Trust and Proof

Translators in Renaissance Print Culture

Edited by
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CHAPTER 5

“No Stranger in Foreign Lands”: Francisco de Hollanda and the Translation of Italian Art and Art Theory

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Between 1538, when Francisco de Hollanda (1517–1585) travelled to Rome, and 1548, when he completed his treatise and dialogues on antique and contemporary art, Da Pintura Antiga (On Ancient Painting), Hollanda dedicated himself to representing the best aspects of Italian culture to the Portuguese court. Although his primary goal was not to translate a classical text, his extensive citations of Vitruvius's De Architectura and Pliny the Elder's Naturalis Historia in Books One and Two of his work suggest the degree to which he was engaged in this humanist pursuit. Hollanda introduces his project by referencing a passage in Vitruvius's preface to Book Six of De Architectura, in which the Socratic philosopher Aristippus, having survived a shipwreck, supports himself by disputing learned subjects in the Gymnasium of Rhodes. Aristippus thrives in a foreign land, Vitruvius implies, because his education equipped him with knowledge and skills valued in whatever civilized place he found himself.

1 I thank Nicholas Baker, Piers Baker-Bates, Andrea Rizzi, and the anonymous reader for their comments, which much improved this chapter. I am also indebted to Harvard University's Villa I Tatti where I began to work through these ideas and the University of Richmond who supported my later research and the purchase of digital images for this essay.


3 For Hollanda's extensive citation of Pliny, see González García's thorough notes for Da Pintura Antiga, which provide Pliny's Latin text; and Elena Calvillo, 'Reading Pliny in Francisco de Holanda's Roman Dialogues', in Melinda Schlitt (ed.) Gifts in Return: Essays in Honor of Charles Dempsey (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), pp. 285–296.

4 Henceforth I will quote from the English translation of Hollanda's treatise, On Ancient Painting. I will also refer to the Portuguese original edited in Da Pintura Antiga (and cite full passages when relevant). For the Latin and English texts of Vitruvius I have used Vitruvius, On
Hollanda’s opening presentation of Vitruvius’s anecdote draws a parallel between the ancient philosopher’s success in Rhodes and his own trip to Rome between 1538 and 1540, which is described in Book Two of *Da Pintura Antiga*, usually known as the *Roman Dialogues*, and represented by a collection of drawings now in the Royal Library of the San Lorenzo de Escorial. These drawings and Hollanda’s introductory comments for his treatise establish him as a knowledgeable translator of Italian artistic theory and culture.

In his dialogues, Hollanda represents himself first in the illustrious company of Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna (dialogues one through three) and later (dialogue four) in conversation with Giulio Clovio, the most celebrated miniaturist in Rome. Hollanda appears in all of the dialogues as a well-connected and educated young artist, a *pictor doctus*, capable of citing Virgil and determined to learn as much as possible about contemporary and ancient art, while enjoying the support of King João III. He emphasizes his desire to return to Portugal, so that he might translate his newly acquired knowledge, writing, “I [...] wish for my part as much as I can not to conceal or thereby allow the loss of whatever is most important that is known of this most noble art,” and “because it is so little known, it will appear very important that I express what I want to say about it in the Portuguese language.”

Hollanda cites the passage in Vitruvius in the context of professional ambition, as a valuable member of the Portuguese court, noting that “(like Marcus Vitruvius) ... I store up the assets of which this is the supreme reward, to wit, to have no need to posses any other assets of greater treasure than my own self”, emphasizing his wealth “in goods which even if the ship foundered and the plundered city were burning, I can carry with me lightly, swimming or walking, 

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6 Book One of *Da Pintura Antiga* comprises forty-four chapters that treat the theory of art, encompassing many media; Book Two consists of four dialogues set on the Quirinal. The fourth substitutes the miniaturist Giulio Clovio and the medalist Valerio Belli in place of Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna.

7 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 67; Hollanda, *Da Pintura Antiga*, pp. 7–8, “...eu ... desejo de minha parte quanto posso não se perder, nem deixar assi perder quanto he maior do que se sabe esta nobelissima arte ... Mas parecerá agora muito grande cousa dizer eu o que desejo della em lingoagem portugues, assi é mal conhecida.”
without the hindrance of a burden..." Hollanda's light baggage, of course, is knowledge. This possession is not only impervious to shipwreck and any other reversal of fortune but also the means by which he flourished in Rome and meant to succeed at home. As the anecdote about Aristippus demonstrates, "knowledge alone is not a stranger in any foreign country, or friendless when retainers and familiars are lost, but is welcomed as a citizen in all cities and a good courtier at any court". Hollanda slightly amends Vitruvius's citation of Theophrastus's assessment that the learned man is no "stranger in foreign lands" but a citizen in every state by inserting "a good courtier at any court" ("bom cortesão em qualquer corte"). He thus updates Vitruvius to suit the political and social realities of his circumstances.

In addition to presenting his new-found knowledge in Portuguese for his peers at court (both professional and social), Hollanda also supplied them, through his extensive citations, translations of critical Latin texts. One of Hollanda's most striking claims in Book One of *Da Pintura Antiga* is that his treatise is the first of its kind in Portugal. He emphasizes the novelty of his work and characterizes himself as a learned champion for his king, determined to produce from his experience in Italy "something very new and rare". Encompassing everything that he learned in Italy, Hollanda presents

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8 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 68; and Hollanda, *Da Pintura Antiga*, pp. 8–9: "Pois com ella (como M. Vetruido) ajunto a fazenda de que este é o summo fructo. Convem a saber: nam ter necessidade doutra fazenda, nem tisouro maior que ter me a mi, que a propiedade da grão riqueza não consiste em mais que em nenhuma cousa desejear. E a Vós, muito Glorioso e Augusto Rei e Senhor, dou eu outras tanta graças pola ajuda que ategora me tem dado (mundandorme ir ver Italia) em bens que, inda quando se a não alagasse, e a cidade saqueada steeesse ardendo, eu posso sem empedimento de carga leuente comigo trazer a nado, ou passeando...". For the cultural climate of Renaissance Portugal, see Sylvie Deswarz-Rosa, *Ideias e imagens em Portugal na época dos Escravitudes: Francisco de Holanda e a Teoria da Arte* (Lisbon: Difel, 1992); and Joaquim Oliveira Caetano, *Francisco de Holanda (1537–1584): The Fascination of Rome and the Times in Portugal* in Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, pp. 7–43.

9 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 68; and Hollanda, *Da Pintura Antiga*, p. 9, "porque dizem que o saber é só de todos que em nenhuma alheia patria é estrangeiro, nem o que perdido os criados e conhecidos é prove de amigos. Mas o que em todas as cidades e aceito cidadão, e bom cortesão em qualquer corte".

10 Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, pp. 2–5. I address the adjustments that Hollanda makes in his translations in Calvillo, 'Reading Pliny'.

11 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 238; *Da Pintura Antiga*, p. 344, "per ser o primeiro que em Spanha, nem ao reino de Portugal escrevesse da pintura, quasi como um dos antigos".

12 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 70; *Da Pintura Antiga*, p. 18. He admits that his treatise is not intended to teach someone how to paint but for those initiated in the art, seeking
his *Da Pintura Antiga* as a trophy from his “conquest” of Rome, couching his experience in chivalric language. The product of that experience, his text and a collection of highly finished drawings in a bound volume, now known as *Os Desenhos das Antigualhas*, become the spoils of a knight defending the “Princess Painting”. A central component of Hollanda’s translation of the art and art theory of Cinquecento and ancient Italy, these drawings functioned as a rhetorically powerful framework for the artist’s theoretical project and his role as a cultural agent in Portugal. This chapter argues that these drawings were conceived to be an intrinsic part of Hollanda’s inventive and cultural enterprise; as material evidence of the intellectual riches that he brought back to his court, they parallel the translated content of his text. In keeping with the chivalric representation of a knight returning home from a military campaign, the artist emphasizes his fidelity to his home and sovereign, having resisted the professional opportunities of working in Rome:

The only thing that was always present in my mind was how I might put my art at the service of our lord the King who had sent me there, and I was constantly pondering how I might steal the masterpieces and elegances of Italy and carry them, stolen, away to Portugal for the gratification of the King and the Infantes and the most serene lord, the Infante Dom Luís. I used to say: what fortresses or foreign cities have I not yet got in my book (i.e., the *Antigualhas*)? What timeless buildings and mighty

more knowledge about its theory, and for the patron class, or at least the royal family, whose understanding of art came from “knowing how to do it, for all wisdom and talent and knowledge lies in the comprehension of drawing in painting” (pp. 69–70, and *Da Pintura Antiga*, pp. 14–17).

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statues does this city still hold that I have not already stolen from it to carry away, without carts or ships, on thin sheets of paper?15

Considering Hollanda's emphasis on knowledge as the one thing that a man carries lightly throughout his travels, the drawings represent a material equivalent to the knowledge evidenced in his treatise. Both text and image can be brought to his king and country without warfare or cumbersome transportation; the marvel of this artistic 'translation' comes across in Hollanda's language and contrasts the "eternal position of edifices and the great weight of sculptures" ("edeficios perpetuos e statuas pesadas") with his "thin sheets of paper".

Such translation, Hollanda explains, is neither simple nor without difficulty, but the difficulty is ultimately overcome through Hollanda's judgment and skill. These become apparent in his arrangement of the drawings, which foregrounds his intervention and interpretation. The drawings, like the learning and experience demonstrated in the text of Da Pintura Antiga, are the means by which he translated his knowledge of Italy's cultural riches. That these works represented a valuable contribution to the collections of his contemporaries is demonstrated by the fact that they were in the Escorial by the end of the sixteenth century, moved there after the Spanish annexation of Portugal in 1578.16 Ironically, the works that Hollanda boasted were stolen from Italy on

15 Hollanda, On Antique Painting, p. 170. and Hollanda, Da Pintura Antiga, p. 221. "E o que só me era sempre presente era o em que poderia server com a minha arte a El-Rei nosso senhor, que me lá mandara, cuidando sempre comigo, como poderia roubá-lo e trazer a Portugal roubados os primeiros e gentilezas de Italia, do contentamento de El-Rei e dos Infantes, o do sereníssimo senhor o Infante D. Luís. Dezia eu: que fortalezas, ou cidades estrangeiras não tenho eu inda no meu livro? Que edificios perpetuos e statuas pesadas tem inda esta cidade, que lhe eu já não ache o mais raro d'ellas polos meus cadernos riscados"?

paper were just as deftly moved to Spain and the Royal Collection at the Escorial less than 40 years later.

My focus here is to consider Hollanda's presentation of himself as translator of foreign ideals and the way in which the drawings and the text of *Da Pintura Antiga* communicate the knowledge that he gained and synthesized in Rome. In Portugal, Hollanda's translations of antique and contemporary Italian culture took form in his discussion of modern art theory, such as Alberti's *De Pictura*, his long citations of Vitruvius and Pliny, and in his arrangement of artistic monuments seen and drawn in Rome.17

Documents or Inventions? The Critical Misfortune of *Da Pintura Antiga* and *Os Desenhos Antiquíssimos*

If one takes the fate of the Roman drawings as an example of how Hollanda's method was also in some ways his works' undoing—in the case of the drawings metaphorical trophies literally become war spoils—we might consider the extent to which his choice of Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna as models for Book Two, the *Roman Dialogues*, undermined Book One, relegating the treatise to a secondary position in the historiography because of historical interest in the dialogues' interlocutors. The fame that made them exemplary also doomed his work to be read by modern critics as a dishonest or implausible documentary account rather than a rhetorically charged text conceived to reinforce and sometimes enact the ideas of his treatise.18 Certainly, Hollanda's decision to participate in the dialogues, rendering them as first person testimony,
contributed to the later, negative critical fortune, but Hollanda’s reception is mostly a problem of modern historiography and method.\textsuperscript{19} In the last forty years, however, the dialogues have been more productively understood as rhetorical works based on real persons and ideas, neither chronicling events or conversations nor wholly fabricating the art theory of the 1540s.\textsuperscript{20}

In contrast to his dialogues, Hollanda’s drawings in the Escorial have provoked little critical suspicion, even though they also demonstrate the artist’s will to interpret and to invent in order to translate his experience in Italy.\textsuperscript{21} Hollanda’s book of drawings has likely resisted interpretation because his primary method of invention is in the arrangement of objects or monuments in relationship to one another. They have rarely been the focus of study outside the scholarship on Hollanda, and when they have appeared in studies, the drawings are usually examined as records of the appearance of well-known works of art or architecture circa 1540 [Fig. 5.1], such as the ‘Cleopatra’ in the Vatican Belvedere.\textsuperscript{22}

Because material evidence of these subjects often still exists, most scholars have neither challenged their descriptive veracity nor recognized their

\textsuperscript{19} For the documentary form of the Renaissance dialogue, see Virginia Cox, \textit{The Renaissance Dialogue} (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 10, and David Marsh, \textit{The Quattrocento Dialogue: Classical and Humanist Innovation} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981). Agoston, ‘Michelangelo as Voice’, p. 135, has explained the critical rift as being between historians who read the dialogues as if they were a transcript, or a “vestige” of a historical conversation, and those who approach the work as an invention to express the author’s ideas.

\textsuperscript{20} Many associate this shift in Hollanda’s reception with David Summer’s discussion in \textit{Michelangelo and the Language of Art} (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 26–27. Even scholars who have been skeptical of artist-philosophers now accept Hollanda’s text as attempting to present the ideas of his time through the dialogue form; see Charles Hope, ‘Francisco de Hollanda and Art Theory, Humanism and Neoplatonism in Italy’ in Hollanda, \textit{On Antique Painting}, pp. 45–64.


Hollanda's reception is well-documented. In the last forty years, his work has been understood as rhetorical art, chronicling events or historical events, e.g., 1540.

The Escorial have produced ten catalogue raisonnés, which demonstrate the artist's influence on the Florence experience in Italy. Hollanda, however, remained in Holland because his primary source of income was the marble monuments in relation to which his skills as a sculptor were of greatest importance. Studies of his drawings, the drawings of well-known works such as "Cleopatra" in the Vatican Museum, and the catalogue raisonnés, suggest that he existed, most scholars, however, having recognized their importance to art history.


**FIGURE 5.1** Francisco de Hollanda, Belvedere Cleopatra, fol. 8°, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20

For color version, see the section Color Plates after p. 257 in this book.

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inventive component. If one were to isolate the portraits of the interlocutors in the dialogues of *Da Pintura Antiga*, the locations of their meetings, and the content of their discussions, only a few passages would seem implausible or invented by Hollanda. Yet, the literary form that arranges these historical figures in historical places and has them enact conversations reinforcing points made in Hollanda's treatise has disposed the modern reader to react negatively to any false or fanciful note. Only recently have scholars recognized that Hollanda embraced his inventions as the tools by which he made his knowledge and arguments vivid to his readers and viewers in Portugal. Thus the aspects of the dialogues that damned their modern reception were the very qualities that demonstrated Hollanda's ability as an authoritative translator. Similarly, his 'thefts' of the monuments and antiquities of Rome and Italy, carried away on thin sheets of paper, are examples of *translatio* not only for their canonicity but also for their judicious selection and meaningful arrangement.

**Reading Pintura Antiga as Cultural Translation**

Hollanda surely chose his characters because they would have been known to the members of his court. Their status as the most illustrious artist and female patron in Rome afforded him an opportunity to communicate the most salient aspects of contemporary art theory and patronage. Michelangelo's international reputation by the 1540s is indisputable, but it is perhaps less obvious that Vittoria Colonna would have been known at Évora or Lisbon. However, she was not only a Colonna, and thus understood as an Imperial ally, but the wife of a d’Avalos, whose clan originated in Spanish Naples. She was also a widely published poet by 1548, the completion date of *Da Pintura Antiga*, and known for her piety. The friendship between the male artist and the female poet

23 For this failure to see the inventive component of drawings that seem like documentary studies of monuments, see Cammy Brothers, 'Reconstruction as Design: Giuliano da Sangallo and the “palazzo di mecenate” on the Quirinal Hill', *Annali di architettura*, 14 (2002), pp. 55–72.


25 Vittoria Colonna’s spirituality is a central concern of most scholarship dedicated to her. In the context of Hollanda’s dialogues, see Deswarte-Rosa ‘Vittoria Colonna und
The other figures who appear as ideal patrons and artists, such as Pope Paul III and the miniaturist Giulio Clovio (Michelangelo’s surrogate in the fourth dialogue) were equally well known and probably associated with one another by Holland’s fellow courtiers. Vittoria Colonna’s support of Clovio’s career in Rome, for example, probably contributed to his successful reception at the Imperial courts. Clovio’s miniatures are similar to copies after Michelangelo associated with Colonna in the 1540s, when she received the Florentine’s presentation drawings. Knowledge of Michelangelo gifts to her and her taste for his works could well have reached the culturally informed members of the Portuguese and Habsburg courts. If not, Holland supplied a clear portrait of her as an enlightened patron and poet. Through a question posed by her to Michelangelo, Holland famously introduces his controversial distinction between Flemish and the Italian art:

Michelangelo in San Silvestro al Quirinal nach den Gesprächen des Francisco de Hollandia, in Vittoria Colonna, pp. 349–373. Deswarte-Rosa has demonstrated an interest in Petrarchan verse at the Portuguese court; see her Ideias e Imagens, p. 74.


For Holland’s conception of the ideal patron, see Calvillo ‘Inventive Translation,’ pp. 180–182.


While Clovio’s works are not copies, most of his cabinet miniatures centre on Michelangelo’s designs. How closely copies after Michelangelo’s presentation drawings can be associated with Colonna is unclear; see Bernadine Ann Barnes, Michelangelo in Print (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 69–72, and n49 citing a letter that suggests Colonna most valued Michelangelo’s design and did not worry if the work were not by his hand.
"The Painting of Flanders, Signora", the painter answered slowly, "will generally please any devout person more than any Italian painting, which will never cause him to shed a single tear, whereas that of Flanders (will cause him to weep) many; not because of the vigor and good quality of that painting, but because of the goodness of that devout person. It will appeal to women, especially the very old or the very young, and likewise to monks and nuns, and to some noblemen who are tone-deaf to true harmony".30

Colonna’s question provided the straw man for Michelangelo’s response favoring the design, intellect and idealization of Italian art, but Hollanda and those familiar with his text would have known that she provided a model for the female viewer that was more complicated and informed than that suggested by Michelangelo’s response in the dialogue. As Agoston notes, despite polarizing divisions in this passage between intellectual substance (male) and superficial material (female), or good and bad painting, Hollanda’s entire work offers a more moderate art theory, one that allows for much of what appears to be rejected in Michelangelo’s response. Colonna’s own cultural practice, as manifested in her poetry and collection of devotional art, encompassed both the emotional response disparaged in Michelangelo’s comments and the intellectual rigor recommended by them, thus providing the female reader or viewer of Hollanda’s works with an admirable model of cultivation and artistic discernment.31

It is tempting to think that Hollanda’s project was partly conceived for his female patrons in Portugal and that his selection of Colonna as a principal interlocutor served this end. That Hollanda fulfilled at least one request of Queen Caterina is testified to by his copying the image of Christ in the

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Pintura Antiga, pp. 235–236,
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Michelangelo and Colonna
Colonna Colonna; Renaissance

poetry reflects her sophisti-
Christ’s Blood: Vittoria Col-

Sancta Sanctorum, as reported in both the treatise and the third dialogue of
Book Two. While the passage in the treatise concerns the production of
sacred images and the representation of Christ, that in the dialogue ties Colon-
through her interest in ancient sacred images, to Queen Caterina and by
extension to other pious women at the Portuguese court.

Hollanda’s copy of the Lateran image was presumably seen by a privileged
handful of the queen’s intimates. His appeal to the piety of the women at
his court may also be seen in his drawings of religious relics in the Desenhos
das Antigualhas. Among the first drawings are the titulus of Santa Croce in
Jerusalemme and the column from Solomon’s Temple in St. Peter’s Basilica,
presented in facing pages on folios 4v and 5r; at the end of the album is the reli-
quary skull of St. Mary Magdalen at St. Maximin (fol. 48v) seen in Provence
on his journey home to Portugal. Hollanda thus brings the pagan antiquities
of Rome and the contemporary works of art in Italy with depictions of sacred
objects associated with saintly women: the titulus crucis and the Magdalene
relic. Vittoria Colonna showed a life-long devotion to Mary Magdalene, like
many women of her station who needed a model of spirituality and chastity
in marriage and widowhood.33

Historical interest in Colonna has perhaps skewed the amount of interest
given to the dialogues in comparison to the treatise, but Hollanda’s use of
Michelangelo as the ideal, learned artist opened his work to the harshest criticism
from later scholars who disputed whether Michelangelo could possibly have
said what Hollanda presents in the dialogues.34 A more nuanced and contextu-
alyzed examination of Hollanda’s theoretical project, however, reveals that he

32 Hollanda reports that he painted this work for “our lady the queen” in On Ancient Pain-
ting, pp. 191 and 211, nos. 20–21 at p. 162; Da Pintura Antiga, pp. 140 and 299. This passage has
been discussed by scholars interested in Vittoria Colonna’s taste for archaic, cult images; see
Alexander Nagel, Michelangelo and the Reform of Art (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press, 2000), p. 75; and Deswarte-Rosa, Vittoria Colonna und Michelangelo,
p. 363.

33 Barbara Agosti has emphasized the importance of the cult of the Magdalene for Colonna
and the court at Ischia. See her Vittoria Colonna e il Culto della Maddalena (tra Tiziano
e Michelangelo), in Vittoria Colonna e Michelangelo, pp. 71–81, at pp. 75 and 81, n21. See
also Michael Hirst, Tre saggi su Michelangelo (Florence: Mandragora, 2004); Marjorie Och,
‘Vittoria Colonna and the Commission for a “Mary Magdalene” by Titian’, in Sheryl E.
Reiss and David E. Wilkins (eds.), Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renais-
sance Italy (Kirksville: MO, University of Missouri Press, 2001), pp. 193–223; and Gigliola
Fragnito’s essays on Colonna’s spirituality, most recently ‘Vittoria Colonna e il dissenso

34 For the history of that critical reception, see n8 and Agoston, ‘Michelangelo as Voice’. 
primarily presents Michelangelo as an authoritative interlocutor and historical figure in his texts and in Os Desenhos da Antiqualhas. In fact, the elder Florentine artist is surprisingly scarce in Book One's treatise and the Antiqualhas, at least in contrast to his vivid presence in the dialogues. One must read and look carefully to find references to Michelangelo, though once found they suggest the extent to which Hollanda's project sought to mediate the Florentine's reception in Portugal.

A Defense of the Sistine Chapel Last Judgment

An example of such mediation, and translation, is Hollanda's critical response to Michelangelo's Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, unveiled in 1541 and immediately denounced by critics for its nudity and iconographic complexity. Citing the epic poet Virgil in Chapter XXXII, Hollanda introduces his theme with "Facilis descensu Avernii" ("the descent to Avernus is easy"), and comments, "yet whoever is willing to ponder carefully will find that somber and horrible painting of purgatory and its pains, and the most cruel painting of hell, is very useful in enabling us to descend there in this life".35 Noting their utility to the imagination is a standard justification for sacred images. Hollanda's defense of Michelangelo in this section is incremental in its specificity and application to the Sistine Chapel work. He continues by acknowledging the difficulty and creative challenge of Michelangelo's subject:

The admirable and most solemn painting to which at this point I would call the attention of the contemplative and most learned painter is the likeness and most sacred image of the awesome day of judgment, for in this most famous and memorable historia the great master will find much to work on and to ponder, and much more to give others to ponder in his work. And this is the most noteworthy painting that can be seen in this wide earth, and, with its dependent parts, the most memorable.36

36 Hollanda, On Antique Painting, p. 123, and Hollanda, Da Pintura Antiga, p. 151. "E a admirable e gravissima pintura que n'este lugar lembro ao contemplativo e doutissimo homem que pinta, é a semelhança e sanctissima imagem do spantoso dia do juizo, poque n'esta famosissima e memorable historia tem o grande mestre muitoque trabalhar e consirar. E muito mais que dar a outrem que na sua obra consire. E esta é a pintura mais navel que
The emphasis on the noteworthy painter and famous *historia* would have brought to the readers’ minds Michelangelo’s recent work, which Hollanda might have seen before he left Rome in 1540, before the painting was officially unveiled.

The use of the word *historia* in this passage is significant not only because it suggests his knowledge of Alberti’s treatise on painting, whose first publication was in preparation when Hollanda was in Rome, but also because it implies the creative, poetic element of the artist’s representation of what would have been understood as a historic scene.37 Michelangelo’s incorporation of poetic and mythological figures into a sacred history, as Charles Dempsey has shown, was a key component of the most learned criticism against him.38 Toward the end of this chapter, Hollanda circles back to the opening reference to Virgil, addressing the devotional utility of representing hell. His language here becomes specific enough to argue that Hollanda is responding to the current criticism:

Thus before his death, the serious painter, if he believes himself capable of doing so, must show other men what they are unable to see while they live; and so he will contemplate and by means of painting will represent the torments and punishments of hell, not merely as the pagans or the poet Virgil painted them, with Acheron, the boatman of the wretched souls, ...but far beyond the River Cocytus and Phlegethon, and beyond that inviolable lake of the Styx, ...and beyond Minos the judge ... He will paint the cruel chain that binds the damned, which the Gospel calls the *Gehena ignis*.39

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37 See Deswarte-Rosa, *Ideias e imagens*, for Hollanda’s likely knowledge of Alberti manuscript.
39 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 124. See also Hollanda *Da Pintura Antiga*, p. 152, “Assi que o grave pintor antes de sua morte, se se achar capaz para fazel-o, deve de mostrar aos outros homens aquilo que elles, vivendo não podem ver; e assim contemplará e representará com pintura os tormentos e castigos do inferno não sómente como o pintavam os gentios ou o poeta Virgilio, com Aqueronte, barqueiro das tristes almas ... mas muito
Hollanda's point here is not necessarily whole-hearted endorsement of antique images of hell but an exhortation to produce an image that culminates with Christian content and, more important, one whose terrifying effect results in Christian penance and avoidance of sin. His emphasis, however, on the learned and devout artist, one who can marshal both the imagery of Virgil's poetic imagination and the sacred history of the Gospels ultimately lays the foundation for a defense of Michelangelo's work, as long as it also contained scenes that would compel the viewer to avoid sin.40

Oliveira Caetano has recently argued that Hollanda's humanism was quickly outdated in Tridentine-era Portugal.41 Equipped with the most current Italian cultural artistic theory, Hollanda somewhat tragically returned to a court that would soon eschew the intellectual liberality of the 1530s. His chapter on representations of hell both defended Michelangelo's epic mode of painting for the Last Judgment and the kind of learning necessary to produce such a work. By the time Hollanda had his work translated into Castilian in 1563, he saw fit to change his emphasis, exchanging "doutissimo" (most learned) with the "devoto" (devout), as Alice Sedgwick Wohl has noted.42 Hollanda's discussion of epic poetry and emphasis on learning in the context of Christian imagery might be understood to provide a cogent defense to the better known criticisms of Pietro Aretino, who faulted Michelangelo for the difficulty of his imagery, which only a few would understand. Such a defense not only indicates the intellectual and theoretical position taken by Hollanda but also the extent to which he aimed to remain current and informed about Italian art theory. While Michelangelo might seem curiously absent in Book One of Da Pintura Antiga, he is represented in the subjects engaged by the treatise. Hollanda introduces Michelangelo, whether through his work or his persona in

40 Though he acknowledging the primacy of sacred texts, Hollanda maintains the richness and utility of poetic texts usually associated with Michelangelo's Last Judgment; see Hollanda, On Antique Painting, pp. 124–125; and Hollanda, Da Pintura Antiga, p. 153. Deswarte-Rosa discusses Hollanda's admiration for this aspect of Michelangelo's intellect and art in Ideias e imagens, pp. 198–199.

41 Oliveira Caetano 'Francisco de Hollanda'.

the dialogues, as the most important practitioner and authority on matters of art in Italy.

In a similarly indirect way, a passage in dialogue four of Book Two establishes an eschatological metaphor to represent Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* as the culmination of artistic perfection. An anonymous Roman gentleman conversing with Hollanda, Giulio Clovio, and Valerio Belli calls into question the existence of a contemporary Golden Age in Pauline Rome by linking the perfection of Augustan-era art to its temporal and physical proximity to the living Christ:

It was then, certainly, that things existed in their perfection ... both in the arts and in warfare, ...which had been increasing and rising from the beginning of the world until that time, and which have been decreasing and declining steadily from the time to this or until our day. And this I believe Divine Providence did because the time was drawing ever nearer in which the perfection of its Maker made Man and God on earth was awaited, for I make bold to claim that never before or since were things at their peak and universal perfection as in the time of Augustus, during which God became incarnate. And similarly, once holy perfection perceived that he had ascended into heaven, it began to retrace its steps and to seek him in heaven.43

Following the logic of Hollanda’s Roman gentleman, only the second coming of Christ would return the arts to some kind of perfection. Taken with Hollanda’s discussion of hell and the epic mode in Chapter xxxii of the treatise, these comments suggest that Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* promises a return to the artistic perfection of the Augustan era.

Hollanda’s engagement with one of the most current and controversial subjects in the world of art demonstrates both his theoretical inclination and his
ability to interpret and translate the cultural events of Rome. Hollanda's informed interpretation of what was at stake with the critical reception of Michelangelo's work and its tenuous position at a moment of great change and anxiety over sacred images presents itself in a layered and highly nuanced way from his defense of pagan poetic imagery in Chapter xxxii of Book One to his discussion of Horace's ut pictura poesis in the third dialogue and the Roman gentleman's eschatological model for the perfection of the arts in the fourth dialogue.

Michelangelo's Presence in Da Pintura Antiga and Os Desenhos Antigualhas

Hollanda's Michelangelo provided the bar against which one measures artistic and creative success throughout Da Pintura Antiga. Hollanda's use of the greatest living artist as an interlocutor has been somewhat superficially understood as a form of braggadocio, but it would be more productive to understand his presentation of Michelangelo in terms of exemplarity, as with Vittoria Colonna. Given his prominence in the dialogues and his influence in the treatise, one would expect that there would be more drawings after Michelangelo's works in the Antigualhas, yet there are only two figures from the Sistine Ceiling, and relatively minor ones: the Charity (fol. 11r) and the Eritrean Sibyl on the facing folio 12r. As Deswarte-Rosa has noted, Vittoria Colonna invoked the latter figure in the second dialogue as a witness of God's creation. Colonna's comment is worth considering because it offers a kind of meta-acknowledgment of the absence of Michelangelo's works in both Hollanda's text and collection of drawings from Italy. When, after listing all the noteworthy modern works to be seen in Italy, Michelangelo excludes Rome, Colonna explains his omission:

Do you not notice, Messer Francisco, how Messer Michael refrained from speaking about Rome, the mother of painting, in order not to mention his own works? Now, since he was unwilling to do so because he was performing his obligation, let us not fail to perform ours in order to confound him the more, for when one is to treat of famous painting, there is no other of any value except the source from which they all derive and

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44 Although the Roman Dialogues are no longer understood as simple reportage, much work remains to identify the points of intersection between the theory laid out in Book One and articulated by the interlocutors in Book Two.

45 Deswarte-Rosa, Ideias e Imagens.
proceed. This is at the head of the source of the church, I mean at Saint Peter’s in Rome, a great ceiling in fresco, with its circuit and lunettes and a wall, where in a divine manner Michelangelo encompassed how God first created the world, in separate *historie*, together with many images of Sibyls and figures of the most artful decorativeness and skill. And what is extraordinary is that, while he has done nothing more than this work, which he still has not completed having begun it when he was a young man, the work of twenty painters together is contained there on that single ceiling.46

Michelangelo’s work on the ceiling parallels the vastness of Creation itself. An attempt to reproduce it or any of Michelangelo’s work might have compromised Hollanda’s artistic agency and authority. Michelangelo’s presence is thus contained to the role of cultural authority and fellow interlocutor. Hollanda’s commitment to present Michelangelo as a learned and illustrious man is nevertheless clear from the verisimilitude of the dialogues and the specific way in which he appears in the drawings. Michelangelo first appears at the beginning of the album in profile portrait facing Paul III [Figs. 5.2 and 5.3], his powerful patron and the pope throughout the writing of *Da Pintura Antiga*.

As the next section will address, the pairing itself demands interpretation and is a key mechanism of Hollanda’s translation of ancient and contemporary art. What ideally puts Michelangelo on equal footing with the Farnese pope is suggested by the dynamic between interlocutors in Book Two’s dialogues and developed specifically in the context of portraits in Hollanda’s treatise on portraiture, *Do tirar polo natural*, completed in January of 1549.47 The artist in all of Hollanda’s work, textual and visual, is knowledgeable and valuable to his patron, able to converse and teach, theorize and practice. Michelangelo next appears in the visual representation of Hollanda’s stay in Rome as a person conversing about art. We see him with Hollanda standing beside the colossal sculpture now identified as the muse Melpomene, once in the Palazzo della Cancelleria. His presence is performative; as in the dialogues, he and Hollanda

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46 Hollanda, *On Antique Painting*, p. 188; also see Hellmut Wohl’s notes identifying the Etruscan Sibyl and the reference to the painting of the still-in-progress *Last Judgment*.

47 For the influence of this treatise, see Joanna Woodall, *Antonis Mor: Art and Authority* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007), pp. 9–44 and pp. 235–260; also see Calvillo, ‘Inventive Translation’, pp. 180–181, and Deswartes-Rosa who notes the equality suggested by their presentation, *Ideias e Imagens*, p. 82.
FIGURE 5.2 Francisco de Hollanda, Portrait of Paul III, fol. 1r, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20
For color version, see the section Color Plates after p. 257 in this book.
BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCÓRIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.
FIGURE 5.3  Francisco de Hollanda, Portrait of Michelangelo, fol. 25; Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-1-20
For color version, see the section Color Plates after p. 257 in this book.
BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.
guide the viewer in his or her discussion of the works of art presented for consideration.

Francisco de Hollanda's Roman Triumph, *Os Desenhos da Antigualhas*

The drawing of the Cancelleria colossal muse on folio 10 [Fig. 5.5] faces Hollanda's drawing on folio 9v of the ancient Laocoon [Fig. 5.4], then installed as his inscription indicates in the garden of the Vatican: ROMAE IN HOR/ITIS PONTIFICVM/ DIGNISSIMA SIMULACRA LAO/CHEHONTIS REPERTA IN DOMO TITIV.

Hollanda's provision of the location where the sculpture was found is the link that ties the two sculptures together as facing pages. Both sculptures are associated with Michelangelo's first years in Rome. The colossal sculpture of the Melpomene, which was identified as either Minerva or Ops in the Renaissance, was installed in the Palazzo della Cancelleria, or the Palazzo di San Giorgio as Hollanda's inscription notes, in the 1490s when the palace was occupied by Michelangelo's first patron in Rome Cardinal Raffaele Riario. The Laocoon, in turn, would have been associated with Michelangelo by virtue of its discovery and identification in 1506, when Giuliano da Sangallo and Michelangelo recognized it as the work described in Pliny's *Natural History*. The discovery and Michelangelo's association with the work were surely the stuff of legend by the time that Hollanda arrived in Rome, and I would argue that his pairing of these works meant to draw a parallel between Michelangelo's first exposure to the antiquities of Rome and that of our author, who returned to Portugal able to introduce the viewers of his drawing collection and readers of his text to the works that Michelangelo seems to show him. Hollanda effectively becomes Michelangelo to his viewer's Francisco in the drawing. This particular pair of drawings may offer an explanation for the almost complete absence of drawings after Michelangelo's works in Rome. In 1559, Boissard reported that


Michelangelo advised artists to look upon the miracle of the Laocoön and seek to grasp its genius rather than try to imitate it. Hollanda's treatise and dialogue repeatedly emphasizes the importance of understanding and discussing works of art. His decision to supply his King, fellow courtiers, and artists with a primarily textual account of Michelangelo as a knowledgeable and contemplative artist privileged the ideas and intellect of the great artist's work. In doing so, Hollanda mediated and exerted greater control over the Portuguese reception of Michelangelo's theory and practice.

The mechanisms at work in folios 9v (the Laocoön) and 10 (the Melpomene) also shed light on how Hollanda translated for his viewers the experience of ancient and contemporary Rome. The way in which he organized his drawings in typological pairs challenged viewers either to draw appropriate connections through their knowledge of the works or to learn about them through Hollanda's interpretative arrangement, a kind of curating of sculptural and thematic exempla. His first pairings suggest his command and understanding of different modes of representation, from naturalistic portraits of the historical men, fols. iv and 2, [Figs. 5.2 and 5.3] to allegorical personifications of Rome Triumphant and Rome Defeated.50 Hollanda's selection and arrangement of works make a strong claim for his artistic and intellectual discernment and his ability to convey—or translate—the most canonical monuments of ancient Roman architecture [Figs. 5.6 and 5.7] and antique sculpture [Figs. 5.1 and 5.8].51

While some pairs such as that of the Colosseum and Pantheon are obvious in their typology, others seem intended to make his viewers work harder to understand his presentation of certain monuments. If the viewer might admire his ability to 'restore' the Colosseum and Pantheon with pen, ink, and gouache, he or she might also experience the artist's wonder and inspiration before the sculptures of Cleopatra—now identified as Ariadne—and Apollo in the Belvedere. Sylvie Deswarte-Rosa has noted Hollanda's witty and creative acknowledgment of the effect of the Apollo Belvedere on him (Fig. 5.9 detail of

51 The purpose of Hollanda's arrangement of the drawings into pairs is open to debate; what is clear is that he had access to annotate them well into the 1560s, since his portrait of Michelangelo bears an inscription marking the date of the artist's death. A recent study of these drawings and Hollanda's later De Aetatibus Mundi Imagines (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MS. S. xvi) has also interpreted these works in the context of Hollanda's intellectual ambition. See Maria Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur": Francisco de Holanda as Artist, Reader, and Writer', in Heiko Damm, Michael Thimmann, and Klaus Zittel (eds.), The Artist as Reader: on Education and Non-Education in Early Modern Europe (Leiden, Brill, 2013), pp. 387–419.
FIGURE 5.4  Francisco de Hollanda, Laocön, fol. 9v, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-1-20
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FIGURE 5.5  Francisco de Hollanda, Muse Melpomene, fol. 10r, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20
For color version, see the section Color Plates after p. 257 in this book.
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FIGURE 5.6  *Francisco de Hollanda, Colosseum* fol. 5r, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-f-20
For color version, see the section Color Plates after p. 257 in this book.
*BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.*
FIGURE 5.7 Francisco de Hollanda, Pantheon fol. 5r, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20
BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.
FIGURE 5.8  *Francisco de Hollanda, Apollo Belvedere, fol. 97*, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), *Ms. 28-I-20*

**BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.**
Fig. 5.8), inserting in the laurel leaves at the god’s left foot: \textit{F.O.L.L.A.N.D.I.V.S A.P.O.L.I.N.I.D.I.C.A.V.I.T.}\textsuperscript{52}

The facing page drawing of the Belvedere Cleopatra/Ariadne mirrors this theme of inspiration by presenting the sculpture as a nymph of the garden font, through whose waters the young Hollanda runs his hand.\textsuperscript{53} Hollanda expected an engaged viewer and interlocutor in future ‘dialogues’ generated from his translated and stolen works. His album is part curated gallery and part academy; it is at once a cultural record, product and catalyst.

\textbf{Reading the Os Desenhos Antigualhas}

The cognitive skill that recognizes typologies requires breadth of knowledge and the ability to make educated comparisons. Hollanda’s typological arrangement of works of art and architecture demonstrates his knowledge and experience, stimulates and rewards that of his peers, and supports the less learned, or practiced viewer. This is partly accomplished by the documentary aspect

\textsuperscript{52} Deswarte-Rosa, ‘Le Rameau d’Or et de Science’.

\textsuperscript{53} Calvillo, ‘Reading Pliny’, pp. 288–289; see n75 for relevant bibliography on the nymph as a creative spirit associated with academic gatherings in Renaissance Rome.
FIGURE 5.10 Francisco de Hollanda, Trophies of Marius, fol. 147, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20
BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.
FIGURE 5.11  Francisco de Hollanda, Trophies of Marius, fol. 157, Os Desenhos da Antigualhas (c. 1540), Ms. 28-I-20
BIBLIOTECA DEL REAL MONASTERIO DE SAN LORENZO EL ESCORIAL, © PATRIMONIO NACIONAL.
of these drawings, especially the inscriptions that Hollanda took great care to provide. Not only do they suggest Hollanda’s abilities in Latin and humanist perspective, they also suggest first-person testimony. The facing-page pairs present objects and monuments to be learned or recognized, be they the columns of Trajan and Antonine, the Quirinal Dioscuri or the frescoes of Raphael in the Vatican. Sometimes these connections seem intended to prompt very specific associations, such as the copy of Raphael’s fresco of Hanno the Elephant, which was a gift from King João I to Leo X, facing the watercolor copy of frescoed pilasters all’antica in Raphael’s Loggia for the same pope, both considered marvels of Leonine Rome. Other sets of pages, such as the Quirinal Dioscuri or the aforementioned columns hardly seem typological, since by their installation, object type, or subject they were already pairs. If one considers the mechanisms that Hollanda implemented to insure a visual and intellectual comparison, however, a better understanding of the exercise emerges.

One such device is the way in which Hollanda utilized inscriptions across pages to enforce a way of looking, so that the reader must leave the left, verso, page and continue reading the inscription on the right facing page before moving back and down the left page to continue the next line of text; this is most profitably seen in the pages representing the Trophies of Marius [Figs. 5.10 and 5.11] and the facing pages of antique masks found in Rome that follow on folios 15v and 16.

The reader must combine TROPHÉA C. MARII SIC RO on folio 14v with MAE MARMORE SCVLPTA on folio 15, then return to folio 14v to continue reading DE TRIVMPHO CIMBRI that is completed by CO ERECTA on folio 15. Forcing the reader’s/ viewer’s eye to move between pages to complete Hollanda’s inscription compels a visual comparison between the two sculptural groups. Such an exercise prompts the reader/viewer to note the differences between the two and to marvel at the detail achieved by Hollanda’s skill. This is all the more striking and seemingly purposeful when one considers that Hollanda has inserted his own figure on folio 15. These figurative appearances in the Antiquitás elucidate the scale of the monuments, but as miniature self-portraits they also amplify the authority of Hollanda’s testimony and the performative, heuristic function of the drawings.

Reading is thus a central component of Hollanda’s method. In the case of the drawings, the visual mode of reading overlays and reinforces that of

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comparing works of art and architecture. No doubt, on the most basic level, the inscriptions supply the viewer with information about the works and their locations. But, as we have seen, the inscriptions also provide clues to identify the theme or typology connecting the works, whether it be a reference to Michelangelo's own early years in Rome or the nature of divine inspiration in a locus amoenus such as the Vatican Belvedere. I have previously argued that Holland's long citation of Pliny's *Natural History* in the fourth dialogue of Book Two also confronted his reader with a kind of meta-reading where the text of the dialogue becomes the interlocutors reading Pliny. In this case, his characters perform the exercise both prescribed and made possible by Holland's work, since there was no published vernacular translation of the *Natural History* in sixteenth-century Portugal. The visual mechanisms implemented by the pairs of drawings in the Desenhos da Antigualhas function in a similar way, using the act of reading an inscription to force the eye to move between pages and compare objects deemed worthy of study. This physical movement parallels the cognitive exercise of making connections between two things, so that reading underscores the process of discovery made possible through Holland's inventive linking of inscriptions, monuments and sculptures. Although the objects themselves are not the artist's invention, his presentation of them to the Portuguese court represents his triumphant return, each set of images bearing the spoils of his journey.

Holland's highly finished, annotated and arranged drawings provide an interpretative counterpart for his long citations of Pliny and Vitruvius. In the case of Pliny's text, the conversations of the dialogue guide the reader to consider certain themes such as the value of painting and the importance of learned

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55 As Oliveira Caetano notes, there was at least a manuscript by Francisco de Monzón, a chapter of his unpublished second volume of *Espejo del príncipe Christiano*, containing passages from Book Thirty-five of Pliny's *Natural History*, the book that addressed ancient painting and thus the book presented as a reading in Holland's fourth dialogue; see Oliveira Caetano's 'Francisco de Hollanda', pp. 32, 44, and 95 that provides the manuscript information (Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, MS. 618).

discussion, while the enacted reading of Pliny simultaneously forces and equips the reader to engage an important cultural source. Another extensive citation of Vitruvius in Chapter seventeen of Book One, "Of the Proportion of the Body", serves a similar function. Hollanda characterizes Vitruvius's passage on this subject as the best source:

Here we shall speak of the symmetry and measure of the rational creature, according to Marcus Vitruvius's very judicious examination; and I shall not be like some moderns who, misled by I know not what, wanted to create novelty in a matter that is so certain and well known ... But let us use that master's own words.57

The passages that follow this introduction are direct citations from Book Three, Chapter one of De Architectura. Hollanda's treatise might have provided, as it had for the Natural History, a vernacular translation when none yet existed. A note in Pedro Nunes's dedication of De Crepusculis (1541) indicates that he had begun a translation of Vitruvius for King João III. André Resende also seems to have been working on a translation of at least a part of De Architectura, and as both Deswarte-Rosa and Margarida Tavares da Conceição have noted, several editions of Diego de Sagredo's Medidas del Romano were published in Lisbon in the 1540s.58 Hollanda's decision to begin his own prologue to Book One of Da Pintura Antiga by citing extensively, and thus translating, one of Vitruvius's prologues demonstrates the timeliness of his project and his ambition to rival Nunes and Resende, or at least participate in the same humanist activity. Having returned from Rome with direct knowledge of ancient and contemporary art and architecture and recent exposure to the theoretical interests reflected in the editions of Alberti's De Pictura and Vitruvius's De Architectura, Hollanda re-entered the Portuguese court with a great deal to share.59 Whether we think of him as a bold young Dinocrates,

57 Hollanda, On Antique Painting, p. 99. See also Hollanda, Da Pintura Antiga, p. 102.
59 Hollanda's exposure to Italian art theory and probable knowledge of several publications is emphasized by Deswarte-Rosa, Ideias e Imagens, pp. 74, 168–171, and 197. Also see Hope's more skeptical assessment of Hollanda's theoretical fluency in 'Francisco de Hollanda and Art Theory'.
ultimately forces and inspiration on an unknown source. Another extensive and revealing passage, "Of the Proportion of the Human Figure," emphasizes Vitruvius's passage on the human body as a perfect model.

... but the rational creation's examination; and I know not what, wanted well known ... But let...

The text citations from Book Two of Vitruvius's treatise might have prompted a direct translation when none were found. Crepusculus (1541) indicated Joao III. Andre Reinald's publication of at least a part of Agarida Tavares da Conceição's Medidas del Romano in the decision to begin his own treatment extensively, and thus implies the timeliness of his translation. Or at least participate in the same with direct knowledge and recent exposure to Alberti's De Pictura and the Portuguese court with a bold young Dinocrates.

60 Hollanda, On Antique Painting, p. 68; Da Pintura Antiga, p. 9.