Florence and asked Rodin to give Claudel and the other women in Claudel's studio advice in his absence. This mentor relationship led to what would become the turbulent, intimate affair that would eventually be perceived in *L'Âge Mûr*.⁴ Rodin visited Claudel's studio with such regularity his entourage knew which days they could find him there.⁵ The two cultivated a strong working relationship with mutual respect for each other's talents. By 1884, Claudel, age 20, had joined Rodin's studio staff. Jules Desbois, another sculptor in Rodin's workshop, noted that while she was officially his pupil, Rodin would ask for her opinion on everything and would not settle on an idea until they were in agreement.⁶ Over the course of the relationship, Claudel would serve not only as his student, but also as model, inspiration, collaborator, and lover.⁷ Their lives and works were very much intertwined, which led critics to naturally compare her work to Rodin.

³ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, "In Rodin's Studio," in *Camille Claudel & Rodin: Fateful Encounter*, ed. by Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 38. Camille and Rodin met as early as February 1882, according to a record of people that were present in Rodin's studio while he was working on *The Gates of Hell*. The record indicates a woman named "Camille" was in his studio and given no other Camille in Rodin's life, it can be assumed this is Camille Claudel.

⁴ Caranfa, 32-33.

⁵ Le Normand-Romain, "In Rodin's Studio," 41.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

⁷ Caranfa, 32-33.

However, the personal relationship was tumultuous. Accounts of their relationship suggest that for the majority of their relationship Rodin was the one pursuing Claudel while she was distant for unknown reasons. Throughout 1884, the acquaintance intensified, as Rodin took every chance to be near Claudel.⁸ However, Claudel was not always receptive, and it is likely because she wanted his devoted attention. By 1885, he wrote her friend and fellow sculptor, Jessie Lipscomb, entreating her to give him news of Claudel and bring her around. In his letters, he referred to her as “our dear stubborn one,” recognizing her moodiness and the challenge of his pursuit.⁹ He was relentless, even following her in 1886 to England where she was spending the summer with Lipscomb. Rodin did not get the reception he had hoped to receive. He wrote many letters to Lipscomb pleading for her to convince Claudel to respond to his letters. Rodin’s letters expressed his loneliness without Claudel and spoke of his desperation for communication with her during this time. He succeeded in getting an invitation from Lipscomb’s family to stay with them, but Claudel remained distant. She was moody and disrupted two evenings in which Jessie was singing a Scottish romance for Rodin.¹⁰ The cause of her temperamental behavior is not known, since some of the correspondence from Rodin to Claudel has been lost. It has been suggested that Claudel may have

⁸ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 24.

⁹ Letter from Auguste Rodin to Jessie Lipscomb, kept by her in a private collection, held in London, translated in Frederic V. Grunfeld, *Rodin: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1987), 215.

¹⁰ Grunfeld, 215-218.

become pregnant with Rodin's child. However, the pregnancy remains unconfirmed and dates for the pregnancy are not known.¹¹ A pregnancy would have been devastating for an unmarried woman in nineteenth-century France, and the stress could explain some of her distance. These conjectures must also take into account Claudel's personality, as well as the stress of their unstable relationship.

As shown in *L'Âge Mûr*, there was not just one woman in the man's life. Rodin enjoyed the benefits of being a sculptor in the sexually tolerant Parisian art world with a constant flow of female models in his studio.¹² Claudel was well aware of these women, even writing to a postscript in a letter to Rodin, "Especially, don't deceive me more!," indicating that she wished for him to stop seeing the other women.¹³ However, there was always one constant woman in his life. During Claudel's relationship with Rodin, he continued his relationship with Rose Beuret, his lifelong companion.¹⁴ Beuret was perhaps one of the most stable forces in his life. Beuret and Rodin had been together since approximately 1864-65. Beuret was a seamstress who remained by his side throughout the difficult points in his career and bore him a son named Auguste Beuret.

¹¹ According to Grunfeld (214-218), Jessie Lipscomb's documents suggest Camille had two illegitimate children by Rodin but he did not want to acknowledge them. Ayral-Clause (*Camille Claudel: A Life*, 114-115) notes that contemporary Lucien Descaves hinted at one of Claudel's pregnancies in correspondence. Ayral-Clause also mentions a 1939 letter from Paul Claudel that hints at Camille having at least one abortion. Although, Ayral-Clause points out there were rumors that she had up to four children.

¹² *Ibid.*, 224-226.

¹³ Delbée, 261. "Surtout ne me trompez plus."

¹⁴ Caranfa, 33-35.

Still, Rodin did not marry her until the year of their deaths, 1917.¹⁵ Her role in Rodin's life was completely in the domestic sphere, while Claudel, by contrast, participated in his artistic and intellectual circles. Claudel was bright and young; in fact, Claudel was twenty years younger than Beuret and twenty-four years younger than Rodin.¹⁶ Beuret was not the intellectual match that Claudel was for Rodin. His refusal to leave Beuret made Claudel feel both jealous of Beuret and rejected by Rodin.¹⁷ Claudel's next actions indicate that the situation was not suitable for her and she requested a contract which would ensure she was given his exclusive attention. On October 12, 1886, at the height of Claudel and Rodin's relationship, a contract was executed between the two, clearly at the urging of Claudel, in which Rodin promised Claudel would be his only student, he would support her in every way, she would be the only woman in his life until May 1887 (the date of the Salon), and they would travel to Italy together to begin a relationship that would result in a marriage. Despite the contract, they did not travel to Italy together and Rodin never married Claudel.¹⁸ Claudel and Rodin were distant again by March 1887, when Lipscomb notified Rodin of her and Emily Fawcett's arrival from England for instruction and offered: "We won't stay with Mlle Claudel if that upsets you, and the

¹⁵ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 33. Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth has described Beuret as a domestic servant.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁷ Porter, 170.

¹⁸ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 35-36.

differences between you are none of our business.”¹⁹ Rodin asked Lipscomb to bring both Fawcett and Claudel with her.²⁰ Their relationship resumed in 1888, when Claudel moved from her parent’s apartment and acquired an apartment on the Boulevard d’Italie, while Rodin set up a studio for the two of them at a house called La Folie-Neufbourg, where the couple lived and worked together.²¹ This arrangement was possibly brought about because Claudel had to leave the family home when her parents discovered the relationship. Her mother possessed a strict moral code and expressed her distinct opposition, writing about her father’s reaction:

He has suffered enough--yes, he too---when he learned the truth about your relations with Rodin and the disgraceful comedy you have played! Me, naïve enough to invite the ‘Great Man’ to Villeneuve with Madame Rodin, his concubine! And you, who played the sweet little thing, and were living with him as a kept woman!²²

In nineteenth-century France, this was a scandalous situation. While Claudel had an apartment set up, she was now at odds with her family and continued to be second to Beuret. Rodin, state officials, and scholars viewed Claudel’s wanting to be with Rodin as he continued his life with Beuret as the struggle depicted in *L’Âge Mûr*. Claudel, as Youth, falters as she reaches after the middle-aged man. He is pulled away by another

¹⁹ Letter from Jessie Lipscomb Auguste Rodin, kept by her in a private collection, held in London, translated in Grunfeld, 218.

²⁰ Grunfeld, 218.

²¹ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 59.

²² Reine-Marie Paris, 131. “Il a assez souffert lui aussi quand il a connu la vérité sur tes relations avec Rodin, l’ignoble comédie que tu nous a jouée. Moi, assez naïve pour inviter le “grand homme” à Villeneuve, avec Mme Rodin, sa concubine! Et toi, qui faisais la sucrée, qui vivais avec lui en femme entretenue.”

woman, considered a representation of Beuret. It is this moment that many believed they saw in *L'Âge Mûr* and, knowing the autobiographical connotations, many scholars never contemplated the other meanings.

Rodin was willing to have a relationship with her and work with her, yet he was unwilling to let Claudel into his domestic realm. Rodin refused to abandon Beuret, despite Claudel's demands.²³ Claudel may have negotiated more time with Rodin and a shared studio, but still Beuret was considered "Madame Rodin" by outsiders.²⁴ This eventually led to them romantically parting ways. The breakup was a drawn-out process which began in 1892 when Claudel moved out of La Folie-Neufbourg and Rodin left Paris for Bellevue.²⁵

While Rodin's allegiance to Beuret was a major factor, Claudel also needed to gain independence at this point. Claudel's brother argued that the breakup was caused more by a clash of talent and ego.²⁶ Claudel wanted to achieve her independence and Rodin desired to focus on his art.²⁷ In a 1951 article Paul Claudel wrote on his sister for an exhibition catalogue when her works were shown at Musée Rodin, he explained:

The separation was inevitable, and the time...was not late in coming. Camille could not assure the great man the perfect security of habits and self-esteem that he found from an old mistress. And on the other hand, two geniuses with equal

²³ Porter, 170.

²⁴ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 33.

²⁵ Porter, 169-170.

²⁶ Caranfa, 35.

²⁷ Porter, 169-170.

power and of different ideals could not continue to share the same workshop and the same clientele. The divorce was for him a necessity, it was for my sister the total, deep, final catastrophe. The profession of a sculptor is for a man a case of perpetual challenge to good sense, it is for an isolated woman and for a woman with the temperament of my sister a pure impossibility. She had everything with Rodin, she lost everything with him.²⁸

Paul Claudel's comment touched on Camille's need for her independence from Rodin and recognized that she faltered after the breakup. However, it is not clear why Paul Claudel would have considered the breakup to be a necessity for Rodin. Rodin did not completely give up on Claudel. Rodin was upset over the breakup and even went to the critic Roger Marx bemoaning his loss of control over her; still, he continued to advocate for her.²⁹ For a time, Rodin kept one promise he made in the contract, which was to help her in any way possible. The two artists kept in contact via intermediaries, primarily Swiss journalist and poet Mathias Morhardt, and Rodin continued to use his influence with friends, journalists, and politicians to aid Claudel.³⁰ However, Claudel preferred to keep her distance from Rodin and even asked Morhardt to help her ensure Rodin did not

²⁸ Paul Claudel, "Ma sœur Camille," 361. "La séparation était inévitable et le moment... ne tarda pas à arriver. Camille ne pouvait assurer au grand homme la parfaite sécurité d'habitudes et d'amour-propre qu'il trouvait auprès d'une vieille maîtresse. Et d'autre part, deux génies d'égale puissance et de différent idéal n'auraient su longtemps partager le même atelier et la même clientèle. Le divorce était pour l'homme une nécessité, il fut pour ma sœur la catastrophe totale, profonde, définitive. Le métier de sculpteur est pour un homme une espèce de défi perpétuel au bon sens, il est pour une femme isolée et pour une femme avec le tempérament de ma sœur une pure impossibilité. Elle avait tout misé sur Rodin, elle perdit tout avec lui." The entire article is reproduced in this publication.

²⁹ Porter, 171-174. In May 1895, Rodin wrote to journalist Gabriel Mourey asking him to help Claudel. Then, in June 1895, Rodin indicated in a letter to Claudel that he had spoken with many authorities in an effort to secure her a commission.

³⁰ Ibid.

come to her studio.³¹ Since this request was fulfilled, Rodin did not have knowledge of the subject of Claudel's monumental work-in-progress. By refusing to see Rodin, she gained some of the personal independence she sought, but professional independence would not come as easily.

Claudé had been working on a three-figure group which would develop into *L'Âge Mûr* since the demise of her relationship with Rodin.³² Claudé had hoped to exhibit this work at the Champs de Mars Salon of 1894. Such an ambitious sculpture could not be completed in time, however, and so Claudé completed the figure of *Youth* separately in order to be exhibited at the Salon.³³

As a solitary figure, *Youth* was named *L'Implorante* (*The Implorer*) (Figure 2). *Youth* is humbly upon her knees, naked and reaching forward for the person who has just left her. When Rodin saw *L'Implorante* at the Salon, he referred to it while speaking with a journalist as *Le Dieu Envolé* (*The God Has Flown Away*). According to Odile Ayral-Clause, the god Rodin was referring to is Cupid, who flies out of reach of Psyche.³⁴ Rodin appears to have been unaware that two more figures were to accompany the figure of *Youth*.³⁵ When all three characters were presented, it is believed the autobiographical references to Rodin and Claudé's relationship became obvious to those who were aware

³¹ Ibid., 175-176.

³² Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudé: A Life*, 121.

³³ Ibid., 121-122.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 122.

of her personal life.³⁶ Still, there are some issues with this strictly biographical interpretation. It is true that Claudel had found herself in a love triangle, but she appeared to be the one who turned her back on the relationship, not the man as the sculpture would suggest.

Through some changes Claudel made to the sculpture, it appears that she did not want a love triangle to be the sole interpretation. The maquette of the first version of *L'Âge Mûr* (Figure 3), created around 1894, also contained the three figures we are familiar with today; however, the middle-aged man is in contact with Youth, placing his left hand on her breast, and his arm is around the figure of Old Age, who has her hand in a fist ready to defend her possession. This version emphasizes the idea of a man torn between two women, and presumably represents the love triangle between Claudel, Rodin, and Beuret.³⁷ The contact between the middle-aged man and Youth is nonexistent in the second and final version of the work, which opens up other possible meanings.³⁸ The gazes of the figures reinforce the separation. The middle-aged man stares blankly and does not even look back at Youth. He yields to Old Age, while Old Age looks back “contemplating her obedient prey.”³⁹ I believe this change in the figures supports the theory that Claudel wanted this work to have meaning beyond that of a love triangle. She wanted the figure to convey the human experience, as one moves through the trials

³⁶ Porter, 178-181.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 82-84.

³⁹ Porter, 195.

and tribulations of life, and grows old. Her change to the composition, separating the hands, is one that emphasizes the notion that the physical connection to a person is gone when he dies.

John R. Porter, in “The Age of Maturity or Fate,” argues that the separation is a reference to a letter she received from Rodin. In 1886, Rodin wrote in a letter to Claudel begging for sympathy and declaring that it was only Claudel who could save him from the mental torture of their separation.⁴⁰ He implored:

I have moments of amnesia when I suffer less, but now the pain is unrelenting. Camille my beloved despite everything, despite the madness that I feel coming and that will be your work, if it continues. Why do not you believe me? ... There are times when I honestly think that I'll forget you. But in a moment, I feel your terrible power. ... I cannot go on, I can no longer spend a day without seeing you. ... My Camille, be assured that I have no other woman, and my soul belongs to you. ... Let me see you every day, it will be a good deed and maybe something better will happen to me, because you alone can save me by your generosity. ... Do not threaten me and let yourself see that your very gentle hand marks your kindness for me and sometimes leave it there, so I can kiss it in my transport. ... Your hand Camille, not the one that is withdrawn, no happiness to touch it if it is not the guarantee of some of your tenderness.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Ibid., 196.

⁴¹ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 37-39. “J’ai des moments d’amnésie où je souffre moins, mais aujourd’hui, l’implacable douleur reste. Camille ma bien aimée malgré tout, malgré la folie que je sens venir et qui sera votre œuvre, si cela continue. Pourquoi ne me crois-tu pas?... Il y a des moments où franchement je crois que je t’oublierai. Mai en un seul instant, je sens ta terrible puissance...Je n’en puis plus, je ne puis plus passer un jour sans te voir...Ma Camille sois assurée que je n’ai aucune femme en amitié, et toute mon âme t’appartient...Laisse-moi te voir tous le jours, ce sera une bonne action et peut-être qu’il m’arrivera un mieux, car toi seule peut me sauver par ta générosité...Ne me menace pas et laisse toi voir que ta main si douce marque ta bonté pour moi et que quelques fois laisse là, que je la baise dans mes transports...Ta main Camille, pas celle qui se retire, pas de bonheur à la toucher si elle ne m’est le gage d’un peu de ta tendresse.”

In the context of Porter's theory, this work would represent that Claudel's hand continued to be extended for Rodin, even after he chose to go with Beuret. However, in reality, Claudel was not receptive to seeing Rodin after their break-up, as evidenced in her communications and actions. Therefore, it is unlikely she would create a public sculpture indicating her hand is extended toward his as a gesture that would invite contact with him.

For those aware of their relationship, her work certainly represented her voice as a woman who had experienced heartbreak. Her own brother, Paul Claudel, even viewed the work as such,

But no, this naked young woman is my sister! My sister Camille, imploring, humiliated, on her knees, and naked! It's all over! This is what she left us to look at forever. And do you know what is being torn from her in that very moment, before your eyes? Her soul. Her soul, genius, sanity, beauty, life, all at the same time.⁴²

While the sculpture is routinely considered to be a comment on her relationship with Rodin, it is not clear that Claudel intended it to be a public statement. Given that Paul was her brother, I believe people viewed his comments as coming from intimate knowledge of the situation (as opposed to that of the average observer), thus steering the interpretation of the work. However, it is not documented anywhere that Claudel herself mentioned the autobiographical nature of the work.

⁴² Paul Claudel, "Ma sœur Camille," 362-363. "Mais non, cette jeune fille nue, c'est ma sœur! Ma sœur Camille. Implorante, humiliée, à genoux, et nue! Tout est fini! C'est ça pour toujours qu'elle nous a laissé à regarder!! Et savez-vous? ce qui s'arrache à elle, en ce moment meme, sous vos yeux, c'est son âme! C'est tout à la fois l'âme, le genie, la raison, la beauté, la vie, le nom lui-même."

Claudé was aware of her comparisons to Rodin and consciously wanted to distance herself from him. Camille had been accustomed to creating large, bronze sculptures of lovers and mythological figures. Beginning around 1895, Claudé created several works that were largely inspired by everyday life. These were small sculptures and used a combination of materials, such as bronze and stone, or bronze and marble onyx.⁴³ *Les Causeuses* (The Gossips) (Figure 4) was one such work and was exhibited at the Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1895.⁴⁴ The other two works created were *La Vague* (The Wave) (Figure 5) in 1897 and *Profonde Pensée* (Deep Thought) (Figure 6) in 1898.⁴⁵ In a letter to her brother, Paul, Claudé revealed plans for more sculptures of everyday life, including *Le Bénédicité* (The Blessing) which would feature “tiny figures around a large table listening to prayer before a meal,” *Le Dimanche* (Sunday) which would include “three men in the same blouses perched on top of a high wagon departing for mass,” and *La Faute* (Fault) in which there would have been “a young girl crouching on a bench crying, her parents looking at her surprised.”⁴⁶ These ideas were either never realized as works or were later destroyed by Claudé as her mental state declined. After

⁴³ Laure de Margerie, “The ‘Sketches from Nature,’” in *Camille Claudé & Rodin: Fateful Encounter*, ed. by Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 237.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Camille Claudé, *Correspondance*, 96-97. “Des personnages tout petits autour d’une grande table écoutent la prière avant le repas.” “Trois bonshommes en blouse neuve et pareilles juchés sur une très haute charette partent pour la messe.” “Une jeune fille accroupie sur un banc pleure, ses parents la regardent tout étonnés.”

1906, Claudel regularly destroyed works.⁴⁷ However, these ideas for sculptures are significant, because after she described her ideas to Paul in December 1893, she wrote, “You see it is not at all Rodin, and it is dressed.”⁴⁸ This is evidence that she was strategically trying to distance herself, even stylistically, from Rodin. Laure de Margerie explains in “The ‘Sketches from Nature’” that with these small sculptures:

Camille was most probably entirely absorbed in her individual struggle as a woman and female artist. When she did her ‘sketches from nature,’ what mattered to her was to escape for a while from the constraints of the life model, the portrait, and the historical, allegorical, mythological and autobiographical repertoire, even if the latter dimension is never completely absent from some of her works. Real life, real people’s emotions, this was the new universe she sought to capture.⁴⁹

Given this evidence of her efforts to distance herself from Rodin, it seems unlikely that Claudel would intentionally create a sculpture to reveal her relationship with the famous artist when she was working to gain recognition as an independent artist. During the time *L’Âge Mûr* was being created, Claudel was doing all she could to distance herself from Rodin, even refusing an invitation for Rodin to introduce her to the president of the Republic. She even begged Morhardt to assist her in her effort:

I beg you to do your very best to ensure M. Rodin does not come to see me on Tuesday. I do not like to show things that are not finished and sketches in progress, we have time to see them when they are completely finished and why publicize one’s ideas before they are complete? If you could at the same time instill in M. Rodin carefully and subtly the idea of not coming to see me, you would give me the greatest pleasure I have ever experienced. Rodin is aware that

⁴⁷ Margerie, 238-240.

⁴⁸ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 98. “Tu vois que ce n’est plus du tout du Rodin et c’est habillé...”

⁴⁹ Margerie, 243-244.

many wicked people imagined that he did my sculpture, so why then do everything we can to give credit to this slander. If M. Rodin really wishes me well, it is very possible to do so without other people believing that it is to his advice and inspiration that I owe the successes for which I have so painfully worked.⁵⁰

The reason Claudel would not let Rodin in her studio was most likely her desire for her successes to not be credited to Rodin as opposed to her trying to conceal this work's content from Rodin. Therefore, in *L'Âge Mûr*, Claudel used the aging process as a general metaphor for life experiences, such as the death of a loved one or the end of a relationship, that represent a defining moment. For her personally, this work represented the end of a phase in her life as she gained independence from Rodin. It was her way of defining herself as an artist who has her own voice and can create a major work that would secure a commission.

L'Âge Mûr represents a turning point in her career. It was an ambitious sculpture she began as she stepped out on her own. However, its completion did not provide the independence Claudel had hoped it would. In fact, the work caused much strife and unrest for Claudel during her lifetime. This three-figure group was intended to establish

⁵⁰ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 127-128. "Je vous prie de vouloir bien faire votre possible pour que m. Rodin ne vienne pas me voir mardi. Je n'aime pas montrer des choses pas finies et des esquisses en herbe; on a le temps de les voir quand elles sont complètement terminées et pourquoi faire connaître toutes ses idées avant d'être mûres? Si vous pouviez en même temps inculquer à m. Rodin délicatement et finement l'idée de ne plus venir me voir, vous me feriez le plus sensible plaisir que j'aie jamais éprouvé. M. Rodin n'ignore pas que bien des gens méchants se sont imaginé de dire qu'il me faisait ma sculpture: pourquoi donc alors faire tout ce qu'on peut pour accréditer cette calomnie. Si m. Rodin me veut réellement du bien il lui est très possible de le faire sans d'un autre côté faire croire que c'est à ses conseils et à son inspiration que je dois la réussite des œuvres auxquelles je travaille si péniblement."

her own artistic genius, outside of Rodin's shadows.⁵¹ An art inspector for The Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts came to Claudel's atelier in June 1895, at the urging of Morhardt and Rodin, to offer her a commission for a bust; however, Claudel showed the minister a maquette of *L'Âge Mûr* and convinced him to aid her in the completion of her three-figure group instead. On July 25, 1895, Claudel received her first state commission to create a plaster of *L'Âge Mûr*.⁵² This would signify a major milestone in a sculptor's career and one that could potentially lead to financial stability. Claudel had been struggling with finances and had run out of money as early as 1893, leading her to ask her family for support.⁵³ The work was exhibited at the May 1899 Salon.⁵⁴ At first, the future of the sculpture appeared promising, when a bronze was ordered by the Ministry of Fine Arts in early June 1899, but the order was abruptly cancelled later the same month on June 24.⁵⁵ Just as her means to support herself seemed within reach, it was quickly snatched away.

Due to its unusual treatment after the show, the work caused speculation that Rodin became outraged, believing his personal life had been aired in public, and used his influence to bring about its removal from view. The granted commission and subsequent cancellation both came from the Director of Fine Arts, Henry Roujon. The reason for the

⁵¹ Porter, 176-177.

⁵² Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 127-129.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 147-148.

⁵⁵ Porter, 183-184.

project's cancellation is not clear. A letter in 1905 from the Head of Works to the Under-Secretary of Fine Arts indicated there was no explanation for the cancellation in the file; therefore, scholars Ayral-Clause and Porter presume that the administration received negative feedback from Rodin, who had finally seen it when it was exhibited at the May 1899 Salon.⁵⁶ Porter suggests that a report by the Under-Secretary of Fine Arts in 1907 to the minister of public instruction and fine arts stated it was cancelled "for reasons that do not appear in the record and must have to do with the very nature of the work."⁵⁷ The suppositions are reinforced by Claudel's comment to artist Eugene Blot that "Rodin is waging a vicious war against this statue."⁵⁸ No documents survive to Rodin's objection to this sculpture. Scholars assume it exposed his affair with Claudel, however, it does not appear that he went to any great lengths to conceal his relationship with Claudel. They shared a studio, travelled together, and executed a marriage contract. Those suspecting the sculpture was personal at the time it was exhibited would already have had knowledge of the affair.

⁵⁶ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 146-148.

⁵⁷ Porter, 183-184; Danielle Arnoux, *Camille Claudel: L'ironique Sacrifice* (Paris: Epel, 2001), 47. "...pour des raisons qui n'apparaissent pas au dossier et qui doivent tenir à la nature même de l'ouvrage..."

⁵⁸ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 183; Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 159. In the letter, Claudel actually states that the statue he is waging a war against is *Persée*. However, according to Ayral-Clause, Claudel has confused *L'Âge Mûr* with *Persée* in this statement.

Porter contends that in addition to asserting her own artistic abilities, it was her way to condemn him for choosing Beuret.⁵⁹ If Rodin truly saw the sculpture as autobiographical, it is also possible that Rodin was offended by the humiliation it caused Beuret and that he saw himself in a negative light, being led by a haggard old woman. Nevertheless, contention over *L'Âge Mûr* effectively ended the friendship that had formed between Claudel and Rodin after their romantic relationship ended.⁶⁰ It is unclear what the nature of the reaction of the general public was toward the sculpture. While some of the critics speculated about the meaning of the piece, it was never explicitly stated.

The repercussions of this sculpture did not end with the cancellation of the state commission. The sculpture and Claudel endured many roadblocks. The plaster of *L'Âge Mûr* was rejected by the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts for the 1900 Universal Exhibition, prompting Claudel to resign from the association.⁶¹ To complicate matters further, the Ministry of Fine Arts owned the plaster of *L'Âge Mûr* and repeatedly demanded that it be stored at the Dépôt des Marbres, but Claudel resisted and continued to keep it at her studio.⁶² *L'Âge Mûr* was saved from destruction by a soldier, Captain Louis Tissier, who admired the work and had it cast in bronze in January 1902.⁶³ It was

⁵⁹ Porter, 176-177.

⁶⁰ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 148.

⁶¹ Porter, 185-186.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 189.

this version that was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français in 1903.⁶⁴ Throughout her life, Claudel continued to worry about the fate of *L'Âge Mûr*. In a letter to her brother, Paul, in 1909, Claudel expressed her concern over her sculpture's future, writing, "I tremble over the fate of *The Age of Maturity*, what is going to happen to it, it is unbelievable!"⁶⁵ In the letter, it seems Claudel was concerned that the work would be replicated by other artists, a fate she believed had befallen *Les Causeuses*. According to Claudel, a Swede created a modified version of *Les Causeuses* every year. She was frustrated that other artists would profit from her ideas while she had to rely on her parents for living expenses.⁶⁶ This fear of copy was most likely exacerbated by her mental struggles.

L'Âge Mûr is an expression of emotional and professional independence. This work came at a time of great transition in her life. Claudel had discontinued her relationship with Rodin and was trying to create a life and career of her own. An artist's personal experiences are never far from her works, and her relationship with Rodin undoubtedly informed this work. However, this sculpture was not intended to be a literal interpretation of her affair. Still, the reactions to the work by the state suggest that is how

⁶³ Ibid., 185.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 186.

⁶⁵ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 241. "Je tremble du sort de l'Age Mûr, ce qui va lui arriver, c'est incroyable!"

⁶⁶ Ibid., 241-3.

it was received, causing her much more frustration and pain, as she struggled to establish her career without Rodin and find financial independence.

CHAPTER 2

L'ÂGE MÛR: THE PROGRESSION OF LIFE

In creating *L'Âge Mûr*, Camille Claudel certainly was informed by her own perspective on life. However, her personal life was just one source that Claudel used to shape her work. *L'Âge Mûr* is also influenced by themes of destiny and fate as told through various symbols and a mythological figure. *L'Âge Mûr* is an allegory of the stages of life, with a progression of figures from Youth, to Old Age, and conveys a sense that one's destiny is out of the hands of Youth.

A closer look at individual figures is key to understanding everything that inspired this sculpture. On the left is an older woman whose arms surround the middle-aged man. The features of this woman resemble those of the women in Claudel's sculpture, *Clotho* (Figure 7), a figure from Greek mythology who became tangled in her own web from spinning so much.¹ Clotho, also known as Moirae in Greek mythology, is one of the three Fates that prepare and measure the thread of human life. The Fates - Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos - represented the idea that all events in human life, including death, are predestined at birth, and even the gods were unable to alter this fate.² Clotho used a spindle to spin the thread of life, while Lachesis measured the length of life with a

¹ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, Thierry Dufrenoy, and Josefina Alix Trueba, *Rodin y la Revolución de la Escultura de Camille Claudel a Giacometti* (Barcelona: Fundación "La Caixa," 2004), 190.

² Lucia Impelluso, Stefano Zuffi, and Thomas Michael Hartmann, *Gods and Heroes in Art* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 93.

rod, and Atropos used scissors to cut the thread.³ The Fates are depicted together with their identifying symbols in Francisco Goya's *The Fates* (Figure 8) and are portrayed as wrinkled, older figures.⁴ Similarly, in Claudel's *Clotho*, the figure has a withered physique and a vacant stare.⁵ She is hunched over, as the weight of her hair makes it difficult to stand upright. The matted and ragged braids represent the confusion in Clotho's life and create an arch around her.⁶ The character in *L'Âge Mûr* has similar facial characteristics and matted hair. The cloak was a symbol of Clotho, because the three Fates were often pictured as elderly spinners with bloodstained cloaks.⁷ In this work, the drapery is similar to a cape around the old woman's body.⁸ Thus, the hair and drapery indicate the older woman is Clotho. In light of this, it would indicate that Claudel intended this figure to represent death, one's inevitable fate.

The image of fate, represented as an older woman, was common at the time among Claudel and her fellow sculptors, Rodin and Desbois. J. Adolf Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth claims, based on the similar features of Claudel, Rodin, and Desbois' sculptures, that they worked in the same studio for a time, and they even used the same

³ Malcolm Day, *100 Characters from Classical Mythology: As Seen in Western Art* (London: Herbert Press, 2007), 93.

⁴ Irène Aghion, Claire Barbillon, and François Lissarrague, *Gods and Heroes Classical Antiquity* (New York: Flammarion, 1996), 125.

⁵ Aghion, Barbillon, and Lissarrague, 125.

⁶ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 70.

⁷ Day, 93.

⁸ Porter, 196.

Italian woman as a model.⁹ In all instances, the figure is a representation of death or fate. The earliest presentation of this particular model is in Rodin's *Gates of Hell* (Figure 9), added about 1883 or 1884. Both Desbois and Claudel were working in Rodin's studio at the time and would have been familiar with Rodin's representation of the figure, which appears on the left pilaster and is juxtaposed to a young kneeling woman, representing the *Zeitgeist*. Desbois also included a shriveled old woman as a symbol of death in *Death and the Woodcutter* (now destroyed), using the same model as did Rodin and Claudel for *The Helmet-Maker's Wife* (Figure 10) and *Clotho*, respectively. In addition, one can see similar characteristics between Claudel's study for *Clotho* (Figure 11) and Rodin's *The Helmet-Maker's Wife*, which is considered a *vanitas* symbol.¹⁰ Both figures have haggard, drawn cheeks, sagging breasts and protruding abdomens. Thus, the old woman in *L'Âge Mûr* is a familiar representation of fate in the context of Claudel's work, the work of her contemporaries, and the commonly used allegories. It makes more sense that our primary interpretation of this figure should be that she is a personification of death.

The wild and unruly hair of Old Age can be contrasted to the tidy hairstyle of Youth. There is a significant meaning in Claudel's treatment of hair of the two women. Reinforcing the stark contrast between figures, Youth wears her hair in a neatly tied

⁹ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 74-77.

¹⁰ Ibid.

chignon, while the unruly, matted strands of Old Age identify this figure with Clotho.¹¹ Claudel often used hairstyles as a metaphor for feminine reality. Hair tied neatly back is a representation of reason, while untied hair represents unreason.¹²

Turning to the figure of Youth, one must consider its meaning when it was exhibited as a solo figure. Youth was exhibited alone by her art dealer Eugene Blot as *L'Implorante*, meaning the one that begs or makes an appeal. Put in the context of the group sculpture, *L'Âge Mûr*, the figure is perhaps appealing to Clotho that it is not the man's time.¹³ However, death is not something that we can negotiate.

Youth can also be interpreted in terms of mythology. Youth was also exhibited as *Le Dieu Envolé* (The God Has Flown Away) at the Champs de Mars Salon, a reference to the story of Cupid and Psyche.¹⁴ Psyche was a character in mythology who possessed exceptional beauty. This provoked jealousy in Venus who urged Cupid to make Psyche fall in love with an unbecoming man. However, Cupid fell in love with Psyche and placed her in a lovely palace where he visited her each night.¹⁵ He asked her to not look at him or find out his identity since he was immortal; however, Psyche's curiosity got the better of her and she gazed at him one night while he was asleep. When Cupid caught her

¹¹ Porter, 195.

¹² Marie-Joséphine Van Vliet, "Camille Claudel: A Sociocultural Study" (Ph. D. diss., Syracuse University, 2000), 76.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 190-191.

¹⁴ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 121-122.

¹⁵ Impelluso, Zuffi, and Hartmann, 219.

doing so, he flew away. The myth of Psyche was one that is popular in art and it would not have been uncommon for an artist to draw inspiration from the story. While some have viewed Rodin as the god that has flown away or that Claudel is imploring Rodin to come back to her, this analogy has a flaw. This theory would mean that Venus, a goddess known for her beauty, is represented by Old Age.

Had Claudel wished to publicly comment on her relationship with Rodin, she could have created a figure that more closely resembled Beuret. She did not; instead she chose a figure that is a broadly recognized allegory for death or fate. While one might argue that the figure being female might at least suggest a reference to Beuret, it was not uncommon for death to take on a female form as in the French language, the word for death, *la mort*, has a feminine gender.¹⁶ Furthermore, the middle-aged man does not appear to be a physical representation of Rodin. The figure has the typical physique of a middle-aged man and is clean shaven, whereas Rodin had a beard. Finally, the fact that Youth is female tends to speak to the notion that a woman's beauty fades with age as a man becomes more distinguished with age. Therefore, choosing a youthful, female figure with smooth skin enhances the notion that beauty falls away as age approaches. In addition, I think the mixture of female and male figures in different stages of life makes for a richer interpretation. If all figures had been the same gender in different stages of life, it would have appeared to be a depiction of evolution.

Claudel was criticized after the Salon des Artistes Français in 1903 because the figures were modeled in the style of Rodin. Ayral-Clause indicates critic Henri Cochin

¹⁶ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 77.

called Claudel an imitator of Rodin.¹⁷ Romain Rolland's review referred to it as "a little caricature of the genius of Rodin."¹⁸ A comparison to Rodin is to be expected since Claudel was one of his students. The spatial composition of the characters, however, is something that is entirely Claudel's. Rodin's characters generally form a tighter, intertwined arrangement; however, the figures in Claudel's work exhibit independence.¹⁹ This work represented Claudel's effort to distance her work from Rodin's in terms of style and self-expression.

In a letter to her brother, Paul, in December 1893, Claudel mentioned she was working on *L'Âge Mûr*, which was unnamed at the time and indicated: "I am still attached to my group of three, I'll put a leaning tree that expresses destiny; I have many new ideas that would please you a lot, you'd be quite excited."²⁰ The tree she first described became more of an abstract pedestal, but that did not change the metaphor. Claudine Mitchell argues that the base on which the figures are positioned further develops the notion of fate. The base resembles a rolling wave that appears to be breaking as it approaches the shore and spreads out. Mitchell points out that waves are

¹⁷ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 150.

¹⁸ Romain Rolland, "Les Salons de 1903," *La Revue de Paris* (1 June 1903), 663. "...un peu la caricature du genie de Rodin."

¹⁹ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 88.

²⁰ Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 96. "Je suis toujours attelée à mon groupe de trois je vais mettre un arbre penché qui exprimera la destinée; j'ai beaucoup d'idées nouvelles qui te plairaient énormément, tu serais tout à fait enthousiasmé."

metaphors for destiny.²¹ Claudel was even infusing meaning into the base of the sculpture. Every aspect of this sculpture must be considered in its entirety in order to understand the true intention of the work.

The different levels in terrain and the angle of the bodies heighten the concept that different stages in life cause separations and changes. Three levels of the base indicate the stages of life. Horizontal lines suggest the passage of time. The main horizontal axis follows Youth's gaze to the drapery of Old Age, which indicates destiny.²² One can see in the sculpture that the middle-aged man has reached a higher stage in his life that resulted in a separation from Youth. The middle-aged man is about to get out of the way of the approaching wave at the left of the base while the figure of Old Age remains dry on a higher outcropping.²³ Increasing the effect of the separation is the twist in the body axis of Youth. While the arms of Youth are in line with the axis of the older pair, her legs are not and she will likely fall and be left behind on the lower piece.²⁴ Thus, as man moves toward Old Age, Youth must fall away.

Armand Silvestre, a critic and arts inspector sent to inspect Claudel's work on behalf of the director of fine arts, wrote in his third report on the group on November 1, 1898:

²¹ Mitchell, 426-428.

²² Ibid., 428.

²³ Porter, 194-195.

²⁴ Ibid.

In a previous report, I described this composition comprising three figures and representing man at the end of his maturity, vertiginously drawn away by age while he reaches needlessly toward youth, who would like to follow him in vain. The artist has made only a few modifications to her model. Mlle Claudel has separated the hand of her principal figure from that of the figure of Youth to better express his being taken away. She has also enveloped the figure of Age in billowing drapery to emphasize the speed of her step.²⁵

This is an important statement because it surely must represent some of the descriptions Claudel herself used to explain the meaning of the piece to Silvestre. Silvestre does mention that the work has “the impression of Rodin,” but this is more of a reference to Claudel’s stylistic treatment than the meaning of the work.²⁶ Therefore, it must be assumed that Claudel did not represent the work as a love triangle when showing it to Silvestre, but as an allegory of the progression of life.

The critics of the time agreed that the older woman represented old age and death, the figure of youth represented beauty and the joys of life, and the middle-aged man was torn between these two symbolic figures.²⁷ When the finished *L’Âge Mûr* was exhibited in 1903 at the Salon des Artistes Français, critic Andre Michel noted,

... A man in his forties showing all the signs of somber hopelessness is following an emaciated ghost, an old woman leading him away, while behind him, a younger woman, kneeling, imploring him in vain, has her arms outstretched toward him. He no longer sees her, or rather he has turned his tear-veiled gaze away from her, and his arm is reaching back to her in a gesture of regret and definitive adieu...as he follows the other woman, like a prisoner under sentence of death following the hangman. Ah! How difficult it is to get old...And to better

²⁵ Armand Silvestre, *Report to the ministre de l’Instruction publique et des Beaux-Arts on “The Age of Maturity” by Camille Claudel* (Archives Nationales de France, 1 November 1898), translated in Porter, 180.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Porter, 192.

express this revulsion and this drama, she has accentuated the veins, tendons and muscles and protuberances, suddenly piercing the skin with deep cavities; she has modeled the painful and decrepit bodies with a somewhat messy vehemence – this is a sculpture of feeling...²⁸

It is important to note that the term “ghost” was used to represent the woman of old age and the reaching out to bid “adieu.” At the time of its exhibition, *Old Age* was clearly understood to represent death.

The images of the characters and the descriptions of the critics must then be paired with what we know of the descriptions and titles of this work at the time. Just the year before the work was exhibited, in 1898, Morhardt titled the work, *Le Chemin de la Vie* (The Path of Life).²⁹ When the plaster version was exhibited at the Salon of the Société National des Beaux-Arts in 1899, it was listed as “*The Age of Maturity* (fantastic group, plaster, property of the state).”³⁰ It should be noted that mur in French has a double meaning: in a positive light it means “mature” and in a negative light it means “aged” or “overripe.”³¹ Given the rough stylistic nature of the older figure, we must assume the meaning of mur tends towards the negative connotation. Finally, in a letter in 1905 addressed to the inspector of fine arts, Henry Havard, Claudel suggests an

²⁸ André Michel, “Promenades aux Salons,” *Feuilleton du Journal des débats* (May 12, 1903), translated in Porter, 186.

²⁹ Morhardt, 352.

³⁰ Porter, 182.

³¹ Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, 82.

alternative title, *La Fatalité* (Fatality).³² All of these titles indicate a work that represents life's progression toward death more than the loss of a lover to another woman.

The stylistic elements of the figures, the association with Clotho, and the critics' reactions of the time indicate this work represents an allegory of fate. While Claudel was experiencing the loss of a lover to an older woman, the figures in this sculpture indicate the separation conveyed is one of the human life leaving Youth behind and that some things in life happen without reason and are beyond our control.

³² Camille Claudel, *Correspondance*, 191.

CHAPTER 3

**THE EMERGENCE OF THE WOMAN SCULPTOR IN LATTER
NINETEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE**

It was not at all common for a woman to be a sculptor in nineteenth-century France. An artistic education was not readily available for women. Despite the hurdles, Claudel succeeded in her career to overcome many obstacles and had she been allowed to continue her work, she likely would have gained fame in her own right.

One of the barriers to such a career was the conventional school of thought that placed women within the domestic realm in the nineteenth century. Society felt women could engage in painting and drawing as a pastime, but sculpture was not considered appropriate. It is dirty work and, logistically, sculpture required a lot of space, making it more difficult to be created at home. Sculpture is also an expensive art. While clay and plaster were reasonable, the sculptures had to be cast in bronze or marble, which is more expensive than drawing and painting.¹ Furthermore, sculpture was considered an “ungrateful” trade that yielded the fewest material rewards for an artist.² To be a woman artist, one had to possess a strong will and the ability to rebel against the conventional role of a woman finding her place in the home.

¹ Odile Ayrat-Clause, “Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France,” in *Camille Claudel & Rodin: Fateful Encounter*, ed. by Yves Lacasse and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 315.

² Grunfeld, 212.

The nineteenth century proved to be a time when women began to be able to navigate the obstacles by not only succeeding in obtaining training but also securing a forum to showcase their work. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the two women sculptors who achieved acclaim were Marie d'Orléans and Félicie de Fauveau. Both women were unable to find access to life model training as it was considered taboo for a woman to study a nude model, although men were afforded such a privilege.³ Therefore, d'Orléans drew inspiration for her works from literature and history. D'Orléans exhibited *Joan of Arc Praying* (Figure 12) at the 1837 Salon, to praise. Sadly, she died just two years later, her career cut short. However, Félicie de Fauveau did enjoy a long career. At her first Salon in 1827, she received a gold medal. She sculpted to support her family after her father, an aristocrat exiled during the French Revolution, died. The image of her bravely supporting her family was viewed favorably by society.⁴ These women represent the beginnings of a change for women sculptors in the nineteenth century and proved a woman sculptor could have a career and gain recognition.

Women artists were gaining ground partly due to the support of the government. A liberalization of the arts occurred in the Second Empire (1852-1870), because Napoleon III's wife, Empress Eugénie, was supportive of artists, especially women artists. Also helping women artists was the fact that Count Nieuwerkerke was superintendent of fine arts. Count Nieuwerkerke was a man in love with painter and

³ The fundamental essay on this is Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?," in *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 160-162.

⁴ Ayrál-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 317.

sculptor Princess Mathilde and was willing to work to help women acquire works from the state. As a result of this change in attitude in state offices, many women were afforded commissions.⁵ By the mid-nineteenth century in France, there was one female artist per three male artists. Seven percent of these women had benefited from an official commission or been honored with a Salon medal or Legion of Honor.⁶ While this percentage is not directly proportional to the number of women in the field, it indicates that women were breaking into the field and establishing a presence just before Claudel began her career. While progress had been made in the Second Empire, the Third Republic brought a conservatism that restricted progress in terms of medals and commissions.⁷ Still, progress was made for women in the arts.

A woman who became an artist generally either had an artist father or a connection to an influential male artist. For Claudel, the influential male artist was Alfred Boucher, but it was Claudel's own belief in her abilities that led her to this mentor. It was Claudel's drive that uprooted the family from her birthplace of Villeneuve. Paul Claudel recalled:

My sister, thinking that she had a vocation of a great artist (which was unfortunately true), having discovered clay, had begun to make little statues that struck Alfred Boucher, the sculptor; and then my sister, who was terribly determined, managed to bring the whole family to Paris.⁸

⁵ Ibid., 318.

⁶ Nochlin, 163.

⁷ Ayrat-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 319.

⁸ Paul Claudel, *Mémoires Improvisés* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954), 16-17. "Ma sœur trouvant qu'elle avait une vocation de grande artiste, (ce qui était malheureusement vrai), ayant

Claudé's talent was evident to two influential male artists, which secured her instruction by them. She originally was guided by Boucher, who had been instructed by Paul Dubois, a noted sculptor and director of the *École des Beaux-Arts* in 1878. When Boucher went to Florence for six months after winning the *Prix de Salon*, he first asked Dubois to counsel her. With one look at her work, he saw a similarity to Rodin's work, even though Claudé had not been taught by Rodin at that time. As a result, Boucher asked Rodin to instruct her and the other women in her studio instead.⁹ Rodin, like Boucher, saw the talent Claudé possessed, exclaiming, "I showed her where to find gold, but the gold she finds is truly hers."¹⁰ During Claudé's time, it generally took the influence of another male artist in order to navigate a career as an artist, especially that of a sculptor. Therefore, Claudé was fortunate that her talent drew the attention of Boucher, who helped her begin her career.

For a woman sculptor, a connection to a male artist was critical because education was a significant barrier for women artists. Nochlin argues that among the reasons there have been no great women artists was education.¹¹ The legend of the great male artist attributes natural ability as the main factor in his success and his "genius" would present itself regardless of his education or institution of study. If such a gift presents itself

découvert de la terre glaise, elle avait commence à faire de petites statues qui avaient frappé M. Alfred Boucher, le statuaire; et alors ma sœur, qui avait une volonté terrible, a réussi à entraîner toute la famille à Paris..."

⁹ Grunfeld, 213.

¹⁰ Morhardt, 331.

¹¹ Nochlin, 150.

despite education and study, it is curious that no woman has ever been considered to possess such a gift.¹² Therefore, Nochlin reasoned education must be a factor. France, specifically, operated with an apprenticeship system. It had set competitions, which rewarded the winner with training at the French Academy. The system was one of the only avenues to success up until the later nineteenth century. For men, the system included education at the *École des Beaux-Arts* or an apprenticeship with a recognized sculptor if one were not admitted to the *École des Beaux-Arts*. However, women were not admitted to the *École des Beaux-Arts* until 1897 and would have had great difficulty finding training with a noted sculptor.¹³ Many artists opened their studios to women in the second half of the nineteenth century; however, Rodolphe Julian founded an academy that accepted women as early as 1873. Still, women paid twice as much for lessons at Julian's and lessons were separate for men and women.¹⁴ The *Académie Colarossi*, which Claudel attended, began around the same time but offered lessons to both sexes and charged the same price. Colarossi was a sculptor and gave special attention to sculpture, leading many French and foreign women to attend the academy, including Claudel's English studio partners, Amy Singer, Fawcett, and Lipscomb.¹⁵ Given that

¹² *Ibid.*, 154-156.

¹³ Ayral-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 316.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 320.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Claudel arrived in Paris in 1881 to train as a sculptor, she benefitted from a time when the system was breaking down and opportunities for women were opening up.

Women may have been opening the doors to the classroom, but they did not always gain the same education once inside. Women were not allowed to study the nude in a classroom setting. A fundamental part of academic training since the beginning of art academies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was the study of the male nude model. By 1850, men were able to study the female nude in all public art schools, not just private academies.¹⁶ Some academies, such as Rodolphe Julian's, began allowing women to study the nude earlier. Julian's academy allowed women to study the nude a few years after accepting women in 1873.¹⁷ Women were not even able to enroll in the life drawing class at the Royal Academy in London until 1893. After that time, while women were admitted, the model was not completely nude, but partly covered.¹⁸ No matter how talented a woman was, to be denied the ability to study the nude put her at a strong disadvantage. Still, Claudel, under the private instruction of Rodin, was in a situation that afforded her access to the study of the nude.

Women sculptors in the nineteenth century benefitted from instruction provided by established artists because the rules on what they were allowed to study did not apply and the lessons were generally free. Boucher and Rodin instructed Claudel for free, which was not unusual in the Parisian art world. Established artists commonly provided

¹⁶ Nochlin, 159.

¹⁷ Ayral-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 320.

¹⁸ Nochlin, 159.

free advice to students, which was invaluable to women artists denied entry to the École des Beaux-Arts.¹⁹ Rodin instructed the women in Claudel's studio as well, including Lipscomb and Singer. Rodin generally did not charge them. It is only documented once that Rodin, in need of rent money, requested that Lipscomb pay what she felt was appropriate for his services.²⁰ Lipscomb proved that she was talented at modeling and drapery and in 1885, when Rodin needed reliable assistants for *The Burghers of Calais*, Claudel and Lipscomb were the first women to join Rodin's atelier.²¹ It was here that Claudel became so proficient in marble that she joined sculptors Jean Baffier and Jules Desbois as one of Rodin's praticiens, a proficient sculptor who would sculpt the work to near completion.²² Claudel and Lipscomb were also able to work on studies for *The Gates of Hell*. This arrangement was extremely beneficial for them. They were able to learn from him and share models. Furthermore, working with an artist of this stature meant that Rodin could assist them in entering Salons, meeting buyers, and gaining recognition.²³

While the doors had opened to allow women to study the nude in studios, women still had to contend with society's opinion of whether a woman should exhibit the nude. The use of sexuality in women's artwork was often censored, misrepresented in critiques,

¹⁹ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 28-29.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

²² *Ibid.*, 53.

²³ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

or ignored. This was the environment in which Claudel was working. Claudel pursued a state commission for *La Valse* (The Waltz) (Figure 13) in February 1892, which resulted in direct censorship. The work did not include drapery originally and the Inspector Armand Dayot wrote:

The work cannot be accepted as it has been presented to me. First of all the violent accent of reality which comes from it prohibits its display in a public gallery. The proximity of the sexes is conveyed with a surprising sensuality of expression which considerably exaggerates the absolute nudity of all the human details.²⁴

Therefore, Claudel's nude couple was considered to violate the law of human decency, leading Dayot to request she add an evening dress to cover her character and yet preserve the beauty of the human form. Claudel was clearly not pleased with the idea.²⁵ When Dayot consulted Rodin on this request, he wrote on March 21, 1892, "Mademoiselle Claudel requests to do the nude and in this case, let her do the nude, for it is good and as she does not want drapery she would only do it poorly."²⁶ Mitchell takes this to be a negative comment of her technical abilities, but I think it is a comment on her strong will towards her artistic vision. Defiantly, Claudel managed to satisfy Dayot without giving

²⁴ Armand Dayot. Report to the Direction des Beaux-Arts, (Archives Nationales de France, 20 May 1892), F21 4299, translated in Mitchell, 436.

²⁵ Mitchell, 437.

²⁶ Auguste Rodin, *Correspondance de Rodin*, vol. 1, no. 181, ed. Alain Beausire and Hélène Pinet (Paris: Editions du Musée Rodin, 1985), 129. "Melle Claudel demande a ne faire que le nu, dans ce cas laissons lui le nu car c'est bien et du moment qu'elle ne desire pas la draperie c'est quelle la ferait mal"

him what he requested. She added drapery very loosely from the waist down only, and it worked, as Dayot exclaimed:

Ah! The draperies are rather flimsy...but they are sufficient to hide certain too obviously realistic details and indicate at the same time the character of the composition. The light sash which clings to the woman's hips leaves the torso entirely naked, a torso which bends backwards as if to escape a kiss, and ends in a shivering tail; it is like a cocoon that bursts open to let a winged creature escape.²⁷

However, such censorship was not equally applied to Rodin. His *Le Baiser* (The Kiss) (Figure 14), which shows a nude couple embracing, represented art in France at the Universal Exhibition of 1889. In addition, Rodin's show at the Universal Exhibition of 1900 included *Le Pêché* (Sin) (Figure 15), which directly represented sex.²⁸ Claudel defiantly sculpted works that challenged the sexist values of the time, which in the end made her an outsider. The overt sexuality expressed in Claudel's works astonished the academic art world and drove away state officials, leaving her without a state commission until 1907, when she created *Niobide Blessée* (Figure 16), depicting a woman alone and wounded.²⁹ Rodin was afforded more freedom due to his gender and established career, while Claudel was subject to more strict decency laws.

In addition to the censorship, women sculptors faced financial struggles and the fact that their personal life affected whether their careers were accelerated or continued at all. Lipscomb, who focused her efforts on busts instead of large sculptures, had her

²⁷ Armand Dayot. Report to the Direction des Beaux-Arts, (Archives Nationales de France, 9 January 1893) F21 4299, translated in Mitchell, 437.

²⁸ Mitchell, 436.

²⁹ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 177-181.

career cut short by marriage.³⁰ It is clear from some of Claudel's letters to her friend, Florence Jean, that Lipscomb was struggling with finances and had requested a reduction in studio rent and complained of an inflated bill for the casting of a bust. Claudel disagreed with Lipscomb about the casting bill and was offended by the request for rent reduction. Lipscomb's version of events is not documented but it can be determined there was a falling out between the two. As a result, Lipscomb lost her instruction from Rodin and use of Claudel's atelier, resulting in her return to England. Once back in England, she decided to get married, which extinguished any possibility that she might continue to sculpt. While she was not prevented from doing so, marriage and motherhood did not afford her the time to sculpt.³¹ Like Lipscomb, Singer also traded her career for marriage a few years later. In order to continue her career, a woman either did not get married or married a fellow artist, which might actually benefit one's career through contacts with Salon juries, critics, and patrons.³² Therefore, while women were able to become sculptors, the notion that a woman should be in the home, especially a married woman, could have a great impact on their art.

Claudé's career, however, ended under circumstances unique to her situation. In her case, a lack of support by her family was coupled with apparent mental deterioration. In later years, Claudé experienced the stress of supporting herself without public commissions, which were needed at that time for financial security as an artist. She

³⁰ Ayral-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 321.

³¹ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 79-83.

³² Ayral-Clause, "Women Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century France," 321.

relied on support from her father and brother as she fell into poverty and became increasingly isolated and eccentric.³³ Claudel had always exhibited moments of irrationality that often affected her relationships with others, including Rodin.³⁴ However, by 1909, Claudel had become reclusive.³⁵ Her brother, Paul, noted his surprise at her decline in a journal entry from 1909, writing, “In Paris, Camille insane, the wallpaper ripped to shreds, a single seat broken and torn, horribly dirty. She was enormous with a soiled face, speaking incessantly in a monotonous metallic voice.”³⁶ She was no longer with Rodin, Lipscomb had gone back to England, she had taken a stand against the art world over the content of her work, and she was not able to go home. Her father was the one person in the family to provide unwavering support, and he felt that a visit to the family home would improve her mental state, but her mother wouldn’t allow it. Claudel was left in Paris without any visits from family, and she had alienated all but two friends. She would invite homeless people on the street into her home for a party any time she accumulated some money. After *Niobide Blessée*, all statues created

³³ Patricia Mathews, *Passionate Discontent: Creativity, Gender, and French Symbolist Art* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2000), 81-83.

³⁴ Ayral-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 140.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

³⁶ Paul Claudel, *Journal I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), 103-104. “A Paris, Camille folle. Le papier des murs arraché à longs lambeaux, un seul fauteuil cassé et déchiré, horrible saleté. Elle énorme et la figure souillée, parlant incessamment d’une voix monotone et métallique.”

by Claudel were destroyed at the sculptor's hands each summer or after a crisis. In addition, she was convinced people were out to get her and she generally felt Rodin was behind it.³⁷ Claudel, despite her success at navigating the path to become a woman sculptor, was in a place where she was unable to function as a productive artist.

The point of no return for Claudel's life and career was the death of her father in March 1913. She was committed to an asylum only eight days after his death.³⁸ Once Claudel was committed to an asylum, she never sculpted again. While medical records indicate she was classified as paranoid, the extent of her paranoia cannot be assessed.³⁹ Her family attributed her mental illness to her relationship with Rodin.⁴⁰ Her brother, Paul, claimed that when Rodin would not marry her in 1894, she began her decline.⁴¹ Claudel considered Rodin to have taken so much from her. She had spent her youth with Rodin, who did not keep his promises to her. Indeed, much of their relationship was to be kept a secret, including the marriage contract and the alleged illegitimate children, which may have had an impact on her mental state.⁴² However, she continued to be mentally sound and artistically engaged up until 1905, and potentially until 1910. In fact, Patricia Mathews points out that some of her most innovative work was created after the

³⁷ Ayrat-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 181.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 188.

³⁹ Mathews, 79-83.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁴² Ayrat-Clause, *Camille Claudel: A Life*, 184.

break-up.⁴³ In addition, the characterization of Claudel as paranoid was questioned by many friends and even the press. Her letters at the time of her being committed and throughout her stay at the asylum indicate she was generally lucid.⁴⁴ In addition, there is evidence that questions whether she needed to remain in an asylum for the rest of her life. Over her 30 years in the asylum, doctors recommended her release at least two times. Claudel even wrote to her mother, offering to give up her inheritance in exchange for coming home. Her mother, who often objected to her daughter's lifestyle, most notably her relationship with Rodin, would not allow it. Her mother was not the only person who decided to leave her in the asylum. Her brother, Paul never released her either, even after their mother's death in 1929.⁴⁵ Her family treated her as a problem that they wanted to go away. As long as she was in the asylum, the problem was gone.⁴⁶ In this respect, Claudel's freedom and career suffered from her family's perception of how a proper nineteenth-century woman should conduct herself.

Claudel had found educational opportunities, including the study of the nude, and finally obtained a state commission, when her paranoia led her family to commit her. So, while social norms had loosened to allow her to become an artist, her family's inability

⁴³ Mathews, 79-83.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

and unwillingness to care for her outside the asylum prevented her from continuing as an artist.

The supposed reactions by Rodin and state officials to *L'Âge Mûr*, reinforced by Paul Claudel's comments, have steered the scholarship on this sculpture as having an autobiographical meaning. However, symbols, a mythological figure, and commentary from the artist suggest this work represents the stages of life. *L'Âge Mûr* signifies a transitional time in Claudel's career as she gained independence as an artist and created this ambitious group in pursuit of a state commission. To reach this point in her career, Claudel had navigated many educational and censorship obstacles that existed for a woman artist in nineteenth-century France.

Throughout her career, Claudel had difficulty being recognized in her own right. Her struggle to move out of the shadow of Rodin in life continues in historical appraisal of her work.

L'ÂGE MÛR TIMELINE

- 1893 - In December, Claudel writes to her brother, Paul, that she is working on a group of three.
- 1894 - Claudel exhibited *L'Implorante* at the Champs de Mars Salon and a maquette of the first version of *L'Âge Mûr* is created.
- 1895 - In June 1895, Claudel showed an art inspector for The Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts the maquette of *L'Âge Mûr* and convinced him to aid her in the completion of her group of three. In July, Claudel officially received her first state commission to create a plaster of *L'Âge Mûr*.
- 1898 - Armand Silvestre, a critic and arts inspector sent to inspect Claudel's work on behalf of the director of fine arts, wrote in his third report that the group had been modified from the original version. The hands of Youth and the middle-aged man were separated.
- 1899 - The plaster version of *L'Âge Mûr* was exhibited at the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. In June, a bronze was ordered by the Ministry of Fine Arts and cancelled in the same month.
- 1900 - The plaster of *L'Âge Mûr* was rejected by the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts at the 1900 Universal Exhibition.
- 1902 - Captain Louis Tissier had *L'Âge Mûr* cast in bronze in January.
- 1903 - Tissier's bronze *L'Âge Mûr* was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français.



Figure 1. Camille Claudel, *L'Âge Mûr*, bronze, circa 1902, 121 x 181.2 x 73 cm, Musée D'Orsay, Paris.



Figure 2. Camille Claudel, *L'Implorante*, bronze, circa 1899, 66.5 x 74.5 x 32.5 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 3. Camille Claudel, *L'Âge Mûr*, plaster, circa 1894, 87 x 103.5 x 52.5 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 4. Camille Claudel, *Les Causeuses*, marble onyx and bronze, 1895, 44.9 x 42.2 x 39 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 5. Camille Claudel, *La Vague*, marble onyx and bronze, 1897, 62 x 56 x 50 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 6. Camille Claudé, *Profonde Pensée*, marble, 1898, 23.5 x 23.3 x 31 cm, Musée Sainte-Croix, Poitiers.



Figure 7. Camille Claudel, *Clotho*, plaster, 1893, 90 x 49.5 x 43.5 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 8. Francisco de Goya, *The Fates*, mixed technique on wall, 1820-21, 123 x 266 cm, Madrid, Prado.



Figure 9. Auguste Rodin, detail of left pilaster of *The Gates of Hell*, bronze, 1880-85, 636.9 x 401.3 x 84.8 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 10. Auguste Rodin, *The Helmet-Maker's Wife*, bronze, 1887, 49.5 x 23.5 x 26.7 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 11. Camille Claudel, torso study for *Clotho*, plaster, 1893, 44.5 x 25 14 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.



Figure 12. Marie d'Orléans, *Joan of Arc Praying*, bronze, 1837, 201 x 75 x 82 cm, Palace of Versailles, France.



Figure 13. Camille Claudel, *La Valse*, bronze, 1893, 47 x 34 x 22 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.

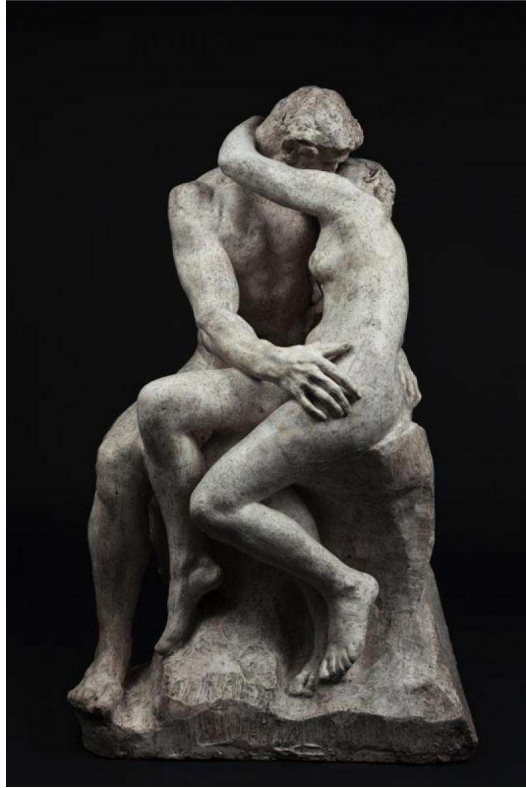


Figure 14. Auguste Rodin, *Le Baiser*, marble, 1889, 181.5 x 112.5 x 117 cm, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 15. Auguste Rodin, *Le Pêché*, marble, 1900, 24 x 12 x 16, Musée Rodin, Paris.



Figure 16. Camille Claudel, *Niobide Blessée*, bronze, circa 1906, 90 x 50 x 51.5 cm, Musée de Poitiers, France.

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