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COMPANION TO CANTO V

Canto V was first published in *The Dial* as “The Fifth Canto” in August 1921 and in *Poems 1918-1921*. New York: Boni & Liveright, 8 December 1921. (P&P IV: 172-175; Gallup 32). [Go to the Fifth Canto](#).

CITATION FORMATS

Annotations in the List of Works Cited:

Contributor name. *The Online Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, IV: n.gloss number. *The Cantos Project*. Web. Date of access.

Example: Preda, Roxana. *The Online Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, IV: n.13. *The Cantos Project*. Web. 5 September 2016.

In-text references

([Contributor name], *OCCEP* IV: n.no).

Example: (Bressan, *OCCEP* IV: n.3). If no name is indicated, the gloss was written by Roxana Preda. In this case, the citation will have this format: (*OCCEP* IV: n.13).



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References to the Cantos

As The Cantos Project is numbering the lines of *The Cantos* for the first time, references to cantos already glossed will be by canto number and line(s), as standard with classical works. Example: III: 7-17.

For cantos that are not yet glossed within the project, the references will be by canto number slash page number, as standard in the research on the poem. Example: III/12. The page number refers to the American edition of *The Cantos by Ezra Pound*. New York: New Directions, 1998.

SOURCES

Gaius Valerius Catullus. *Carmina* LXI, LXII

Herodotus. Ecbatana. *Histories* I: 97.3-99.1.

Dante Alighieri. *Par* XVIII: 73-108; *Inf* V: 107

Sappho. “To Atthis.” Trans Richard Aldington. *Des imagistes*.

Camille Chabaneau. *Les Biographies des troubadours en langue provençale*: Gaubert de Poicebot and Piere de Maensac. *LE* 96-7.

Robert Browning. “Meeting at Night” and “Parting at Morning.”

Benedetto Varchi. *Storia fiorentina*. Vol. 3.

Aeschylus. *Agamemnon* : 1344-1345.

Homer. *Iliad* I, 159, 225.

William Roscoe. 1806. *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth*. 4th ed. 2 vols. 1846.

Martial. *Epigrams* V, 34, 37; X: 61.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C	Carroll F. Terrell. <i>A Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound</i> . Berkeley: U of California P, 1993.
GK	Ezra Pound. <i>Guide to Kulchur</i> . London: Peter Owen, 1966.
HSP	Ezra Pound. <i>Homage to Sextus Propertius</i> in <i>P</i> 205-224.
LE	Ezra Pound. <i>Literary Essays</i> . Ed. T.S. Eliot. London: Faber, 1954
OCCEP	<i>Online Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound</i> . The Cantos Project. Web

P	<i>Personae. The Shorter Poems</i> . Eds. Lea Baechler and Walton Litz. New York: New Directions, 1990.
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TC	Ezra Pound. Three Cantos (1917) in <i>P</i> 229-245.
TTSC	Ezra Pound. "Troubadours: Their Sorts and Conditions." 1913. <i>LE</i> 94-108.

1. **Ecbatan** – Deioces’s city of seven walls, whose building is recounted by Herodotus. **Herodotus: Deioces and Ecbatana.**



2. **The bride** – Pound refers back to the previous canto, where he imagines Danaë in Ecbatana: “Vidal, or Ecbatan, upon the gilded tower in Ecbatan/ Lay the god's bride, lay ever, waiting the golden rain” (IV: 117-18).

3. **Clock ticks and fades out** – Pound establishes a contrast between his reality, in which time is marked by the clock, and his vision, which escapes the inexorable ticking to move among times and locations, overlaying ancient Egypt and Media, Ecbatana and Rome, Provence and Renaissance Italy, heaven and earth, this world and the next. As philosophical supports, he has Iamblichus’s idea of light, which is diffused everywhere, and Ficino’s statement that the intellect is “omniform” - can take any shape. (See n.7 and n.11).

4. **North was Egypt** – the river Nile has its source in the south of Egypt and flows towards the north. The Egyptian civilisation could flourish only along the river and especially in the North, where the Nile formed a delta and naturally fertilized the land. At the foundation of cities and civilisations lies the control and management of water, an idea Pound would take over again in Canto 53, where he celebrates the roots of Chinese civilisation and “Yu, leader of waters.”

5. **celestial Nile** – Ancient Egyptians believed that the sky and the earth mirrored each other and that there was a Nile flowing in the sky. During the day, the boat of the sun god Ra would float in its waters. During the night, while Ra was in underworld, the celestial Nile was visible as the Milky Way. (Griffith 356-57). The earthly Nile was a material manifestation of divinity.

6. **Iamblichus** – Neo-Platonist philosopher from Syria (ca. 245 - ca. 325) and author of the treatise *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, translated by Ficino into Latin in his anthology of Neo-Platonist thought. Pound referred to this translation in



*Three Cantos I: 146-150 and
Three Cantos III: 24-28 and 35-
39. (See OCCEP TC I: n.53 and
TC III: n.10-13).*

7. **Iamblichus’ light** –

Iamblichus described the quality of light in this manner: “the light of the Gods illuminates separately, and being firmly established in itself, wholly proceeds through all beings. Moreover, the light which is the object of sensible perception, is one, continuous, and everywhere the same, whole; so that it is not possible for any part of it to be separate and cut off from the whole, nor to be enclosed in a circle, nor at any time to depart from its illuminating source. After the same manner, therefore, the whole world being partible, is divided about the one and impartible light of the Gods. But this light is everywhere one and the same whole and is impartibly present with all things that are able to participate of it” (*Mysteries* 45-46, partly quoted in *C V*: n.5, 17).

8. **sparks like a partridge covey** – A similar comparison of souls moving like a group of birds is made by Dante, who, led by Beatrice through Paradise, contemplates the ordered arrays of souls in the sixth sphere of Jupiter, the heaven of just rulers. The souls “as birds just risen from the water’s edge” arranged themselves as golden letters against silver background and formed the message: DILIGITE IUSTITIAM QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM (“love justice, you who are judges on earth”). (*Par* 18: 70-108)
9. **like the “ciocco”** – play of sparks rising when a smouldering log is struck. Dante compares it with the movement of souls in the Jupiter sphere of Paradise. The sparks arrange themselves to form the crest and neck of a great eagle” (*Par* 18: 100-108).
10. **brand struck in the game** – Dante adds that fools on earth use the play of sparks for auguries. The introduction of this detail suggests that Pound is indeed looking at details of events that announce the future. One such detail is the “maze of approaching rain-steps” (*V*: 44) that accompany Poisebot in his most hopeful hour; or “Sea-change, a grey in the water” (*V*: 54) when he meets his former wife in a brothel. Another detail is the impending doom prophesized to Alessandro de Medici by his astrologer Del Carmine before his death.



Gustave Doré. Dante and Beatrice in the 9th circle of Paradise (Jupiter)

1. **et omniformis** – "Omnis intellectus est omniformis" (Ficino 289). Pound translates the formula as "every intellect is omniform." The quote is from Ficino's own title for section thirteen of Porphyry's *De Occasionibus* (*On Chances*). Pound introduces it in Three Cantos III for the first time: TC III: 24-25; *OCCEP* TC III: n.10.
2. **weaving points of gold** – possible reference back to Dante's vision of the sparks that arrange themselves in the image of the eagle (See n.9 above). Here Pound's imagination takes another path, veering to Aurunculeia's golden sandal.
3. **Topaz I manage** – Pound himself appears to draw attention to his poetic powers and to the way he weaves together metaphors of gold, yellow and amber in this canto: Danaë waiting for the golden rain; the soul-sparks Dante sees in the *Paradiso*, Aurunculeia's saffron-yellow shoe, the fading light from the sea at dusk.
4. **Three sorts of blue** – the three sorts of blue might be those Pound refers to in his poem "Blandula Tenulla Vagula":

My soul, when I meet thee, when this life's outrun,
Will we not find some headland consecrated
By aery apostles of terrene delight,
Will not our cult be founded on the waves,
Clear sapphire, cobalt, cyanine,
On triune azures, the impalpable Mirrors unstill of the eternal
change? (*P* 38)
5. **The fire? always** – Pound declared: "human beings [...] attain to very fine, enjoyable and dynamic emotional states, which cause them to emit what to careful chartered accountants may seem intemperate language, as Iamblichus on the fire of the gods, tou ton theon pyros, etc. which

comes down into a man and produces superior ecstasies, feelings of regained youth, super-youth and so forth, not to be surpassed by the first glass of absinthe” (GK 223).

6. **Aurunculeia** – Vinia Aurunculeia, the Roman bride whose wedding Catullus celebrates in *Carmina* LXI. A is invoked in Canto IV: 3 (See *OCCEP* IV: n.3).
7. **Gold-yellow saffron** – At the beginning of Catullus’s wedding song, LXI, Hymenaeus, the god of marriage, wears yellow sandals (IV: 86) *OCCEP* IV: n.26-27. Catullus 61.
8. **da nuces!** – “give nuts” - ritual during the Roman wedding. In Catullus 61, the groom’s teenage male concubine has now to give him up, as Vinus is getting married. At the wedding, the former favourite has to “give nuts” to boys, as a sign that he is leaving behind childish things. Nuts were toys, often used in games (Hersch 156).
9. **Hymenaeus** – Hymen, the god of marriage. See also IV: 86-87. *OCCEP* IV: n.26-27.
10. **Sextus** – possible reference to Sextus Propertius’s love for Cynthia, the subject of his *Elegies*, as a counterpoint to Catullus’s wedding song. Propertius and Catullus were contemporaries and Propertius himself sees analogies between his own poetry and that of Catullus. (*HSP* XII in P 224). In Book 3: XXI, of his *Elegies*, which Pound translates in section X of his *Homage*, Propertius offers a distorted mirror image of Aurunculeia and Manlius: Sextus is “attacked” by young boys, as he is walking the streets at night alone, neglecting his mistress. They feel they can “take” him, as he is not bound to a woman. “And one of the lot was given to lust” notes Propertius (*HSP* 219). Sextus spends the night with the boys and arrives at Cynthia’s house in the morning. He finds her alone: “I was stupefied./ I had never seen her looking so beautiful. No, not when she was tunick’s in purple” (*HSP* 220).
11. **Hesperus** – the planet Venus, as it is seen at dusk. Reference to Catullus LXII, where maidens invoke both Hesperus and Hymen to mourn the separation of a girl from her family: “Hesperus, comrades, has stolen one girl away from us ... [Hymen O Hymenaeus, Hymen come O Hymenaeus!]”
12. **older song ... Athis unfruitful** – Pound’s pastiche of a poem fragment by Sappho mourning a separation from a beloved woman. At the same time it is a celebration of same-sex love among women the way the references to “boys” in Catullus and Propertius had celebrated love among men. The poem was found in the collection of ancient papyri in Berlin and translated by Richard Aldington, who called it “To Atthis” (See also Kenner, *Era* 55-59). The adjective “unfruitful” mirrors Aldington’s mistranslation of the Aeolian word “gentle” for “sterile” (C V: n.19, 18). (See also Bressan, detailed textual notes to V: n.30-41, 141-144). [Sappho Atthis](#).

13. **Vinestock lie untended** – reference to Catullus LXII: “As the widowed vine which grows in naked field never uplifts itself, never ripens a mellow grape, but bending prone beneath the weight of its tender body now and again its highmost shoot touches with its root; this no farmer, no oxen will cultivate: but if this same chance to be joined with marital elm, many farmers, many oxen will cultivate it: so the virgin, while she stays untouched, so long does she age, uncultivated; but when she obtains fitting union at the right time, dearer is she to her husband and less of a trouble to her father.” [Catullus 62](#).
14. **Mauleon** – Savaric de Mauléon, (ca. 1181-1233) seneschal de Poitou, soldier, poet and patron of Gaubertz de Poicebot.



15. **Poicebot** – Gaubertz de Poicebot or Jausbert de Puycibot (fl. 1220-1231) – troubadour from Limousin. Pound refashions P's *vida* such as he had told it in "Troubadours: Their Sorts and Conditions" (1913). G was destined to be a monk but left the church, as he desired women. He put himself in the service of Savaric de Mauleon, who first gave him a horse and clothing. Going out into the world he met a lady who told him she would not be his unless he was a knight. "The new earned grade" is the knighthood that Savaric then bestowed upon Poicebot, so that he could marry the woman he loved. (TTSC in *LE* 95-96). See also note 10. [Gaubertz de Poicebot and Savaric de Mauleon](#).
16. **romerya** – pilgrimage, fig. roaming, roving (C n.22, 18).
17. **lei fassa furar a del** – "she let herself go gay," this is how Pound translates the phrase in the *vida* of Piere de Maensac (TTSC in *LE* 97). Gaubertz's wife and the wife of Bernart de Tierci were both courted by strangers and persuaded to leave their husbands, like Helen had been seduced and carried off by Paris. Yet, the same act had very different implications for each of the women. The life of Gaubertz's wife was destroyed; for the wife of de Tierci, a war was fought and won.
18. **Sea-change, a grey in the water** – Pound comments by images and literary references on Gaubertz's drama. The grey in the water is ominous, yet it is a reference to Browning's "Meeting at Night," which starts with the line: "The grey sea and the long black land." Unlike Gaubertz, who is just looking for a paid sexual encounter, the poet in "Meeting at Night" goes to the poor village house to meet the woman he loves. [Robert Browning: Meeting at night - Parting at morning](#).
19. **parting at morning** – In Browning's poem, it is the woman who speaks: her lover has a golden path in front of him; for her, the future is in the world of men. Again, Browning's poem is an ironic comment to Gaubertz's situation, where the woman is sent to a nunnery and

effectively closed from the world, whereas the husband loses the will to sing and thus the meaning of his life. **Robert Browning: Meeting at night - Parting at morning.**

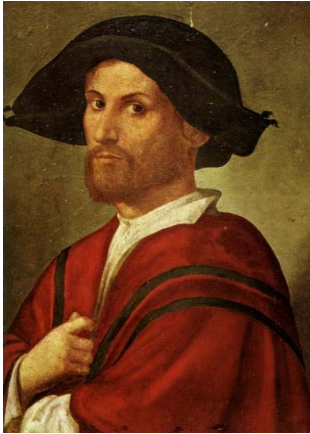
20. **Pieire de Maensac** – troubadour from Auvergne. Both he and his brother Austors were troubadours but agreed that one of them should have their castle and one of them should sing. Austors won the castle and Pieire the poetry. He fell in love with the wife of Bernart de Tierci and honoured and served her so well that she let herself be carried away to one of the castles of the Dauphin d’Auvergne. Her husband, Bernart, tried to win her back using the power of arms and the support of the Church. But the Dauphin did not surrender her back to her husband. **Peire de Maensac.**

21. **dreitz hom** – Prov. “an upstanding fellow.”

22. **Troy in Auvergnat** – The attractiveness of Piere de Maensac’s story for Pound was in its similarity to Homer’s tale of the Trojan War in the *Iliad*. The Trojan prince Paris had seduced and carried away Helen, wife of Menelaos. The husband gathered all the heroes of Greece and waged war on Troy for keeping his Helen, yet the Trojans did not give her back and resisted until they were destroyed.

23. **Tyndarida** – Helen of Troy was the stepdaughter of Tyndareus, king of Sparta.

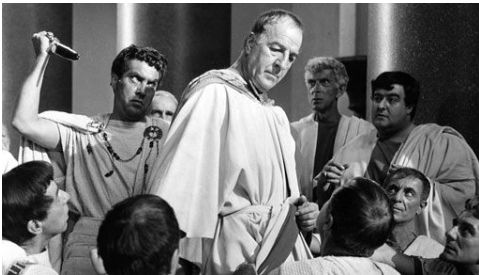
24. **John Borgia is bathed** – Giovanni Borgia (1474-1497), son of Pope Alexander VI, Duke of Gandia and brother to Cesare, Gioffre and Lucrezia Borgia. Giovanni was assassinated on the night of 14 June 1497 while returning from a feast held in his honour. He had left it together with Cesare, but had then left his brother to call on his mistress before returning home. The nightly encounter with a woman was fatal to both Giovanni Borgia and Alessandro de Medici, four decades later. Giovanni was “bathed” because his body was thrown into the Tiber (Roscoe I: 385-93). Pound also draws a parallel with Agamemnon, who was assassinated by his wife and cousin in the bath.



25. **At last** – Pound implies that the “bathing” occurred too late. This might be another reference to Agamemnon as a character both in Homer and Aeschylus. Pound alludes to A’s conflict with Achilles at the beginning of the *Iliad*. In the heat of his quarrel, Achilles drew his sword halfway to attack Agamemnon. If he had killed him, the Trojan War would have been over and Troy would not have been destroyed. But Achilles chose to restrain himself and withdraw. Agamemnon was murdered too late, when his death ceased to have any consequence for Troy, or for Greece

as a whole. See also n. 40.

26. **Slander** – Giovanni Borgia’s brother, Cesare, was blamed for the murder, but his guilt could never be proven. Giovanni was commander of the papal military forces, whereas Cesare had been made a cardinal against his inclination. Giovanni’s death opened for Cesare the military career he desired: one year after his brother’s death, in 1498, he resigned the function of cardinal and became commander of his father’s, Alexander VI’s army. Pound’s source, William Roscoe exonerated Cesare and ascribed the murder to a jealous rival. (Roscoe I: 393).
27. **Varchi of Florence** – Benedetto Varchi (1502-1565) Florentine humanist, poet and historian, author of the *Storia fiorentina* (16 vols, covering the period 1527-1538). He studied law at Pisa and lived in Padova (1537-1540) and Bologna (1541-43). The Medici family had been driven out of Florence in 1527 and the city then became a republic, a form of government it was able to retain only for three years. Pope Clement VII was a Medici and re-established his family’s government of the city by sending his nephew Alessandro to rule it. After A’s assassination in 1537, his successor Cosimo I called Varchi back to Florence in 1543, gave him a pension and commissioned him to write the history of the republic and the return of the Medici family.



28. **Brutus** – Marcus Junius Brutus (85-42), politician of Late Republican Rome, who, out of Republican sentiments, took part in the assassination of Julius Caesar in order to

restore the Roman republic. Caesar had trusted B., accepted him in his inner circle, and given him political tasks and honours, behaving in many respects like a father. This act of betrayal was punished by Dante in the lowest circle of the *Inferno*, where Satan himself is eternally eating the bodies of the three worst traitors in history: Judas, Brutus and Cassius.

29. **‘Σίγα μάλ’ αὖθις δευτέραν** – H. “Silence once more a second time.” Agamemnon is murdered by his wife in his bath after returning from Troy. Mash-up of two verses of Aeschylus’ play, *Agamemnon* 1344-1345:

XO: σῖγα: τίς πληγὴν αὐτεῖ
καιρῶς οὐτασμένος;

ΑΓ: ὦμοι μάλ’ αὖθις δευτέραν
πεπληγμένος.”

Chorus: “Silence! Who is this that cries out, wounded by a mortal



blow?”

Agamemnon: “And once again, alas! I am struck by a second blow.”

Agamemnon.

30. **Dog-eye** – At the beginning of the *Iliad*, Homer shows the relations between Achilles and Agamemnon to be extremely strained. Achilles



calls Agamemnon “dog-face” as a term of abuse. The two are quarreling over the spoils of war and particularly over the daughter of the priest Chryses, whom Agamemnon has to return to her father. Chryses had prayed to

Apollo to punish the Greeks and his prayers had been heard: Apollo was decimating the Greek army. Agamemnon gives back Chryses’s daughter but requests compensation from his allies, claiming this is due to him as a commander. He takes it from Achilles, by requesting his slave, Briseis. The heat mounts so high that Achilles draws the sword halfway against Agamemnon and has to be restrained by the goddess Pallas Athene. Achilles tells him: “Heavy with wine, with the face of a dog but the heart of a deer, [225] never have you had courage to arm for battle along with your people, or go forth to an ambush with the chiefs of the Achaeans. That seems to you even as death. Indeed it is far better throughout the wide camp of the Achaeans to deprive of his prize whoever speaks contrary to you. [230] (*Iliad* I: 92-244) (C n.36, 20). From this detail, it is clear that Pound makes the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon the mirror of the rivalries that led to Giovanni Borgia and Alessandro de Medici’s deaths. *Achilles and Agamemnon*

31. **Alessandro** – Alessandro de Medici (1511-1537), also called Il Moro, first Duke of Florence (1531-37). A’s rule of Florence was not what the Florentines wanted. After the sack of Rome in 1527, they had forced the Medicis into exile and returned to being a republic. However, Clement VII’s treaty with Charles V in Barcelona (1529) prepared the return of the Medici family and led to a siege of Florence which lasted for ten months, from October 1529 to August



Alessandro de' Medici, Duke of Florence (1510 – 1537)

1530. Florence was forced to surrender and accept Charles's terms. He imposed the restoration of the Medici family in 1531 and Alessandro became the first hereditary Duke of Florence in 1532. He was murdered by his cousin Lorenzino in the night between 6 and 7 January 1537. Before the murder, the two cousins were very close and took political decisions together. A. was assassinated by the one person he trusted most (Dall'Aglia 2, 14). The bait Lorenzino used was his aunt Caterina Soderini, a beautiful widow innocent of the plot. He organized a fake amorous encounter which gave him the opportunity to put A. in a room unguarded and unarmed. Then he attacked him together with a servant, who plunged a knife into his throat (Dall'Aglia 4).

32. **Se pia... o empia** – It. “noble... or ignoble” (Varchi III: 191). Varchi.
33. **Lorenzaccio** – Lorenzo de Medicis called Lorenzino or Lorenzaccio (the bad Lorenzo) (1514-1548). Son of Pier Francesco de Medici and



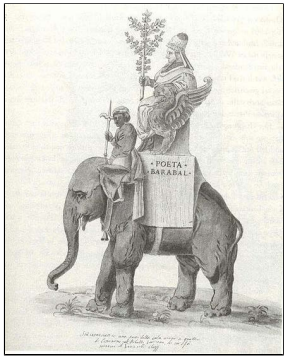
Alessandro's cousin from the poor branch of the family. The most notorious event of his life was the assassination of Alessandro, for which he paid with an eleven-year exile and his own death: he was murdered on 26 February 1548 on orders of Charles V. The meaning of L's act is still disputed: one side declared him a “second Brutus,” having done the deed so as to restore the republic in Florence; the

other view is that of “wicked and cruel parricide” (Dall'Aglia xiii).

34. **Caina attende** – It: “Caina is waiting” – Francesca da Rimini foresees the eternal punishment of her husband, Gianciotto Malatesta, who killed her and his own brother Paolo (*Inferno* V: 107). Caina is a frozen lake in the ninth circle of hell reserved for the murderers of kindred.

35. **Del Carmine** – Giuliano del Carmine, Alessandro's astrologer who had foreseen the murder in his horoscope. (Varchi III: 191). [Varchi on Lorenzaccio](#)
36. **se morisse, credesse caduto da se** – It. "If he died, thinking he had fallen by himself." Lorenzino planned to have Alessandro thrown from the wall, yet gave up the idea because he wanted Alessandro to know who killed him, not to think that he had fallen by accident (Varchi III: 191). [Varchi on Lorenzaccio](#).
37. **Σίγα** – H. "Silence." Chorus in Agamemnon: 1344
38. **Schiavoni** – It. "Slavonians." Pound refers to Giorgio di Schiavoni – the bargeman on the Tiber who saw how three men had thrown Giovanni Borgia's body into the river. (Roscoe I: 184-86).
39. **afterbirth** – Giovanni's cloak was still floating on the surface after Giovanni's body had been dumped into the river. One of the murderers threw a stone to sink it. [The murder of Giovanni Borgia](#).

40. **Barabello** – Baraballo, abbot of Gaeta. On the feast of Cosma and Damian, 1518, Pope Leo X thought to offer himself and the city a day of amusement by conferring the laurel wreath on the poet B. who "insensible to his own defects" thought himself to be a better poet than Petrarch. The pope offered the poet to ride on the back of an elephant from the Vatican to the Capitol. Everybody present had their first laughs seeing that B could not mount the elephant. Finally he succeeded, but the animal was so frightened by the noise and the crowd gathered at the event that at the bridge of St. Angelo, it refused to move any further and the poet disappeared into the crowd. (Roscoe II: 181-82).



41. **Mozarello** – Giovanni Mozzarello, poet writing in Latin and protégé of Leo X. Leo appointed him governor over the fortress at Mondaino, so that he could have enough leisure to pursue his poetry. M was probably assassinated – he disappeared and was found after a month at the bottom of a well, crushed by his mule. (Roscoe II: 177-78).

42. **Sanazzaro** - Jacopo de Sanazzaro (1458-1530). Neapolitan poet, who wrote in Latin and had a high reputation for his poems. He was loyal to the family of Ferdinand and Alphonso II de Aragon who gave him patronage. In the calamity years between 1500-1504, when the kingdom of Naples was lost and regained and lost again, Sanazzaro



stood by Federigo, the last king of the Aragon family, as he was deposed by a papal bull. S went with him into exile in France and stayed with him until Federigo's death in 1504, even supporting his patron financially. (Roscoe I: 40-3; 219)



43. **Fracastor** – Girolamo Fracastoro. (1483-1553). Physician, poet and scientist from Verona. F's most important work is in epidemiology, he is the first to have named syphilis and typhus. F also wrote poetry in Latin such as his poem *Syphilus* which incorporated his scientific findings. He belonged to the circle of humanists and poets around Bartolomeo D'Alviano

(Roscoe: II: 158-64)

44. **Cotta** – Giovanni Cotta (1480-1510) poet of Verona who wrote poetry in Latin. He was a friend of Navagero and Fracastor with whom he shared the patronage of Bartolomeo D'Alviano (Roscoe I: 51). Cotta was very loyal to D'Alviano, even at the time the general was captured and imprisoned by the French (1509-1513). On a mission to Julius II to secure D'Alviano's freedom, he died of the pest. He was thirty. (Roscoe II: 453).

45. **Ser D'Alviano** – Bartolomeo D'Alviano (1455-1515). Italian condottiere who served the Orsini family. In 1508, he entered the service of the Venetians for whom he fought against Emperor Maximilian. Cotta and Navagero commemorated his victories (Roscoe I: 271). As a true condottiere, D'A cultivated the arts and surrounded himself with poets.



46. **Al poco giorno ed al gran cerchio d'ombra** – “To the short day and its great arc of shadow,” first line of a sestina by Dante Alighieri. **Al poco giorno**.

47. **Talk the talks** - D'Alviano received from the Venetians the town of Pordonone where he founded an academy to reunite the Latin poets of his circle: Fracastoro, Navagero and Cotta.

48. **Navighero** – Andrea Navagero (1482-1529). Venetian poet writing in Latin and classicist scholar. He associated with the printer Aldus Manutius, for whom he collected manuscripts several of which were published with his notes. N was sent on diplomatic missions to Charles V and Francis I. He was so careful about his reputation that he destroyed almost all his own occasional poetry in Latin. Likewise he was wont to burn a copy of Martial every year, “whom he probably considered as the

chief corrupter of that classical purity which distinguished the writers of the Augustan age” (Roscoe II: 164-68).

- 49. **Martial** – Marcus Valerius Martialis (ca. 41 - ca. 102) Roman poet, best known for his epigrams.
- 50. **Slavelet** – Erotion, a child slave who died before she turned six. Martial mourns her in three of his epigrams (Book V: 34, 37 and Book X: 61). [Martial and Erotion](#).
- 51. **“Se pia...deliberazione”** – “If noble or ignoble, but certainly, a resolute and terrible decision.” (C V: n.58). [Varchi on Lorenzaccio](#).
- 52. **Ma se morisse** – “But if he died” – pound replaces Varchi’s “or” with “but.

Useful Links

- Ezra Pound Society
- New Directions
- Ezra Pound Papers at Beinecke
- Ezra Pound Papers at the Harry Ransom Center
- The Cantos on Wikipedia
- List of cultural references to The Cantos
- C. F. Terrell's Companion on googlebooks
- The Cantos at Amazon



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