Inventive Translation, Portraiture and Spanish Habsburg Taste in the Sixteenth Century

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The Spanish Patron

In his autobiography, Benvenuto Cellini recounts how when faced with an angry mob of Spaniards from the household of the bishop of Salamanca, he defiantly pointed his gun into the crowd and cried, ‘You treacherous Moors – so this is how you loot the shops and houses in a city like Rome?’1 According to the artist, the Spaniards had come to collect a vase that had been returned to Cellini to be repaired, but because the patron had not yet paid for it, Cellini declined to release it. The commotion surrounding this exchange soon attracted the attention of a few Roman gentlemen, eager to join the fight. Their offer to help Cellini kill his opponents was made ‘with such vehemence that the Spaniards were terrified out of their wits’ and retreated.2 The Spanish courtiers were subsequently admonished by the bishop, who, Cellini claimed, was angered by both the violence initiated by the brash members of his household and by their failure to finish the job. Cellini’s characterization of the Spanish throughout this part of his text, leading up to the Sack of 1527, is similar to many portrayals of this period.3 For Cellini, such a depiction of the troublesome Spaniards served the rhetorical ends of the autobiography by highlighting his loyalty to Rome and his personal bravery, most spectacularly demonstrated in his account of the defence of the Castel Sant’Angelo against imperial troops.

A few themes emerge from Cellini’s anecdote. The first ties his martial nature to professional virtuosity and personal nobility;4 the second concerns the reputation of the Spanish patron in Rome near the middle of the sixteenth century. This latter subject is the focus of the following essay, which examines the miniaturists Giulio Clovio and Francisco de Holanda and their artistic theory and production for sixteenth-century Spain.5 Cellini’s text presents
a patron who is at once wealthy and stingy, attracted by beauty and prone to violence. Such a patron was dangerous, presenting the opportunity to make great works but also the risk of not getting paid – even of receiving bodily harm. Clovio, a Farnese familiare in Rome, and Holanda, a member of the royal household of Portugal, took a more optimistic approach to the problem of Spanish patronage by cultivating an ideal (Iberian and Lusitanian) patron, one whose relationship to Rome was congenial, generous and suitably appreciative of the city’s religious and cultural, if not political, hegemony. As Holanda’s writings make clear, this patron would be similarly appreciative of artistic virtuosity, at least partly by paying for it. Such an approach surely developed from their particular circumstances at courts closely associated with the Habsburgs. Each artist, furthermore, made their careers as proponents of the Roman maniera, exemplified by the work of Michelangelo. This model put their practice somewhat at odds with Spanish imperial taste for the naturalistic portraiture of Titian or Antonis Mor, but ultimately their works seem conceived to reconcile this taste with the style of modern of Rome. Central to Holanda’s and Clovio’s strategy was the production and theorization of portraiture.

Clovio’s Works and Habsburg Taste

From the late 1530s until the end of the sixteenth century, many, perhaps most, of Clovio’s miniatures were sent to Spain and other Habsburg centres as diplomatic gifts, i.e. works commissioned by Italian patrons to curry favour with members of the Spanish and Imperial courts. These gifts, unlike those famously exchanged between Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna, were made with the expectation of reciprocity, whether the political end was general good will for families such as the Farnese and Medici or a more specific favour. Painted in gouache on vellum, these small-scale works were easily exchanged, intimately viewed and privately coveted. Some of the documented miniatures included portraits of members of the imperial family, often within Holy Family compositions.

That Clovio’s skills as a portraitist were appreciated by his Spanish patrons is suggested by Vasari’s Life of the miniaturist, which likened him to Titian and Bronzino, the premier court portraitists working in mid-sixteenth-century Italy and, more important, those favoured by the imperial family and their allies in Florence. Vasari specifically praises the life-like naturalism of Clovio’s portraits, despite their small size. Two works portraying Leonor de Toledo, Duchess of Florence, and a Roman gentlewoman identified as Settimia Jacobacci demonstrate that Clovio also painted portraits independent of sacred narratives (Figure 9.1). These two miniatures, the former in a
British private collection since the mid-nineteenth century and the latter part of the Farnese Collection at the Museo del Capodimonte, and a self-portrait of Clovio probably painted in the 1560s for the Medici are the only extant conventional portraits by Clovio, but Vasari’s account suggests that there were many others. He specifically mentions several in the Duke of Florence’s study, perhaps best documented by the drawings of at least one of the Medici children attributed to Clovio. Besides confirming Vasari’s account, Clovio’s surviving portraits of the Medici also indicate the extent to which he fulfilled the typical duties of a court artist while residing with the Medici between 1551 and 1554. Certainly Clovio’s talent was already well known in Spain by the 1550s; the fact that Leonor de Toledo was the cousin of the Duke and Duchess of Alba and sent them at least one Pietà would have furthered his fame. One can imagine that she might even have sent a small portrait of herself such as the one now in a British collection.
Clovio’s incorporation of his patrons’ portraits in compositions for sacred subjects was a well-established practice by the time he began to send works to Spain. What might have been novel is the way in which his miniatures combined canonical Roman models with aspects of Northern art, including naturalistic portraiture. How well these works were received by Spain is suggested by their numbers. An inventory of Clovio’s works of art made days before his death in January of 1578 documents three works that included portraits of Philip II, either miniatures – perhaps unfinished – or drawings for miniatures: ‘una Madonna con il Re filippo et Quattro figure’, ‘una Madonna con il figliolo in braccio con il Re felippo alli Piedi et nove figure’ and ‘una Madonna in piede con il Re filippo’.14 Vasari also notes in Clovio’s Life a number of the Holy Family compositions with portraits that were intended for Spain. The first, which was sent to Charles V, included a portrait of Paul III kneeling before ‘Our Lady holding the Child, with many saints around (them)’; the Pope’s portrait ‘appeared as if alive (even) in the minuteness of the miniature’.15 Although sequence is not a reliable indicator of chronology in Vasari’s Vite, in this case of the work, he specifically notes that this gift to the emperor preceded Clovio’s masterpiece for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the Farnese Hours (Ms. 69, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York), usually dated between 1538 and 1546.

That Clovio’s first reported work for the Farnese involved making a diplomatic gift is significant and suggests that the imperial family had already developed an appreciation for his works.16 Vasari’s later description of an ‘Our Lady together with the portrait of King Philip’ sent to the Catholic king, the presence of the abovementioned works in Clovio’s inventory, and a steady stream of diplomatic correspondence from the 1550s testify to the Habsburg taste for Clovio’s miniatures.17 An examination of the extant works of this type and his method of combining a Roman figural style with Flemish-like landscapes suggests that Clovio constructed an image that carefully situated the portraits in a hierarchy that acknowledged the Habsburg Empire, their piety, and their taste for Northern naturalism while insisting on the centrality of Rome. This practice of inventive translation, adapting the Roman artistic canon both to the tastes and interests of the Habsburgs and to the increasing demands of the Counter-Reformation for sacred art, at least partially explain his value to his Farnese patrons. Such an approach, and the theory to support it, links him first to Sebastiano del Piombo, who as Baker-Bates has demonstrated provided an important model for the Italian artist serving Spanish patrons,18 and also to Francisco de Holanda, whose project to translate the ideal forms of Michelangelo and the Roman maniera moderna to sixteenth-century Portugal and Spain would have needed to take into consideration his patrons’ taste for Northern art.
Outside Perspectives

Clovio and Holanda provide us with interesting perspectives that are neither strictly Italian nor Spanish. Italophiles, these men were nonetheless foreigners who adopted and promulgated the culture of late Renaissance Rome. Born in coastal Croatia in 1498, Clovio was 20 years Holanda’s senior and was well ensconced at the papal court by the time the Portuguese miniaturist and theorist reached Italy. When Holanda arrived in the second half of 1538, Clovio was a member of the Venetian Cardinal Marino Grimani’s household, where he appears in the Roman Dialogues. By the time of Holanda’s departure in 1540, Clovio had joined the court of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the grandson of Paul III. As John Bury and Sylvie Deswartes-Rosa have amply demonstrated, Holanda came to Rome equipped with the best possible introductions. Even if one rejects his Diálogos em Roma (Roman Dialogues) featuring Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna as a transcript of real conversations, the text, which forms Book 2 of his treatise Da Pintura Antiga, indisputably reflects a profound knowledge of the artistic theory and practice of the period. By the time he completed these dialogues (1548), Holanda had developed clear ideas about the relationship between the patron and artist.

Several passages in the Diálogos em Roma recall Cellini’s negative portrayal of the Spanish patron, but Holanda is circumspect, leaving his Italian characters to cast aspersions on the Spanish and their reputed hypocrisy and thrift. At the beginning of the fourth dialogue, one of the Roman interlocutors concludes a long diatribe against ignorant appraisals of art by noting the false magnificence of the Spanish patron:

And to the valuation and reward of painting, the Spaniards likewise displease me, for you will find men in Spain who go into ecstasies over painting and delight to look at it and are loud in its praises, but if you press them they have not the spirit to order two or three pictures or even to pay for one; and they are astonished that there should be persons in Italy who give such high prices for them; and in this I think they do not act up to their boasted magnificence.

Holanda responds by admonishing the speaker of the political allegiances of some Romans (the Colonna) to Spain but excuses himself disingenuously, claiming ‘as for me, I know nothing of Spain, but in Portugal I know that there are princes who know how to value painting and pay for it’. Holanda then models the correct behaviour by offering to pay his collaborator Clovio for a work that he had painted following Holanda’s design. No doubt the courtier reading these dialogues was meant to be spurred to virtuous action in order to repudiate the Italian stereotype, but Holanda does not simply insult his readers to manipulate them. Both the Roman Dialogues of 1548 and his dialogues on portraiture, Do tirar polo natural of 1549, provide positive examples to guide his Portuguese and Spanish contemporaries.
The *Diálogos em Roma* compelled Holanda’s readers to perform the role of enlightened artists and patrons, whether by reading the learned conversations between Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna in the first three dialogues or by reading excerpts from Pliny’s *Natural History* in the fourth and final dialogue.24 These excerpts testified to the generosity and magnificence of the ancient patron, providing examples of extraordinary rewards for artistic virtuosity. The recitation of Pliny served several purposes: it provided Holanda’s readers with a Português (and later Spanish) translation of the ancient text, when no other existed, and put before them examples that they would ideally want to imitate. The artist who read Holanda’s fourth dialogue would thus acquire a rudimentary education about the classical past and strive for the honours awarded his ancient predecessors, and similarly the patron would consider the virtues of generosity and magnificence recounted in Pliny’s history. The benefit of a well-paid artist, as Holanda notes in Dialogue 2 of *Do tirar polo natural*, is that he will be free of the concerns of subsistence so that he can focus on the production of excellent art. Quality of life for the artist, in other words, ultimately benefits the patron.25

**Portraiture Becoming (of) the Ideal Patron**

Seen by most scholars as an appendix to *Da Pintura Antiga*, Holanda’s dialogues on portraiture are dated 3 January 1549, a mere three months after the completion date of the *Diálogos em Roma* (18 October 1548). Joanna Woodall’s sensitive reading of them in the context of Antonis Mor’s career demonstrates the extent to which Holanda sought to establish an intimate relationship between the portraitist and noble sitter, one which suggests the company of equals.26 *Do tirar polo natural*, then, continues the rhetorical strategy of the dialogues set in Rome, in which virtuosity of mind and skill raise up the artist, allowing him to interact with great men and women. In Holanda’s discussion of portraiture, it is the artist’s mastery and intellectual understanding that render him worthy of portraying his sitter. The sitter, in turn, should be someone of great deeds and/or virtue.27 The three portraits that Holanda includes in his Roman book of drawings reinforce the ideas of both texts. All three men, Paul III, Michelangelo and Doge Pietro Landi, qualify as great men by the standards that Holanda establishes in his first dialogue on portraiture; however, his arrangement at the beginning of the collection of drawings pairing the portrait of Paul III (Figure 9.2) with that of Michelangelo (Figure 9.3) visually articulates the kind of equality between virtuous men, between ideal patron and artist, proposed by Holanda.28 Such a relationship, of course, calls to mind that of Alexander and Apelles, and, as Woodall has noted, Holanda makes an interesting choice in his dialogues.
on portraiture by referring to the anecdote about Alexander’s mistress Campaspe and the devotion that Alexander felt toward his favoured artist Apelles, whose love of beauty incited an affection for the woman that was greater than that of the king.²⁹ To cite this episode in their relationship rather than note the standard passage from Pliny recording Apelles’s status as the sole painter of Alexander’s portraits served to assert the bond between the two men and, I would add, the artist’s superior judgment in the realm of beauty. Apelles’s official status is mentioned in the third Roman dialogue, but again Holanda alludes to other aspects of the ancient patron and artist’s relationship. When Holanda’s Michelangelo remarks that Paul III has little understanding of art but nevertheless pays him and his servant well (just to grind pigments), his words recall an anecdote told by Pliny in which Apelles discourages Alexander from speaking in front of his assistants because they laugh at the prince’s ignorance about art. Alexander did not punish Apelles for his impudence but understood the painter’s act to be protective of his patron’s honour.³⁰ The story, according to Pliny, represented the license allowed the beloved painter by his powerful patron.

The example of Alexander and Apelles as many have noted is standard to most Renaissance discussions of portraiture, and Holanda repeatedly refers to Apelles throughout the Diálogos em Roma.³¹ It is worth emphasizing, nonetheless, that his allusion to the episode in Apelles’s workshop and the parallel that that reference drew between Michelangelo and Paul III successfully foregrounds the value placed on the artist’s judgment in Italy. Of course, Holanda’s use of Pliny’s anecdote also proposes the ideal relationship, generally speaking, between the artist and patron, and, specifically, between the royal recipient of his carefully arranged drawings and himself. Corresponding to this theme in both sets of dialogues, Holanda’s facing-page portraits of Paul III and Michelangelo offer proof both of his artistic virtuosity and of an ideal relationship witnessed while traveling in Italy.³²

On one hand, the portraitist’s skill and judgment raise him up and enable him to capture the true likeness and nature of the sitter; on the other hand, as Woodall has suggested, the sitter’s portrait represents an ideal self because of the artist’s virtue; establishing a relationship that, like friendship, improves both individuals. Such a dynamic is expressed in a letter by the Sienese poet and Roman courtier Claudio Tolomei to Sebastiano del Piombo in 1543. In the context of asking Sebastiano to paint his portrait, Tolomei praises the artist’s works, which ‘seduce the eyes, delight the soul, and nurture the intellect; marvelling the learned while stupefying the common man’.³³ His desire to be portrayed by Sebastiano, he writes, is like that ‘severe judgment’ of Alexander the Great, who allowed no one but Apelles to paint his portrait.³⁴ After this commonplace, his next comments are more interesting. Tolomei informs Sebastiano that he will think of his portrait of him as a divine
mirror, in which he will see both himself and the artist. Seeing in the portrait Sebastiano’s ‘singular virtù’ and ‘marvelous artifice’, Tolomei explains, will compel him to look at his own image with a desire to purge his soul of its shortcomings and flaws.35

Certainly, Tolomei’s praise of Sebastiano partakes in the language of courtly convention, but I would argue that it also asserts the dynamic between the artist and sitter articulated in Holanda’s dialogues. Another example of the ideal relationship between the patron/subject and Sebastiano may be found in an innovative portrait from the preceding decade. In at least one case, the painter’s likeness of Clement VII, his most important patron, drew a parallel between his practical and theoretical mastery and his subject’s
virtue through the metaphor of a touchstone (pietra di paragone); likening the painting to a surface used to reveal real and fraudulent substance. As Suzanne Butters has noted, both Paolo Giovio and Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici (Clement VII) invoked the concept of the touchstone for personal devices. One of the latter’s imprese was ‘un paragone con oro su’, or ‘as gold upon a touchstone (he proves himself)’.

Thus, when the Medici pope requested that Sebastiano paint his portrait on a stone support, he linked the authenticity and purity of his character – via the device – to the revealing marks of his portraitist.

Perhaps most in keeping with Tolomei’s remarks and Holanda’s dialogues is the degree to which the inventions of both men, painter and subject, cooperated to produce something representative of their best selves.
Naturalistic Likenesses and Sacred Settings

As Baker-Bates has observed in this volume, Sebastiano’s paintings of sacred subjects, his Venetian naturalism and his relationship to Spanish patrons provided an important example for subsequent artists. Although his portraits were not apparently the objects most sought out by these patrons – Titian is clearly preferred in this category – the theory of portraiture espoused by him and his patrons at the papal court seems to have been influential to Holanda and Clovio. By the time that Tolomei wrote this letter to Sebastiano, both men were closely tied to the Croatian miniaturist. Indeed, Tolomei’s theme seems to be reflected in a portrait that Clovio made of their patron, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, in the margin of folio 46v of the *Farnese Hours*. The cardinal appears in profile (Figure 9.4) praying to the Virgin, whose figure faces his in the margin of folio 47r. The text of these pages presents, on either side, the voices of the petitioner and the Virgin. It is easy to imagine the cardinal, reading the hymn ‘Ave maris stella’ while regarding his portrait. Since ‘maris stella’ is the Latin translation of Mary’s Hebrew name, Miriam, Farnese addresses the Virgin by name.38 Her response, on the facing page is the ‘Magnificat’ from the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The opening words, ‘my soul doth magnify the Lord’ (magnificat anima mea Dominum), seem particularly meaningful in the context of Tolomei’s comments because the Virgin modestly asserts that she is only a reflection of God’s work. Just as the Virgin’s virtue is a reflection of divine grace, so the cardinal’s piety aims to mirror that of the Virgin. Following Holanda’s argument in his dialogues on portraiture, Clovio’s artistic virtuosity, as seen in the cardinal’s portrait, reflects the extent to which his talents are divinely endowed.39

Clovio’s portrait of Cardinal Farnese and the compositional and theoretical conceit that would have initiated the cardinal’s prayers provide the best approximation of his invention for the lost miniatures portraying Philip II before the Virgin and Child with Saints. Like the cardinal, the Spanish king would have appeared in the best possible light as a pious devotee before the Virgin and Child. Before turning to these works, it is worth considering one last example of portraiture in the *Farnese Hours*, especially given Vasari’s remark about Clovio’s skills approaching those of Titian. Certainly, Clovio would have been quite aware of Titian’s well-known portraits of the Farnese, which were produced while he was finishing the Cardinal’s Book of Hours.40 And it should be noted that Vasari’s comments, published more than 20 years later, were charged with the polemic that arose from his privileging of Central Italian *disegno* over Venetian (and Northern) *colorito*. To propose that Clovio’s miniature portraits were on par with Titian and Bronzino was, in effect, to propose that he was capable of providing works with both strengths; well-designed compositions drawn from the best models of Central Italian art and beautifully painted, naturalistic portraiture. Following the iconography that

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had developed for the pope, Clovio’s inclusion of Paul III as the High Priest in the Circumcision on folio 37v fulfilled his patron’s desire for naturalistic portraits and the Farnese taste for its incorporation into narrative, historical settings. According to Vasari, Clovio also included some of the beauties of the Roman court, Settimia Jacobacci among them. This practice is surely related to Clovio’s insertion of Philip II in the Holy Family compositions regularly sent as diplomatic gifts. Indeed, as noted above, Vasari suggests that Clovio’s portrait of Paul III kneeling before the Virgin and Child predates the pope’s appearance in the Circumcision.

The first document indicating Clovio’s status as a Farnese familiare dates to 1540; this is also the most likely date of his earliest surviving illumination for the Habsburg court, found in the manuscript of the Stanze sorra l’impresa dell’aquila by the papal court poet Eurialo d’Ascoli (Ms. 2660, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna). Clovio’s composition for the frontispiece parallels the principal allegory of the encomiastic poem written in dactylic hexameter, featuring a recumbent nude maiden who is attended by a faithful eagle upon her funeral pyre. The miniaturist’s and poet’s imagery depends

9.4 Giulio Clovio, Cardinal Farnese Praying to the Virgin, ff. 46v–47r, Farnese Hours, Ms. M. 69, ca. 1538–1546, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library (photo: © Pierpont Morgan Library)
upon an obscure tale from Pliny and thus is the kind of adulatory and difficult allegorical portrait for which Charles V showed little interest. Perhaps on the heels of this gift, whose patron other than the poet is unknown, the Farnese instructed Clovio to produce a work more in line with the emperor’s taste and more direct in its spiritual authority, i.e. a naturalistic portrait of Paul III set before the Virgin and Child. Clovio’s ability to distinguish and move between modes of portraiture was understood and matched by Holanda. Indeed, his carefully arranged book of drawings from Rome opens with three different types of portrayal: the naturalistic depictions of Paul III and Michelangelo (fols 1v and 2r), the seemingly documentary illustrations (fols 2v–3r) of the different women seen on his journey (from France to Naples), and the complicated facing-page allegories representing Rome (fols 3v–4r), which Deswarte-Rosa has discussed both in terms of portraiture and the imperial allegory used in Clovio’s frontispiece. The combination of this first, naturalistic mode of portraiture and a sacra conversazione in the Roman maniera became the model for all of Clovio’s subsequent miniatures containing Habsburg likenesses.

Clovio’s Works as Diplomatic Currency

Although none of Clovio’s works with portraits of Philip II are extant, at least one surviving miniature now in the Musée Marmottan documents his portrayal of a member of both the Habsburg and Farnese families. This is the Virgin and Child with saints (Figure 9.5) mentioned by Vasari and documented in the Farnese correspondence as sent to Philip II’s advisor and court favourite Ruy Gómez de Silva in November 1556, immediately before Margaret of Austria and her son Alessandro arrived in Brussels to join the court of her half-brother. We know from the Farnese agent Giuliano Ardinghelli that this miniature was greatly esteemed, and Ardinghelli urges the family to continue to send as many works by Clovio as possible. Although Gómez de Silva ultimately sent this miniature home to his wife Ana Mendoza de la Cerda, the work initially served to introduce two members of the Farnese and Habsburg families. With this goal in mind, we might identify the figure at the far right as a portrait of Margaret, whose features are similar to those found in Mor’s portrayals from the same period, especially a version now in Philadelphia (Figure 9.6). Aside from the physical likeness, Clovio’s attention to this figure’s costume suggests a certain specificity and fineness of dress that the other figures lack. In a sense, this representation testified both to the piety and good nature of the historical woman and to the ability of Cardinal Farnese’s artist to produce portraits acceptable to Phillip’s court.
As diplomatic gifts, Clovio’s works were expected to fulfil a rhetorical end, to persuade their recipient to bestow a favour or change a policy.\textsuperscript{50} In the mid-1550s, the Farnese renewed their political alliances with the Habsburgs and earned the enmity of Paul IV, causing the exile of cardinals Alessandro and Ranuccio from Rome until the end of his pontificate.\textsuperscript{51} Despite having settled many of the affairs related to the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza, they were dependent on the good favour of the emperor and king of Spain, and the last decades of Clovio’s life were filled with a steady demand for his miniatures.\textsuperscript{52}

The success of Clovio’s works for both his Italian patrons and his Spanish recipients depended upon his ability to marry the naturalism preferred by Philip II and the idealized design that represented the cultural and spiritual authority of the Roman canon, in which his Farnese patron was considerably invested. Clovio’s central figures in the surviving – and presumably also in the lost – miniatures owe much to Raphael and Michelangelo. Beyond the core group of the Holy Family, however, his works vary in their ornamental figures; we can assume according to Clovio’s invention and the interests of his patrons/recipients.

Pérez de Tudela, following Mirella Levi D’Ancona, has discussed the presence of an all’antica figure, tentatively identified as an ideal portrait of the young Alessandro Farnese, in another Holy Family sent to Spain. This miniature, like the previous example, was made during the time when he and his mother joined Philip II’s court and is also now in the Musée Marmottan.\textsuperscript{53} Both scholars cite a letter by Annibale Caro concerning an impresa designed for the future Duke of Parma. Caro explicitly states the flexibility of the device’s meaning and notes that not only did an Alexander follow a King Philip but that Alexander the Great and Alexander the Uncle – that is, Cardinal Farnese – shared the impresa of Pegasus.\textsuperscript{54} If the gift of the miniature commended the youngest Alessandro to Philip II, the classical figure of Alexander could not help but remind the Spanish sovereign of the work’s origin at the cardinal’s court and perhaps of the most illustrious Farnese, Paul III, who also identified with Alexander the Great. In this guise, of course, all three Farnese represented not just a military hero and prince but also a magnanimous patron of arts and letters.

These ornamental, rhetorically rich figures are secondary to the central figures of the religious narrative, establishing a hierarchy of images that usually privileges Michelangelo’s design. The subordination of Clovio’s invention to the central, sacred figures can be found in his work in the Farnese Hours, but it becomes more rigorous in the years leading up to the closing of Trent, when most of these miniatures were sent. The lost Holy Family miniatures intended for Spain and bearing the portraits of Paul III and Philip II would have most likely placed the sacred group based on Roman design in the centre of the work, without neglecting the naturalistic portraits.
of the pope or king. Taking into consideration such factors as Charles V's dislike of adulation and preference for the naturalism of Titian's works and Philip II's demonstrated interest in portraiture and tolerance for more complicated imagery, it is important not to present Habsburg patronage as monolithic or uniform. Nevertheless, Clovio's cabinet miniatures seemed to have been favoured by both monarchs, perhaps because they provided a desirable balance between long-held aspects of Spanish taste and the authoritative translation of Rome's ideas and canonical images.
Ambition, Translation and the Geography of Style

In the context of the theory of portraiture articulated by Tolomei's letter to Sebastiano del Piombo and Francisco de Holanda's dialogues of 1549, Clovio's works presented the Spanish ruler in the most favourable aspect of personal piety, while also proving himself worthy of his subject. In Holanda's case, the fact that almost all of his known portraits are lost makes any characterization of his technique and style difficult, but the surviving portraits in his bound collection of drawings at the Escorial testify to his practical mastery as much as his texts demonstrate his theoretical sophistication. As noted above, the pairing of these portraits makes a visual argument for the ideal dynamic between artist and patron, while also demonstrating Holanda's capacity for naturalistic likeness. That he was very much in tune both with Clovio's production and the taste of the imperial court is suggested by a painting attributed to him, The Adoration of the Madonna of Belém, in which the royal family of Portugal appears in the company of Pope Julius III and, facing them, members of the Hieronymite Order.55 As John Bury has suggested, the degree of naturalism in these portraits signals Holanda's awareness of his patrons' taste for Northern art, despite the Italian idealism that his texts and works promote.56 Like Clovio, Holanda was able to use such an image to maintain the intellectual and representational hierarchies articulated in his theory of sacred images and demonstrate the practical, painterly virtuosity demanded by his patrons.

Francisco de Holanda, largely thanks the perseverance of scholars such as Deswarte-Rosa and Bury, is finally receiving the scholarly attention outside of Portugal that his work deserves.57 Giulio Clovio's position in the history of sixteenth-century art is still marginal, despite his privileged position in the Farnese household and the admiration for his works at the court of Philip II (an admiration that culminated in an invitation to work at the Escorial).58 Modern historiographical neglect should not, however, obfuscate the reasons for their success in the sixteenth century. The stylistic composition and variety of their works effectively translated Italian artistic theory and practice to early modern Spain and Portugal, maintaining the cultural and spiritual authority of Italy without questioning the Spain's political hegemony. This essay proposes that they succeeded in this through their sensitive use of representational modes and style, more and less naturalistic, to maintain the idealization of Central Italian disegno and the appealing naturalism of Northern Italian and European art. Their works, textual and visual, accommodated a complex nexus of personal, political, religious and cultural identity that supported both the patrons' and artists' self-presentation as pious, enlightened and worthy.

By way of conclusion, it is worth considering the most prominent portrait collection in Spain during the period in which Clovio and Holanda were
working, developed under the direction of Philip II himself at the El Pardo Palace. Its stylistic affiliations and arrangement suggest the extent to which Holanda’s and Clovio’s approach to portraiture and the exchange between Italy and Spain were in line with prevailing thought, even if the naturalism of the principal painters (Antonis Mor and Titian) trumped their more idealized style. That Philip II had become the patron prescribed in Holanda’s writings is evidenced by the inclusion of these artists’ portraits at one end of the gallery. Moreover, the disposition of the royal Habsburg portraits, as Woodall has proposed, tied them to the private chapel adjoining the gallery, suggesting through arrangement and architecture the dynamic between sitter and devotional practice depicted in Clovio’s miniatures. Finally, we find the king assembling a collection of likenesses whose subjects and styles testified to the vastness of his house and political domain, from the contested Netherlands (Mor) to Italy (Titian and Anguissola). As Philip II was closely involved in the conception of the gallery, it seems reasonable to suggest that he would have appreciated the way in which Clovio’s and Holanda’s works negotiated the stylistic and political geographies of his realm.

Notes


2 Ibid.

3 Keneth Gouwens’s *Remembering Rome: Humanist Narratives of the Sack of Rome* (Leiden, 1998) provides contemporary, humanist sources whose characterizations of the Spanish troops are similar to Cellini’s criticism. This reading of Cellini’s anecdote and testimony focuses on the goals of his rhetoric rather than its historical accuracy.


5 Given the probable irony of Sebastiano del Piombo’s description of the Spanish wanting to appear pious, as noted in the Baker-Bates essay for this volume (also cited by Michael Hirst, ‘Sebastiano’s Pieta for the Comendador Mayor’ *Burlington Magazine* 114 [September 1972]: 585–95, from Sernini’s letter to Ferrante Gonzaga), Cellini’s description of a Spaniard who moves from threatening the artist’s life to begging ‘as if he were praying at the foot of the Cross’ (p. 36) seems in keeping with contemporary views.


On 15 March 1565, the duchess of Alba wrote, ‘De D. Julio yo tengo tantas, que podría enviarle dellas si las quiere, y de la Piedad tengo una que me dio la Duquesa de Florencia quando (cuando) estaba en Italia’; see Jacobo Stuart Fitz-James y Falcó, Duke of Alba, Contribución al estudio de la persona del III Duque de Alba: discursos leídos ante la Real Academia de la Historia en la recepción pública del Excmo. Sr. Duque de Berwick y de Alba, 18 May 1919, p. 107.

Antonino Bertolotti published Clovio’s inventory and will in the nineteenth century; ‘Don Giulio Clovio Principe dei Miniatori’, in Atti e Memorie delle Deputazioni di Storia Patria per l’Emilia e la Romagna 7 (1882): 259–79. Pelc, Sources, pp. 216–66, has republished it with photographs of the fragile document; for these works, see p. 222 and 248.

Vasari, Le Vite, vol. 7, p. 560. Further in the biography (p. 568), Vasari again comments that some of Clovio’s figures in the Farnese Hours, though ‘no bigger than a small ant’, are still beautifully formed and lifelike.

The exact date of Clovio’s earliest surviving work for the imperial court, illuminations for Eurialo d’Ascoli’s encomiastic poem to Emperor Charles V, is unknown, but the manuscript was certainly completed between 1537 and 1543, when the Marqués of Aguilar was the imperial ambassador to Rome. For this dating, see Calvillo, ‘The Impresa de l’Aquila’. Charles V probably knew Clovio through his sister, Mary of Hungary, who employed Clovio between 1524 and 1526, when the disastrous Battle of Mohács left Mary a widow and Clovio a refugee.

Vasari, Le Vite, vol. 7, p. 564; also see Pérez de Tudela, ‘Documenti inediti’ and ‘Corte de Felipe II’.


Art historians have discussed this ambition as it relates the Renaissance artist’s changing social status; for a close reading of Holanda’s text in this context, see Ronald W. Sousa’s study, ‘The View of the Artist in Francisco de Holanda’s Dialogues: A Clash of Feudal Models’, Luso-Brazilian Review 15 (1978): 43–58.

Most English translations of Holanda’s Roman Dialogues are from Four Dialogues on Painting, trans. Aubrey Bell (Oxford, 1928; reprint Westport, 1993). The original Portuguese text is cited from Ángel González García’s edition of Da Pintura Antiga (Lisbon, 1984). Other English translations of Holanda are mine. Here, see Holanda, Four Dialogues, p. 83.

Holanda, Four Dialogues, p. 83.

Calvillo, ‘Reading Pliny’, pp. 265–6, and 271–2 in particular.

For this text, I have used the recent edition of the 1563 Castilian translation by Manuel Denis, Del Sacar por el Natural, edited by John Bury (Madrid, 2008), see p. 47. This edition, produced in conjunction with the exhibition of Renaissance portraits held at the Museo del Prado and the National Gallery in 2008, marked the first substantial effort to incorporate Holanda’s text into the history of the theory of portraiture. In her assessment of the subject in Renaissance Theory (New York, 2008), James Elkins and Robert Williams (eds.), Joanna Woods Marsden briefly notes Holanda’s engagement of ideas articulated in Alberti’s De Pictura; see her ‘Theorizing Renaissance Portraiture’, pp. 360–66, in particular p. 364.

See Woodall, Antonis Mor, chapters 1 (pp. 9–44) and 6 (pp. 235–60), in particular.

This is the subject of the first dialogue, Sacar por el Natural, pp. 41–6.

Holanda’s book of drawings, catalogued as ‘Reinando en Portugal el Rei Don Ioaø III que Dios tem Francisco d’Ollanda pasou a Italia e das Antigualhas que vio retratou de sua mano todos os desenhos deste livro’ (Ms. 28-I-20, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de El Escorial, San Lorenzo del Escorial), is arranged in pairs with the utmost care, as both Deswarte-Rosa (Ideias e Imagens, pp. 59, 241–2 n. 12) and González García note (Da Pintura Antiga, pp. XXVI–XXVII). The portrait of Landi (fol. 40) faces Holanda’s watercolour of the Clock Tower adjacent to San Marco (fol. 39v); as a kind of typological pair, the images represent the Republic of Venice. There are a number of facsimiles of this work; I have used that of Elias Torno, Os desenhos das Antigualhas que vio Francisco D’Ollanda pintor, português (1539–1540) (Madrid, 1940).

Woodall, Antonis Mor, pp. 240–44.


32 These two portraits represent the best painting, technically speaking, of Holanda’s oeuvre and demonstrate the ‘atomic’ technique that Holanda describes in both books of *Da Pintura Antiga* (pp. 201 and 313–14).


34 Tolomei, *De le Lettere*, ‘Ne so gia qui io di quel severo giudizio che fu Alessandro magno, il quale non voleva ch’altri lo dipingesse, se non Apelle, anzi per lo contrario, per che voi mi dipingeste, non mi curarei che mille altri, men che mezzani dipintori, mi dipingesseno.’

35 Tolomei, *De le Lettere*, p. 97. Tolomei ends citing Socrates’ prescription for youths to look at themselves in mirrors, ‘Solo vi dirò che quando da voi mi venga tal grazia (come spero) allora mi parerà haver guadagnato uno specchio, il quale io sempre chiamarò specchio divino, perció che in quello vedrò voi, e me stesso insieme. Voi, vedendo ne l’imagine mia la vostra singular virtu, e’l vostro maraviglioso artifizio. Me, vedendo ne l’arte vostra espressa vivamente la mia imagine, la quale mi sarà continuo stimolo a purgare l’anima di molti suoi mancamenti; non solo per quel rispetto, per lo qual Socrate voleva che i giovani si guardasseno ne lo specchio; ma molto piu, perche vedendovi dentro molti luminosi raggi de le vostre virtu, mi s’accenderà l’anima a bel disiderio d’honore, e di gloria’. Carl Brandon Strehlke has related this last passage to a drawing by Pontormo of two men examining themselves in a mirror; see the exhibition catalogue, Carl Strehlke (ed.), *Pontormo, Bronzino, and the Medici: The Transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence* (Philadelphia, 2004), cat. n. 1, p. 56 and n. 1.

36 Suzanne Butters, *The Triumph of Vulcan: Sculptors’ Tools, Porphyry, and the Prince in Ducal Florence*, 2 vols (Florence, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 99–102; see especially 102 and n. 27. The device is recorded in Vasari’s *Zibaldone* as inscription on a portrait of the Medici cardinal (and later pope); see *Lo Zibaldone di Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Alessandro del Vita (Rome, 1938); Paolo Giovio refers to a similar device of Fabrizio Colonna in his dialogue on *imprese* in which he describes the image of a touchstone with the motto ‘Fides Hoc tue, Virtusque probantur’; see *Ragionamento di Monsignor Paolo Giovo sopra I motti e disegni d’arme e d’amore comunemente chiamano imprese* (Venice, 1556), p. 44.


38 William Voelkle also notes this act of invocation; see his comments, *Farnese Book of Hours* (Graz, 2001), p. 69. The one distinction that I would make is that, though the Magnificat is sung in praise of the Virgin, the words are her response and thus represent her voice.

39 Also see Christina Riebesell, ‘Giulio Clovio als Hofkünstler’, pp. 121–41, in Barbara Mikuda-Hüttl, Richard Hüttel and Jeanette Kohl (eds), *Re-Visionen Zur Aktualität von Kunsthgeschichte* (Berlin, 2002), p. 125. Clovio had previously utilized a similar format highlighting the virtue of his portrayed patron in
his earlier work for the *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans* (Ms. 143, Sir John Soane’s Museum, London). In this case, the portrait of Cardinal Marino Grimani on the title page (fol. 8) also acted as an author’s portrait. See Alexander, *Farnese Lezionario*, p. 21 for a colour reproduction.

40 See *I Farnese*, pp. 212–16, entries 30 and 31 for Titian’s portraits of Paul III with Cardinal Alessandro and Ottavio Farnese and Cardinal Farnese, respectively.


44 The dedicatory page addresses the imperial ambassador the Marquès of Aguilar as the emperor’s proxy. Clovio used an erudite allegory to characterize the complex relationship between the emperor and papal Rome; see Calvillo, ‘Impresa de l’Aquila’, pp. 56–7.


46 The ability to distinguish between these modes of representation was expected by the Farnese, who favoured a combination of naturalism and allegory. See Charles Dempsey’s foundational study of Farnese interest in highly ornamented imagery, ‘Mythic Inventions in Counter-Reformation Painting’, in P.A. Ramsey (ed.), *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth* (Binghamton, 1982), pp. 55–75.

47 Vasari’s comments (*Le Vite*, vol. 7, p. 564) and a letter published by Amadeo Ronchini in the nineteenth century have documented this gift since its making, but the recent work of Pérez de Tudela has resolved some of the confusion over which Holy Family was given to Ruy Gómez da Silva. See Ronchini, ‘Giulio Clovio’, in *Atti e Memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia di Patria per le Province Modenesi e Parmensi* 3 (1865): 262; republished in Pelt, *Fontes Clovianae*, p. 191; and Pérez de Tudela, ‘Documenti inediti’, pp. 284–6. Elena De Laurentiis also addressed this body of Clovio’s works in her ‘Miniaturas devocionales, entre el Manierismo y la Contrarreforma, en el Museo Lázaro Galdiano’, *Goya* 263 (1998): 88–98.

48 The wife of his rival, the duchess of Alba wrote that she had many works by Clovio and seems to have been actively seeking another, particular work by him in Rome for her private chapel. See above, note 13.

49 See Woodall’s discussion of the function and chronology of Mor’s portrait types of Margaret, *Antonis Mor*, pp. 388–407.


This demand is documented not just by Ardinghelli’s well-known letter but by a stream of correspondence published by Pérez de Tudela; see her ‘Documenti Inediti’ and ‘Corte de Felipe II’.


See Bury’s introduction to Holanda, Sacar por el Natural, pp. 11–13.

Holanda, Sacar por el Natural, pp. 14–18.

This attention will certainly increase after the release of the first English translation of Holanda’s treatise, Book 1 of Da Pintura Antigua, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl (College Park, 2013).


For recent reconstructions of this collection, which was lost to fire in 1604, see Joanna Woodall, ‘“His Majesty’s Most Majestic Room”: The Division of Sovereign Identity in Philip II of Spain’s Lost Portrait Gallery at El Pardo’, in Image and Self-Image in Netherlandish Art, 1550–1750, Netherlands Yearbook for the History of Art 46 (1995): 53–103; and Maria Kusche’s series of articles in Archivo Español de arte beginning ‘La Antigua galleria de retratos de El Pardo: su reconstruccién arquitectonica y el orden de collocacion de los quadros’, Archivo Español de arte 64 (1991): 1–21.

For Woodall’s reconstruction of the hanging, see her Appendix 1, in ‘His Majesty’s Most Majestic Room’, p. 100; for the an extended discussion of Mor’s privileged relationship with Philip, see her Art and Authority (2007).


Woodall noted the geographical and political significance of the artistic origins and arrangement of Philip II’s gallery, see her ‘His Majesty’s Most Majestic Room’, pp. 53 and (especially) 73–4.