

**OGUMA, Natsumi. An Unnoted Mediator Between Titian and Raphael: The Immaculate Conception in the *Gozzi Altarpiece* and the *Madonna of Foligno***

Titian (1488/90-1576) executed the *Gozzi Altarpiece* for the church of San Francesco ad Alto at Ancona in 1520; it was commissioned by the merchant Alvise Gozzi (1457-1538). It is widely accepted that this work was influenced by Raphael's *Madonna of Foligno* (c. 1511-12) because of their similar compositions. Moreover, the two altarpieces share the image of the Virgin with Child seated on a cloud throne and floating in the air. However, it remains unclear why and how Titian referred to Raphael's *Foligno*.

Most studies assume that one inspiration for the *Gozzi Altarpiece* was Marcantonio Raimondi's (c. 1475-1534) 1515-16 engraving of Raphael's painting created. However, the engraving shows only a portion of the picture, and therefore does not seem sufficient to convey the whole composition of the *Foligno*. Interestingly, the fact that both works were main altarpieces in major Franciscan churches has been overlooked. Hence, it is plausible that they reference the Immaculate Conception, a Catholic doctrine that the Franciscan Order actively promoted.

Through iconographic examination, this paper proposes that both works relate to the doctrine of Immaculate Conception. It has been stated that the *Foligno* has some connection to the Apocalypse and Ecclesiasticus, which provide the basis of the immaculacy of the Virgin. Although the *Gozzi Altarpiece* has never been investigated from this perspective, it contains several elements suggestive of the immaculacy, such as the presence of Gabriel and the expression of light. Further, the fact that Franciscans have traditionally considered Ecclesiasticus as principal scriptural evidence for the doctrine suggests that the iconography of the Virgin in both works implies the text of Eccl. 24:7, "Ego in altissimis habitavi, et thronus meus in columna nubis. (I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar.)"

Additionally, Garofalo's *Suxena Altarpiece* (c. 1519-), located in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the church of Santo Spirito at Ferrara, has imagery similar to these two altarpieces, further supporting this hypothesis. In addition, all the churches belonged to the Observant Franciscans. Therefore, it is plausible that the friars played a leading role in the iconographic decisions of these altarpieces, considering the prevailing conflict at the time between the Conventuals and the Observants.

For the above reasons, I suggest that the friars were the most probable mediators between Titian and Raphael, and could have offered the artists both motive and channel for the reference to the *Foligno*.