

Three Fifteenth-Century Sculptures from Poligny

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART has an outstanding collection of Gothic sculpture from Burgundy and the Franche-Comté. Four splendid examples are in a class by themselves and deserve more attention than they have yet received either here or abroad. The earliest, a monumental *Virgin and Child* attributed to Claus de Werve and dating from about 1415–17, has recently been published in these pages.¹ This article discusses the other three, statues of St. Paul, St. James the Greater, and St. John the Baptist. Although they reached the Museum independently and at different dates, all four sculptures were originally from Poligny in the Franche-Comté, today a small town but in the fifteenth century an important administrative center of the Valois dukes. The limestone in which the three saints' figures were carved was probably quarried in the region.²

1. Acc. no. 33.23; see William H. Forsyth, "A Fifteenth-Century *Virgin and Child* Attributed to Claus de Werve," *MMJ* 21 (1986) pp. 41–63; and idem, *Hommage à Hubert Landais: Art, objets d'art, collections* (Paris, 1987) pp. 662–666.

2. It is characterized as bioclastic, oolitic stone of the Middle Jurassic period by Professor Pierre Rat, Institut des Sciences de la Terre, University of Dijon. The author is indebted to Professor Rat for this information, and also to Pete Dandridge and George Wheeler of the Objects Conservation Department, MMA, who examined the condition of the three statues and analyzed the stone as fossiliferous, soft, and tufflike when first quarried. According to Professor Rat, the stone in which the Poligny *Virgin and Child* was carved must have been quarried near Dijon, at Asnières; see Forsyth, "A Fifteenth-Century *Virgin and Child*," p. 59 n. 65.

3. See Joseph Breck, "A Statue of the School of Claus Sluter," *MMAB* 17 (1922) pp. 79–83; Georg Troescher, *Claus Sluter und die burgundische Plastik um die Wende des XIV. Jahrhunderts I* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1932) pp. 80–81, pls. XLV, XLVI (center); idem, *Burgundische Plastik des ausgehenden Mittelalters*

(Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1940) pp. 116–117; James J. Rorimer, "Late Medieval Sculpture from the Byways of Burgundy," *MMAB* n.s. 9 (1951) p. 183; Anne McGee [Morganstern], "A Study of the Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," M.A. diss. (New York University, 1961) pp. 14–20; and Pierre Quarré, "Les Statues de Claus de Werve en Franche-Comté," *Archéologie occitane: Moyen-Age et Epoque Moderne—Actes du 99e Congrès National des Sociétés Savantes* 2 (1974) p. 125.

The statue itself remained in the Dubois family until the death of Dubois's granddaughter about 1900. She bequeathed it to a servant, and it was then bought by the same collector, Vuillermet.⁶ Vuillermet's son, François, was to be instrumental in putting

4. Breck, "Statue of the School of Claus Sluter," p. 80, and Rorimer, "Late Medieval Sculpture from the Byways of Burgundy," p. 183.

5. According to a note by James Rorimer on the catalogue cards of the Medieval Department, MMA, this book contained the following inscription: "Ce livre appartient a moy Claude Antoine Dubois au faubourg de Notre Dame du departement du Jura. Achete aux Jacobins le 8 oct. 1792. L'an premier de la Republique." The Medieval Department records are the source of many of the otherwise unattributed statements in this article.

6. Breck, "Statue of the School of Claus Sluter," pp. 80–81, and Rorimer, Medieval Department records.



1. *St. Paul* from Poligny (Jura), Burgundian, first third of 15th century. Limestone with traces of paint, H. 47 in. (119.4 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harkness Fund, 22.31.1

the Poligny *Virgin and Child* and the statues of St. Paul, St. James, and St. John the Baptist on the market. In 1919 he sold the *St. Paul*, which he remembered as a boy seeing on a corbel in the church of the Jacobins, to Georges Demotte, the international antiquarian dealer. Demotte brought the statue to America and sold it to the Metropolitan Museum in 1922.

The partially bald head and the long beard identify the figure as Paul the Apostle. The book in his right hand represents his epistles to the Gentiles, the sword in his left the instrument of his martyrdom.

The condition of the sculpture is generally good,

although there has been some weathering on the front and some restoration on the outer surfaces of the folds on the back. The nose has been replaced, and the mouth, beard, and eyebrows are possibly reworked. The most important of the restorations, which were probably all effected by Demotte, is a section of drapery over the hilt of the sword. A photograph taken before this restoration was carried out (Figure 2) suggests that the original graceful curve of the edge of the drapery was replaced by the present stiff line, obscuring the left hand, which is carved with the same consummate skill as the right (Figure 3).

Although the statue must have been painted several times, it now appears an indiscriminate gray. Microscopic examination has revealed traces of gesso and brownish red underpaint, minute specks of blue over red, and some gilding. The process of making a cast may have contributed to the loss of paint and



2. *St. Paul* prior to restoration and cleaning, before 1919 (photo: Vuillermet?)



3. *St. Paul*, detail of the right hand with book



4, 5. *St. Paul*, views of the sides

6. *St. Paul*, detail of the sword



gesso, and may account for certain deposits of whitish plaster.⁷

The composition is well conceived and the statue skillfully carved. The posture is easy, showing slight contrapposto, with legs somewhat flexed and arms in a natural position. The left leg is advanced, with the bare foot extending to the corner of the pedestal. The ample silhouette of the cloak below and around the outside of the right arm is in beautiful counterpoise to the rigidity of the sword on the opposite side.

The fullness of the drapery enhances the dignity and solemn gravity of the statue. The wide, rhythmic sweeps of the cloak are tucked under and around each other in soft, deep folds. One end falls in a bold diagonal curve to the base. The other end is thrown across the body and over the sword. This complex arrangement gives depth and monumentality to a

statue measuring only eleven inches from front to back (Figures 4, 5).

On the statue's left side, a section of drapery falling down behind the scabbard of the sword furnishes visual as well as structural support (Figure 6). A carefully detailed sword belt, with buckles and quatrefoil mounts, is twisted around the scabbard.⁸ The hidden pommel of the sword is covered by drapery in a way that recalls the draped attributes held by Moses and David—the tablets of the Law and a harp respec-

7. A cast of the figure has been placed in a chapel off the north aisle of St.-Hippolyte, Poligny. See *Art sacré dans le Jura du Moyen-Age au XVIIIe siècle: Poligny, Baume-les-Messieurs, Saint-Cloud*, exh. cat. (n.p., 1972) no. 47, p. 56.

8. This typical usage was pointed out by Dr. Helmut Nickel, Curator of Arms and Armor of the Metropolitan Museum. The three straps of belt and suspension attached to the sword scabbard meet in a ring with three metal attachments.



7. Puits de Moïse (Well of Moses), Burgundian, ca. 1400: detail showing Moses, with partial views of David (right) and Isaiah (left). Dijon (Côte-d'Or), Chartreuse de Champmol (photo: Archives Photographiques)

tively—on the Puits de Moïse in Dijon, dating to about 1400 (Figure 7). The figure of Moses is attributed to Claus Sluter (d. 1406), head of the ducal workshop, and that of David to Claus de Werve (d. 1439), then Sluter's chief assistant.⁹

On the back (Figure 8) the cloak rises up to form a high collar in the fashion of the early fifteenth century. The careful modeling is quite different from the usual cursory treatment of a rear view and reinforces the probability that the figure originally stood on a corbel rather than in a niche. The handling of the drapery, though less complicated than on the front, is no less impressive. A direct comparison can be made with a small pleurant (Figure 9) on the tomb

9. A. Kleinclausz, *Claus Sluter et la sculpture bourguignonne au XVe siècle* (Paris, n.d.) pp. 63–82; Troescher, *Claus Sluter*, pp. 85–107; and Aenne Liebrich, *Claus Sluter* (Brussels, 1936) pp. 77–96.



8. *St. Paul*, view of the back

9. Claus de Werve, pleurant no. 32 from the tomb of Philip the Bold, 1404–11. Alabaster, H. approx. 16 in. (40 cm.). Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts (photo: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon)





10. *St. John the Evangelist*, first third of 15th century. Limestone, Baume-les-Messieurs (Jura), Abbey Church (photo: Courtauld Institute of Art)



11. *St. John the Evangelist*, first third of 15th century. Limestone, H. approx. 6 ft. (174 cm.). Poligny, St.-Hippolyte (photo: Archives Photographiques)

of Philip the Bold, probably the work of Claux de Werve after his appointment in 1406 as sculptor to Philip's son, John the Fearless.¹⁰ The deeply pocketed folds, framed by vertical falls of ponderous and supple drapery, are very close to those on the back of the Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*.

The *St. Paul* belongs to an interrelated group of

roughly contemporary sculptures in Poligny and in nearby Baume-les-Messieurs, all associated with the style of Claux de Werve. This stylistic relationship is

10. Pierre Quarré, *Claux de Werve et la sculpture bourguignonne dans le premier tiers du XVe siècle*, exh. cat. (Dijon, 1976) pp. 37–39 and doc. 5, pp. 22–23.



12. *St. Andrew*, first third of 15th century. Limestone, H. approx. 6 ft. (174 cm.). Poligny, St.-Hippolyte (photo: Archives Photographiques)

paralleled by political and historical associations between the two towns.¹¹

Fundamentally similar to the *St. Paul* is a figure of St. John the Evangelist in the abbey church at Baume (Figure 10), attributed to Claus de Werve.¹² The statue stands on a corbel above the tomb of the donor of the church, Abbot Amé de Chalon (d. 1431).

Though its silhouette is less ample than that of the *St. Paul*, the two sculptures are alike in the overlapping planes of drapery and in the way the cloak falls in parallel curving lines.

Two of the statues in the sanctuary of the collegiate church of St.-Hippolyte in Poligny, a *St. John the Evangelist* and a *St. Andrew* (Figures 11, 12), can also be compared to the Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*. The sanctuary was finished in 1422, and the statues are probably contemporary with it. A third figure in the series is presumed to represent the donor, Jean Chousat (d. 1433), in the guise of St. Thibault (Theobald of Provins).¹³ For these sculptures Chousat, who was chief financial adviser to the dukes of Burgundy, would naturally have turned to de Werve, by then head of the ducal workshop.¹⁴

The Poligny *St. John the Evangelist* wears the same kind of loosely flowing garments as his counterpart in Baume¹⁵ and the Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*. In the lower half of all three figures, the folds sweep down in a curvilinear pattern to the base, where they lie spread out. The *St. Paul* differs from the two statues of the Evangelist in the arrangement of the cloak, drawn across the top of the figure in front and folded back over the right shoulder; this arrangement corresponds to that of the more voluminous

11. The abbots of Baume-les-Messieurs had rights in Poligny at least from the 11th through the 15th century; see Alphonse Rousset, *Dictionnaire géographique, historique et statistique des communes de la Franche-Comté* (Lons-le-Saunier, 1857; repr. Paris, 1969) V, pp. 170, 233–237. The two chief donors, the abbot Amé de Chalon (d. 1431) at Baume and Jean Chousat (d. 1433) at St.-Hippolyte, Poligny, were contemporaries who owned adjacent lands in Poligny and must have known each other. See Abbé Brune, "Le Mobilier et les oeuvres d'art de l'église de Baume-les-Messieurs (Jura)," *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux historiques* (1894) pp. 458–478; Pierre Quarré, "La Collégiale Saint-Hippolyte de Poligny et ses statues," *Congrès archéologique de France en Franche-Comté en 1960* (Paris, 1960) pp. 210, 215, 218; and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 30–34.

12. Henri David and Pierre Quarré both felt that Troescher (*Claus Sluter*, pp. 80–81, 95) was in error in attributing the statue to Sluter (personal communications, Medieval Department records). See McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 32–33; Quarré, "Statues de Claus de Werve en France-Comté," p. 123; and Rorimer, "Late Medieval Sculpture from the Byways of Burgundy," p. 183.

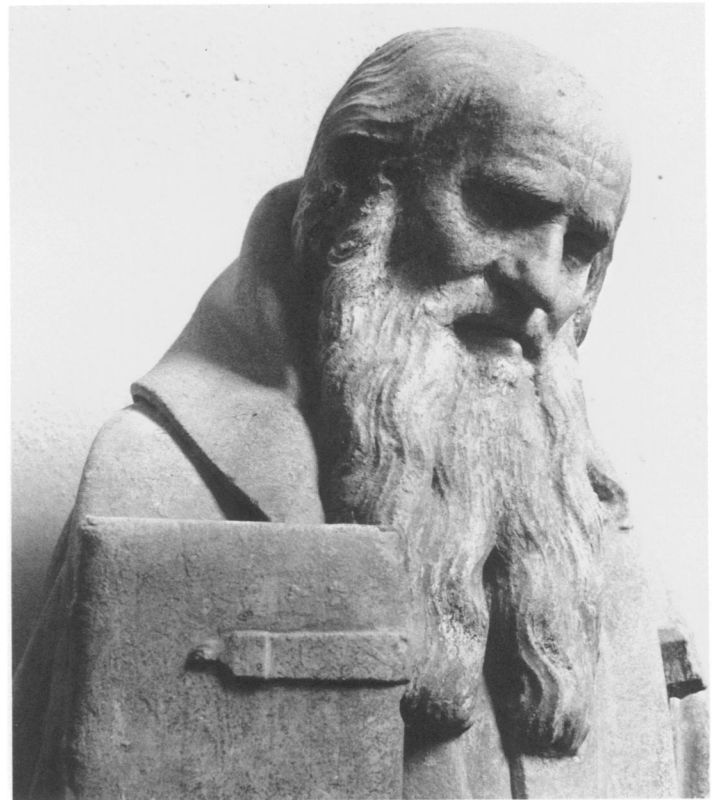
13. Quarré, "Collégiale de Saint-Hippolyte," pp. 215–216.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

15. *Ibid.*, and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 28–29, 32–33.



13. *St. Paul*, first third of 15th century. Limestone, H. 3 ft. (90 cm.). Baume-les-Messieurs, Abbey Church (photo: Courtauld Institute of Art)



14. *St. Paul* (Baume-les-Messieurs), detail of the head (photo: Courtauld Institute of Art)

cloak worn by the Poligny *St. Andrew*.¹⁶ Despite differences in composition, the bearded figures of *St. Andrew* and *St. Paul* can be compared in posture and head type; their curving drapery is similar, although falling in the reverse direction below the knees; the downward tilt of their heads suggests that both statues were originally placed above eye level, as the *St. Andrew* still is.

An image of *St. Paul* at Baume (Figure 13),¹⁷ though smaller, simpler, and of lesser quality, seems to be related to and dependent upon the Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*, whose reflective mood it shares. The extended left leg, with bare foot, is similarly placed just ahead of the tip of the sword. Although here the cloak falls in a prominent uninterrupted curve, exposing the front of a belted tunic, the cloth spreads over the base as it does in the larger figure, but in a more exaggerated fashion. Both heads are slightly tilted in the same manner, and

each has a two-forked beard (Figures 14, 15). The statues of *St. Paul* and of *St. Andrew* (see Figure 12) are linked by a similar expression of benignity and quiet majesty. All three heads are related to a head of *St. Anthony* in the Musée Archéologique de Dijon (Figure 16), attributed to Claux de Werve.¹⁸

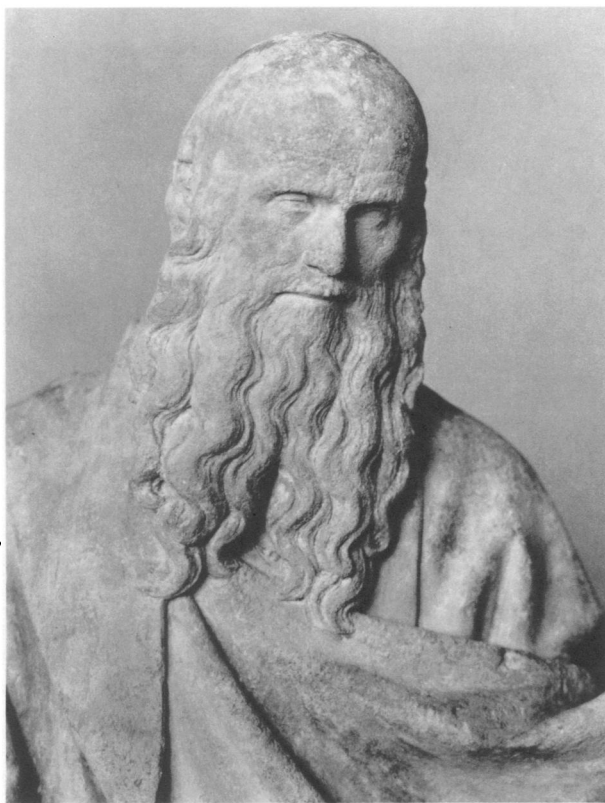
The figure of a kneeling donor (Figure 17), now in the Louvre,¹⁹ comes from the same source as the

16. Quarré, "Collégiale de Saint-Hippolyte," p. 218, and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 22–28.

17. Brune, "Le Mobilier et les oeuvres d'art de l'église de Baume-les-Messieurs," p. 473; Troescher, *Claus Sluter*, p. 81; Emile Mâle, "L'Art chrétien: Les Apôtres Pierre et Paul," *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Aug. 1955) p. 391; and *Art sacré dans le Jura*, p. 84. All these sources agree in relating the statue to the style of Sluter.

18. Quarré, *Claux de Werve et la sculpture bourguignonne*, pp. 47–48, pl. xxx, and Troescher, *Claus Sluter*, p. 58, pl. vii.

19. Pierre Quarré, *Antoine le Moiturier, le dernier des grands*



15. *St. Paul* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art), detail of the head



16. *St. Anthony*, first third of 15th century. Limestone, H. approx. 20 in. (48 cm.). Dijon, Musée Archéologique (photo: Musée Archéologique)

17. *Kneeling Donor* from church of the Jacobins, Poligny, 15th century. Painted limestone, 40 × 28 in. (107 × 75 cm.). Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. R.F. 1679 (photo: Studio De Guerny)

imagiers des ducs de Bourgogne, exh. cat. (Dijon, 1973) no. 61, pl. xxxviii. Marcel Aubert and Michèle Beaulieu, Musée National du Louvre, *Description raisonné des sculptures du Moyen-Age, de la Renaissance, et des temps modernes: I. Moyen-Age* (Paris, 1950) no. 356, fig. 356, assign the statue to the second half of the 15th century. This date and the identification of the figure as Thomas de Plaine (d. 1506)—an earlier member of the family may be involved—have been contested on the basis of costume, hair style, and resemblances to several pleurants on the tomb of Philip the Bold: see Troescher, *Burgundische Plastik*, p. 116, and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 14–19. The latter (p. 10) cites two chapels founded by members of the de Plaine family in the church.



Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*—a de Plaine chapel in the former church of the Jacobins in Poligny. There is a general stylistic resemblance between the two sculptures, despite differences in posture, in the folds of drapery on the base, and in the carving of the features (those of the donor are heavily restored). In both sculptures the fabric is draped in widely spaced pockets. The broad parallel fold curving backward from the shoulder of the Louvre figure to the base recalls the frontal sweep of *St. Paul's* cloak. The way in which the garment covers the back of the neck of both figures is distinctive.

In summary, the sequence of sculpture in Burgundy during the first third of the fifteenth century under the dominating influence of Claux de Werve clearly includes the Metropolitan Museum's *St. Paul*. The gentle, easy posture, the head type with a full, curling beard, the beautifully modeled hands, and the carefully detailed strapping of the sword are the handiwork of a master, either Claux de Werve himself or one of his followers. More specifically, the statue is related to works attributed to de Werve or his followers that were commissioned for the abbey church at Baume-les-Messieurs before 1431 and for the sanctuary of St.-Hippolyte at Poligny before 1433. Allowing some leeway, one can thus date the *St. Paul* to the 1420s or 1430s.

The statues of St. James the Greater (Figure 18) and St. John the Baptist (Figure 19) differ from the *St. Paul* in general appearance and style.²⁰ Undoubtedly they came from a church in Poligny, but which one is not known.²¹ The tilted heads and shortened legs of

20. Troescher, *Burgundische Plastik*, pp. 117, 153, pl. LXVII; James J. Rorimer, "A Statue of Saint John the Baptist Possibly by Claus Sluter," *MMAB* 29 (1934) pp. 192–195; idem, "Late Medieval Sculpture from the Byways of Burgundy," pp. 182–183; and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 5–14, 37–39 (under "The Master of St. James" she attributes the two sculptures correctly to a master following Sluter, but erroneously to a date in the late 14th century).

21. Rorimer ("Late Medieval Sculpture from the Byways of Burgundy," p. 183) and Troescher (*Burgundische Plastik*, p. 106) both believed that the statues came from the church of Mouthier-Vieillard; this church, however, was largely abandoned and partly destroyed before the middle of the 15th century and before the probable date when the statues were carved. McGee [Morganstern] ("Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," p. 13) believes they came from the chapel of St. James in the church of the Jacobins. The devastation suffered



18. *St. James the Greater* from Poligny, third quarter of 15th century. Limestone, H. 62 in. (156 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 47.101.17



19. *St. John the Baptist* from Poligny, third quarter of 15th century; before restoration of the leg. Limestone, H. 59½ in. (151 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Pulitzer Bequest, 34.44



20. Niche in cemetery wall, Mouthier-Vieillard, Poligny, ca. 1930 (photo: Rorimer)

these figures imply placement on corbels high above eye level.²²

Whatever the original source, old residents of Poligny in the 1930s remembered the two statues when they had stood in niches set into a cemetery wall in Mouthier-Vieillard on the outskirts of the town (Figure 20).²³ Erosion on the front of the statues is evidence of their exposure to the elements. The wall,

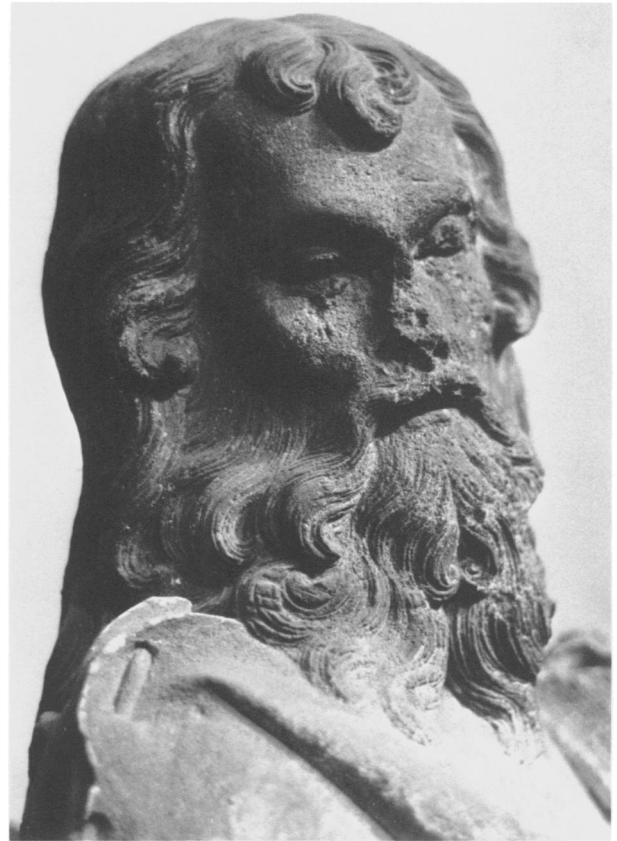
during the 16th and 17th centuries by the churches of Poligny, coupled with the lack of records, makes it impossible to determine a specific source. See Rousset, *Dictionnaire*, V, pp. 240–241, 258–259.

22. Such figures were customarily placed against the piers of churches, sometimes at a considerable height. Well-known examples are found in the Ste.-Chapelle, Paris (1248), for which see Denise Jalabert, *La Sainte Chapelle* (Paris, 1947) p. 18 and ill. pp. 8, 9, 15. For examples in Cologne Cathedral see Paul Clemen, *Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Köln*: 1:3. *Dom zu Köln* (Cologne, 1937) pp. 144–147.

23. Rorimer checked the size of the niches in the 1930s before the wall disappeared. He noted that although they were high enough to accommodate the sculptures, the scale and proportions of these did not accord with a placement at eye level (Medieval Department records). The statues are too sophisticated and fine in quality to have been made for the cemetery wall, which was rustic in style and appears, from a 16th- or 17th-century doorway set into it, to have been later in date.



21. *St. James*, detail of the head



22. *St. John the Baptist*, detail of the head (photo: Kent, courtesy Anne McGee Morganstern)

which has since disappeared, had five niches in all, suggesting that there were other figures in the series for which places had been made.²⁴

After acquiring the statues of the Baptist and St. James, François Vuillermet sold them in 1918 to Georges Demotte, who brought them to America. Joseph Brummer, the well-known dealer in medieval art, sold the figure of the Baptist to the Metropolitan Museum in 1934; the *St. James* was bought by the Museum in 1947 from Brummer's estate before this was dispersed at auction two years later.

Although both statues are skillfully carved, that of the Baptist shows a better sense of volume and a more dramatic stance, indicating the hand of a more creative and powerful sculptor. A prominent feature of both figures is the majestic cloak draped across the shoulders and arms. The deeply pocketed folds of the Baptist's cloak cascade down the center in the form of inverted triangles; these are framed by two

heavy folds, one vertical beneath the book on the right, the other diagonal, descending to the base on the left. St. James's cloak, which lacks the monumental sweep of the other, has three layers, the lowest cut diagonally.

The hair of both saints curls with the same wide parallel lines and thick, slightly hooked tips, and their beards are each bisected by a vertical line (Figures 21, 22). Despite considerable damage to the face

24. A Capuchin cycle of 1410 in the Prague National Gallery includes the disciples and the Baptist; see *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* I (Rome, 1968) p. 163. For a group of disciples from Dole (Jura), a few miles north of Poligny, see Troescher, *Burgundische Plastik*, p. 119, pl. LXXXI, nos. 340–347. A bearded head in the Poligny Museum is too badly battered to be confidently considered as having belonged to one of the missing figures. See Rorimer, "Statue of Saint John," p. 194, and McGee [Morganstern], "Fifteenth-Century Sculpture from Poligny," pp. 8–9, fig. 7.

and the fact that the head has been broken off and reset, St. James's features are clearly of the same type as those of the Baptist.

The differences in style between these two and the *St. Paul* are evident. The quiet attitude of the other figure and the placid serenity of the drapery point to the influence of Claux de Werve. *St. James* and *St. John the Baptist*, with their livelier postures and more animated garments, belong to a later period—the 1440s to the early 1460s, when the style of Jean de la Huerta was dominant.²⁵ Huerta (d. after 1462), a turbulent Spaniard from Aragon, was commissioned in 1443 to carve the tomb of John the Fearless, and his

series of pleurants on the tomb introduced a new dynamism into Burgundian sculpture.²⁶ He is known to have been active in several places in the Franche-Comté, probably including Poligny.²⁷

The two statues are also differentiated from the *St. Paul* by the quality of their stone, which is coarser and marked by pitted erosions. The large hole below the knee of the Baptist is apparently due to the loss of a conglomerate shelly mass of rough material in the body of the stone. There are similar wide-grooved and slightly interlacing chisel marks on both statues,²⁸ with traces of reddish orange pigment not found on the *St. Paul*.

Although St. James was an apostle and a leader of the early church in Jerusalem, he is shown here in his traditional medieval garb as a simple pilgrim, a reference to his shrine at Compostela in Spain, which was, after Jerusalem and Rome, the most frequented in Christendom.²⁹ Identifying attributes are the soft-brimmed hat, the cockleshell badge, and the pilgrim's staff. Fragments of this staff remain above the saint's right arm and contiguous with the front of his garment; a hollow between his feet indicates where the bottom of the staff rested.

There is a certain ambiguity in the posture of the statue. Its placement on the base indicates that the saint is taking a step to his left, but the drapery of the cloak is arranged as though he were standing frontally (Figure 23). The statue's direction could mean that it was designed to stand at the left end of a series, whose existence has already been suggested in connection with the five niches in the Mouthier-Vieillard wall.³⁰ Before the left foot was broken off, it

23. *St. James*, three-quarter view



25. Pierre Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta et la sculpture bourguignonne au milieu du XVe siècle*, exh. cat. (Dijon, 1972) pp. 5–20, 21–26 (bibliography), and doc. 8, pp. 37–40. Huerta was succeeded by Antoine le Moiturier, who completed his last ducal commission in 1469; see idem, *Antoine le Moiturier*, pp. 6–7.

26. See Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, pp. 6–9, doc. 1, pp. 27–30, and pls. viiff. See also idem, *Les Pleurants des tombeaux des ducs de Bourgogne* (Dijon, 1971) pp. 13–16, pls. 51–78.

27. Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, pp. 8–9, 15–16, and doc. 7, pp. 36–37; idem, “La Collégiale de Saint-Hippolyte,” p. 221.

28. For chisel marks as a possible means of distinguishing the sculptor's hand see Forsyth, “A Fifteenth-Century Virgin and Child,” app. 3, p. 63.

29. Jeanne Viellard, ed. and trans., *Guide du pèlerin de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle* (Mâcon, 1938), gives the Latin text, with a French translation, of a guide for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela written in the 12th century.

30. See above and note 24.



24–26. *St. James*, views of the sides and back

projected over the edge of the base. The saint's hands and the lower half of his book are missing; he was perhaps shown reading as he walked.

Below the center parting of the beard are the two terminals of a cord that secures the hat under the chin. The hat makes *St. James*'s head seem out of proportion to his body, rendering the figure slightly top-heavy.

Seen from the sides (Figures 24, 25), the statue appears exceptionally shallow. More of the edge of the cloak is missing below the saint's right arm than is apparent in the photograph. On the back (Figure 26),

the folds of the cloak are almost as carefully finished as on the front; the concentric swirls are very different from the quiet draping on the back of the *St. Paul* (see Figure 8), a clear indication of the contrasting styles of Huerta and de Werve. The metal mounts of the cover of the book, visible only from the back, are carved with sharp precision (Figure 27).³¹

No other sculpture of *St. James the Greater* known

31. The Prophet Isaiah on the Puits de Moïse from an earlier period carries a book with mounts of a similar type (Figure 7, extreme left).



27. *St. James*, detail of the back of the book

to the author is close enough to make a significant comparison. A smaller Burgundian statue of the saint in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 28), although iconographically almost the same, is of a totally different style.

The figure of St. John the Baptist is identified by the lamb—the visual image of Christ as Lamb of God (John 1:29)—and by small sections of the “raiment of camel’s hair” (Matt. 3:4) barely visible beneath the saint’s right arm and behind the break in the leg (Figures 29–31). He carries an open book, one side supporting the lamb, the other resting against his left

28. *St. James the Greater*, Burgundian, 15th century. Limestone, H. 39 in. (98 cm.), with some restorations. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Bequest, 17.120.3





29. *St. John the Baptist*, upper half

shoulder; an extension of the leather binding falls over the upper pages, its straps and studs treated in considerable detail. The Baptist's right hand, once attached by a dowel and now missing, must have pointed to the lamb. The lamb, which has lost its head, faces right, away from the saint.

The head of the Baptist is turned abruptly to the left—a most unusual attitude—as if to counterbalance the lamb and the book. The features are strongly marked, with high cheekbones and sunken eyes (see Figure 22), as in a number of Huerta stat-

ues.³² The hair is arranged with three curls on the forehead.

Seen from its right side (Figure 30), the statue appears less calm and erect than from the front. The head and body tilt backward above the waist. The right leg, now restored from the calf to the foot (Figure 31), extends outward, stabilizing the body and acting as a foil to the diagonal folds of drapery. On the other side (Figure 32), the monumental quality of the drapery beneath the book is impressive.

32. For example, the statue of St. John the Evangelist at Bar-le-Régulier; see Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, no. 61, pl. XL.

30. *St. John the Baptist*, three-quarter view, the leg restored



31. *St. John the Baptist*, lower half



The heavy, regular folds on the back of the statue are fully realized (Figure 33), somewhat recalling those on the back of the *St. Paul* (see Figure 8). They have been roughly chiseled away near the bottom right, probably when the piece was moved into its

wall niche at Mouthier-Vieillard. The curling hair falls over the shoulders in ringlets that resemble those of St. James's beard (see Figures 18, 21).

There are a number of surviving Burgundian statues of the Baptist, some of them loosely related to this one. An example at Châteauneuf (Figure 34) was probably commissioned by Philippe Pot, grand sene-

32, 33. *St. John the Baptist*, views of the left side and back



schal of Burgundy, who was buried in a chapel at Cîteaux dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Philippe acquired the castellany of Châteauneuf in 1460, and the statue may have been carved after that date.³³

By far the closest comparison, however, to the Metropolitan Museum's figure is found in the parish church at Rouvres-en-Plaine (Figure 35), in a chapel commissioned from Jean de la Huerta in 1445 by Philippe Mâchefoing, mayor of Dijon and châtelain of the ducal castle at Rouvres.³⁴ It may be assumed that this statue of the Baptist, which is set in the retable above the altar, was finished by 1448, when a

violent quarrel over the completion of other work in the chapel was brought into court.³⁵

33. See Henri David, *De Sluter à Sambin I* (Paris, 1933) pp. 28–30, and Quarré, *Antoine le Moiturier*, no. 39, pl. xx. For a very similar statue of the Baptist at Bussy-la-Pesle (Côte-d'Or) see David, *De Sluter à Sambin*, I, pp. 75–76, and Quarré, *Antoine le Moiturier*, no. 40, pl. xiv; the forelocks on the Bussy figure recall those of the statue in New York.

34. David, *De Sluter à Sambin*, I, p. 10, and Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, no. 44, pl. xxv, and p. 14.

35. Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, pp. 13–14, docs. 4, 5, pp. 33–35.

34. *St. John the Baptist*, Burgundian, after 1460. Painted limestone, H. 52 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (133 cm.). Châteauneuf (Côte-d'Or), St.-Philippe and St.-Jacques (photo: Inventaire Général de Bourgogne)



35. *St. John the Baptist*, Burgundian, 1445–48. Limestone, H. approx. 54 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (134 cm.). Rouvres-en-Plaine (Côte-d'Or), Parish Church (photo: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon)



The Rouvres sculpture is monumental in breadth and dignity, and easy in posture. St. John holds an open book supporting the lamb (now missing except for the legs). The weight of the saint's body rests on the right leg, hidden by thick drapery. The stance is

36. *Virgin and Child*, Burgundian, ca. 1447. Limestone, H. 72 in. (180 cm.). Auxonne (Côte-d'Or), Notre-Dame, from the old Porte de Pantesson (photo: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon)



modified by the way in which the cloak indicates the position of the slightly flexed left leg, partly breaking up the long diagonal of the cloak in its descent from the right shoulder and somewhat activating the figure. The head is tilted to the saint's right. The hair, heavily framing the face, is arranged in long locks, one of which is held in the fingers of the right hand, with a curl passing over the top of the hand; the only known recurrence of this detail is in a fragment from an earlier statue of the Baptist, which was excavated by Pierre Quarré in the ducal oratory at Champmol.³⁶

Georg Troescher and Quarré alike pointed out the relationship of the *St. John the Baptist* in New York to the style of Jean de la Huerta, sculptor of the figure at Rouvres.³⁷ In both statues, the saint's majestic stance is emphasized by a voluminous cloak, which envelops the body at Rouvres but is open on one side on the other. In both, the front panel of the cloak has fundamentally the same drapery scheme: a cascade of deep transverse folds framed on one side by a long diagonal fold sweeping down from the right arm and curving around the base, and on the other by a cluster of vertical folds that hangs directly below the book. This distinctive scheme is found in a number of sculptures associated with Huerta, among them a statue of the *Virgin and Child* that was carved for a city gate at Auxonne around 1447 (Figure 36).³⁸

Although completely different from each other in mood and execution, the figures of St. John the Baptist at Rouvres and in the Metropolitan Museum are

36. The statue at Champmol was probably carved by Jean de Marville before 1389 and could have served as a model for the Rouvres figure. Another fragment from the same statue, further identifying it as of the Baptist, consists of the corner of a book with the imprint of a lamb's hoof. See Pierre Quarré, *La Chartreuse de Champmol: Foyer d'art au temps des ducs Valois*, exh. cat. (Dijon, 1960) no. 16, and his report, "Les Statues de l'oratoire ducal à la Chartreuse de Champmol," in *Recueil publié à l'occasion du cent cinquantième de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France (1804-1954)* (Paris, 1955) pp. 247-251, figs. 2a, 2b.

37. In conversations with Rorimer (Medieval Department records).

38. This statue, now in the Collégiale at Auxonne, served as a prototype for statues at Pluvault (Côte-d'Or), Autun (before 1459, from the cathedral jubé), Sully, Laizy, and Beaumont-sur-Vingeanne (all Saône-et-Loire); see Quarré, *Jean de la Huerta*, nos. 46-52, pls. xxviii-xxxiii. A pleurant by Huerta on the tomb of John the Fearless (no. 64, before 1456), now in the Cleveland Museum of Art, shows the same drapery scheme; see *ibid.*, p. 43, and pl. xiv.

similar in composition. Even without the damage it has sustained, the Museum's statue lacks the finish and careful detail of the one at Rouvres, but it is carved with greater élan. The bravura interpretation of the theme, the impetuous posture with head thrown nobly back, the bold draping, the casual ease of the book against the shoulder—all suggest that Jean de la Huerta may himself have been the sculptor.

One stops short of an outright attribution to Huerta, however, because of the lack of direct evidence. At the least the similarity in composition to the figure at Rouvres allows the hypothesis that Huerta could have made a model or sketch for a talented assistant to execute. The statue certainly has the stamp of a great master.

As for the date of the Museum's *Baptist*—and by extension that of the *St. James*—sometime in the third quarter of the fifteenth century seems to be likely. This view is based on the supposition that the meticulously carved figure of the Baptist at Rouvres, made before 1448,³⁹ preceded the simpler, more carefree version now in New York.

The Metropolitan Museum's four statues from Poligny were carved at a time when the arts of Burgundy were a dominating influence throughout Europe. Beginning with the *Virgin and Child*, they range in date from the first to the third quarter of the

fifteenth century, roughly spanning the active careers of two sculptors employed by the dukes of Burgundy, Claux de Werve and his successor Jean de la Huerta, whose very different styles they exemplify. Where the *Virgin and Child*, which came from a convent of the Poor Clares founded by John the Fearless, can confidently be attributed to de Werve himself, the statues of St. Paul, St. James, and St. John the Baptist are less easily assigned. However, the masterly quality of the *St. Paul* and the *St. John the Baptist* suggests that they were designed, and may well have been executed, by de Werve and Huerta respectively. Together these four sculptures are invaluable witnesses to the artistic sophistication and high level of aesthetic accomplishment of the time and place of their creation.

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39. See above and note 35.