

Early Nineteenth-Century Gothic Ivories

by Jaap Lecuwenberg

In the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum's modest collection of French carvings in ivory one group of three soldiers, apparently part of a »Flagellation of Christ«, carved in high relief in the style of the 14th century (fig. 1), had caused me misgivings for quite a long time¹. However, since I discovered that carvings in ivory of a similar kind were repeatedly described as »Mediaeval« in various publications

Fig. 1
Three soldiers, part of a Flagellation, h. 13 cm., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



and displayed as such at exhibitions as well as in several museums, I was at first afraid to back my own judgment.

In view of the style of the costumes, this group seemed to originate in the third quarter of the 14th century. Circumstances which were in themselves irrelevant forced me to make up my mind about this work. This led me to a detailed study of similar works as described in publications by such well known experts in the field of ivory carvings as W. Maskell (1875), E. Molinier (1896), A. Maskell (1905), O. M. Dalton (1909), O. Pelka (1920–23), W. F. Volbach (1923), R. Koechlin (1924) and M. H. Longhurst (1926 and 1929)², and, far more important, to the study of kindred works described in more recent publications.

These and several more authors honestly believed works executed in the same style to be genuine Mediaeval carvings. This opinion was shared by many art historians and interested amateurs. Because I no longer share this conviction I felt it my duty to give you my own considered opinion on a large number of ivories. Most of these are attributed by me to one particular forger and his workshop, and a small number to two different ivory carvers of far less importance. The majority of these so-called works of art are displayed in various museums, others are kept in museum reserves; in the latter case many of these carvings are still considered to be genuinely Mediaeval. The largest group of ivories, including the Rijksmuseum carving, shows a common style. Because of one characteristic many of these works have in common I shall here refer to them as works by *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*.

A few of the falsifications to be dealt with here have been described by Raymond Koechlin in an article published in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* in 1906 as belonging to a group of genuine ivories³. Among



Fig. 2
The Denial of St. Peter, h. 14,8 cm., Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

the illustrations in Koechlin's article there is one of »Three standing figures« from the G. Hoentschel Collection in Paris, now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and another one of a relief, akin in style, formerly at a Tournai museum. In a note the author mentions works which he considers to be closely related to the above with regard to form and subject, in museums in Amsterdam, Berlin, Lyons and in the British Museum in London, all of these groups of standing figures which might have belonged to a Passion retable.

It was this note which induced many people interested in Mediaeval French ivories to continue to consider these works to be genuine. Because of this conviction several of these works are still on display at the museums mentioned above, and are

still referred to in publications as authentic examples of carvings of this period. In his later manual, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Français*, Paris, 1924, Koechlin has retracted his belief in the authenticity of the small group of ivories mentioned in the gazette of 1906. However, in the three-volume publication of 1924 which would require a great deal of time to read carefully, this important correction is merely mentioned in a lengthy, complicated and far from lucid note⁴, so that it may easily escape many readers' notice as it first escaped mine. Moreover, Koechlin remained in doubt as to the authenticity of other works and still considered various other ivories to be genuine although, in my opinion, all of these are the work of the same carver. I feel compelled to show up as fakes all these ivories.

In order to prove the connection between all these forgeries which are apparently so different, it is necessary first of all to describe at some length the stylistic characteristics of the Rijksmuseum speci-

Fig. 3
Three Apostles, h. 15 cm., Staatliche Museen, Berlin.





Fig. 4
The Betrayal of Judas, h. 18,2 cm., Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

men. Next, I shall deal with each of the fakes discussed by Koechlin in the note mentioned above. A thorough analysis of this kind is indispensable in order to acquire a real knowledge of the typical qualities of the work made by the man who is responsible for these falsifications. Without such knowledge it would have been impossible to expose as forgeries, carvings in ivory which were and are considered to be genuine by Koechlin and by other authors.

The reason why the Rijksmuseum group (fig. 1) upset me each time I looked at it was simply because I refused to believe that any genuine Mediaeval carving could possibly show such self-assured, essentially modern facial expressions. The deeply set eyes are as incongruous as the lined foreheads. Koechlin remarks in his 1924 note that he had not expected the latter detail in a 14th- or 15th-century work. In the second place I was struck by the deeply carved hair and by the fact that the hair stands away from the temples. The men have too well-rounded calves and they gesticulate with curiously flat hands. The soldier on the left holds a scourge (waist-high), the single thongs of which stand upright (sic). The men's pseudo 14th-century

costumes appear odd: the sleeves of their tunics end in »ringed« lower sleeves; the buttoned tunics emphasize the waists in too marked a manner and, here and there, slight horizontal folds are running round the waists; the tunics are buttoned from the necks to the scalloped edges, yet, the girdles are worn well below the waists as was usual in the third quarter of the 14th century. Either all or some of these details can be found again and again in the other ivories under consideration in this article, either all together in one carving, or just a few of them, and in some cases augmented with new characteristics to be mentioned later.

Three groups of figures displayed at the Staatliche Museen in Berlin show a marked affinity to the Rijksmuseum group; these are »The Denial of St. Peter« (fig. 2), »Three Apostles« (fig. 3), both formerly in the Spitzer Collection in Paris⁵, and »The Betrayal of Judas« (fig. 4), formerly in the Campe Collection at Hamburg⁶. In the case of »The Denial«, the soldier on the right shows a strong resemblance to the one in the Rijksmuseum group (fig. 2 and 1). They wear similar costumes with slight horizontal folds at the waist; their tunics

Fig. 5
Christ before Pilate, h. 13 cm., Private Collection, West Germany.



have scalloped edges and tight lower sleeves; they have deeply carved hair and both have slightly opened mouths. The big heads with the deeply carved hair and the opened mouths are also noticeable in »The Apostles« (fig. 3). The small books with diaper-decorated covers held by two of the apostles are typical of the maker of these forgeries as you will see in many of the works yet to be described. This also applies to the rosette-shaped agrafe with which the cloak is held together. »The Betrayal of Judas« shows us the same type of heads (fig. 4), but here three of the figures are wearing caps with upturned rims. Koechlin who, in 1906, pronounced these ivories to be genuine, said in his 1924 publication that he considered them to be fakes.

Whereas these four groups are very vague from an iconographical point of view, this is very different in the case of another similar group, »Christ before Pilate« (fig. 5), also from the Spitzer Collection. At first this group was thought to have formed part of the same retable as the groups shown in fig. 2 and 4⁷. Nobody can possibly doubt »Christ before

Fig. 6

St. John and two Jews, h. 9 cm., Musée des Beaux Arts, Lyons.



Fig. 7

St. John and two Jews at the foot of the Cross, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Pilate« being a fake. Koechlin, in his 1924 publication, also pulled this group to pieces. Nevertheless, the catalogue of the List Collection sale in 1939 still showed and described this group as »Flemish or French, late 14th century«; moreover, it was still shown at Cologne in 1960 and similarly indicated as »Flemish, late 14th century«⁸. In his note, Koechlin emphasized the strange details of the costumes such as a kind of epaulet on the tunic of the soldier on the right. The scalloped tunics, the drawn sword held erect in a rather aggressive manner (left), and the mace are just as unusual and cause us to doubt the authenticity of this group as much as the hangdog face of Christ and the too self-assured expression on the faces of the soldiers. It hardly seems necessary to convince anyone of this group being a forgery.

In the same note, Koechlin also exposes as a fake the pathetic looking group of »St. John and two Jews« (fig. 6) at the Musée des Beaux Arts at Lyons in which St. John is seen wearing the agrafe⁹ as well as a group of »Three Apostles (?)«. L. Gonse showed the first mentioned ivory in his *Chefs*



Fig. 8
The Washing of the Disciples's feet, 14 x 7 cm., formerly at a museum at Tournai.

d'oeuvre des Musées de France in 1904. Koechlin failed, however, to mention two other, kindred groups also at this museum¹⁰. In addition, he mentions »St. John and two Jews at the foot of the cross« (fig. 7), now at the Metropolitan Museum and presented to the museum by the late Pierpont Morgan (formerly in the Hoentschel Collection mentioned above), and »Christ washing the Disciples's feet« (fig. 8), formerly in one of the museums at Tournai but which disappeared without a trace during World War II¹¹. The last falsification mentioned in Koechlin's note is a relief at the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels, viz. »A female saint being tortured« (fig. 9)¹².

Koechlin did not realize that these ivories were forgeries until he had seen the polyptych, »The Live of St. Agnes«, in the Hampe Collection at



Fig. 9
The martyrdom of a female saint, 8,5 x 7,5 cm., Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels.

Hamburg and the diptych, »The Crucifixion and the Death of the Virgin«, formerly in the Oppenheim Collection at Cologne, now at the Metropolitan Museum¹³. Having seen both these works

Fig. 10
The Virgin among Holy Women, b. 11,5 cm., British Museum, London.





Fig. 11
Apostles of a Last Supper, h. 10 cm., Musée d'Abbeville.

he no longer hesitated to declare similar ivories in Berlin, Lyons, Amsterdam, Tournai and Brussels to be fakes too. In a later addition, apparently included at the last moment, he declares the group just then presented to the British Museum, »The Virgin among Holy Women« (fig. 10), also to be a forgery¹⁴. However, he was still sufficiently convinced of the authenticity of the following specimens: »Two seated Apostles«, part of a »Last Supper« (fig. 11), in the Musée at Abbeville¹⁵ »Christ seated with two Apostles« (Christ wearing the agrafe) (fig. 12)¹⁶, at the V. & A.; »Christ taken prisoner« (also wearing the agrafe) (fig. 13) and »The Nativity«, both at the British Museum¹⁷. Personally, I look upon these ivories as slightly more successful fakes. These works, considered by Koechlin to be either falsifications or of doubtful origin, provide us with more stylistic characteristics of our »Master«.

In the case of the Brussels female saint (fig. 9) – reproduced in a recent publication – we notice that

the kneeling man on the right wears the tunic familiar by now, buttoned from neck to bottom, and with the scalloped edge; that the men's hair is deeply carved and that the two men standing behind the king wear slightly pointed caps with turned-up rims similar to those we noticed in »The Betrayal of Judas« (fig. 4) and in »St. John and two Jews« (fig. 6). In »Christ before Pilate« (fig. 5) we also find the mace, used repeatedly by our »Master«, either held in the left or in the right hand of a standing figure, as in the Brussels carving. In the case of »The Palm Sunday Ass« at Lyons already mentioned, an exceedingly bad piece of work¹⁰, the bit of St. Peter's key is similar to that shown in »Christ washing the Disciples' feet« (fig. 8); moreover, we find St. John with the diaper-decorated book cover in the ivories in Berlin, Lyons, Tournai and New York (fig. 3, 6, 8 and 7) as well as in an ivory carving with »Three Jews«, the whereabouts of which cannot at present be traced. With regard to »St. John and two Jews« (fig. 6) I would particularly like to draw your attention to the fact that this work which formerly belonged to the »Cabinet de M. Migieu, membre de Parlement de Dijon«, was bought by M. Sathonay, Mayor of Lyons, for the museum of this town as early as 1810¹⁸.

Fig. 12
Christ seated, with two Apostles, h. 10,5 cm., Victoria and Albert Museum, London.





Fig. 13
Group of five Apostles, h. 14 cm., British Museum, London.



Fig. 14
Group of six Apostles, h. 9,5 cm., The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

Quite a number of unknown ivories showing stylistic affinities to the fakes and the doubtful specimens described by Koechlin in his note, were still displayed as genuine works of art a short while ago or are thus shown even now. For instance, the »Six Apostles« (fig. 14) at the Walters Art Gallery at Baltimore¹⁹, their faces showing a mealy-mouthed expression, demonstrate their affinity to the works discussed already because of the deeply carved beards, the gesticulating hands, the short legs and squarish knees, as well as the diaper-decorated books. There is also a similarity between this and the Abbeville group (fig. 11) and the one at the V. & A. (fig. 12).



Fig. 15
Two Holy Women, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt.

A similar impression is created by »The Virgin among Holy Women«, displayed at the British Museum (fig. 10) and already mentioned here. Striking in this case is, first of all, the absence of St. John. In the second place, we cannot be sure

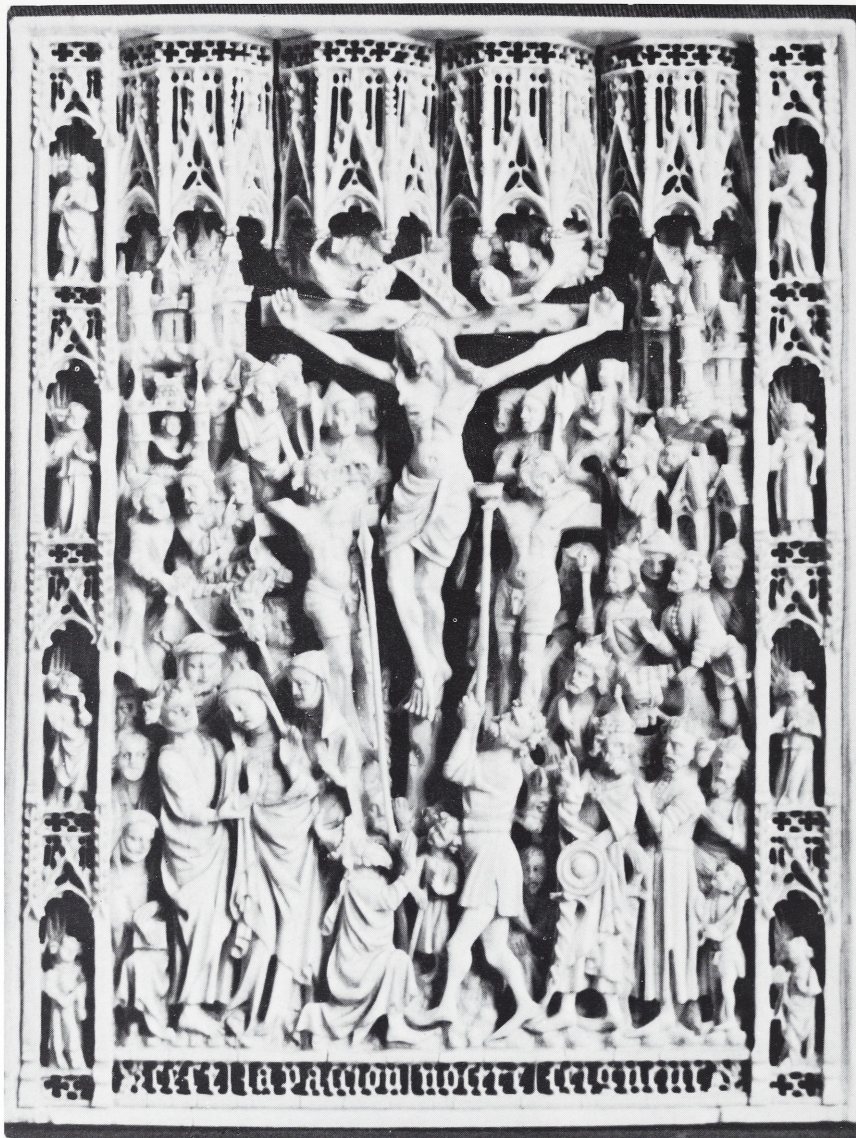


Fig. 16a
 Diptych with a
 Crucifixion and the Death
 of the Virgin, each
 14,7 x 11,4 cm., Musée
 des Beaux Arts, Lyons.

which of the women is supposed to be Mary Magdalene because her attribute, the long hair, is not shown. The *barbettes*, as worn by these women, are too tight; they are akin to two women in a group (fig. 15) displayed at the Hessische Landesmuseum at Darmstadt, probably acquired from the collection of Baron Hüpsch who died in 1805²⁰. Both these groups are similar to a diptych with four male and four female saints in the reserves of the Metropolitan Museum and, therefore, also to be attributed to our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*.

Smaller yet kindred figures are to be found in a pierced diptych, a «Crucifixion and Death of the Virgin», until recently displayed at the Lyons Musée des Beaux Arts (fig. 16)²¹. Here the figures

and the facial expressions are reminiscent of the diptych at the Metropolitan Museum mentioned before but not reproduced here; it shows a «Crucifixion» and an «Entombment»; they came from the Oppenheim Collection and were recognized at once as a forgery by Koechlin²². Moreover, the *barbette* and the turban worn by a tall woman in the Lyons «Crucifixion» shown behind and above the heads of the Virgin and St. John, remind us of similar accessories worn by the High Priest's maid in «The Denial» (fig. 2). Here we also find the buttoned tunic, the tight lower sleeve, the turned-up rims of Jews' caps and the leather-swathed swords as shown in the group of «St. John and two Jews» at Lyons (fig. 6) described already; also we once more find the mace next to the thief on the right in



Fig. 16b.

»Christ before Pilate« (fig. 5) and in »The Washing of the Disciples's feet« (fig. 8) as well as the agrafe worn by the man holding the sword.

In the case of »The Death of the Virgin« (fig. 16-b), where Christ is seen wearing the agrafe, the apostles remind us of those in the Baltimore work (fig. 14) in which group the figure bottom right holds a diaper-decorated book, and several of the figures have the deeply carved hair with which we are now familiar. The words carved under »The Crucifixion«: *cest | la passion | notre | seigneur* and those underneath »The Death«: *cest | le | trespacement . . .* could never be accepted by any philologist as late 14th or early 15th century¹⁸. A smaller and simpler specimen of this crucifixion is displayed at the British Museum²³.

The Walters Art Gallery still possesses a pierced plaque showing St. Catherine seated on a throne between two standing figures of St. Peter and St. Paul (fig. 17)²⁴. To me, a St. Catherine, thus placed between two of the Church's greatest apostles, is quite unacceptable from an iconographical as well as from a theological point of view. Moreover, I have only seen seated St. Catherines in groups. The St. Paul in this carving holds a leather-swathed sword of the kind we have seen in kindred works as well as a diaper-decorated book. St. Peter holds another of these books and his key has the same bit as the one in »The Washing of the Disciples's feet« (fig. 8). The row of pierced quatrefoils over the heads of the Baltimore figures and under St. Catherine's throne is a new stylistic



Fig. 17
St. Catherine between St. Peter and St. Paul, h. 10 cm., *The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.*

detail of the maker of these fakes which we also find in the Lyons diptych underneath the angels over the canopies (fig. 16). Not a single Mediaeval ivory I have ever seen has an agrafe like the one with which St. Catherine's cloak is closed here, nor do they ever have carved nimbuses because these are always painted in Mediaeval ivories. These details are most important clues.

The Baltimore St. Catherine is akin to the seated St. Catherine at the Musée de Cluny in Paris (fig. 18), an ivory lent to the 1962 Vienna exhibition where it was proudly displayed²⁵. The manner in which she is seated, the way in which the mantle is held together with an agrafe (comparable to the one in fig. 13), the horizontal folds at the waist, the deep folds falling over the squarish knees... all these details correspond with those of the Baltimore ivory as does the treatment of the hair and several additional details. Both thrones show the pierced back with quatrefoils at the ends of reticulated tracery in an almost identical manner. The recumbent figure of the Emperor Maxentius of the Cluny carving again shows a face which is too well carved and with an expression of far greater self-assurance than that which could be expected in a Mediaeval work.

A similar St. Catherine, formerly in the Carrand Collection, is in the reserves of the Museo Nazionale in Florence. In this case the seated St. Catherine, complete with nimbus, is placed on a large silver-gilt mount set with precious stones, in the manner reminiscent of book covers. Underneath the figure of the saint a relic is fixed behind a piece of rock crystal over the legend: *de la robe de sainte Catherine!* This work was reproduced in 1958 in the *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*²⁶. It is hardly feasible to find a genuinely Mediaeval St. Catherine fixed, as a kind of *pièce de résistance*, on a book cover, and far less feasible that a Mediaeval mind would have seated her thereupon, nor could the legend possibly be Mediaeval. Moreover both St. Catherines wear the agrafe identical with the one worn by a »Seated Virgin with the Child standing on her right knee« at the V. & A. (fig. 19)²⁷. We have already seen this agrafe worn by the centre figure of »Christ with two Apostles« at the British Museum (fig. 13). The treatment of the eyes, the rather fat neck, the way the cloak falls over the shoulders and across her lap, as well as the enormous knees

Fig. 18
St. Catherine, h. 19,1 cm., *Musée de Cluny, Paris.*

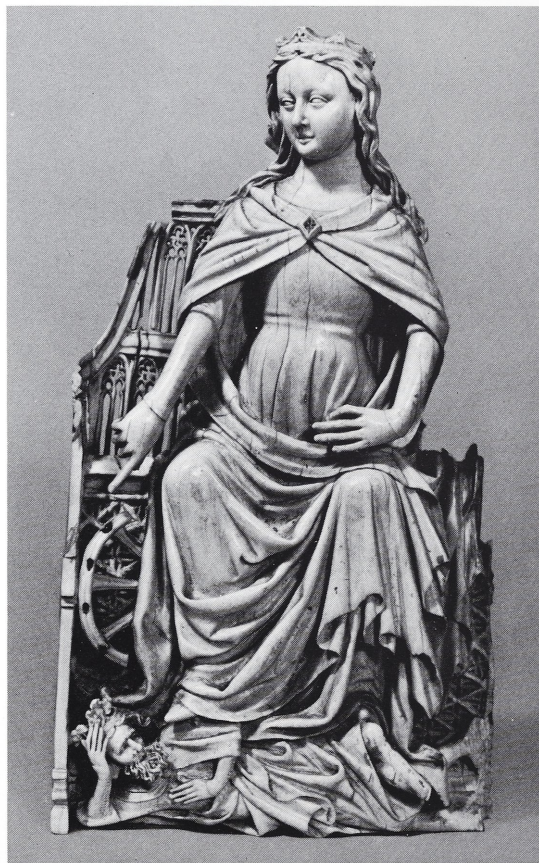




Fig. 19
Virgin and Child, h. 13,5 cm., Victoria and Albert Museum,
 London.

supply ample reasons for attributing this work to *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*.

Also to be attributed to him in my opinion are: a »Seated Virgin with the Child standing on her left knee«, displayed at the V. & A. and shown at the 1962 Vienna exhibition²⁸, a similar ivory at the Leningrad Museum²⁹ as well as a third, deliberately mutilated and without the Child, formerly in the Cl.Côte Collection³⁰.

The Virgin as well as the three St. Catherines (fig. 19, 18 and 17) show a definite affinity with another »Virgin, seated on a throne and feeding the Child«, the pierced throne of which carving is flanked by additional tracery structures rising from the back and surmounted by an unusual and inexplicable kind of pinnacle (fig. 20). Viollet-le-Duc was fascinated by this piece of furniture; he showed it with a bishop seated upon it in a print reproduced in *Mobilier français* in 1858³¹. The pierced panels of the back and the sides remind us of those in the carving just described. The Virgin's fat neck, the Child's head with its hair brushed back, and the Virgin's delicately modelled but expressionless face suffice as reasons for considering this work to be as yet another fake. It was

acquired by the Musée du Louvre from the Révoil Collection in 1828.

The seated St. Catherine between the standing figures of St. Peter and St. Paul at Baltimore (fig. 17) has its counterpart in another Virgin at the Museum Mayer van den Bergh at Antwerp (fig. 21), bought at the Debruge Duménil sale in Paris in 1839³². This Virgin's throne also shows the quatrefoils at the bottom and the accompanying St. John is similar to the St. John shown in »The Washing of the Disciples's feet« (fig. 8). Moreover, he wears the same kind of garment as is worn by the Baltimore St. Peter (fig. 17). I would have expected a big figure like St. John to hold a chalice as his attribute rather than a palm branch, but I discovered that the former never figures in Mediaeval French ivories²⁹. All three figures in this ivory have carved nimbuses like those we have seen already and St. John wears a rosette-shaped agrafe similar to those worn by the Baltimore St. Catherine, by Christ in »The Death of the Virgin« and by the Lyons St. John (fig. 17, 16 and 6).

Fig. 20
Virgin and Child, h. 19,8 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris.

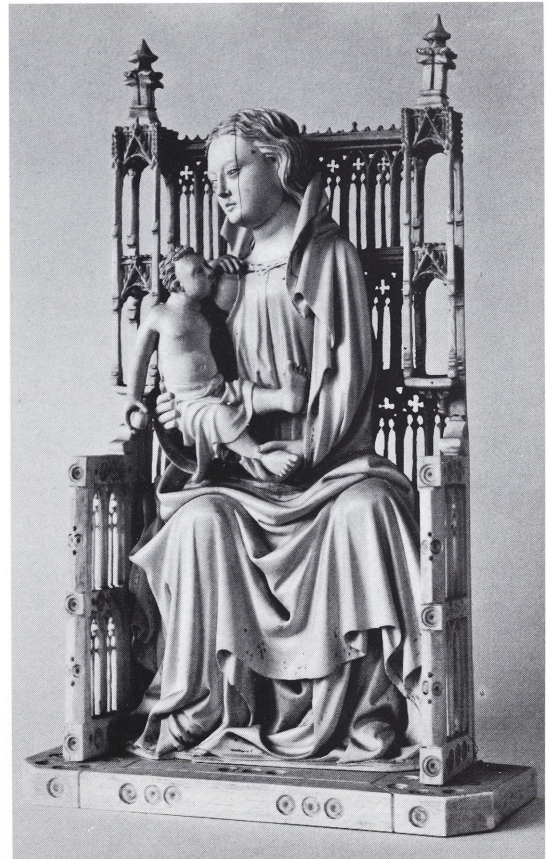




Fig. 21
The Virgin between St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist, 12,6 x 9,1 cm., Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp.

St. Peter and St. Paul are akin to a large pierced panel displayed at the V. & A. and reproduced recently (fig. 22)³⁴. Here too we find the quatrefoils, the diaper-decorated books, the deeply carved hair, the lined foreheads, the carved nimbus, and the flat hands here are even flatter than usual. It is very strange to see Christ holding the orb in His left hand and a smallish cross in His right hand. A smaller cross should be affixed to the top of the orb and we might expect to see Christ blessing the crowd with two fingers of His right hand. Here, as in the case of the Lyons diptych (fig. 16), we notice uprights with small figures of saints and angels in niches.

We also find figures in niches in uprights in »a diptych in an intarsia frame« at the same museum (fig. 23), displayed as »early 15th century«. It is curious that »The Coronation of the Virgin« having been placed at the bottom and that the stages of the Passion are not depicted in the traditional sequence. Some of the figures again show the scalloped tunics, namely in »Christ carrying the Cross« (the man with the hammer) and in »The Flagellation« (both soldiers). Some of the sleeping Apostles on the Mount of Olives are shown with the now familiar books, and the holy women again are

wearing either too tight *barbettes* or the turbans already mentioned (the woman behind the sepulchre). We also find the slightly conical Jews' cap with the turned-up rim worn by the man behind St. John in »The Crucifixion« as well as the quatrefoils in the canopies. We can only hazard a guess as to the meaning of the growing corn in »The Flight to Egypt« since the mower is absent. It is as strange that God the Father holds a small cross to Christ on the Mount of Olives as that there are only two women standing at the foot of the Cross. Stylistic affinity is noticeable in the soft round faces of the women and the small figures in the scenes at the top of the pierced panel at the same museum (fig. 22). The diptych is displayed together with its faked leather case³⁵.

Recently I saw a similar diptych in an intarsia frame displayed as the one and only ivory of this kind at the National Gallery in Washington (fig. 24), although it must have been known to many persons since it was illustrated in the catalogue of the J. E. Taylor sale of 1912 and mentioned as »Milanese«. Koechlin has included this diptych in his manual in spite of his having had some doubts about its authenticity³⁶. On the whole, this diptych is very similar to the one at the V. & A. but in some ways it is stylistically different from the works

Fig. 22
Christ between St. Peter and St. Paul, 14,5 x 11,5 cm., Victoria and Albert Museum, London.





Fig. 23
Diptych with the Life of the Virgin and the Passion of Christ, each 27,5 x 20,5 cm., Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

already described here, although we do recognize a few of the details: the scalloped tunics buttoned right through, the too tight *barbettes*, the leather-swathed sword held by the chieftain in the Crucifixion, the quatrefoils in the canopies and the carved nimbuses. St. Joseph's nimbus is pierced in a very unusual manner and rather resembles the tracery of a church window above his head. The diaper-decorated sepulchre resembles that in the V. & A. diptych (fig. 23). In »The Descent of the Cross« the ladder is not poised against the cross as is usual; consequently, the woman kneeling under the ladder is shown with her back to the cross. The vine branches in the horizontal friezes are similar to those in the Oppenheim diptych, now at the Metropolitan Museum¹³. In 1846, Sommerard published a reproduction of this diptych, engraved by Henri Sellier as early as 1839³⁷. This diptych is



Detail Fig. 24b.



Fig. 24a and b.
*Diptych with the Life
of Christ, 25,5 × 37,5 cm.,
The National Gallery
of Art, Washington.*

one of the very best works of our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* and it was indeed displayed as such. In 1958 this diptych was reproduced in the *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte, Elfenbein* as »Milanese, early 15th century«.

Equally misleading are pierced plaques with twenty-five scenes, four of which, each with two scenes, are at the V. & A. (fig. 25); four plaques each containing four scenes, were reproduced in the catalogue of the Gibson-Carmichael sale at Christie's in 1902; and another of these plaques was formerly in the Trivulzio Collection in Milan³⁸. All these scenes have decorated canopies with three tall gables, resting left and right on the capitals of too heavy swathed columns. Once more we

find the buttoned and scalloped tunics and the very low girdles, the hair standing out from the temples, the calves modelled in a rather exaggerated manner, the diaper-decorated book covers, the scourge with the ropes standing upright, the *barbette* worn with the turban, the Jews' cap with turned-up rim, the leather-swathed sword sheath and the mace. Moreover, in »The Entombment« of one of the Carmichael Collection plaques, we notice a sarcophagus decorated rather too emphatically with arches and roundels, with a small lion in each roundel between pilasters.

The most astonishing details to be found in this piece of work are six bearded men (wearing Jews' caps with scalloped rims turned back) but not a

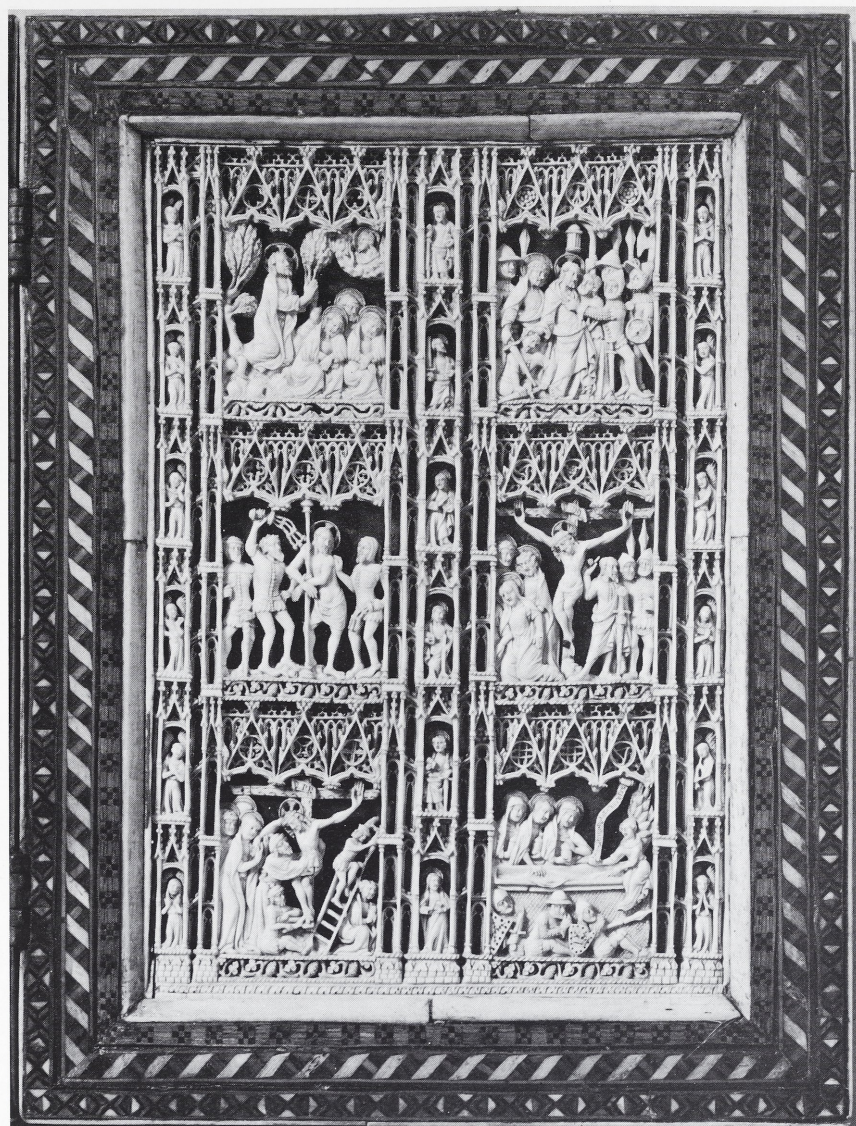


Fig. 24b.

single holy woman; consequently, two men are carrying the pot of ointment! The eight scenes at the V. & A. which at first sight had impressed me rather favourably, made me increasingly suspicious while studying them more carefully. The sixteen scenes from the former Carmichael Collection supply a sufficient number of clues to convince that all of these twenty-five scenes are forgeries.

A »Last Supper« with Mary Magdalene anointing Christ's feet, displayed as the only carving in ivory of this kind at The Cloisters in New York (fig. 26), should be classified as belonging to the same type because of style and size. This work is strikingly similar to »The Marriage at Cana«, top left in fig. 25, the next item to be dealt with here.

The four pierced panels for a casket (fig. 27) at the Walters Art Gallery, showing the life of Christ (barring the last scenes, for instance, »The Crucifixion«) are also, without the slightest doubt, the work of the same master³⁹. We see similar travellers on the road to Emmaus in fig. 25, a similar »Last Supper« in fig. 26 (compare the recurring pewter jugs on the tables), whereas »The Baptism of Christ« is practically identical with one of the panels from the Carmichael Collection. Various costume details, by now quite familiar, are found in »The Massacre of the Innocents« as well as Herod and Pilate with crossed legs, a recurring detail in the work of the *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. Left of »The Baptism« we see »Christ as a child in the Temple« looking like an elegant young lady. In

»The Adoration« the three kings, Joseph with his stick and a midwife with *barbette* and turban, are grouped together in a rather ridiculous manner. One would expect to find »The Washing of the Disciples's feet« with St. John, already holding a palm branch (sic), to precede »The Last Supper« instead of following the latter. It is equally unusual for Christ to be holding a book when taken prisoner and when buffeted before a seated Pilate. This last

Fig. 25

The Life of Christ, 26,5 x 11 cm., Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

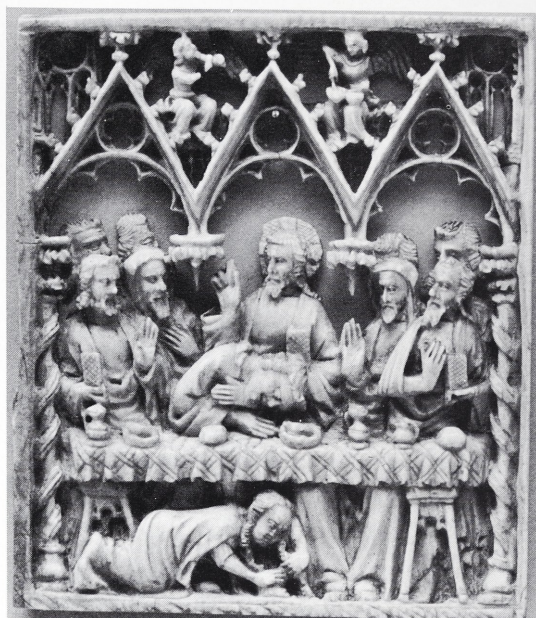


Fig. 26

The Last Supper and the Ointment of the feet, The Cloisters, New York.

scene again includes a man holding a mace and one may well ask the meaning of three gesticulating apostles in the panel bottom right, and in the second panel left.

Another but very important characteristic of our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* is the fact that in most of his »Annunciation« scenes he depicts the Archangel Gabriel kneeling (fig. 22, 23 and 27). Mediaeval French ivories always show Gabriel standing, barring a few exceptions.

A casket, until recently displayed at the Musée du Louvre (fig. 28), proves that our master must have started his career at an early date. This casket was given to the museum as *aconquête de 1806*, viz. as loot acquired by Napoleon during his campaign of that year⁴⁰. This work arouses suspicion at first sight because of its mixture of styles. The front panel showing »The Virgin feeding the Child« looks as if it had been made in the second half of the 14th century, whereas the arched brace above the three heads is late 15th century, as are the popular saints depicted here; moreover, the latter are placed »pell-mell« instead of in their traditional sequence. We are struck by the blank faces with toothless mouths. St. Peter is not in the place where he should be. St. John, one of the Evangelists, is placed on the lid of the casket and he is depicted wearing a beard which is most unusual in the late Middle Ages. In his catalogue of

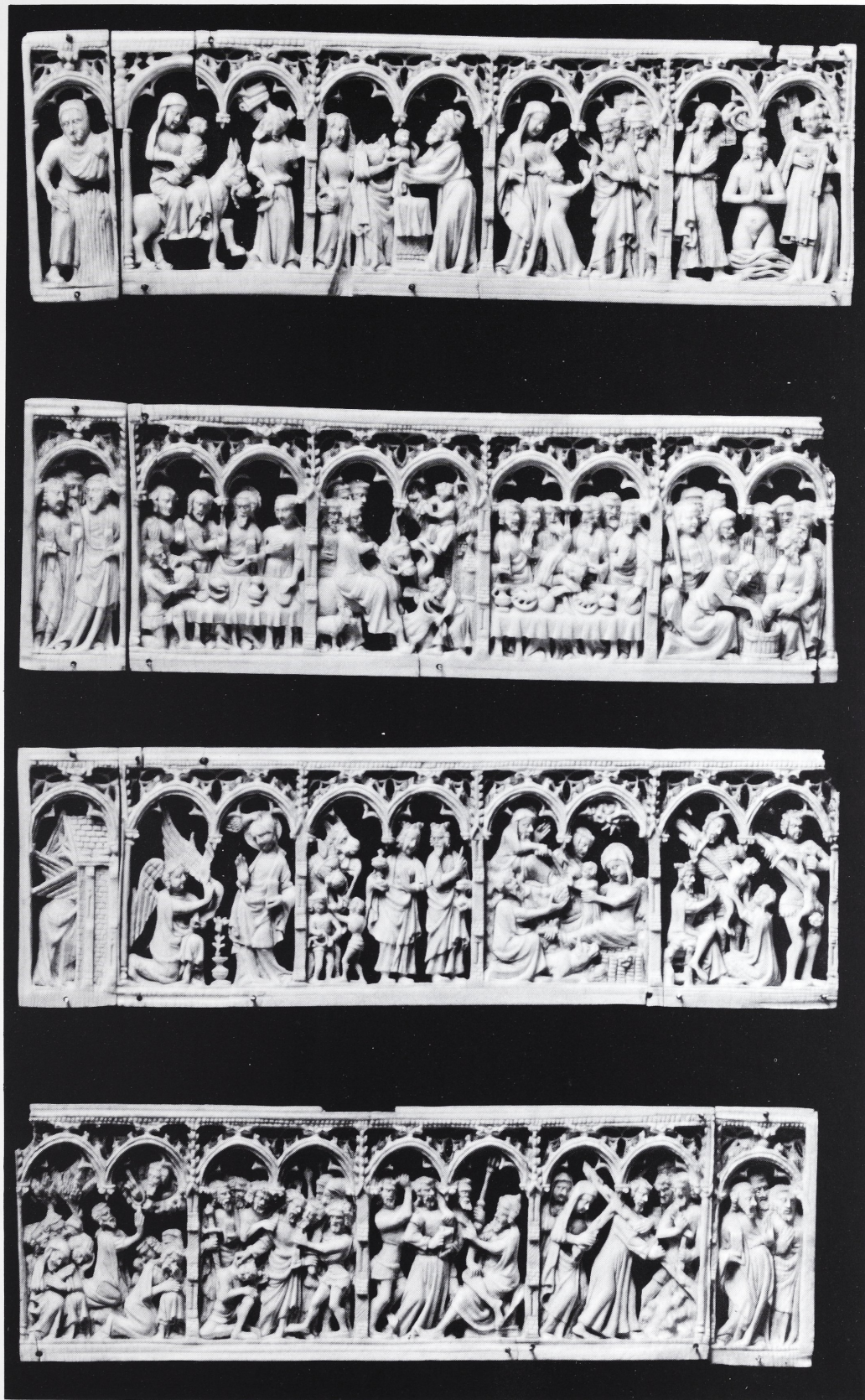


Fig. 27
Four sides of a casket with *The Life of Christ*, 5,5 × 16 cm., *The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.*

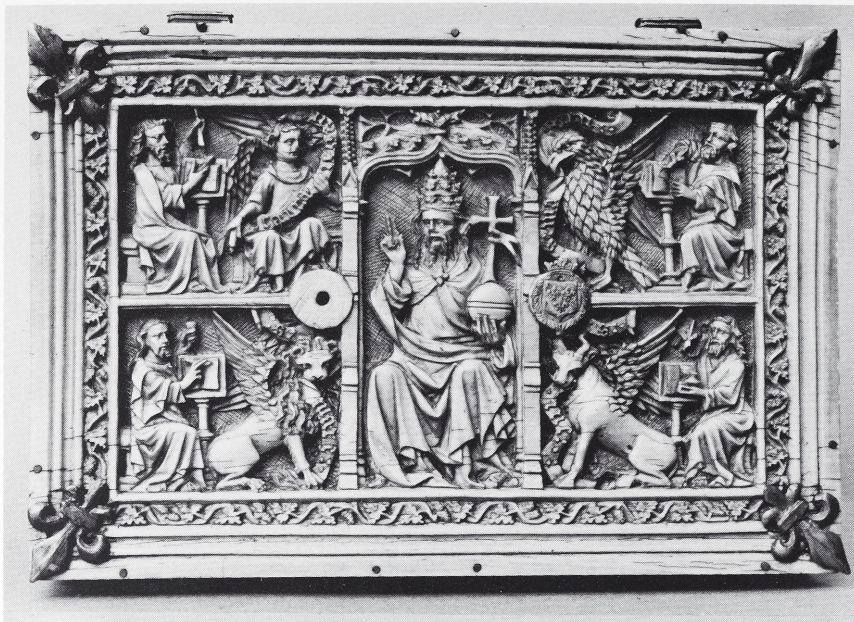
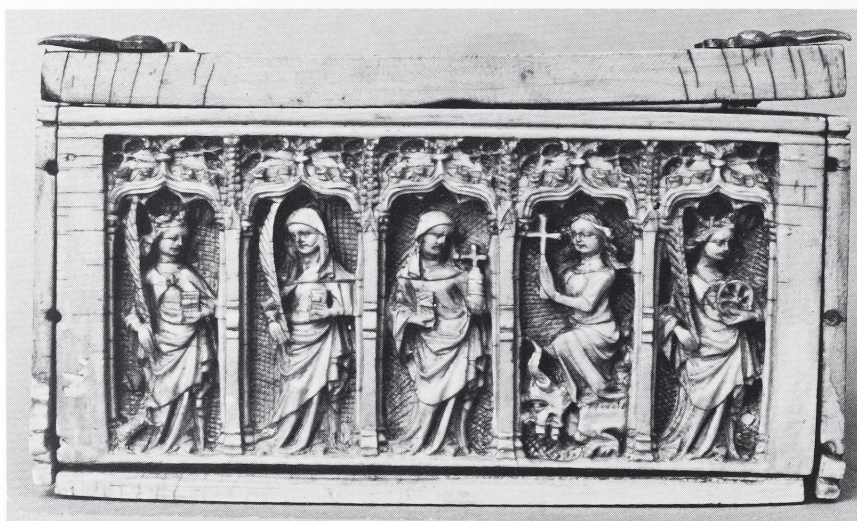


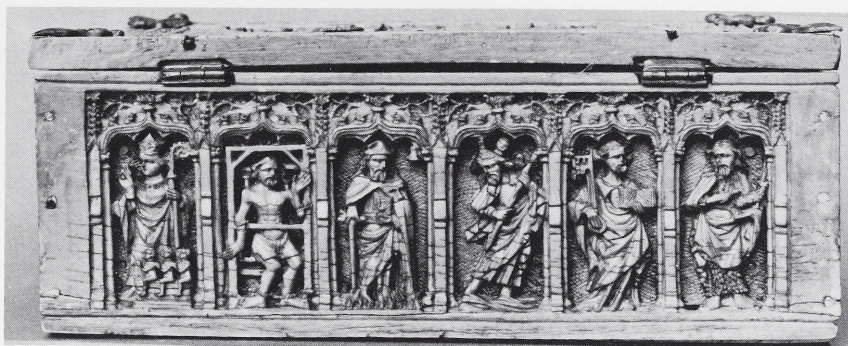
Fig. 28
Casket, 8,6 x 21,6 x 15,2 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Detail fig. 28



Detail fig. 28



Detail fig. 28



Detail fig. 28

1896, Molinier remarked that the symbols of the Evangelists do not tally with their names as indicated by the scrolls⁴¹. Both Koechlin and Dalton were intrigued by stylistic differences apparently pertaining to different periods. This should certainly have aroused their suspicions had it not been for the fact that they considered it out of the question for a forgery of this kind to have been made prior to 1806. Dalton compared the casket with a panel with St. Agnes and St. Margaret now in the reserves of the British Museum⁴². He had his doubts about the authenticity of the latter, yet, he came to the conclusion that they were the work of the master who had also carved the Louvre casket. His eyes were sufficiently critical but very likely he was afraid to denounce these ivories outright as fakes because of the opinion expressed by other experts.

Various details found in the panels of this casket can also be traced to other ivories. For instance, there is an Italian retable with an intarsia frame in the reserves of the Musée de Cluny; the missing Embriachi pieces have been replaced by about

ten ivories by the *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. This retable, with the grand name of *Oratoire des Duchesses de Bourgogne*, shows various figures of which the Evangelists are very similar to those of the Louvre casket. Koechlin who reproduced two⁴³ declared that a restored demi-figure of an angel in a Mediaeval triptych from the former Spitzer Collection, later in the Martin le Roy Collection, must have been carved by the same artist as the faked figures on the Italian retable just mentioned. This is indeed the case⁴⁴. And it proves that »our Master« also used to restore Mediaeval ivories.

A panel displayed at the Gruuthuse Museum at Bruges shows, in the upper tier, a »Coronation of the Virgin« including St. Michael and, in the lower tier, St. John the Baptist and three Apostles (fig. 29). The Archangel does not only wear a crown (sic) as well as an agrafe (sic), but also he is about to turn his back to Christ while the latter is in the act of crowning the Virgin; St. Michael is a good deal taller than Christ and, moreover, this St. Michael is similar to the one we noticed in a panel of the



Fig. 29
The Coronation of the Virgin with St. Michael and four saints,
8 x 5 cm., Gruutbuse Museum, Bruges.

casket. The Christ of the Bruges panel holds an orb with two horizontal grooves just like the one held by the Christ on the lid of the casket⁴⁵.

A pierced panel, at the *Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire* in Brussels, shows St. Michael, St. John

the Baptist and St. Anthony. We recognize the first and the second in the Bruges panel, whereas the first and the last correspond with the figures of the casket. Another small pierced diptych in a brass frame at the Brussels museum provides similar corresponding figures. In the latter case we unexpectedly find St. Jerome behind the Virgin and St. Anthony behind St. John in a »Crucifixion« (fig. 30), quite as astonishing as having found St. Michael in a »Coronation of the Virgin« in fig. 29.

The left leaf of a diptych in the Kofler-Truniger Collection at Lucerne shows a »Seated Virgin with Child« facing a kneeling figure whereas the right leaf, displayed at the Museum Mayer van den Bergh at Antwerp, shows St. Catherine, with the agrafe, and St. Margaret (fig. 31), both these saints with toothless mouths. In this same work we also find the border decorated with vine leaves and tendrils rather like the panel on the lid of the Louvre casket. The lozenge background with a leaf motif is a new stylistic characteristic we shall soon meet again⁴⁶.

A panel with an »Annunciation« displayed at the Schnütgen Museum at Cologne and two slightly smaller panels with the same theme in the former Gillot Collection in Paris all show a kneeling St. Gabriel and, in the third panel, a St. Agnes, complete with agrafe, behind the Virgin (fig. 32 and 33)⁴⁷. Corresponding kneeling angels in similar »Annunciations« are to be found in the left leaf of a tiny diptych in the Kofler Truniger Collection mentioned above – in the right leaf a Crucifixion with St. John wearing an agrafe⁴⁸ – as well as in a diptych, almost similar in size and appearance,



Fig. 30
Diptych with a Crucifixion
and saints,
Musées Royaux d'Art et
d'Histoire, Brussels.



Fig. 31

Diptych: The Virgin and Donor, St. Catherine and St. Margaret; each leaf, 7,2 x 4,2 cm., one at the Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp, the other in the Kofler-Truniger Collection, Lucerne.

until recently displayed at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (fig. 34)⁴⁹. The five corresponding angels, the diaper-decorated book cover, the hatched or diaper-covered background, the agrafe worn by St. Agnes and St. John, the gesticulating hands and the hair style all belong to the stylistic features of our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. You see, therefore, that I myself must plead guilty too. In each of the five kneeling St. Gabriels the Archangel wears a garment, the folds of which hang down in the same manner from the right knee, and in each case the lower end of the garment is doubly folded over the left foot. This particular manner of depicting folds can also be seen in a diptych in the British Museum reserves⁵⁰.

A close study of these small reliefs makes us doubt the authenticity of a polychrome «Annunciation» with its leather case at the Musée St.-Didier at Langres (fig. 35) as well as that of a kindred group,

without any colour, at the Museo Nazionale in Florence. The former, very glamorous, almost regal, is as little satisfactory as the latter. The Langres Virgin's conical neck, the expressionless face, the badly modelled hands equally bereft of expression, as well as the badly modelled chest and the position of the feet as compared to the entire body, all these details arouse the visitor's suspicions. And what are we to make of wine-red sleeves peeping out of the cloak, the sleeves being those of a long white robe with a kind of flower design? The kneeling angel's left hand is covered with a slip of his dalmatica. His amazingly hefty body, his strong and rather fat neck rising out of a stiff, standing collar and his sharp nose in a round face also strike us as very curious. The top of his head, seems to be lower than the top of his forehead and temples, both hidden by curls. The big toe of his left foot points forward in a silly manner and without touching the floor, whereas his right foot is



Fig. 32
Panel with the Annunciation and St. Agnes, formerly in the Gillot Collection, Paris.

disproportionately small. Koechlin, who only reproduced this group in his manual, said of it: «une Vierge au visage sans expression, au geste guindé, aux draperies sèches et de mouvement rebattu, et un ange disgracieux et trivial sous des beaux habits, tout cela ne sent guère l'inspiration personnelle» (A Virgin with an expressionless face, with a stilted gesture, with dull folds without any movement, and a very unelegant and stupid angel in lovely clothes, all this hardly suggests personal inspiration). Moreover, the leather case confirms that the group is a fake⁵¹.

The Florentine »Annunciation« (fig. 36)⁵², reproduced by Koechlin in 1906, together with the fake »Washing of the Disciples feet« at Tournai (fig. 8), and with the falsified group of figures at the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 7), but not shown in his 1924 manual, is very similar to the Langres group. Here too we notice the round face with the sharp nose, similar wings and the same kind of hair. Moreover, the necks of both Virgins are so strikingly similar that one can but feel convinced

that both groups are the work of one man, and this in spite of the fact that the attitude of the Bargello Virgin and the folds of her garments differ completely from those of the Langres figure, barring a few folds on the stomach. The Bargello Virgin gives me the impression of having been copied from an existing figure, yet, the too refined gesture of the left hand holding the book being



Fig. 33
The Annunciation, 7,5 x 4,8 cm., formerly in the Gillot Collection, Paris.

Fig. 34
Diptych with the Annunciation and Crucifixion, 6 x 8 cm., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

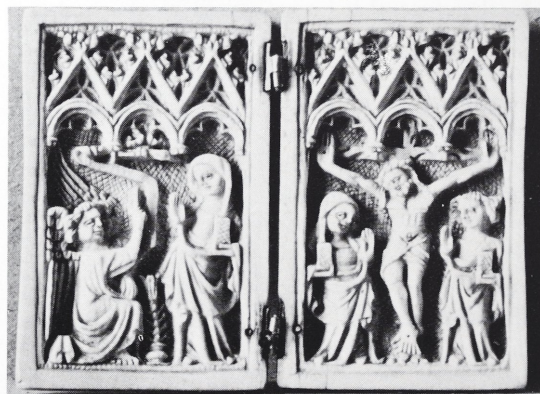




Fig. 35
*The Annunciation, h. 26 cm.,
 Musée de Saint-Didier,
 Langres.*

the carver's own design. Koechlin was struck by the similarity of the Langres angel's face to that of an angel in the »Annunciation« panel of the Gillot Collection (fig. 33)⁵³, as well as to the faces of the added figures of the Italian retable at the Musée de Cluny⁴³. The Florentine angel, however, shows a much closer affinity; this is obvious when studying closely the tight lower sleeve, the deep fold on the elbow and the half-raised hand.

Equally striking is the almost classic arrangement of the alb's folds and the manner in which it is gathered at the waist. The extended row of box pleats between the left and the right foot is to be found, on a smaller scale, in the angel's garments hanging from the left feet in the five »Annunciations«, respect-

ively at the Schnütgen Museum, two in the former Gillot Collection, one in Amsterdam (fig. 32, 33 and 34) and one in the Kofler-Trüniger Collection; also in the diptych at the British Museum discussed already⁵⁰.

We notice the standing collar of the Langres Gabriel also being worn by a St. Lawrence and a St. Stephen in a panel in the former M. Kann Collection, the authenticity of which had already been doubted by Koechlin⁵⁴; we also see this collar worn by a St. Lawrence in a panel displayed at the Basle Historisches Museum mounted on a 16th century box (fig. 37)⁵⁵. The collars worn by these saints are diaper-decorated like that of the Langres angel, whose collar, moreover, shows lozenge-shaped em-

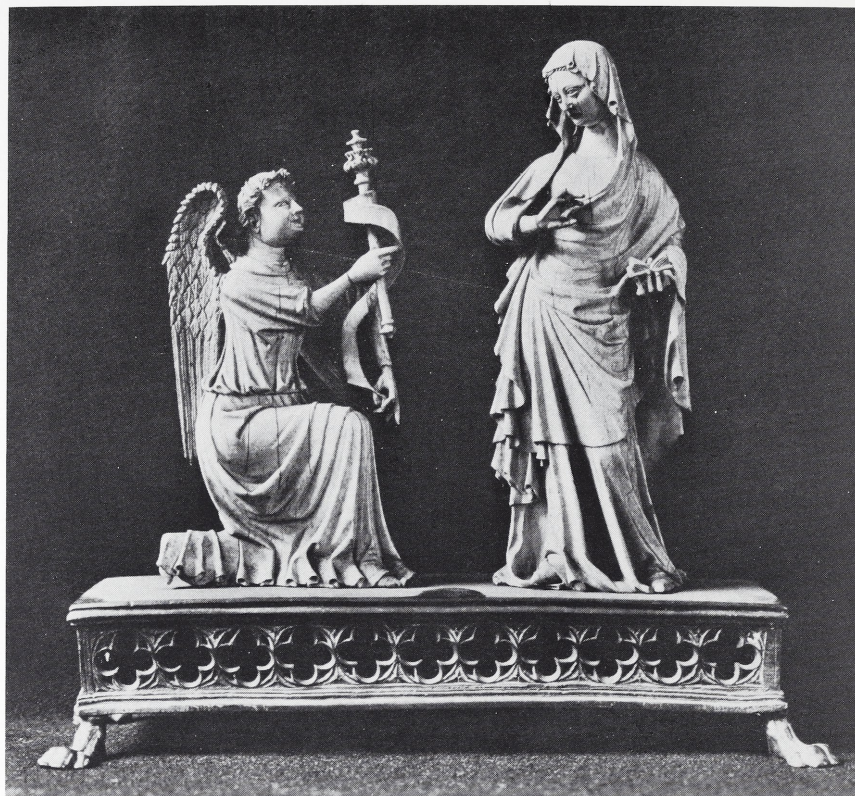


Fig. 36
The Annunciation,
Virgin, h. 18 cm.,
Angel, h. 13,7 cm.,
Museo Nazionale, Florence.

broidery, reminiscent of the agrafe worn by the »St. Catherine« of the Bargello book cover, and by the »Seated Virgin« at the V. & A. (fig. 19), as well as by the men in the British Museum group (fig. 13). Moreover, the face of the Florentine »St. Catherine« is very much like the face of the Archangel Gabriel at Langres; the Virgin's sullen little mouth is reminiscent of the mouths of the women in the British Museum group and of those at the Darmstadt Museum (fig. 10 and 15). The Bargello metal book cover with »St. Catherine« and »The Annunciation« at the same museum both came from the former Carrand Collection.

According to Koechlin, the metal base of the Florentine group is modern, whereas the wooden intarsia-decorated base of the Langres group reminds us of the frames of the two diptychs already discussed, viz. those at the V. & A. and at the National Gallery of Art in Washington (fig. 23 and 24). The wooden base has a centre foot the profiles of which do not correspond to the profiles of the corner pedestals, decorated with beads. Moreover, the manner in which the corner pedestals and the centre foot are joined to the base does not look right at all. One would have expected a regal work of art like the Langres »Annunciation« to have a

base carved in one piece instead of its being an inferior carpenter's job. In order to support my objections against the authenticity of this outstanding piece I would like to add the following: I feel convinced that the difference in style between the two »Annunciations« was deliberate, in spite of the fact that the details point in an unmistakable manner to their being the same man's work. A true Mediaeval artist of the period of the great French ivories would undoubtedly have created an intrinsically beautiful work of art which is spiritually alive; his workshop might have produced a weak imitation. A carver of a later period, having decided upon the same subject, would, of course, have been influenced by the spirit and conceptions of his own time and, consequently, would have worked in a style which would have been considered advanced in the days of the original works of this kind. Both »Annunciations« lack sensitivity and expression; the modelling is weak; yet, both show an elaborate artificiality which does fascinate... at first sight. Both works are meant to *épater le bourgeois!*

In spite of the objections raised by Koechlin against these two groups, he allowed himself and us to be led astray by his desire to recognize in these works the dawn of a new realism, still held captive



Fig. 37
Panel with a Crucifixion on the lid of a box containing a sun-dial and compasses, dated 1578, 7,6 x 4,5 cm., Historisches Museum, Basle.

in the traditions of the period. It would need an exceedingly intelligent and technically superior man, half artist, half forger, to succeed in bringing this off.

Yet another important work should be mentioned here although it has not been displayed since World War II: the harp at the Musée du Louvre about which Koechlin was in two minds in 1924; he described and illustrated this piece yet doubted its authenticity. Here, I merely wish to deal with one of the scenes shown on this harp: the »Massacre of the Innocents« on the elbow of the harp. The first detail to arouse our suspicions is the sword of the half-seated soldier facing Herod which seems to float behind him as a kind of attribute; the next thing to make us wonder is the absence of the murdered infant's mother. In the third place, the harp is rather crudely carved altogether. The diaper decoration of Herod's throne and the background entirely covered by lozenges enclosing stylized

leaves, the scallops edging the soldier's tunic and the facial expressions; in fact, the entire character of this scene supplies us with plenty of reasons for ascribing it to our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. Nevertheless, this work, no longer on display since World War II, has subsequently been described and reproduced in four different publications as a genuine Mediaeval work of art, in the most recent one even with a colour plate⁵⁶.

The Art Institute of Chicago still displays, as its one and only carving in ivory, a relief described as »Northern Italy, late 14th century« (fig. 38). This work which shows all the characteristics of our Master forger also reveals a conspicuous affinity to »The Life of St. Agnes« in the polyptych already condemned by Koechlin¹³.

A triptych in the reserves of the British Museum, showing a »Crucifixion« in the centre panel, in the left wing St. John the Baptist and in the right wing St. Catherine standing on the Emperor Maxentius, is mainly interesting because of its lozenge-decorated backgrounds, inside as well as outside (fig. 39 and 40)⁵⁷. The St. John of the »Crucifixion« shows great affinity to the one of the »Crucifixion« in a panel acquired for the Bayerische National Museum at München in 1811⁵⁸; this figure is also akin to the St. John in the diptych with the intarsia frame at the V. & A. (fig. 23); the Emperor Maxentius, being

Fig. 38
The Life of St. Agnes (?), h. 6,5 cm., (by courtesy of) The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.



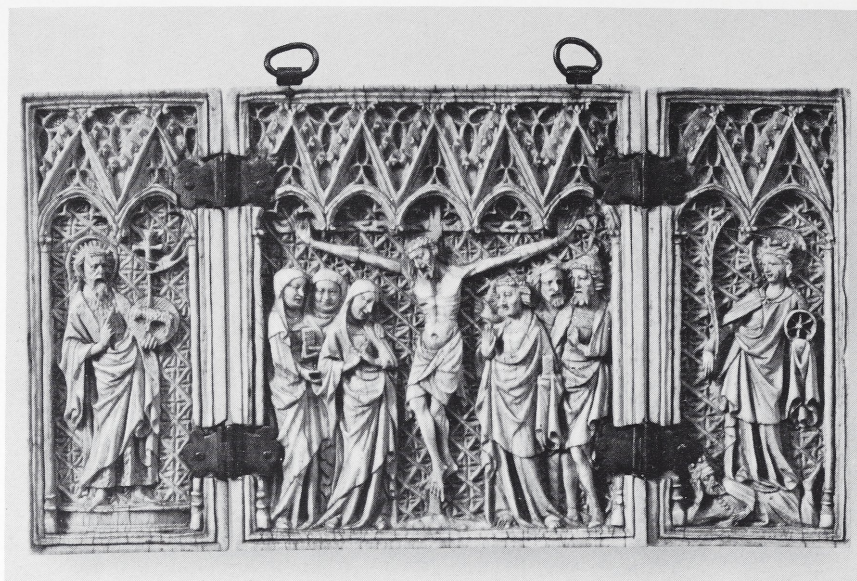


Fig. 39
*Triptych with a Crucifixion,
 St. John the Baptist and
 St. Catherine, 8 x 14 cm.,
 British Museum, London.*

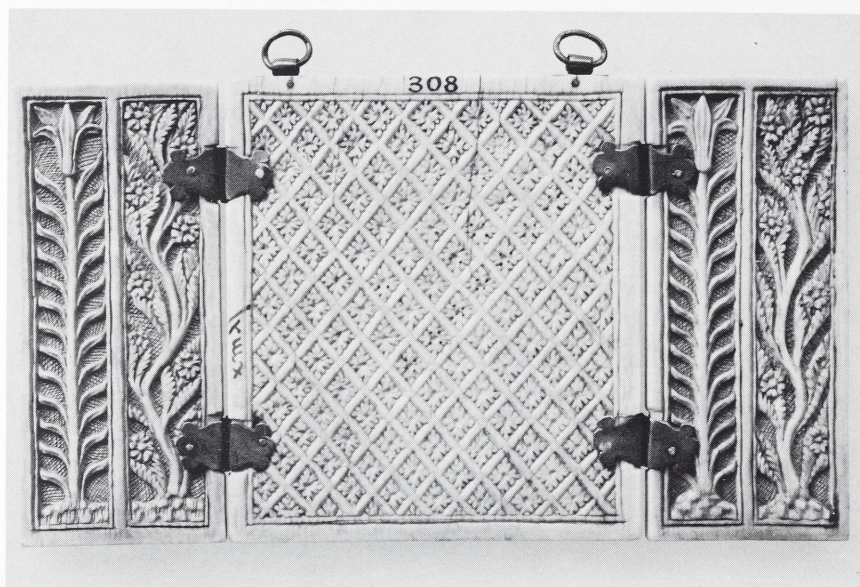


Fig. 40
Figure 39 seen from the back.

trampled upon by St. Catherine wearing the agrafe, reminds us at once of the recumbent Emperor at the Musée de Cluny (fig. 18) and of the corresponding figure at the Bargello; this is especially striking while handling the work in question when it reveals an almost identical expression. The all-over decorated back with stylized leaves in all the lozenges (fig. 40) should be compared to the background of Herod and the soldier in the scene on the harp already mentioned; also to that of the diptych, one leaf of which is now in the Kofler-Truniger Collection, the other leaf being at the Mayer van den Bergh Museum at Antwerp (fig. 31). If one turns

either of these leaves ninety degrees one can see that the decoration is practically identical⁵⁹. The unusual application of the flowers and leaves on the backs of the wings of the triptych is reminiscent of the style of William Morris.

I regret also having to »dethrone« the head of a slightly cross-eyed »English King« with a cowl (!) (fig. 41), displayed at the British Museum and considered by Koechlin to be a genuine 14th-century work⁶⁰. I feel sure that his head too was made by our friend, *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. Another king's head, kindred as to style and



Fig. 41
Head of an English King, h. ca. 6 cm., British Museum, London.

character, can be found in a relief panel with saints in the reserves of the same museum. Dalton already had felt doubtful as to its authenticity. The head of the English King should be compared to a king's head on this ivory panel, where it is shown looking over a city gate⁶¹; the resemblance refers especially to the wavy hair. To me, both have the same character. The figures of St. Margaret, St. Agnes (wearing the agrafe) and St. George shown in this panel are repeated in several works by our master forger⁶².

Subsequent to the »Seated Virgin« and the casket (fig. 20 and 28) having been removed from the Louvre show cases, and subsequent to the other ivories in the reserves, including the harp, also having been attributed to our forger, my esteemed colleague, M. Hubert Landais, keeper at this museum, decided to undertake yet another, very careful examination of all the Mediaeval ivories in his collection⁶³. During my second visit to the Louvre, about a year after the first, he showed me three figures he had in his office: a »Female Martyr«, a »Seated Virgin feeding the Child« and a »Seated Female Saint« (fig. 42, 43 and 44). I had

already noticed these figures before when they were still displayed in one of the galleries⁶⁴). This time, however, M. Landais considered that these three figures could not possibly be Mediaeval because of their style and modelling, and especially because of the hair hanging down their backs in V-shape in all three cases. He suggested that these figures might also belong to »l'oeuvre de ton maître«. I had first seen and admired the »Martyr« and the »Virgin feeding the Child« at an exhibition in Vienna in 1962⁶⁵ and I had never doubted their authenticity. The idea that these works too, in the words of an English colleague, »would now have to be banished to our little limbo of forgeries« was rather painful to me.

Fig. 42
A Holy Martyr, h. 21 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris.

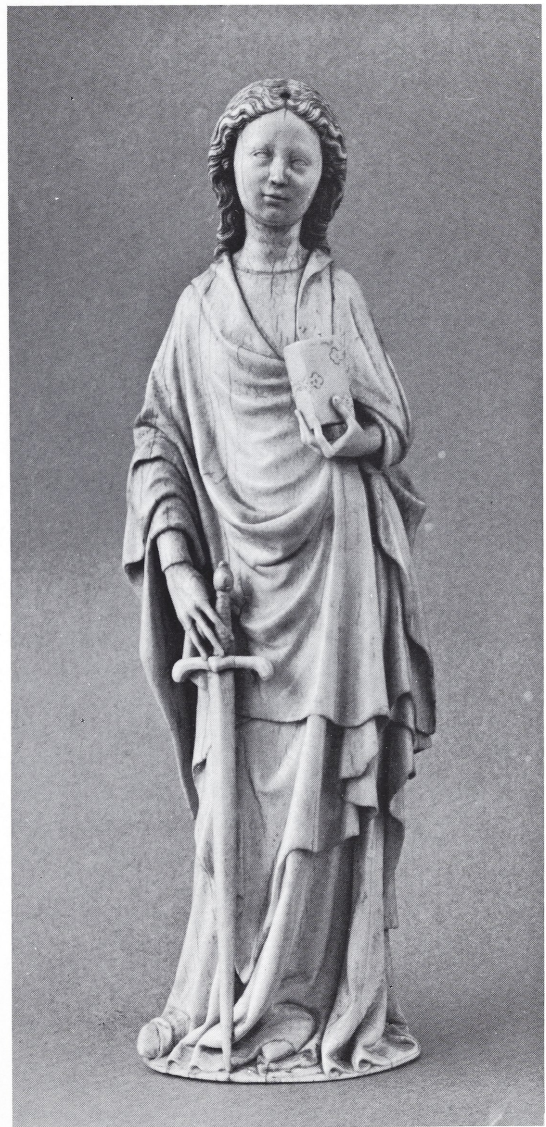




Fig. 43
The Virgin feeding the Child, h. 32 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris.

However, after a close study of these figures it was indeed obvious that they could not be Mediaeval. The »Female Martyr« is altogether expressionless in spite of the exceedingly well and delicately carved head; the left hand holding the book is just not integrated in the lines and the movement of the figure in its entirety; it is rather reminiscent of the hand holding the book of the Langres Virgin; moreover, the folds of the draperies just below the hand seem to come from nowhere. It is the entire composition's lack of entity which renders this figure so expressionless, again, in spite of the excellent craftsmanship.

The »Seated Virgin feeding the Child« does not seem really alive either and this lifelessness is even more striking in the figure of the »Seated Saint«.

Apart from the coincidence of the V-shaped hair hanging down the backs, there is a striking affinity between the faces of both seated figures as well as between the manner in which both cloaks are held together with the agrafe, in each case showing a tiny triangle of the robe underneath. In addition, both these figures have eyes and lower eyelids so bulbous as to suggest semi-circles having been drawn; this effect corresponds with a similar effect produced by the Virgins at the Louvre and at the V. & A. (fig. 20 and 19) as well as by the »St. Catherine« at the Musée de Cluny. Here too, we notice again the big and squarish knees jutting out too massively, in the manner we also noticed in the group of Apostles at Baltimore (fig. 14). In view of the considerable range of our master's subjects and no less considering the quality of the works discussed here, these three ivories may well belong to »l'oeuvre de mon maître«.

Fig. 44
A Holy Woman, h. 29 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris.



The stylistic characteristics with regard to the three ivories mentioned above also apply to a »Seated Virgin feeding the Child« displayed at the British Museum⁶⁶. The manner in which eyes and hair have been modelled, the massive knees and the peculiar folds of the draperies over the horizontal hem of the cloak just below the knees, as well as the baggy folds between the knees all point to a common origin. Mr. G. H. Tait, F.S.A., Keeper of the British and Mediaeval Antiquities at the British Museum, had already expressed his doubts as to the authenticity of this work. At the time, I failed to recognize the hand of »my« master forger but since my last visit to the Louvre I feel inclined to confirm his suspicions.

Our master forger selected a red velvet background for a pithy diptych with pierced, arched, and nicely gilded ivory leaves. To complete this work he chose a wooden frame, painted dark and decorated with gilded tendrils. This diptych was sold at Christie's in 1898, described and illustrated in the catalogue as no. 268, and it is now openly displayed at Luton Hoo. It reveals several of the characteristics already enumerated in the course of this article, among them the agrafe. Yet, the quality of this neo-Gothic work certainly is good enough to show it as such.

The Luton Hoo collection also contains a panel with »The demi-figure of Christ in the sepulchre between two angels«, each angel wearing the agrafe. An inscription in Gothic lettering is carved in the sepulchre's front. This panel formerly formed part of the Homberg Collection and Koechlin illustrated it in his 1924 edition next to a circular plaque carved in relief showing »The demi-figures of the Virgin and St. John flanked by angels«. This work is now in the reserves of the Metropolitan Museum⁶⁷. Both works clearly show the stylistic idiosyncrasies of our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. The inscription in the panel of the »Demi-figure of Christ in the Sepulchre« just mentioned also shows a marked affinity to the legend in a panel with a »Mercy-Seat«, formerly in the Martin le Roy Collection, described by Koechlin in 1906⁶⁸. This panel certainly is the work of the same carver who is also responsible for two more works representing the same subject, one at the V. & A. and one at the Museo Nazionale in Florence⁶⁹, as well as for a pierced panel with a »Mercy-Seat with two angels« at the British Museum⁷⁰. In this panel one of the angels is seen holding the three nails in a manner similar to the angel next to Christ in the Luton Hoo panel.

Two more works by our »Master« are on display at the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford: a pierced ivory, »The Coronation of the Virgin«, mounted on a metal medallion with a blue enamel frame; here, Christ is seen wearing the typical agrafe⁷¹. The second is a small triptych showing »The Resurrection, St. Michael (but not Mary Magdalene), St. Peter and St. Paul, the Crucifixion, the Betrayal of Christ etc. Both works are indicated as »French, XVth century«. Here too we notice the agrafe being worn by several figures, a crowned St. Michael as well as several more stylistic details typical of our »Master«.

Finally, I would like to mention a few more ivories made by him, recently illustrated in several sales catalogues: a standing figure of St. Andrews was first sold at Sotheby's on the 26th of June, 1961 (no: 88), and again on the 9th of April, 1962 (no: 86); a diptych with a »Crucifixion« and a »Coronation of the Virgin« sold at Christie's on the 28th of November, 1962 (no: 86); a diptych with four scenes sold at Christie's on the 5th of December, 1966 (no: 108); fifteen pierced scenes for a casket, sold at Christie's on the 17th of May, 1968 (no: 54).

Altogether, at least one hundred and ten works can be ascribed to *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* and his workshop. I feel sure that several more may yet be discovered in private collections and in various museums⁷².

While tracing the works of my master forger, I came upon two more small categories of so called Mediaeval ivories which differ stylistically from his oeuvre. Only a few of the works by both craftsmen are displayed in various museums. I intend to restrict myself here to the work of these three forgers although there are many more interesting fakes made by others and still awaiting description. The second forger I wish to mention here I have called *The Master of the forgeries of elegant figures*. The most interesting specimen of this man's work is displayed at the British Museum. It is a diptych with a gilded brass frame showing »The Lives of the Virgin and Christ« (fig. 45)⁷³. The architectural ornaments are definitely neo-Gothic, consequently, these works must have been made during the Romantic Era. At the bottom of the left leaf a wide Christ, while left, curiously separated from the main group, we see two Kings standing under a separate arch and, right, Joseph seated under an-arched brace, embodying two semi-circular arches, forms a canopy below which we find the birth of

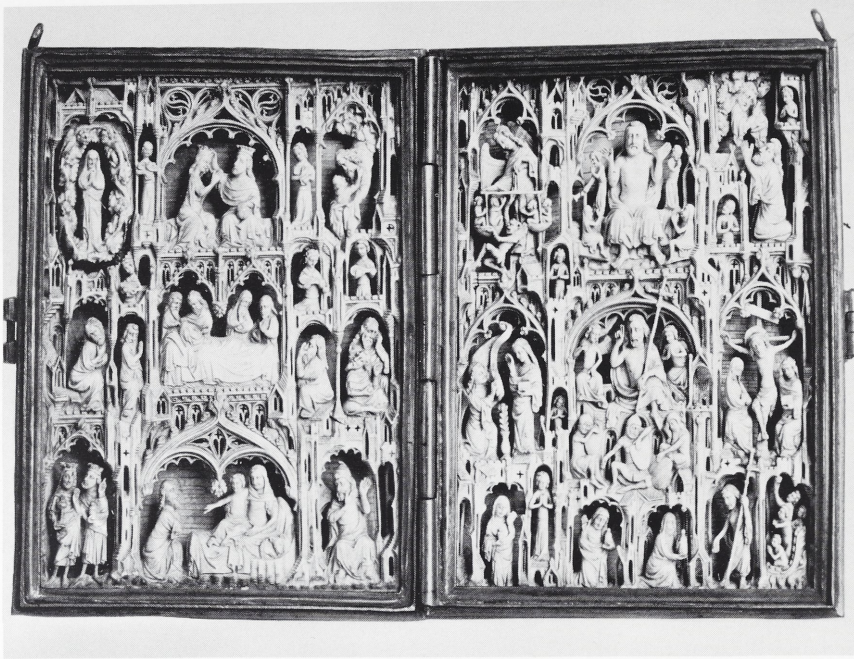


Fig. 45
*Diptych with the Lives
of the Virgin and Christ,*
10,5 × 7 cm.,
British Museum, London.

other single arch. In the centre and top rows of figures this strange separation is repeated: the »Death of the Virgin« in the centre including four Apostles is separated from two Apostles each side, every single Apostle of these four in his own niche. In the top corner, right, we see Christ diving from the clouds about to carry the Virgin's soul back to heaven, this scene looking rather like an act on the flying trapeze. It isn't necessary to describe all the naive details but I do want to say a little more about the architectural details in order to be able to

compare these with similar details in ivories yet to be discussed.

In my opinion, the arched braces are far too wide to be genuinely Gothic; the *mouchettes* are not truly Gothic either, nor have they been fitted in the traceries in the correct manner. Big carved bosses look more like cabbages than like flowers and the crockets suggest ears of corn. The many buttresses and gables with stairs and roofs, the crenellated parapets and the numerous extremely narrow and

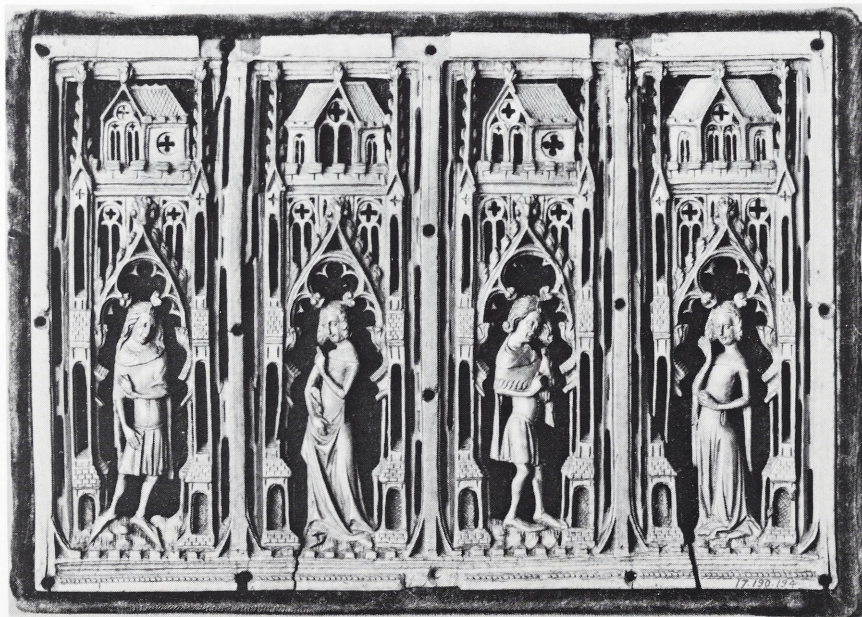
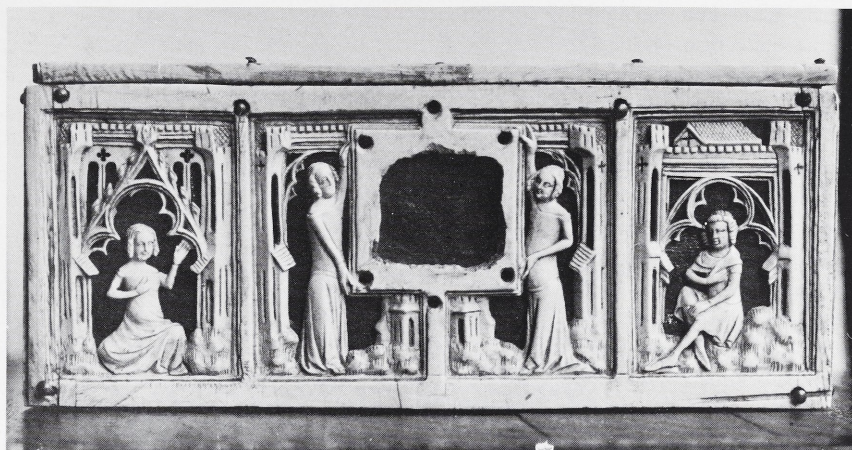


Fig. 46
*Details of a casket
with profane figures,*
7,7 × 12,6 cm.,
*The Metropolitan Museum
of Art, New York.*

Fig. 47
 Plaque of a casket
 with profane figures,
 5,4 × 12,5 cm.,
 Museo Nazionale, Florence.



very tall windows form a very strange decorative background for the groups and single figures. We recognize the same details in a slightly larger and similar diptych, displayed at the Metropolitan Museum as »German or Flemish, 15th century«⁷⁴. Apart from the architectural details mentioned above, the facial expressions of the figures in both diptychs show a distinct affinity which a comparative study of the Josephs in both works will confirm. Yet, I do not wish to look upon the British Museum diptych discussed in detail just now as of no value: this work has a certain naive charm. It would look quite at home at Strawberry Hill and I am not at all sure that it was ever meant to be a forgery.

Similar ornamental details can be found in the so-called »Fragments with profane figures« of a casket, some panels of which are displayed at the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 46), others at the V. & A. and at the Museo Nazionale in Florence (fig. 47)⁷⁵. It had already been suggested previously that the style of these fragments showed a similarity to that of the two diptychs mentioned above and that their Mediaeval origin was doubtful. Be that as it may, I must protest against their now being displayed as »English or Franco-Flemish of the late 14th or early 15th century«.

The pierced panel of »Two Lovers« is also the work of the same carver. This work was acquired for the

Fig. 48
 Diptych with St. Margaret
 and Donor, and with
 The Virgin and Donor,
 7,8 × 11 cm.,
 Museum Mayer
 van den Bergh, Antwerp.



Berlin Kunstkammer in 1835 and later was added to the collection of the Staatliche Museen in this town. Both figures are slightly taller but they unmistakably show the same characteristics⁷⁶.

»The Murder of St. Thomas of Canterbury« in the Koffer-Truniger Collection should also be added to this second master's work. Chaplain Grim's face shows the same bathos we have already seen in faces in the other works by this carver. Here too we find a diving Christ similar to the one already described. In this case, however, Christ is diving in vain since two angels have already got hold of St. Thomas's soul⁷⁷. Next, a small diptych displayed at the Mayer van den Bergh Museum (fig. 48) also reveals the characteristics of *The Master of the Forgeries of Elegant Figures*, as does a pierced ivory at the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, »The Entombment«, displayed as »English, second quarter of the 14th century«.

The third forger I would like to call *The Master of the Bearded Men Forgeries* although, so far, I have merely seen three of his works. The first is a wooden casket at the Walters Art Gallery, decorated with pierced ivory panels (fig. 49). This casket is described in a most detailed manner in the exhibition catalogue of 1962 as »English of the 2nd quarter of the 15th century«; the description emphasizes the fact that the iconography is unusual⁷⁸. I was, therefore, very surprised to read about this »Mediaeval« piece that the metal lock is flanked by »two varlets in close-fitting jerkins hold dogs on leash«! Both

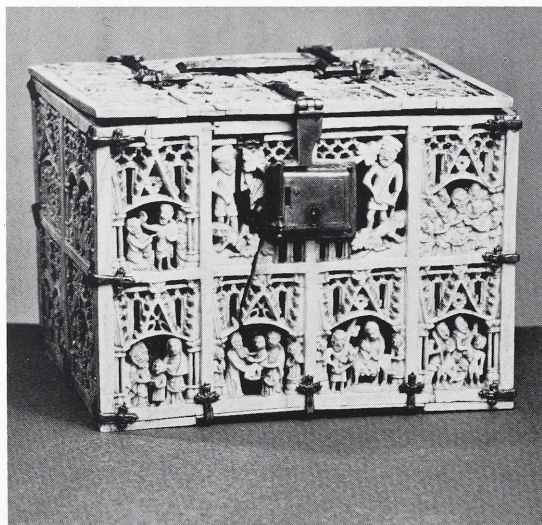
these guards, one of whom is carrying a mace, wear early 16th-century *bonnets*, whereas the tightly buttoned tunics with low belts could, at the latest, be ascribed to the 1st quarter of the 15th century. Two two-tier pierced panels, obviously meant to suggest that they belonged together, are, without the slightest doubt, also the work of the same carver. These are now in the reserves of the Musée de Cluny and only one is reproduced here (fig. 50). Both have been illustrated by Koechlin and described by him with the following remark: »d'un ouvrier de la plus extrême maladresse; un faussaire se fut montré plus habile et on sent ici la touche du XV^{me} siècle«⁷⁹ (the work of the clumsiest possible workman; a forger would have done this much better; one discerns in this work the touch of the 15th century). Corresponding costume details as well as the men's bearded faces, and the horizontal bar or cable linking the finials of the arches all point to the maker of the Baltimore casket panels. A smaller specimen, similar to the Cluny panels, is displayed at the Bischöfliche Museum at Trier.

SUMMARY

Several dates point to the fact that *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* must have lived and worked in the last quarter of the 18th and in the first half of the 19th century: the Louvre casket made its first appearance there in 1806 and this is by no means the Master's best work (fig. 28); the group, »St. John with two Jews«, was acquired by the Lyons museum in 1810 (fig. 6); the panel with a Crucifixion, acquired for the Munich Museum in 1811, may well have been in the Nuremberg Collection prior to 1803; the »Enthroned Virgin« was acquired by the Musée du Louvre in 1828 (fig. 20); the pierced Antwerp panel was bought at the Debruge Duménil sale in 1839 (fig. 21), and the Washington diptych (fig. 24) was illustrated that same year in an engraving. Our carver, therefore, may well have set out on his career as a forger towards the end of the 18th century. It is remarkable that his two least successful works are also the earliest known so far. The Berlin carving in ivory by *The Master of the Forgeries of Elegant Figures* was already in the Kunstkammer Collection in 1835.

We know that *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* had a most inventive spirit, hence the wide variety of his subjects. The fact that so many of his works have been displayed continuously for a hundred and fifty years shows that his ivories are both fascinating and attractive. Another striking feature of this man's work is his obvious preference for pierced

Fig. 49
Casket, 10,2 × 13,4 × 11,2 cm., The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.



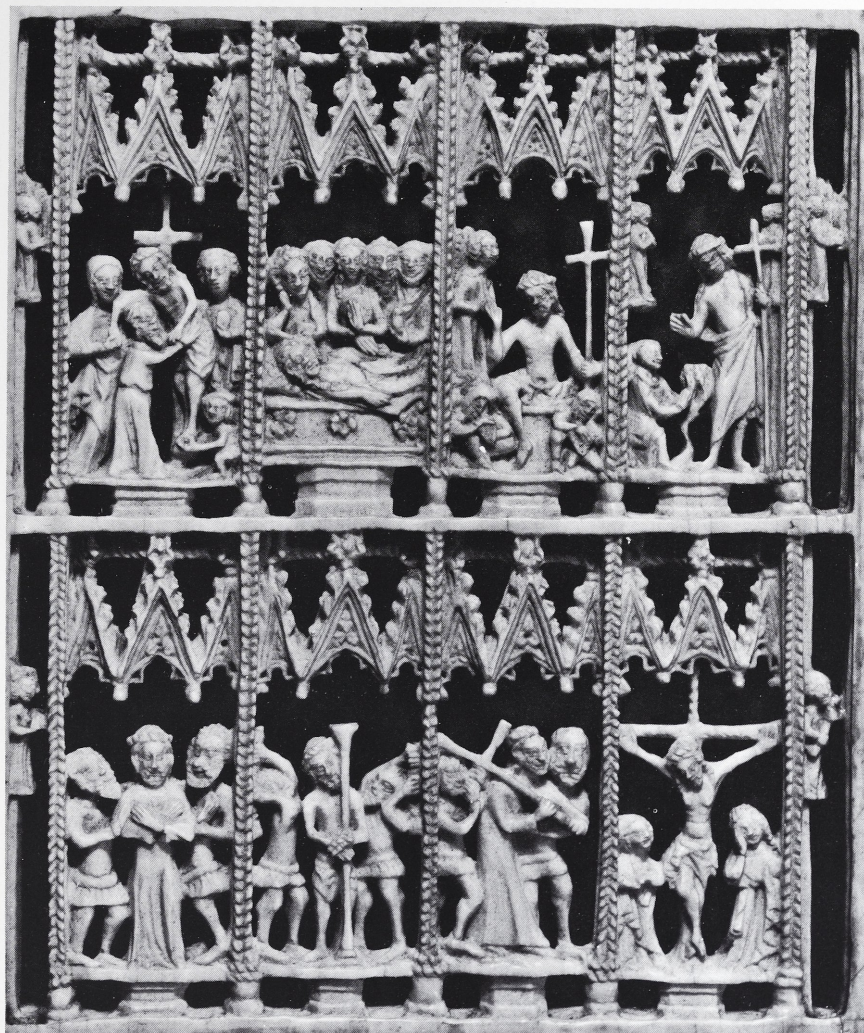


Fig. 50
The Life of Christ,
 12,4 × 10,3 cm.,
 Musée de Cluny, Paris.

ivories, a technique rarely used in the Middle Ages. This preference may have developed his own technique and skills in a particular manner; he may have had a mechanically driven spiral drill; this may also apply to his workshop and both the other forgers. In any case, our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries* must have studied Mediaeval carvings in ivory most meticulously; probably he began his career by restoring Mediaeval ivories. The very inventiveness of his spirit led him astray iconographically. Moreover, he obviously never experienced the slightest religious faith or feeling, consequently, he never felt any real love for or understanding of the subjects on which he worked. In this respect he is entirely different from the maker of the lovely neo-Gothic, polychromed, wooden figures, probably made at Cologne in the nineteenth century, and about which P. Bloch's essay was previously published in this magazine⁸⁰. Our master forger was, of course, imbued with the

spirit of his own time. He supplied Gothic works to the new generation of collectors around 1800 and in the first decades of the nineteenth century. These collectors were much more interested in Gothic forms than in the spiritual inspiration radiating from true Mediaeval works of art.

In addition, our master knew how to present his ivories to the best advantage with the aid of polychromy and gilding, with leather cases and with frames made of various materials. We can, consequently, only prove that he was a forger on aesthetic grounds (such as the false bathos frequently to be noticed in his works) and by the lack of coherence between the figures in groups such as those in Amsterdam, Berlin, London, Baltimore, etc., in spite of the fact that all these groups represent a scene, or part of a scene, of the Passion of Christ.

We can also recognize him as a forger by the rather large number of mutilated pieces as well as by the

evidence of his insufficient iconographic knowledge. Many male and female saints depicted in his carvings, for instance, are seen wearing an agrafe mainly in the shape of a rosette, contrary to Mediaeval custom which merely allowed the Virgin to wear an agrafe in the shape of a pectoral, and in exceptional cases only at that.

Authentic Mediaeval nimbuses with grooves simply do not exist. Mediaeval French ivories usually show the Archangel Gabriel standing, whereas in the fakes discussed he is always shown in a kneeling posture. Also, it is most unusual to show St. Catherine seated on a throne (fig. 17) and it is even more unusual to place her between the standing figures of St. Peter and St. Paul.

I do not know a single genuine Mediaeval ivory showing Christ holding the orb in His left hand and a smallish cross in His right hand (fig. 22).

Iconographic etiquette certainly never would have allowed St. Michael to turn his back to Christ in a »Coronation of the Virgin«, nor to show St. Michael being taller than Christ, nor to allow the archangel to wear a crown (fig. 29). For the same reason, St. Agnes, in an »Annunciation«, should never stand behind the Virgin (fig. 32).

To find two of the six men present at an »Entombment« (former Carmichael Collection) carrying a jar of ointment aroused my suspicions to the highest degree³⁸. Neither can I accept as genuine the sequence in which the saints have been placed on the Louvre casket (fig. 28) which, moreover, shows 14th-century as well as 15th-century details; in this particular instance St. Peter should have been placed according to his importance.

No philologist could accept as truly Mediaeval the legends in the two pierced Lyons panels (fig. 16), or the one in the Bargello book cover with St. Catherine.

The fact that the falsified ivories discussed here do show a style all their own, viz. deviating from the style of genuine Mediaeval French ivories, led

many people to mistake them for English, Italian or Flemish carvings. Above all, the facial expressions, especially those of the figures, reveal the maker as an imposter.

Unfortunately, I have not succeeded in tracing the identity or the whereabouts of the workshop of our *Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*. Most likely he was French and worked in France; as far as we know, his earliest known works were acquired by museums in Paris and Lyons⁸¹. Any additional detailed comment regarding the other two forgers seems unnecessary.

In the course of my examination of the works by these three forgers, I sometimes discovered details which seemed to point to this or that work being genuine, such as, for instance, the scalloped borders of some tunics, usually ascribed to Italian ivories. Such scalloped borders are found in works made by members of the Embriachi family as well as in reliefs carved in combs or mirror cases⁸². Similar scallops are also found in pierced ivories at the Vatican Museum and the British Museum⁸³.

Repeated visits and a close study were required before I was sufficiently convinced myself to declare several of the ivories discussed here to be fakes. It was impossible to come to a decisive conclusion, for instance, after one single visit to the Vatican Museum; I am, therefore, not absolutely certain whether the pierced panels displayed there are genuine. It is virtually impossible to judge ivories only from photographs or by seeing them in show cases from a certain distance.

By the time this essay will have appeared in print many of my colleagues with whom I have repeatedly discussed the subject dealt with here, may consider this publication merely to be raking up old stories. Yet I hope that this article may lead to an entirely new and critical assessment, and to a re-classification according to style, of the bulk of French ivories to which many have been added since Koechlin's days. Koechlin spent twenty years doing just this; unfortunately, I cannot hope to be given sufficient time to do likewise⁸⁴.

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- 1966 TARDY, *Les Ivoires*, Paris.
- 1966 CARRA, M., *Gli avori in occidente*, Milan.

NOTES:

- ¹ Bought from an Amsterdam art dealer in 1898. *Catalogus van Beeldhouwwerken in het Nederlandsche Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst*, Amsterdam, 1904; omitted from the 1915 edition.
- ² The dates following the names of the authors mentioned refer to the chronological bibliography preceding these notes.
- ³ *Quelques ateliers d'ivoiriers français*, p. 61, fig. pp. 49 and 61.
- ⁴ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, Vol. I, pp. 306–308.
- ⁵ Cf. *Darcel*, 1890, no: 75.
- ⁶ Cf. *Demmler*, 1923, p. 43, nos: J.1111, J.1112 and MV.126, pl. 49. »The Betrayal«, in the former Heckscher Collection in Vienna, later in the Campe Collection at Hamburg: cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 307: »La tentation de Judas de l'ancienne collection Heckscher, où le prêtre semble serrer la main du traître plutôt que lui remettre la bourse«! The new management may well have consigned these three groups to the reserves.
- ⁷ *Darcel*, 1890, no: 75.
- ⁸ Cf. *The List Collection*, Magdeburg, Berlin, Lange 28–30 III, 1939, no: 178, pl. 19, mentioned as »Teilstück eines Elfenbeinaltars, weitere Stücke des Retabels im British Museum, in Tournai, Lyon und Berlin«; cf. also *Ausstellungskatalog Grosse Kunst des Mittelalters aus Privatbesitz*, Cologne, 1960, no: 30.
- ⁹ This was acquired from the Cabinet Lambert in 1850.
- ¹⁰ »Christ on the Palm Sunday Ass« and »Christ before Pilate«, not mentioned by *Koechlin*, are the work of the same carver; cf. *R. Berliner, Über einige Kleinplastiken*, Belvedere 9, II (1930), p. 103, fig. 71; here, both are considered to be fakes. *Berliner* never mentioned in which museum at Lyons they were to be found. I am still rather vague as to the whereabouts of these ivories.
- ¹¹ Probably from the Debruge Duménil Collection in Paris. M. Debruge Duménil died in 1839. Cf. *Labarte*, 1847, no: 165: »Jésus lavant les pieds à ses disciples. Groupe de six personnages, découpé et appliqué sur fond d'ébène«. It was impossible to ascertain which of the Tournai museums possessed this group before World War II. The Library of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris where all *Koechlin's* photographic documents are kept, also has a photograph of another »Washing of the Disciples's feet«. Recently one was at a London art dealer's, maybe the one of *Koechlin's* photograph? Blocks and prints of *Koechlin's* photographs can be examined at the Archives Photographiques in Paris.
- ¹² Cf. *J. Destrée*, 1902, no: 26 with fig.; *Ad. Jansen, Christelijke Kunst*, Brussels, 1962, no: 289, fig. 271.

- ¹³ Cf. *Maskell*, 1875. On p. 64 he shows two woodcuts after two scenes of the polyptych devoted to the »Life of St. Agnes« from the former Meyrick Collection. This polyptych is mentioned in *Koechlin's* 1924 manual, p. 306, note 1, as having been in the former Spitzer Collection as no: 76, later in the former Campe Collection and subsequently in the Wernher Collection at Luton Hoo (Bedfordshire); it was sold at Christie's on the 21st of November, 1966, cat. no: 250 (the work can not be recognised from the catalogue's vague description). As to the diptych of Freiherr Albert von Oppenheim, cf. *Exposition rétrospective de l'art français, Petit Palais*, Paris, 1900, also *Kunsthistorische Ausstellung*, Düsseldorf, 1902, cat. no: 1215, pl. LXXX (in the second edition of the catalogue as no: 1217 with fig.); *Molinier, La Collection du Baron Albert Oppenheim*, Paris, 1904, no: 78, pl. LVI.
- ¹⁴ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 308, bottom of page.
- ¹⁵ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 308, no: 846 bis; *Longhurst*, 1929, p. 33, no: 211–1867.
- ¹⁶ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 308, no: 846 ter.
- ¹⁷ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, nos: 341–342 and pl. LXXVIII; *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 308, nos: 846 quater and 846 quinter.
- ¹⁸ This refers to information kindly given to me by the director, Mme M. Rocher-Jauneau. As to the »Three Jews«, cf. *Archives Photographiques*, Paris, block no: BAOA 410.
- ¹⁹ Exhibition Catalogue *International Style, The Arts in Europe around 1400*, Baltimore, 1962, cat. no: 117, pl. XCIV.
- ²⁰ This refers to information given to me by the museum of the Hessische Landesmuseum. This ivory is displayed as »English, 2nd half 14th century«. Von Hüpsch (1730–1805) was a Cologne collector who had some Roman ivories copied; cf. the important article by H. Schnitzler, *Ada-Elfenbeine des Barons von Hüpsch, Festschrift Herbert von Einem*, Berlin, 1965, pp. 222 et seq. There is a more complete copy of the two female saints, made of plaster of Paris, at the Musée Historique at Orleans; cf. *Archives Photographiques*, block no: BAOA 439. The »Three Maries« at Darmstadt and a similar group in the Germanische Museum at Nürnberg which I take to be fakes, are akin to the groups just mentioned. Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 745, pl. CXXIII and H. Stafski, *Die Bildwerke in Stein, Holz, Ton und Elfenbein bis zum Jahre 1450, Die Mittelalterlichen Bildwerke*, Vol. I, 1965, no: 227. No: 216 also shows stylistic idiosyncrasies similar to those of *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*, such as the costume of the man furthest to the right in »The Crucifixion« and who is also seen wearing a cap or hat with a scalloped rim.
- ²¹ This was acquired from the Cabinet Lambert in 1850; cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 862, pl. CLVI.
- ²² Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, pp. 307–308; for the illustration cf. note 13.
- ²³ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 312, pl. LXXII. Here too we find a scalloped cap, a buttoned tunic, the familiar book, swathed columns and a very non-Gothic Corpus Christi; moreover, the thieves are bound to the Cross with bands across their chests (these details are supposed to have been the result of restoration).
- ²⁴ Cf. Exhibition Catalogue, Baltimore, 1962, cat. no: 120, pl. XCIV, described as »Milan?, ca. 1400«.
- ²⁵ Cf. Exhibition Catalogue *Europäische Kunst um 1400*, Vienna, 1962, cat. no: 358; *Molinier*, 1896-a, fig. p. 188; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 712, pl. CXVII. St. Catherine and the Emperor Maxentius show a noticeable affinity to the corresponding figures in a triptych in the British Museum reserves, cf. *Dalton*, no: 308 with fig.
- ²⁶ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 713; also *Les Arts*, August 1904, no: 32, p. 27 with fig. next to another fake which is also illustrated; *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. IV, 1958, *Elfenbein*, fig. 13, described as »Burgundy, 14th century«. A seated St. Catherine at the Louvre, without a throne but with the wheel between her right hand and knee, should be attributed to »our Master« because of the agrafe and the folds of the draperies, etc.; *Molinier*, 1896-b, no: 115.
- ²⁷ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 693, pl. CXII; *Longhurst*, 1929, p. 31, no: 204–1867, pl. XXIX.
- ²⁸ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 703; pl. CXV *Longhurst* 1929, p. 31, no: 201–1867 XXIX; and *Europäische Kunst um 1400*, Vienna, 1962, no: 359.
- ²⁹ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 704; also cf. *Archives Photographiques*, Paris, block no: BAOA 696.
- ³⁰ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 705; also reproduced in *Les Arts*, November, 1906, p. 31, no: 59.
- ³¹ Cf. *Molinier*, 1896-a, p. 188 with fig; *ibid.* 1896-b, no: 114 with fig.; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 708, pl. CXIV; and *Grodecki*, 1947, p. 103. The throne was illustrated by E. E. Viollet-le-Duc in *Dictionnaire raisonné du Mobilier français*, etc, Vol. I, Paris, 1858, pp. 285–286, fig. 4.
- ³² Cf. *J. de Coo, Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1965, no: 190; a much coarser specimen is reproduced by *Tardy* in 1966, p. 264, and described as a fake. This author made use of *Koechlin's* photographs, classified as »faux« in a special section of his photographs in the *Archives Photographiques* in Paris.
- ³³ In carvings in wood and stone, and in paintings, St. John's attribute generally is a chalice or a book. In this case, as a single and rather taller figure, a chalice might have been expected. In ivories, however, St. John is never shown with a chalice but in scenes of »The Death of the Virgin« and of »The Resurrection«, he frequently holds a palm branch.
- ³⁴ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 859, pl. CLV; *Longhurst*, 1926, p. 44; *ibid.* 1929, pp. 36–37, no: 213–1865, pl. XXXIV; and *Beigbeder*, 1965, colour fig. 49.
- ³⁵ Cf. *Pelka*, 1920, fig. 132–133; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 860; and *Longhurst*, 1929, p. 37, no: A 553–1910, pl. XXXV. During the early stage of my studies of ivory carvings. Mr. John Beckwith told me that he doubted the authenticity of this diptych. This drew my attention to a work the authenticity of which I would never have suspected before. Neither *Koechlin* nor *Longhurst* mention the leather case which, together with the diptych, used to be in the Spitzer Collection. The case, however, is reproduced by *G. Gall* in his *Leder im Europäischen Kunsthandwerk*, 1965, p. 106, fig. 76. Gall obviously had never seen a similar case or heard of one like this made for another carving in ivory, an »Annunciation« at the Musée de St.-Didier at Langres. Moreover, Gall calls the work a triptych instead of a diptych, gives 56 cm instead of 5,6 cm and, in his otherwise important work, includes an illustration of this fake. More about this leather case in note 51.
- ³⁶ Cf. Christie's catalogue of the 1st of July, 1912, no: 81; also *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 861. It is strange that *Koechlin* illustrated neither of these important diptychs in intarsia frames in his 1924 manual.
- ³⁷ Cf. *Ed. du Sommerard, Les Arts du Moyen Age*, 1848, album, Vme série, no: 15.
- ³⁸ »Lovely« says my first note in the catalogue when I first saw these plaques at the V. & A.; they appear in the 1929 catalogue on p. 36 as no: 366–1871, pl. XXXVI. Cf. also *Pelka*, 1920, fig. 131; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 858, pl. CLIV; and *Longhurst*, 1929, no: 366–1871, pl. XXXVI; also cf. Christie's catalogue of the Gibson-Carmichael sale, 12th and 13th of May, 1902, no: 12 with fig.
- ³⁹ Cf. Exhibition Catalogue, Baltimore, 1962, no: 108, pl. CI.

- ⁴⁰ Cf. *Molinier*, 1896-b, no: 124; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 886, pl. CLIX; *Dalton*, 1909, p. XLVI.
- ⁴¹ This also applies to a plaquette carved in bone, displayed at the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen; cf. *Tardy*, 1966, fig. on p. 25.
- ⁴² Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 309 with fig.; nos: 308 and 310 also come from our forger's workshop.
- ⁴³ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 853, pl. CLIV.
- ⁴⁴ The demi-figure of the angel crowning the Virgin is mentioned by *Koechlin* in his 1924 manual as no: 853, referring to the triptych, no: 210, pl. LII.
- ⁴⁵ One expects an orb to be divided into three or two parts, viz. either Europe, Africa and Asia, or the earth and the universe.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Spitzer Collection, 1890, no: 95 with fig.; also reproduced by *Molinier*, 1896-a as part of the Mme Hartmann Collection, subsequently sold separately. This diptych is considered as of doubtful origin in the *Archives Photographiques* in Paris. Also cf. *Schnitzler-Volbach-Bloch*, 1964, no: S 114 with fig. of the left leaf; again rejoined in *Aachener Kunstblätter*, 1966, pp. 188—189.
- ⁴⁷ The second panel was first mentioned by *Koechlin*, 1924, as no: 854; he did not mention the third panel although there are photographs of both in his *Archives Photographiques*!
- ⁴⁸ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 885; *Schnitzler-Volbach-Bloch*, 1964, no: S 124 with fig.
- ⁴⁹ Bought at Utrecht in 1882; reg. no: N. M. 5404; *Catalogus van Beeldhouwwerken in het Nederlandsche Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst*, 1904, no: 22, second edition, 1915, no: 16; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 882.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 310 with fig. Also to be mentioned: a diptych with a kneeling Gabriel of an Annunciation at the Musée Laval, of *Tardy*, 1966, fig. p. 268 top.
- ⁵¹ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, pp. 319—320, no: 850, pl. CLIII; *Michel*, 1906, p. 488, fig. 326; *Grodecki*, 1947, p. 107, pl. XXXVIII; cf. Exhibition *Bourgon-dische Pracht*, Amsterdam, 1951, cat. no: 185, fig. 55 (!); and *Tardy*, 1966, fig. p. 65.
The square wooden case, covered with leather, was made for this »Annunciation« just as a similar case was made for the V. & A. diptych (cf. note 35). Both cases are decorated in a similar manner. If one places the Langres case on its narrow side, one notices two slight bulges on the top for the heads of the Virgin and St. Gabriel; the top, therefore, slightly slopes to one side. The decoration on the lid and on the bottom has been incised with the aid of a sharp instrument (perhaps the point of a knife?). The entire surface covering the lid shows concentric circles, sometimes ending in spirals. Minute circles have been incised between the concentric lines of the big circles. The spirals and circles are interrupted by six, mainly standing, stork-like birds, one squatting lion, a hare on the run and an unknown, squat bird; in the centre, surrounded by concentric circles and tiny incised circles, is a Burgundy coat of arms. This was at one time believed to be that of Philippe le Hardi, but *Koechlin* thinks that this is a very exceptional Burgundy coat of arms. The meaning of the big rosette on the bottom corner of the lid is not clear either; it is placed where the spirals have been interrupted once more. The coat of arms, the rosette and the beasts show spare and sober touches of colour.
The outside of the bottom of the case shows incised lines forming a diamond pattern; each of the thus formed lozenges contains an, apparently meaningless, upside down U-shaped scrawl. The leather's surface is even and shows neither protrusions nor any tooled or die-stamped decorations. Obviously, the maker did not possess the special skills necessary for the treatment or decoration of leather. There is no connection between the coat of arms, the beasts and the rosette. The irregularly shaped U's on the bottom create a strange impression. At first sight this case looks rather impressive because it is old now, but when examined carefully one sees that it is a badly made object and really ugly. It was quite a revelation to discover that these similar cases contained ivories which I had already attributed to the same forger!
- ⁵² Cf. *Koechlin*, 1906, Vol. I, p. 60 with fig.; idem, 1924, no: 851.
- ⁵³ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 854: »mais le type de l'ange, avec son nez pointu et ses cheveux bouffants, est presque identique à celui de Langres«.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. Sale Catalogue, Paris, George Petit, 5—8 XII 1910, no: 213 with fig.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. *Tardy*, 1966, fig. p. 39. This panel is attached with four small pins to the lid of a box containing a sun-dial and compasses, dated 1598.
- ⁵⁶ Cf. *Molinier*, 1896-b, no: 116 with fig.; this author pays a great deal of attention to this work in view of the publications dealing with the provenance of the harp and the text with which it is inscribed. *Koechlin*, in his 1924 manual, no: 1252, pl. CCIX, expresses some doubts as to its authenticity. *Grodecki*, 1947, p. 111, also mentions the harp as does *Philipponich*, 1961, p. 69, fig. 55. Also cf. *Carra*, 1966, no: 58, p. 129 with a colour plate, and *Beigbeder*, 1966, fig. p. 75. The lozenges with stylized leaves of the background are similar to those of the diptych shown in fig. 31. Cf. note 59.
- ⁵⁷ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 308 with fig.
- ⁵⁸ Cf. the Catalogue of the Bayerische Nationalmuseum, Munich, no: 59, pl. 30. For its origin, cf. p. XXVII, namely from the collection of a priest, Rath Mayr, of Regensburg. His collection, containing over 300 carvings in ivory, was offered for sale in 1803; subsequent to his death in 1811, it was bought by the Bavarian Government. The same museum catalogue also contains entries of a »Virgin between St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine« in an intarsia frame, no: 61, pl. 23, which should be attributed to *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*, because there is a second, almost identical piece (cf. Archives Photographiques, Paris, BAOA 940) which certainly is the work of »our master«. In this second work we notice a small piece of the pleated shift showing beyond the top of the robe, a detail which is unacceptable in the case of Virgins carved around 1400. I also have my doubts as to the authenticity of a »Virgin with Holy Trinity«, no: 37, pl. 22; *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 319, no: 848.
- ⁵⁹ Our forger also applied this type of decoration to a diptych and to the right leaf of another diptych, both at Baltimore, nos: 71.189 and 71.195; also seen on a casket at Tournai, at least if one goes by *Koechlin*'s photographs, and considered by him to be a fake; also in a panel in the former Campe Collection at Hamburg. Also cf. note 50. Always beware of ivories with this kind of decorated background!
- ⁶⁰ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 249, pl. XCIII; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 717 bis.
- ⁶¹ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 309 with fig.
- ⁶² Cf. St. Margaret and St. Agnes of the Louvre casket; the St. Margaret in fig. 31; and a diptych at the Walters Art Gallery, no: 71.189; the arched diptych in the Luton Hoo Collection; the St. George in fig. 30; also corresponding works at the Musée de Cluny and in the Wallenstein Collection; moreover the St. Agnes (turned left to right) in fig. 32; St. Denis in the diptych at the Walters Art Gallery, already mentioned, and a few more of these figures are to be found in a triptych, displayed as a loan at the Schnütgen Museum, showing six saints spread over two sections of the wings both sides of the »Crucifixion« in the centre.
- ⁶³ In the course of our friendship he taught me to look at works of art with critical eyes.

- ⁶⁴ Cf. Female Martyr in *Molinier*, 1896b, no: 120 with fig.; *Michel (Koechlin)*, 1906, p. 482; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 847, pl. CLII; *Grodecki*, 1947, p. 103, pl. XXXVII. Also cf. »The Virgin feeding the Child«, *Molinier*, 1896b, no: 99; *Michel (Koechlin)*, 1906, p. 482 with fig. 319; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 706, pl. CXIV.
- ⁶⁵ Cf. Female Martyr and Virgin in the catalogue of the exhibition *Europäische Kunst um 1400*, Vienna, 1962, nos: 360–361, fig. 48–49. But these are forgeries as are the two preceding numbers 358–359.
- ⁶⁶ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 330, pl. LXXIV; *Michel (Koechlin)*, 1906, p. 481/2: »mais, à y regarder de pres, cet enfant est men et trop joli, le manteau sans style«, etc.; *Grodecki*, 1947, pl. XXXVII.
- ⁶⁷ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, nos: 978 and 981, pl. CLXXI.
- ⁶⁸ Cf. the Martin le Roy Collection, Vol. II, Paris, 1906, no: 30, pl. XVI; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 878.
- ⁶⁹ Cf. *Les Arts*, August, 1904, no: 32, fig. 76.
- ⁷⁰ Cf. *Dalton*, 1909, no: 311, pl. LXX; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 855.
- ⁷¹ Cf. The Black Collection, 1935 and the J. Francis Mallet Collection; no: M. 207.
- ⁷² These include a panel in the Wallenstein Collection at Oettingen, showing a »Crucifixion« in the top tier between a crowned St. Michael and a St. George; in the bottom tier an »Annunciation« with a kneeling St. Gabriel between St. Peter and St. Paul (cf. *Archives Photographiques*, no: BAOA 853, described as »doubtful«); also a diptych in the Forrer Collection in Strasbourg, the left leaf upper tier showing the Virgin between four saints; in the lower tier St. John the Baptist between four saints; in the right leaf top tier a »Crucifixion«, in the left leaf top tier an »Adoration« (cf. *Archives Photographiques*, no: BAOA 616, marked »Doubtful«) now in the Kofler-Truniger Collection (cf. *Schnitzler-Volbach-Bloch*, 1964, S. 79); also cf. a panel in the Campe Collection at Hamburg, showing, on the left, a seated woman holding a rod, facing three girls, a woman holding a spindle facing a kneeling warrior carrying a lance; (cf. *Archives Photographiques*, no: BAOA 895, marked »doubtful«). A very unusually shaped plaque is displayed at the Museum Görtius at Liège. This contains nine deeply set panels four of which only are occupied by figures: a Crucifixion, a crowned (!) St. Michael (without wings), a St. Anthony and an Annunciation with a kneeling Gabriel, all of them placed against a diaper-decorated background. The St. Michael, in his too wide, folded garment, reminds us of the St. Michael of the Wallenstein Collection plaque just mentioned, and of the same saint in the triptych at the Ashmolean Museum; the swathed leaves of the border as well as the uneven ground on which all the above figures are standing, are reminiscent of comparable details in a pierced panel at the British Museum²⁸.
- ⁷³ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 876; *Longhurst*, 1926, p. 56, fig. 164 (the caption is that of the preceding number and vice versa).
- ⁷⁴ Cf. *Darcel*, 1890, no: 112; in the Freiherr von Oppenheim Collection at Cologne, cf. *Catalogue Kunsthistorische Ausstellung*, Düsseldorf, 1902, nos: 1213–1214; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 875, pl. CLVII; and *Longhurst*, 1926, p. 56, fig. p. 163; *Egbert*, *Art Studies*, Vol VII, 1929, p. 198, fig. 56; and *Natanson*, 1951, fig. 63.
- ⁷⁵ Cf. *Koechlin*, 1924, nos: 1279–1280, pl. CCXVII; *Longhurst*, 1926, fig. p. 162; and *Grodecki*, 1947, p. 120.
- ⁷⁶ Cf. *Volbach*, 1923, p. 28, no: 648, pl. 56; *Koechlin*, 1924, p. 441, no: 1204A, pl. CXCIX. Compare the Berlin woman's décolleté and the way her hair is dressed with the women holding the lock at the Museo Nazionale at Florence, fig. 47.
- ⁷⁷ Cf. *Schnitzler-Volbach-Bloch*, 1964, no: S 117. The angels carrying off the deceased's soul should be compared to a work depicting the same subject by *The Master of the Agrafe Forgeries*, illustrated by *Dalton* as no: 372 and by *Tardy*, 1966, p. 272.
- ⁷⁸ Cf. *The International Style*, Baltimore, 1962, cat. no: 109 with fig.; *Art Studies*, 1929, pp. 22–203, fig. 64; *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 866, and *Dalton*, p. 109, no: 313.
- ⁷⁹ Cf. *du Sommerard*, o.e., pl. XX; also *Koechlin*, 1924, no: 865, pl. CLVI.
- ⁸⁰ Cf. *P. Bloch*, *Das Annentärchen im Suermond Museum*, 1962/63, pp. 218–228.
- ⁸¹ The Musée du Louvre possesses about nine of his works, the musée de Cluny at least four, the Musée des Beaux Arts at Lyons five or six; seven in various private Parisian collections; one of the museums at Tournai formerly owned four, the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels three, the Walters Art Gallery at Baltimore nine, the Metropolitan Museum and the Cloisters seven, the V. & A. seven, the British Museum about ten and the Museo Lázaro Galdiano in Madrid one.
- ⁸² Cf. *Longhurst*, 1929, pl. LVI; *Dalton*, 1909, nos: 402 and 415; *Morey*, 1936, no: A 102, pl. XXVII; and *Schnitzler-Volbach-Bloch*, 1964, no: S 127 et seq.
- ⁸³ Cf. *Morey*, 1936, no: A. 105, pl. XXVIII; *Dalton*, 1909, no: 314, pl. LXX.
- ⁸⁴ Now and again I was given hints that the keepers of the museums I have been visiting while studying these fake ivories might have resented my visits. It gives me great pleasure to be able to contradict this suggestion. These keepers' own doubts regarding the authenticity of the works in their keeping repeatedly proved to be of great value to me. In some cases, ivories which I considered to be fakes were at once removed from the show cases; in other museums steps will be taken, subsequently to the publication of this article, to try and convince the museum authorities that certain specified ivories are indeed forgeries. I can but express my sincere gratitude for the invaluable help and co-operation given to me by my colleagues.