

The image features two golden Renaissance sculptures of bearded men. The man in the foreground is shown in profile, facing left, with a thick, dark, curly beard and hair. He is wearing a golden, draped garment and holding a golden, ornate object with both hands. The man in the background is slightly out of focus, also with a beard and wearing a golden garment. The background is a plain, light gray.

TREASURES OF SPANISH
RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE
THE ORIGIN OF THE SPANISH MANNER



INSTITUTE OF OLD MASTERS RESEARCH

**TREASURES OF SPANISH
RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE**

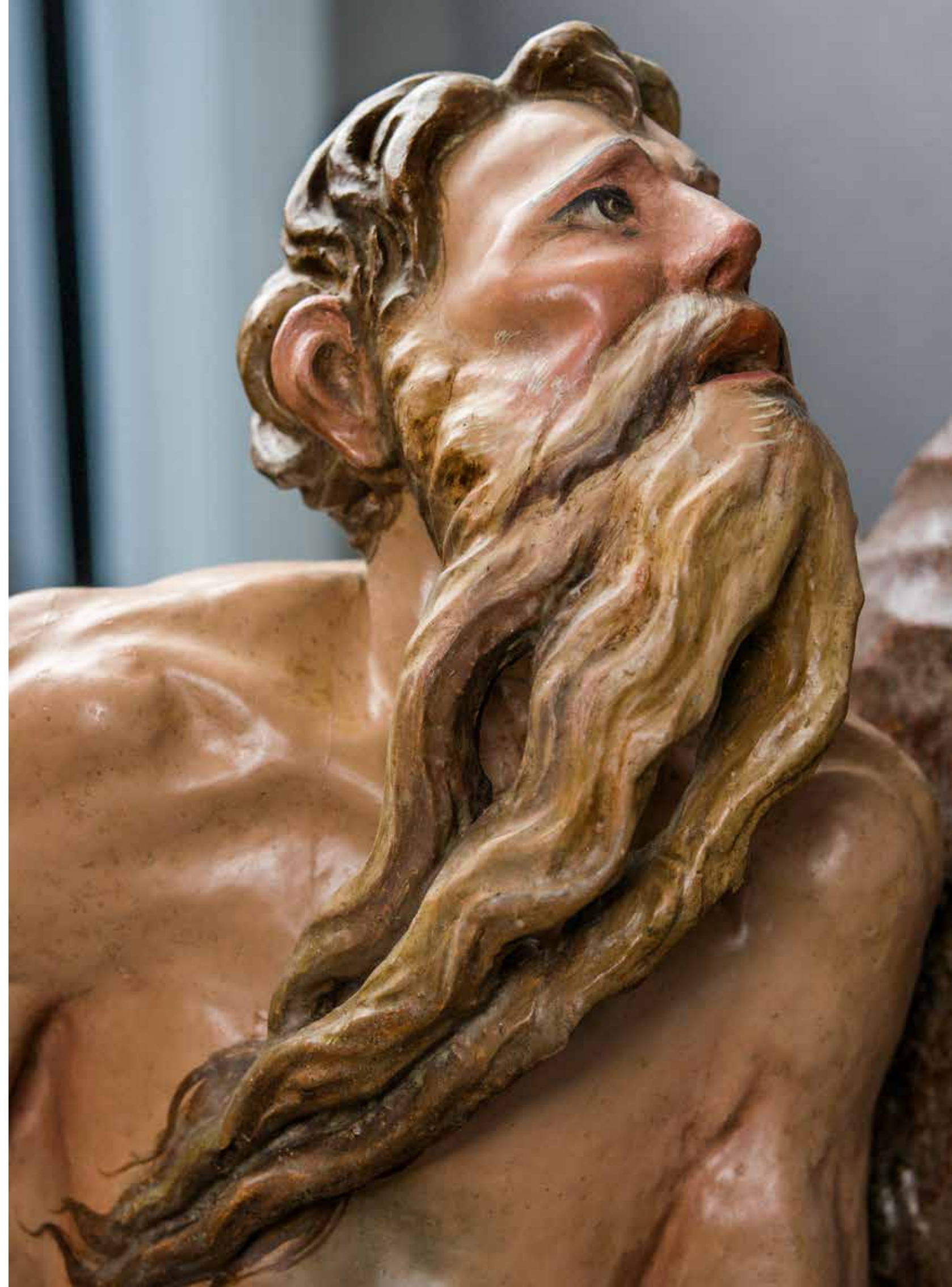
THE ORIGIN OF THE SPANISH MANNER



Cover:
Alonso Berruguete, *pair of sculptures, Saint Peter and Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, detail, 1530, IOMR collection.

Alonso Berruguete, high Choir-stall, *Transfiguration*, 1548, Cathedral of Toledo. → →





TREASURES OF SPANISH RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE

THE ORIGIN OF THE SPANISH MANNER

Ed. Carlos Herrero Starkie

PROLOGUE

Patrick Lenaghan

TEXTS

Carmen Morte García

Margarita Estella Marcos

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo

René Payo Hernanz

Carlos Herrero Starkie



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Arnao de Bruselas *Nathan rebuking King David*, detail, IOMR collection.

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Helmond, 3rd September 2019
Ed. Carlos Herrero Starkie
Director
Institute of Old Masters Research



Prologue

Patrick Lenaghan

The Hispanic Society of America

The reader holds in his hands a volume offering a comprehensive discussion of Spanish sixteenth-century sculpture. It thus affords the English speaker a notable opportunity to learn about this fascinating period when sculptors created splendid masterpieces. In fact, no such volume has been available since 1931 when Manuel Gómez-Moreno's insightful account appeared. There have of course been major publications in the intervening years, but none with as wide a scope as the present volume: Beatrice Gilman Proske (1954) discussed the transition from Gothic to Renaissance in Burgos and Toledo; Marjorie Trusted (2007) included sculpture in a broad study of Spanish art of the early modern era; the present author has written a series of articles on the introduction of the Italian Renaissance in funerary art; and most recently, Berruguete has been the subject of two different studies in English, one by Nicola Jennings and Rosario Coppel (2017) and the other by Manuel Arias (2018). Another major contribution appeared when Kelley Helmstutler Di Dio and Coppel (2013) demonstrated the extent to which Spanish collectors prized sculpture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Notwithstanding these works, a great lacuna remained for anyone who did not read Spanish and thus could not follow the many important discoveries and interpretations which scholars have published regarding this material. The present volume brings together some of the most distinguished experts working in this field who draw on their expertise to present the reader a detailed survey.

Although the work examines artistic developments, the history of period raises important considerations which the foreign non-specialist should also keep in mind. In the first place, there is the question of nomenclature. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spain did not exist as a monolithic political structure. Rather monarchs ruled over an aggregate of kingdoms — Castile and León, Aragón, and Navarre — of which the first two had subsumed Galicia, Asturias, Andalusia, Granada, Valencia, and Catalonia among others.¹ The territories had their own laws and constituent assemblies, and the monarch was king of each individually. If legally he was King of Castile and León, Aragón, and Navarre, many visitors and observers at this time spoke simply of the Spanish Monarchy. Insisting on this point is not scholarly pedantry because the division also reflects a social and cultural reality in which each area had its own traditions. With regard to art, this appears in the various ways patrons and artists reinterpreted the styles arriving from Italy and Northern cities. Not surprisingly, those regions that enjoyed a closer economic relation with Italy came into contact sooner with the Renaissance, but even so, they adapted the new art according to their needs and traditions.

Vasco de la Zarza (attributed). *Noli me tangere* relief from Tomb of doña Mencía Enríquez de Toledo, 1498 and 1510-20?, formerly San Francisco (Cuéllar), now The Hispanic Society of America. Photo courtesy of The Hispanic Society of America.

The other major engine for cultural exchange was the increasing political contact between the Iberian monarchs and Italian rulers. The Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella, had ties with the papacy, but it was only later that such relations became more pervasive. In the early sixteenth-century, Castilian troops carried the day in Naples so that kingdom also came into the orbit of the Spanish Monarchy. Under Ferdinand and Isabella's grandson and successor, Charles V, the Spanish realms became part of an international enterprise, made up of the various territories which the young man ruled as he inherited not just Iberian lands but also Flanders and the title of Holy Roman Emperor.² Raised in Northern Europe, he first experienced the art of the Lowlands but later beheld that of Italy in all its splendor when he traveled to Bologna for his coronation as Holy Roman Emperor (1530). From a young age he had been conscious of art as a useful tool in propaganda, having learned that lesson first in Malines from his aunt Margaret of Austria Duchess of Savoy and then seeing it reinforced while in Italy. At an early point in his rule, he drew around him a cultivated circle of humanists, yet one should be careful in assessing how these men understood the world of classical antiquity and its visual heritage. To a certain extent some equated their Emperor with those of antiquity as seen when Luis de Ávila y Zuñiga assembled Roman statues in his palace in Plasencia. Furthermore, Charles V gladly availed himself of similar comparisons in the portraits by the painter Titian and the sculptor Leone Leoni. His conservative religious position, however, shaped his artistic vision after the Protestants split from the Catholic Church.

The full impact of the Protestant Reformation and the Spanish response to its theological challenge only emerged under the reign of Charles's son and successor Philip II.³ He implemented measures establishing strict censorship and close supervision of all artistic production. This fear of innovation limited creative freedom with regard to subject and severed ties with regions suspected of heresy. As religious orthodoxy trumped all, knowledge of classical antiquity was prized only for the way it bolstered Catholic dogma. A distrustful ruler determined to control all aspects of his realms, Philip II preferred characterless figures, whose devotion to him outstripped any imagination or spark. As his father had inherited many lands to create an empire, Philip assembled an imposing collection through bequests although he too acquired works directly from Titian and Leone Leoni. To what extremes he went appears with regard to the collection of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, the extroverted and brilliant ambassador who had served Charles V so well.⁴ For whatever reason, Philip decided that the diplomat's accounts now needed to be audited.⁵ At the same time that his case was being reviewed, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza got around this by making his monarch his heir. In effect, any debts he owed would be paid from the estate he would leave his sovereign. As the ambassador's bad fortune continued, he was scheduled for surgery which might prove fatal. At this point, the vigilant monarch stationed an agent to watch during the operation and gave him authority to step in and secure the collection should Hurtado de Mendoza not survive. Although he pulled through, he died three days later, and a splendid collection of antiquities and sculpture entered the royal holdings. Philip's own taste inclined towards more religiously correct styles as seen in the architecture and decoration of the monastery of El Escorial. While he expressed fewer preferences about sculpture, his choices for the statues for its high altar are revealing. In this case, he followed his own counsel when he declined to place Cellini's marble crucifixion there but persisted in commissioning one in gilt bronze from Pompeo Leoni.⁶



Gil de Siloé (attributed). *Effigy of Doña Mencía Enriquez de Toledo*, from Tomb of doña Mencía Enriquez de Toledo, 1498 formerly San Francisco (Cuéllar), now The Hispanic Society of America. Photo courtesy of The Hispanic Society of America.

These considerations bring the reader to a matter which all of the essays in this catalogue address: the predominantly religious character of this art. The phenomenon reflects the culture of the period in which religious orthodoxy prevailed, and the church disposed of significant amounts of money to decorate its buildings. The sixteenth century witnessed a burst of popular enthusiasm for the Catholic faith which manifested itself most strikingly in the growth of new orders and foundations, all of which called for altars, paintings, and statues. At the same time, the authorities expended great effort overseeing these projects. As Philip II pushed the bishops, the clergy, and monastic orders in his realm to enforce the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545–63), they made the correct decoration of altars a priority. The viewer today can appreciate their efforts and the talent available since much of these works survive, in spite of destruction and losses that occurred during the Peninsular War (1808–14), the disamortization of the religious houses (1836), and the Civil War of Spain (1936–39).

By contrast, almost nothing remains from the secular world, although probably less existed to begin with.⁷ When noble families decorated their palaces, they often turned abroad and documents describe small bronzes and antique figures that almost certainly came from Italy or Northern Europe. While a handful of palaces (like that of Viso del Marqués) boast Italian frescoes, little survives to suggest what sculpture might have graced these buildings. In this regard, the facade and staircase of the University of Salamanca stand out as exceptions of secular art.

In addition to its pronounced religious quality, another factor distinguishes Spanish Renaissance sculpture dramatically from that found elsewhere in Europe. It is almost invariably painted, a crucial consideration for any assessment of the subject. It continues a medieval tradition that had flourished in Spain both in architectural sculpture, altars, and single figures. As the custom spread, artists developed an elaborate technique to adorn statues and when in Aragón, they applied it to alabaster, it becomes even more striking, if not startling for viewers not accustomed to it. Spanish sculpture has, for this reason been an art form that almost defied the understanding of foreigners, particularly if they adhere to a neoclassic canon which prizes uncolored marble as the most perfect form of sculpture. When Rudolf Wittkower an eminent professor at Columbia University delivered the Slade lectures at Cambridge (1970–71), he tacitly excluded Spain from consideration for this reason. Instead he followed a path that went from the world of Classical Antiquity to Michelangelo and Bernini before moving on to Falconet, Canova and Rodin. His (low) opinion of colored sculpture appears clearly: “Sculpture aiming high or created for a discerning audience, for the great and learned, imitated the uncolored marbles of Rome; whereas polychromy was almost exclusively reserved for popular works made of cheap materials.”⁸ He was, however, expressing what many had long believed. One of the earliest and most extreme expressions appears in the *Handbook of Spain* written by Richard Ford who had traveled extensively through the Iberian Peninsula in the early nineteenth-century. Because his volumes proved so influential, his opinion bears repeating: “The essence of statuary is *form*, and to clothe a statue, said Byron, is like translating Dante: a *marble* statue never deceives; it is the colouring that does, and it is a trick beneath the severity of sculpture. The imitation of life may surprise, but like colossal toys, barber’s blocks, and Madame Tussaud’s waxworks, it can only please the ignorant and children of a large or small growth to whom a painted doll gives more pleasure than the Apollo Belvedere.”⁹

Polychromy, nonetheless, lies at the heart of the Spanish tradition, and sculptors carved knowing that it was part of the process. Moreover, whenever one beholds a statue or relief with its polychromy intact, one cannot help but be impressed at the skill of these talented figures. Perhaps with because he came with such prejudices, the American writer and distinguished literary figure William Dean Howells found the experience of visiting the museum in Valladolid so impressive: “Pictures you can see anywhere, but not statuary of such singular interest, such transcendent powerfulness as those carvings of Berruguete.”¹⁰

The five essays in this volume go a long way to fleshing out what Howells called “transcendent powerfulness.” The book opens with the personal and distinctive vision of Carlos Herrero Starkie, the founder of the Institute of Old Master Research. In his text, he combines a close examination of the sculptor with a sweeping view of art. As he elaborates this, a dramatic vision of Berruguete takes shape in which the sculptor is not only a man of his time but part of a visual tradition that extends to Francisco de Goya and Edvard Munch.

Berruguete is also the subject for José María Parrado del Olmo, a professor in Valladolid, who has studied not only the artist but also broader questions relating to the Spanish Renaissance. Bringing this experience to bear, he places the sculptor in the context of his peers and followers, while also singling out his touch, praising the elegance of his sinuous lines and the volume of the figures. The importance of the church as a patron also emerges since it was the Toledo Cathedral

which summoned Berruguete to carve the choirstalls. Once there, however, he successfully ingratiated himself with the learned clientele there, securing among other projects the tomb of the Cardinal Archbishop Juan de Tavera. Parrado del Olmo also points out the important differences between Berruguete and the two major figures who came after him, Gaspar Becerra and Juan de Juni.

Berruguete again features prominently in the chapter by René Payo Hernanz of the Burgos University. Here the question of the master’s polychromy receives its due in a thorough examination. Since, as the author recognizes, the paint layer formed an integral part of the work’s design, close study reveals much about the painter entrusted with its realization. In a case like Berruguete who had an unparalleled sense of form and volume, the sensibility to this regard proves particularly informative.

The focus of the book moves beyond Berruguete in the other essays. As those authors trace the broader question of stylistic transformations, the importance of regional differences emerges. One text comes from Carmen Morte, a professor in Zaragoza, who has published extensively on sixteenth-century art in Aragón, including a major monograph on Damián Forment, the leading sculptor there. She establishes the distinctive quality of the altars and tombs from that important region while singling out this talented figure. Nonetheless, as Morte demonstrates, Aragón offers much more, and attentive readers will learn of gifted figures like Gil de Morlanes and Gabriel Joly, whose achievements remain unrecognized by English speakers.

Similar discoveries await in Margarita Estella’s chapter. Estella, a member of CSIC, the advanced research institute in Madrid, has spent her career examining many aspects of Spanish sculpture, among them the career of Juan Bautista el viejo. After training in Ávila and Toledo, he settled in Seville but not perhaps before he had visited Italy. A fascinating figure, who copied Michelangelo’s Pietà for the Ávila Cathedral, his career reveals much about the vagaries and uncertain paths by which the Italian Renaissance reached Andalucía. Placing him expertly in the context of his time, she presents the nuances not just of his case but of the period with characteristic precision and clarity. She does not hesitate to describe a “courageous expressionism” of artists, like Diego de Siloé or Juan de Valmaseda as they adopted Italianate forms and made them their own.

Surveying this book, one last thought occurs. A curious story lies behind one of the lavish illustrations, that of Damián Forment’s high altar for the Cathedral in Sto. Domingo de la Calzada. Commissioned by the bishop and cathedral chapter, he responded with a masterpiece that filled its space with remarkable sensitivity. Unfortunately, it covered the architecture of the arches of the sanctuary which opened onto the ambulatory. A recent restoration (1993–94) therefore moved the entire altar to the side transept where it stands today. Opening up the space supposedly revealed the original forms of the apse, yet without considering how the cathedral chapter in the sixteenth century had reworked the space for Forment’s work. Looking at the superb image in this volume, one notes, however, that the altar does not quite fit correctly in its current space. In effect, the plan came at the expense of the sixteenth-century masterpiece. Forment’s work was understood to have sufficient merit to restore but not enough to keep it in its original site. Perhaps as scholars continue to make a stronger case for the outstanding sculptors of the Spanish Renaissance, the public can appreciate their achievements more fully.

NOTES:

1. See Elliott 1992 and Feros 2017, pp. 16–22 for this question.
2. For the life of Charles V see Parker 2019.
3. For the life of Philip II see Parker 2014.
4. For the inventory of the sculpture in his collection see Di Dio and Coppel 2013, pp. 124–32.
5. Spivakovsky 1970 pp. 397–404.
6. For the crucifixion of Cellini and Philip's response see Mulcahy 2004, pp. 91–114. For Philip II as a collector see Helmstutler DiDio and Coppel 2013, p. 5.
7. Di Dio and Coppel 2013, pp. 65–83 and 103–4.
8. Wittkower 1977, p. 184.
9. Ford 1845, vol 1. p. 110.
10. Howells 1913, p. 65.

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Vasco de la Zarza (attributed). *Magdalene from Noli me tangere* relief from Tomb of doña Mencía Enríquez de Toledo, 1498 and 1510-20?, formerly San Francisco (Cuéllar), now The Hispanic Society of America. Photo courtesy of The Hispanic Society of America.

Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, detail. IOMR collection.





GENERAL TEXTS



I. ALONSO BERRUGUETE: *A MODERN GENIUS BLOSSOMS FORTH IN THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE*

Ed. Carlos Herrero Starkie

Director of the IOMR

The approach of the IOMR to the Spanish XVIth century is intimately related to the throb my heart experienced upon acquiring and later studying two sculptures by Alonso Berruguete, which at present are treasured in the Institute. A whole project was born from this, which involves promoting Spanish Renaissance sculpture and assembling a collection of sculptures around this subject. Up to this moment I was not fully aware of the great transcendence that this period had won in Spanish art and in the renovation of western art. I could not imagine the deep significance of this first revolutionary break, which challenged the Italian classical canon, nor how far Alonso Berruguete, its most representative figure, could be recognized as the first artistic genius of essentially Spanish features and, above all, that his works of art could contain the most modern stamp of contemporary western art.

Alonso Berruguete was born in Paredes de Nava, a village in the archdiocese of Palencia. He was of a rough and vehement nature. Upon the death in 1508 of his father Pedro, a court painter,^(Fig. 1) he travelled to Italy where he met Michelangelo and mixed with the most distinguished artists of the time in Florence.¹ There, together with his youthful companions, Rosso Fiorentino and Pontormo,² he creates a revolutionary art movement, which centuries later will be named mannerism.³ We will, however, have to wait until his return to Spain in 1518 to discover Berruguete as a genius capable of challenging the wealth of new ideas he has assimilated in Italy. What then surges up in him is a storm of creativity and modernity completely unknown up to that time in sculpture, a field rather new to him. What appears is an ultramodern artist, who hispanises the repertoire of classical gestures, who simplifies forms and shapes, and who anticipates El Greco and Bernini, among other things.

In the process of discovering and acquiring new works of sculpture from the Spanish XVIth century for the IOMR, I realised that the unique work of Alonso Berruguete was not created by chance, nor was it an exception in the Spanish art world of the time. Instead, it is the greatest example of the first generation of artists responsible for the so-called "Spanish Manner". Our collection at the IOMR and this book "Treasures of Spanish Renaissance Sculpture" have the special intention of rendering homage to these artists, who have been disregarded by historians to a certain extent. Perhaps precisely because their works adorned the altars of countless Spanish churches have they failed to become properly recognised internationally.

Fig. 1 Alonso Berruguete
Ecce Homo, c.1525
Olmedo, Monastery of La Mejorada
currently Valladolid, Museo Nacional
de Escultura de Valladolid.

Fig. 2 **Pedro Berruguete**
Annunciation, c.1500
Burgos, Cartuja de Miraflores.



Alonso Berruguete could only have risen up in Spain. Historical and socio-cultural circumstances there were absolutely exceptional compared to the rest of Europe, and were fundamental to favouring the blossoming of a genius capable of undermining the foundations of classical Art and, at the same time, of giving birth to a new way of understanding art based on prioritizing the spirit instead of the form.⁴

Looking back to Spanish Renaissance, the most important characteristic is that our history for the last eight centuries had evolved in a completely different way from the rest of Europe. We were not affected by the territorial distribution after Charlemagne's death, which determined the modern map of Europe. The peninsular kingdoms were involved in an exclusive national project – La Reconquista – to recover the territory conquered by the infidel. Here the church rises up as a bastion of national values, and religion becomes the incentive driving the kings to channel the faith of the people towards achieving their national project. Accordingly, in the everyday life of the conquered territories appears a phenomenon unique in the world: a fusion between the Christian, Hebrew and Moslem cultures. This would be a world in which they would live together, though sunk in a state of mutual distrust, until the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492 and Moriscos in 1609. All this makes the individual Spaniard a determined person, convulsed, fanatic, vehement, combative, envious and tremendously resistant. Initially not particularly in favour of developing art and on the whole, this is a people in good form who successfully accomplish their great historic project in 1492, with the conquest of Granada, the discovery of America, and the union of the peninsular territories around Castile. This assumes leadership and openness to Europe, thanks to the result of the very wise matrimonial policy of King Fernando. In scarcely a generation's time, Spain becomes a leading protagonist of Europe's future, acting with great self-assurance and firmly convinced of religious principles, which fervently compelled their heroic deeds. In fact, the Spaniard of the early years of the XVIth century believed so much in their natural difference that he felt a real vocation to universally extend his message, which was the opposite to the standard European approach. This passion to evangelize, to impose his truth, which led him to discover and colonize America, from a political standpoint, would turn at the end of the XVIth century towards a forewarned disaster. But from an artistic and cultural angle, it marked the birth of one of the greatest and uninterrupted currents renewing plastic art, which had risen up in the western world and would continue to survive throughout history with landmarks such as El Greco, Velázquez, Goya and Picasso.

Berruguete's genius emerges amidst this background and although he is fundamentally of Iberian nature, he returns to Spain imbued with all the aesthetic ideas of the Renaissance assimilated during his stay in Italy. The conflict inevitably caused by these new ideas, which push against what is inherent in his nature, is essential to the maturation process of any artistic genius. This conflict is clearly revealed in the disquiet transmitted by many of his sculptures, especially those of the San Benito altarpiece. All of them show a genius who has lost his trust in God and in mankind, and whose only refuge is that granted by art. The nihilism that overwhelms us when we observe his most personal works has an infinite and outright sense of modernity and corresponds to man's confrontation with the universe. Berruguete needs to express himself when taken aback by the indignation aroused in him by events such as the sacking of Rome by the imperial troops in 1528, or the submission of the "comuneros" of Castile at the battle of Villalar 1521, and, at a personal level, the indifference shown by the new King Carlos towards his own art, which was similar to what El Greco must have felt when his art was scorned by Felipe II.⁵ In my opinion, what is exceptional in Berruguete is his very personal and individualistic way of expressing himself in art. In him there is not the slightest sign of religious sentiment, as expressed by Juan de Valmaseda. On the contrary, there is anguish and despair at the collapse of his values. In this aspect lies his modernity and his important status of being the founder of the Spanish School and, to some extent, the driving force behind a new conception of art that may be considered as modern; that is, questioning artistic traditions handed down by heritage. In this respect, in Berruguete's art there is always an element of protest, which rises up from the depths of his soul. In this and in many other points Berruguete coincides with El Greco.

Fig. 3 **Alonso Berruguete**
San Sebastian
High altarpiece of San Benito el Real,
1526–1532 currently Valladolid, Museo
Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

Alonso Berruguete stands out as a forerunner. He created true icons of art that had a great influence in his own age, but, above all, he anticipated what other masters, generations later, would achieve with the most acclaimed masterpieces. We do not pretend here to demonstrate the historical connection of these artistic coincidences, but only wish to point out the parallelism between these works so as to prove the perennial and anticipatory character of Alonso Berruguete's work.

His "Ecce Homo"^(Fig 2), executed when Berruguete was just beginning his career as a sculptor, shows stark simplicity in the devices employed to directly transmit the tragic significance of the scene of Christ's sacrifice. With what dignity and self-assurance he is presented to us! With his legs crossed, he evokes the sense of affliction praised by the classics and the lean countenance typical of Berruguete's Christs⁶, only partially covered by a vermilion coloured cloak with "corlado" trimming, which hangs down and gives a sense of gravity. The Calvary painted by Grünewald at the monastery of Isenheim (1512-1516) or the Christs of Roger Van der Weiden (1400–1464), are the only precedents that can compete with Berruguete's sense of tragedy and sorrow, which would have a direct influence on the Andalusian School of "imaginería", especially in Alonso Cano and Pedro Mena.

There is no other Renaissance sculpture like the San Sebastian by Alonso Berruguete.^(Fig 3) It expresses so intimately the powerlessness that a youth may feel when confronted by a deep pain that alienates him psychologically and physically. This is something that we do not see, but we feel its presence all around us due to his perplexed attitude, his paralysed look, his moist half-open lips, and the way his drooping body moves slowly about. In this work Berruguete universalizes a plague that has grasped humanity. It is the melancholy, the void, brought by the Renaissance, which has taken hold of the youth, but which could burst out in any epoch; that is why the sculpture is so timely. The protagonist of the scene is the interplay between the invisible – the soul – and what is visible – the beauty of the youth, empowered by his inner suffering. The sculpture represents modern beauty because it causes an impact that transforms the spirit of the spectator, expressing artistically what is not perceived by the senses. Berruguete is deeply influenced by the recently discovered "Laoconte", but he surpasses it in poetry⁷, creating empathy in the viewer which can only be compared to the sadness we find in the personage "Gile" painted by Watteau and in the harlequins of Picasso's blue period. It is a premonitory sadness, which seizes you and chokes you.⁸



Included among the Apostles who rise up like flames from the niches in the altarpiece of San Benito, the “Sacrificio de Isaac” and the “San Jerónimo”^(Fig 6) correspond to the same pattern. Both emit a bestial cry of an almost cosmic scale, which surpasses human limits. Both are distant precedents of Goya’s expressionism and can be compared in terms of strength with his Kronos devouring his children^(Fig 5), but we even see a link with the “Cry” by Munch^(Fig 4) and German expressionism. In all these examples, Berruguete, like Goya or Munch, expresses his evident disagreement with the world.

Fig. 4 **Edward Munch**
The scream
Oslo, The National Museum.



Fig. 5 **Francisco de Goya**
Saturn
Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

Fig. 6 **Alonso Berruguete**
Saint Jerome, 1526–1532
Valladolid, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

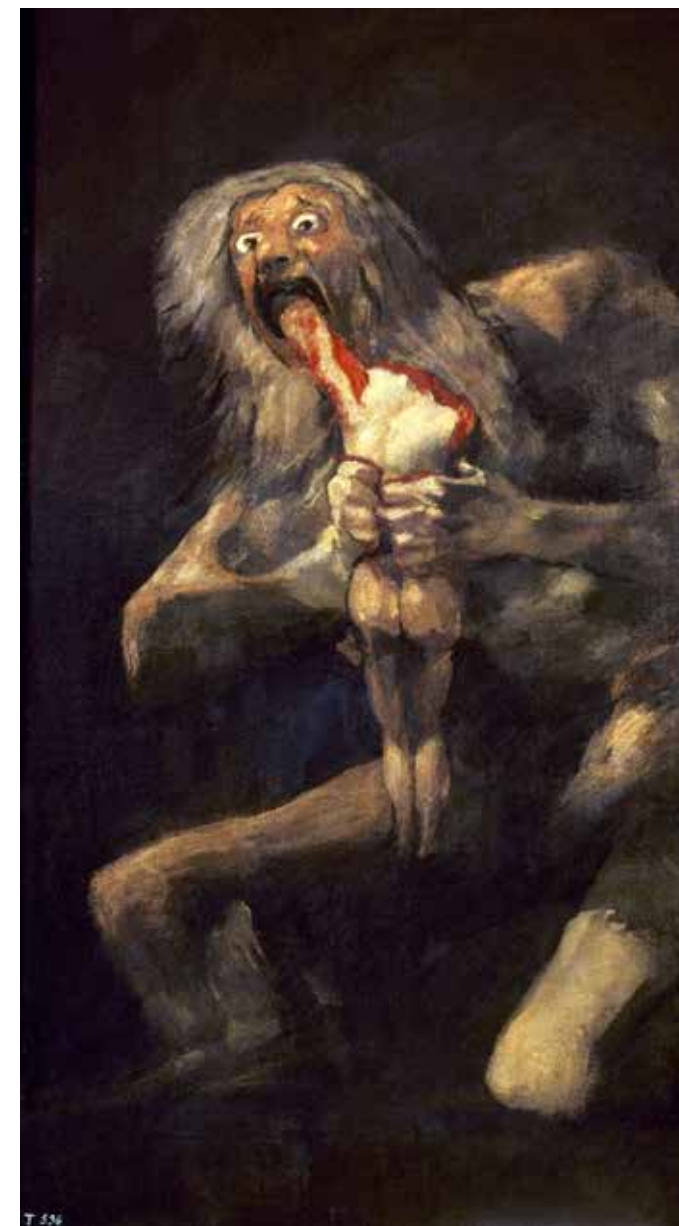




Fig. 7 **Alonso Berruguete**
Job, c.1539
 Toledo, Cathedral, high choir-stall.

The choir stalls of the Cathedral of Toledo probably represent the most outstanding masterpiece of the Spanish Renaissance. Made in an incredible combination of alabaster, walnut wood and marble, they form a most original design. Berruguete, challenging the laws of nature, places on top of a “serliana” architecture the “Transfiguración”, a composition full of movement, which is a precedent of the Baroque and especially of such consecrated works as the “Fontana de Trevi” by Bernini.⁹ From the walnut wood choir stalls, I would point out the tablet representing Job,^(Fig 7) with his arms stretched out on high and in a completely unbalanced posture. In him we see Berruguete’s sharp mannerist expressionism, his elongated bony hands, his goose-like feet, his unsteady body, his Laocontesque expression.¹⁰ Yet, what I most appreciate in this Job is his semi-obsequious, semi-protesting gesture, crying out to heaven against the trials that beset him as an ordinary human being. This exhibits a capacity to manifest the levity of our existence as opposed to the supernatural.

Finally, his small “lunetos” in the choir stalls, where Berruguete opposes the whole Renaissance theory of linear perspective, representing the scene by means of a sequence of levels placed one on top of the other, when he makes them ascend and creates another type of space.¹¹

His three “lunetos” are absolute gems since they can all be related directly to El Greco’s work, particularly to his well-known “horror vacui” and the sense of weightlessness that he gives to his personages. Thus we find analogies, especially in the small relief of the Last Judgement,^(Fig 8) which crowns the Archbishop’s Chair and El Greco’s Laocoonte (National Gallery of Art, Washington),^(Fig 9) which, in turn, evokes to us Cézanne, creating a triangle of influences, all leading towards a renewal of Classical art.¹²



Fig. 8 **Alonso Berruguete**
Last judgement, c.1543,detail
 Toledo, Cathedral, choir-stalls.

Berruguete, however, even though an extraordinary artist, cannot be declared as an exception, inasmuch as he participated in a much broader and more far-reaching artistic movement promoted by the crown, the aristocrats and, above all, by the Church. To this movement belong a group of Spanish artists and also foreign hispanised artists who, in their art of high international quality, make a stamp that for the first time may be termed as particularly Spanish. It places greater emphasis on the conceptual aspect of the work than on purely visual aspects related to a naturalistic rendering of what is observed. His art is fundamentally religious, and its purpose is to rouse spiritual values, which the Spaniard conceives with passion. Their technique, except in supreme cases like Bartolomé Ordóñez or Diego de Siloé, is not so pure and, of course, cannot be compared with that of the Italians. For that reason, Spanish artists will never be the best at representing what is natural. Beauty in itself does not interest them

Fig. 9 **El Greco**
Laocoon
 Washington, National Gallery of Art.





Fig. 10 **Juan de Valmaseda**
Saint Jerome, c.1530
 Polychrome wood
 IOMR Collection.

unless inner values are perceived glowing underneath. Juan de Valmaseda, Diego de Siloé and Damián Forment are examples of ultra-Spanish artists who knew, as few artists of that epoch, how to transmit spiritual values and how to express the invisible forces that dominate mankind. A good example is the San Jerónimo, in the IOMR collection.^(Fig 10) In this sculpture, Juan de Valmaseda, employing limited resources, simplifying forms and shapes, represents the absolute submission of the saint to Christ. There is only expressiveness in depth of feeling, passion and devotion indicated by the diagonal line that the saint represents. This simplicity, this submission of form to concept, is the great contribution made by these eminent men of genius to a real landmark in the evolution of our culture, which acknowledges the constant renewal of art throughout the centuries.¹³ (see also Fig 11)

Fig. 11 **El Greco**
Saint Jerome
 Washington, National Gallery of Art.



These artists need to express their inner spirit and let their temperament gush forth freely. In all this Alonso Berruguete surpasses everyone and connects himself with the patriarchs of Modernity: Goya,^(Fig 5) Picasso, Munch,^(Fig 4) and even Jackson Pollock.¹⁴

I would like to conclude mentioning the surprising closeness between a design by Alonso Berruguete for a “Descendimiento” (Uffizi Museum) and “Mural 1943” by Jackson Pollock (University of Iowa Museum of Art). These indicate that two men of genius, who are like two volcanoes though separated by five centuries of time, can coincide in their creative process. No doubt, it is a mere coincidence. Pollock never knew Berruguete’s work, though he did know Picasso’s art. Nevertheless, this “parangone” exposes the obvious evidence of Alonso Berruguete’s modernity.

- 1 Following Longhi's studies culminating in the publication of his innovative article "Comprimari spagnoli della maniera italiana" 1953, Mozzati, Zeri, Becheruzzi, Dacos, Waldman, Arias Martínez, Barbara Agosti and Anna Biscecla, amongst other researchers of the Italian style in Alonso Berruguete, coincide in considering the following documentary sources of prime importance: three letters by Michelangelo mention Alonso Berruguete with interest and affection as a "good young man" and indicate worry about his health; the first two letters refer to him only as "the Spaniard" and are addressed to his brother "Buonarrotti", one of them is dated the 2nd and the other one the 31st of July 1508; the most surprising of these letters is the second one for its condescending, though not irritated, tone of Michelangelo due to Berruguete's not having yet seen the cartoon of the battle of Cascina, and the last letter addressed to his father Ludovico in which he now refers to Berruguete by his name and makes a reference to his friendship with the painter Granacci in April 1512; a contract for a current account in the Salviati Bank, recently discovered by Wadman, 2002 page 29, which records Berruguete's sharing a rented apartment in Florence with the painter G. Francesco Bembo from August 1509 till February 1510 when he travels to Rome; various references by Vasari include Berruguete amongst the painters who studied Massacio's Brancacci chapel and Michelangelo's cartoon of the battle of Cascina; Vasari also refers to Berruguete as one of the participants in the competition to reproduce in wax the Laocönte in 1510 and as the painter who finished the picture of the Crowning of Our Lady by Filippino Lippi, just before returning to Spain in 1517- Vasari likewise indicates Berruguete amongst the painters who collaborated in Rafael's workshop in the Vatican Loggias. "Il sogno di Giacobea" in the Vatican Loggias is attributed to Berruguete by Anna Biscecla. Nicole Dacos in 1985, 1986, 2012, p. 53-62 supports this interesting idea which is confirmed by Arias Martínez in 2011 and, on the contrary, is placed in doubt by Waldman due to excluding a later stay in Rome by Berruguete since in 1516 he was painting in Florence the "Coronation of Our Lady" and Berruguete did not exhibit amongst his works the last Roman innovations. Cagliotti in 2001 connects the picture "Madonna coll bambino" of the Uffizi with a document dated 30th Dec. 1513 indicating payment to Berruguete by Giovanni Bartolini.
- 2 Antonio Natali in "Berruguete e Bembo e i compagni Fiorentini" studies the importance in Florence of the Santa Annunziata basilica, "Il Chiostrino de Volti", as an authentic and intense centre in Florence of the "maniera moderna" propitiated by the followers of Andrea del Sarto, Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino, revolutionary painters who, together with other ultramodern artists, constituted the "Scuola dell Annunziata" in opposition to the "Scuola di San Marco". The former "Scuola dell Annunziata" must have been attended by Alonso Berruguete as his friends Francesco Granacci and Giovanni Francesco Bembo were also habitual members, due also to revealing in their later work the same innovative character. There is a similarity to Berruguete which is evident in their eccentricity and incisive expressionism which is still evident in Pontormo's and Rosso's development, once he returned to Spain (cat. "Norma e Capriccio", 2014). Longhi and Arias Martínez reached similar conclusions. Mazariego Pajares, cap. II "Alonso Berruguete y el Manierismo" p. 50 and following pp. In accordance with Azcárate 1961 who expands repeatedly on the extraordinary influence which Berruguete exerted on Rosso and Pontormo who were much younger than him and who, together with the Siense Domenico Beccafumi, formed the

first generation of "manierista" painters. In fact, Azcárate considers Berruguete the first entirely and essentially mannerist artist due to his essentially gothic medieval roots which, in his opinion, is a key question in the mannerist renovation and its eclectic development which causes its opposition to the Renaissance.

- 3 Hauser Arnold, *El Manierismo, La Crisis del Renacimiento y los orígenes del Arte Moderno*. Ediciones Guadarrama, 1965, págs. 208, 280.
- 4 There now comes to mind what may be considered the origin of the Spanish Genius: the pertinent words of Azcárate 1961 p.14 and following pages, regarding the resistance of the Spanish people to lose their medieval tradition in favour of the cult of the pagan ideas which idolized apparent beauty. The Renaissance in fact opposed the religious and political ideas which were in force in the Spain of the Catholic Kings which considered itself the Defender of Christianity. This idea which was wrought throughout the centuries thanks to the determination with which the various Spanish kingdoms fought against Islam and which culminated in the conquest of Granada and in its own union as a nation and a State. This messianic sentiment continued with the evangelization of the recently discovered American territories, thus causing to rise up a fundamentally Christian Renaissance, in opposition to the Italian Renaissance which was basically pagan in its origin. This movement, however, has all the fundamental roots required to give a great impulse to the artistic renovation of the modern age which would lead to the mannerism of Trento and finally to the Baroque. This Spanish Renaissance, whose greatest representative in sculpture is Berruguete, and later El Greco, following in his tracks, scorns external form and subordinates all its valuation to the level of its expressivity in its desire to move its spectator's soul which is led from the visible to the invisible by means of the intellectual perception of eternal beauty. All this partially explains the unreal suffering of Saint Jerome and the pathetism of his Saint Sebastian. Berruguete seeks refuge in the world of ideas, in the intellectual conception which is coherent with the neoplatonic currents of thought, though never loses contact with reality, with the world of sensations and sentiments, which is precisely where the "Barroquismo" and the modernity of Berruguete has its roots. It is this wilful deformation of visible forms in order to create a new world of forms which advances parallel to the schism of the cubist and abstract painters from the sensual vision of the impressionists.
- 5 María Bolaños investigates deeply in Melancholy in her article on the occasion of the catalogue for the exhibition of the National Museum of Sculpture in Valladolid "Tiempos de melancolía, creación y desengaño en la España del Siglo de Oro", 2015. Here she alludes to how Berruguete lived through the decline of humanistic optimism in a sense which harmonised with the nature of the artist identified by Felipe Vergara in his comments on painting 1560 as "a melancholic, Saturnine type of man who doubtless was of an irate, bad tempered nature, and who, although he wished to paint angels and saints, his natural disposition forced him inevitably to paint terrible and heart-breaking situations." María Bolaños, p.22 analyses deeply the culture of melancholy, a refined spiritual tragedy which is converted in the sign of the metaphysical talent of the modern creator of his mental energy, of that "pazzia" of which Michelangelo, Pontormo... and also Berruguete have left us evidence. The special anguish through which all the artists had to live after the sack of Rome in 1528 and which implied their exile is, doubtless, the

cause of the decisive expansion of the exaggerated mannerist ideas throughout Italy, Bohemia, France and northern Europe, forming a second generation of artists who will gradually lose that profound sensation of suffocation and anguish of the early years of Pontormo, Rosso and Beccafumi in favour of a more decorative and superficial activity. These styles were convincingly and effectively rejected by the "escuelas emilianas" of the Carracci and the Caravaggists (Fig. 13).

- 6 María José Gainza comments on this movement which Berruguete shapes in art, for the first time, in the "Ecce Homo" at Mejorada de Olmedo; she refers to Winkelmann who considers it a symbol of affliction for ancient classical artists. This is the attitude with which Antilochus announces Achilles' death to Patroclus. Berruguete correctly takes his inspiration from this source to express Christ's affliction. [1] Parrado del Olmo sees many classical connotations in the altarpiece at Mejorada de Olmedo, specially in its composition which he believes was inspired by the drawings of Roman buildings done by Giugliano di Sangallo. These drawings also inspired Giacopo Fiorentino in the composition of the altarpiece of the royal chapel of Granada, according to Gómez Moreno and Parrado del Olmo "El retablo del renacimiento y los Jerónimos, Mejorada de Olmedo y el Parral de Segovia" (2000). This interest in antiquity is equally revealed for the first time in his "Ecce Homo" in a similar movement of legs as in the Mercury of the Uffizi which we have documentary evidence that it was at the Belvedere in 1536, so Berruguete could have seen it there beforehand. For a summary of historical opinions on the "Ecce Homo" in which all coincide in that it is supremely disconcerting and admirable the way he expresses moral suffering (see María José Gainza p. 20). See also Orueta 1917 and Azcárate "Alonso Berruguete cuatro ensayos", Salamanca 1988.
- 7 J. M. Martínez refers to Winkelmann and Lessing on the expressive force of suffering in order to define the pain. Laocoönte expresses, the controlled suffering shown by his body and his face, but quite different from the rage and fury Virgil attributes to Laocoönte. Laocoönte's sculpture does not utter any terrible cry. His open mouth indicates rather a controlled and smothered sigh. This is what Winkelmann considers regarding the poem which Saboleto wrote in 1506 on Laocoönte in which he expresses himself like Virgil in intense terms, which is the contrary of his artistic ideals. Lessing culminates Winkelmann's interpretation based on "la noble sencillez y reposada grandeza del arte" in his Laocoönte or on the limitations in painting and poetry" (1766) and he wonders if suffering should be expressed with violence or with moderation and solves the dilemma considering that the poet allows himself to be convinced by anger whereas the artist is drawn by harmony in his search for beauty. The Laocoönte expresses suffering, but above all acceptance, which allows himself to be a correct model and a spiritual Christian. J.M. Martínez p.461. In this sense Berruguete is more a poet in his reaction to Abraham's terrible suffering, but in his representation of Saint Sebastian he attains supreme beauty, such as that conceived by Winkelmann, when he expresses in a contained manner the silent and intimate suffering of the young Saint.
- 8 Orueta, p.55 It is emotion in nature which our artist's soul perceives and places in his work with a fire which has no equal example in art..... the suffering Berruguete expresses is a universal sorrow which he feels as the result of having lived through years of unrest (sack of Rome 1528) and a crisis of humanism. Following F. Holanda, Orueta and Pajares write about the soul which pervades their sculptures,

a sense of anguish and suffocation which has no apparent cause, but is something existing in the artist himself and which, according to Longhi, we also see in Pontormo and Rosso.

- 9 It is very appropriate to mention in defence of the "barroquismo" of Berruguete the constant references made by Orueta to the artist's desire to act in accordance with the spectator's sentiments and Mazariego Pajares' allusion to this conception of space and composition, sublimely expressed in his "Transfiguración", where the figures are free in space and where light plays a fundamental role. All this gives Berruguete his Baroque character. Georg Weisse, in one of his chapters referring to Spanish sculpture, extends himself on this question "Berruguete y otros maestros del Barroco temprano".
- 10 Orueta makes reference to transversal ligaments in hands and feet which give great expressive strength to mechanical contraction and nervous force. Orueta. P.64 considers them an example of his work and usually marks them with a vigorous projection.
- 11 Arias Martínez (2014) studies deeply the fact that was most cherished in Spain by the Church, principally on account of its realism and naturalism; this gave Alonso Berruguete the opportunity of developing his genius in a complete synthesis of artistic areas, allowing him to imprint on wood concepts which the most revolutionary Italian painters of his generation, like Pontormo, worked on panels or on canvas. Arias Martínez connects preparatory studies by Pontormo for the frescos of San Lorenzo (1546) with small relief works "El Diluvio. "La serpiente de bronce" and the "Juicio final" in the Archbishop Chair of the Toledo Cathedral carried out by Berruguete in 1548, as he had not found any other example in the Spanish world of such daring composition, with no order or perspective. "La serpiente de bronce" and the "Diluvio" have an evident connexion with the cartoon of the "battle of Cascina" by Michelangelo in accordance with M.C. García Gainza's indications p.17.
- 12 The influence which Berruguete could have exerted on El Greco is corroborated by Orueta, Azcárate 1961, p.15 and by Julián Marías who, however, surprises us indicating the indifference and almost apparent dislike which El Greco showed towards Berruguete as he made no greater note in his book "Lives" by Vasari than just indicating the presence in Italy of El Greco "History of an exaggerated painter" 2013, p.290. His terse comments on the artist stand out in blatant contrast to the words of praise which Tristan inscribes in the book. Such coldness might perhaps be justified by El Greco's proximity in artistic style to Berruguete which might have diminished El Greco's fame as a revolutionary painter and initiator of new forms of art, all of which would turn contemporary criticism in favour of Berruguete. El Greco's envy of the artistic gifts of others, as demonstrated by his apparent contempt for the frescos of the Capella Sistina are sufficient proof. The same occurred in Picasso's case with his stubborn silence when facing Goya, his most immediate precedent in art. Nevertheless, the parallelisms between Berruguete and El Greco are evident in character, education, entrepreneurship, the cultural background where their creativity grew up and their determination to break with the traditional Italian models developed. Their temperament rooted in the Judeo-Christian world in contact with the Islamic world, their common combative characters as proved by the fact that both were accustomed to solve their disputes by means of litigation, the special importance both gave to a broad education, but after their sojourn in Italy both maintained themselves absolutely up to date regarding modern tendencies, the great importance they both gave to their rise in social stand-

ing and their right to social recognition, a characteristic also shared by Velázquez, their multicultural castilian background mixed with fanaticism, their late development as artists of genius, combined with a special technique, their capacity as entrepreneurs to create an extensive workshop, and, above all, their absolute necessity to break with what was traditional, creating new forms which would claim the spectator's attention: all this induces us to consider these two Masters as constituting a corpus of similar artistic connotations and permits us to view Berruguete as an evident precursor of El Greco, even though this would lessen the innovative character which for the last century is attributed to the Cretan artist. Nevertheless, the fact that Berruguete's painting was not as revolutionary as his sculpture, would grant exclusively to El Greco the merit of being the first in the art of painting to break radically with the principles which guided the Renaissance, that is, breaking particularly with traditional perspective focused in depth and to introduce its typical "horror vacui", all questions which El Greco could contemplate in Berruguete's work, specially in the small relief works in the Archbishop's Chair behind the choir- stalls already mentioned. Thus Berruguete's style, still alive in the most cultured Toledan circles, specially in the ecclesiastical ones, could probably serve as an adequate cultural medium enabling El Greco's painting to be understood and facilitating his acceptance as principal painter of the Archbishop's city, due to the previous generation having already assimilated Berruguete's exaggerations .

13 Santiago Amón, in his book on Picasso, wonders whether there exists a Spanish school or only Spanish Masters imbued with the Spanish genius, and arrives at the conclusion that, since they are all rebels, the key to them lies in their inimitability which prevents them from creating a school and makes it impossible for them to form a stylistic succession amongst themselves; regardless, of course of the rise of the "Berruguetesque", "Velazqueño", "Goyesque" and indeed of the "Picassiano". Hence, we must deduce that the lack of disciples of importance left by these Masters is due to their possibility of being superseded only by other artists of equal genius.

14 In my opinion the line in common which unites Berruguete, El Greco, Picasso and Pollock is that which gives all the modernity to the Corpus of Alonso Berruguete and their perfect interaction, is the best demonstration of how up to date he is. What unites El Greco and Picasso is their obstinate urge to break away, to simplify forms and their imperious need to express their ideas and inner sensations through Art, which doubtless also applies to Berruguete and Pollock. Rupture in Berruguete and El Greco means breaking away from all they had learnt in Italy, specially from Renaissance composition which was always treated in depth and perfectly balanced. As Malraux says with reference to El Greco "he freed himself from Italy", substituting the figure of Apollo for that of Dionysios. Picasso breaks away from tradition as he is the one who "throwing a resounding stone, the "Demoiselles d'Avignon" at the face of traditional painting, changed figurative painting into an art based on concepts, separate from visual reality, distorted, which forms an authentic declaration of rupture. Pollock makes the break in his own way, giving creative priority to gestures rather than to their final consequence, liberating the subconscious as the only creative source. Simplification is a process observed in the design of Berruguete's sculptures of the upper part of the altarpiece which are sketchy and where importance is only given to movement, so as to cause a

greater impact on the spectator. El Greco follows this idea specially in his "Quinto Sello del Apocalipsis", where appear unexpectedly in the foreground spectral, evanescent figures. Picasso reaches simplification destroying completely form by means of decomposing and recomposing new images dissociated from reality, questioning the spectator who, under the guide of the Master's genius, must give them a meaning. In Pollock simplification is treated as part of the creative process in itself, in the first instance, with his bright idea of dripping, that is applying the paint in drops, or splashing it (by means of throwing cans of paint) on the canvas, stressing its casual nature which rises from his instinct imbued with ferocious intensity, and indifferent to its artistic result. Pollock in fact simplifies art, reducing it to its most essential expression of his psyche and depriving it of any intellectual or cultural content. The will to express oneself is common to all artists and, in the case of a genius, becomes an imperious necessity to reveal his preoccupations, his suffocating inner anguish, as Berruguete does in "Abraham's Heraclitian cry, or in his San Sebastian's mute groan". Picasso expresses his intimate self in his blue painting, whose infinite sadness could only burst out in his "Demoiselles d'Avignon", as an act of rebellion demonstrating his superiority as a genius and his Nietzschean triumph over the misfortune and submission of the common people. In Pollock, his subconscious leads him to flood his pictorial space with a skein of nervous Berruguetesque lines, continual turns and obsessive rotative movements which, surprisingly, form a work equally great as Picasso's, El Greco's and Berruguete's masterpieces. This, of course, has not occurred by chance, but is the consequence of a common volcanic psyche which forces them to break with all their acquired culture, and thus is the essence of their genius. For them creative inspiration and intuition have priority over talent, technique and skill, regardless of the fact that, above all in Picasso, they may have these qualities in plenty.



Juan de Valmaseda
Saint Jerome, detail, c.1530
 Polychrome wood
 IOMR Collection.



2. *THE INFLUENCE OF ALONSO BERRUGUETE IN SPANISH XVITH CENTURY SCULPTURE*

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A crucial time: the arrival of the Italian Spaniards

Between 1518 and 1520 two Spanish masters return to Spain, imbued by different artistic training and lifetime experience during their Italian stay, similar to Diego de Siloé and Alonso Berruguete. In the same period came the Florentine Jacopo Torni, known in Spain as Jacobo Florentino, and Pedro Machuca. Three of them, Berruguete, Siloé and Machuca, together with Bartolomé Ordóñez, were referred to as “las águilas del Renacimiento español” by Francisco de Holanda.² At that time, the Italian Renaissance was only known in Spain in an incidental way through the import of works, principally sepulchres executed by Genoese or Neapolitan workshops and above all by the excellent Florentine master, Domenico Fancelli. All of them were endowed by the styles and shapes of the “quattrocento”. However, the new Spanish masters who appeared on the scene brought from Italy the new Renaissance models that had risen up during the first two decades of the XVIth century.

Though Berruguete’s influence was significant, especially in the field of Spanish sculpture, his very personal and subjective style, which shunned submission to academic ruling, was not well-suited for attracting a group of followers who would strictly carry out his artistic approaches. Furthermore, the personality of his followers, their different origins, and the artistic traditions to which they belonged would add their particular interpretation of Berruguete’s style. Siloé’s activity in Castilla was less extensive and his influence is restricted to the zone of Burgos or Granada. It was also assimilated to a certain extent by Juan de Valmaseda.

At the moment of Berruguete’s arrival in Spain, his modern style was not easily understood by the castilian sculpture workshops, still deeply immersed in the debate between a final gothic and a “quattrocento” style scarcely assimilated, as may be observed in the dominating Felipe Bigarny^(Fig 1) or in the more Florentine Vasco de la Zarza.^(Fig 2) Therefore, a new generation had to rise up to collaborate in Berruguete’s workshop. From 1536 onwards, these followers began to work independently, after Alonso Berruguete finished the altarpiece of the monastery of San Benito in Valladolid, which was such an innovative work in Spain that it left a real stamp on all the craftsmen who participated in it.

Fig 1 **Felipe Bigarny**
high altarpiece of the Royal Chapel, 1520-1522,
Cathedral of Granada.

Fig2. Vasco de Zarza, detail, *Sepulchre of Alonso de Madrigal, "El Tostado"*, 1520 - 1523, Cathedral of Ávila.

Between north and south. Felipe Bigarny and Vasco de Zarza

Felipe Bigarny was the master of greatest influence in Castilla. In 1498 he appears contracting the relief of the "Camino de Santiago" for the retrochoir (space behind the high altar) of Burgos Cathedral. This indicates that he could have arrived in Burgos the year before and could have collaborated in royal works like what Gil de Siloé, Diego's father, was carrying out in an exquisite tardo-gothic style in the Cartuja de Miraflores. This was the beginning of a supremely predominant action of Bigarny in the field of sculpture, protected by his good relations with the high social classes. He was appointed "veedor", or inspector of the castilian altarpieces by King Fernando el Católico and had good relations with the Flemish artists who arrived in Spain with the young Charles I. Thus he had an enormous influence in the kingdom of Castilla.

Although he declared that he had visited Rome, Bigarny's work shows more of a taste for descriptive art than an assimilation of the new Italian models devoted to beauty. In Bigarny's work there is always a northern pulse, though his long life (he died in 1542) allowed him to have the opportunity to be influenced by the new currents, thanks to undertaking contracts with Siloé and Berruguete. However, these collaborations were in fact more due to a wish to avoid their competition than to understand the new artistic approaches, especially in Berruguete's case.³

At the same time, another interesting sculptor appears, Vasco de la Zarza, who was said to be from Toledo, though he was most probably from Ávila. In Zarza's case, we can certainly confirm his stay in Italy, as his style faithfully follows XV century Florentine models in design and technique. His artistic activity covers a more restricted area than Bigarny's, since it was limited to the Ávila bishopric and the Toledo area. Vasco de la Zarza^(Fig 2) is first mentioned in 1499 in Toledo. He appears connected with not only the works undertaken by Bishop Carrillo de Albornoz in Ávila Cathedral, but also in the tombs of his funeral chapel in Burgos Cathedral. In his style we appreciate his delicate decorative sense, especially in the rhythm of his small-scale sculptures, which include the outstanding Eva from the sepulchre of the "Tostado". We imagine his connection with Sicilian or Venetian-Lombardian workshops and we also find similarity to works by Andrea Sansovino. The headstone of Dante's sepulchre in Ravenna, a work by Pietro Lombardo, is the closest iconographic precedent to the "Tostado" of Ávila Cathedral. Vasco de Zarza appears in 1523 in the signatures of the contract of the high altarpiece of the monastery of Mejorada de Olmedo, completed by a young assistant of Alonso Berruguete, due to his death in 1524.⁴



Fig 3 **Jacopo Florentino**, detail, *Burial of Christ*, detail, Museo de Bellas Artes, Granada, circa 1520.



Fig 4 **Bartolomé Ordóñez**, detail, altarpiece of the Epiphany 1518, Church of San Giovanni a Carbonara, Caracciolo di Vico Chapel, Naples.





Fig 5 **Diego de Siloé**, *Saint Jerome*,
Capilla del Condestable, Cathedral
of Burgos, circa 1526.

Jacobo Florentino and Diego de Siloé

Jacopo Torni, the Indaco, known in Spain as Jacobo Florentino, was one of the great driving forces of the later Renaissance in Spain. Connected with Michelangelo in the dome of the Capella Sistina, with a sound knowledge of the Laocönte and antique statues and also well versed in the novelties of the Florentine “*comprimari*”, Jacobo Florentino was therefore an experienced professional of the three arts. He achieved one of the most dramatic works on the burial of Christ created in the Spanish Renaissance.^(Fig 3)

Diego de Siloé arrived in Burgos having completely assimilated the Italian Renaissance. Son of the tardo-gothic Gil de Siloé and probably former apprentice in Felipe Bigarny’s workshop, he had gone to Italy where he came in contact with Bartolomé Ordóñez, also a native of Burgos. In Naples both of these young artists have left us brilliant works endowed with an expressivity controlled by the elegance of their compositions, their deeply pondered and conceived gestures and perfectly effected technique, fused together into a style full of aesthetic suggestions.^{5 (Fig 4)} Upon his return to Burgos, Siloé had to admit collaborating in a company contract with the dominating Bigarny, which will be finally and abruptly broken when the tower of Santa Maria del Campo is constructed. This last event is the cause of Siloé’s departure to Granada. In Spain, Siloé does not abandon his elegant style, which is particularly noticed in his feminine models, although he occasionally shows a descriptive style that recalls Bigarny, or he may also enhance expressivity in a more Spanish manner, above all in his work on polychrome wood. Siloé maintains more perfectly alive his Italian influence in his works carved in stone, as may be appreciated in his sepulchre of Don Luis de Acuña in Burgos Cathedral, or on the reverse side of the sepulchre of Don Alonso Fonseca II in the Úrsulas at Salamanca, which also display Michelangelesque evangelists on the walls of the tomb.

In Burgos, Siloé’s work in polychrome wood stands out in the Capilla de los Condestables. He finished a side altarpiece begun by his father, where he has left us elegant idealised representations of Saints and in the “*predella*” a deceased Christ sustained by angels whose iconography (unusual in Spain) must have been inspired in Antonello di Messina. The high altarpiece shows a deliberate contrast of styles; Bigarny’s direct and descriptive style opposed to Siloé’s elegant and restrained manner. This is clearly reflected in the principal scene: the Presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple, on Saint Peter’s altarpiece, where stands the theatrical Saint Jerome.^(Figs) There Siloé has left us a series of human types which carry us back in many instances to his Neapolitan marble sculptures.⁶

Fig 6 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail, *Ecce Homo*, Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Mejorada de Olmedo, currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid, circa 1525.

Alonso Berruguete, a Spanish “comprimari”

The artistic personality of Berruguete grows like a giant in the castilian artistic world due to his creative capacity and subsequent influence. Thus his memory, together with Gaspar Becerra's, persisted throughout, in comparison to other masters who were scarcely mentioned in all these years.

Berruguete was able to assimilate a complete education in Italy where he directly appreciated the art of Michelangelo, Rafael and the ancient statues. Berruguete participated among young Florentine artists in a contest to make a copy of the recently discovered Laoconte. He was part of the entourage of young Florentine artists like Rosso Fiorentino and Pontorno, surrounding Andrea del Sarto, who were creating a reaction against the style of the great masters.

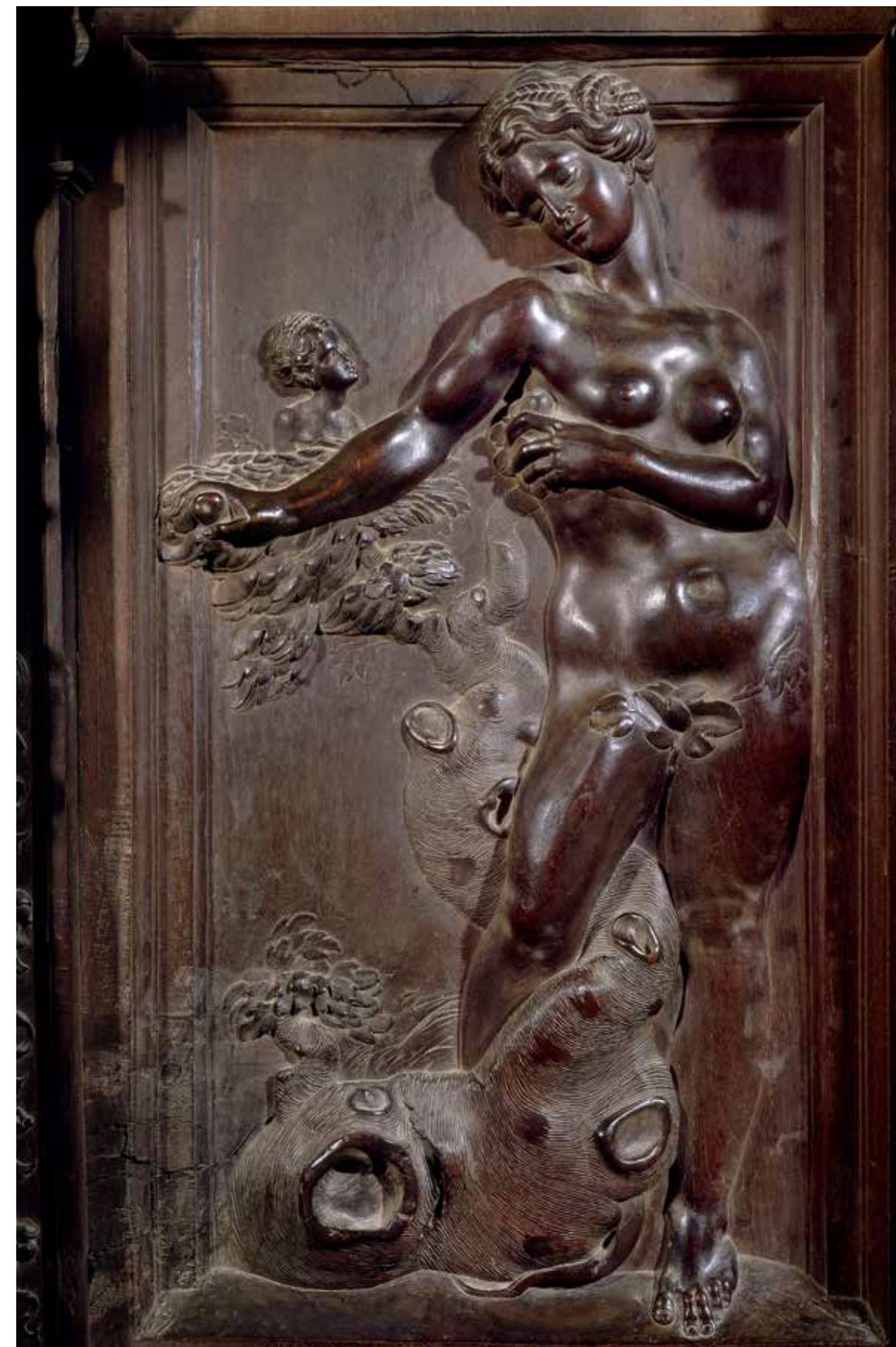
Berruguete is, above all, a great designer. He arrived in Spain as a painter and his first works, such as those in the chapel of the Canciller Joan Çalvaje in Santa Engracia (Zaragoza), were accompanied by Felipe Bigarny. Berruguete contributed the paintings of the altarpiece and must have given the designs so that Bigarny could make the sepulchre, of which now only remains an angelotto that strongly echoes Berruguete. It is his capacity as a designer that makes Berruguete constantly create, never exactly repeating the same subject in two different works. For that reason, in his first sculpture works, we observe that his function must have been that of creator of models destined for master sculptors, like in the Calvary of the altarpiece of Olivares de Duero, or his participation with Vasco de la Zarza in the altarpiece of the monastery of Mejorada del Olmedo (1523-1526).^(Fig 6) There the death of Vasco de la Zarza forced Berruguete to execute most of the altarpiece himself. It is in that moment he discovers the art of sculpture and when he contributes with all his features that makes his art so modern for those times: the Vitruvian canon, the Michelangelesque foreshortening and the mannerist “serpentinata”, but, above all, his style, full of expressive fury, vibrating rhythm and endowed with an overwhelming personality. This was an authentic revolution in Spanish plastic art, which stands out in his monumental altarpiece in the monastery of San Benito in Valladolid (1526-1532), in the altarpiece of the Colegio de Fonseca of Salamanca, (contracted in 1529), and in the altarpiece of Don Diego de la Haya in the Church of Santiago in Valladolid, and marks the conclusion of the first cycle of Berruguete's work, which was characterised by a wild, unfettered force wrapped up in delicate Italian suggestions – precisely what makes it so Spanish.^(Fig 7)





Fig 7 **Alonso Berruguete**, *San Sebastian*, 1526- 1532, high altarpiece, Monastery of San Benito el Real, Valladolid, currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

Fig 8 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Eve*, high Choir-stalls, Toledo Cathedral, circa 1540.



From 1539 onwards, Berruguete's work is preferably oriented towards the cultured city of Toledo and he begins to work on the choir stalls of the Cathedral (1539-1542), where he competes with Bigarny. His style becomes more elegant and delicate, showing greater interest in the twining lines of relief work and voluminous mass in his figures, as may be observed in the Toledo choir stalls,^(Fig 8) though he never renounces to his expressionistic mannerism. There, Berruguete's work shines due to its originality in the design of his figures, carved both in wood and in alabaster, which clearly contrast with the rather dull sculptures by Bigarny, who is still obsessed with his naturalistic treatment of vestment and the short canon of his figures. Bigarny's death in 1542 provided Berruguete with the opportunity of being commissioned to make the Bishop's throne. Berruguete seeks to cause a theatrical surprise by situating the "Transfiguration"^(Fig 9) group above the "serliana" architecture of the choir stall. At the end of his life, Berruguete undertakes the sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera, sculptured in Carrara marble, where he opposes the delicate reliefs of the bed, which culminate in an elegant figure of Charity. Its brutal reference to death, represented by the head of the Bishop, taken from the death mask of the deceased, heralds the Counter-Reformation.^{7 (Fig 10)}



Fig 9 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail of high Choir-stall, *Transfiguration*, 1543 -1548, "remate" of the archiepiscopal Throne. Cathedral of Toledo.



Fig 10 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Tomb of Cardinal Tavera*, Hospital Tavera, Toledo, circa 1554 - 1561.



Fig 11 **Juan de Juni**, *Burial of Christ*, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid, circa 1540.

Contrast to Berruguete: Juan de Juni

Another excellent sculptor, a bit younger than Berruguete, was Juan de Juni. He was Burgundian, like Bigarny, and after passing through León and Salamanca, establishes his residence in Valladolid where he establishes good relations with Berruguete, who occasionally expressed his admiration for him. But, in spite of having an expressionist style with certain mannerist features, Juni has a clear vision of drama and is more objective in his description of personages, not at all intellectualised as those represented by Berruguete. In this respect his Burgundian antecedents, which reach back to Claus Sluter, are evident. His figures present muscular bodies, dressed in thick clothing and provided with powerful faces. Juni distorts his figures, dislocating their limbs with a harsh expressionism that echoes Sluter, Michelangelo and Rustici.

This greater objectivity revealed in the mise en scène and in his very particular human types, permitted Juni to connect more easily with the new style that Gaspar Becerra establishes in the high altar-piece of Astorga Cathedral (1556-1562), in which the "romanismo" derived from Michelangelo emerges. Both styles would blend together during the second half of the XVIth century.⁸ (Fig 11)

The Influence of Alonso Berruguete

Documents mention only a few disciples in his workshop during the first phase. In 1525 the painter Andrés de Melgar⁹ is documented as working in his workshop and is still in Valladolid until he settles in La Rioja where he is mentioned in 1530.¹⁰ Here he develops an expressive style that reminds one of Berruguete's composition, though he shows greater interest in delicately rendered designs. The polychrome of the sculptures of Santo Domingo de la Calzada's altarpiece represents, in all its endowments, the extremely talented genius of this artist.

In 1535 it is documented that Berruguete had five collaborators in his workshop: Francisco Giralte^(Fig. 12) Diego de Salamanca, Pedro de Guaza, Pablo Ortiz and Íñigo de Arrate, the latter two being painters.¹¹ This demonstrates that the polychrome of the sculptures was made by the workshop under the direction of the master and not by external collaborators.¹⁰ But the style of Berruguete leaves its mark mainly in other masters who show their influence, because they must have received their education with him at an unknown date. As a matter of fact, we do not know when Isidro de Villoldo entered Berruguete's artistic entourage. Perhaps it occurred in connection with the presence of the "entallador", Corneilles de Holanda, who came to Valladolid from Ávila in mid 30s. All pupils, collaborators or followers are influenced by the circumstances in which they work, and that is the origin of their "deviations" from the orthodoxy of Berruguete's personal manneristic interpretation of Vitrubio's canon, his brusque movement and dramatic expressionism. Perhaps thanks to this hypothetical early encounter with Berruguete, Isidro de Villoldo is the only sculptor who offers, in the phase previous to his collaboration in the Toledo choir stalls, a direct link with the style of the master. Therefore it is Villoldo who more clearly presents the fieriness that characterizes all Berruguetesque works. However, we must await the conclusion of the Toledo choir stalls to encounter other names. Apart from the previously mentioned Francisco Giralte and Isidro de Villoldo, we know that Berruguete's principal assistants included the young Manuel Álvarez and his nephew Inocencio Berruguete.

Around the sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera, contracted in 1554,¹² appear Manuel Álvarez and Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo. The latter could have been in Italy and was the artist who oriented Berruguete's style towards elegance in composition, the idealization of human types and the softening of his vibrating rhythm. Furthermore, in the Toledo of those times, there flourishes an elegant circle of mannerist sculpture that includes the idealization of Gregorio Pardo, son of Felipe Bigarny, the sense of form and shape of Nicolás de Vergara and, especially, the delicate expressivity of Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo. The sculptors, followers of Berruguete, carry out their work between approximately 1540 and 1580, and some, like Giralte or Manuel Álvarez, thanks to their longevity, will assimilate aspects of the new currents that arrive during the second half of the XVIth century at the artistic panorama of the Kingdom of Castilla.¹³

At first, Berruguete's influence is noticed in the bishoprics of Palencia and Ávila, which then extended to part of the province of Valladolid.¹⁴ His presence, however, is scarcely visible in other corners of the northern Meseta, since in the great centre of Burgos traces of Felipe Bigarny and Diego de Siloé are maintained, although we can hear echoes of Berruguete in the altarpiece of Santibáñez de Zarzaguda.¹⁵

Fig 12 **Francisco Giralte**, *tomb of Don Gutierre de Vargas*, Detail, Alabaster, 1547- 1550
Capilla del Obispo, Madrid.





Fig 14 **Francisco Giralte**, *high altarpiece, detail*, Capilla del Obispo. 1546.

Fig 13 **Francisco Giralte**, *Tomb of Don Gutierre de Vargas* 1547 - 50, Capilla de Obispo, Madrid.



School of Palencia

Francisco Giralte (1510-1575), who was in Berruguete's workshop until 1534, stands out in the Palencia area where he encounters the styles of Bigarny, Juan Ortiz el Viejo and the expressionist interpretation of Diego de Siloé, as well as of Valmaseda. Consequently, Giralte adapts his style to the forms then in fashion and thus corrects his canon to shorter proportions than those used by Berruguete. He also presents heavier vestments that wrap around the figure instead of cloth in swaying bands and ample nude surfaces as appear in Berruguete's compositions. On the whole, he is more interested in emphasising the massive volume of his figures, influenced by Juan de Juni. He is also more descriptive regarding some elements, such as his characteristic feminine headdresses. The altarpiece of Doctor Luis del Corral's chapel (1547)^(Fig 15) in the church of la Magdalena in Valladolid may be considered the quintessence of his style. When he groups figures together in restricted areas, he creates a special mannerist tension in which sinuous figures try to force their way. The low relief work, however, offers an elegant composition, which is a characteristic example of the Toledan School developed during the second phase of Berruguete's life.

In contracting the great work of the Capilla del Obispo of Madrid ^(Fig 12) ^(Fig 13) ^(Fig 14), Giralte's professional life begins to mature. This is his masterpiece and includes the great high altarpiece, the sepulchres of the parents of the patron and the great funeral monument of Don Gutierre de Carvajal y Vargas, Bishop of Plasencia. In this work, although he still maintains his human types in many reliefs of the altarpiece, we observe his "horror vacui". His massive volumes of sculpture become ever more striking and monumental, which, perhaps, echoes Juni's compositions. His tendency toward the monumental, though mixed with a more academic style, is emphasised in the altarpiece of San Eutropio del Espinar from 1573. Furthermore, we cannot forget that during these years Giralte lived in Madrid close to Pompeo Leoni, with whom, it has been documented, he had personal contact.

Fig 15 **Francisco Giralte** *Lamentation over the death of Christ*, circa 1547, altarpiece of Dr. Corral, Church of the Magdalena, Valladolid.

Manuel Álvarez (born c. 1517; active in 1587) was a brother-in-law of Giralte. Based on the approximate date of his birth, he may have entered Giralte's workshop as an apprentice, probably facilitated by the family connection. Together with stylistic aspects passed on by Giralte, Toledo will assuredly be the key to forming Álvarez' style because he will be connected on various occasions with the imperial city. Thus, after settling down in Palencia in 1548, later in 1552 we find him working for Berruguete on the sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera and in 1555 he makes the models of the "candeleros del Infante" in Toledo. Margarita Estella connects Manuel Álvarez at that time with Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo and comments that Álvarez was working in Valladolid in 1553, where he hoped to settle down in a city with artistic ambitions. But in the end he had to remain in Palencia until 1577 when he finally moved to Valladolid. Álvarez, in direct contact with the elegant circle of mannerist sculpture of Toledo and influenced by his brother-in-law Giralte's style, begins to make expressive and delicate compositions that moderate his typical helical shapes in accordance with his evolution. He uses human types with melancholic and introverted expressions surrounded, mainly in his reliefs, by architectural backgrounds. (Fig 16) (Fig 17) From 1563 onwards, his figures appear heavier and more muscular. The folds of vestments are thicker and more ample and his heads begin to have thick beards and curly locks of hair. The influence of Juan de Juni's work, as well as the magnitude of Gaspar Becerra's, are enhanced. Outstanding are the spectacular sculptures belonging to his first style, which adorn the façade of the Salvador de Valladolid, perhaps executed around 1553. Equally striking is the elegant altarpiece of "Quintanilla de Onésimo", of "serliana" design, which is also of Álvarez' first style^(Fig 18) and the relief of the high altarpiece of the Church of Santoyo.

Between 1560 and 1563 a new phase begins that will last until 1577, when Álvarez is now documented as dwelling in Valladolid. At this time, many works are documented and attributed to him due to his having a big workshop with many collaborators and numerous artistic relations with other companies manned by other artists of Palencia. During this period he makes interesting sepulchres, such as that of "Don Juan de Rojas y Doña Marina Sarmiento, first "marqueses de Poza", in the convent of San Pablo of Palencia. Here we observe a great interest in the size of the sculpturing and a more deliberate movement, which characterises this moment in the sculptor's life. Closely related to this work is the "Sepulcro del Conde de Buendía" in the parish church of Dueñas (Palencia).





Fig 16 **Manuel Álvarez**, *Santa Espina*
Monastery, Valladolid, circa 1560, currently
at Museo Marés, Barcelona.



Fig 17 **Manuel Álvarez**, *Lamentation over the death Christ*, circa 1550, IOMR collection.

The influence of Juan de Juni is evident in the monumental altarpiece of the church of San Juan Bautista in Santoyo (Palencia) executed by Álvarez with the participation of Juan Ortiz Fernández and Mateo Lancrín. This altarpiece was effected according to its contract in 1562 and the work continued slowly until 1573. The carving was done by Ortiz Fernández, while Álvarez directed the work. The long duration of the execution of this altarpiece caused it to have two different styles; on the one hand, the “predella” with its typical unstable composition and elegant treatment in the low reliefs and, on the other hand, the high bodies and the attic with its pompous movement and solid shapes in its sculptures. Stylistically related to this altarpiece, we may mention the bench of the altarpiece of Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia) and the outstanding alabaster reliefs of the Monastery de la Santa Espina at present at the altarpiece of Santoyo^(Fig 18) where we also observe the influence of Juan de Juni and of the Michelangelesque models imported by Gaspar Becerra.

Manuel Álvarez’ last dated artistic period begins in 1577 in Valladolid, where his style is connected with two “romanista” sculptors, Esteban Jordán and Francisco de la Maza, very close to that of Juan de Juni. His work becomes more balanced; his figures more magnificent and the expression on their faces acquire a restrained attitude. The Berrugetesque influence has disappeared.



Fig 18 Manuel Álvarez, circa 1560, altarpiece of Santoyo Church, Palencia.

School of Ávila

The process of assimilating and interpreting Berruguete's forms in the sculpture of Ávila has peculiar characteristics that are different from what has been seen in Palencia. We have already said that Vasco de la Zarza has been working in Ávila during the first twenty-five years of the XVIth century. Zarza's delicate technique will not be lost in the following artistic generation with pupils who will gradually adopt the Berruguete's style. In this medium, Alonso Berruguete's influence will suddenly rise thanks to the arrival of an "entallador", Cornieles de Holanda, (born c.1488; active until 1563, first documented in Ávila in 1520, who has worked in Valladolid and who probably collaborated with the direct disciple of Berruguete, Isidro Villoldo (†1554). The interrelation of work maintained between Cornieles, Villoldo, Pedro de Salamanca (active until 1569) and Zarza's followers would facilitate the entry of the Berruguete's manner in Ávila. Berruguete's influence will spread through the work on the choir stalls at Ávila Cathedral. In 1534 plans were undertaken regarding this work and the "cabildo" of Ávila Cathedral studied the choir stalls of the San Benito Monastery in Valladolid as a possible model for the Ávila choir stalls. The contract by which Cornieles was commissioned to make the choir stalls for Ávila was not signed until 1536. The next year, 1537, Cornieles was sent to Valladolid to study the altarpiece of San Benito, where he must have made contact with Isidro de Villoldo. Together they returned to Ávila so that Villoldo could carve the imagery required for the choir stalls.

The sculptor Isidro de Villoldo appears in 1538 for the first time in the Ávila Cathedral documents when he was paid for making an example of two chairs for the choir: one high chair and the other one low. Furthermore, Juan Rodríguez, Lucas Giraldo, and his son-in-law Pedro de Salamanca are mentioned as helping Cornieles de Holanda at the choir stalls as well as Isidro de Villoldo, who will abandon this work in 1539 when he is called by Berruguete to go to Toledo. Villoldo must have marked his stamp on the work of the choir stalls because we notice that the Berruguete's style gradually dominates the stalls along the Epistle side, which is the first part of the choir stalls to be finished, and then along the Gospel side, which was terminated in 1541.

After finishing the collaboration with Berruguete at the choir stalls of the Cathedral of Toledo, Villoldo returns to Ávila. In my opinion, Villoldo's hand may be detected particularly in the work on the alabasters at the choir stalls of Toledo, where the concept of massive volume is more striking and where we observe a fine softness in his treatment of surfaces, which is clearly related to Villoldo's later work. ^(Fig 18)

When he arrives in Ávila, he crafted two altarpieces in alabaster for the Cathedral: the altarpiece of San Segundo and the altarpiece of San Bernabé. ^(Fig 19) These are Isidro's masterpieces where the Berruguete's influence is blended with the architectural background typical of the Avilan tradition. His reliefs are executed at various levels and in the San Segundo altarpiece he creates unstable compositions, as perceived in the scene of the bridge falling down. His fiery style calms down, though we continue to observe Berruguete's influence in human types, which echo Michelangelo, especially the "predella" of Saint Bernabé. ^(Fig 20) Villoldo's feminine types are idealised and express a certain melancholy that may be also felt when we view the group illustrating the flagellation, inspired in an engraving by Albert Dürer; there Villoldo renders a Christ represented by a languid and delicate figure related to the aesthetic taste of Toledo society ^(Fig 21).

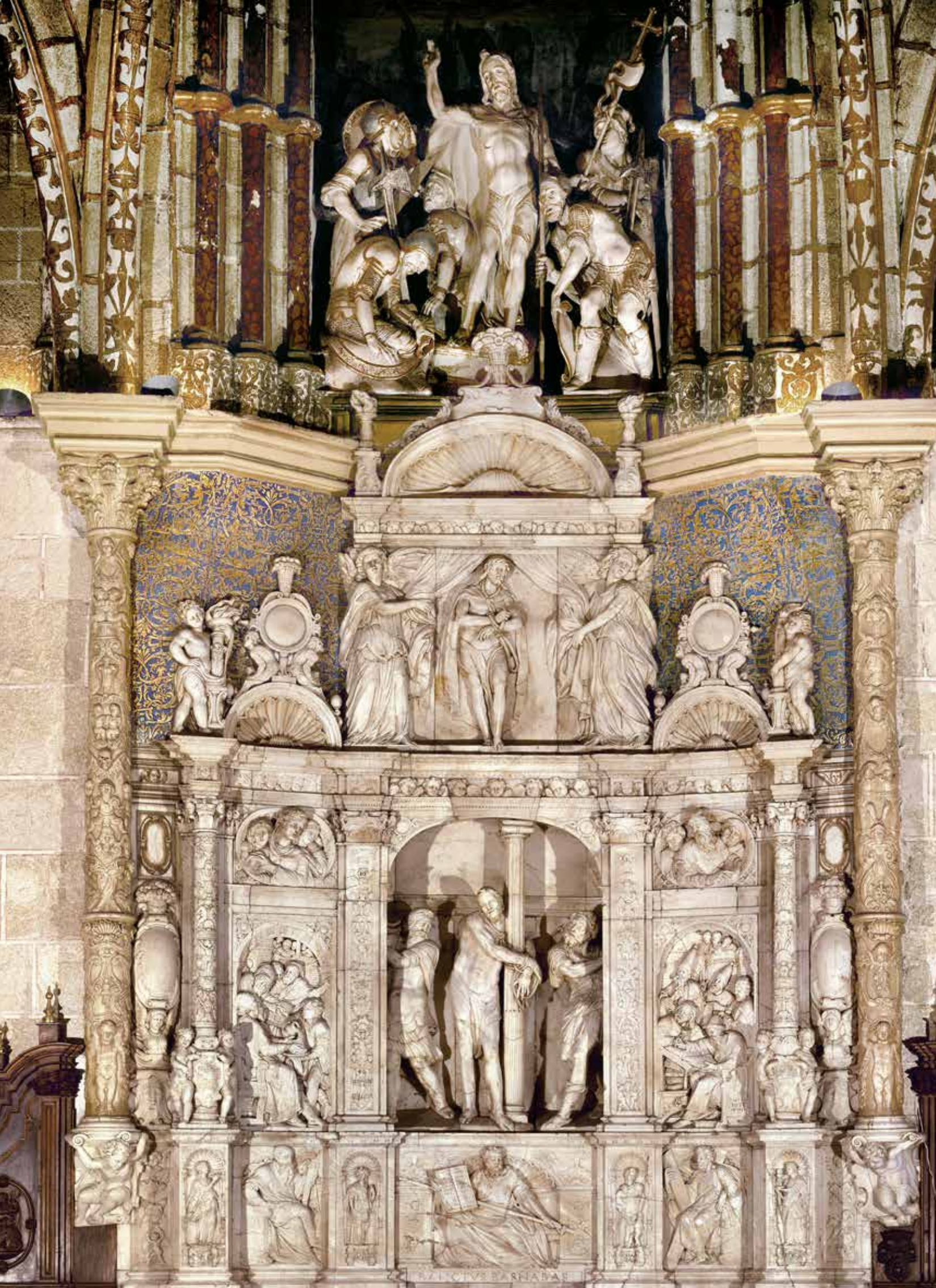


Fig 19 **Isidro de Villoldo**, altarpiece of San Bernabé, 1549-1553, Ávila Cathedral.

Fig 20 **Isidro de Villoldo**, 1549-1553, details of the predella, altarpiece of San Bernabé, Ávila Cathedral.

In 1551 Villoldo works on the altarpiece of San Antolín in Ávila Cathedral, using polychrome wood, with which the technique required by this art permits Villoldo to create folds of greater rhythmic curves. The relief of the burial of Christ, in the Museo Diocesano of Valladolid, and the relief of “San Cosme y San Damián” in the Museo de Escultura of Valladolid,^(Fig 22) demonstrate good spatial construction and a fine serenity in the interpretation of sentiment, which relates them closely to this artistic phase.

Villoldo goes to Seville to make the altarpiece of the Cartuja de Cuevas. Unfortunately, he dies prematurely and Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo undertakes to finish the work. As a consequence, a group of master sculptors connected with the Toledo School, brought their elegant and leisurely style to Seville. They would be the immediate precedent of Martínez Montañez and of the Golden Age of the “*imaginería sevillana*” in the XVIIth century.

It is surprising that Alonso Berruguete did not have a great influence in Valladolid, except on the “*entallador*”, Gaspar de Tordesillas and on his nephew, Inocencio Berruguete. Here Juan de Juni’s influence, of corpulent human types, wearing thick clothing, always buffeted by the winds, exerts all his power and will soon encounter the Romanist tendencies of Gaspar Becerra.

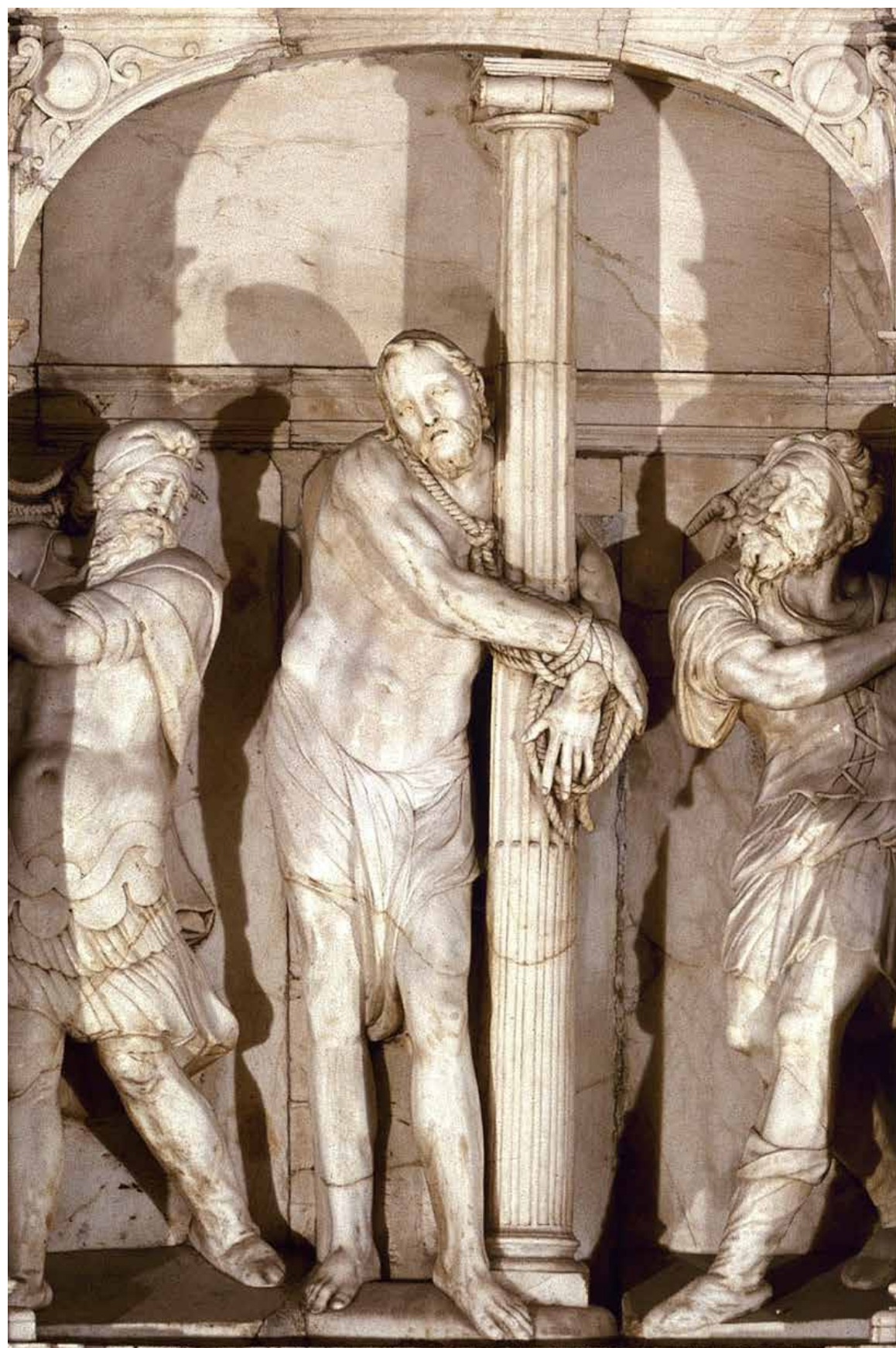


Fig 21 **Isidro de Villoldo**, *Christ attached to a column*, 1549-1553, Ávila Cathedral.

Fig 22 **Isidro de Villoldo**, *Relief of Saint Cosme and Saint Damián*, circa 1550, currently Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.





Fig 23 **Andrés de Melgar**, detail polychromy, circa 1540, high altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Logroño (La Rioja).

Fig 24 **Arnao de Bruselas**, *Apostle*, 1553, Church of Santa Maria del Palacio, Logroño (La Rioja).



Aragonese and Riojan School

Berruguete's influence is also detected in Arnau de Bruselas, a sculptor who works in La Rioja, País Vasco, Southern Navarre and Aragón. Arnau is a sculptor of exquisite technique who is in contact with Damián Forment's workshop, but who also has received, to a certain extent, the impact of Berruguete's mannerism, which influences him in his compositions and in his long-legged human types with flexible hands and feet. His personages are always interpreted with refined elegance.¹⁶ His very finished technique is related to the sculptural quality of Forment, one of Spain's great sculptors who has a workshop established in Zaragoza. Forment commissioned the altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada where he admits collaborators like the Beaugrants and Arnau de Bruselas; the polychromy is done by Berruguete's workshop assistant, Andrés de Melgar who emigrates to Aragón in the early 30s and has left us the Berruguete's style in some exquisite "estofados" which would have a great influence in the zone.^(Fig 23) Arnau de Bruselas is working as a sculptor and only undertakes the direction of the whole work when he signs the contract for the altarpiece of "Santa María de Palacio" (in Logroño)^(Fig 24), of the Monasterio de Veruela (Zaragoza) and later for the retro-choir of La Seo in Zaragoza.

The Frenchman Gabriel Joly also collaborates with Forment who at the last moment of his life, has left us works in Teruel, like the high altarpiece of its Cathedral, in which an elegant and refined expressionism appears that reminds us of French artistic taste and distant echoes of Berruguete.



Fig 25 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**, circa 1560, *relief of flight to Egypt*, high altarpiece of Cathedral of Sevilla.

Toledan School: Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo, patriarch of the Seville school

Very interesting is the interpretation of Berruguete by the group of sculptors who settled in Toledo halfway through the XVIth century. Some of them were born in Ávila and their greatest representative was Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo.¹⁷ He was born in Pelayos (Ávila) around 1525. His apprenticeship was spent probably in Isidro de Villoldo's workshop. In this respect, he certainly went with Villoldo to Toledo when the latter was working for Berruguete on the choir stalls of Toledo Cathedral. That very young apprentice would suffer the dazzling impression of Berruguete's art and perhaps he also received the urge to make a journey to Italy on the occasion of this contact, bearing in mind the very pure Italian manner of his early sculpture work. Upon his return, he confirms himself as one of the most important masters of the imperial city. Vázquez is imbued by the ideal of beauty, probably having passed through Parma. His art enters into contact with Berruguete's style, reflected particularly in his movement, his skill at design and his interest in elegant nudes, though lacking the extreme fieriness of the master. Therefore, Vázquez plays a leading role in the adaptation of Berruguetesque style to a more international manner, with a view to acquiring elegance and closely following Italian mannerism. All this may be appreciated in his works made at that time, such as his work on the retablo de Almonacid de Zorita and that of Santa Maria la Blanca in Toledo¹⁸. Upon the death of Isidro de Villoldo, Manuel Álvarez goes to Seville to finish the sculpture group of the Cartuja de las Cuevas which, in fact, paves the way to many other commissions, including the relief of the "Huída a Egipto"^(Fig 25) in Seville Cathedral and the commissions for Virgin Mary sculptures for many dioceses of Seville. ^(Fig 26)



Fig 26 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**, circa 1560, *Virgen de las Fiebres*, Church of the Magdalena, Sevilla.



Fig 28 Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, IOMR collection.



Fig 27 Juan de Valmaseda, 1519, *Calvary*, attic of the high altarpiece of Palencia Cathedral.

Juan de Valmaseda: an independent Master

Juan de Valmaseda was born around 1488 and is first mentioned in Burgos around 1514-1515 in connection with the sepulchre of Don Pedro Lopez de Gumiel. This enigmatic sculptor will be working throughout the first half of the XVIth century. From the date of his contract to make the “Calvario de la Catedral de Palencia” signed in 1519,^(Fig 27) he settled down in Palencia where he enjoyed credit among agents contracting sculptured work. Valmaseda appears to be connected with Bigarny and Siloé, but his artistic style is very personal. Traces have been found pointing to the influence of Siloé in Valmaseda’s feminine types, in the folds and pleats of clothing and in his way of treating hair. Certain influences from Alonso Berruguete have been noted in Valmaseda’s compositions,^(Fig 28) particularly their sense of movement. But Valmaseda maintains a personal artistic route since he does not fit into the generally accepted ideal beauty of Siloé, nor does he understand the intellectualised mannerism of Berruguete. On the contrary, he keeps alive the expressionism of gothic origin in his bony bodies, expressive heads that seem deformed, and the folds of clothing torn into angular rags. In this aesthetic world, elegant compositions occasionally appear, as we have noticed in his Virgin Mary of the previously mentioned Calvary or in particular aspects of the altarpiece of San Ildefonso, circa 1530, at Palencia Cathedral – his masterpiece.¹⁹ The central relief illustrating the “Imposición de la casulla a San Ildefonso” shows an elegant interpretation of the Virgin Mary in Diego de Siloé’s style, and in the Epiphany group there appear Berrugetesque designs. But in the relief representing Saint Jerome in the desert and in the medallion with a “Pietà”, Valmaseda returns to his typical expressionistic late gothic style.

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Fig 11 Juan de Juni, detail, Burial of Christ, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid, circa 1540.



3. *THE INTEGRATION OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE IN SPANISH SCULPTURE*

Margarita Estella
CSIC

The splendour of the Italian Quattrocento surges up at the beginning of the XVIth century when its manner is divulged amongst the European nations, who at this time begin to establish their new political character. Outstanding among these nations is the Spain of the Reyes Católicos, Isabel and Fernando, who once they have consolidated their political and religious union, extend their kingdom with the discovery of America in 1492. They begin to be increasingly interested in developing artistic monuments as a way of showing their power. During these years the Monarchy decides to prepare their sepulchres, which as symbols of their power, will perpetuate their memory.

The death of Prince Juan in 1497 served to speed up the administrative procedures involved in building a sepulchre. It was decided to commission it to the Italian sculptor, Domenico Fancelli, who had carried out the tomb of Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza at Carrara and then transported it to the Cathedral of Seville. The sculptor moves to Spain to establish his work. Conde Tendilla, brother of Don Diego Hurtado, following the will of Queen Isabella, draws up the contract for making three funeral monuments: the sepulchre of Prince Juan, the one of the Reyes Católicos, and that of Queen Juana and Felipe el Hermoso. This made funeral art flourish in Castilla in a never foreseen way.

Domenico Fancelli executed the sepulchre of Prince Juan (1510), at present in the monastery of Santo Tomás in Ávila, the sepulchre of the Reyes Católicos in the Capilla Real at Granada in 1517^(Fig. 1) and the sepulchre of Reina Juana and Felipe, between 1518 and 1519, which he was unable to finish due to his sudden death. These three artistic monuments are the most outstanding examples of the arrival of the Italian Renaissance in Castilla, as they all follow Florentine models inspired in the tombs executed by the Pollaiuolos.

Fig 2 **Giovanni Da Nola**, *Sepulchre of Almirante Ramón Folch Cardona*, 1522-1526, Church of San Nicolas, Bellpuig, Lérida.

Fig 1 **Domenico Fancelli**, detail of the sepulchre of the *Reyes Católicos*, 1517, Royal Chapel, Granada Cathedral.



Fig 3 **Domenico Fancelli - Bartolomé Ordóñez**, *Juana*, sepulchre of Felipe el Hermoso and Juana la Loca, 1518, Royal Chapel, Granada Cathedral.



The funeral sculpture soon incorporates the essence of the new art, coloured by deep ideological guidelines which, to a certain extent, are alien to art, and contain religious or socio-political factors. Fancelli's death in Zaragoza on the eve of his return to Italy forced the selection of another artist to continue the execution of the sepulchre of Queen Juana and Felipe El Hermoso. Bartolomé Ordóñez^(Fig 3) was commissioned for the work. He was already a consecrated artist, born in Burgos, but who, thanks to working with great success in Naples with Diego de Siloé, was named by Gómez Moreno as one of the "Eagles" of our Renaissance.³

The kingdom of Aragón, after effecting its union with the kingdom of Castile, also offers an interesting and important representation of Italian funeral art. The tomb of Almirante Folch de Cardona, Viceroy of Naples, a work carried out by the Neapolitan Giovanni da Nola between 1522 and 1525 in Lérida^(Fig. 2), is another beautiful example of Italian Renaissance art, both in the representation of the deceased person and in the imposing series of reliefs illustrating mythological stories alluding to historical events that occurred during the admiral's career. Its valuation is entrusted, amongst others, to Damián Forment, who is said to be the foremost representative of the "first aragonese Renaissance".



Fig 5 **Gregorio Pardo**, relief “*Imposición de la casulla a san Ildefonso*”, high Choir-stall, archbishopric Throne of the Toledo Cathedral.

At that time in 1519, Carlos V summoned to Zaragoza Felipe Bigarny and Alonso Berruguete⁴, another of the four Eagles, and signed a contract of collaboration that years later would reach its peak with the choir of Toledo Cathedral,^(Fig 4) one of the most indisputable Masterpieces of the Spanish Renaissance. There, the particular way that these castilian artists interpret the Italian currents can be admired in all its splendour. The absence of the art of Bartolomé Ordóñez, due to his death in Carrara in 1520, and the beautiful Italian style of Diego de Siloé in this work do not lessen the splendour of Berruguete’s genius and the fine technique of Felipe Bigarny, perhaps assisted by his son Gregorio Pardo.⁵ (Figs) Around these dates Spanish art is determined to set forth on its way to incorporating itself in the Renaissance to which Alonso Berruguete applies a particularly Spanish stamp in the development of sculpture. Such has been widely recognised in recent years by many historians. The Spanish manner begins to be recognised by its exaggerated gestures, its expressionism and its capacity to reinterpret classic models. In fact, Spain is the western nation best prepared for this incorporation of the Italian Renaissance, as no European nation or region developed such close and lasting political, cultural and artistic relations with Italy as did Spain.⁶ These relations were present, more or less, from the XIVth century and would last until the XVIIth century. This idea was initiated by Italian historians like Longhi and has also been confirmed recently by many of his Spanish and Italian followers.

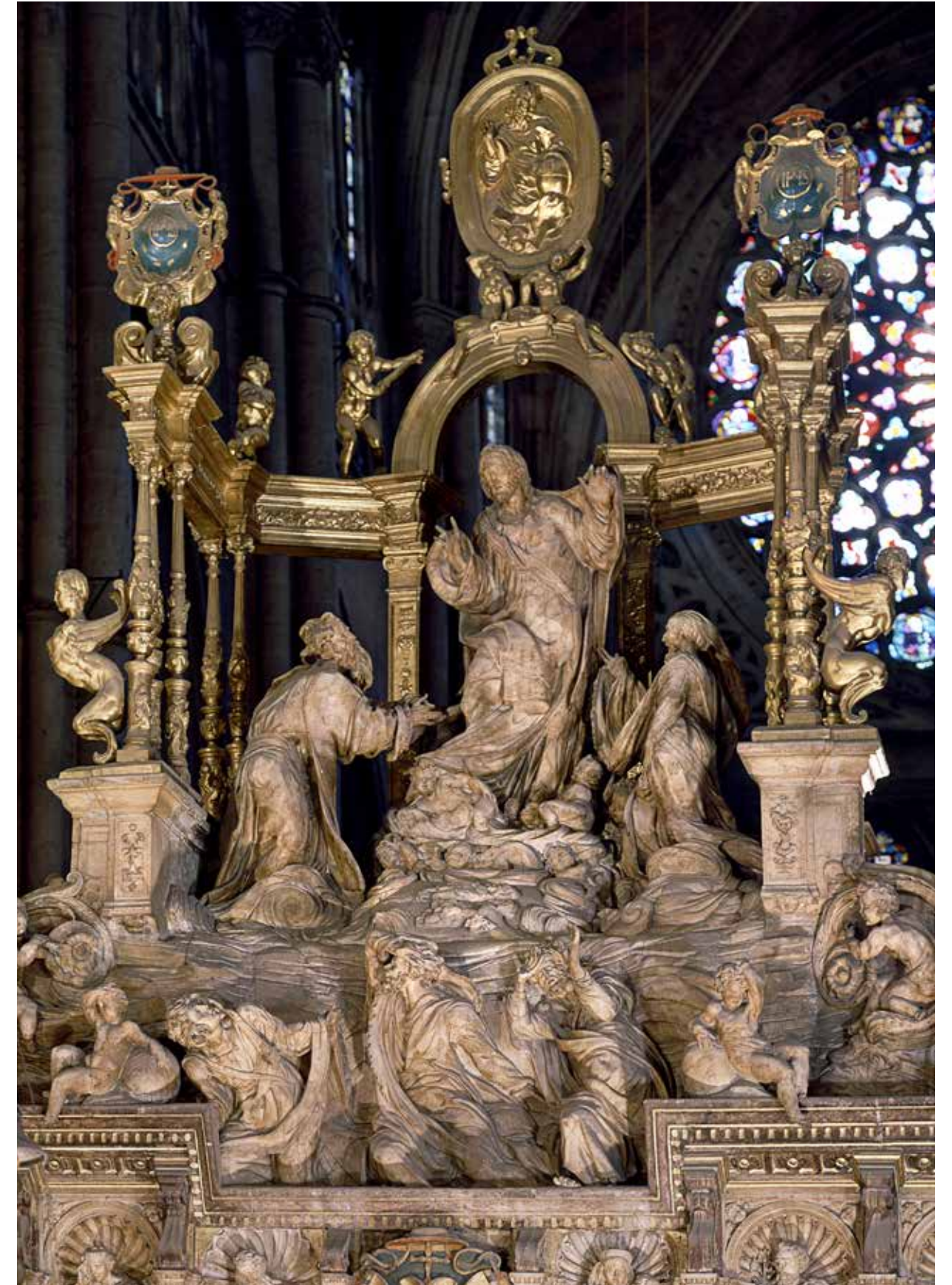


Fig 4 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail of high Choir-stall, *Transfiguration*, 1543 -1548, “remate” of the archiepiscopal Throne. Cathedral of Toledo.

Fig 6 *Pallas Atenea, II AD*,
Casa Pilatos, Seville.

Although this essay does not deal with the Renaissance's incorporation in the fields of architecture and painting, we should remember that the high aristocracy imported artists from Italy to construct their beautiful mansions. The most splendid example of this current is the Castillo of Calahorra⁷ commissioned by Don Rodrigo de Vivar (Marquisate of Cenete), which the Reina Católica affectionately called one of the "beautiful sins" of Cardinal Mendoza. At the bottom of the Sierra Nevada, in the wild country land of Granada, near Guadalix, this severe castilian construction by Lorenzo Vázquez is preserved intact. In this case, Genoa lends her marbles and her artists to these and other almost-lost buildings, which offer Italian art in all its purity, and in which were involved important families of Genoese sculptors of the sagas of the Aprile, the Carlone and others.⁸ The Castillo de Velez Blanco still stands in this zone, and its polished Renaissance courtyard is exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of New York; its friezes adorned with interesting relief work have been just recently rediscovered in the Museum of Decorative Art in Paris and are being studied by French scholars.⁹

Another route taken in the diffusion of the Renaissance throughout Spain was that of the collectors of antiques imported from Italy to decorate their mansions "a la antigua", such as the celebrated Casa Pilatos^(Fig 6) at Seville (formerly Hispalis Romana). In its patios it exhibited, together with important archaeological ruins, beautiful Italian works of the first Renaissance period, such as two fine sculptures of a recumbent Venus, one of which was possibly sent by the Neapolitan sculptor Cacabello.¹⁰





Fig 7 **Pietro Torrigiano** , Saint Jerome, Terracotta, 1522, Museo de las Bellas Artes, Seville.



Fig 8 **Jacopo Florentino**, *The Burial of Christ*, circa 1520, Museo de las Bellas Artes de Granada.

This significant example of some of the principal characteristics of the new art – namely its devotion to antiquity – did not create a permanent influence in Sevillian sculpture. Nor did the arrival of Italian artists in Sevilla and Granada really exert a direct and important influence on Andalusian sculpture in the first half of XVI century, in spite of the general repercussion of the Capilla Real of Granada. The work of the famous artist Torrigiano^(Fig. 7), resident of Sevilla, whose *San Jerónimo*, as well as his classicist “*Virgen con el Niño*” were extremely well received in his day and were copied several times. Still, the work of the by-no-means-lesser artist Jacopo Florentino,^(Fig. 8) with his momentous “*Entierro*” (today in the Granada Museum) revealed to Spain the Laoconteque model divulged through Europe¹¹¹². The work of the French master Perrin, following the style of the old Mercadante Master of Bretagne, and Pedro Millán show evident Italian echoes. All these minor influences were interrupted by the arrival of the castilian masters, mainly of Toledo, and followers of Alonso Berruguete in the 1550s. Thus during the first half of the XVIth century in Andalusia, what really prevailed was a strong gothic current tinged with the influence of the resurgent northern artistic schools, already involved in their own interpretation of Italian Art and represented by some artists who were in charge of important sculpture works, such as the high altarpiece of Sevilla Cathedral¹³. The most famous is Roque Balduque¹⁴ (Fig. 9) who executed several reliefs of the altarpiece of the cathedral. This Flemish sculptor, who came from Bois Le Duc (today Hertogenbosch), settled in Sevilla and determined a very specific style with his Virgins, which in a certain way are the result of blending Italian and northern currents. A fine example of his art can be seen in the “*Lamentation on Christ’s Death*” (in the IOMR collection).



Fig 9 Roque Balduque, *Saint Anne*, circa 1550 The Virgin and infant Jesus, church of Santa María de la Asunción, Alcalá del Río, Seville.

It is only on the arrival of the sculptors of the Toledan School, who were disciples or followers of the pure Italianate art of Bautista Vázquez el Viejo, when Sevillian sculpture directly received the Italian blood stream. Through this medium, the rest of the Andalusian school likewise received it. Gómez Moreno classified the art of Juan Bautista Vázquez as the opposite side of Berruguete's art, as may be observed, for instance, in his beautiful "Virgen con el Niño" of Almonacid de Zorita (Toledo), which today is treasured in the Colegiata of Torrelaguna. Her placid expression is inspired, nevertheless, in the sculpture on the same subject that Berruguete carved for the altarpiece of the Iglesia de Santiago in Valladolid. An impressive example of his art can be viewed in "Nuestra Señora y el Niño Jesús" from the IOMR collection, though with a certain still more Berruguetesque halo.^(Fig 10)

It is intriguing to go deeper into why Vázquez el Viejo's art becomes much more moderate, and the delicate shapes that contribute to crediting him as the most Italianised of our sculptors. His skill

Fig 10 Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder, *Our Lady and infant Jesus*, circa 1560, IOMR collection.



as a sculptor of wood, bronze and marble and his wide knowledge of the art of engraving are proof of his Italian training. We do not know for certain if he travelled to Italy, but his "Pietà" at the Ávila Cathedral is perhaps the best interpretation of the famous work by Michelangelo.^(Fig 11) Still, it cannot be interpreted as a coincidence that he was born in Ávila. During the very first years of the XVIth century, Vasco de Zarza made the tomb of Alonso de Madrigal, "el Tostado",^(Fig 12) an interesting personality of our humanism, which shines forth in the cathedral of Ávila as one of the most beautiful examples of Renaissance sculpture, with an impressive representation of the deceased's writing and a wealth of minute and meticulously carved decorations on the surrounding walls. His art can almost compete with the most outstanding Florentine funeral monuments. We have little information on Vasco de Zarza (Siglo XV, Ávila, 1524) and we do not know where he could have acquired his impressive skill in carving alabaster, but his influence is great in the creation of the Ávila School, whose best exponents are Isidro Villoldo and Juan Bautista Vázquez, who were of fundamental importance in the diffusion of Berruguetesque and Italian models in the south of Spain.



Fig 11 Juan Bautista Vázquez *The Elder*,
La Pietá, circa 1558 Ávila Cathedral.

Fig 12 Vasco de Zarza , *Sepulchre of Alonso de Madrigal "El tostado"*,
1518, alabaster, Ávila Cathedral.



Fig 13 **Diego de Siloé and Bartolomé Ordóñez**, *altarpiece of the Epiphany* 1518, Church of San Giovanni a Carbonara, Caracciolo di Vico Chapel, Naples.

Bartolomé Ordóñez, Diego de Siloé and Alonso Berruguete, to whom we have previously referred briefly, draw our attention to another way Spanish artists selected to gain skill with the prevailing Renaissance style during their visits to Italy.

Manuel Gómez Moreno's study on the "Eagles of the Spanish Renaissance" outlines this third route of Spanish art leading towards the Italian Renaissance. He lists four of our eminent artists: the sculptors Alonso Berruguete, Bartolomé Ordóñez, Diego de Siloé and the architect and painter Machuca. Remembered by the Portuguese Francisco de Holanda, other Spanish and foreign historians complete the pioneer studies, contributing more information and interpretations of this departure of our artists to Italy. Ordóñez and Siloé, two artists born in Burgos, went to Naples because this area seemed to be the most favourable one for the apprenticeship of Spaniards. Both of them will, in fact, give new life to the Neapolitan school of sculpture, which would become the third in importance after the Roman and the Florentine schools of sculpture. These artists have left us little more evidence of their arrival round 1508 in the Partenopean region (their stay continued until about 1520), except for their masterpiece in the Chapel of "Caracciolo di San Giovanni degli Spagnuoli", which is a beautiful example of their delicate art and of the reputation won in these lands.^(Fig 13)





Regarding Bartolomé Ordóñez, we only have information covering five years of his intensive life. He works on the choir of Barcelona Cathedral, assisted by the Flemish artist Monet in his perfectly classical “trasaltar” prepared to receive the Emperor Carlos V who had summoned in Barcelona the meeting of the 19th Capítulo de la Orden del Toisón de Oro¹⁷ (Fig 14). He dies in Carrara engaged in the work of terminating the delicate tomb of Doña Juana and Felipe el Hermoso which is today in the Capilla Real of Granada. The tomb of Cardinal Cisneros in Alcalá de Henares^(Fig15) was almost complete, but tombs commissioned for the Fonseca family in Coca (Segovia) were left very unfinished. Modern research has studied the composition of his workshop in Carrara, which gathered together twelve Italian sculptors, some of whose life and works are known today.¹⁸



Fig 14 **Bartolomé Ordóñez**, *the martyrdom of Saint Eulalia*, 1518-1520, Trascoro Barcelona Cathedral.

Fig 15 **Bartolomé Ordóñez**, *Sepulchre of Cardinal Cisneros*, Chapel of San Ildefonso, 1520, University of Alcalá de Henares, Madrid.

Fig 16 **Diego de Siloé**, *Christ and two angels*, altarpiece of Saint Anne, 1523 Capilla del Condestable, Burgos Cathedral.

Regarding Diego de Siloé we have more information, such as about his sculpture work for the Capilla del Condestable de Castilla (1520), including the imposing high altarpiece in which he participated with Felipe Bigarny. He also finished the altarpieces of San Pedro and Santa Ana, which was a work initiated by his father, Gil de Siloé. There we can appreciate the dead Christ between angels of an incredible delicacy.^(Fig16) At the altar piece of San Pedro stands one of his masterpieces, the monumental Saint Jerome. From the point of view of the development of Spanish sculpture, the high altarpiece of the Capilla del Condestable offers Italian novelties of great interest, for though we do not assuredly know who gave the original design, it is generally accepted that it must have been from the Siloés. Furthermore, the comparison between the delightful little sculptures by Gil and the Italianate elegance of Diego is a most important example of the way Spanish sculpture was developing.¹⁹

Alonso Berruguete also arrives in Italy preceded by his father Pedro Berruguete, who travels to Urbino. Michelangelo refers to Alonso several times as the “spanuolo” in three letters, one of them dated 1508. According to Vasari, he participated together with Jacopo Sansovino in the contest of copying the Laoconte, which as studied by Manuel Arias, is present in a lot of the sculptures at San Benito’s high altarpiece and very specifically in the altarpiece of the wise kings at the Church of Santiago in Valladolid^(Fig 17).



Fig 17 **Alonso Berruguete**, *The Holy family*, 1537, Chapel of the Wise Kings, Church of Santiago, Valladolid.

The enthralling awakening of Spanish plastic three-dimensional art to the Italian Renaissance tendencies takes various routes, which represent the finest and most personal adaptation of its models. This progressive Hispanisation of Italian manners is visualized more in the works done by Alonso Berruguete and Diego Siloé than in the more classical works by Ordóñez or even in Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo's more advanced works. We also must not forget the courageous expressionism that other castilian artists impose in their representations so often affirmed as characteristic of Spanish art. Indeed this is shown remarkably in the work of Juan de Valmaseda, whose art is very close to that of Siloé and, in certain aspects, to Berruguete. The strength manifested in the "San Jerónimo" by Juan de Valmaseda (from the IOMR collection) shows us without any doubt the close link of his art with Diego de Siloé's²⁰ and the artistic level their expressionism may attain. (Fig18)

In this sense, Alonso Berruguete shows the most genuine Spanish interpretation of classicism, with an absolutely personal technique which, at first, may be interpreted as disconcerting. The pioneer study by Azcárate, and more recently the profound analysis of his work by Manuel Arias, offer us some of the keys for understanding his art, mainly from the point of view of his personality. He was proud of his social status but was a painter who did not manage to establish his career and, perhaps for the glory of Spanish art, had to devote himself to sculpture. Among his works we may admire the very particular beauty of his "Sacrificio de Isaac"^(Fig 19) at San Benito's altarpiece, full of a deep religious sentiment but bound by the violent foreshortenings so influenced by the "Laocoonte". Thanks to this extremely personal way of expressing himself, he is considered one of the founders of the so-called "mannerism movement", together with Pontorno and Rosso Fiorentino. The movement originated at the Chiostrino dei Voti in the Basilica of Santa Annunziata in Florence where they met. Upon his return to Spain in 1518, this incipient mannerism was marked by the Spanish stamp and expressed in a volcanic manner in his sculpture work, whose best examples are at Mejorada de Olmedo and San Benito in Valladolid, but also in a more moderate way in the choir stalls of the Cathedral of Toledo.

This totally new interpretation of Italian art favoured El Greco's welcome in Toledo a generation later. The Cretan "pintor extravagante"²¹ will explore artistic devices of great originality. He will herald elements of great modernity, such as the rupture of the traditional Italian lineal perspective, which has an incredible parallelism with the small reliefs at the choir stalls of the Cathedral of Toledo, "El diluvio, El Juicio Final y la serpiente de oro". (Fig 20)





Fig 18 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome*, 1530, IOMR collection.

Fig 19 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, circa 1526 - 1532. Monastery of San Benito, Valladolid, currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.



Fig 20. **Alonso Berruguete** *Last Judgement*, detail of high choir-stall, Cathedral of Toledo circa 1543.

Finally, the rapid incorporation of Italian Renaissance art in Spain is by no means disconnected from the earlier movement that occurred in the kingdom of Aragón, due to its particular political and, to a certain extent, geographical conditions. The union of the Kingdoms of Spain logically favoured mutual influences, although aragonese art differed from castilian art at least throughout the XVIth century. An example of these relations is the case of Gregorio Pardo, son of Felipe Bigarny, being sent to the studio of the aragonese **Damián Forment** to perfect his art.²²

Carmen Morte²³ has deeply investigated the artistic clues of this great aragonese master Forment, so skilful at carving wood and alabaster that he has swamped all the walls of the aragonese kingdom with his beautiful altarpieces, including Valencia, his possible place of birth. His large altarpieces show the change occurred in sculptural conceptions, although in most of his altarpieces he assumes gothic style. His last commission, the altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada^(Fig 21), is of great importance in helping us to understand the evolution of his style, as there the structure is renacentista and his stylistic advance perhaps makes us imagine the influence of Gregorio Pardo and Arnao de Bruselas, who collaborate in the sculptures. The kingdom of Aragón attracts Italian artists like Moreto and the French sculptor Gabriel Joly,^(Fig 22) with his Italo-French style, whose artistic pinnacle can be seen in the high altarpiece of Teruel. In recent years there has been more research on the so-called “circolazione mediterranea” of art and especially Italian historians have investigated these exchanges between Spain and Italy like those undertaken by Abbate Pier Luigi de Castris and Letizia Gaeta.^{24 25}

Fig 21 **Damián Forment**, detail of the predella, Saint Dominic releasing the captives, Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, circa 1538.



Fig 22 **Gabriel Joly**, detail, *Virgen del oro*, 1527, Church of San Miguel Arcangel de Villafeliche, Zaragoza.



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4. ALONSO BERRUGUETE: *SYMBIOSIS OF DESIGN, CARVING AND PAINTING.* *POLYCHROMY IN SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL*

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Polychromy in the sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, by Alonso Berruguete

The pair of sculptures representing Saint Peter and Saint Paul (54 cm high) from the IOMR Collection, is a magnificent example of Spanish Renaissance art which, thanks to their extraordinarily shaped design and the way they are carved, can be assigned to Alonso Berruguete 's gouge. Furthermore, their splendid polychromy, which has reached us in such an outstanding condition,¹ is directly connected with other works polychromed by the master. A careful observation of their pictorial devices would contribute to confirm their attribution, as will be analysed in the following text.^(Fig.1)

Bearing in mind that this pair of sculptures represents a unique repertoire of Spanish XVIth century polychrome technique, a deep study of their features would certainly increase our knowledge of the creative process of this particular artistic expression of Spanish art, which blends pictorial and sculptural talent.

Fig 1 **Alonso Berruguete**, pair of sculptures, *Saint Peter and Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.



Fig. 2 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail *Saint Peter*, polychrome, walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR collection.

The importance of polychromy in sculpture

In a pioneering study of the outset of the XXth century,² Marcel Dieulafoy indicated that one of the great contributions of Spanish art to European art has been polychromed wood sculpture, since no other area has achieved such a perfect fusion between the sculptured figure and polychrome techniques, acting to intensify their striking power of communication and manifest Hispanic genius in an absolutely new way.³ As María Elena Gómez Moreno⁴ and Juan José Martín González⁵ have correctly indicated, the participation of master polychromers in the finishing of a sculpture usually would considerably improve the artistic piece produced, provided that these professionals were qualified craftsmen or alternatively would not harm the work if they were not sufficiently skilled. It is thus not strange that the great wood sculptors, “*imageros*”, would be anxious regarding who would polychrome their sculptures. On some occasions they would recommend a particular trusted polychromer who would carry out this work in the proper surroundings, bearing in mind they were not usually undertaken by the same artist.⁶ Thus, fruitful connections were established between both artistic fields, such as between the XVIIth century sculptor, Gregorio Fernández, and Diego Valentín Díaz, polychromer, or between Juan Martínez

Fig. 3 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail *Saint Paul*, polychrome, walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

Montañés and Francisco Pacheco, polychromer. In spite of the modern stereotyped image we have of the masters in polychromy as that of being professionals subordinate to the sculptors, we must admit that on many occasions, at least during the XVIth century, these craftsmen were considered of the same level from an economic point of view. We must remember that it was sometimes more expensive to have an image polychromed than to have it sculptured according to the standpoint of their importance in the contract.⁷ A good example of all this is the figure of the great polychromer León Picardo⁸. We should, therefore, not be surprised at the high cost of gilding and polychromy and at the noteworthy consideration enjoyed by the masters responsible for carrying out the polychrome work, which signified a long complicated process including much technique but no less artistic creativity.⁹

As we have previously indicated, it was a habitual practice in Hispanic polychromed sculpture that the art of sculpture and of polychromy should each be carried out independently. Very few were the masters who effected both tasks. One of these exceptional cases is Alonso Berruguete, perhaps the most important artist of the XVIth century, due to his particular educational process, which was essentially pictorial. In this sense the transcendental quality of Berruguete's works arises in conceiving the work of art as a whole, originating in the idea developed in the artist's mind until it reached completion. His works, through the carving and polychromy processes, are extraordinary examples of the creative nature and absolute genius of the author. (Fig 2) (Fig 3)



Alonso Berruguete and Polychromy

Although we know with fairly adequate precision the types of shapes, sources and models employed by Alonso Berruguete when he crafted his altarpieces and sculptures, his polychromed works still remain insufficiently studied, particularly in terms of its technique and the ornamental models employed by the master. However, when we initiate an analysis of his polychromies we are convinced by the special transcendence of these artistic tasks, executed without interruption during the specific sculptural operations.^{(Fig2) (Figs)}

We must bear in mind that Alonso Berruguete initially trained in the workshop of his father Pedro where, besides working on narrative painting, polychromy was also undertaken in collaboration with the sculptor Alejo de Vahía. Alonso Berruguete goes to Italy as a painter where he trains from 1504 onwards surrounded by the great painters of the Quattrocento¹¹ and of the new generation who will mark out the modern aesthetic paths of Italian Cinquecento art. In fact, Alonso Berruguete participates actively in the movement of the “*comprimari*”, who contributed to establish the aesthetics of the first Mannerism.¹² During his time in Italy (1504-1518), Berruguete undertook a powerful change in his art following the most “advanced currents”. In Italy he came into contact with Michelangelo, Bramante and some of the great Florentine masters, acquiring training in painting, sculpture and architecture. On his return to Spain in 1518 he was essentially involved in sculptural work, though some of his first activities are connected with the pictorial medium, such as the mural paintings of the Capilla Real of Granada and later in his narrative paintings effected for the altarpieces of the monastery of San Benito in Valladolid or at the college of Santiago de Fonseca in Salamanca.^(Fig 4)

In accordance with Berruguete’s consideration as an artist “*a la italiana*”, his great altarpiece productions were viewed as works reflecting the incorporation of Italian styles into Spanish art. Berruguete conceived his altarpieces as comprehensive creations. His work, including architectural design, frequently echoes Bramante and the “*Cinquecentistas*”, sculptural work in which we can observe traces of classical art like the *Laoconte*.^(Fig. 5) He also echoed artists of the “*Quattrocento*” like Donatello, whose fluid, nervous and perpetually moving style clearly reveal Roman, but above all Florentine echoes. In this process of conceiving the work as a whole, we should consider that the artist could not fail to initially wonder how polychrome designs would look like in the overall structure of the altarpiece and how the skin of the sculptural work would appear, since polychromy is an essential element in determining the overall presence of a work of art. We must underline that Berruguete considered himself skilled at all the tasks involved in polychromy, since in 1522, shortly after settling down in Spain, he was commissioned by contract to polychrome the altarpiece of Oviedo Cathedral. However, in the end, for economic reasons and for problems encountered with the “*Cabildo Ovetense*”, the work was given to León Picardo, painter and gilder of French origin, who settled in Burgos¹³ and whose style as polychromer differed noticeably from that of Berruguete’s productions.

Fig 4 Alonso Berruguete, detail of the altarpiece of the Chapel of the Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca Salamanca. Circa 1529.





It is evident that Berruguete conceived art as an idea, as a comprehensive project, in line with the Italian conception of an artistic creation.¹⁴ But there is no doubt that the master also bore in mind huge artistic projects as business companies in which the economic factor was always present. Consequently it was much more profitable for him to carry out all the production processes, including the polychromy, which was by no means the least costly.¹⁵ The frustrated project of Oviedo demonstrates the fact that, since his return to Spain, Berruguete was ready to undertake polychrome tasks on a large scale. There is no information in contracts with other professionals who, once the sculpture work was designed and carved by Berruguete, would have independently contracted polychrome work. For this reason, we must think that the master acted in the polychrome processes of his altarpieces directly or through his workshop and that he would receive notable consideration not only as a narrative painter but also as a polychromer.^{16, 17}

Fig. 5. *Laocoön*, 300 - 40 BC, Marble, Musei Vaticani.



Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

René Payo Hernanz

Fig 6 **Alonso Berruguete**, *altarpiece* of the Chapel of Santiago de Fonseca College, Salamanca. 1529-1532.



The Polychromy of Saint Peter and Saint Paul

The two sculptures we are now studying are assigned to Alonso Berruguete's gouge. I consider the hypothesis studied by Prof. Jesús María Parrado del Olmo⁽¹⁷⁾ to be very relevant here. It argues that the sculptures could have proceeded from the original niches situated at the now lost "predella" of the Colegio Santiago de Fonseca altarpiece in Salamanca, made in about 1529, during the same period of the big altarpiece of San Benito of Valladolid.^(Fig 6) We do not know exactly when these two sculptures could have disappeared from the Santiago de Fonseca altarpiece, but they were certainly not present in 1832 when Pedro Micó undertook to restore the altarpiece and was commissioned to make two sculptures of San Pedro and San Pablo for the first body of the altarpiece.¹⁸ The similarity in shape that the pair of sculptures presents to the rest of the Salamanca altarpieces persuades us to firmly assign them to Berruguete who, according to Pons, was contracted to personally undertake the carving of the sculptures of this "retablo". On the other hand, regarding the details and elements of the polychromy of this pair of sculptures, its extraordinary similarity in quality to the most outstanding and well-preserved polychromies at the Fonseca altarpiece, mainly the "estofados" of the Pietà, reinforces the attribution of both sculptures to Berruguete.



Fig 7 **Alonso Berruguete**, *detail Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

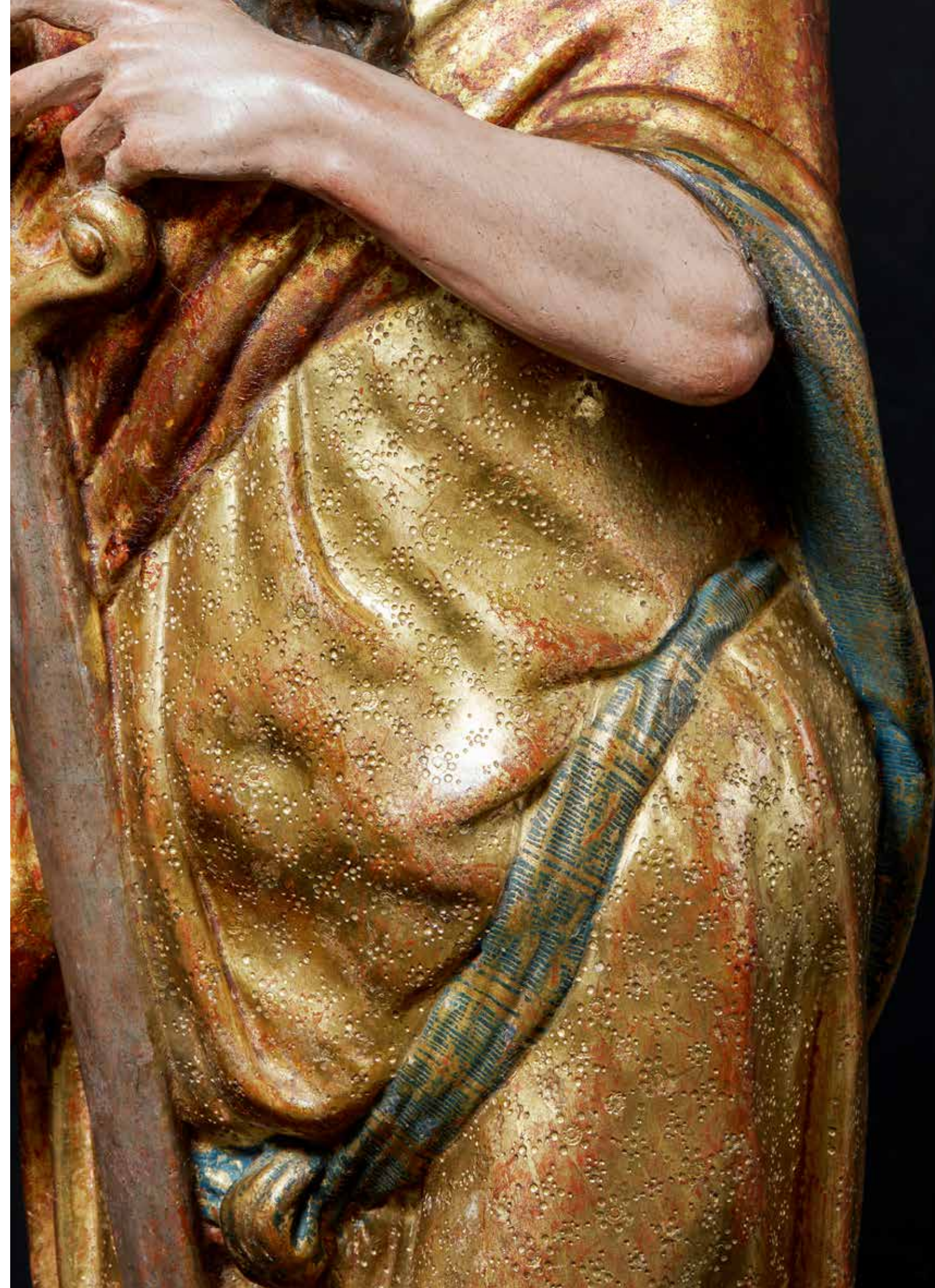


Fig. 8 **Alonso Berruguete**, *detail Saint Paul*, polychrome, walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

The sculpture of Saint Peter presents ample and swirling vestments that have remained magnificently polychromed.^(Fig 7) The cloak, which is elegantly gathered, is golden on its outward side. Here we see die-cast designs making an ornamental network that creates a perfectly balanced drawing adapted to the different folds on the cloth. We have observed in these folds at least three different “punzones” (punches). One of them has a larger diameter and is composed of a central circle around which are gathered small circles, as well as other simpler circles, each of which has a different size, distinguishing it from the rest. The care given to this geometric play of die-cast punches seems to point to the proof that we are dealing with a piece of sculpture made to be seen at a lower level. The above-mentioned geometric details were not usually observed in altitude since the high altitude would precisely render these designs invisible. For this reason the polychrome treatment was carefully employed, and this special care also serves to confirm the direct intervention of the master in these tasks, as he would naturally reserve his time for the objects which would attract special scrutiny by interested observers.^{(Fig. 8) (Fig 9)}

Fig 9 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail of *corla*, polychrome, walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.

A very exceptional and unique aspect of this sculpture of Saint Peter is that, in some areas, the inside of his cloak appears to be turned out and presents “corladuras” with golden designs and “estofados esgrafiados”, which are a contrast to the external area of the gilded cloak.^{(Fig 9)(Fig 12)} These “corlas” were made with “colofonia”,¹⁹ as indicated in the studies made after restoration.²⁰ Although the use of “corlas” was not common in Hispanic polychromy, it was even more unusual to observe sophisticated decorations (“esgrafiados”) on them, in gold upon a reddish background, which appears to be bol (first imprimatura applied to sculpture before being polychromed). Furthermore, what is most exceptional is that these “esgrafiados” placed on “corlas” could have resisted time and even survive, as they frequently have disappeared.^{21 (Fig 10)} In this case, the “esgrafiados” represent a geometric cross-shaped design indicating a kind of vegetable motif that is easily adapted to the swaying gathering of the cloak. These “corlas” with the decorative motifs are connected to the polychrome designs in some of the sculptures at the altarpiece of San Benito of Valladolid, like the “Sibilas”, where we find similar ornamental elements – though in this case their poor state of condition has ruined the “corlas”, which could have enriched the polychromy of these figures. The contrast in colour shown in Saint Peter’s vestments are even more striking in the sashes of his cloak, where a magnificent decoration with “esgrafiado” is achieved. That is, applying a coat of blue paint (“azurita”) upon the gold, which is carefully taken out and removed; thanks to this exquisite technique, creating simple stylised vegetal decorations arranged horizontally to shine forth^(Fig. 13).

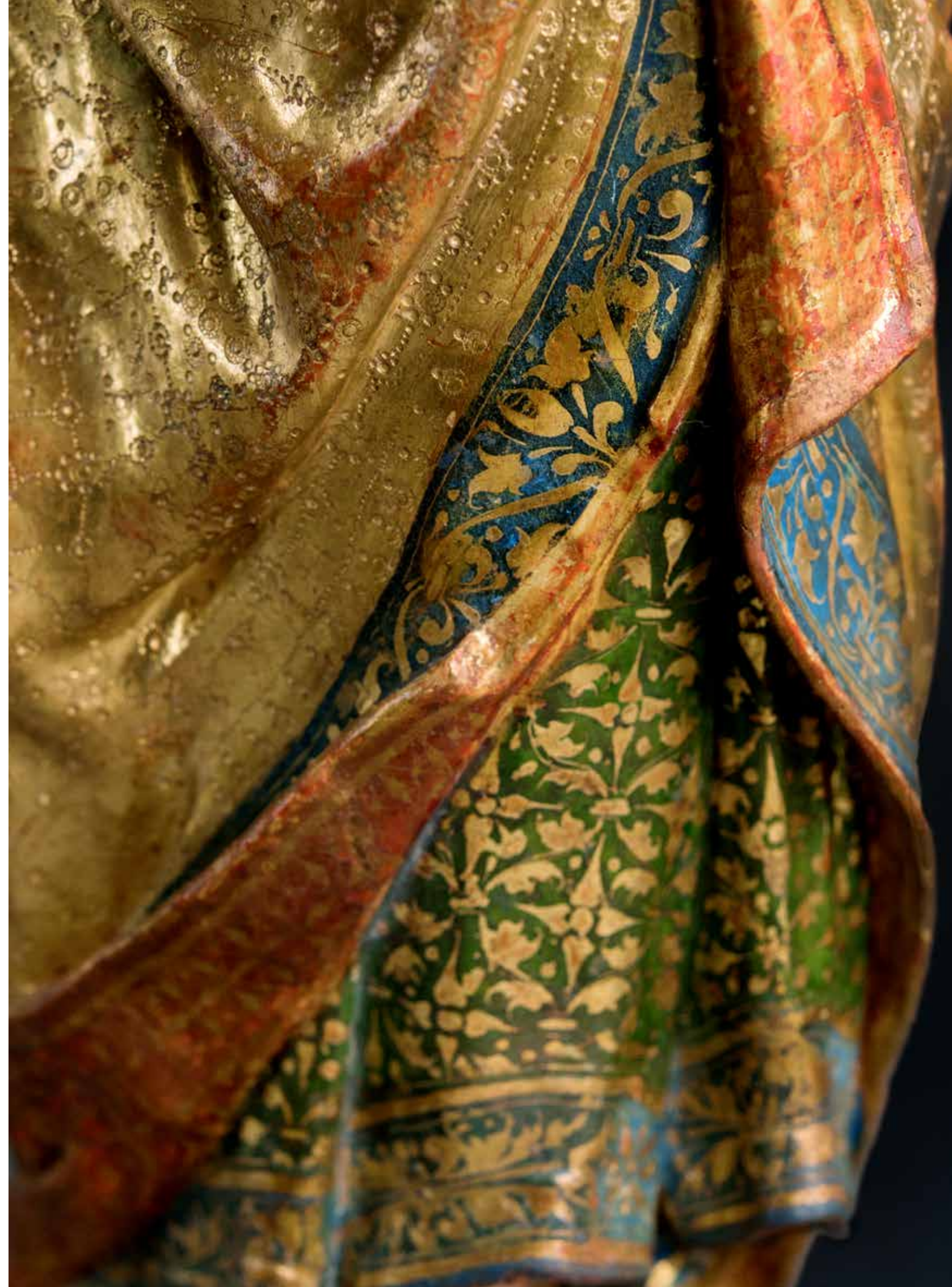
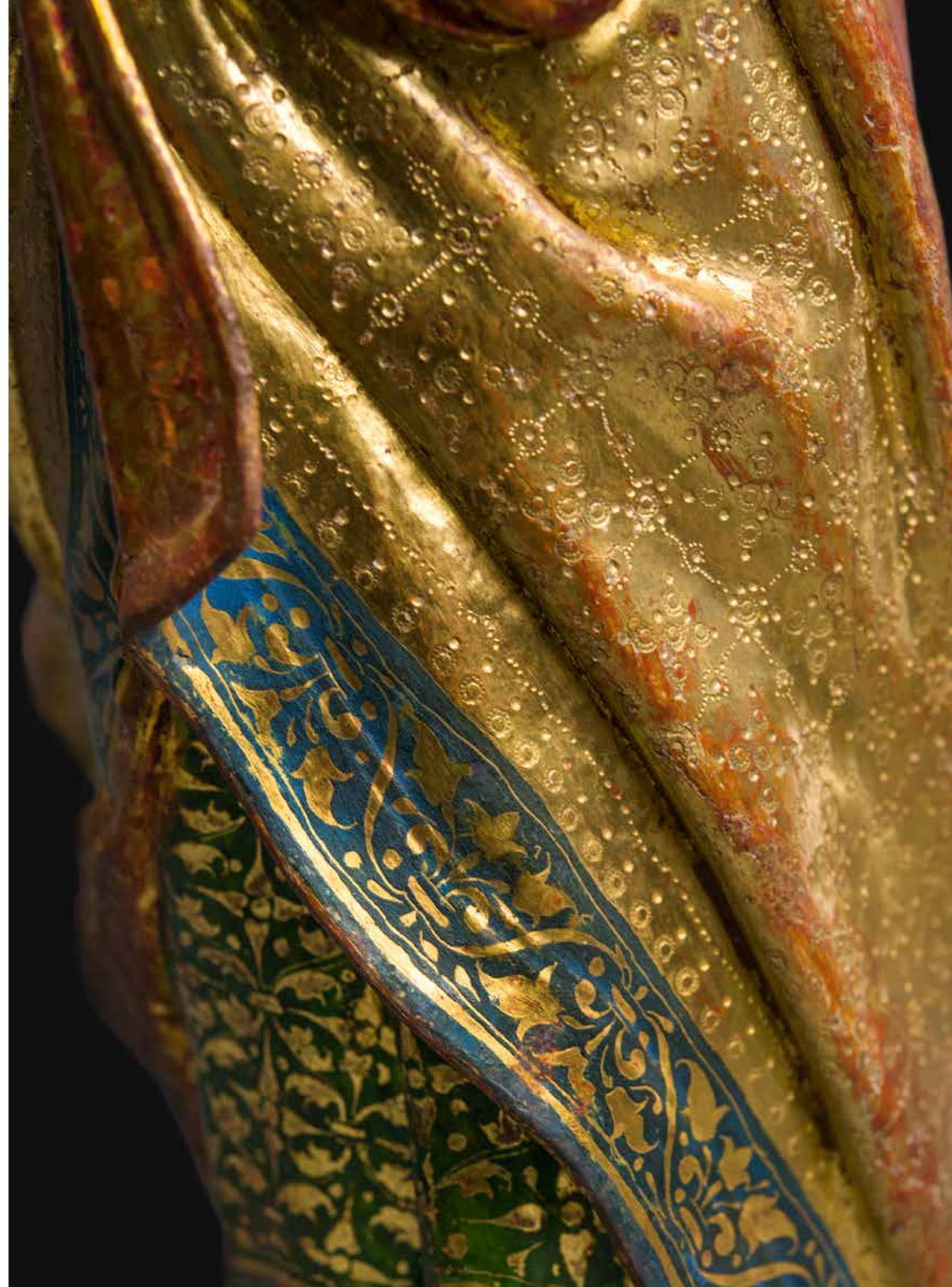




Fig 10 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail, IOMR Collection.

Fig 11 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail of sash, IOMR Collection.



Under the cloak appears the tunic on which is the coat of paint laid over the gold – in this case, green (*cardenillo*) – and a decoration is formed by means of the “*esgrafiado*” technique, creating motives which remind us of “*a candelieri*” decorations, due to their vertical symmetry in “*moresca*” style (also formed by stylised vegetation).^(Fig 12) The inner sides of the sleeves of the tunic appear at the edges turned out and are also “*estofado*” (quilted) this time in a blue (*azurita*) colour and line-shaped “*esgrafiados*” that allow the underlying gold to be seen in circular shapes.^(Fig 10) These simple motifs, presented by linear “*esgrafiados*”, also appear in many sculptures of the Fonseca high altarpiece at Salamanca, in the high altarpiece of San Benito. Above all, we have to point out the similarities in execution with that of the cloak of the Virgin at the altarpiece of the Wise Kings in the church of Santiago in Valladolid.^(Fig 13) ^(Fig 14) ^(Fig 15)

The contrast between blue, green, and gold allows the creation of an outstanding high quality interplay of light, which we believe would be intensified by the use of candles. Since this sculpture would have been situated at the “*predella*” of the altarpiece, the beams of light would converge on it. In this sense, in the restorer’s report it is indicated that one of the most outstanding alterations achieved during the restoration process was the cleaning of the dirt accumulated on the sculptures, produced by the smoke of the burning candles and chandeliers placed at the base of the altarpiece. The sculptures were appreciably darkened by all this and even stained with wax from the sputtering candles. This evidence confirms the fact that we are confronting two sculptures which were situated at the “*predella*” of the altarpiece and therefore the master was extremely careful to enhance the beams of light on the gold contrasting with the blue and green of the “*estofados*”.



Fig 12 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail, IOMR Collection.

Alonso Berruguete. Comparison of polychromies, (Fig 13) *Pietà* of the Chapel of Santiago de Fonseca College, Salamanca, (Fig 14) *Holy family*, altarpiece Wise Kings of Church of Santiago, Valladolid; (Fig 15) *figure of altarpiece of the Monastery of San Benito*, Valladolid, (Fig 16), detail of *Saint Peter*, IOMR Collection.



Fig 17 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail, hands, IOMR Collection.

Fig 18 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail, feet, IOMR Collection.

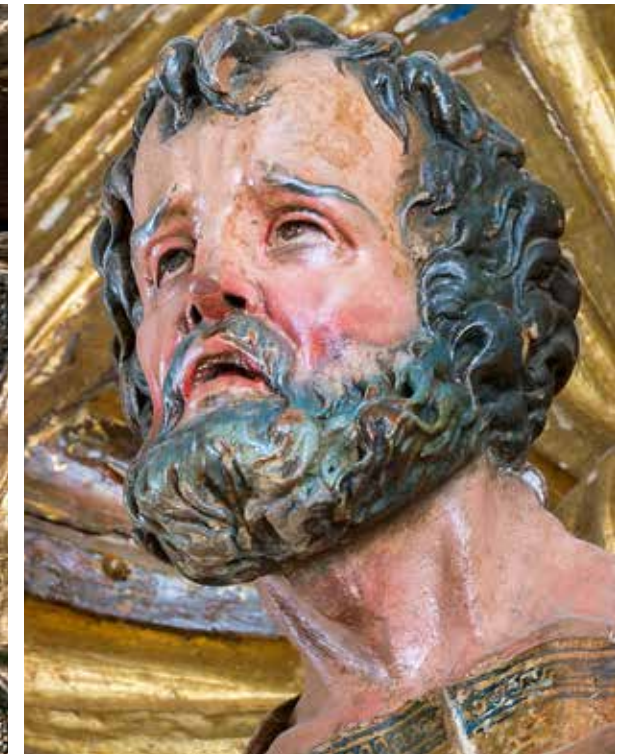
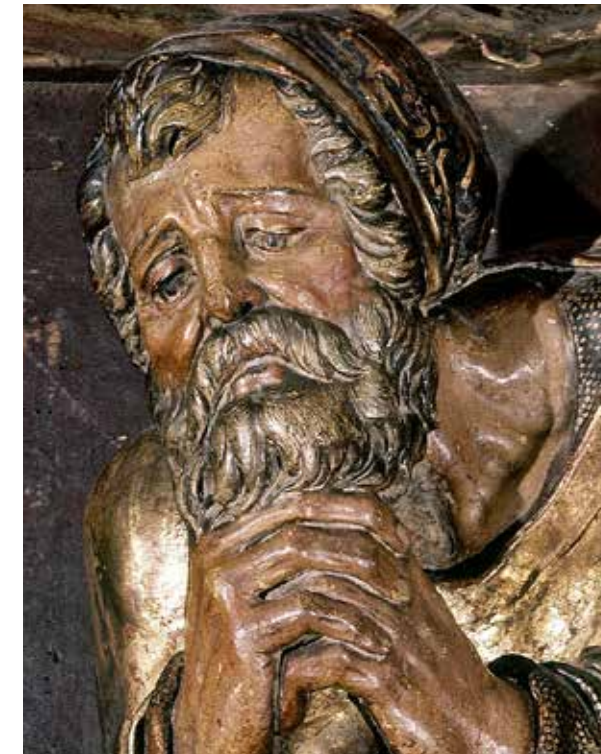


The flesh tones in this sculpture of Saint Peter's feet, arms, hands and head were effected in an incipient polishing technique, "técnica a pulimento con vejiga", which is quite exceptional since in the XVIth century matt flesh tones were more frequent.^(Fig 16) They were produced on the saint's body with subtle shades of colour that tend to indicate from a volumetric standpoint the different zones of the body. Again, light is used to emphasize shape in a most skilled polychrome technique.²² According to the restorer's report, unpolished traces of brush strokes of oil paint between the toes and between the fingers still persist, probably due to the difficult access of the "vejiga" to these small hollow spaces or to the particular way of finishing his works, which we can see in many of Berruguete's polychrome sculptures.^{(Fig 17) (Fig 18)}

Fig 16 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail, IOMR Collection.



Comparison, (Fig 19) *detail face of Saint Peter*, IOMR collection, (Fig 20) /*Saint Joseph, Epiphany*, of the Church of Santiago, Valladolid.1539, (Fig 21) *Apostle*, Altarpiece of the Chapel of the Santiago de Fonseca College.



The process of polychroming reached a special virtuosity in the treatment of hair, where the relief work carved in the wood was visibly enhanced by pictorial technique effected by paint brush.^{(Fig 16)(Fig 21)} This was especially visible in the eyebrows, but above all in the beard and hair, where some locks are carved and others are just polychromed, creating a symbiosis between pictorial and sculptural techniques. The ones only painted on a flat surface without any carving create a notably naturalistic sensation just as it appears in other works by the master, specifically in the beard and hair of the principal figures of the high altarpiece of San Benito and those of the Wise Kings at Santiago Church in Valladolid. Saint Peter's head of hair and beard have grey and ash-grey tones, although to enliven the effect, small touches of light were added with the tip of the paintbrush on the polychromy of the beard, which not only contribute divinely to enhance the rays of light, but also to create the sensation of greater space. This can only be appreciated in works well preserved and where the hand of the master appears, as in the above-mentioned altarpiece of the Church of Santiago.^{(Fig 19) (Fig 20) (Fig 21)}

Fig 22 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail of eyes, IOMR Collection.

Fig 23 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Sebastián*, San Benito Monastery, Valladolid, currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.



Where polychrome manages to exalt the aesthetic and psychological elements of this work to a maximum degree is, without doubt, in the treatment of facial features, where shades of colour are employed in the flesh tones of the forehead, cheek bones and nose. The wood carving shows a tendency towards pathos (Fig 26) (Fig 27) with echoes of Laoconte. The master emphasises the profound sentiments of the protagonist with a wise use of the pictorial resources of the eyes, in which the master uses blue tones similar to those of the San Sebastian of San Benito in Valladolid, (Fig 22) (Fig 23) the half-open mouth, in which the red tones of lips contrast with the white colour of teeth, and the wrinkles, where the sculpture is enhanced by the pictorial work of the paintbrush. (Fig 26) (Fig 27) All this contributes to the external manifestation of the internal life of the Apostle, which Berruguete so brilliantly achieves in most of his creations, fusing together the pictorial and sculptural effects, of which this pair of sculptures is a magnificent example. (Fig 24) (Fig 25) (Fig 26) (Fig 27)

Fig 24 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail mouth, IOMR Collection.

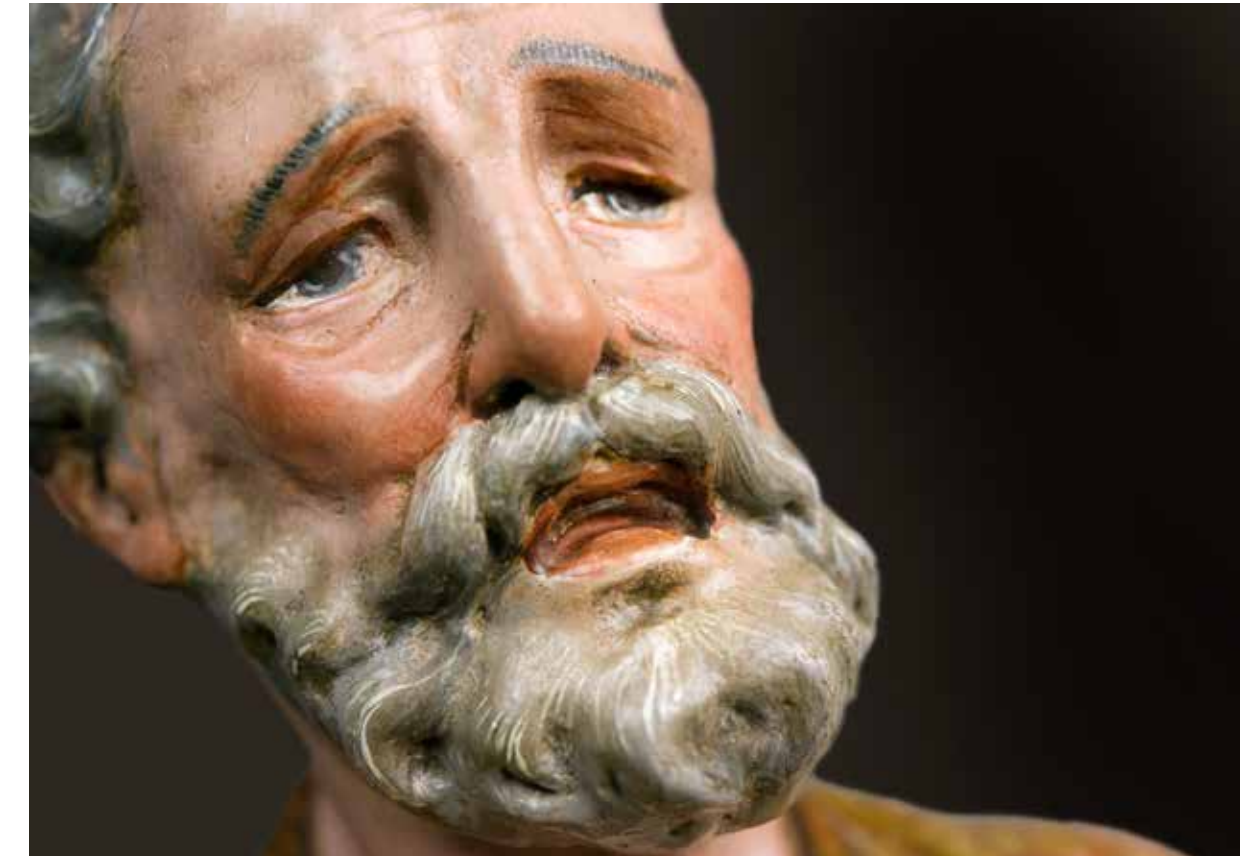


Fig 25 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint John*, detail mouth, Monastery of San Benito currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.



Fig 26 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, IOMR Collection. →

Fig 27 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Sebastián*, San Benito Monastery, Valladolid, currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid. → →



Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*,
IOMR Collection.

If the work of polychromy in the sculpture of Saint Peter manifests great quality, no less interest is claimed for the sculpture of Saint Paul which, although at first sight seems a simpler work, it presents noteworthy peculiarities.^(Fig. 27) The Saint Paul is covered by an ample cloak, gathered at his shoulders and arms and also decorated with “corlas” and “esgrafiado” details. If the sculpture of Saint Peter presents cruciformed design, in Saint Paul’s “corlas” the esgrafiado motifs are enriched with small circular designs surrounding larger circles, which form groups that seem to represent the shapes of vegetables set up in the same “boll” background. The problem is that these “corlas esgrafiadas” are even more complex than those carried out in Saint Peter’s case, both using colofonia in matt “boll background” to create an incredible sensation of depth and of a nearly kaleidoscopic effect that magically changes according to the different angles from which one can view the sculpture. No doubt this is the best testimony of the masterly skill needed to create such decorations entailing supremely subtle contrasts as well as complex designs.^(Fig. 28)

The tunic appears here golden, adorned with decorative geometric “troquelados”, forming an ornamental network with many similarities to Saint Peter’s cloak, although the “retícula”, which is perfectly adapted to the material, is not exactly the same as that of the sculpture. The visible parts of the inside of the cloak are decorated with “esgrafiado” quilting (estofado), in which only lines are developed and in which the blue paint “azurita”, once it has been partly removed, allows the underlying gold to be seen. The same occurs with the waistband (cíngulo), which ties the tunic.^(Fig. 29) The ornamental motifs in this girdle and on the inside of the cloak are very simple and are limited to merely lines. Quite different is the case of the sash, which surrounds the bottom of the tunic, next to the feet, where a quilting (estofado) adornment arranged with “esgrafiado” technique is developed and where the underlying green paint shows the extremely rich gold designs, which draw a collection of stylised “gruteschi” arranged horizontally. There is a striking similarity in design, carving and polychromy with the San Benito Altarpiece.^{(Fig. 30) (Fig. 31)}



Fig 28 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, detail "Corla", IOMR Collection.

Fig 29 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, detail of the "cingulo", IOMR Collection.



Fig 30 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, detail of sash, IOMR Collection.

Fig 31 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Levi*, Monastery of San Benito Valladolid currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



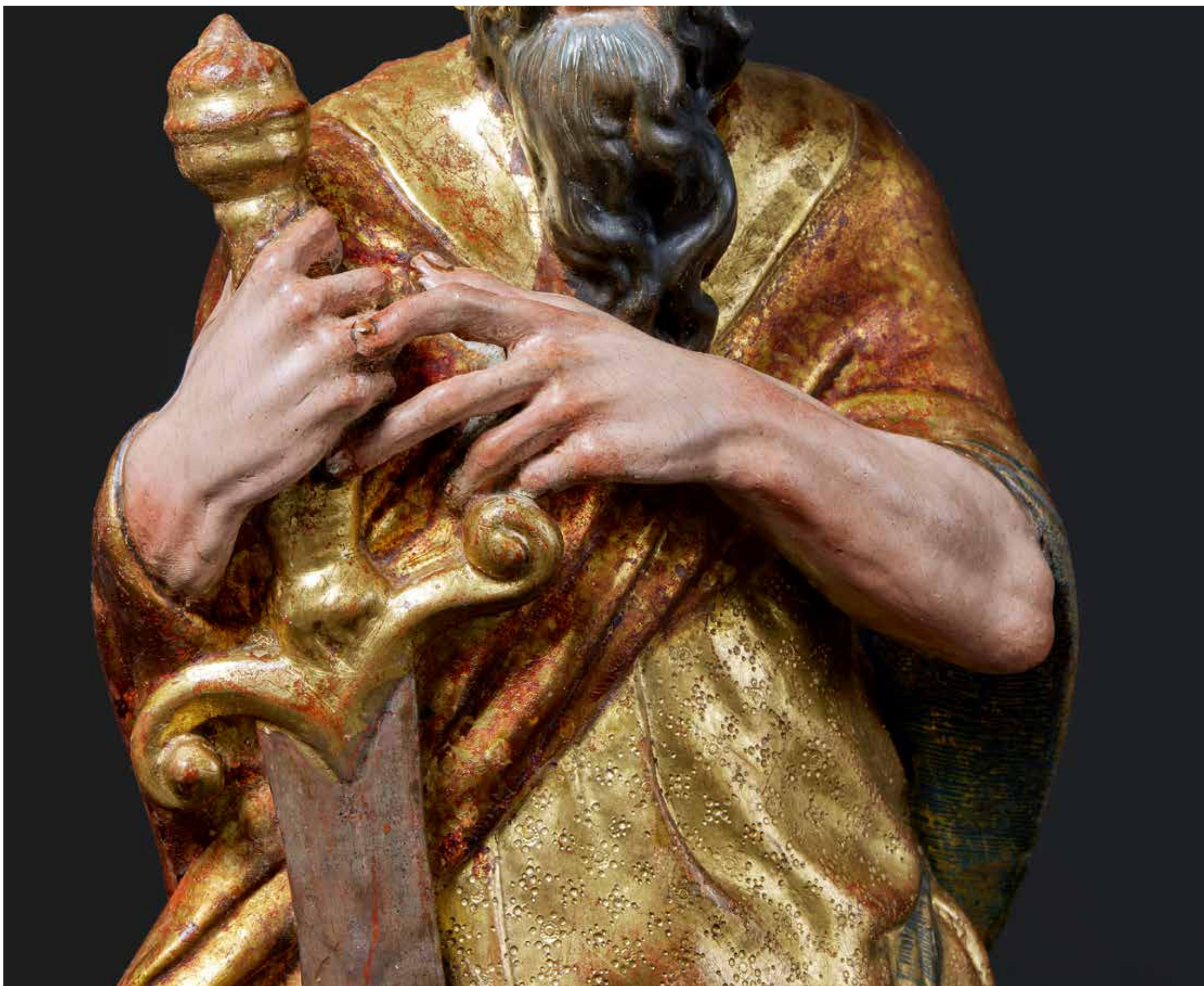


Fig 32 Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*, detail, IOMR Collection.

The sculpture of Saint Paul offers less contrast in colour than the San Pedro, because it does not show with equal strength the “esgrafiados” on top of such potent colours as the blues and greens, which in San Pablo’s sculpture take up much less space. The latter sculpture also remained covered by a thick layer of dirt coming from the smoke of candles and stains of wax from sputtering candles. All this served to prove that both sculptures were situated in the “predella” or bench below the high altarpiece of the chapel of Santiago de Fonseca College. The sword, the attribute that identifies Saint Paul, was silver-plated but, as the restorer’s report indicates, the oxidation and decay were irreversible. In its original state, the contrast between the gold dominating the vestments and the silver beams of the sword must have been remarkable.

Just like in San Pedro’s case, in this sculpture the flesh tones are polished up at the extremities of hands and feet as well as the face. Here we also notice that the “vejiga” (the instrument used to polish) has difficulty reaching certain zones situated between toes and fingers. The strength that the master has given in this sculpture to the carving of arms, hands^(Fig 32) and feet^(Fig 33) is a remarkable “tour de force” making vigorous and nervous shapes. It is brought out by the colour given to realistic flesh tones, where various shades of colour draw attention to certain zones like the fingers, which are beautifully rendered with nails indicated in white from the tip of a paintbrush. The extremely expressive nature of the feet, derived from their violent and Manneristic posture, is also empowered by polychromy. In this area sandals and their straps are painted.^(Fig 30) ^(Fig 33)



Fig 33 Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*, detail, IOMR Collection.



Fig 36 **Alonso Berruguete**,
Detail of *Saint Andrew*, 1539 - 1542, high
choir stalls, Cathedral of Toledo.



Fig 34 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint
Paul*, profile, IOMR Collection.

The remarkable expressivity of this image lies above all in the face, which is not only due to the strength of the sculpture work. Here the polychromy plays an important role. Skin is satisfactorily represented by various flesh tones, painting cheekbones darker, which helps to create a noteworthy sensation of realism. The treatment of the long beard and hair is especially virtuoso and in greyish tones. A few locks of hair stand out thanks to very accurate colour treatment made with a very thin paintbrush, enhancing the difference between darker and lighter tones.^{(Fig 34) (Fig 35)} We also see parts of the beard and hair extended through pictorial finishing in plain areas, which creates a clear sensation of naturalistic realism such as that we can see in some of the figures of the altarpiece of San Benito.^{(Fig 30) (Fig 34)} Eyebrows, eyes and mouth also stand out due to brushwork that gives the figure great psychological strength. The asymmetric character with which the sculptor shows us a face, so as to give a different sensation depending on the spectator's angle of vision, emerges in an exceptional way due to the action of the polychromy. If the expressive force and the manifestation of pathos in the sculpture of Saint Peter are evident, these values are no less outstanding in this image of Saint Paul.^{(Fig 34) (Fig 36)}



Fig 35 **Alonso Berruguete**, detail, *Apostol/ Patriarch*, Monastery of San Benito currently at the Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.

The ornamental motifs correspond to models in fashion at the time, many of them of Italian origin, with which Berruguete could have been familiar during his stay in Italy and could have introduced in Spain by means of printed plates he may have bought or from drawings he could have made.²³ It seems that these “esgrafiado” designs are taken from essays accompanied by decorative models that served as a source of inspiration to weavers and textile manufacturers. Thus we find many similarities between the sashes and “estofados esgrafiados” of San Pedro’s vestment and some of the plates included in the book by Francesco di Pellegrino²⁴ in which “morescos” appear that are similar to the decorations on the sculptures. There are also parallels occurring with those we find in the book by Alessandro Paganino or in the one by Domenico da Sera il Franciosino, both published in 1532, but whose printed editions must have circulated previously during the time when the master was active in Italy.²⁵

Fig 37 **Andrés de Melgar**, detail polychromy, Altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, La Rioja.



Polychromy in the Sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in the context of the sculptural Polychromy of Castile during the XVIth century: an interpretation

If we analyse the polychromy of these sculptures, as well as of the rest of the altarpiece of the Colegio de Fonseca and even of the altarpiece of the Monastery of San Benito in Valladolid, and we compare them with other important polychrome activities during this time carried out in other great sculptural collections, we may extract the main feature of Berruguete's polychromes: his greater simplicity in the "estofados" designs – compared with the production of other workshops – combined with an extraordinary use of golden surfaces. But this greater simplicity in what is merely ornamental – which is not to be confused with the treatment of the flesh tones – in no sense diminishes its value, as that is the result of a conscious and premeditated decision, which tends to create a correspondingly homogeneous final result.

Fig 38 **Andrés de Melgar**, detail polychromy, Altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, La Rioja.



In fact, if we compare the pictorial work on these two sculptures with the polychromes by León Picardo, Andrés de Espinosa and Andrés Melgar – to cite three great polychromers who work in the castilian zones around 1530 – we will understand the great differences between the workshops.

León Picardo was a Frenchman settled in Burgos who substituted Berruguete in the tasks of gilding and polychroming the altarpiece of the Cathedral of Oviedo in 1529.²⁶ The work of this master, who was also a noteworthy painter of history, stands out due to his use of "troquelados", "corlas" and very realistic matt flesh tones. His "esgrafiado" design was characterised by geometric lines and wide bands of striking quality and complexity.²⁷ The supremely virtuoso polychrome work of Picardo stands out, above all, in polychrome works for the great patrons of art, such as the high altarpiece of San Pedro in the Capilla del Condestable in Burgos, where Picardo had to adapt his skill to the gouges of Diego de Siloé and Felipe Bigarny, which forced him to craft a supremely virtuoso work that would not clash with his work on wood.

On the other hand, the co-citizen of Burgos, Andrés de Espinosa, was also a great polychromer, among whose outstanding creations are the altarpiece of the "Piedad" of the church of San Miguel de Oñate and the altarpieces of the Capilla Mayor and the Capilla del Sagrario of Palencia Cathedral, in which Espinosa worked in association with other collaborators such as his brother Alonso de Espinosa and Cristóbal de Herrera. All these works were carried out between 1525 and 1540.²⁸ Among the more important of these productions are the "estofado" (quilting), whether "esgrafiado" or executed with paintbrush, which was a very complicated operation, occasionally employing "grutescos", a kind of decoration which never appears in the work of Leon Picardo.

Fig 39 **Andrés de Melgar**, detail polychromy, altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, La Rioja.



Andrés Melgar was reared in Berruguete's workshop, from whom Melgar learned his craft between 1523 and 1526. He also developed great skill as an independent painter both in narrative scenes painted on wood panel and in work in gilding and in "estofados".²⁹ When he was installed in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, he carried out intensive professional work in the mid-1530 decade. Without any doubt, his first important operation was to carry out the polychromy of the high altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, carved by Damián Forment since 1537,³⁰ and whose polychromy was initiated in 1539.³¹ In the same way as Picardo with the altarpieces of the Capilla del Condestable, Melgar armed himself with his best talent at that moment so as to collaborate with Forment, one of the giants of Spanish sculpture of the day.³²

Fig 40 **Andrés de Melgar**, detail polychromy, altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, La Rioja.



Picardo, like Espinosa and Melgar, found himself in the critical situation of intervening in works undertaken by great master sculptors. They did not belong to their workshops so they were not subject to their decisions, and, in any case, they wished their production to be marked with a stamp of their own. Yet, both these sculptures of San Pedro and San Pablo – like the rest of the altarpiece of the Colegio de Fonseca in Salamanca and the sculptures included in the altarpieces of San Benito and of the church of Santiago in Valladolid – were works executed by Berruguete himself or under his direction during all the phases of their work. It is therefore normal that the master should strive from the beginning to establish a clear balance between the carving and polychrome operations. The relatively greater simplicity presented by these sculptures compared with the work of the other polychromers mentioned is not due to an attempt to economise resources and time, but instead to make the final result constitute a balanced work. This objective, undoubtedly, would sometimes not be achieved if the polychromer worked on carvings by another artist. Perhaps excessive pictorial adornment of a merely virtuoso nature could partly hide the true value of the sculpturing as, in fact, occurs in some sculptures polychromed by Picardo, Espinosa and Melgar, though never observed in the works polychromed by Berruguete. Therefore it is not correct to declare that the polychromies executed by Berruguete were of less quality, solely by virtue of his having broadly accepted the profuse decorations employed by other polychromy professionals. On the contrary, the characteristics of the pictorial treatment of many of Berruguete's productions, to which class these sculptures precisely belong, is not due to Berruguete's technical incapacity nor to his ignorance of the complicated repertoire of decorative ornaments that were being employed in many workshops specialised in polychromy at that time, and which Berruguete, with his broad artistic training, knew perfectly well, but to his clear intention to undertake a symbiosis between design, carving and pictorial features, interpreting, as we have said, the work as a whole. Consequently this simplicity in "gruteschi", "candelieri", "zoomorphic" and "anthropomorphic" figures and in the vestments represented is due to a conscious intention to control ab initio, when the idea was conceived by the master, the creative process, so that neither of the two operations – the carving and the polychroming – should impose itself on the other^(figs. 37-40).



NOTES

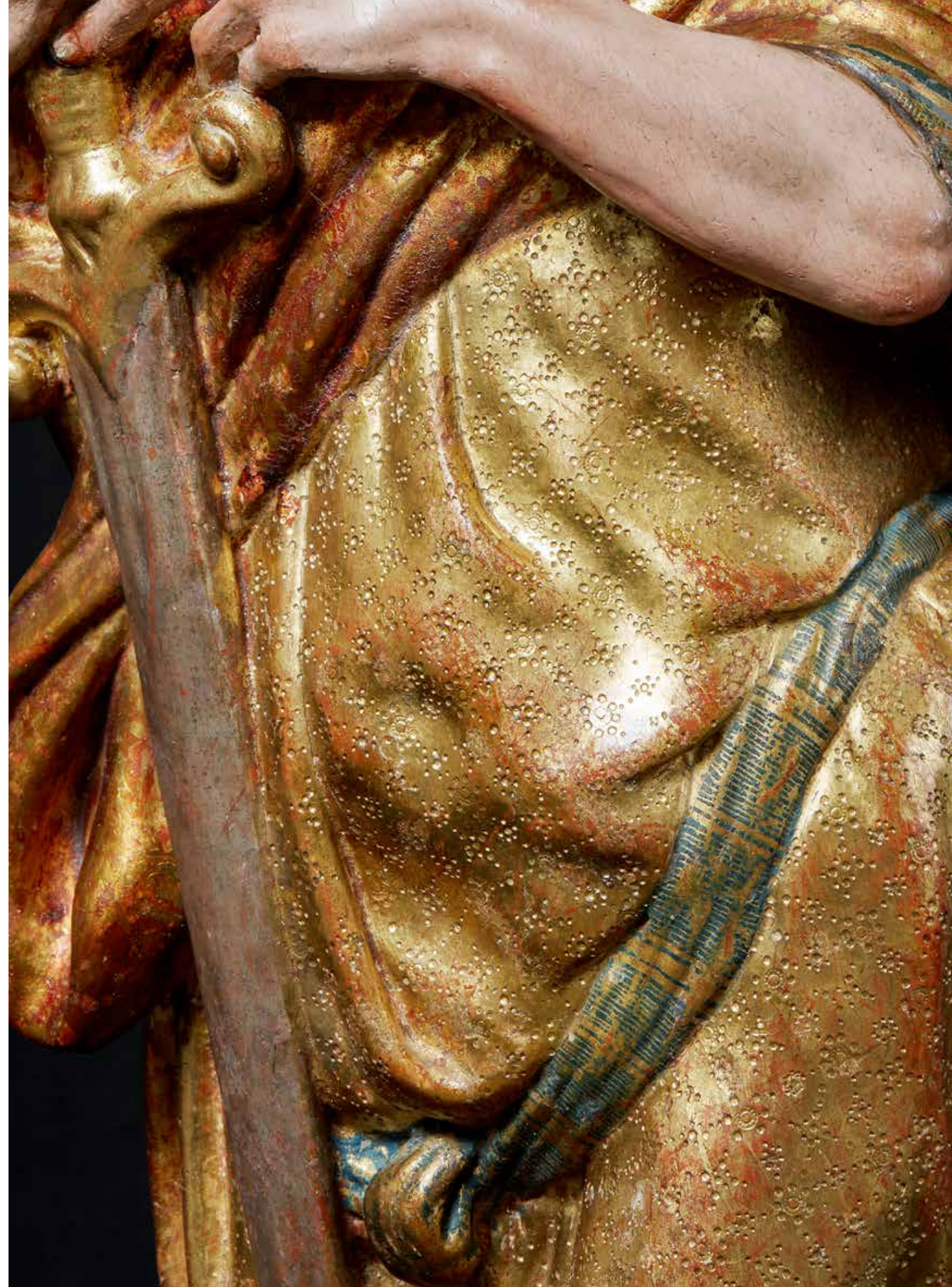
- 1 The magnificent polychromy of these sculptures, which is in an excellent state of condition due to the restoration process carried out by the Empresa Arte Valladolid which has consisted of cleaning, strengthening of the pictorial material and of a few cracks, and with the help of short treatment have integrated the structure into a whole piece again.
- 2 Dieulafoy, Marcel: *La statuaire polychrome en Espagne du XIIe au XV^e siècle*. Aragón et Castille. (Extrait de Monuments et mémoires publiés par l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, t. X, fasc. 2.) Paris, Leroux, 1904.
- 3 Although this artistic genre was not only developed in the Iberian zone and the American continent – as France, Italy and other European countries crafted polychromed wooden sculptures – in fact, the Spanish territories were the areas where, from the Early Middle Ages onwards, an incredible development arose and wooden polychromed sculptures of remarkably high quality were produced on a great scale. The high quality achieved in the production was to a great extent, due to the fine skill of the sculptor who must have been endowed with outstanding plastic and naturalistic talents to be able to infuse in his sculptures the living and realistic representation of his models; but it is no less true that in the final result the elaborate task of polychromy played a fundamental role.⁴ GÓMEZ MORENO, María Elena: *La policromía en la escultura española*, Escuela de Artes y Oficios, Madrid, 1943.
- 5 MARTÍN GONZÁLEZ, Juan José: “La policromía en la escultura castellana”, *Archivo español de Arte*, N^o 104, 1953, pág. 205 y ss.
- 6 In this respect, there existed noteworthy exceptions, like in Berruguete’s workshop which included, besides professional sculptors in wood, also professionals in painting and polychromy.
- 7 We think that in the complex process of contracting great groups of polychromed sculptures – as, for instance, in the case of altarpieces – that it would usually be a master gilder-polychromer who would contract the work. Bearing in mind that, in many instances, these professionals were also painters of historical subjects, it would not be surprising to us that they would collaborate on equal footing with sculptors and carvers and even that they would draw up the designs and contract the task which might lead later to subcontracting the tasks connected with carving the wood.
- 8 He attained the honour of appearing as one of the speakers in the work of Diego de Sagredo, *Medidas del Romano*, the first artistic treaty on the Spanish Renaissance.
- 9 After finishing the task of carving, a precautionary lapse of time was allowed to pass, which could vary from a few months to years, before the beginning of the polychroming process could start. This method was followed so that the wood would settle down, as frequently cracks might appear in the sculpture. For this reason, before initiating the task of priming, the small cracks which might have occurred were filled with size or with rags steeped in size, if the cracks were deep. So everything was ready to receive a coat of white size which was mixed with cooked and minced garlic to stimulate adherence and applied hot. Later, various coats of plaster were applied – usually between four and eight coats were applied – and it was considered essential to have a complete dry-out between each application of coating. Nearly all the treaties on polychromy point out that good painters do not need to use big priming equipment to carry out these tasks as the latter tools tended to produce a contrary effect and to make the reliefs blunt, though occasionally they made

them appear more outstanding. Once the priming was done, the sandpapering and polishing operations were effected by means of corresponding files. Various coats of “bol” were applied (following the above-mentioned method of applying coats of size) to the areas which were going to be gilt; this process, referring to the application of “bol”, was named “embolado” and ensured perfect adherence and also the outstanding gleam of the gold leaf which was applied with the utmost care in another phase of the process and later stretched out and polished up. Usually, the instructions, which were included in the contracts, contained prescriptions requiring that the gold, which was provided by “batihojas” should be of high quality. It was a common occurrence that at the last coat of plaster, before the “embolado” and the gilding processes, that decorations would be carved in relief and, above all, from the Baroque period onwards (though there were previous examples to the contrary during the XVIth century) that “elementos adventicios”, like jewellery, might be applied. The parts that remained golden could be decorated with designs stamped by “troqueles”. Normally, as soon as one part of the surface had been gilt, the process would continue with the “estofado”, which consisted of imitating sewing tasks on fabric or material. On the gold surface could be applied a delicate coat of oil or tempera painting and afterwards with a sharp-pointed instrument of wood or bone the “esgrafiado” process would be executed, or the precise removal of painting in certain previously selected places would occur, thus revealing the gold underneath. Both decorative operations were usually carried out at the same time. All this created a noteworthy quality well appreciated by spectators. The technique of the “corladura” was commonly used. Various types of varnish were applied on silver-plate with the purpose of imitating gold; this also led to the production of series of “esgrafiados”. Special care was given to the process of obtaining flesh tones (carnación). The parts of human anatomy which were visible were normally indicate in oil painting, though sometimes in tempera painting. Francisco Pacheco pointed out that this was one of the most delicate tasks of the whole process. These flesh tones could be produced “matt” or after polishing. When the intention was to manifest reality, decorum and gravity were best rendered in the matt flesh tones which in any case were predominant during the first half of the XVIth century. With infinite care and with the use of the tip of the paintbrush, anatomical features such as lips, eyes, ears, wrinkles, nails, etc... were made to stand out, as well as beards, eye-brows and which that created expressions and realistic aspects as appear in the sculptures we are now studying which are fine examples of the synthesis of all these techniques. (GONZÁLEZ ALONSO MARTÍNEZ, Enriqueta: *Tratado del dorado, plateado y su policromía*, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Servicio de Publicaciones, 1997; BARTOLOMÉ GARCÍA, Fernando: “Terminología básica de técnicas y materiales de la policromía”. *Akobe*, N^o 5, 2004, págs. 12-20).

- 10 The recent book by Manuel Arias Martínez is a magnificent study which synthesizes and extends the knowledge we have up to now on Alonso Berruguete. (ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, Manuel: *Alonso Berruguete. Prometeo de la escultura*, Diputación de Palencia, Basauri (Vizcaya), 2011).
- 11 VASARI, G.: *Le vite de’ Piv eccellenti pittori, scultori et architettori*, Milano, 1928-1930, vol. I, pp. 1267 y 469 n23.¹² LONGHI, Roberto: *Comprimari spagnoli della maniera italiana*, 1953, págs. 3-8.
- 13 FRONTÓN SIMÓN, Isabel María; PURAS HIGUERAS, Jesús

- María; PÉREZ CARRASCO, Francisco Javier: *Retablo Mayor de la Catedral de Oviedo*, Hidroeléctrica del Cantábrico, Oviedo, 1993, págs. 126-128.
- 14 Francisco de Holanda, in 1546, put in Michelangelo's mouth words which could refer to Berruguete: *Así afirmo que ninguna nación, ni gente (dejo estar uno o dos españoles) puede perfectamente hurtar ni imitar el modo de pintar de Italia, que es lo griego antiguo, que luego no sea conocido fácilmente por ajeno, por más que en eso se esfuerce y trabaje. Y si por algún grande milagro, alguno viniere a pintar bien, entonces, aunque no lo hiciese por remedar a Italia, se podrá decir que solamente pintó como italiano. Ansi que no se llama pintura de Italia cualquier pintura hecha en Italia, sino cualquiera que fuere buena y cierta... la cual aunque se hiciese en Flandes o en España (que más se aproxima con nosotros), si fuere buena, pintura será de Italia, porque esta nobilísima sciencia no es de tierra alguna, que del cielo vino, empero del antiguo Imperio quedó en nuestra Italia más que en otro reino del mundo...* (citado por ARIAS, Manuel: "Alonso de Berruguete en Italia y el sueño de un cuaderno de viaje", *Isimu. Revista sobre Oriente Próximo y Egipto en la Antigüedad*, Vol. 14-15, 2011, pág. 220).
- 15 PARRADO DEL OLMO, Jesús María: *Talleres escultóricos del siglo XVI en Castilla y León. Arte como idea. Arte como empresa comercial*, Universidad de Valladolid, 2002.
- 16 He would obviously be assisted in these tasks by apprentices and officials at his service. We know some masters who belonged to this entourage like the painter of historical events, Juan de Villoldo, or Andrés Melgar who worked with Berruguete between 1523 and 1526. Many more were the painters-polychromers who permanently belonged to Berruguete's workshop. Thus, in 1535, a youth called Jerónimo, son of the apothecary Íñigo de Santiago, was an apprentice at his service, with whom Berruguete encountered some problems. Besides, at that time various other apprentices and officials of this artistic group were working in the workshop. (ALONSO CORTÉS, Narciso: *Datos para la biografía artística de los siglos XVI y XVII*, Madrid, 1922, págs. 24-25).
- 17 Some of the scholars studying Berruguete's work have mentioned how he directly involves himself in the polychromy tasks in his well organised and specialised workshop, in which the dominating Master participates in the tasks with a numerous, active and well organised group of collaborators. (ARIAS, Manuel: *Las claves iconográficas del retablo de San Benito el Real, de Alonso Berruguete*, *Boletín del Museo Nacional de Escultura*, 205, págs. 14-27).
- 18 SENDÍN CALABUIG, Manuel: *El Colegio Mayor del Arzobispo Fonseca en Salamanca*. Salamanca, 1977, pp. 127-172.
- 19 "Colofonia" is a solid, translucent, brownish or yellowish resin which is obtained by distilling turpentine sourced in a pine tree. This was applied on top of the coat of paint and was removed with great care in certain spots, thus creating designs based on subtle contrasts in colour. This coat might gradually lose its effect with the passage of time and then the designs "esgrafiados" would also be lost.
- 20 AVA, Arte Valladolid: *Memoria final. Restauración de dos tallas de San Pedro y San Pablo*; Valladolid, 2016.
- 21 FUENTE, Luis de la: *Los metales plateados como policromía: Análisis, experimentación y restauración*. Tesis Doctoral, Universidad del País Vasco, 1993.
- 22 CARRASSÓN LÓPEZ DE LETONA, Ana: "Las encarnaciones y algunas reflexiones sobre sus tratamientos", *Revista Pátina*. Nº 13-14, 2006, págs. 87-94.
- 23 In the decorations of Saint Peter's tunic and in its borders we found some similarities to Italian engravings containing decorative designs which were in fashion, with a variety of models, throughout the first quarter of the XVIth century. (BERLINER, Rudolf: *Modelos ornamentales de los siglos XV al XVIII*, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, láminas 79-83).
- 24 Although this book *La Fleur de la science de portraiture. Patrons de broderie, façon arabicque et ytalique par Francisque Pellegrin*, was published in Paris in 1530, copies circulated in Italy years previously.
- 25 BYRNE, Jannet: "Patterns by Master F", *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, Vol. 14, 1979.
- 26 BARROSO VILLAR, Julia: "En torno al retablo mayor de la Catedral de Oviedo", *Imafronte*, Nº 3,4 y 4, 1987, 1988, 1989, págs. 5-7.
- 27 CUESTA, José y ARRIBAS, Filemón.: "El retablo de Oviedo II. La documentación del retablo", *Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología*, Nº 25, 1933, págs. 7-20 y ESTELLA MARCOS, Margarita: *La imaginería de los retablos de la Capilla del Condestable*, Asociación de Amigos de la Catedral de Burgos, Burgos, 1995.
- 28 ECHEVERRÍA GOÑI, Pedro Luis y MARTIARENA LASA, Xabier: *Retablo de la Capilla de la Universidad de Oñate*, Diputación Foral de Guipuzcoa, San Sebastián, 2006.
- 29 IBÁÑEZ PÉREZ, Alberto C. y PAYO HERNANZ, René Jesús: "Andrés de Melgar y las corrientes pictóricas en la primera mitad del siglo XVI", en *Gonzalo Martínez Díaz. Un sabio humanista castellano*. Homenaje de la Academia Burgense de Historia y Bellas Artes al P. Gonzalo Martínez Díez S. J. Premio Castilla y León de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades 2005, Burgos, págs. 97-116; MOYA VALGANÓN, José Gabriel: *Alonso Gallego y Andrés de Melgar, pintores*, Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2013.
- 30 MORTE GARCÍA, Carmen: *Damián Forment*, Caja de la Inmaculada, Zaragoza, 2009, págs. 368-390.
- 31 ECHEVERRÍA GOÑI, Pedro Luis: "La policromía del retablo calceatense", en *Damián Forment. Escultor Renacentista*, Valencia, 1995, págs. 214-239.
- 32 In these Works we observe the most complex designs in the vestments where appear not only conventional "gruteschi" and "candelieri" but on many occasions spectacular vegetal, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic designs, creating a vast repertoire of real and fantastic beings. Cornucopias, "bucráneos", trophies and other classical designs typical of the polychromy of the 1530 and 1540 decades appear in plenty on the surface of the vestments, as corresponding to the aesthetic change which begins to be manifested in polychromy in mid XVIth century.

Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*, detail, IOMR Collection.





5. *THE ART OF THE ARAGONESE RENAISSANCE AS CENTRE OF NEW ARTISTIC TRENDS IN SCULPTURE*

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Until the '70s decade of the XVIth century aragonese sculpture represents a moment of extraordinary splendour due as much to the abundant number of works made as to the outstanding masters who have produced them, either born in this territory or who have come from abroad. An epoch known as the “golden age” of sculpture in Aragón.

That ancient Kingdom lives a period of economic well-being which is essentially reflected in monumental palaces built in Zaragoza, the capital celebrated by chroniclers and travellers like, for example, the Ambassador of the Republic of Florence, Guicciardini, who describes it as “the rich and beautiful city, full of people” (1513). The aragonese society of the Cinquecento had a particular artistic good taste for sculpture as is noticeable in the variety and wealth of its artistic heritage, still kept in a fine state of condition in spite of wars, confiscations and neglect. In Aragón, as in the rest of Spain, there is a considerable rise in population throughout the XVIth century which entailed the need to enlarge churches or reconstruct them completely. In consequence, this brought the necessity of making new equipment of movable decorative objects or the renovation of what existed, such as altarpieces, choir-stalls, funeral monuments, sculptured entrances or façades and other architectural decorations or holy water fountains.

Evidently, an artist, without a sponsor, client, or patronage, could not undertake a work. Diverse were the reasons for promoting a work of art, according to the objectives pursued at that moment. Financing artistic works might be made in terms of social recognition, prestige, power, fame, religious education, salvation of one's soul, personal taste, etc... Furthermore, after Trento (1563), the sponsors could not disregard the requirements imposed by the new religious rulings created by the Council. Patronage was either individual (belonging to the ecclesiastical or civil state) or collective, through parish, convent, or monastic chapters, or city councils etc... We should consider included among these patrons with a definite artistic taste for sculpture the Princes of the Casa Real de Aragón who dwelt in the Archbishopric of Zaragoza, or the banker of the Emperor Carlos V, Gabriel Zaporta¹.

Fig 1 Esteban de Obray, *Entrance of ex Colegiata de Calatayud, Zaragoza, 1525, with modifications from 17th to 20th centuries. Alabaster.*

Artists, Maecenas and Works

The sculptors of the first decades of the XVIth century who obtained wider recognition during their time and to whom historians have given greater attention, are the aragonese Gil Morlanes “el Viejo”, artist since 1493 of King Fernando el Católico who indicates the transition to the new Renaissance tendencies) and his son bearing the same name († 1547), the Valencian Damián Forment († 1540) the real leading figure of the sculptural renovation in Aragón, the French artists Gabriel Joly († 1538), who initiates a new tendency to more dynamic and expressive form, Esteban de Obray († 1556)^(Fig 1) and the Italian Giovanni Moreto^(Fig 2) († 1547); all living in Zaragoza, or having works situated in this city which became one of the most outstanding sculptural centres of the Spanish Renaissance and one of the first to introduce the Italian artistic novelties. This state of affairs was also due to the presence in the city of sculptors who coincided with the stay in Zaragoza of the Court, as in fact occurred with the project for the funeral chapel of Charles I's Chancellor, Jean Sauvage, in the Real Monasterio de Santa Engracia in Zaragoza which was commissioned in 1519 to the artist of the future emperor, the castilian Alonso Berruguete, recently arrived from Italy. Of this project there is only preserved in the Museum of Zaragoza a rather deteriorated figure in alabaster, bearing the coat of arms of Carlos I, which was part of the sepulchre in whose execution participated the French artist dwelling in Burgos, Felipe Bigarny. The destruction of the rest of the monument has prevented us from knowing the models taken by Berruguete from Michelangelo and the references to the Hellenistic Laocoonte group, which must have moved Forment and Joly who were able to adapt them to their artistic sensitivity.



Fig 2 **Giovanni Moreto**, *Saint Michael*, detail of the altarpiece of la Concepción, Cathedral of Tarazona, Zaragoza 1535. Polychromed wood.



Fig 3 **Pedro Moreto** with the collaborators, high altarpiece of the chapel of San Bernardo, 1553, La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza. Unpolychromed Alabaster.

This first generation of sculptors was followed by another generation whose leading artists constitute the second stage of the Renaissance in Aragón. Amongst them we find the Zaragozaan Pedro Moreto († 1555) who followed the trail of his father, though he strengthened the classical models. A different sensitivity is manifested by another outstanding sculptor, the Flemish Arnao de Bruselas († 1564) who was part of Forment's workshop for four years, but the archetypes used by his master are transformed by Arnao into very expressive examples of mannerist forms which are forerunners of the "romanista" current.

Pedro Moreto's^(Fig 3) early death when he was little more than thirty years old deprived aragonese sculpture of a good artist and caused an overall decline in the quality of the works produced; this tendency is accentuated as Arnao does not settle in Zaragoza when his collaboration with Forment comes to an end in 1540. All this meant that when the chapter of Zaragoza Cathedral decides to do the relief work for the retro-choir it would approach Arnao de Bruselas, settled in La Rioja. The same occurs when the banker Gabriel Zaporta was seeking the best sculptor for the altarpiece of his chapel in the Seo of Zaragoza, and discovers that he could not find it in the kingdom of Aragón; we refer to the Basque artist trained in Castilla Juan de Anchieta († 1588), contracted in 1570 to execute the mighty images in alabaster for this altarpiece, considered the fundamental elements of the so-called "romanista" current. The Basque sculptor follows Michelangelo's models in this project and in the altarpiece of the Trinidad of Jaca (Huesca), carved in stone. He does not establish his residence in Jaca, and will settle in Pamplona (Navarre).

The material employed in making the works also determines the final result and the patrons are those who have chosen the said material. On the other hand, not all the sculptors achieved the same technical level working with each material. They fundamentally employed wood, alabaster, stone and plaster. No doubt wood – cheap and easily obtainable – was used frequently as raw material. Mainly provenant from the varieties of "white and good pine trees free from knotches", as required in the contracts for works. The normal origin was in the Pyrenees and prePyrenees of Aragón, whereas if oak was used it came from the forests of Sierra de Albarracín (Teruel) or from the oak woods of Navarre. Thus oak wood and walnut were preferred for the choir-stalls and, combined with other harder wood like boxwood, created designs in marquetry, like those made for the seats of honour for the choir of the Pilar of Zaragoza.^(Fig 4) In this work three outstanding sculptors collaborated, the aforementioned Esteban de Obay and Giovanni Moreto, together with Nicolás Lobato. The repertoire of both religious and secular images is stunning, including mythological subjects, scenes of everyday life, an idealized representation of a sculptor's workshop when he is carving a relief, or the entrance in a city of the Emperor Carlos V, no doubt in memory of his visit to Zaragoza in March 1543, all executed while the project was in progress.



Fig 4 Esteban Obay, Giovanni Moreto and Nicolas Lobato, *Choir stalls of the Basilica del Pilar, 1542-1547, Zaragoza. Wood.*

But the most numerous Renaissance works were the altarpiece sculptures, which in Aragón covered the cathedrals, monasteries, convents, collegiate, churches and chapels, and wood was the material most used. Excellent artists took part in the work and the king even participated in financing it.² An example is the high altarpiece of the Convento de Nuestra Señora del Carmen Calzado of Zaragoza, currently missing, which was commissioned to Damián Forment in 1520 and whose cost was paid by King Carlos I. In January of the previous year Forment contracts the high altarpiece of the church of San Miguel de los Navarros^(Fig 5) in Zaragoza, which would partly be paid from the thousand gold florins that came from the indulgences from the factory of San Pedro in Rome, which were granted by Pope Leon X (whose coat of arms shows on the tip of the altarpiece). It was executed by order of the Archbishop of Zaragoza, Alonso de Aragón, son of King Fernando el Católico. The Renaissance architectural design is by Forment himself, whose figures were a study of the human body according to the concept of classical statues and took his inspiration from engravings by Albert Dürer. The beautiful image of San Miguel is surprising on account of its carving and polychromy.



Fig 5 **Damián Forment**, *Saint Michael*, 1519, detail of the altarpiece of the church of San Miguel de los Navarros, Zaragoza. Polychromed wood.

The good taste of Hispanic society preferred to view the wood painted, showing the technique of gilding and “estofado” on the sculptured piece and performed by the best painters of the time. This aspect of the work worried the sculptors because a bad polychromy altered the sculptured appearance of their works. For that reason, Forment used to control these tasks, as with the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada (La Rioja), a masterpiece of sculpture and one of the best Hispanic polychromies of all time. Such was mentioned by Pedro Echevarría, who in 2008 studied the graphic sources and international “esgrafiado” textile patterns of the above-quoted Riojan altarpiece. The Riojan chapter itself wanted the celebrated master Forment to accept the work of the painter Andrés de Melgar^(Fig 6) in this project in 1539, before allowing the tasks of reliefs and the obvious work on images to be finished by workshop assistants, which included Arnao de Bruselas.

Fig 6 **Andrés de Melgar**, *Polychromy*, circa 1540, detail of the high altarpiece of Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Logroño.



Occasionally, the wooden altarpieces were not polychromed due to lack of money, as this was an expensive process. But the lack of colour and gilt had the effect of putting more attention into the process of carving the pieces, from the moment of their preparation and assembly through to the shaping of the details and final polishing. This occurs in two of the altarpieces of the great sculptor Gabriel Joly. The first one is the high altarpiece attributed to him of the parish church of Aniñón (Zaragoza), in 1530 and executed in wood from fruit trees, a material that indicates the importance of the project, since this was a highly sought-after wood. The other altarpiece is the biggest one of the Cathedral of Teruel,^(Fig 7) constructed in pine and begun in 1532, which marks the peak in the creative evolution of the French master.

The other material that occupies a privileged position in the Renaissance sculpture of Aragón is alabaster, which is richer than wood and substituted marble, and with which textures similar to those of marble were gained. Alabaster was also very abundant and of good quality in the quarries of the middle valleys of the Ebro and the Jiloca in the Calatayud community. Let us recall that in January 1528 Nicolás of Chanterenne, sculptor of the King of Portugal, was in Zaragoza to arrange the purchase of alabaster – famous for its beauty and translucence – in the quarries of Gelsa (Zaragoza), destined for the execution of the altarpiece for the church of the convent of Nuestra Señora de Pena, in Sintra.

A peculiarity of Aragón was that of sculpting altarpieces of alabaster, such as the monumental high altarpieces of the Cathedral of Huesca^(Fig 8) and of the “colegiata” of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de

Fig 7 **Gabriel Joly** with collaborators, high Altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel, 1532-1536. Unpolychromed wood.





Fig 8 **Damián Forment**, *Ecce Homo*, detail of the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Huesca 1520-1534. Unpolychromed Alabaster.

Fig 9 **Gil Morlanes (el Viejo)** with collaborators, detail of the high altarpiece from the Abbey of Montearagón, Museo Diocesano of Huesca, 1506 -1512. Polychromed alabaster.

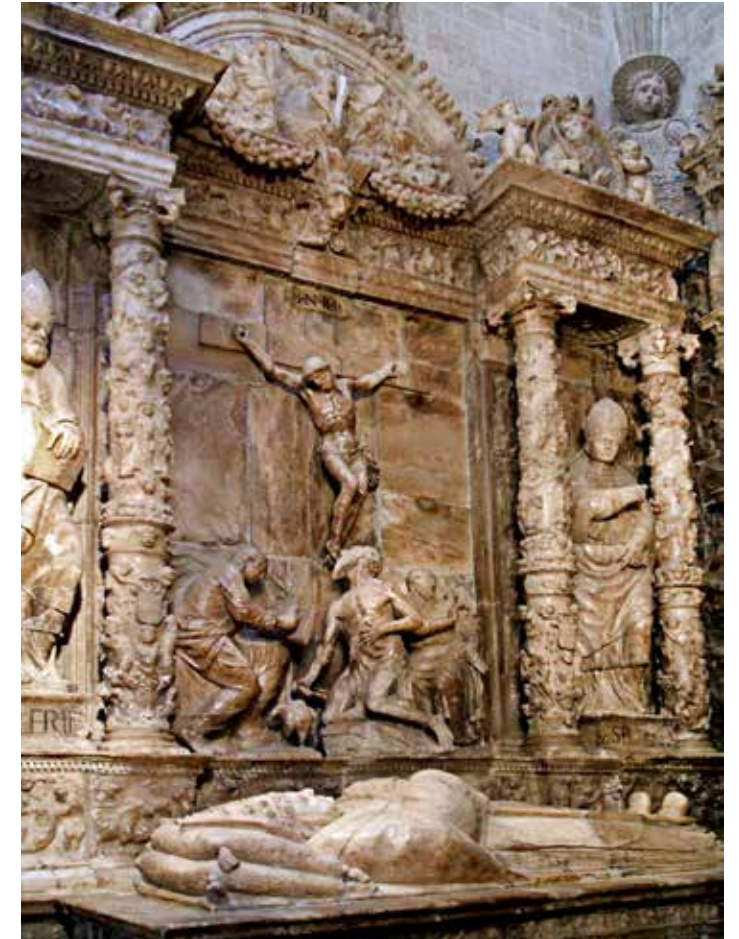


Zaragoza, both executed by Forment. With this material he achieves the highest quality amongst the sculptors of his generation. The fortified Abbey of Montearagón^(Fig 9) was commissioned by its abbot and Archbishop of Zaragoza, Alonso de Aragón, to sculptor Gil Morlanes (“el Viejo”), who worked on the Cistercian monastery of Rueda de Ebro and various chapels, such as those financed by the prioresses of the Monastery de Santa María de Sijena (Huesca). The abbey was later entrusted to Joly, whose monastery project included the now destroyed group of the “Santo Entierro”.

As alabaster was a material of prestige, Fernando II of Aragón, the Catholic king, was convinced that the main façade of his foundation, the Real Monasterio de Santa of Zaragoza, should be constructed of it, and he commissioned the project to his sculptor Gil Morlanes, who passed it on in 1515 to his son, who bore the same name. The compositions on this façade are a clear example of the crossroads of two different stylistic currents: that of final gothic and the propositions of the first Renaissance novelties. In this work the propaganda spread by the Reyes Católicos is visible through their saints at prayer and through the artistic representation of saints and personages of classical Rome. King Fernando knew the ancient language and used it skilfully with political aims, just like his advisors and those of his grandson Carlos I, who sponsored the conclusion of his maternal grandfather’s project.

Alabaster was also the fundamental material of funeral sculpture in Aragón. It was used for “laudadas” (memorial tablets), free-standing sepulchres and others that appeared like triumphal arches, as well as tumuli placed on “lucillos” framed by lofty arches and open on the side walls so as not to take up space or block vision during ceremonies celebrated inside temples or chapels. In the XVIth century, the foundation of these funeral constructions as places for burial reveals man’s ambition to perpetuate his memory after his death and serves as an example of the deep religiousness of society at that time, an aspect which is clearly reflected in funeral iconography and in last wills and testaments. Since the late Middle Ages and during the “Quinientos”, Aragón, like other zones of the Spanish territory, treasured a rich heritage of funeral sculpture situated in chapels that were built to prepare a person for eternal life and often to emphasise the prestige of the family.

Fig 10 Pedro Moreto and Juan Pérez Vizcaíno with the collaborators, sepulchre of the archbishop Hernando de Aragón, chapel of San Bernardo, 1550-1552, La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza. Unpolychromed Alabaster.



There is no doubt that the artistic project of greatest importance involving the production of funeral sculpture made from alabaster from the quarries in the middle valley of the Ebro was the San Bernardo chapel^(Fig 10) in the Seo of Zaragoza, pantheon of Archbishop Hernando de Aragón and his mother Ana Gurrea. The chapel was constructed at the base of the church during the building expansion financed by the prelate. Due to its magnitude, this was a project to be undertaken by a team of artists, and a time limit (1550-1557) was imposed. The principal sculptors were Pedro Moreto, Juan de Liceyre (pupil of Forment), Bernardo Pérez and Juan Pérez Vizcaíno (pupil of Joly), who worked on designs drawn by the painter Jerónimo Cósida. The outstanding sculpture group is formed by the principal altarpiece dedicated to San Bernardo, the mural sepulchre of the Archbishop, which is backed against an altarpiece as if it were an altar, and in the same position are set the sepulchre of his mother, the statues at prayer of archbishops and monarchs of his lineage, hereby referring to the four archbishops of the Royal House of Aragón (Juan I, Alonso, Juan II and Hernando) and to kings Alfonso V, Juan II and Fernando el Católico, and to the Emperador Carlos V. These monarchs are represented beneath a coat of arms with a Cross and the motto “in hoc signo vinces”³.

We now make a brief reference to three of our best sculptors who introduced new artistic tendencies in the field of aragonese sculpture.



Damián Forment († 1540)

«Salió un ingenio peregrino en esta profesión, llamado Damián Formento[...], este varón insigne fue el primero que puso la verdadera manera moderna[...], fue grande dibujante, grande historiador, sus figuras de magnífica grandeza [...] muy consideradas sus actitudes, con terrible resolución y manejo».

(Jusepe MARTÍNEZ, *Discursos practicables...*, 1673-1675)

Damián Forment, one of the most inspired creators of images of Spanish Renaissance sculpture, was an artist well recognised by his contemporaries and soon praised by critics as an outstanding master. He maintained his prestige years after his death and at the end of the XVIth century he was remembered in Zaragoza as a “great maker of statues who could compete with the famous sculptors Praxiteles and Phidias”. His fame distracted attention from other important contemporary sculptors who worked in Aragón. He is documented in Zaragoza on 1 May 1509 as a sculptor well known to the profession, when on that date he makes a contract with the Chapter of Santa María la Mayor and El Pilar to do the lower part of the high altarpiece for the Cathedral.^(Fig 12) He came from Valencia where it is assumed he was born around 1480 and where he belonged to the family workshop, dedicated to sculpture and masonry, which his father, Pablo Forment, established there. Damián consistently travelled for business interests and, though maintaining his status as an inhabitant of Zaragoza, he draws up his last will and testament in Santo Domingo de la Calzada on 22 December 1540, and dies shortly thereafter while working on the high altarpiece for its Cathedral. He was eventually buried in the cloisters of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada.⁴

The high altarpiece of Nuestra Señora del Pilar of Zaragoza (1509-1518) is a masterpiece in alabaster and in it we observe the change from gothic naturalism to classical shapes, with reference to models from Dürer, Leonardo, Yañez de la Almedina and Fernando de Llanos.^(Fig 11) The images of Forment and his wife Jerónima Alboreda are situated in the Renaissance styled “sotabanco” of this work. The lady is dressed according to contemporary fashion and a headdress, a clear symbol of her civil state, covers her head. Because on this occasion it is important to point out the virtues of the perfect spouse and emphasise the idea of devout womanhood, she has rosary beads hanging round her neck. It is of special interest to observe the self-portrait of the sculptor, as it is a clear example of the celebrity and personality cult focused on artists who keep within the standards of Renaissance thought. In accordance with these ideas, we understand the wish to represent his true likeness at thirty years of age, dressed according to the fashion of the time in a cap and hair net and, also in the manner of a portrait, with a profile view of his bust like Roman medals. His being a professional sculptor is demonstrated by showing the tools of his trade: mallet and chisel, tied up with cords. On the other hand, the sheaves of wheat that appear on the medallion could be linked with his surname Forment, which in Valenciano means wheat.

Fig 11 **Damián Forment** with collaborators, high altarpiece of Basilica del Pilar, 1509-1518. Unpolychromed and polychromed Alabaster.



Fig 12 **Damián Forment** *self portrait*, predella of the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Huesca, commissioned in 1520. Unpolychromed Alabaster.

The master from 1511 onwards gains so much prestige that all the important commissions are entrusted to him and he becomes intimately accepted to the highest religious and civil levels. In view of the extraordinary dimensions of these projects, Damián had to create an important enterprise for making sculpture, which could not be compared to any in all the Kingdom of Aragón throughout the XVIth century and thus turned Zaragoza into one of the most outstanding sculpture centres in all of Spain. His active workshop fills three significant decades of the first stage of Renaissance sculpture in Aragón. The master also creates other important and long-lasting art centres outside Zaragoza.

His workshop at Huesca in Upper Aragón was founded in September 1520 when he contracted the high altarpiece of the Cathedral, Forment's second greatest work. Due to the extreme pressure of work, he had to double the team of workers engaged in Zaragoza and Huesca and he moved with his family to reside in Huesca. This great project, which marks an important turning-point in Forment's development, occurs when the master sculptor is at the summit of the Renaissance sculpture movement in Aragón. Forment incorporated new models and developed a wide repertoire of ideas based on Central European engravings, (Dürer and Cranach) and Italian ones (Raimondi reproducing works by Rafael), drawings by Leonardo, echoes of the Laocoonte, of Michelangelo and Andrea Sansovino. He produced a self-portrait depicting him standing at the bottom of the altarpiece, as if he were a middle-class bourgeois with his hair gathered in a net and wearing a cap following contemporary fashion.^(Fig 12) He plays artistically with his surname, sheaf of wheat (Forment), and the symbolism of a mouse gnawing the wheat sheaf perhaps to suggest the passage of time. These animals were connected with their inveterate urge to destroy. This idea of the passage of time is coherently related to the portrait of Forment's young daughter, Ursula, situated opposite her father. He also made sculptures for the Canons of Huesca, such as the high-relief of the "Adoración de los Reyes Magos" (in the Diocesan Museum of Huesca), a Renaissance jewel in polychromed alabaster.

The 1520 decade was the epoch when Forment produced the greatest number of works of art in all his professional career. The fame of the artist spread throughout the whole Kingdom of Aragón, which helped to increase the number of works contracted, although the greater part have disappeared. In 1527 he was commissioned to produce the high altarpiece of the Real Monasterio de Poblet (Tarragona),^(Fig13) the pantheon of the monarchs of the Corona de Aragón. This entailed opening a third workshop. The altarpiece was made in alabaster from the quarries near Sarral and was his greatest professional failure.



Fig13 **Damián Forment** with collaborators, high altarpiece of the Monastery of Poblet, Tarragona, 1527-1529. Unpolychromed Alabaster.

Fig 14 **Damián Forment**, *San Juan evangelista*, detail of the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, 1537 – 1540, La Rioja. Polychromed wood.

The final stage of Forment's activity does not show any fall in his creativity or prestige, and he continued taking on apprentices and collaborators in his workshop. He continues producing outstanding funeral works (Sepulchre of the Viceroy Lanuza in Alcañiz) and his designs for works in gold are sought after. Fundamentally he continues with his usual work of planning and designing altarpieces. In the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada in La Rioja^(Fig 14) (1537-1540), made of alabaster, walnut and pine wood, Forment repeats the best of his previous creations, as well as incorporating other new models proceeding from the work by Ordóñez in Barcelona Cathedral and the sepulchre of Bellpuig (Lérida) by Giovanni da Nola, with its images in unstable postures and with highly expressive heads. In nearly all these sculptures Forment emphasizes rhythm and flexible gestures. The Riojan altarpiece is also of special interest, as it marks the point of contact between Aragón and Castile, the meeting place of Hispanic, Northern and Italian art. Here, Forment poetically makes an inspired synthesis of the artistic currents – namely, the classicism of Ordóñez, the modern renewal of Bigarny, the mannerist movements mixed with the models of Berruguete and the expressionism of Juní. All these currents are fused together in Spanish sculpture during the first half of the XVIth century. After Santo Domingo de la Calzada, the Riojan School of sculpture starts working and its traces will be seen in Castile, Vascongadas and Navarre.

At the end of 1540, Forment is one of the foremost sculptors of the Hispanic Renaissance; furthermore, it is of special interest to point out his role as educator of future sculptors of diverse sources: from Aragón, from the rest of Spain, from France and the Low Countries his influence extends beyond Aragón and reaches La Rioja, Navarra, Mallorca, certain zones of Cataluña and Castilla. The incredible amount of work produced by Forment since his arrival in Zaragoza, in spring 1509, until the end of his life, as well as his posthumous influence can be easily explained thanks to his special talent for organization, for having good collaborators who helped him to carry out the works. All these circumstances, together with the high quality technical execution of the whole production contracted by Forment determined his amply recognized success. For the moment, we can account for more than twenty-five altarpieces, four sepulchres, numerous memorial tablets, Crucified Christs, small scale statues and reliefs and an infinite number of designs for artistic projects.



Gabriel Joly († 1538)

“Se ha logrado averiguar el Artifice de esta obra [retablo mayor de la catedral de Teruel], y se ha hallado que fue uno Gabriel Joly, francés: que fue persona de la qual se tuvo particular estimación, habiéndosele señalado lugar para su entierro en el ingreso del coro”

(Antonio Ponz, *Viage de España*, tomo XIII, 1788).

Gabriel Joly is the second greatest personality of aragonese sculpture after Damián Forment. He was a native of Varipont in French Picardie where he appears documented in 1514 as “imaginero”. Various events relate him to Forment and it is possible that he belonged to his workshop until 1518 where he learned to work with wood and alabaster. However, his artistic sensitivity turned to models more expressionistic than those of Forment.

Gabriel Joly was also a designer of altarpieces for other artists and he was respected by his professional companions. He died on 19 March 1538 and was buried in Teruel Cathedral for which he had made its striking high altarpiece. On his memorial sepulchre he is represented with cloak and sword, the image of a knight, completely in harmony with the title of “preboste en el arte gladiatoria” (provost of the gladiator’s art), referring to his connection with the fencing school of Zaragoza, an aspect that distinguishes him from other artists of his time.

Since 1518 Joly has his own workshop, and we know that in March of that year an apprentice initiates service to him. Two years later, the first documented works appear, executed in wood and in collaboration with other sculptors including Gil Morlanes el Joven, with whom Joly had formed a company, but which closed down in 1521. The altarpiece of the Apostle Santiago (in the Seo of Zaragoza) and the high altarpiece of the parish church Santa María in Tauste (Zaragoza)^(Fig 15) were contracted on 22 November 1520 by Joly and Morlanes with the collaboration of Juan de Salas, a pupil of Forment, and Giovanni Moreto. These projects, executed in collaboration with various sculptors, pose the problem of not being able to precisely determine the participation of each artist in the different areas of the altarpiece; this aspect was not specifically indicated in the contracts.⁵

All the images of the Tauste altarpiece belong to the Renaissance period and have artistic shapes with classical references, especially in the “contraposto” and in the folds of the clothes, which manifest movement and interrupt the strictly frontal view of the figures. Although various sculptors have intervened in the work, we can differentiate the carving done by Joly in the reliefs and the freestanding statues, all of which are executed with higher quality than the rest and have more expressive images. In the scene of the “Adoración de los Reyes Magos”, the French artist has concentrated on representing naturalistic details, like the spurs of the old king, the cap and bands of the young king, or the containers of the symbolic gifts, which resemble pieces of contemporary gold work.

Fig 15 Gabriel Joly, Gil Morlanes (el Joven), Juan de Salas y Giovanni Moreto, high altarpiece of the church of Tauste, Zaragoza, 1520-1526. Polychromed wood.



The true likeness in the representation of the “negro” King surprised us and may have been due to the presence of slaves of that race in Zaragoza at that time. The composition and a few details of this relief are inspired in a bronze plaque dealing with the same subject that was designed and engraved by the prolific sculptor of Verona, “Moderno” (Galeazzo Mondella, 1467-1528).^(Fig 16)

After completing the altarpiece at Tauste (which did not yet achieve the masterpiece status and clear distinction of his later altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel), Gabriel Joly continues working on altarpieces for Zaragoza and searching for new markets away from the city. Few of his works still exist, but we can observe a progressive evolution in his artistic shapes that reflects his knowledge of new Italian models, coinciding with proposals made by Diego de Siloé or Alonso Berruguete.

The interesting image in polychromed wood, known as the “Virgen del Oro”^(Fig 17) has been identified as part of the altarpiece commissioned in 1526 by Juan de Luján, “maestresala” Infante of the Royal House of Zaragoza, Juan II. This image was intended for the funeral chapel of the archbishop in the parish church of Villafeliche (Zaragoza). From 1529 to 1530 Joly works for the monastery of Santa María de Sijena (Huesca), belonging to the Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén which, since the beginning of the XVIth century, had embarked on a renewal of its art. Of the works carved in alabaster by Joly for this convent of royal foundation, ordered by the Prioress Beatriz de Olcinella, most of them were lost, scattered or ruined during the civil war of 1936-1939 when the monastery was burnt down.



Fig 16 **Gabriel Joly**, *Epifanía*, detail of the high altarpiece of the church of Tauste, commissioned in 1520, Zaragoza. Polychromed wood.

To the sculptor Joly is attributed the high altarpiece of the church of Aniñón (Zaragoza) executed in unpolychromed walnut wood, constructed on an alabaster base, with the collaboration of Esteban de Obray, from Normandy. The latter artist participated in the monumental façade in alabaster of the “colegiata” of Santa María la Mayor of Calatayud. Both French artists were the most outstanding creators of the first aragonese Renaissance; together they sculptured in wood the high altarpiece of the parish church of Olvés (Zaragoza) between 1530 and 1532,⁶ although the polychromy was done in 1558 with the collaboration of the Italian painter Piero Morone. The images of these two aragonese altarpieces show the clear progress towards more expressive and dynamic models in Joly’s poetic style.

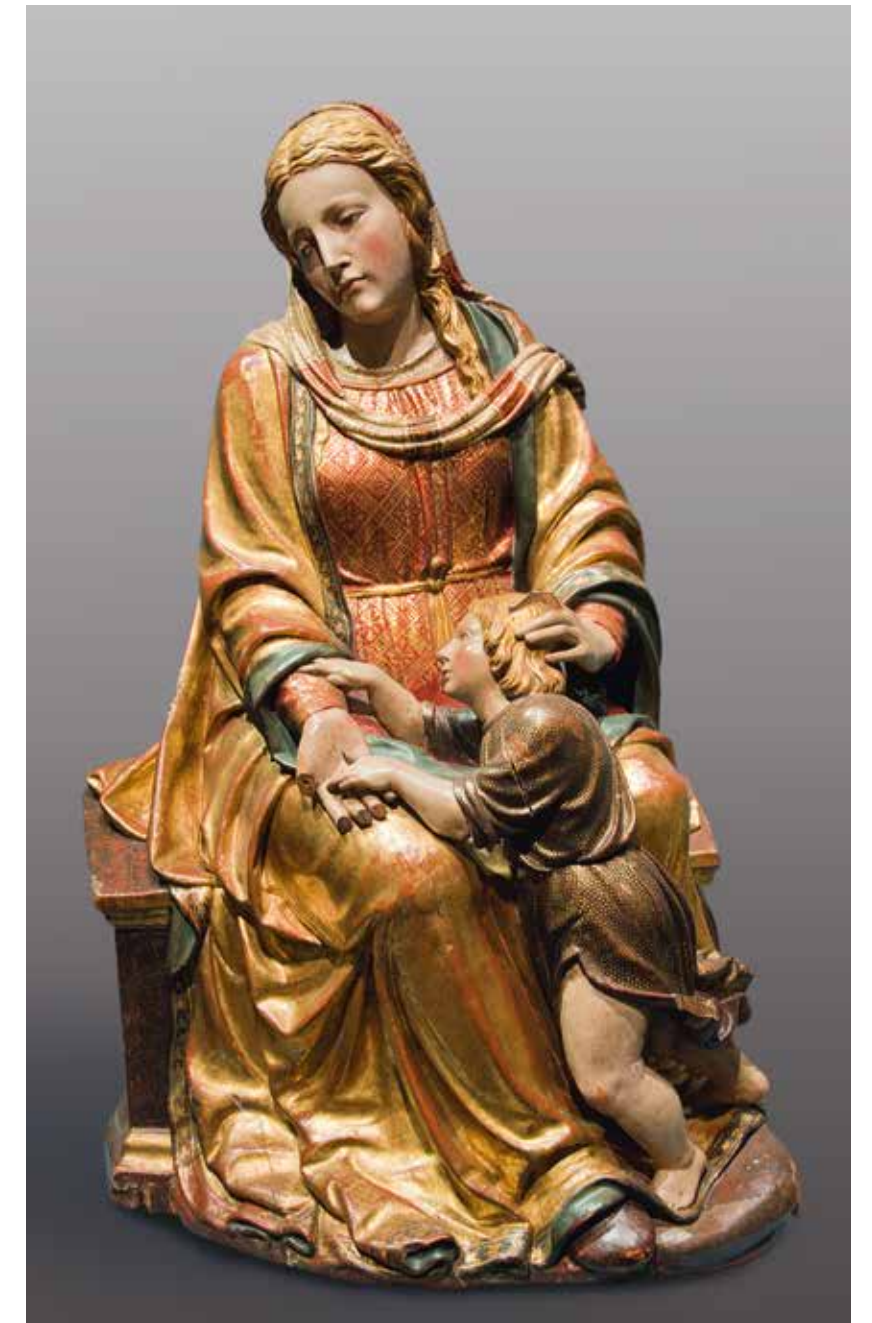


Fig 17 **Gabriel Joly**, *Virgen del oro*, 1526, church of San Miguel Arcángel de Villafeliche, Zaragoza. Polychromed wood.

From those years onwards until his death, Joly is very active professionally and has a workshop with various collaborators, among whom Juan Pérez Vizcaíno stands out. This allows him to contract diverse projects outside of Aragón (Navarre and Castile) and manifests the important diversity of his artistic styles. To this period may be assigned the “Retablo de Santiago” sculpted in alabaster, financed by the writer and Canon Diego Dieste; it was made for the “colegiata” Santa María de Bolea. The influence of Damián Forment’s models is so evident in the images of this altarpiece that the work has even been attributed to Forment. This is understandable because Joly had participated in projects with Forment’s pupils, and even in his workshop there were collaborators who formerly had worked for Forment.

Joly’s masterpiece is indubitably the magnificent high altarpiece (1532-1536) dedicated to the “Asunción de Nuestra Señora” of Teruel Cathedral.^{(Fig 7)(Fig 18)} We observe in its sculptures the influence of models by Michelangelo and the Laoconte, amongst others. The figures of the Teruel altarpiece manifest great expressivity, both in their heads and in their dynamic bodies, covered by rhythmically pleated vestments which, together with their swaying postures, turn them into mannerist models representing the most daring tendencies of contemporary sculpture in Aragón. All this indicates that Joly has seen new models and that he could have had unidentified collaborators in the Teruel project; one of these might have been Arnao de Bruselas, due to the similarity of their works.

The altarpiece, executed in pinewood, was not polychromed and remains in its natural colour, which permits our appreciation of the excellent carving of this material, mentioned by a chronicler as “Madera incorruptible (“Los amantes de Teruel”, 1616). There are a few sculptures missing from this project that were not returned to the Cathedral of Teruel when the Spanish Civil War ended (1936-1939). Due to this war, the sculptures of the altarpiece were transferred outside Aragón in January 1938, together with other objects of Teruel’s artistic heritage. Joly’s original project contained a beautiful sculptural “tondo” representing the “Sagrada Familia y San Juan Bautista niño”^(Fig 18) situated on top of the sculpture group of the “Asunción de Nuestra Señora”, which had been removed from the altarpiece in 1598 to make room for an “óculo”, (an open space) connecting with the sacramental chaper situated behind the altarpiece, typical of most aragonese high altarpieces during the XVIth century. This “tondo” in 1941 entered the collection of the Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid attributed to Diego de Siloé, but there is no doubt that the models are Joly’s – and this has been recently verified. The beauty of the Virgin Mary, the expressive head of San José and the infantile typology of the two cousins are recognized in other works by Joly.⁷

This altarpiece caused a profound reaction regarding other altarpieces in the Teruel zone, on account of its architectural structure and the sculptural models used. The closest in time and likeness to the high altarpiece of Teruel Cathedral is the high altarpiece of the church of San Pedro in Teruel, which was attributed to Joly himself and which should be assigned to a follower. However, for the church of San Pedro in Teruel this same artist sculpted the “Retablo de los Santos Médicos (1537), commissioned by the Fraternity of Santos Cosme y Damián. It was executed in gilt wood and polychromed, and presented differences in images which, furthermore, were of lower quality than those of the high altarpiece of Teruel Cathedral.



Fig18 **Gabriel Joly**, *Holy Family*, 1532 - 1536 high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel currently at the Museo de Escultura de Valladolid. Unpolychromed wood.

Arnao de Bruselas († 1564)

“Un trascoro de esta Santa iglesia metropolitana de esta ciudad labrado[Zaragoza] con tanta gracia, belleza, y hermosura y grandeza, que no hay cosa que se le pueda igualar por este camino”
(Jusepe MARTÍNEZ, *Discursos practicables...*, 1673-1675.)

The above text by the baroque painter and writer indicates that although the sculpture of the retro-choir of La Seo of Zaragoza arouses admiration in him, he is not aware of the name of its real author, Arnao de Bruselas. This sculptor appears documented on 10 September 1536 in Zaragoza when he enters the workshop of Damián Forment and we can imagine that upon arriving in Aragón, he would establish his first professional relationship with Gabriel Joly. Beyond that, he would even become a collaborator in the high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel, due to the link between the types of male models used by Arnao and those of this aragones work. In fact, the task of carving this work had ended precisely on 9 September 1536.⁸

According to what was specified in the contract with Forment, his permanence in the workshop would last four years, which would imply having to accompany him to La Rioja in November 1537 when he would take charge of the high altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada,^(Fig 19) in which Arnao held an important participation as collaborator. When he arrived in Aragón he must have had knowledge and practice as an “Imaginero”, which he acquired in the numerous workshops in his homeland, where he would also have been in contact with Italian Renaissance art. We must remember that the cartoons of the acts of the Apostles by Rafael had arrived at the ancient capital of the Duchy of Burgundy in 1517 and remained there when the tapestries were sent to Rome. We cannot forget that the Renaissance shapes reached the sculpture of the Low Countries thanks to the hand of Jean Mone (1521), who was trained in Italy and collaborated with Bartolomé Ordóñez in the choir stalls of Barcelona Cathedral and to whom Carlos V commissioned the decoration of the chapel of the Palace in Brussels, thus becoming the emperor’s artist. Although it was not necessary for Arnao to visit Italy, one cannot disregard his journey there before arriving in Spain in view of the powerful attraction exerted by Italy on northern artists.



Fig 19, **Damián Forment** with collaborators (Arnao de Bruselas), high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada 1537 1540, La Rioja. Polychromed wood.

An element that favoured Arnao's entry in Forment's workshop was that the latter, who had just returned from Cataluña, needed to reorganize his workshop and introduce new members in the artistic enterprise he had founded in 1512. We deduce from the contract drawn up before a notary on 10 September 1536 that "Arnao de Bruselles, natural de la ciudat de Bruselles, de la tierra de Brabante de Flandes y de presente residente en la ciudat de Caragoça", entered as a qualified craftsperson to carry out determined types of tasks, according to the system of work in Spanish sculpture workshops. At the conclusion of the stipulated four years, Forment would give Arnao the four hundred "sueldos jaqueces" (money of legal currency in Aragón) to cover clothing. We should bear in mind that the master, to insure the fulfilment of the contract and perhaps as a concealed payment of his future work, made him a loan of two hundred ducados in gold. This was a very significant sum, as documents prove that Arnao was paid one hundred ducados for the execution in "yeso" of the retro-choir of La Seo.

The presence of Arnao in Aragón offered the young northerner an ample field for his education, since Zaragoza was one of the most important centres for sculpture of the Hispanic Renaissance, containing works by the Italian Giovanni Moreto, the Frenchmen Gabriel Joly and Felipe Bigarny or by the castilian, Alonso Berruguete, recently from Italy.

The Riojan altarpiece of Santo Domingo would be Arnao's source because Forment had made a compilation of the models used during his lengthy professional career. Arnao also participates actively in the execution of this project, which deeply influenced his later production. In spite of Forment's influence on Arnao, the latter maintains his own artistic personality and is in fact the most gifted pupil of the Valencian artist. Arnao's inspiration is not limited to his master's models. His conceptions and designs evolve through contact with other sculptors and the impact of new works of art, including Italian, Flemish and French etchings. Furthermore, there is a great difference between the artistic sensitivity of master and pupil. Whereas Forment's attitude is restrained, Arnao's figures are imbued with intense expressivity in their faces, as well as moving bodies wrapped in swirling garments. Thus Arnao represents the so-called "manierismo de movimiento" which, together with his outstanding capacity as draughtsman and his skill as "imaginero" (polychrome sculptor), make him one of the most remarkable sculptors of the Spanish Renaissance. (Fig 20)(Fig 21)

Fig 20 **Damián Forment**, *Saint Dominic*, high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, 1537-1540, La Rioja. Polychromed wood.

Fig 21 **Damián Forment and Arnao de Bruselas**, *San Judas Tadeo*, high altarpiece of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, 1537-1540, La Rioja. Polychromed wood.



The need for good sculptors in Aragón – so as to be able to embark on some of the artistic projects planned for the mid-XVIth century – and the death of the best artists must have been the principal cause for Arnao to move again to Aragón. This decision forced him to interrupt his work on the altarpiece of Santa María de Palacio, in Logroño. His presence in Zaragoza on 18 September 1556 is documented when he is contracted to make an altarpiece in wood for the chapel of San Bernardo of the monastery of Veruela (Zaragoza). It seems that the sculptor did not wish, at that time, to settle down permanently in Aragón, since the commissioner had to provide lodgings for him and his collaborators.

We ignore the circumstances that contributed to Arnao's winning this commission, though it would undoubtedly facilitate the important projects of the southern façade of the retro-choir of La Seo in Zaragoza (October 1557). He transferred with his collaborators, but the "Cofradía de la Transfiguración, San Esteban y San José de Zaragoza" obliged him to take the examination according to the rules of the guild of "imageros", which required this control so as to be able to work in the city. It was a way of making regulations for the profession, of controlling production and preventing foreign competition. In the case of Arnao, the exam consisted of making a sculpture in wood and another in "aljez", two materials used in his work on the retro-choir of La Seo in Zaragoza. As he did not take the exam on the pre-arranged date, the guild postponed the date, as is registered in the notary's document of 28 January 1558.

It is certain that Arnao left the execution of the San Bernardo of Veruela altarpiece in the hands of the workshop. Their images are directly related to Riojan altarpieces of Alberite and of Santa María de Palacio. However, the southern front of the retro-choir of the Catedral Metropolitana del Salvador de Zaragoza (La Seo), on account of its high quality, is a more personal work by Arnao and in it manifests more advanced formal resources and style if we compare them with contemporary aragonese sculptures. In this work, Arnao tried to do his best because his prestige was at stake here, since he was working for the most important church of all Aragón and the place where the kings were crowned. This was a work warmly praised by critics as one of the most beautiful works of Spanish art in whose ornamental decorations had worked the "mazonero" (stonemason) Juan Sanz de Tudelilla, a Riojan craftsman trained in workshops in Tarazona. The whole work was directed and supervised by the painter Jerónimo Vallejo Cósida, an artist protected by the Archbishop Hernando de Aragón.

The work effected by Arnao de Bruselas, according to a document certifying the payment made to the sculptor dated 20 June 1558, consists of four big reliefs, four massive freestanding sculptures situated in niches and fourteen children as ornaments on top, all sculpted in "aljez" (solidified plaster). Also belonging to this project are two massive sculptures that were transferred to the presbytery of the Seo, as well as a Calvary in wood situated at the centre of the retro-choir.

The iconography selected by the chapter itself represents four of the saints who are most significant to the Zaragoza Episcopal see. The saints are presented by freestanding statues and by reliefs depicting their most outstanding stories.

Arnao's stylistic features are observed in several elements: dynamic shapes, bold foreshortenings, clear organization of space and perspectives, and soft textures moving smoothly and swirling around while pressed tight on bodies.^(Fig. 22) The compositions of the four reliefs are differently planned and

Fig 22 Arnao de Bruselas, relief, *Martirio de San Vicente*, retro-choir, La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza, 1557 – 1558. Yeso (aljez).



represent personages who have adopted various postures and attitudes. They show clearly how completely the artist dominates volume in sculpture. The excellent rendering of the nudes, closely related to Renaissance studies of the human body, adapt themselves to classical sculpturing. We are surprised to observe in these works, made of "aljez" ("gesso") the profane decoration of the clothing of human figures. It is carved according to formal Renaissance rules and the absolute nudity of the bodies attests its classicism. On this point, the Zaragoza Cathedral Chapter should have left the sculptor completely free, bearing in mind that the Church had not yet forbidden the "grutesco" or the nude.

The sculpture group of the "Calvario"^(Fig. 25) is executed in wood and is situated in the chapel of Cristo located at the centre of the wall at the base of the retro-choir. It is sheltered under a spectacular "baldacchino" of the XVIIIth century. The present XVIIIth-century polychromy does not hide the quality of Arnao's work. This extraordinary "Christ on the Cross" seeks a balance between beauty and spiritual values in order to gain devotion. His humanity does not let him lose his sacred divinity and thus became a deeply venerated image. Our Lady^(Fig. 23) recalls models made by Forment. Saint John^(Fig. 24) is the most pathetic figure of the group. Arnao carved the sculpture while seeking a blending of the aesthetic and spiritual in the Virgin Mary.

Research in the archives can still give us pleasant surprises, such as the discovery of the testament of Arnao de Bruselas by Profesor Aurelio Barrón (19 October 1564). He was ill at the time and soon afterwards died of plague, which had broken out in Logroño at that time. The testament indicates the considerable fortune that had been collected, and the legacy of money left to a compatriot, Juan Flamenco, who was a shoemaker of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, and to whom Arnao gave the order to search out and bring forth his heirs: his father Tosan Espirin or his brother Gil Espirin (Spierincks). The document also mentions the debts of various churches of La Rioja for works carried out by Arnao, amongst them the magnificent high altarpiece of the church of Santa María de Palacio in Logroño.⁹



Fig 23 **Arnao de Bruselas**, *Our Lady*, detail, Calvary of the retro-choir, La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza, 1557-1558. Polychromed wood.

Fig 24 **Arnao de Bruselas**, *Saint John*, detail, Calvary of the retro-choir, La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza, 1557-1558. Polychromed wood.

NOTES

- 1 Carmen MORTE GARCÍA, “La llegada del renacimiento a la escultura aragonesa: de Fernando el Católico a Carlos V (1500-1530)”, en *De la unión de coronas al Imperio de Carlos V*: coord. por Ernest Belenguer Cebrià, Vol. 3, Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001, págs. 53-120.
- 2 Raquel SERRANO [et al.], *El retablo aragonés del siglo XVI: estudio evolutivo de las mazonerías*, Zaragoza: Gobierno de Aragón, Departamento de Cultura y Educación, 1992.
- 3 AA.VV. La Capilla de San Bernardo de la Seo de Zaragoza. Restauración 2001, Zaragoza, 2001. Pág. 11.
- 4 Carmen MORTE GARCÍA, *Damián Forment. Escultor del Renacimiento*, Zaragoza: Caja de Ahorros de la Inmaculada de Aragón (CAI), 2009.
- 5 *El retablo mayor renacentista de Tauste*, Carmen Morte García y Margarita Castillo Montolar (coords.), Zaragoza: Institución «Fernando El Católico» (C.S.I.C.), 2012.
- 6 Jesús CRIADO MAINAR, Olga CANTOS MARTÍNEZ, *El retablo mayor de Santa María de Olvés: las claves del renaci-*

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- 7 Javier IBÁÑEZ FERNÁNDEZ, “Nuevas aportaciones documentales sobre el retablo mayor de la Catedral de Teruel (1532-1536)”, *Artigrama*, núm. 16, 2001, págs. 297-327.
- 8 *La escultura en la ruta jacobea: Arnao de Bruselas: Retablo Mayor de la Imperial Iglesia de Santa María de Palacio (Logroño)*, por Francisco FERNÁNDEZ PARDO (coord.), 2005, págs. 207-239.
- 9 Diario La Rioja, “CULTURAS Y SOCIEDAD”, jueves, 20.06.19, p. 40



Fig 25 **Arnao de Bruselas**, *Calvary*, retro-choir of La Seo del Salvador, Zaragoza, 1557-1558. Polychromed wood.

Alonso Berruguete, pair of sculptures, *Saint Peter and Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood, circa 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.





**CATALOGUE OF
THE IOMR COLLECTION
OF
SPANISH RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE**

I. JUAN DE VALMASEDA.

*The rediscovery of a masterpiece of Spanish Renaissance sculpture.
A study on a newly revealed Saint Jerome*

Carlos Herrero Starkie

There are occasions when a work of art surpasses the artistic recognition won historically by the author inasmuch as its intrinsic greatness goes beyond everything we know about him and serves to show us the way to rediscover him with modern eyes that may appreciate new aspects of his work.^{(Fig A1)(Fig A2)}

We find ourselves facing a masterpiece of the Spanish Renaissance in which the various aspects of excellence of that period converge as Spanish artistic genius blossoms forth. For this reason it acquires a paradigmatic significance within the IOMR collection. We find fully conveyed in this magnificent representation of Saint Jerome the eternal values of expressivity, immediacy and modernity of Spanish art to the same extent as they are expressed by El Greco, generations later, in his work in Toledo.

Its author is Juan de Valmaseda, a master who, though still relatively unknown, is considered by Spanish scholars to be one of the founders of castilian Renaissance sculpture and probably the artist who best knew how to render the Catholic religious fervour of Iberian people in a state of exaltation and spiritual grace as the “Reconquista” ended in 1492, with the return of their territory from the Moors following eight centuries of warfare. Valmaseda was an artist who gave to his work a very particular style, which is the result of the fusion of his gothic roots with the new Florentine forms, anticipating the expressionistic style so characteristic of Spanish art. Thus many scholars believe his first masterpiece “Calvario de la Catedral de Palencia” (1519) to be the immediate precedent of Alonso Berruguete, one of the founders of mannerism and the artist who hispanised the repertoire of gestures assimilated in Italy.

Fig. A1 **Juan de Valmaseda.** (1487/ 1493 .. circa 1560). *Saint Jerome*, c. 1530, 73 x 41 x 30 cm, Polychrome walnut wood, **Provenance:** Historical provenance, presumably from the Cathedral of Palencia. Private collection Spain. IOMR Collection, The Netherlands. **Exhibited** at the Cathedral of Toledo Cisneros exhibition, Toledo, 2017. **Literature:** Catalogue of the exhibition at the Cathedral of Toledo, 2017, *Cisneros, Arquetipo de Virtudes, Espejo de Prelados*, Cabildo Primado, Catedral de Toledo. Ilust. pág 444, catalogue entry Prof J M Parrado del Olmo.





Fig. A2 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome*, detail, IOMR Collection.



The first deep studies on Valmaseda's work are carried out by a German, Georg Weiss, a great lover of Spanish art, who assigns many important sculptures of the Capilla del Condestable at Burgos Cathedral to Valmaseda. J. Camón Aznar and J.M. Azcárate both support this very positive opinion of the artist. M. Gómez Moreno concentrates his studies on Alonso Berruguete and Diego de Siloé in his book "Las Águilas del Renacimiento Español" where he consecrates these artists as the interpreters of classical gestures and, to a certain extent, applies discredit to Juan de Valmaseda, considering that his tardo-gothic artistic shapes did not develop into the genius foreseen in his early works. Valmaseda's scarcely documented work has remained virtually trapped by history between those great names. The artistic greatness of the work we are now studying in a way contradicts this historiographic approach and indicates that Spanish Renaissance sculpture has to be revised in the light of the modern manner of Juan de Valmaseda.

The artistic environment that Berruguete encounters on his return from Italy in 1518 is essentially constituted by Juan de Valmaseda, Vasco de Zarza (though tremendously Italian) and Felipe Bigarni (of French origin). Valmaseda, however, is the only genuinely castilian artist endowed with an artistic talent that could receive the influence of the "Eagles of Spanish Renaissance" autonomously without surrendering to them. In fact, Valmaseda is already a formed artist of about 30 years of age, and had contributed to monumental works such as the altarpiece at Oviedo, as well as signing the contract of the Calvary for the high altarpiece of Palencia Cathedral ^(Fig.1) in 1519. This is a work, which for its mon-

Fig. 1 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Calvary of the High altarpiece at the Cathedral of Palencia*, 1519.



umental size and greatness, may be considered one of the supreme castilian artistic works of its time and in which Valmaseda demonstrates a great sensitivity and a lack of idealization of forms. He is a sculptor deeply rooted in a late gothic style that clearly defines the religious passion of the castilian people.

Especially in the Calvary of Palencia Cathedral, we already observe the touches of inspiration that make Juan de Valmaseda stand out as a genius with an immediate and evident artistic style completely his own. He creates a canon of Calvary in which he masterfully combines the absolute rigidity of Christ with the sensational movement of Our Lady^(Fig.2) in a delicate contraposto to the Saint John,^(Fig. 3) from whose half-open mouth drips an overwhelming sorrow that reminds us of the newly discovered Laocoonte. We shall see something of all this later in Alonso Berruguete – in his altarpiece of Mejorada de Olmedo and in the one of San Benito in Valladolid. This artistic formula, which was so striking, must have been very successful in view of the number of Calvary works attributed to him. We also find other touchstones that reveal his sculptor's hand, such as a straight nose, lean faces, prominent cheek bones, pointed beards and hair that falls in tangled locks, as well as feet with outstretched toes and hands calmly crossed – all this treated in a succinct, expressionist manner, as it is executed in our St Jerome.^(Fig. A3)

Fig. 2 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Our Lady*, Calvary of the High Altar-piece at the Cathedral of Palencia, 1519.

Fig. 3 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint John*, High altarpiece of the Cathedral of Palencia, 1519.

Fig. A3 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome*, detail, IOMR Collection.



Fig. 4 Diego de Siloé, *The Christ between angels*, 1523. Altarpiece of Saint Ana, Cathedral of Burgos.



In 1520 Valmaseda is active in Burgos where he most probably worked in the Capilla del Condestable at the Cathedral. G. Weise, J. Camón Aznar, J. M. Azcárrate and even, for a while, M. Gómez Moreno, have attributed a magnificent group of works: a deceased Christ sustained by angels in the altarpiece of Santa Ana^(Fig 4); the San Cristóbal and the San Sebastián in the altarpiece of San Pedro; and the figures of Our Lady and Saint John, swaying together in a movement so characteristic of him, in the high altarpiece of this chapel. All these attributions were later rejected by Gómez Moreno and by Francisco Portela, ascribing them to Diego de Siloé. No doubt the attributive points questioned regarding these two masters were confused until Manuel Gómez Moreno, patriarch of Spanish Renaissance scholarship, solved the polemic by deciding in favour of his choice Spanish Renaissance sculptor, Diego de Siloé.

Fig. 5 Diego de Siloé or Juan de Valmaseda, *Pietà*, Iglesia de Santiago de la Puebla, Salamanca.



In 1524 Valmaseda carries out the Calvary for the chapel of Christ in León Cathedral, accompanied by four Apostles. The best one is Saint John, with eyes lost in reverie and a face of a rather feminine and childlike beauty, which we constantly encounter in Valmaseda's later work. In this group, Saint John leans against a tree whose gnarled knots and branches remind one of Siloé. His San Lucas wears spectacles just like those worn by Saint Jerome in the "Pietà de Desplá" by Bartolomé Bermejo. From 1524 onwards we clearly see the influence between the styles of Berruguete and Siloé. The splendid altarpiece of Santa Columba of Villamediana (Palencia) belongs to this decade. Its quality, however, is rather unequal, though in the relief work of the "Lamentación" and in the fabulous "San Jerónimo sedente" Valmaseda rises to celestial heights in the expression of pathos. The Our Lady and the St John, now in the Lázaro Galdiano Museum, also belong to this period. Most scholars attribute the "Lamentación" of the church of Santiago de la Puebla (Salamanca) to Bigarni. But after a comparative study with other "Lamentaciones", it should also follow the stream that links Siloé and Valmaseda and thus distances him from Bigarni^(Fig 5).



Fig. 7 **Juan de Valmaseda**, 1530. Relief representing the Wise Kings, Capilla de San Ildefonso, Cathedral of Palencia.

Fig. 6. **Juan de Valmaseda**, 1530. Altarpiece of the Capilla de San Ildefonso, Cathedral of Palencia.

The 1530 decade, to which our St Jerome corresponds, marks the highest development of Valmaseda's style when his work reaches a synthesis between his underlying Gothic background, loaded with its strong expressivity, and the Italian influences filtered by Alonso Berruguete's and Diego de Siloé's interpretations. The masterpiece of this period is without any doubt the altarpiece in the chapel of San Ildefonso of Palencia Cathedral^(Fig.6), which possesses markedly strong Siloesque characteristics in its smooth composition in which Valmaseda masterfully combines medallions with figures in contraposto so that the scene seems to acquire an almost musical rhythm. We must draw attention to the magnificent relief work of St Jerome with its meticulous pictorial technique, whose lion is very similar to the one of our sculpture^(Fig.A7) and the beautiful relief representing a nativity with the Wise Kings^(Fig.7). The medallion, however, which crowns the altarpiece and represents the "Pietà", recalls the other "Pietà" from Alonso Berruguete in 1529/1530 for the chapel of the Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca. It conveys a strong Michelangelesque spirit, especially in the way Christ lets Himself fall into Our Lady's lap – although, in Valmaseda's case, taking the form of an arabesque with a certain Gothic mannerism.

We find ourselves facing a sculptor little known in modern times who, had nonetheless been better able than anyone else to create compositions that became easily recognisable archetypes in his time – not to mention their great success in Castile during the first half of the XVIth century. Valmaseda creates various compositions that become canons during the Spanish Renaissance, such as his Calvaries^(Fig 1), his active Virgins Mary^(Fig 2) who appear to dance with swaying motion, with the Saints^(Fig 3); his allegorical representations of death, which influence so much Spanish XVII century sculptors^(Fig 8); his childlike youths with rather feminine features, which our sculptor likes to repeat in his St Johns and his many San Sebastians which we see in Palencia Cathedral, in Santa Columba or in the Rodríguez Acosta collection^(Fig 9).

Fig. 8 **Juan de Valmaseda** *Allegorical figure representing Death*, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

Fig. 9 **Juan de Valmaseda** *San Sebastián*, private collection.



Fig. A5 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome*, detail. IOMR Collection.



Fig. A7 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome*, detail. IOMR Collection.

The work we are now studying represents a Saint Jerome in a state of ecstasy, due to a supernatural vision of Christ. The scene is set in rocky surroundings. He holds in his hand a stone^(Fig A5) and is accompanied by a lion.^(Fig A7) In this scene we observe strong Berrugetesque influences, above all, as Parrado indicates, in the composition “en serpentinata” and the unbalanced position of the Saint.^(Fig A9) It presents analogies in design between this sculpture and the St Jerome by Siloé in the chapel of the Condestable of Burgos Cathedral,^(Fig.10) especially due to the saint’s firmly out stretched arm, the crouching position of his legs and the lion. All this gives us stylistic reasons to confirm the date of execution in the decade of the 1530s, suggested by Parrado, which is when Valmaseda’s art reaches its highest quality, thus excellently fulfilling the fusion between his tardo-Gothic roots and the Italian influences of Alonso Berruguete and Diego de Siloé, which increasingly irritated his heavy expressionism and had become a canon of beauty.



Comparison between the *Saint Jerome* (1522) by **Diego de Siloé**, capilla del Condestable, Cathedral of Burgos (Fig. 10) and the *Saint Jerome* (1530) by **Juan de Valmaseda**, IOMR Collection (Fig. A1).





Fig. A6 Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, detail. IOMR Collection.

Fig. A14 Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, detail. IOMR Collection.

However, upon facing a masterpiece, we discover that the greatness of our St Jerome lies in its originality. For this reason it would be wise to compare this sculpture with the other Saint Jerome masterpieces of the Spanish Renaissance, which would make a wonderful exhibition in themselves.

In opposition to the meticulous technique of Siloé in his St Jerome^(Fig 10), Valmaseda simplifies the sculptural moulding of the muscles, sketchily rendering bones and tendons^(Fig A6). He scarcely carves the outlines of feet even to the point that, if we observe the sculpture at the back, we shall see legs in oblique position, which is typical of Valmaseda, but formed in a succinct way that surprises us by its tremendous modernity, and by not making the slightest error in design. It is all-perfect in its simplicity^(Fig A14).

Facing the Laocontesque character of the St Jerome by Berruguete^(Fig 11), we are overwhelmed by the expression of a both human and animal sensation of tremendous suffering regarding the chaos of the universe, without the slightest trace of any religious sense. Valmaseda, on the contrary, is completely devoted to rendering the link between the saint and the supernatural, expressing a profound faith^(Fig A8).



Comparison between the *Saint Jerome* (1526 - 1532) by Alonso Berruguete, from the High altarpiece of the Church of San Benito, Valladolid, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid (Fig. 11) and the *Saint Jerome* (1530) by Juan de Valmaseda, IOMR Collection (Fig. A8).



Fig. A9 Juan de Valmaseda, *Saint Jerome*, IOMR Collection.



On the other hand, Valmaseda surpasses the St Jerome of Torrigiano, who is excellent in his artistic technique and in the originality of his design due to his movement forward, but lacks, in my opinion, any religious expression. In the passionate expressivity of his St Jerome and in the impressionistic nature of his technique, lie the magnificently natural and the real presence in space that Valmaseda gives to the St Jerome we are presently studying^(Fig A9).

Finally, if we compare it with the St Jerome of the Church of San Francisco at Medina de Rioseco, by Juan de Juni, there we would find ourselves facing a work of comparable expressivity, imbued by an early baroque style. Valmaseda offers us a composition captivated by the sense of movement worthy of Michelangelo's slaves or Miron in his "discopolo", based on a simple sloping diagonal. In such evident simplicity lies the beauty of the sculpture^(Fig A11).



Fig. A11 Juan de Valmaseda *Saint Jerome*, IOMR Collection.

Our St Jerome calls on fervent castilian believers to understand the irrational strength of the passion that the saint^(Fig A8) feels. It is a question of faith and Divine Grace that Valmaseda expresses, and he does so with an absolutely masterful scarcity of resources^(Fig A8), such as maintaining the saint's balance with an outstretched arm and the extremely upright position of his face, which directs his look at the rock. A diagonal composition adjusts according to the physical inclination of the sculpture itself and, therefore, of the Saint who, due to this circumstance, seems to be alive and to maintain his balance thanks to Divine Grace itself^(Fig A10).



Fig. A10 Juan de Valmaseda Saint Jerome (1530), IOMR Collection.

We find other examples representing the same sentiment of faith in Titian's saints, especially in the St Jerome^(Fig 12), a small panel at the Escorial and, above all, in the magnificent St Jerome by El Greco^(Fig 13), today in the National Gallery of Art in Washington. All three of these works follow a similar composition. In fact, due to his spirit and his expressionist painting, all of El Greco's work emits an evident parallelism to Valmaseda. We also find it in the obsession with movement of the baroque, especially in Bernini. For this reason we can affirm that Valmaseda, like Berruguete, anticipates the new artistic currents that triumphed generations later.

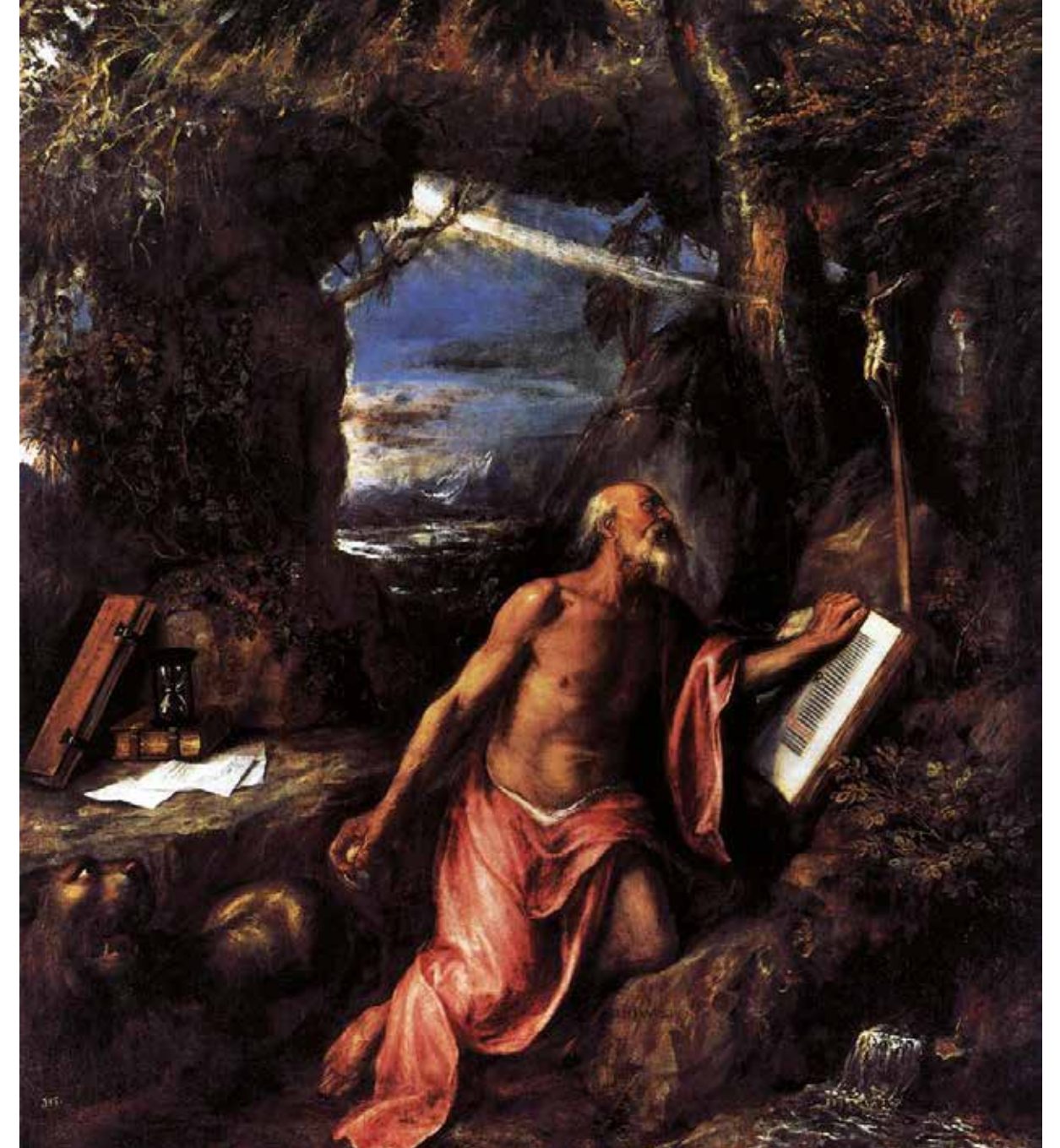


Fig.12 Titian, Saint Jerome in Penitence (1575), Nuevos Museos in the El Escorial.



Fig. 13 **El Greco.** *Saint Jerome Penitent* (1614).
National Gallery of Art.



Fig. A15 **Juan de Valmaseda** *Saint Jerome*.
IOMR Collection.

The rock that provides a setting for the saint with polychromed silver “corlada”^(Fig A15) decoration at the front and with all nature’s rough strength on its reverse, enriched with a beautiful knot, fulfils a fundamental function in the work. On the one hand, it prolongs the saint’s look towards a supernatural scenery that we only intuitively imagine and, on the other, it surrounds the sculpture so that it allows the spectators to have a different vision depending on the angle from which they look.

Here lies another of the great achievements of the sculpture. By means of a mechanical rotation system applied at the base of the sculpture, the spectator discovers unknown angles of the work, which are incredibly beautiful. Viewed from the side^(Fig A12), the Saint appears virtually leaning on the rock, with only his hand and his mystical expression perceived. The vision of the Saint’s back is perfect in its unfinished state and conveys a Greek elegance that ends in sketchily rendered legs folded in an almost symphonic movement^(Fig A11). Lastly, when we contemplate the reverse side of the sculpture, the piece shows all its modernity as the walnut wood trunk, shaped like a flint stone, gains as the protagonist, St Jerome’s face scarcely stands out revealing his unfinished part^(Fig A13). Can there be any more modernity in this scene? How much it reminds us of Michelangelo^(Fig 14) and his slaves; how much we are moved emotionally by this struggle between the spirit and the material, between polished and unfinished areas in this conflict produced by forms in their attempt to free themselves – in this case, from a wooden trunk!

Fig. A11 **Juan de Valmaseda, Saint Jerome**, IOMR Collection.





Fig. A12 **Juan de Valmaseda** *Saint Jerome*, IOMR Collection.



Fig. A13 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome* by, IOMR Collection.

Without any doubt, as indicated by J. M. Parrado del Olmo, we shall not be exceeding ourselves if we consider our St Jerome as one of Juan de Valmaseda's works where his art shines out in all its splendour. Armed with this credit, it should strive for the place fitting for him among the sculpture of the Spanish Renaissance, with the same rights as the already-consecrated great figures of Alonso Berruguete, Diego de Siloé and Juan de Juni, whose representations of St Jerome cast no shadow on this sculpture, but indeed enhance it with a greater and more expressive passion that is all the more profoundly Spanish, and therefore more essentially modern.

Fig. A16 **Juan de Valmaseda**, *Saint Jerome* (1530) by, IOMR Collection.



Fig. 14 **Michelangelo Buonarroti**, *Tomb of Giuliano de Medici* (Circa 1530), San Lorenzo Basilica, Florence.



2. ALONSO BERRUGUETE.

The Saint Peter and Saint Paul sculptures

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo

“Whoever says art, must forcibly say emotion”

(Ricardo de Orueta, “Berruguete and his Work”, p. 54)



The two sculptures presented here confront us with an important and recurring problem when initiating a basic analysis to determine the plausible attribution of an artwork to a recognised master. In the first place, there is the first impression of the expert or connoisseur, which is influenced by memories of other works by the master, with their emotional impact and the specific formal features determined to be typical for a particular artist. Eliminating the possibility that the works of art could belong to a follower of the master's style implies a profound analysis of each of the motives eliciting artistic forms and the personal ways of making them, as well as details of the execution itself.

This process was followed when these sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, part of the IOMR collection, were studied, and I believe they have passed the analysis with the absolute conviction that they can be fully attributed to Alonso Berruguete.^(Fig 1)

The two sculptures give a first impression of expressive emotion full of sentimental subtlety, something highly identified with his way of working. He composes the two sculptures with movement that is particularly stressed by means of the sharp foreshortening in Saint Peter and the unstable helical movement in Saint Paul, together with the latter's typically crossed legs. This is very characteristic of his personal style, in which his mannerist stamp is pervaded by an intellectual¹ and fully artistic subjectivism, due to his transcendence beyond stereotyped formulas. This is what the spectator notices on viewing this pair of sculptures; a special kind of aesthetic attraction that can only be compared with observing works of truly great art. Berruguete's stamp is present here, with his characteristic way of interpreting the rules governing proportions, the movement of the human body, and his supremely personal manner of rendering the disposition of a human body, especially its limbs and head.^{(Fig 2)(Fig 3)}

Fig 1 **Alonso Berruguete**, (Paredes de Nava (Palencia) 1489. Toledo 1561). *A pair of sculptures, Saint Peter and Saint Paul*, 1529/1532, 54 cm Polychrome walnut wood. **Provenance:** Historical provenance presumably from the altarpiece of the colegio of Santiago de Fonseca, Salamanca. Garnica Collection Toledo, until 2015. IOMR Collection, The Netherlands. **Literature:** Prof J M. Parado del Olmo, Prof René Payo Hernanz, in *Treasures of Spanish Renaissance Sculpture. The origin of the Spanish Manner*, IOMR September 2019. Will be included in the forthcoming: addenda to the book “Alonso Berruguete, Prometeo de la escultura”, Manuel Arias Martínez, 2011.





← ← Alonso Berruguete, *pulpit*, gilt bronze, circa 1545, Toledo Cathedral..

Fig 4 Francisco Giralte. *Lamentation over the death of Christ*, polychrome wood, Capilla de Obispo, Madrid.

← ← Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*, 1529 - 1532, polychrome walnut wood, IOMR collection.

Fig 5 Isidro de Villoldo. *Saint Paul*, circa 1550, IOMR Collection.

If we now wish to compare the pair of sculptures with the style of artists who followed the master, we shall notice the sharp differences involved. Apart from the artists of the Toledan group, or related to this group (such as Manuel Álvarez), one can say that the first generation of followers whose style is well known include Francisco Giralte^(Fig 4) and Isidro de Villoldo.^(Fig 5) The former adopts a very personal deviation from the artistic interpretation of his master. The latter is closer to the Master's expressivity. Villoldo, however, does not attain the epic grandeur of the master in his sculpture and, in many instances his interest in great volume distances him from the aesthetic considerations confronting us with the two statues we are now studying. Villoldo is more deliberate in his compositions and less direct in his emotional stamp.



Therefore we find ourselves facing two Berrugetesque sculptures related only to the personal style of the master. Both measure 54 cm in height. The backs are not carved, but simply hollowed out by an adze, as was the custom with sculptures for XVIth century altarpieces. This was because they were placed in niches such that the reverse side would not be visible, meaning effort and material could be economized in their execution. Such are the sculptures of the altarpiece of San Benito and those in the Colegio de Fonseca.



Fig 6 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR collection.



Fig 7 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Christ tied to the column*, pen and brown ink on paper, circa 1537, 10286 Galeria degli Uffizi.



Fig 8 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Ecce Homo*, 1525, polychrome wood, Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Mejorada, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 9 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Apostle*, 1526-1532, polychrome wood, Monastery of San Benito, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.

The general composition of both sculptures follows the flexible and dynamic rhythm of Berruguete, which avoids frontalism and creates rich movements in opposing directions. They also employ the technique of exaggerated “contrapostos” or, in the case of Saint Paul, crossed legs whilst in an unstable position, of which he has left us many examples in the sculptures for the altarpiece at Mejorada de Olmedo, in the patriarchs of the altarpiece of San Benito, or in Saint Jerome² at the Diocesan Museum of Salamanca^(Fig 47) which, according to Arias Martínez, proceeds from the altarpiece of the Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca.^(Figs 6-13)



Fig 10 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR collection.



Fig 13 **Alonso Berruguete**, *David*, relief, walnut wood , high choir stalls, 1539-1542 Cathedral of Toledo.



Fig 12 **Alonso Berruguete**, *drawing*, circa 1526-32, The Art institute of Chicago.



Fig 11 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Levi* , polychrome wood , 1526- 32, Museo Nacional de Escultura Valladolid.

Fig 16 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Apostle*, Monastery of San Benito, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 15 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Ecce Homo*, detail arms, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



The movement of arms contributes to the use of space which, in Saint Peter's case, is perpendicular, as often employed by the master, or advancing towards the spectator, as with Saint Paul. In this we see a subtle, playful elegance and thought-provoking expressivity, particularly in the position of the fingers of the right hand^(Figs 14-17), with the index and ring fingers outstretched, lightly touching the other hand. Such a degree of subtlety can only be found in Berruguete, who treats hands, as no one else can, in harmony with gesture. In the San Benito altarpiece he has, in fact, left us many varied examples of his personal way of bending slender fingers. The Saint Peter especially reminds one of his compositions in the panels of the choir stalls of Toledo Cathedral, although in these we recognise the habitual differences in Berruguete, who never repeats his compositions. Worthy of mention are the Michelangesque features of loaded shoulders, with reference to Saint Peter.

Fig14 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, detail, arms, IOMR Collection.



Fig 14 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul and Saint Peter*, detail hands, IOMR Collection.



Fig 15 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Ecce Homo*, detail hand, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 17 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Roque*, detail hand, Museo Marés, Barcelona.



Fig 19 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Patriarch*, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.



Fig 21 **Alonso Berruguete**, *San Bartolomé*, circa 1530, polychrome wood, altarpiece of Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca, Salamanca.

The habitual tradition of the Princes of the Church prevent to him from revealing important parts of their naked anatomy; Saint Peter^(Fig.18) and Saint Paul are always wrapped in a tunic and cloak in their various representations. Therefore, their vestments play an important role. Dynamic robes wrap around their bodies in a complicated way, often clinging to them, suggesting legs in both sculptures and, in the case of Saint Paul, his navel.

In Saint Paul, his tunic, which moves more freely than his cloak, clings to his body at the front, permitting a veiled view of his anatomy, suggesting both his belly and advancing left leg. Nevertheless, the master is even more subtle in the arrangement of the folds of the cloak, for example in the manner of crossing the upper edge of the cloak obliquely from his left shoulder down to his opposite hip, forming a diagonal arrangement, which is a most peculiar feature of his style. The cloak twists upwards, wrapping around such that the artist avoids creating a vertically falling line and consequently a static one. We also observe his peculiar way of disposing the girdle that winds obliquely around from the left hip to the pelvis where it is knotted, as can be seen in so many of the sculptures³ at San Benito, or in the Saint Bartholomew of Santiago de Fonseca altarpiece.^(Figs 19-22)



Fig 22 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Apostle*, 1526-1532, polychrome wood, Monastery of San Benito currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 20 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR collection.

In Saint Peter, the ample sleeve of his tunic or the gathered folds on his chest already suggest hidden vitality, which is intensified by the ruffled cloak slipping down from his left shoulder in such a way as to twist around his arm in a disposition habitual in Berruguete's figures for the altarpiece of San Benito or in the Saint John the Baptist of the altarpiece of Don Diego de la Haya in the church of Santiago of Valladolid. These examples serve to reveal his naked leg and, in this case, the leg itself is suggested through the robe. In similar fashion, the cloak flows impetuously at the level of his waist and falls diagonally towards his right hip, with the intention of stressing movement. The robes do not fall down directly to their feet, but both the cloak and the tunic reveal separate edges advancing forward, which strengthen the vital dynamism of the scene. ^{(Fig 18)(Fig 23)}



Fig 18 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Relief representing Isaias*, 1539- 1542, walnut wood, High Choir-stalls detail, Toledo Cathedral.

Fig 23 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR Collection.





Fig 24 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Apostle*, detail hands, Monasterio de San Benito, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.

Fig 25 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR Collection.

The few parts that are nude, such as the arms and feet, are consistent with his tendency to stylize muscles, making them elongated and slender, the opposite of Michelangelo's canon, but similar to the first Florentine mannerism, as appears in the paintings of Rosso Fiorentino.^{(Fig 24)(Fig 26)} The hands display tendons and long fingers, bent in different positions, avoiding rigidity and, as has been indicated above, revealing the master's capacity for subtle and elegant suggestions, as in the case of Saint Paul. Similarly, his feet are curved upon treading the ground as is typical in Berruguete's work. In fact, the left one only touches the ground with the tips of his toes. Some of the toes bend, giving greater expressivity in a moment when life seems to stop its ever-flowing movement.^(Figs 26-31)

Fig 26 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR.



Fig 27 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR collection.



Fig 28 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529-1532, IOMR collection.

Fig 29 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Jerome*, 1526-1532, detail feet, Monastery of San Benito currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 30 **Alonso Berruguete**, *San Sebastian*, Detail feet, Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.



Fig 31 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Roque* detail feet, Museo Marés, Barcelona.



Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Joseph*, altar piece of the church Santa Úrsula, Toledo.

We must draw particular attention to the heads of these two sculptures. The hair reveals vitality in their locks, with the expressivity only Berruguete appears to give to heads of hair.^(Fig 32) He avoids straight and lank hair. The locks twist about in nervous strands, sometimes touched up with polychrome paint, which adds richness to the carving. The master uses the same technique in some of the figures of the altarpiece of San Benito, especially in his Saint Christopher. Saint Peter is rendered bald, as in the customary iconography of the saint, but with a thick lock of hair over his bald pate. On either side, hair creates nervous locks, with dynamic “contracurva” strands of hair that cover the tops of the ears. Berruguete also observes canon law in the interpretation of the first Pope, with a short disordered beard whose tousled hair mingles both with his moustache and his beard, creating volume by means of “chiaroscuro”.

Fig 32 Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood 1529-1532, IOMR Collection.





Fig 34 **Alonso Berruguete**,
Apostle, polychrome wood,
Monastery of San Benito currently
at Museo Nacional de Escultura,
Valladolid.

Fig 33 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood
1529 - 1532, IOMR Collection.



Similarly, Saint Paul is represented with an abundant head of hair and a long beard – as he is usually portrayed in Christian iconography. We must point out that Berruguete does not show him as an old person, but with the appearance of a mature man. His hair is a tangled mess of disordered locks that twist around from back to front. His ears are covered and a few curling locks of hair lie over his temples. The sculpture has a flaw in the front part of the hair. The long beard, also commonly portrayed in the representations of Saint Paul, is even more disordered than that of Saint Peter and presents its usual characteristic with twisting and tousled locks that finish in a pointed ending in the upper part of the bust. This can be seen in many of the sculptures at the San Benito, the Santiago de Fonseca altarpiece and the pulpits of Toledo Cathedral,⁴ whose design Arias attributes fundamentally to Berruguete.^(Fig. 2) Again, the disordered surfaces appear, where he arranges the lively “chiaroscuro”.^{(Fig. 33) (Fig. 34)}

The faces present the characteristic physiognomy found in Berruguete, in which one can see his stylistic stamp and which differ significantly from his closest followers, such as Isidro de Villoldo, who is calmer in his expressionism. Their wizened faces with strong features, very typical of the Berruguesque, combine a look of anguish with a melancholic expression in a deeply mannerist style. Thus the eyes and brows of both sculptures clash obliquely, making a deep mark at the eyebrows, where the dark shadows meet in a dramatic frown. The eyelids stand out in relief through sharp incisions in the lower eye lids, as with Saint Peter.^(Fig. 35) Their cheekbones are so prominent that we can see the bones underneath. Also characteristic are their straight noses and slightly open mouths. All these details appear in Berruguete's sculptures throughout his production, in the figures on the bench of the altarpiece at Mejordada, repeatedly in all the sculptures of the altarpiece of San Benito, in the figures of the altarpiece of the Colegio Fonseca, and later in the panels of the choir stalls of Toledo.^(Fig. 35-41)

In analysing the shaping of the two sculptures we have found irrefutable likenesses to other well-known works by Alonso Berruguete. Furthermore, and in reference to what has been indicated at the outset, it is beyond all discussion that these works share a significant emotional and aesthetic impact – both at first sight and when contemplated slowly. Such impact is precisely that which is caused by artistic works considered to be great. This special emotion, as quoted by Orueta in the opening sentence of this study, can only be expressed by means of art – in my opinion, by great art.^{(Fig. 35) (Fig. 37) (Fig. 40)}

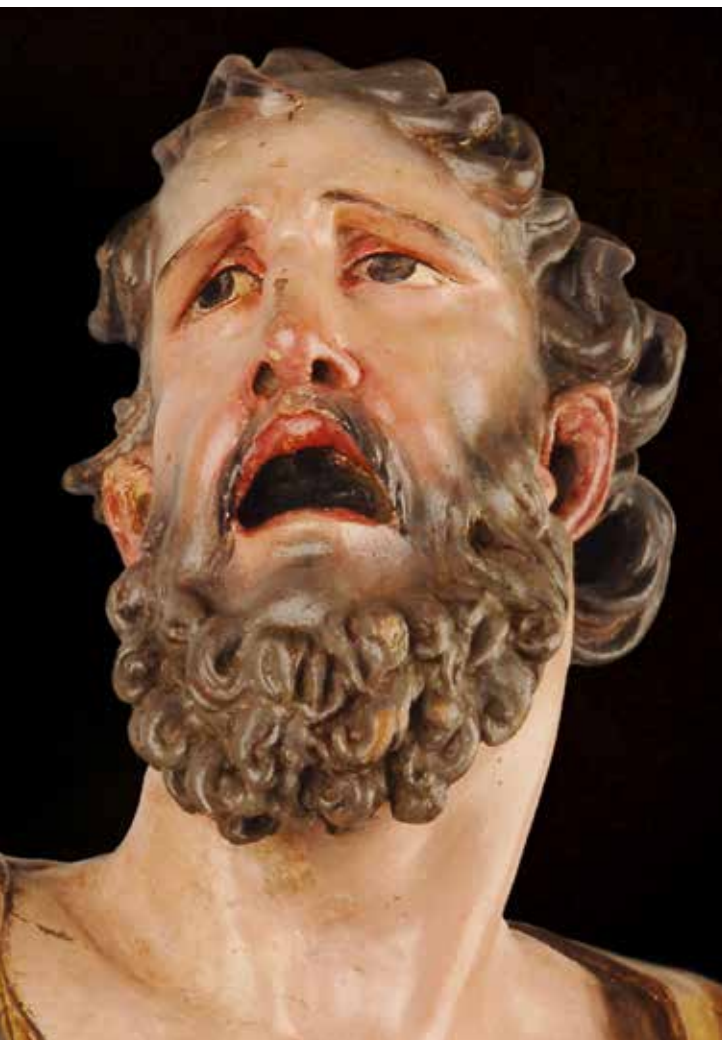


Fig 36 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Patriarch*, detail face, Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

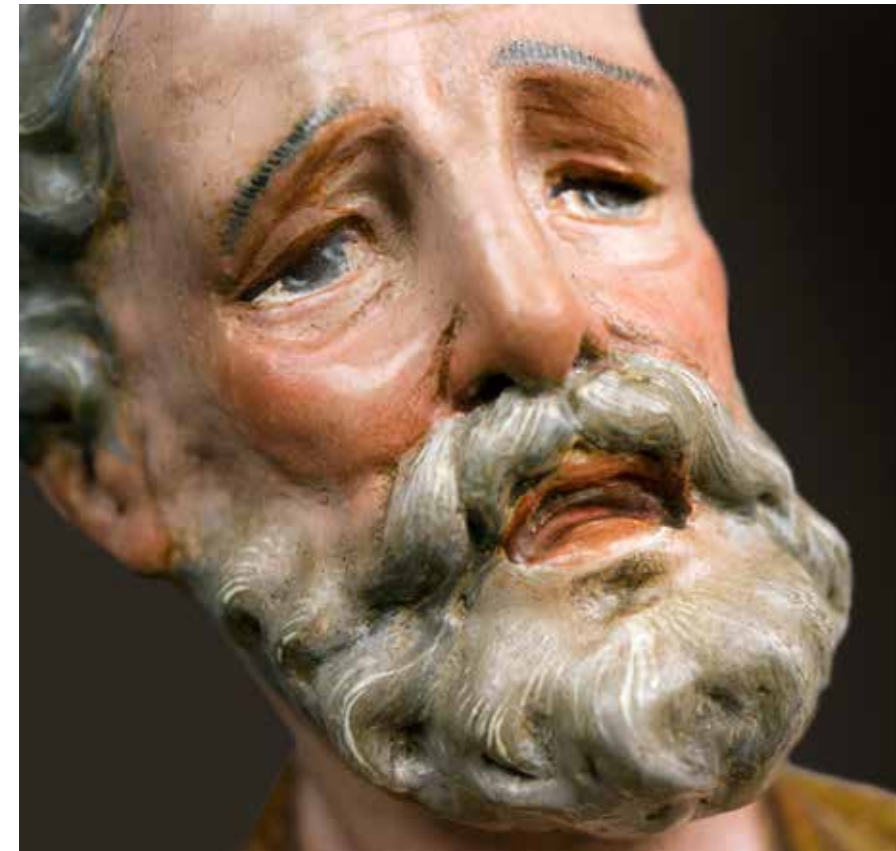


Fig 35 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail face, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR Collection.



Fig 37 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Sebastian*, detail face, 1526-1532, Monastery of San Benito, currently at Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

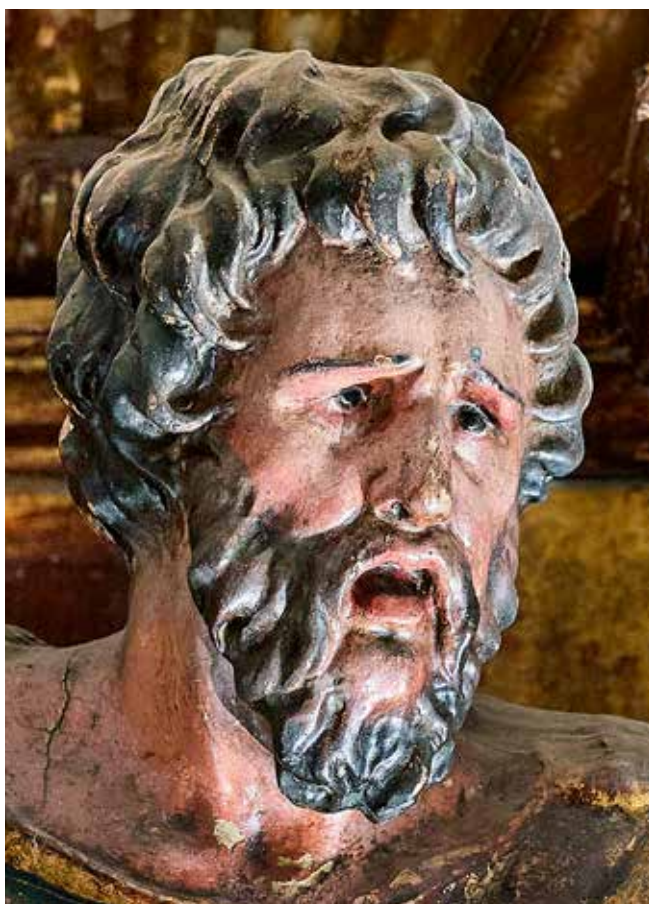


Fig 38 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Saint Bartolomew*, detail face circa 1530, polychrome wood, altarpiece of Colegio Santiago de Fonseca, Salamanca.

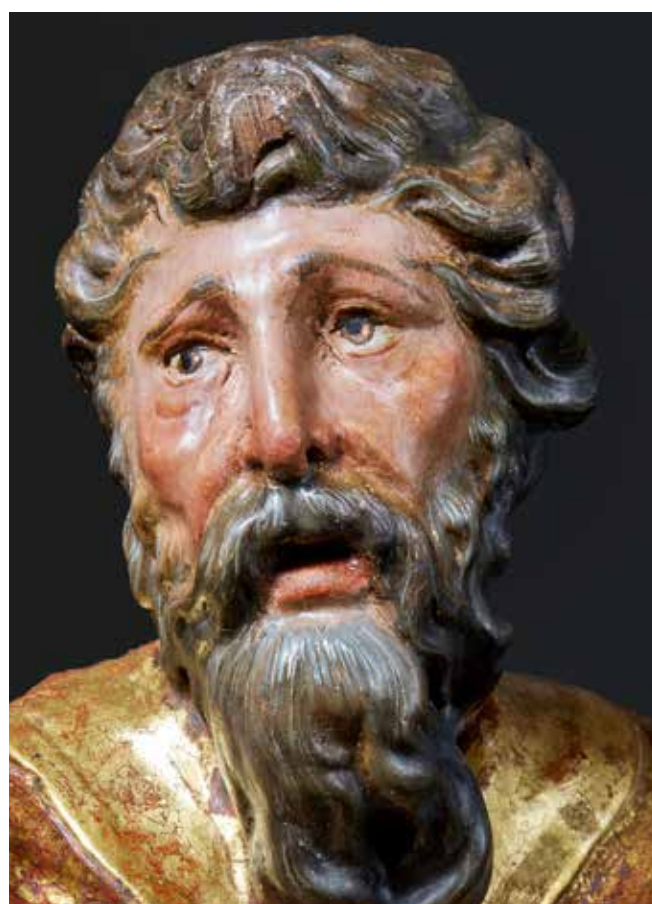


Fig 39 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Saint Paul*, detail face, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR Collection.



Fig 40 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Saint Paul*, detail face, polychrome walnut wood 1529- 1532, IOMR Collection.



Fig 41 **Alonso Berruguete**. *Apostle*, detail face, altarpiece Monastery of San Benito. Museo Nacional de Escultura de. Valladolid.

A REASONABLE HYPOTHESIS

An open question is that of connecting these two sculptures (considered a pair in a single work), with a historically catalogued work by Berruguete. The altarpiece of the Colegio Santiago de Fonseca is an enigmatic work in which there are many aspects difficult to understand due to the scarce documentation preserved. The altarpiece was commissioned in Madrid on 3 November 1529.^(Fig 42) In this contract signed with Don Alonso de Fonseca, Archbishop of Toledo and “patrón” of the building at Salamanca, Berruguete’s obligation to terminate the work in a year and a half’s time was secured at the price of six hundred ducados, as quoted by Ponz, who adds some data on the iconography and other details of the contract.⁵ We therefore assume that the altarpiece was made at the same time as the altarpiece at the monastery of San Benito at Valladolid, which was commissioned under contract on 4 November 1529 and finished in 1532. The problem becomes more complicated due to the different modifications made on the altarpiece. One occurred in about 1549, when the top of the building was enlarged which, as Arias indicates, must have caused the creation of the upper part of the altarpiece, around the Calvary.⁶ Sendín Calabuig carried out a detailed study contributing some very important data on the incidents affecting the work and which are of interest regarding what we intend to propose in this paper.⁷

It appears that the fire that attacked the top of the dome and “capilla mayor” in 1638 could have caused damage that included, according to Sendín, the bench. This bench was replaced in 1815 by another one, which in the state in which it is now preserved includes some of the ancient pieces, such as the columns forming banisters (now giving us an idea of the original height of the bench). The “colegio” suffered various incidents after the suppression of the “Colegios Mayores” in 1798. In 1801 it became a military hospital. In 1827 and in 1830 it was occupied by an Irish contingent that resided there permanently after 1838, which substituted the central statue of Santiago⁸ in the altarpiece for one of their own saints.

During this period, the sculptures of the two niches in the first group disappeared and the sculptures of Saint John and Saint Joseph of Arimatea, which must have been in adjacent niches, were united to the Piedad of the third “cuerpo” of the altarpiece. Saint Christopher and another saint, which must have been originally in the second “cuerpo”, were placed together in another niche. For this reason the two “angelotti” acting as Atlas, who must have formed part of the original bench, were placed in the second “cuerpo”. It has been suggested that the sculptures in the niches of the first “cuerpo” could have been the San Roque, today in the Marès Museum of Barcelona, and the Saint Jerome⁹ in the Diocesan Museum of Salamanca.^{(Fig 43), (Fig 47)} It is certain that they were already missing in 1832, when the painter Pedro Micó undertook to restore the altarpiece and make two sculptures of Saints Peter and Paul for these first niches.¹⁰ Don Manuel Gómez Moreno collected the material for his “Catálogo Monumental de la Provincia de Salamanca” (1901–1903) and drafted the text in 1903. But the photographs made of the altarpiece of the Colegio de Santiago were the work of Ricardo de Orueta, who published them in his book on Berruguete, the first edition in 1917 including a general image of altarpiece.¹¹

Fig 42 **Alonso Berruguete**, altarpiece of the Chapel of the Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca, 1529, Salamanca.



Years later, when the “Catálogo Monumental” was published in 1967, apart from the general image of the altarpiece, two more were published in which we may clearly observe the two sculptures of Saints Peter and Paul¹² by Pedro Micó, then placed in the first part of the altarpiece, which are completely different from Berruguete’s style.

The general photograph of the altarpiece, referred to above, shows us the bench of the altarpiece in the state in which it remained after the reconstruction of around 1815 and after the restoration by Micó in 1832, in which we observe how he respects the division into “entrecalles” by means of empty niches on either side of the central “calle”. The idea suggested by this division is that the bench originally might have had two paintings in the side “calles”, the “sagrario” in the central “calle”, and on either side of the tabernacle, two niches for sculptures. All this was replaced by panels of “estofado” in the detailed restoration carried out between 1969–1971.¹³

Therefore we find ourselves facing the reconstruction of the altarpiece bench undertaken around 1815 when pieces of the old bench were specially used for the lower and upper mouldings, pilasters, and columns. This would indicate the approximate height the bench might have had (if not slightly higher) if we imagine the upper frieze is missing. A space was also disposed for two sculptures on both sides of the “calle central” of the altarpiece as a reminder of those that would have gone in the original bench and which necessarily would have been situated there. The 83 cm height of this bench allows us to fit into it the sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, which we are now studying, since their height of 54 cm is only slightly smaller than those of the bench. But if the sculptures were placed in niches with scallop shell clasps, these would coincide exactly with the 54 cm that our two sculptures measure.

It is, however, surprising that the two sculptures commissioned to Pedro Micó in 1832 should be of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, as if at that moment he was reminded of the existence of two sculptures representing that specific iconography in the original situation of the altarpiece. It is, in fact, typical that in many XVIth-century Spanish altarpieces the two sculptures of the princes of the Church should be placed in niches on both side of the “sagrario”, on the bench. Traditionally, one of the original sculptures, preserved in an upper niche, has been identified as Saint Peter due to his wearing a short beard and his head being slightly bald. It was considered the keys he typically carries might have disappeared or that he could have carried them in one hand. But Saint Peter is usually more noticeably bald than is revealed in this statue and on observing the disposition of his arms, we see them more in an attitude suggesting prayer than to be carrying anything. Besides, if we view the work from above we would notice that no space is left for the keys, as well as the fact that these keys would have to be carved, as Berruguete never uses false objects and the polychromy of the cloak does not show any traces of the keys. Therefore, the sculpture must represent another holy figure, perhaps an apostle.

Fig 43 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Roque*, altarpiece of the Chapel of the Colegio de Santiago de Fonseca, circa 1530, Salamanca. Currently at Museo Marés.

Fig 44 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529 - 1532, IOMR collection.



Fig 45 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Christopher*, altarpiece Santiago de Fonseca.



Fig 46 bis **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Andrew*, altarpiece Santiago de Fonseca.



Fig 46 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Bartholomew*, altarpiece Santiago de Fonseca.



Fig 47 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Jerome*, Museo Diocesano de Salamanca.

In addition, similarities in form and style must be established between our two sculptures and those existing in the altarpiece. In this case, we are not going to mention physiognomy, as I do not think it is necessary to insist that the features revealed in our two sculptures are fully Berruguetesque. But I would like to indicate the special similarities in the way of rendering beards and hair, for the manner of carving the size of the locks of hair is very similar to the treatment given to the sculptures of Saint Bartholomew and Saint Christopher and the San Roque at the Museo del Marés, especially the fluctuating motion of the locks of the beards. ^(Fig 38-39)



Fig 48 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Paul*, polychrome walnut wood 1529 - 1532, IOMR Collection.

Fig 49 **Alonso Berruguete**, *the incorrectly identified as Saint Peter*, detail face, altarpiece of Santiago de Fonseca.



Fig 50 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, polychrome walnut wood 1529 - 1532, IOMR Collection.

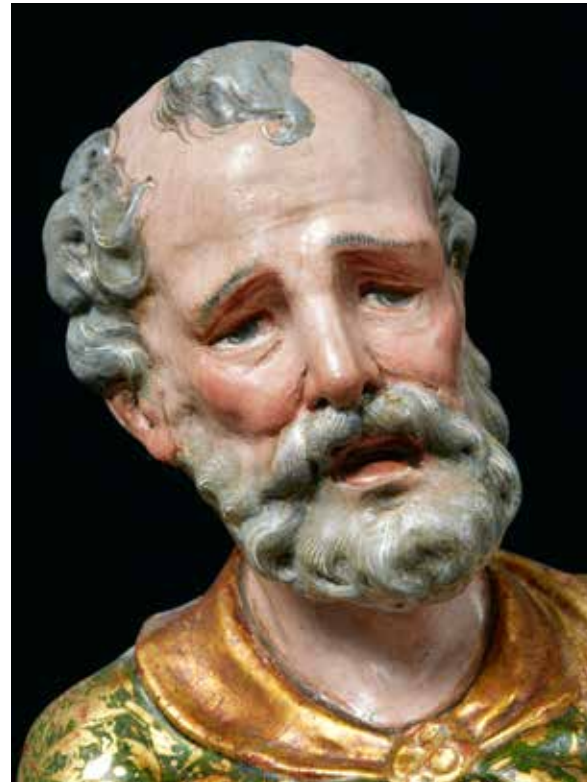


Fig 51 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint*, altarpiece of Santiago de Fonseca.



Fig 52 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Joseph*, Group of the Holy family, Altarpiece of the Epiphany, circa 1537, Church of Santiago, Valladolid.

Our Saint Peter's beard is very similar to that of the apostle in the altarpiece, typically identified also as Saint Peter.^(Figs 49-52) Regarding hands and feet,^(Figs 53-54) one could point out that, in many cases, the extremities of our two sculptures are superior in quality to those of some of the sculptures of the altarpiece of Fonseca, as observed in the Saint John or in the Saint Joseph of Arimathea, whose hands are roughly rendered. As regards composition, the instability of the Saint Peter and Saint Paul stands out in the disposition of the apostles, their swirling robes, or the way his sleeves are gathered up as revealed in sculptures of this altarpiece, like the cloth which wraps around Saint Andrew's right arm.^{(Fig 46), (Fig 46 bis), (Fig 45), (Fig 47)} The suggestion of anatomical form through the robes, particularly in our Saint Paul, is also evident in the sculpture of Saint Bartholomew^(Fig 46) and of the apostle mistakenly identified as Saint Peter. Furthermore, there is a strong similarity in the polychromy, as has been deeply studied by René Payo, in the first part of this book, mainly in the quality and designs of the "estofado" of the Pietà and of the vestments of Saint Peter.

The movement of the robes of the pair of sculptures is more elegant than in some sculptures of the altarpiece, such as the already-mentioned Saint John or Saint Joseph of Arimathea, which are carved rather as a block due to being made for the upper structure of the altarpiece. As the remaining figures have their legs bare it is impossible to compare the system of folding draperies. But the pleating system and Saint Paul's knotted girdle are specially related to the Saint John of the Calvary, and to Saint Bartholomew of the Santiago de Fonseca altarpiece.



Comparison, Fig 53 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint Peter*, detail feet, IOMR Collection and Fig 54 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Saint John*, detail feet, circa 1530 altarpiece of the chapel of the College of Santiago de Fonseca, Salamanca.

CONCLUSIONS

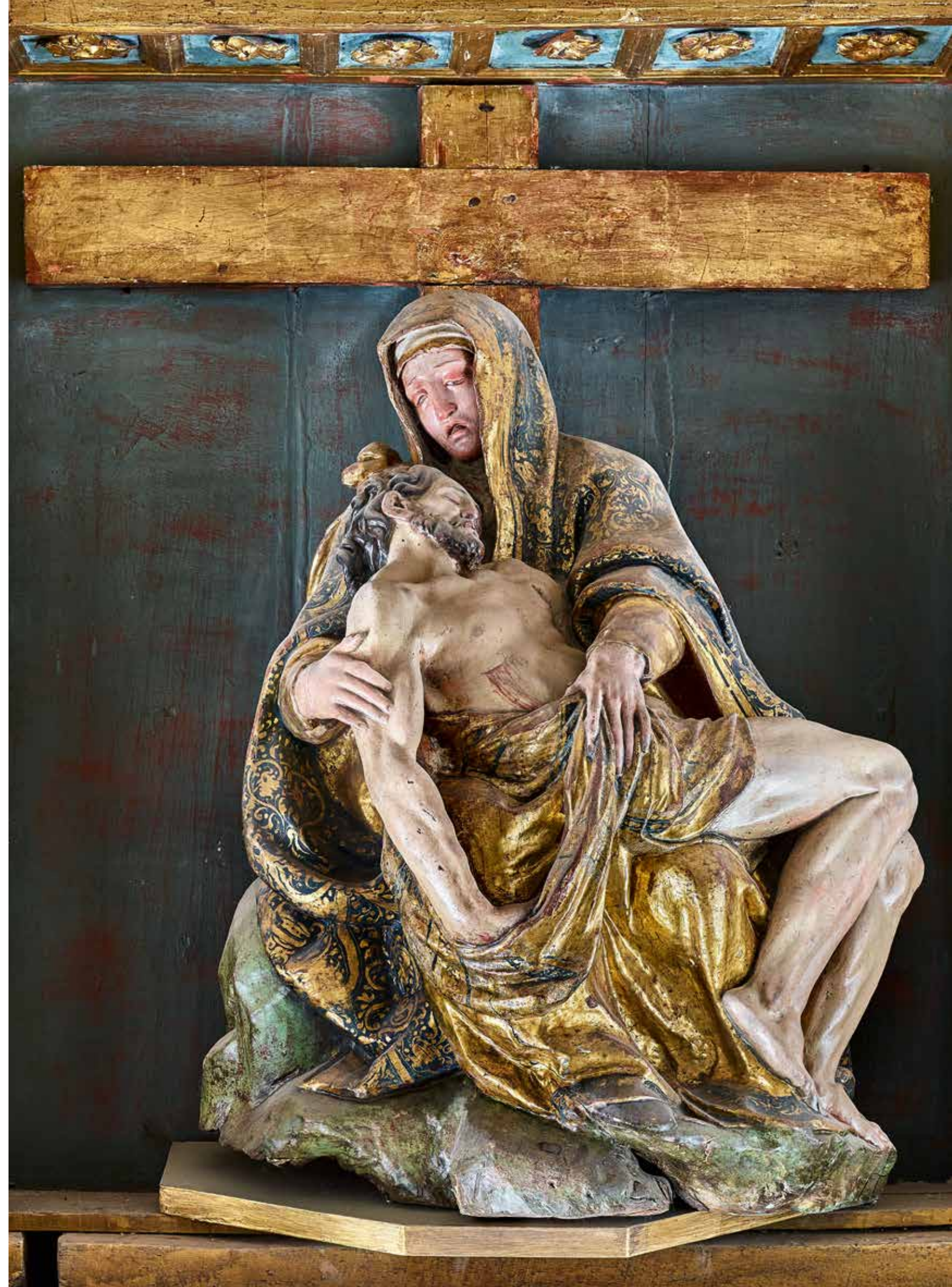
These two sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul are fully considered to be the autograph work of Alonso Berruguete. Besides all the formal features consistent with the style of the master and not attributable to any of his known disciples, these sculptures emit that stamp of creativity and emotion that only Berruguete was able to integrate in his sculptural designs, always original in his creation and never making concessions to repetition in his compositions or human types.

Furthermore, it is again possible to propose the hypothesis that both sculptures proceed from the altarpiece at Fonseca, as stated above. On a vaguely determined date, the sculptures of the bench and of the “primer cuerpo” were taken down and were no longer there in 1832 when Pedro Micó restored the altarpiece and two new sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul were carved. It is probable that if the bench was remodelled in 1815, as indicated by Sendín Calabuig, and these two original sculptures were not mounted in it, they might have already disappeared. In this respect, it is of interest to note the information contributed by Sendín that in 1801, when the building was going to be turned into a military hospital, the sale of the altarpiece was proposed to pay for the cost of fitting the building for this purpose. The complete group was not sold, but the nearest sculptures, those of the bench and the “primer cuerpo”, could then have been disposed of. In any case, all this is open to doubt.

NOTES

- 1 From two different, but not opposed, points of view this intellectual mannerism has been denoted by José María AZCÁRATE y RISTORI “Alonso Berruguete: Cuatro ensayos. Valladolid, 1963, pp. 55–68; Fernando MARÍAS: “El siglo XVI. Gótico y Renacimiento”, pp. 137–139. The aspects of form in Juan José MARTÍN GONZÁLEZ: “El manierismo en la escultura española”, *Revista de Ideas Estéticas*, 1960, pp.301–312; IDEM, “Consideraciones sobre la vida y la obra de Alonso Berruguete”. *Boletín del Seminario de Arte y Arqueología*, 1961, pp. 11–30.
- 2 ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, Manuel: “Alonso Berruguete: Prometeo de la escultura.” *Diputación de Palencia. Basauri (Vizcaya)*, 2011, p. 126.
- 3 Attributed by me in PARRADO DEL OLMO, Jesús María: Ficha pág. 131 del catálogo del museo. *Fons del Museu Frederic Marès. Catàleg d'escultura i pintura dels segles XVI, XVII i XVIII. Època del renaixement i el barroc*. Barcelona, 1966. ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, M.: op. cit., pp. 126–127. Considera el autor que pudo formar parte del conjunto del retablo del Colegio de Santiago de Salamanca.
- 4 ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, M.: op. cit., pp. 167–170.
- 5 PONZ, Antonio: *Viaje de España*. Edición de Editorial Aguilar, Madrid, 1947, pp. 1099–1100.
- 6 MARTÍNEZ, M.: op. cit., pp. 121–130.
- 7 SENDÍN CALABUIG, Manuel: *El Colegio Mayor del Arzobispo Fonseca en Salamanca*. Salamanca, 1977, pp. 127–172.
- 8 MARTÍ Y MONSÓ, José: *Estudios histórico-artísticos relativos principalmente a Valladolid*. Valladolid-Madrid, 1898–1901, p. 129.
- 9 See notes 2 y 3.
- 10 ORUETA, Ricardo de: *Berruguete y su obra*. Madrid, 1917. Segunda edición, Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid, 2011, publishes a photograph in which we see the two sculptures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in the niches of the first group.
- 11 ORUETA, Ricardo de, op. cit.
- 12 GÓMEZ MORENO, Manuel: *Catálogo Monumental de España. Provincia de Salamanca*. Valencia, 1967, lams. 316 y 317.
- 13 Carried out by the restorers Juan Santos Ramos y doña María Teresa y doña Rocío Dávila Álvarez, del Instituto Central de Conservación y Restauración de la Dirección General de Bellas Artes.

Alonso Berruguete. *Pietà* of the Chapel of Santiago de Fonseca College, Salamanca,



3. ISIDRO DE VILLOLDO

Saint Paul

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



We are facing an elegant sculpture representing Saint Paul, Prince of the Apostles. As is typical in his iconography, he appears with a book, symbol of a holy writer, and a sword due to his martyrdom. The figure makes a sharp twisting movement of the position of the feet, where the right foot only seems to move its heel to a similar slanting position as the left foot, which is visible in the foreground. And yet the general sensation the sculpture offers is a soft swaying movement towards the sword where the tunic and full cloak envelop the figure in a voluminous mass that hides the twisted position of legs.^(Fig 1)

The clothes appear alive and dynamic, such as we observe in the stately layout of the aforementioned cloak, which falls down from the left shoulder like a Roman toga and joins the other part that crosses at the waist in a gathering of folds around his left hand, holding a book. The tunic likewise presents broad folds that cross down over his chest. The way he grasps his sword is very theatrical, with his shoulder raised up so that his delicately fingered hand presses down upon the pommel. This gesture and the gathering of the clothes give a certain overwhelming majesty to the composition.

With its powerful head, the work offers us an outstanding example of Spanish expressionist mannerism. The way he turns his head gives greater vitality to the movement in the sculpture. The Apostle is represented according to the usual interpretations of Saint Paul, with a bald head and a thick beard full of vigorous locks coiling like a living serpent. His face is lean, with high cheekbones and slanting deep-set eyes suggesting the melancholic expressionism typical in mid XVIth-century castilian sculpture which, at the same time, creates a humanistic interpretation, full of existentialism.

Fig 1 **Isidro de Villoldo**, (? ... Sevilla, circa 1556), *Saint Paul*. 83 cm, wood without polychromy. **Provenance:** Private collection, Spain IOMR Collection, The Netherlands Literature Prof J. M. Parrado del Olmo, "Isidro de Villoldo, *Saint Paul*", in *Treasures of Spanish Renaissance Sculpture, The origin of the Spanish Manner*, IOMR September 2019.

Under this work there lie traces of Berruguete's art both in the general composition, which we have already indicated, and in the sudden twisting legs and head that rise from the Master's interpretation of the Laoconte or from Michelangelo. The clothes, however, and the voluminous masses of drapery are more emphatically reaffirmed than what is usual in Berruguete and, in any case, suggest a connection with the figures on the walnut panels of the choir stalls of Toledo Cathedral, although they are lacking in the burning intensity of expression of these panels.^(Fig 2)



Fig 2 **Alonso Berruguete**, high choir-stalls, detail, 1539- 1542, Toledo Cathedral.

Fig 3 **Isidro de Villoldo**, high altarpiece of Saint Bernabé, details of the predella, 1549- 1553, Ávila Cathedral.

This greater strengthening of the volume of drapery represented and the general elegance that pervades this work indicate the evolution in Berruguete's circle in Toledo towards a milder mannerism, which places them on a similar level as the international mannerism of mid XVIth century. Following along that tendency, Villoldo evolves in his alabaster works for Ávila Cathedral. I thus find in this work very close links with the figures of the bench of the altarpiece of San Bernabé, situated in the sacristy of Ávila Cathedral.^(Fig 3) These works were initiated by our sculptor and by Juan de Frías in 1549 and were basically finished in 1553 when Isidro de Villoldo goes to Sevilla to carry out the important commission of the altarpiece for the Cartuja de las Cuevas, which was unfinished at the time of his death in 1556. It is in this altarpiece, and especially in the figures mentioned, that Villoldo creates an elegant vision endowed with swaying movement and a greater emphasis on volume. This is also where we find a close link in style with the sculpture of Saint Paul, which we are now studying.^{(Fig 3)(Fig 4)}

The sculpture is presented without polychromy and it is possible that it originally had no polychromy, either because it was thus conceived, or because it was never painted. We are therefore given a pure sculpture free of any polychromic mystifications, and for this reason we can appreciate the essentially sculptural quality of the work. The type of pedestal is very simple since it is a prism in shape and only has a notch at the front that makes one think it was conceived to stand alone and not in an altarpiece or other liturgical setting.

Fig 4 **Isidro de Villoldo**, high altarpiece of Saint Bernabé, details of the predella, 1549 - 1553, Ávila Cathedral.



Isidro de Villoldo. Saint Paul

4. ISIDRO DE VILLOLDO

A Tondo of a prophet.

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



The present medallion is a work of high quality with an exceedingly expressionistic technique and a very modern approach to its subject. It represents a biblical personage, perhaps a prophet, but without an attribute allowing its identification. The figure is inscribed on a medallion dressed in a tunic and a short cloak that wraps around the top of his head like a turban, revealing a precious stone set at the front with the intention of characterizing the person in oriental style.^(Fig 1)

The sculptor dominates the space by means of composition that seeks to emphasize the solid mass of the figure imposed on the circular frame of the medallion. This is due not only to its volume, but above all to the oblique movement of the head, counteracted by the contrary movement of his arm, which is situated in the foreground. As a result of these devices, the sculptor gives the figure a vital dynamism, thus solving a difficult problem, since a bust situated on a medallion offers fewer possible solutions than the figure of a complete body. Therefore, we are facing an artist endowed with great ability for composition, inspired by the Berrugueteque models of the altarpiece of the Epiphany of the Church of Santiago in Valladolid and the upper choir stalls in Toledo.^(Fig 2)

The influence of Berruguete is also evident in the treatment of the face, in which we can observe a series of facial characteristics unique to the great Spanish sculptor, such as the oblique setting of eyebrows and eye sockets, straight noses, half-open mouths, and strands of beards mixed with disheveled and tangled locks of hair. All this creates a passionate interpretation simultaneously attributable to an anguished and melancholic pathos, which is characteristic of the expressive mannerism imposed by Berruguete. On the other hand, in the carving of clothes and the arm, an impressionist feeling reigns, which reduces shapes to the essential without giving details, but at the same time anatomically correct, as may be appreciated in the delicate and elongated fingers, full of sensitivity.

We are therefore studying a work that can only be assigned to an excellent disciple of Berruguete, who must have been in direct contact with the Master and who, in turn, has left us works of supreme quality. Of all his disciples, the sculptor Isidro de Villoldo is the artist whose work is the most similar to his master.

Fig 1 **Isidro de Villoldo**, (? ... Sevilla, circa 1556). *Tondo Prophet* 33 - 34 cm diameter, 1536 - 1544, polychrome wood low relief, Spanish private collection. Purchase in Feriarte November 2016, private collection (Madrid). IOMR collection, the Netherlands with written communication Prof. JM Parrado del Olmo.

Little is known about the life and training of Villoldo except the fact that he is mentioned for the first time in 1538 by Cornieles of Holland as working on the choir stalls of the Cathedral of Ávila, whose general layout and assembly Cornieles had been contracted to make. Cornieles' activity in the Valladolid area between 1530 and 1532 is adequately documented. We would like to imagine that Berruguete and Isidro de Villoldo may have known one another in Valladolid and that when Cornieles contracts the Ávila choir stalls, he would have proposed Villoldo as "imagero" of this work, though Villoldo abandoned the Ávila project so as to collaborate as one of the main assistants of Berruguete in the upper choir stalls of Toledo Cathedral. On his return from this work, he reappears around 1543-1544 at the Ávila choir stalls. From this time onwards, Villoldo is in charge of carrying out the principal projects of the Cathedral in a style developing towards a more rhythmic beauty following Berruguete and his Toledan School.

The relief we are studying manifests an intense artistic obsession similar to the one shown in the carving of the Ávila choir stalls, both in its first and final stages. We must point out that the way of conceiving a turban as headdress is typical for the Ávila School,^(Fig 3) which is a sign linking the work with this school. The expressive nervousness and high-quality technique also correspond to Villoldo's art at that time and allow us to date the work in a period ranging from 1536 to 1544, when his style was fully integrated in the highly dynamic and passionate trail of Berruguete. The relationship of this work with the principal relief of the aforementioned altarpiece of the Epiphany of the church of Santiago in Valladolid, where Villoldo could have collaborated under the direction of Berruguete, is what compels me to assign an earlier date to the medallion – back to 1536, the date when this extraordinary work was initiated.



Fig 2 **Alonso Berruguete**, Altarpiece of the Epiphany, detail of one of the Wise Kings, 1537, Church of Santiago Valladolid.



Fig 3 **Isidro de Villoldo**, high altar piece of Saint Bernabé, details of the predella, 1549-1553, Ávila Cathedral.

It may be added that Villoldo was an absolute master in adapting the composition to a frame in the shape of a medallion, as may be appreciated in the medallion of the documented altarpiece of San Antolín and in his masterful altarpiece of San Bernabé in Ávila Cathedral.^(Fig 3)

This relief work was probably part of an altarpiece, and thus it has been noticed that the use of medallions in the "áticos" or at the "predella" of altarpieces is very common in the Ávila School, such as El Barraco, in which Villoldo himself participated together with the sculptor Pedro de Salamanca, or in the altarpiece of Lanzahita. We can view it in the attic and predella (currently lost) of the altarpiece of the "Epiphany" at the Church of Santiago in Valladolid.^(Fig 4) The polychromy of the medallion is very worn so that one can hardly notice the "carnaciones" (flesh tones). Regarding the clothing and the borders of the medallions, they are gilt but not "estofados", which is indeed a characteristic of Berruguete's work – that is, to leave ample space for gilding in his polychromes.



Fig 4 **Alonso Berruguete**, high altarpiece of the Epiphany, church of Santiago, Valladolid.



Fig 5 **Isidro de Villoldo**, altar piece of San Bernabé, detail, 1549 - 1553, Ávila Cathedral.

5. MANUEL ÁLVAREZ

Burial of Christ.

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



Fig 1 Manuel Álvarez, (Castromocho ? circa 1517.. Valladolid ? circa 1587). *Burial of Christ*, 49 X 55 cm, circa 1550, low relief polychromed wood, Jose María del Rey private collection (Madrid), Private collection (Madrid), IOMR collection, the Netherlands. With written communication by Prof. J M Parrado del Olmo.

Despite its small size, this relief captivates us with its technical quality and the perfect finishing of its carving. It represents the moment when José de Arimatea and Nicodemo are about to place the dead body of Christ in the sarcophagus. Magdalen fervently kisses the Saviour's hand while behind her Our Lady clasps her hands and bows her head with a gesture of controlled suffering. Further in the background is San Juan, who carries a nail in his right hand while he wipes his tears with the cloak he is carrying in his left hand. On the other side María Salomé and María Cleofás, wrapped up in their robes, press tightly against each other while one of them carries the crown of thorns.^(Fig 1)

The composition of the relief is achieved by a balanced arrangement of masses. The figures are situated around a symmetrical axis, which stresses the central position of Our Lady. At the same time, the movement of the folds creates a curved whirl linking some figures with others, even making them overlap. This is particularly observed in the cloak covering the head of the holy man on the left, as well as Magdalen's shoulder. These two masculine figures are represented with exaggerated postures and have fiercely expressive faces with long flowing and twisting beards.^(Fig 4) Their faces are tormented and pathetic. Jesus' anatomy is carved correctly throughout but with more elongated limbs than was the norm according to the mannerist canon; the same tendency was observed in his crossed long legs. His head is serene and the sculptor does not show us signs of violence, except for the drops of blood on his neck. This is a very Italianate interpretation of death – as a person tranquilly sleeping.^(Fig 5) In the relief there is a clear reference to Berruguete's style, especially in the faces of Nicodemo's and José de Arimatea's, as well as in the circular wrapping movement of the robes.^{(Fig 3)(Fig 4)} But there is also aloof elegance in the gestures and in the movement of the composition, which leads us to approach the development of his school in the mid-XVIth century towards a more elegant art, related to the Transfiguration in the upper choir stalls of Toledo cathedral and the later sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera. This is the evolution observed in the masters of Ávila-Toledo, such as Juan Bautista Vázquez el Viejo, Isidro Villoldo, Francisco Giralte, and Manuel Álvarez from Palencia.

Manuel Álvarez is precisely the one whose work is most closely related to this Lamentation. When he was young he collaborated as assistant in the Toledan choir stalls, where he worked thanks to Francisco Giralte, who later became his brother-in-law when he married Giralte's sister. The women who

appear in the background of our relief remind us of Giraltesque models, but they do not present us with a sense of voluminous masses in the style of this sculptor. On the contrary, in this work we can appreciate features appearing in Manuel Álvarez' initial phase. We must bear in mind that this sculptor had before him a long life during which he could evolve throughout his whole production, from the elegant and refined mannerism of Berrugetesque origin and close contact with the Masters of the Toledan centre, such as Juan Bautista Vázquez, in a period lasting approximately until 1563, towards another style imbued by the influence of Juan de Juní and Gaspar Becerra, which would gradually increase in strength up to his final works.

Thus the figures of Our Lady and the two women situated behind closely approach the human types and system of robes of the relief of Santa Clara and her nuns in the sepulchre of Don Alonso de Rojas in the cathedral of Toledo. (Margarita Estella observes Álvarez's autograph work in this relief and similarly in the human types of the holy men who closely approach the biblical personage in the Lázaro Galdiano Museum, also attributed to Álvarez by Estella).

Likewise, there are close relations with various works undertaken by the sculptor in the bishopric of Palencia during the first period of his activity, such as the relief of the "Presentation of Child Jesus at the temple" in the church of Santoyo, which has many analogies with our reliefs.^(Fig 2)

Fig 3 Manuel Álvarez, *Lamentation over the dead Christ*, detail of the head of one of the Holy men, 1550-1555, IOMR collection.



Fig 2 Manuel Álvarez, *Presentation of child Jesus at the temple*, detail representing Simeón, circa 1560, Altarpiece, Church of Santoyo, Palencia.



Fig 4 Manuel Álvarez, *Lamentation over the dead Christ*, detail of the head of one of the Holy men, 1550 - 1555, IOMR collection.

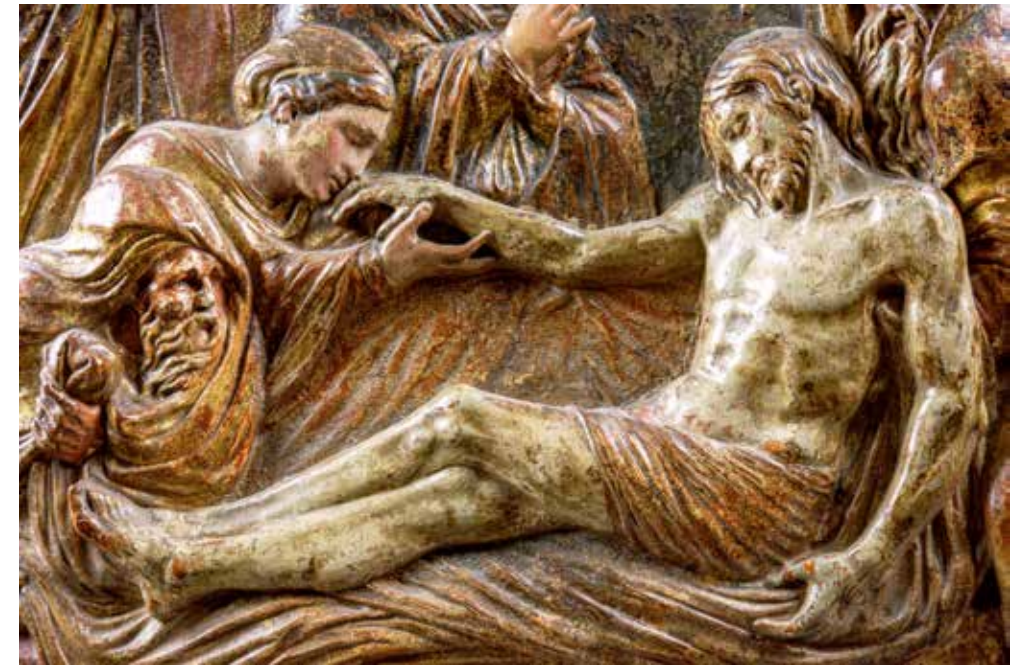


Fig 5 Manuel Álvarez, *Lamentation over the dead Christ*, detail, 1550-1555, IOMR collection.

The human types represented by the two holy men^{(Fig 3)(Fig 4)} appear like the Moses and Elías in the Transfiguration group of the façade of the church of El Salvador in Valladolid. The same movement of folds in the robes and the expressive heads with flowing and twisting beards appear here. Even the figure of the Saviour is similar to that of Jesus in this burial, but with the difference of representing a live body wrapped in robes, not a nude, dead body. Other similar types appear in numerous works by Álvarez belonging to this period, such as the Eternal Father from the scenes of Genesis on the bench of the altarpiece of Arrabal de Portillo, San Jerónimo, David, Salomón and San Gregorio of the altarpiece of Quintanilla de Onésimo, all of which also have in common the undulating movement of the folds. And above all the analogies with the Simeón of the presentation at the temple in the altarpiece at Santoyo^(Fig 2) The same forceful expressivity of his head is evident in a San Pablo carved in alabaster in the collegiate church of Villagarcía de Campos (Valladolid), proceeding from the principal altarpiece of the monastery of Santa Espina, whose reliefs are now in the Marés Museum.

The human type of San Juan is also used by Álvarez in his autograph works. Magdalen's gesture kissing Jesus' hand appears in other reliefs on the same subject by the sculptor, though they may be dated after 1563, such as the alabaster relief from Castromocho (Palencia), now housed in the Diocesan Museum of Palencia, or the altarpiece proceeding from Berceruelo, now in the church of Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Valladolid. Women are also related to a relief on the same subject as Christ's Burial in the National Museum of Sculpture in Valladolid, which is attributed to Francisco Giralte though, in my opinion, it is rather a work by Manuel Álvarez.

After considering all these connections, I think that the work we are studying belongs to the first period of Manuel Álvarez, which coincides with the dates indicated. Also, we cannot exclude that the relief was made in Toledo, where there is documentary evidence of his activity in 1552 involving the sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera.

I. GABRIEL JOLY

Study of a Sculpture newly revealed by the IOMR.

Carlos Herrero Starkie



Some artists express the spirit of their epoch so well that their work shines out to show us the various and frequently antagonistic artistic currents of the day. No doubt Gabriel Joly is one of those with a particular masterly skill in expressing the international characteristics of the first European Renaissance. Joly's work shows us Franco-Gothic features, certainly due to his origins in Picardie; Florentine traces, thanks to his unmistakable devotion to Italian Art; and aragonese influences, since Aragón was the land of his adoption and where his most important works were created.

Due to the spiritual force it transmits, its elegant design, all imbued with a controlled sense of movement and a highly refined sculptural technique revealing a strongly impressionistic mood, the sculpture we are now studying – recently rediscovered by the IOMR – represents a magnificent example of the artistic genius of a sculptor and designer of altarpieces who deserves deeper research.^(Fig. A2) In this work lies the fusion of Alonso Berruguete's expressivity, spread throughout Aragón from the 1530's onwards and, the "gravitas formentiana". Overflowing it all is the majesty and the pathos that only the finest works of Joly can produce; like the high altarpiece of Teruel Cathedral, one of the most significant masterpieces of the Spanish Renaissance.^(Fig. 1)

Gabriel Joly (Picardie. ? .. 1538 Teruel). *Prophet?*, 1532 - 1536, 95 x 35 cm and Pine Wood. **Provenance** Private collection, Catalonia, Private collection, Madrid, IOMR Collection, The Netherlands. With written communication by Prof. J. M. Parrado del Olmo, Madrid and oral communication by Prof. Carmen Morte.

Fig. 1 **Gabriel Joly**. *High Altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel*, 1532-1536. →





The artist Gabriel Joly arrived in Aragón during the first fortnight of the XVIth century, bearing a clearly marked style of French origin rooted in a naturalistic but rather mannered gothic style, which he moderates with an essentially Florentine classicism. Armed with these solid qualifications, Joly makes contact with the sculptural tradition of Aragón, at that time dominated by Damián Forment. There is documentation of this contact in 1514. It is most probable that they collaborated in the larger altarpiece of the San Miguel de los Navarros Church in Zaragoza (1518),^(Fig. 2) which presents a fluid composition revealing strong Italian tradition, no doubt greater than what Forment was accustomed to do at that time.

Fig. A2 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle, Prophet or Saint Joseph*, 1532 - 1536, Pine Wood, 95 x 35 cm, XVI century Spanish School. IOMR Collection.



Fig. 2 **Damián Forment and Gabriel Joly**, *Altarpiece of the Church of San Miguel de los Navarros*, 1519, Zaragoza.

Fig. 3 **Gabriel Joly and Damián Forment.**
Apostle, 1509 - 1518. Altarpiece of the Cathedral
of Zaragoza, El Pilar.

Joly certainly also participated in the altarpiece of the Pilar, which was effected by Forment between 1508 and 1519 and where certain stylistic touches of Joly's are outstanding,^{(Fig.3) (Fig.4)} especially in the figures of the Apostles, who surround the central composition of the main body of the work.^(Fig. 5) The interplay between these two great masters constitutes one of the most rewarding artistic collaborations of the Spanish Renaissance. On the one hand, it propitiates in Forment a lighter representation in his compositions, a refinement which softens the rather sturdy shapes of his sculptures, and, on the other hand, Joly's works acquire an assurance, a corporal presence that will turn them into fundamental elements to confront, during the final years of his career, the impetuous mannerism of Alonso Berruguete.

If we view Forment as a colossal force that surges up from a unique genius, reminiscent of both Sluter and Michelangelo, endowed with a certain trace of a rural "tardo gothic" personality, and who carves his sculptures in solid blocks and crowds his compositions with many figures all together,^(Fig.5) Joly stands out due to the refinement and elegance of his style, which is imbued with a subtle pathos that calls to mind soft memories of "la douce France". The altarpiece of San Agustín de la Seo (1520) and the altarpiece of Tauste, executed between 1520 and 1524, in which Joly collaborated with Gil Morlanes, are where Joly's principal characteristic and contribution as designer of altarpieces is firmly established: his clear composition. Also outstanding in all his sculptural groups, this leaves a lasting mark in Aragón, a region that maintained strong tardo-gothic roots.





Fig. 4 **Damián Forment and Gabriel Joly.** *Apostles.* Altarpiece of the Cathedral of Zaragoza, El Pilar.

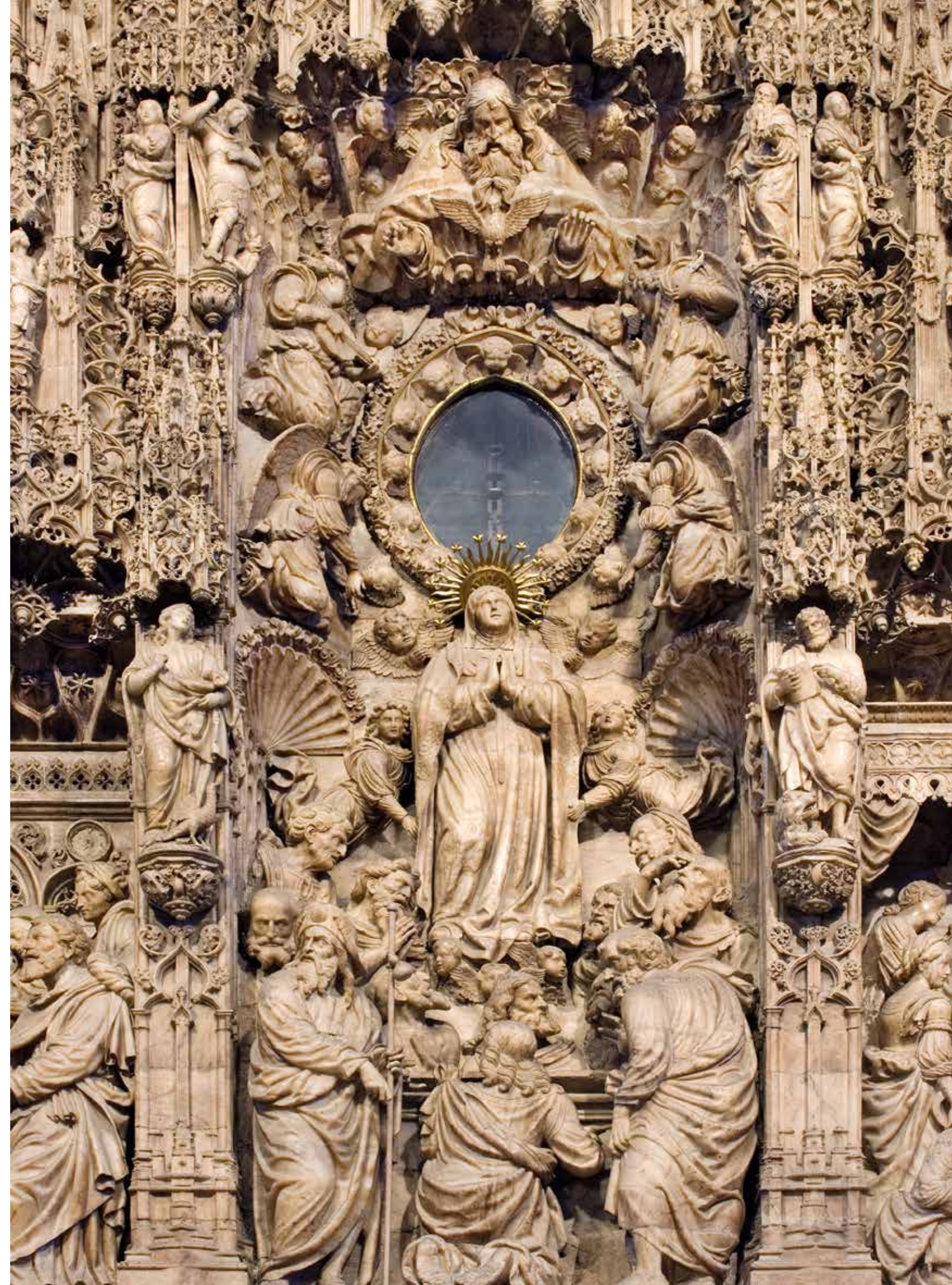


Fig. 5 **Damián Forment.** Altarpiece of the Cathedral of Zaragoza, El Pilar.

Joly's style does not reach its culmination until the outset of the 1530's when the influence of the Spanish Renaissance Eagles penetrates the artistic world of Aragón. We can hear echoes of the most Italian of our sculptors, the unfortunate Bartolomé Ordóñez, who died at Carrara in 1520 and of Diego de Siloé, having recently arrived in Burgos, after his time in Naples, where, with Felipe Bigarni and Juan de Valmaseda, they finish their work on the altars of the Capilla del Condestable,^(Fig 6) which bears the true stamp of Spanish Renaissance identity.



Fig. 6 **Diego de Siloé**, *Christ between the angels*, Altarpiece of Saint Anne, 1523. Cathedral of Burgos.

Fig. 7 **Alonso Berruguete** *Relief the conversion of Totila*, 1526 - 1532, altarpiece of Monastery of San Benito currently in Museo Nacional de Escultura de Valladolid.

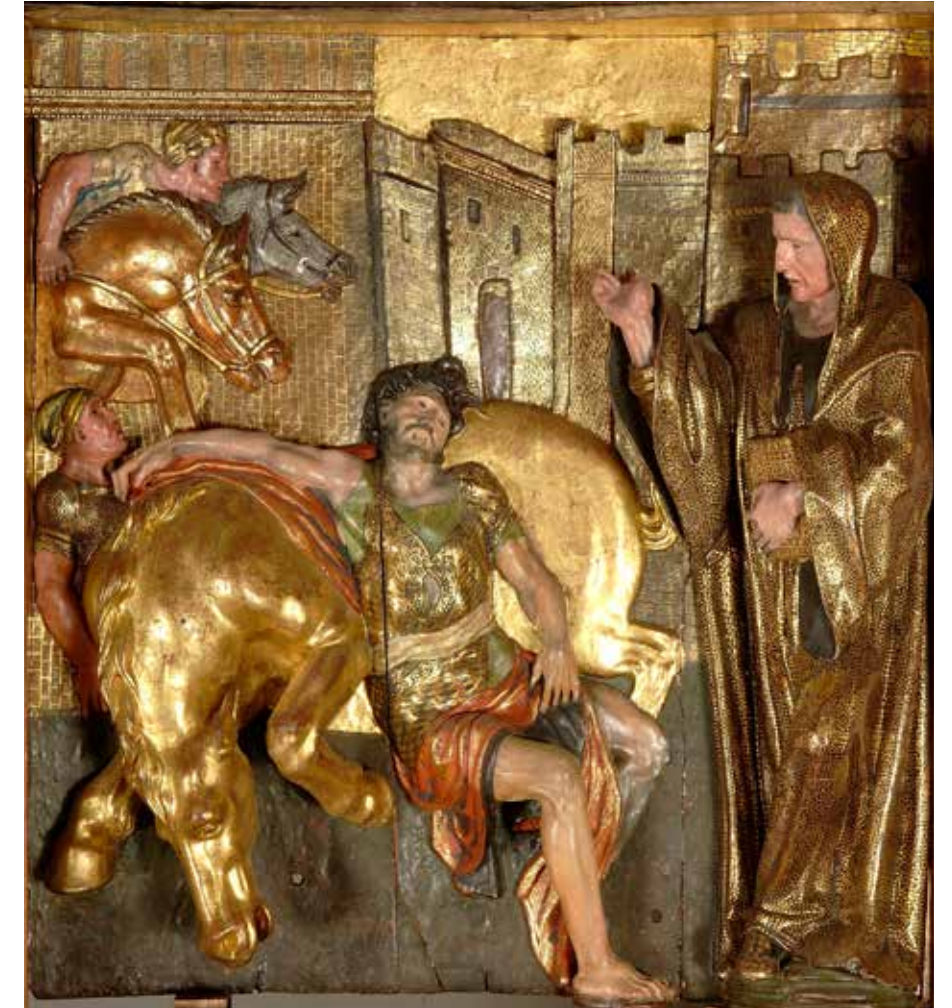


Fig. 8 **Andrés de Melgar**, polychromy, High Altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada.

But it is Alonso Berruguete^(Fig. 7) who has the greatest influence in the region. He appears in Aragón and La Rioja not only thanks to the fame of his compositions but also due to the polychromies of his collaborator, Andrés Melgar,^(Fig. 8) whose designs for the sculptures of the principal altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada had a great influence in the region. At that time Joly blossoms forth with passion and vigour and this is reflected in his art, which is more powerful than in his previous works. His sculpture groups of the church of San Pedro – in its principal altarpiece (1533) and, to a lesser degree, in the altarpiece of San Cosme and San Damián (1537) – and especially all the sculpture work effected for the principal altarpiece of Teruel Cathedral (contracted in 1532 according to the documents found by Cesar Tomas Laguía in 1959 and installed in 1536) indicate a strongly marked stylistic transformation, which is characteristic of a genius in a state of artistic spontaneity. His creations are full of Berrugetesque explosions, which do not detract from the beauty and elegance of his forms. His personages have fiery expressions, ruffled hair, windswept beards, grasping hands and feet – all rendered in a much more agitated manner than usual, caused by a sudden impulse.^(Fig 9)



Fig. 9 **Gabriel Joly.** *The Holy family*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.



Fig. 10 **Gabriel Joly,** *Assumption of the Virgin*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532-1536.

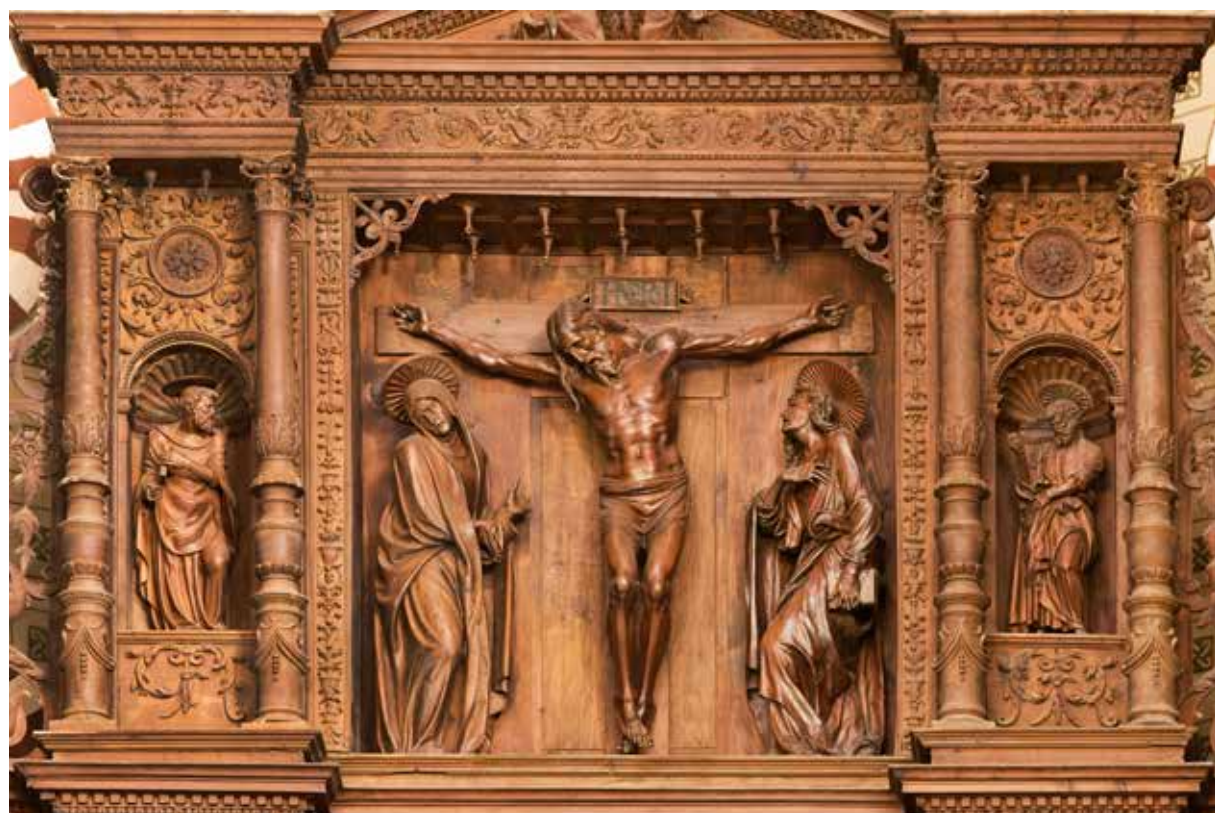


Fig. 11 **Gabriel Joly**, *Calvary*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.

Joly, even in this fleeting moment of creativity, cannot abandon his Italo-French artistic tradition, nor renounce his devotion to beauty, moderation and balance. The faces continue to be classical and the bodies are in accordance with stylised shapes, carved most skilfully by his gouge, and they adopt attitudes with measured steady movement. Clothing is treated in a simple, rhythmical, almost impressionistic manner. This had nothing to do with Berruguete, whose saints and biblical personages dart out from their niches like flames and whose compositions do not have any rational sequence but that conceived by his exaggerated genius. In Joly, on the contrary, control remains triumphant, even at the moment of the greatest exaltation of his creative spirit. This control is absolutely his own and acts as a defensive barrier against Berruguete's stormy influences, which, however, enrage his genius beyond all possible limits.^{(Fig10)(Fig 11)}

The work, recently studied by Carmen Morte and Jesús María Parrado del Olmo, represents a biblical personage who, on account of his turban – typical in Joly – could easily represent a prophet. Such was suggested by Carmen Morte, but the discovery by our restorer of a hole in the base of the sculpture^(Fig A4) has induced JM Parrado to believe that it might be a Saint Joseph holding his stick, belonging to a bigger composition, probably a nativity.^(Fig 12) The position of his head, leaning slightly downwards and to his right, as well as his noble features viewed in profile, with classical cheekbones and brow, all correspond to the canon of Italian beauty that Joly prefers to select when representing major figures of biblical iconography.^(Fig A5)



Fig. A4 **Gabriel Joly**, *Detail of Apostle, Prophet or Saint Joseph*. IOMR Collection.

Fig. 12 **Gabriel Joly**, *Nativity*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.





Its attribution to Joly's best works is justified by the excellent skills it reveals, which clearly correspond to the sculpture groups of the principal altarpiece of the Cathedral of Teruel. The master presents the saint concentrated in self-absorbed contemplation, blending admiration with a certain perplexity the artist knows how to suggest by a slight shrug of laden shoulders.^(Fig A5) All this no doubt suggests analogies to Michelangelo, typical of Joly in his Teruel period, now much more Roman than Florentine, which recall attitudes of personages of the Capella Sistina.^(Fig 17) St. Joseph's meticulously rendered hair and beard frame a countenance of great classical beauty that inspires respect and majesty. On his clear brow we observe a knot in the pine wood that has not been polychromed, which reveals one of Joly's important characteristics: his capacity to make the veining of the wood synchronize with his sense of aesthetics and with the artistic message his sculptures transmit. In this case, he gives to the Saint's face a force and an aura of divinity, which Joly stresses even more by making a series of grooves that surround the forehead like a whirlpool.

Fig. A6 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle, Prophet or Saint Joseph*, IOMR Collection.

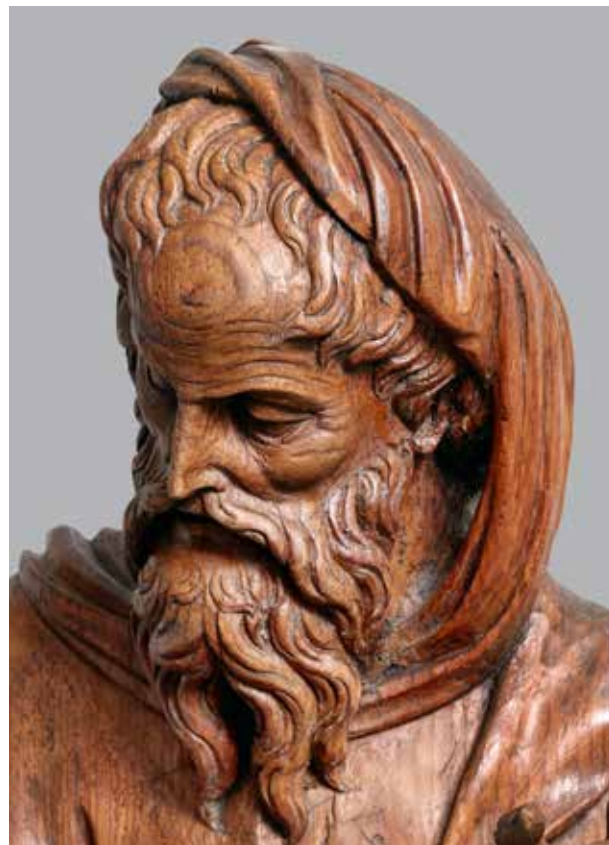
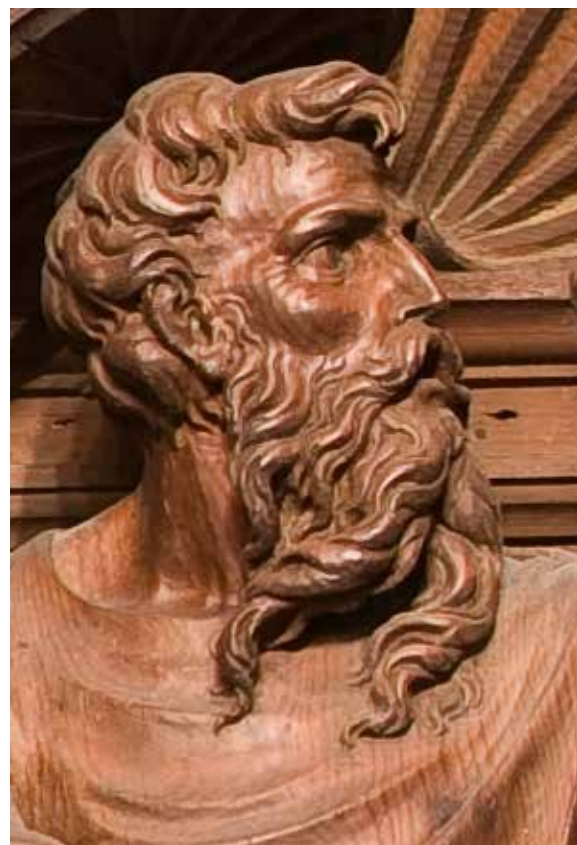


Fig. 13 **Gabriel Joly**, *detail of Apostol*, High altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.



The eye sockets frame a Greek nose, sharpened by the sculptor's gouge that is the touchstone of his autograph works, along with long "mostachos", or whiskers, which hang down covering a half-open mouth and a swishing two-pronged beard. Yet all this is supremely classical! However, the carving effected by his gouge indicates spirit, vigour and courage, which deepens the pathos of the work and carries us off to the models of the ancient Greeks. That is the reason why this work moves us so much. Fundamentally, this is due to its eternal beauty, which is inscribed in our memory like a canon fusing for ever-spiritual and human beauty.^{(Fig A6) (Fig 13)}

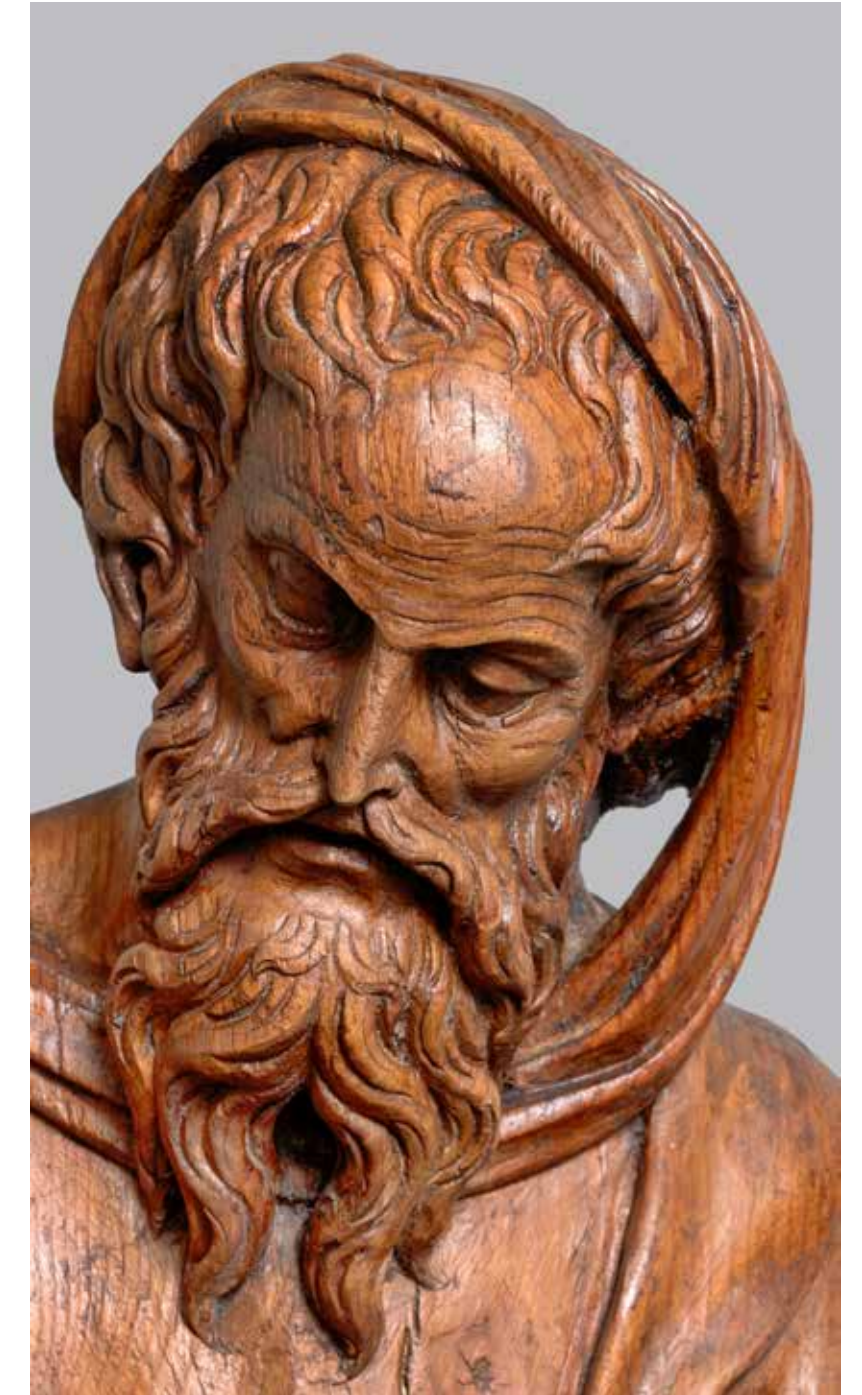


Fig. A5 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle, Prophet or Saint Joseph*, IOMR Collection.

Fig. A7 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle, Prophet or Saint Joseph*, IOMR Collection.

Joly accompanies the movement of the head with a slight “contraposto” of the shoulders, followed by another forward movement of the legs in the opposite direction to the face.^(Fig A7) This design becomes homogeneous on covering the body with a tunic and cloak, which reveal folds rendered in a sketchy, almost impressionistic manner. This correctly marks the “tempo” of the sculpture. We do not see any scrolls except for the one hanging from his left shoulder and two “cordilleras” of a cloak that hang down from both arms and fall into lengthy and swaying folds, giving a stylised appearance to the saint’s figure.^(Fig A13) All this flows between the legs of the saint, who reveals strong muscles behind a tight-fitting tunic. Here we encounter another of Joly’s special characteristic features, observed in many of his saints, especially those who crowd the altarpiece of Teruel: the master, on making the saint’s legs move forward, makes the tunic cling to his body to take advantage of the grain in the wood and of the light that draws attention to the exposed knees.^(Fig A14) The soft folds of the cloak, which hang down due to their weight, give the sculpture the sense of “gravitas formentiana”, which Joly never fails to show us, even in his final works.^{(Fig A8)(Figs 14-16)}





Comparison between the *Apostle* by **Gabriel Joly**, IOMR Collection (Fig. A8) and the *Apostle* by **Gabriel Joly** High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536, (Fig. 15).



Fig. 14 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.



Fig. 16 **Gabriel Joly**, *Apostle*, High Altarpiece, Cathedral of Teruel, 1532 - 1536.

Joly dies in 1538 and Forment in 1541, both recognised as great artists of the aragonese Renaissance. Aragón might have remained an orphan if it were not for the genius of another sculptor who had come from the north, Arnao de Bruselas, whose sense of majesty still pervades among the sculptures of the altarpieces of La Población, Genevilla, Sta María del Palacio or the “trascoro” of the “Catedral Metropolitana de la Seo”^{(Fig 18)(Fig 19)} in Zaragoza. The art of these masters will only be surpassed, though not in greatness, when aragonese sculpture acquires, a mid-century later, a more dignified, rhetorical and dramatic tone, following the rulings of the Concilio de Trento – the so-called “Romanismo” – which unified everything, with Ancheta and Becerra as its greatest exponents. The latter artists, each in a different way, were strongly influenced by Michelangelo’s work during their respective sojourns in Italy.



Fig. 18 Arnao de Bruselas. *Our Lady*, 1557 - 1558, trascoro of the Cathedral Metropolitana de la Seo, Zaragoza.



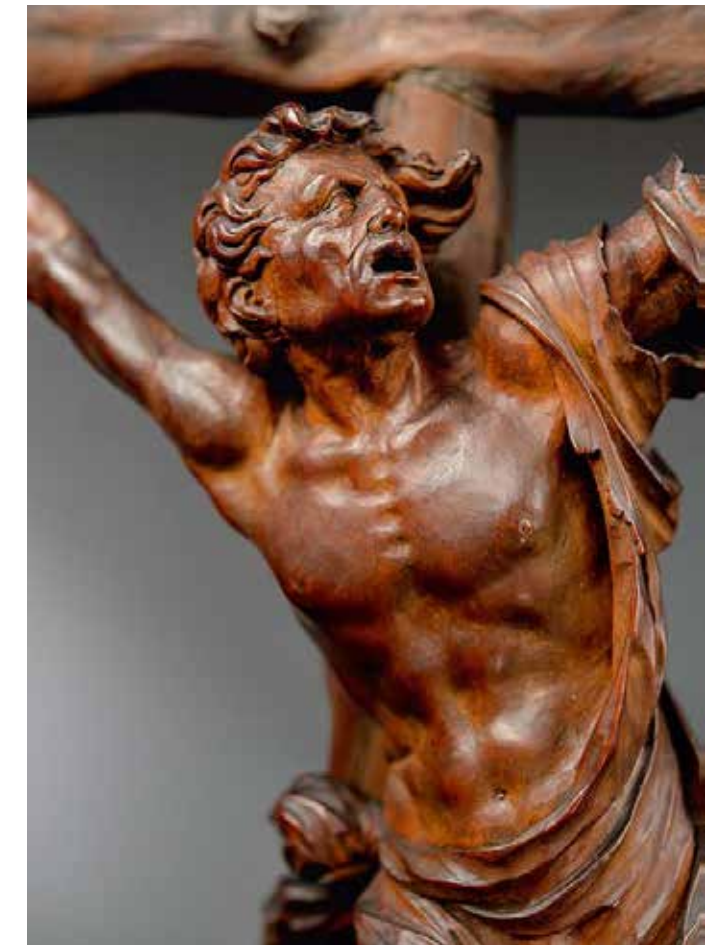
Fig. 19 Arnao de Bruselas, *Calvary*, 1557 - 1558, trascoro of la Catedral Metropolitana de La Seo, Zaragoza.

Viewed from a perspective enabled by the passage of time, we note that Joly and Forment convey a mood of melancholy true of sensitive, good and humble souls, of non-conflictive personalities, which is a stark contrast to the stormy temperament of castilian artists like Berruguete or Bigarni, who were continually involved in lawsuits and anxious to gain social recognition. Their art, in both cases, is the faithful reflection of these divergent sensitivities and, in Joly's case, of a deeply spiritual sentiment.

Proof of the love and gratitude that the inhabitants of Teruel must have felt for Joly, is their decision to bury him at the entrance to the choir of the cathedral. His tomb was covered by a simple but dignified stone tablet, which represents him wearing a cloak and with his head resting on pillows. Engraved on the tablet is "Que Dios perdone el cual hizo el retablo mayor de la presente" (May God forgive the one who made this altarpiece).



Fig. 17 **Michelangelo Buonarroti.**
The Holy Father, Sistine Chapel, Saint Peter Basilica. Vaticano.



Gabriel Joly, *Thieves*, detail, Private collection.

2. ARNAO DE BRUSELAS

Biblical scene

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



We are seeing today increasingly detailed studies of the processes of execution of XVIth century Spanish sculpture, in which the workshops involved were directed by a sculptor with whom the contract for the altarpiece was drawn-up, and who therefore had working for him sculptors who did not figure in the corresponding documents because they were not directly responsible to the patrons. However, these sculptors, by their outstanding individual, artistic personal contribution, may impose their own personality on the style of the work. Such is the case with Arnau de Bruselas. This master who came from Brabant as did so many others who appeared in Spain, was extraordinarily active in the bishopric of Calahorra-Santo Domingo de la Calzada in the workshops of Damián Forment, Andrés de Aroz, Guiot and Juan de Beaugrant, the latter two being of northern origin.

Arnao is first noted in 1536, in a document that verifies his salary over the course of four years, when he began his service under Damián Forment. At this time, he was already a trained sculptor who had placed his gouge at the service of the great aragonese master, but we cannot confirm whether he was previously connected with other castilian workshops. What is certain is that our sculptor's exquisite technique adapted itself very well to such a refined workshop as was that of Forment. When in 1537 Forment made a contract with Arnau for the altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, the Brabant artist, together with other sculptors such as the Beaugrants, moved to Forment's studio to work on the

Fig. 1 **Arnao de Bruselas**, (Brussels (?) - c. 1565 Logroño). *Prophet Balaan or Nataan with king Balaac or David*, 86 X 85.5 cm, polychrome walnut wood relief, circa 1557. **Provenance** Granados Collection (Madrid), private collection (Madrid), IOMR Collection, the Netherlands. With written communication, by Prof JMParrado del Olmo.



Fig. 3 **Arnao de Bruselas** circa 1537 - 1540, *Apostle Saint John* Santo Domingo de la Calzada Cathedral, La Rioja.



Fig. 2 **Damián Forment** (and collaborators) *Main altar* Santo Domingo de la Calzada Cathedral, 1537 - 1540, La Rioja.

altarpiece^(Figs. 2, 3). This must be how the active connection between our sculptor and the bishopric of Rioja began, albeit under the authority of other sculptors who had sufficient funds to pay for the expenses of such important commissions.

Arnao's name does not figure in any other work-contract until 1553 when he began work on the altarpiece of Santa Maria del Palacio in Logroño^(figs. 4, 5), in this case as the result of the death of Juan de Goyaz, whom he replaced, and then when Arnao was contracted in person for the final works produced for his aragonese clients, such as the altarpieces of the chapel of San Bernardo, in the monastery of Veruela, for which Arnao received the contract in 1556, and the southern side of the trascoro of La Seo de Zaragoza, a work undertaken in 1557–1558^(figs. 6-9).

After this, he was employed again as a salaried sculptor by Pedro de Troas for the altarpiece of Aldeanueva de Ebro, priced in 1565, for which he carved five scenes; this is the last known work undertaken by our master.



Fig. 5 Arnao de Bruselas *Presentation of Jesus at the Temple*, 1553, Church of Santa María de Palacio, Logroño.

Thus we have a sculptor who was trained during his adolescence and early youth in Flemish workshops, whose work is characterised by his impeccable technique, encouraged by the fact that the guilds supervised all the works produced, so as to maintain the prestige of their workshops, thus enabling them to export works bearing the stamp of quality. Subsequently, we find our master sculptor in the workshop of Damián Forment, where Arnao was able to reaffirm his interest in highly-finished work, deeply studied compositions, as well as his interest in leisurely movement, a taste he shared with the great aragonese sculptor, in whose figures there is always a classical air as also in the sequence of swirling movements of the draperies which wrap around them.

Fig. 4 Arnao de Bruselas *Saint Lawrence*, 1553, polychrome wood, Church of Santa María de Palacio, Logroño.

Fig. 6 Arnao de Bruselas *Retrochoir*, 1557 - 1558. Catedral Metropolitana de La Seo, Zaragoza.





Fig. 7 **Arnao de Bruselas** *San Braulio at the Concilio of Toledo*, 1557 - 1558 Aljez stone, retrochoir of the Cathedral of La Seo, Zaragoza.

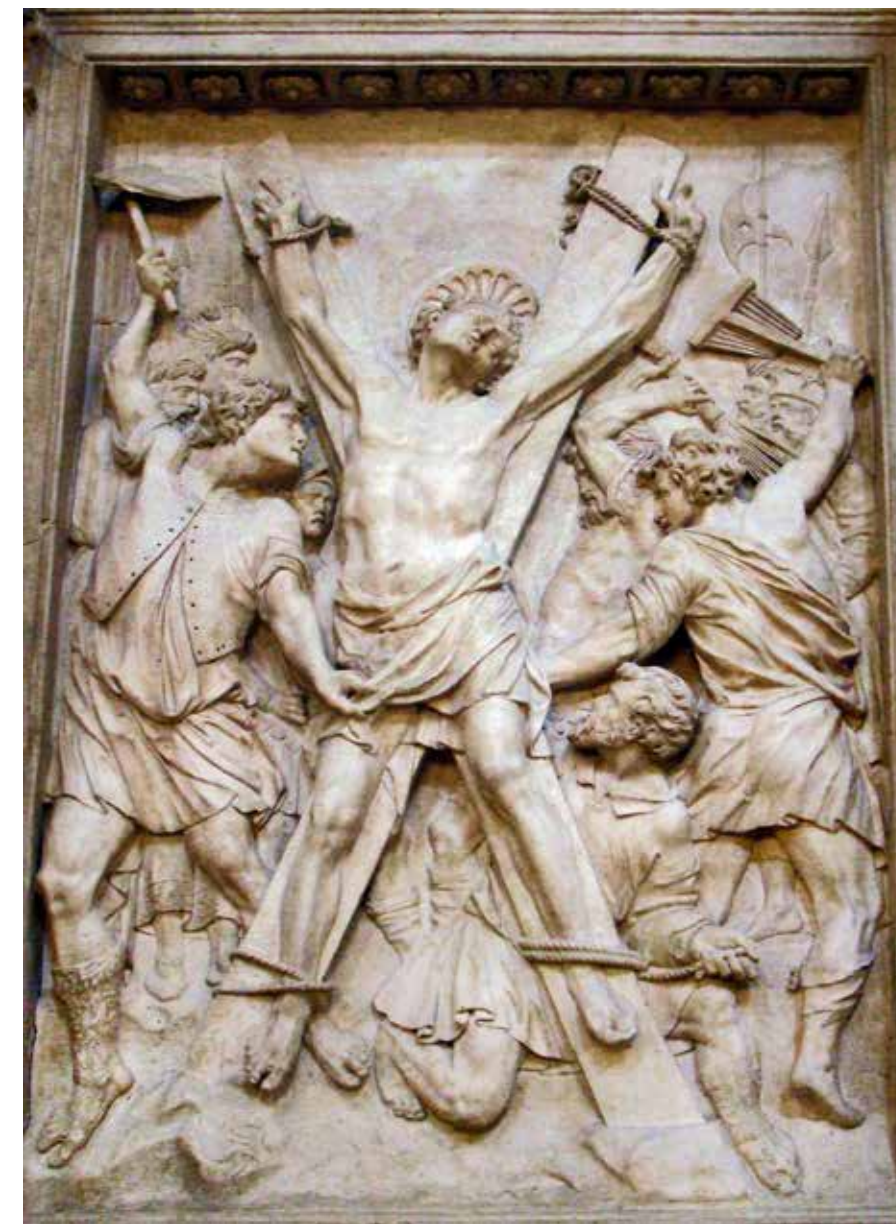


Fig. 8 **Arnao de Bruselas** *The Martyrdom of Saint Vincent*, 1557 - 1558. Aljez stone, retrochoir of the Cathedral Metropolitana of La Seo, Zaragoza.



Fig. 9 **Arnau de Bruselas** *Calvary*, 1557 - 1558, polychrome wood, retrochoir of the Catedral Metropolitana de La Seo, Zaragoza.

Fig. 10 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Isaias*, 1539 - 1542, High Choir stalls of the Cathedral of Toledo



There is a factor that enables us to attribute to Arnau the altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada described above; namely, the greater inclination towards expressionist mannerism displayed by Arnau than by Forment, which can be seen in his use of the “serpentinata” or spiral form, the helical line, and human figures vibrating with pathos, whose flowing beards and hair, elongated and twisted hands and feet, portray their extreme sensitivity^(Fig. 11).



Fig. 11 **Arnao de Bruselas** *Apostle*, 1537 - 1540
altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada
Cathedral, La Rioja.

In this case, there is a clear trace of castilian sculpture of the second quarter of the XVIth century and, in particular, of the work of Alonso Berruguete. We cannot deny that Arnao may have encountered Berruguete's aesthetic style, either in Valladolid, before his participation in Forment's workshop, or in Toledo, in the choir-stalls of its Cathedral^(fig. 10). There is also another possible link in the painter Andrés de Melgar, regarding the polychromy of the altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, as Melgar had in fact formed part of Berruguete's workshop in Valladolid.

Arnao is thus a highly individualistic sculptor since his style can be described neither as strictly 'Berruguetesque' nor 'Formentian', but both these sources fuse together to form a very individual interpretation of sculpture, in which the elegance of the aragonese artist softens the mannerist pathos of Berruguete.

The relief we are at present studying represents a scene taken from the Bible in which a personage appears on the right in a dominant position and addresses himself to another seated person wearing a royal crown and surrounded by counsellors^(fig. 12).

In the background there is a building with a colonnade which may represent a palace. The figures do not wear the attributes of their status, so it is difficult to identify the story which is further complicated by the fact that the relief lacks any corresponding explanatory context, since it is no longer situated in the original altarpiece, in which the adjacent scenes might have helped to solve the mystery. One hypothesis is that it might be a representation of Nathan rebuking King David.



Fig. 12 Arnao de Bruselas *Nathan rebuking King David*, detail, IOMR collection.



Fig. 13 Arnao de Bruselas *Altarpiece detail feet*, Santo Domingo de la Calzada Cathedral, 1537 - 1540, La Rioja.

Fig. 14 Arnao de Bruselas *detail feet*, IOMR collection.

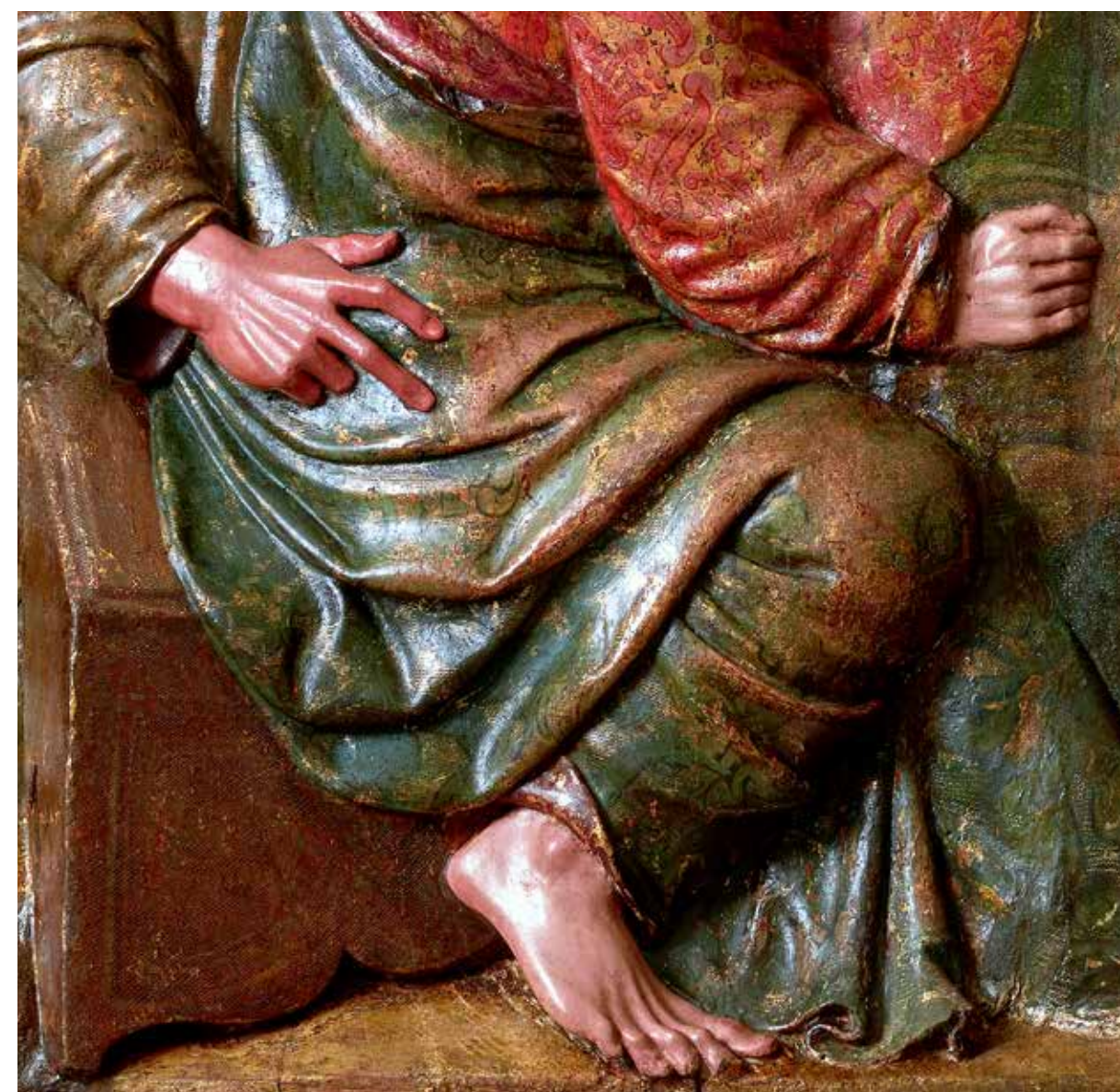




Fig. 15 **Arnao de Bruselas**, detail head, altarpiece of the Cathedral, Santo Domingo de la Calzada, 1537 - 1540, La Rioja.

The scene is composed of two different sections. On the right we see the figure of the prophet and an assistant or servant, both figures standing and filling the space. The scene on the left is at a lower level, possibly as a sign of submission, representing the king seated with four counsellors. Arnao uses the psychological tension between them to unite the two groups, the king and the prophet linked diagonally by their exchange of glances, also suggesting a conflict. The human types represented by our sculptor are characteristically his own, with their elegant, expressive heads, remarkable scraggy beards, and unruly hair covering their foreheads. Arnao always indicates his own style in his individual way of representing feet, in which he emphasizes the elongated bones and tendons, thus adding a further degree of expressivity^(Figs. 13–16).

Fig. 16 **Arnao de Bruselas** *Nathan rebuking King David*, detail, IOMR collection.

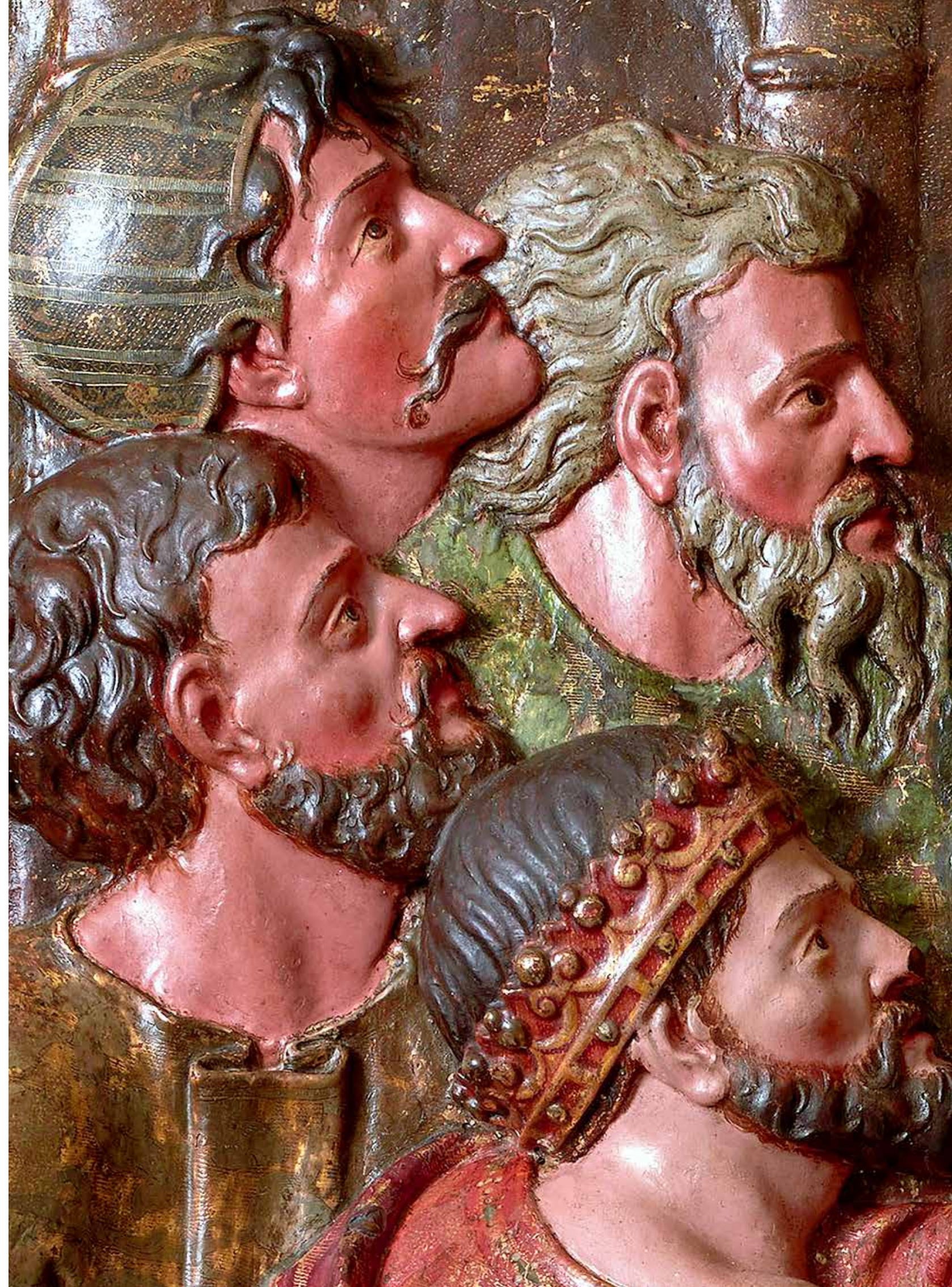




Fig. 17 Arnau de Bruselas, detail hand, altarpiece of Santo Domingo de la Calzada Cathedral, 1537 - 1540, La Rioja.



Figs. 18, 19 Arnau de Bruselas, Nathan rebuking King David, details hands IOMR collection.



Even more faithful to his expressionist style is his representation of hands, with long slender fingers resting in different positions, sometimes half open, sometimes folded, but always expressing strong emotion with their accompanying gestures^(figs. 17-19).

With the exception of the rhythmically moving figure we suppose to be that of the prophet Nathan, the attitudes of the persons represented is balanced. The figure of the prophet on the other hand, is endowed with an extraordinary degree of measured pomposity, stretching out his left arm and, at the same time, turning his head in the opposite direction, folding his right arm, and resting his hand on his breast. The folds of the drapery are uncharacteristically flattened during the central period of Arnau's production, rather than whirling around the bodies of the persons portrayed. Only the king's cloak displays an enveloping movement.



Fig 20 Arnao de Bruselas, *Apostle*, polychrome sculpture, Church of Santa Maria de Palacio, 1553, Logroño.



Fig 21 Arnao de Bruselas, *Apostle*, polychrome sculpture, Church of Santa Maria de Palacio, 1553, Logroño.



Figs. 22 Arnao de Bruselas, *Nathan rebuking King David*, details, IOMR collection.

However, it is true to say that the works carried out in Aragón by the sculptor show a tendency towards greater calm in their compositions, and the human types are represented with greater control in their movements, and in the sequence of folds in their draperies which fall straight down to their feet, as can be seen in Nathan in this relief, the folds resembling those of the tunic and cloak of the San Juan in the Calvary in the trascoro of La Seo^(fig. 9), or in the reliefs of the altarpiece at the monastery of Veruela referred to above. Furthermore, the dialoguing attitude of the prophet can also be linked with the sculptures of the saints in the choir-stalls of Zaragoza Cathedral and the church of Santa Maria de Palacio^(figs. 19-20). For this reason, it is possible to ascribe to the work a date close to these aragoneses works, in which we begin to observe an evolution which culminates in what may be considered his last work, the altarpiece of Aldeanueva de Ebro, priced in 1565, which is almost an early example of 'Romanismo.



The relief is enriched with an excellently executed polychromy^(Figs. 23, 26-28), derived from that of the Riojan polychromers of the time, and especially resembling Francisco Fernández Vallejo's manner of execution, which is very close to that of the work we are at present studying- In his documented works, however, he presents a greater wealth of subjects, as can be seen in the altarpiece of Santa María de Palacio^(Figs. 24-25).

Figs. 23 **Francisco Fernández Vallejo**, Polychromy, details of the tunic of Nathan from *Nathan rebuking King David*, IOMR collection.

Figs. 23, 24 **Francisco Fernández Vallejo**
Polychromy, details, circa 1580, altarpiece of
Santa María de Palacio, Logroño.

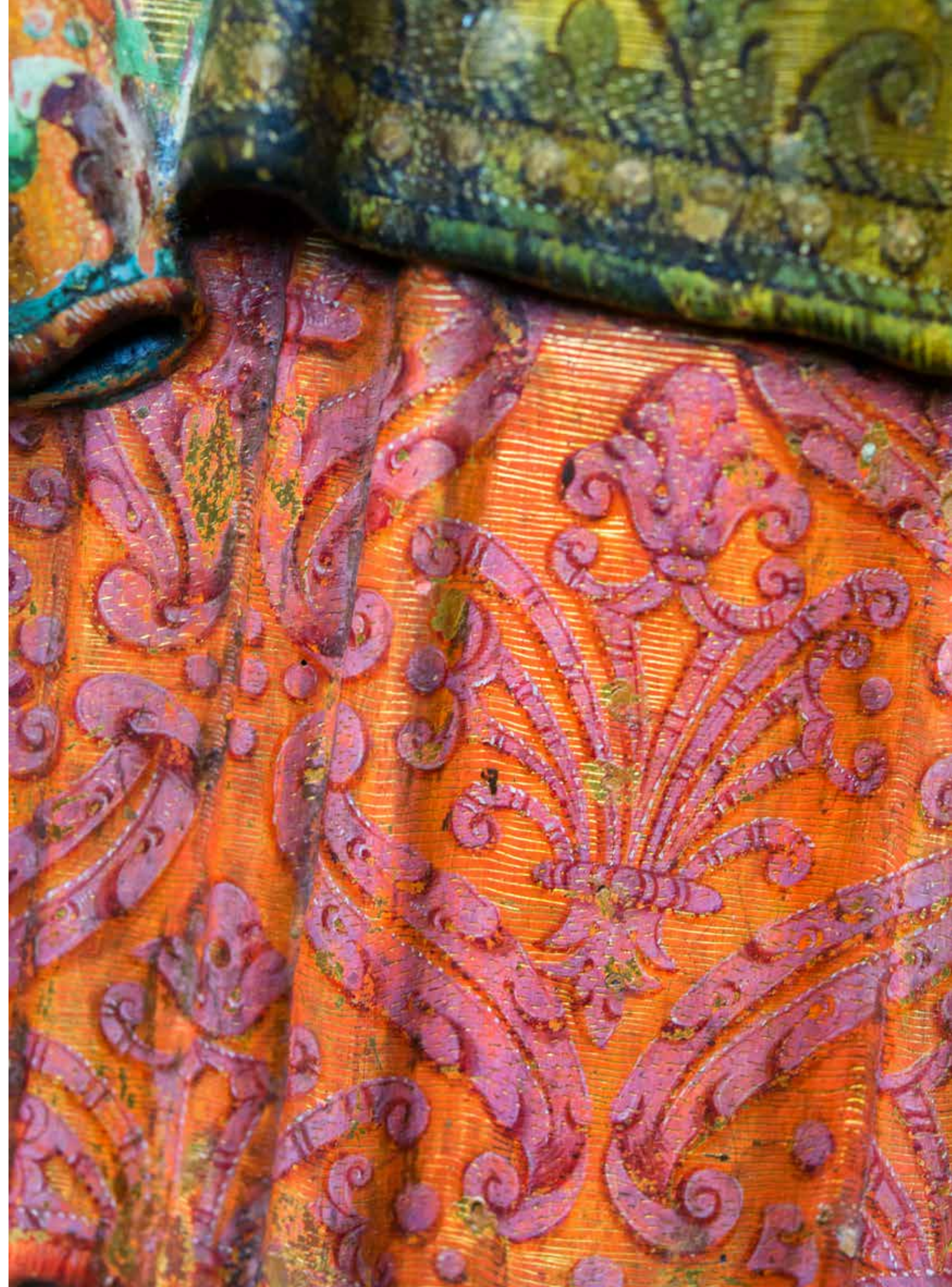


Figs. 25, 26 **Francisco Fernández Vallejo**
Polychromy, details of the tunic of Nathan
from *Nathan rebuking King David*.
IOMR collection.

Figs. 28 **Francisco Fernández Vallejo**
Polychromy, details of the tunic of
Nathan from *Nathan rebuking King*
David, IOMR collection.

We see, however, the same exquisite technique, as observed in the splendid corladuras. Crimson-red, blue and green tones prevail in the collection of draperies, the fleshtones are pink, with touches of reddish colour on the cheekbones which give vitality to the expressions. The fleshtone of the prophet is more pallid than that of the other personages, perhaps so as to distinguish him from the other figures.

The “estofados” are executed with the tip of a pointed brush combined with an extraordinarily “esgrafiado” technique. The “corladuras” are impeccable. As begins to be the custom in the polychromy of La Rioja, branches of vegetation begin to predominate on cloaks and tunics, and the fringe at the bottom of the prophet’s cape displays an extremely delicate decoration of rolls of vegetation mixed with petals and birds on a gold background.



I. JUAN BAUTISTA VÁZQUEZ *THE ELDER*

Our Lady and the Child

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



Art historians have frequently focused their attention on the great Masters of Spanish sculpture, bestowing on them the roles of creators of movements or styles, and that of guides of the aesthetic tendencies of a period. However, the panorama of our culture is broader and more complex because of the existence of other masters endowed with original and sharply defined personalities, who were able to create their own individual styles, which, moreover, greatly influenced the evolution and orientation of aesthetic taste in the following generations. Because of their artistic calibre and influence, they deserve to occupy an outstanding position in the panorama of our sculpture.

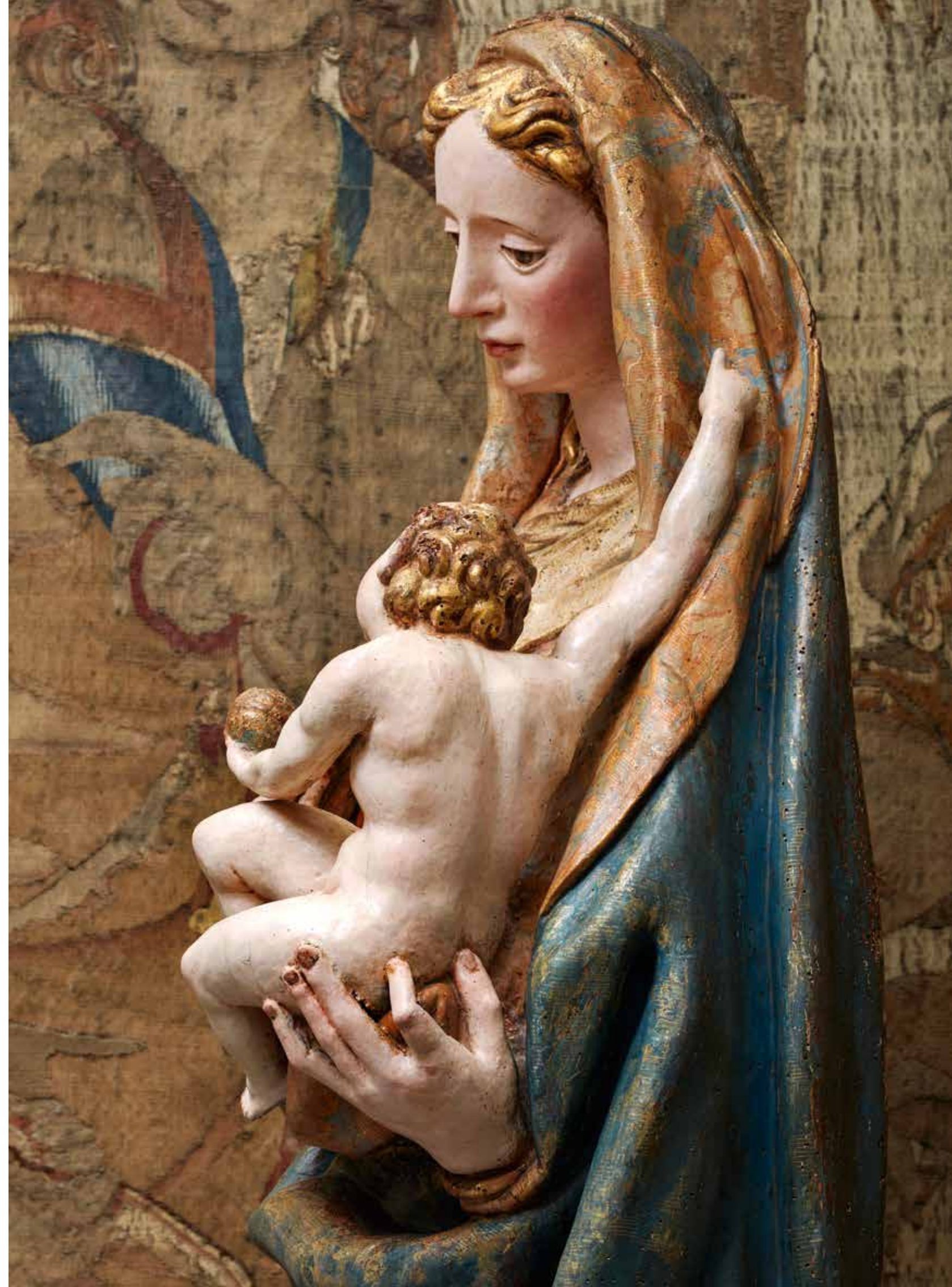
This is the case for Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder. He was probably educated in Ávila, where he lived with his family, and he may also have been a member of the circle of Isidro de Villoldo; for it is only a personal relationship between Juan Bautista and Isidro that could have inspired Isidro's widow to ask Juan Bautista to continue the altarpiece of the Cartuja de las Cuevas in Seville, which remained unfinished upon the death of Villoldo in 1558. Vázquez would have learnt Villoldo's elegant technique, and this element would have been bolstered by his journey to Italy where there is documented evidence of his presence in Parma. Such has been indicated by Margarita Estella, who hypothesised that he might have visited other places in Italy, captivated by the elegance and grace of Parma's art.

Figs. 1–2 **Juan Bautista Vázquez El Viejo.** (Pelayos, Salamanca, c. 1525. Sevilla, 1588). *Virgin and infant Jesus*, 148 cm. High. Circa 1560, Polychromed wood. **Provenance:** Catalan private Collection, IOMR collection the Netherlands. With written communication by Margarita Estella Marcos and by Prof. J M Parrado del Olmo.

Vázquez would become one of the most prolific sculptors of the region around Toledo, where he enjoyed great esteem in cathedral circles and among the bishops, if one is to judge by the number of works he was commissioned to execute. Here he would also have established contact with Alonso Berruguete, contributing in a decisive way in creating a deeper and more refined interpretation of Berruguete's vibrant dynamism, affirming his own personality and, at the same time, influencing other sculptors connected with him.

Vázquez' style was characterised by the elegance displayed in his compositions and in the attitudes of his figures who avoid the extreme Laocontesque tension-filled distortions of Berruguete, as well as his twitching gestures. We find a great quest for beauty with special emphasis given to the curving movements of the folds, which imbue the flexible bodies they cover with vitality. The physiognomies of the figures, however, tend more towards melancholy than expressionism.

Vázquez' departure for Seville, with the purpose of finishing the altarpiece of the Cartuja de las Cuevas, resulted in his becoming the real creator of the city's school of Imaginería, in which he was assisted by the arrival of other master sculptors from Ávila and Toledo who were trained under him, or who were influenced by his way of making sculpture. His works begin to gain in monumentality, without losing their sense of rhythm or the elegance of their gestures. José Hernández Díaz has prized this master's elegance and his role as the founder of the school, highlighting the artist's ability in creating sensitive images of Our Lady and the Child, in which he displays a great skill in representing the intimacy and mysticism of the subject (Fig. 1).

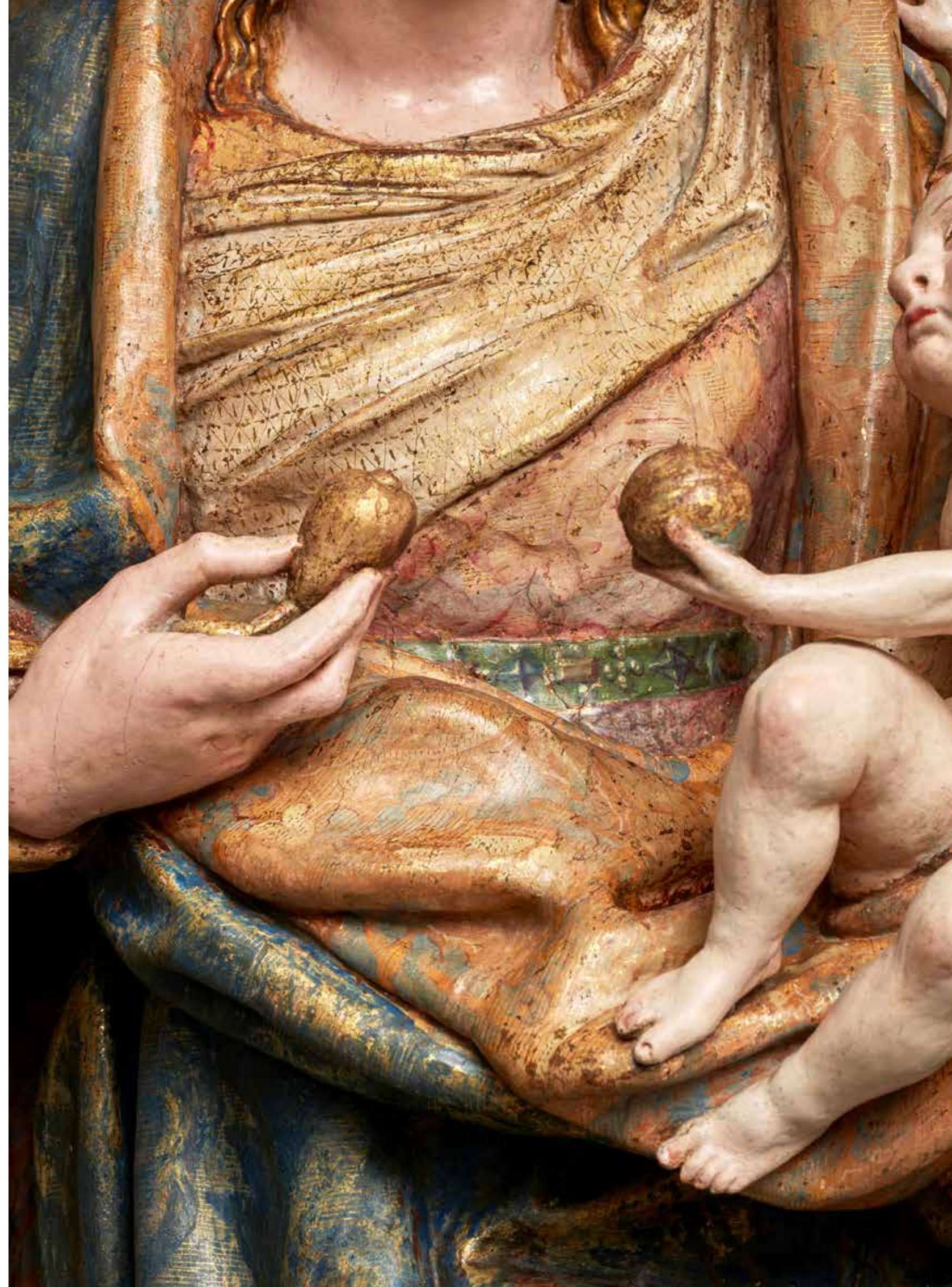


Figs. 3 Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder *Our Lady and the Child*, details IOMR collection.

The *Our Lady and the Child*^(Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4) we are studying here is in complete accordance with these values, as an altarpiece should be. The composition appears balanced, full of an all-embracing serenity, but, at the same time, the rhythmic movement of the folds is exceptionally varied, with continual changes of direction, avoiding the straight, downward fall of the fabric to the feet. The internal vision is full of a rich variety of surfaces. The natural appearance of the robes is combined with a studied artificial movement provoked by the constantly changing rhythms of the surfaces.

Our Lady presents the Child who barely rests on her left hand, an artificial mannerism that is a way of also emphasising the supernatural spirit of the scene, not subject to the laws of gravity common to mortals. Our Lady offers the Child a pear with her right hand, and the Child^(Fig. 3), reciprocates with the offer of a globe. The proximity of both symbols suggests the affectionate relationship between mother and child and indicates the sculptor's subtlety of indirectly representing an emotional relationship. In a similar fashion, Our Lady does not look directly at the Child and her expression has a touch of melancholy, which seems to foretell the tragic destiny of her child. For this reason, the Child raises his eyes on high, as if he were observing the Divinity, and accepting his mission. That is to say, Vázquez does not merely relate the maternal story, but uses the scene to subtly allude to the idea of redemption^(Fig. 7).

Our Lady wears a veil, a tunic and a cloak. The veil hangs down her right side and crosses at the top of her breast with fine pleats, suggesting a light material that allows the wavy locks of fair hair to be seen. This is something that is not observed in other Madonnas by Juan Bautista Vázquez, such as *Our Lady of the Fevers*^(Fig. 5), a closely related composition. The tunic is visible on the right-hand side of the sculpture, falling down to her feet, suggesting a thickness of texture that, by falling in this way, lies facing different directions, forming hollow lumps and a variety of chiaroscuro surfaces which brighten the scene. The treatment of the cloak is a masterpiece in its creation of lively surfaces. It is gathered up at the waist in thick, complicated folds and curls around her right arm, falling as it opens. There is no rough levelling of surfaces in the entire front of the cloak, and the folds are pleated in different directions. The most elegant of all is the diagonal pleat that runs from the right-hand side down to the opposite side at her feet^(Fig. 4).





Figs. 4 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**
Our Lady and the Child, IOMR collection.



Fig. 5 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**,
Our Lady of the Fevers – Our Lady with Child Jesus,
circa 1560, Church of La Magdalena, Seville.

Fig. 8 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**
Giralddillo, 1568. Cathedral of Seville, from the
belfry of the cathedral.



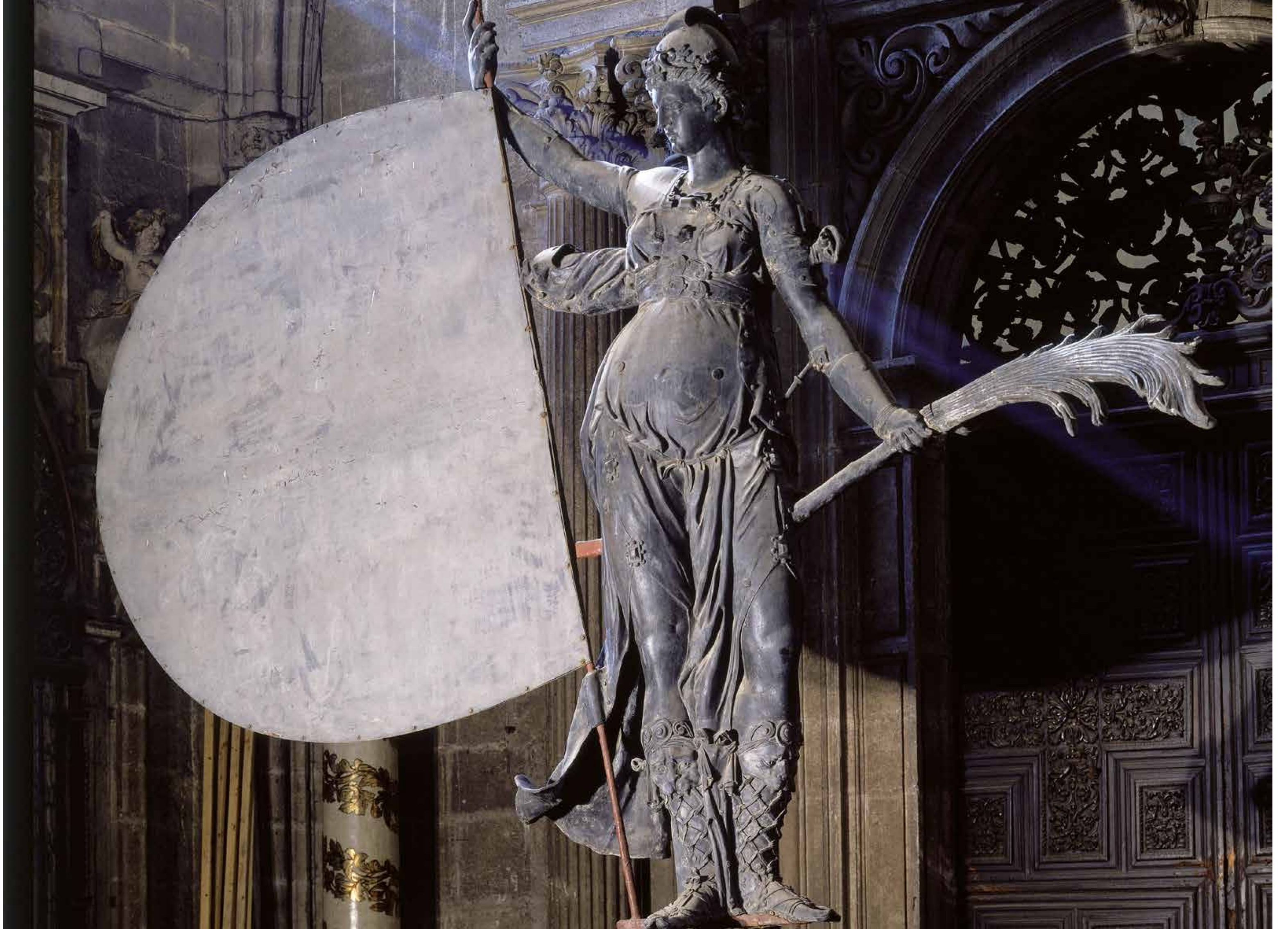
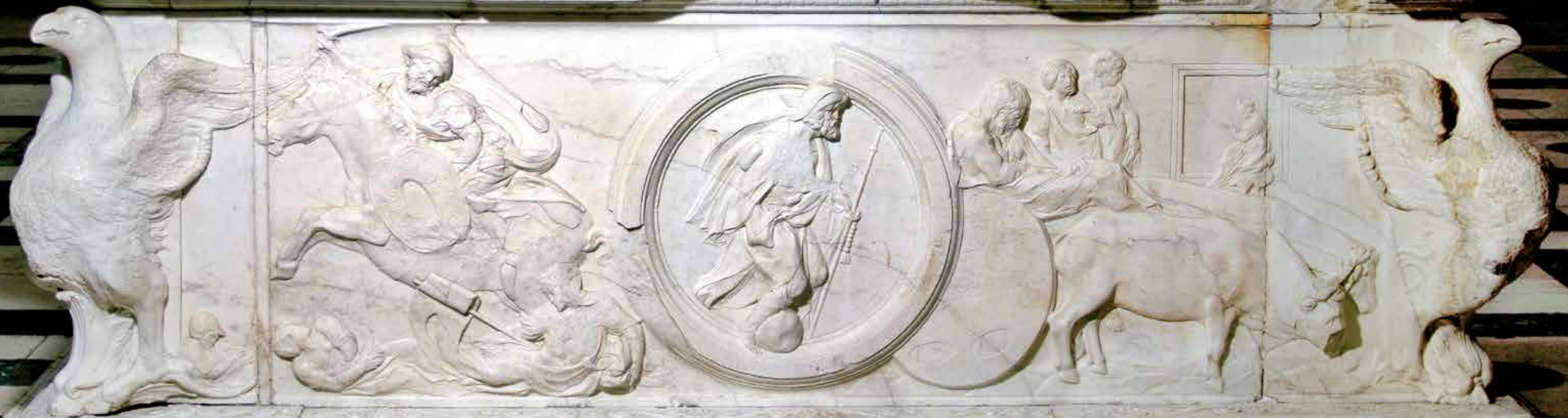




Fig 7 Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder
Our Lady and the Child, detail, IOMR
collection.

Fig 8 Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder
Giraldillo, 1568, detail, Cathedral of Sevilla.





← Figs. 9 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera*, 1554 -1561, Hospital Tavera, Toledo.

The Virgin's face^(Figs. 2, Fig. 7) is composed with soft outlines and has an oval profile. Her eyes are remarkably set, slanting downwards, drawing attention to the melancholic reverie of the image. It is very closely related to the face of the Giraldillo^(Figs. 7, 8), the statue representing faith designed by Vázquez to crown the Giralda tower. Also to be noted are the graceful hands with long fingers, full of sensitivity and reminiscent of the sculptor's Mannerist training.

The representation of the Child is very interesting, rendered in a supple position with his legs folded but in different directions. His head turns following the movement of his body while his arm, which is raised and holds the apple, makes a swaying circular movement towards Our Lady, his right arm rising straight up along her shoulder. His hair has curly locks and his anatomy is remarkably robust, which is particularly noticeable in his sturdy back. There are echoes of Michelangelo here, but assimilated into Alonso Berruguete's interpretation of him^(Fig. 12). The general composition of his back with his arm raised may be related to the central figure in a drawing in the Academia de San Fernando, attributed to Berruguete, which contains elements inspired by the punishment of Amán in the Sistine Chapel. But the composition as a whole, and the way the child's back is constructed, are also close to other figures by Berruguete, for instance the child in the sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera^(Figs. 10, 11), whose general anatomical treatment and, in particular, the way of constructing his back, corresponds to the

Fig. 10 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera*, detail, Hospital Tavera, Toledo.



Fig. 11 **Alonso Berruguete**, *Sepulchre of Cardinal Tavera*, detail, Hospital Tavera, Toledo.



Fig. 12 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**, *Our Lady and the Child*, detail, polychromy wood, circa 1560, IOMR collection.

same basic idea. We would also like to point out the volumetric idea of two other children who figure on the sides of the Transfiguration on the Archbishop's Chair in the Choir of the Cathedral of Toledo. With regard to the Tavera sepulchre^(Fig. 9), Gómez Moreno (in *Las Águilas del Renacimiento Español*, Madrid, 1941 and 1983) suggested the participation of Vázquez himself in this work, although other scholars such as Manuel Arias (*Alonso Berruguete: Prometeo de la escultura*, Bilbao 20, p. 197) are not in agreement, the latter considering that as our sculptor was proposed at the final pricing, he could not be both judge and plaintiff. The fact remains, however, that in some way or other, during his stay in Toledo, Juan Bautista Vázquez must have encountered this work and taken notes on it, just as he might have done for the Transfiguration, a work which aroused much admiration in and around Toledo. The face of the Child is surprising, as it is executed with greater realism than that of Our Lady.

This work can be considered to be amongst the best in Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder's oeuvre. Although it can be linked to other works by the same author, such as *Our Lady of the Fevers* in the Magdalena Church in Seville^(Fig. 5), the *Virgin of the Pine-cone* in Lebrija, or the interpretations of the Virgin Mary in the altarpieces at Lucena^(Fig. 13) and Carmona, this image is unique in expressing the skill of the sculptor in creating such subtle shades in iconography and composition as to reveal to us the elegance and monumental greatness of the story of the Virgin Mary.

The sculpture has a rather elongated structure, but the ample folds of the draperies enveloping the Virgin's hips reaffirm the solidity of the sculptural block^(Fig. 1, Fig 4). The elegance of the gestures and the inner rhythmic cadences of the surfaces make this Sevillian sculpture far removed from the academic romanismo a la Michelangelo prevailing during those years in the schools situated in the north of the country. That elegance will later turn into the great Baroque sculpture of the Andalusian School.

The polychromy creates a beautiful effect with its "corladuras" and with "esgrafiado" slits in the blue and rose-pink tones of both the cloak and tunic, which were decorated with the tip of the brush with bunches of vegetation, characteristic of the polychromies of the second half of the XVIth century^(Fig. 14).

As to the date of the work, if we bear in mind that it still displays reminiscences of Toledo, this might indicate that the work may have been executed a short time after the sculptor's arrival in Seville, probably during the 1560s.



Fig. 13 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**, *Anunciación de Lucena*, 1572, polychrome relief, high altarpiece of the church of San Mateo, Lucena, Córdoba.

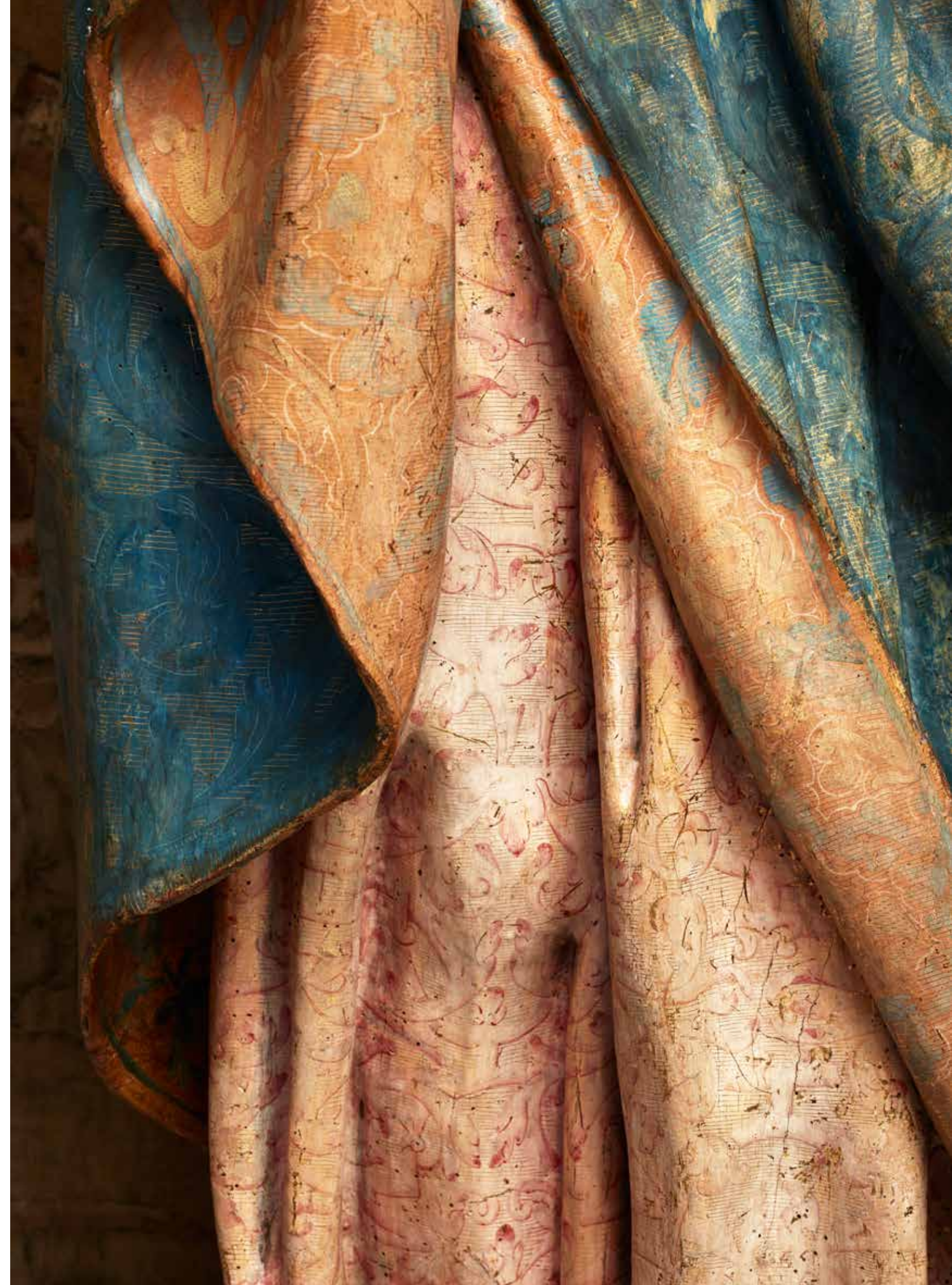


Fig. 14 **Juan Bautista Vázquez the Elder**, *Our Lady and the Child*, detail, IOMR collection.

2. ROQUE DE BALDUQUE

Lamentation on the Dead Christ

Jesús María Parrado del Olmo



This is a relief work that, although it presently appears unpainted, was quite probably polychromed, since one may still observe tiny remains of priming and quilting on the wood. The work has a well-balanced composition, following closed lines so that all its elements follow a generally serene design, although the subject is dramatic. Thus the centre of the composition is the dead body of Christ, sustained by his mother in her lap, in the manner of a Pietà. In the foreground, on either side, San Juan and Magdalen accompany the scene, holding a bowl of perfumes. Behind them is María and, on the far right, José de Arimatea and Nicodemo are in conversation and hold the crown of thorns and the nails. All these figures are interrelated and contribute to create this harmonious and intimate group surrounding the drama of the dead body of Christ. ^(Fig. 1)

The work is related to Roque de Balduque's style. This Flemish master arrived in Seville when other northern artists came to Spain attracted by the opportunities for work. Amongst them are included other sculptors who came from the same city of Bois-le-Duc, such as the so-called Bolduque family, who settled in Medina de Rioseco (Valladolid). Balduque is a hispanisation of the original family name. Documents of the period call him Roque de Baldoc, Baldocrín, Balduz, Belduque, Boldoque and Balduque; the latter is the name used by historians of Spanish art when referring to this artist. All this shows how the scribes transcribed the Flemish name according to how it sounded to their ears.

Palomero has indicated that his style is complex and his carving unequalled, with frequent changes in style, perhaps due to his having to prove collaborations so as to be able to finish his numerous commissions. He used engravings by Dürer and Marco Antonio Raimondi, amongst others, to fix his compositions, which makes his style owe just as much to its northern provenance as to its Italian origin.

Fig 1 **Roque Balduque.** (Hertogenbosch ? Seville 1561). *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, 94 x 77 cm; 100,5 x 83,5 cm (with frame), circa 1550, Pine wood, Valsain type (*pinus silvestris*). **Provenance:** During generations with the very well known Luis Masriera Collection (Barcelona) Spanish private collection. IOMR Collection, the Netherlands. With written communication by Prof JMParrado del Olmo.



His feminine types in this relief are characteristic of Roque Balduque with, oval heads and typically pleated and wavy head-dresses like those used by Balduque in works such as his numerous “Our Lady with the Child Jesus” sculptures, or in the group of Santa Ana at Alcalá del Río.^{(Fig 2)(Fig 3)} In many cases, such as the women’s figures or in San Juan, he carves the front of the tunics with fine parallel pleats. These are the ones that appear in the aforementioned work or in the feminine figures of the “Holy Burial” of the collegiate church at Osuna. They are also related to the feminine figures in the relief of the Burial of Christ at Chiclana, inspired by an engraving by Raimondi on a drawing by Rafael.

The figures of the two saintly men in this relief may be compared with others made by Balduque.^(Fig 4) His interest in characterizing them in the oriental fashion, with turbans, is similar to those in the “Burial of Christ” at Osuna. In the same way their long, thick and fine-haired beards, parted in the middle, are similar to the types represented in the last mentioned work, or to a few apostles in the “Last Supper” at Arcos de la Frontera, which are similar to the San Juan. Analogies are also observed in the heads of a few Apostles in the altarpiece of Santa María de Cáceres,^(Fig 6) initiated in 1547. This work shows more movement, which may be due to its being his first documented work or the participation of the sculptor Guillén Ferrant.

Fig 2 **Roque Balduque**, *Saint Anne, the Virgin and Infant Jesus*, circa 1550, church of Santa María de la Asunción, Alcalá del Río, Seville.

Fig 3 **Roque de Balduque**, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, detail, IOMR Collection.



The dead Christ of this relief is very elegant. He does not show any signs of martyrdom and appears more asleep than dead.^(Fig 5) His delicately pleated loincloth closely pressed to his body, his elegant head with fine strands of hair and beard are outstanding. All these epithets point to their relationship with the “Cristo de los mártires” at Santa María de Carmona or to the “Cristo de la Salud” in Córdoba, attributed to Balduque.

Fig 4 **Roque de Balduque**, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, detail, IOMR Collection.

Fig 5 **Roque de Balduque**, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, detail, IOMR Collection.



Fig 6 **Roque de Balduque**, *altarpiece of the Concatedral of Santa María, Cáceres*. Detail. ↗



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Juan de Valmaseda
Saint Jerome, detail, c.1530
Polychrome wood
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Arnao de Bruselas,
*Nathan rebuking King
David*, details, IOMR
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Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Peter*, poly-
chrome walnut wood 1529- 1532,
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Alonso Berruguete, *Saint Paul*, poly-
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