

Ezra Pound's Defence of a Hero in "Malatesta Cantos" (VIII-XI)

Akiko Miyake

"Malatesta Cantos" (VIII-XI) is to the first sixteen cantos the very corner stone for which Pound spent all the energy of his maturing age. Comparing the drafts of Pound's at Yale University with the collection of his letters there, we find him starting the research of Sigismondo Malatesta's life in August 1922, enjoying "Various XVth c. wash lists."¹ In July the following year, the poem was already published in *Criterion*. Once this foundation for the first unit of *The Cantos* was laid, the rest was an easy task of collecting his earlier materials printed as "The Three Cantos," "The Fourth Canto" and "Eighth Canto" (the present Canto II) into Cantos I-VII just for making the beginning. Thus was published in 1925 *A Draft of the First XVI Cantos* with Pound's theme of Greek-Egyptian Mysteries, on which ground Cantos XVII to XXX were developed absorbing the history of the Italian Renaissance. The one year's research (1922-1923), however, covers such an incredible amount of materials that even the quite impressive list of twelve books in Carroll Terrell's *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* has left some inevitable lacunas. Recently three excellent articles by Michael F. Harper, Daniel Bornstein, Bend D. Kimpel and T. C. Duncan Eaves² further expanded Pound's range of study. "Questions of the accuracy or inaccuracy of P's scholarship can be best settled by someone who has tried to find an error in his life of S. Malatesta in the cantos . . .,"³ prophesied Pound to Louis Untermeyer in 1932, and now Poundians are exactly discovering his amazing accuracy in Malatesta scholarship. What charms of this local princeling carried away our poet to champion for him against the judgment of history? Sigismondo Malatesta was a condottiere, or captain of mercenaries, whom Jacob Burckhardt commented about merely to exemplify the Renaissance incongruity of refined culture and moral unscrupulousness withstanding in one person.⁴ Why should Pound turn every stone in the history of Marca and Romagna to defend this infamous Lord of Rimini?

The answer stands ready in the structure of the first sixteen cantos. Pound discovered in Sigismondo a hero of his Greek-Egyptian mysteries. In order to prove how the poet constructed his own version of mysteries, I have written "The Greek-Egyptian Mysteries in Pound's 'The Little Review Calendar' and in Cantos 1-7."⁵ An initiate in Osiris-Isis-Dionysus Mysteries wears a crown of palm leaves to represent the sun,⁶ descends underworld following the sun's voyage at night, marries the fertility goddess of Isis or Koré in the realm of the dead, passing the judgment of Osiris there, gets himself ritualistically resurrected on the bright morning to the happy isle of Elysium.⁷ These mystical rites were observed for the fertility of the land so that the initiate was supposed

to undergo the suffering of death for his tribe like Osiris, and to bring back the abundance of crops as he marries the goddess. He is a hero of a tribe, just as *The Cantos* was a tale of a tribe, an ἥρωας whose tomb was honored in Greece with sacrifices,⁹ and even a year daimon to motivate the course of the sun just as Herakles was.¹⁰

“Malatesta Cantos” are wrapped like pie-meat within these mysteries cantos from before and behind. Recapitulating the content of the mysteries, we read first that Odysseus the hero descends underworld in Canto I with the Eleventh Book of *Odyssey*. The doctrine of Dionysus is proclaimed in Canto II with Ovid’s Fourth Book from *Metamorphoses*. Koré, the fertility goddess appears in Canto III both resurrected in the spring air and caught underworld, whereas the fragmented truths of Osiris are collected from numerous images of poetical works in Canto IV, even as Isis, the wife of Osiris, collected the torn pieces of Osiris’ body and got him resurrected.¹¹ Cantos V and VI integrated some history of the Italian Renaissance and Provence into the fertility rites. Concerning Canto VII, I have pointed out that the poet is in Osiris’ Inner Chamber as well as in Paris of his days, by interpreting the “lintel” (7/25) to mean the lintel that the Egyptian dead must know before Osiris’ judgment.¹² Consequently, when Pound defends Sigismondo Malatesta he is defending his hero in the presence of Osiris towards eternity. After the “Malatesta Cantos” Dionysus’ mysteries must be sought again in the modern scenes of Canto XII and the hell must be traversed in Cantos XIV and XV. Yet the defence is declared to be successful in the poem, for we find in Canto XVI “the heroes, / Sigismundo, and Malatesta Novello [his brother]” (16/69) on the Purgatorial Island which will be glorified soon in Canto XVII as Elysium.

If the Renaissance means for the West to produce a magnificent crop of art works by introducing the Greek culture, the hero’s passing Osiris’ judgment is indispensable for the resurrection of Koré or Pound’s καλή καρὰθή¹³ of the Hellenic Spirit. Pound depicted the whole efflorescence of the Renaissance in *A Draft of the First XXX Cantos*, beginning with the Greek Emperor’s visit to the Council of Ferrara in 1438, accompanied by Gemisto Pletho (8/30),¹⁴ whose Platonism inspired Cosimo de’ Medici to open the Academy of Florence and to start the Italians’ inheriting the old language.¹⁵ According to Pound, the Renaissance continued till the sack of Rome in 1527 by the German-Spanish army.¹⁶ As Francesco Guicciardi speculated, it was Pope Alessandro VI, who cooperated with Lodovico Sforza to invite King Charles VIII of France to invade Naples and caused this great calamity in 1494.¹⁷ Like Guicciardi, Pound also concludes the Italian Renaissance Cantos with the death of Pope Alessandro Borgia in 1503, “Il Papa mori” (30/149). Such was his fundamental planning for the Italian Renaissance Cantos that before conjuring the resurrection of art in Ferrara, Florence and Venice (Cantos XX–XXVI) his hero must be tried and justified to be a generating power of the Greek tribal spirit and its resurrection.

With such ideas of a Greek ἥρωας in mind, we are amazed to see how Sigismondo just fits in the image. The Poundian hero in the fertility mystery first should resemble Odysseus, the protagonist of the whole *Cantos*. Sigismondo was definitely “Polumetis” (9/36) or a man of many minds (Terrell, p. 46), as Pound applied the Homeric epithet

of Odysseus to the Lord of Rimini. Tall, good-looking with chestnut brown hair, grand and elevated in spirit (“L’accompagnava poi una grandezza d’animo tanto elevata . . .”), as Cesare Clementini portrays,¹⁸ Sigismondo had both a Renaissance man’s intellectual versatility and a successful soldier’s simple vigor and charm. “L’indole franca e generosa, la naturale facondia, la dottrina, l’erudizione, l’umanità delle lettere, la propensione verso i dotti, l’eletto gusto e il conoscimento dell’arti siccome distinguono Sigismondo dalla comune de’ Principi . . .,”¹⁹ wrote Francesco Gaetano Battaglini. A scholar, soldier, poet and prince, interested in devising many military machines (“Invento diversi stromenti bellici; e varie forme di machine . . .”),²⁰ Sigismondo should be properly honored with the title of “Polumetis.”

Actually Sigismondo responded most quickly and heartily the call of the dying Byzantine Empire for the help of Italians and inheriting the ancient Greek culture. In 1459, when Pope Pius II called for a crusade at the Conference of Mantua in order to rescue Greece from the threatening occupation of the Turks, Sigismondo was the only prince who eloquently supported the cause. “E Pio II lodò dinanzi all’ assemblea il nobile consiglio del Malatesta,”²¹ wrote Giovanni Soranzo. Pound’s line, “And what he said was all right in Mantua . . .” (10/43), is therefore a real understatement, for Sigismondo’s campaign in Sparta in 1466 (11/50) was the only result of the Pope’s enthusiastic instigation of the crusade. In the small local court of Rimini, the Lord was called by the name of “Poliocretes, semper invictus”²² (Taker of Cities always unconquerable), as Pisanello inscribed on his medal, “Poliocretes” being an epithet for King Demetrius of Macedonia (Terrell, p. 46). Basinio the poet took refuge in this court in 1449, competed the skill of eloquence with Porcelio Pandone on whether one can be a good poet without knowing Greek authors in the presence of the court²³ and “talked down the anti-Hellene” (9/34). Before Pound, Basinio already glorified Sigismondo by writing a Latin epic of *Hesperis*, as if the Lord of Rimini were an Odysseus or one of the “Greci Eroi contro il Regno di Priamo . . .”²⁴ (Greek heroes against the Kingdom of Priam). In Sparta Sigismondo searched the tomb of Gemisto Pletho, piously took his ashes to his Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini. It is this act of Sigismondo that Pound most credited him for as a cultural hero. “I leave the reader to decide whether without that incitement to curiosity even Herr Schulze wd. have dug up the illegible ms. in the Laurenziana or anyone noticed the latin pages bound in at the end of an almost unfindable edtn. of Xenophon. 1460 . . .,”²⁵ challenged Pound. Thanks to Sigismondo, the ancient sensibility of Greek folklore and religion still alive in Pletho’s Platonism was transmitted to Fritz Schultze’s *Georgios Gemistos Plethon und Seine Reformatorischen Bestrebungen* (1874).

Yet for Pound Sigismondo was before anything an adorer of his goddess, Isotta da Rimini. In his early drafts, we find most beautiful lines:

Isotta, clothed with the skies, mistress of the sun friend of the grass,
distract, aimless
distract and aimless, the blue robe brushing the grass.²⁶

Sigismondo married Isotta, his mistress of long standing, just when he badly needed an ally which a dynastic marriage would certainly procure,²⁷ so that Pound was right to say that Sigismondo loved Isotta to his distraction (“*et amava perdutamente Isotta degli Atti*” 9/14). Pius II accused Sigismondo for his having profane letters inscribed on her tomb, “D. Isottae Ariminensi Sacrum. MCCCCL.”²⁸ Whether the capital “D” should be read “Divae,” as Pius II did in prosecuting Sigismondo’s deification of his wife, or read “Dominae,” as Michael F. Harper protested,²⁹ Pound himself preferred Pius II’s censorious reading, “DIVAE ISOTTAE SACRUM,”³⁰ by quoting it in *The Pisan Cantos* (76/459). In Pound’s drafts, Isotta “clothed with the skies” is exactly Koré in the spring air, and her divinity is emphasized with her being “friend of the grass,” for the grass stands for Pound’s idea of fertility since his very early poem, “Oltre Torre Orlando.” Sigismondo’s very deification of Isotta links the ancient cult of Isis with the Renaissance prince of Rimini. “*e ‘ne fu degna’*” (And she was worth it), continues Pound the praise of Isotta in Canto IX,

“constans in proposito
“Placuit oculis principis
“pulchra aspectu”
“populo grata (Italiaeque decus) (9/41)

quoting the Latin phrases from Alessandro da Rimini’s contemporary chronicle, “. . . erat haec ulchra aspectu . . . constans in proposito, grata populo et placita oculis principis,”³¹ together from the inscription of Matteo da Pasti’s medal, “ISOTE ARIMINENSI FORMA ET VIRITUTE ITALIE DECORI.”³² In Pound’s mysteries it must be Isotta who taught Sigismondo a soldier to worship beauty, for Plutarch believed that the worshipper of Isis, the goddess of the moon, will “desire the beauty ineffable and unutterable.”³³ The relief of the moon goddess in Tempio³⁴ must have inspired Pound to identify Sigismondo to be a hero of the Greek mysteries. His hero in *The Cantos* is most highly honored for the reason that “*Templum aedificavit*” (He built the Tempio, 8/32), and for filling it with pagan and Christian works of art. Only in adoration of his moon goddess, Pound’s hero can be the Greek sun-daimon like Herakles.³⁵

Besides being an ideal “Greek” hero, Sigismondo, as Pound detected, championed himself against the Church’s owning dominions, which was a very advanced idea in the history of Italy, and in which Sigismondo all the more appealed to Pound’s American, Protestant sympathy. History condemned him fiercely. The prosecutor was Pius II, or Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the celebrated Renaissance humanist whose *Commentarii* dominated all the contemporary and historical views with his extremely biased charge against Sigismondo:

Stupro, caede, adulter,
homocidia, parricidia ac periurus,

presbitericidia, audax, libidinosus,
wives, jew-girls, nuns, necrophiliast, *fornicarium ac sicarium,*
proditor, raptor, incestuosus, incendiarius,
ac concubinarius . . . (10/44).

[“Ravisher, butcher, adulterer / murderer, parricide and perjurer,
killer of priests, reckless [one], lecher,/. . . fornicator and assassin,
traitor, rapist, committer of incest, arsonist, and keeper of con-
cubines.” Terrell, p. 52.]

“*Lussurioso incestuoso, perfide, sozzure ac crapulone,*
assassino, ingordo, avaro, superbo, infidele
fattore di monete false, sodomitico, uxoricido” (10/45).

[“Lustful indulger in incest, perfidious, filthpot and glutton, / assassin,
greedy, grabbing, arrogant, untrustworthy / counterfeiter, sodomite,
wife-killer.” Terrell, p. 53.]

Not a single person within his life-time can hardly commit one half of the crimes listed. Here is Pound’s opportunity to develop a splendid defence against history. The judge was il cardinale di San Pietro in Vincoli or the famed scholar, Niccolò Cusa, and the court is in the Renaissance Rome, 1461, with all the Renaissance heroes in the audience, Cosimo de’ Medici for Florence, Borso d’Este for Ferrara, Francesco Foscari for Venice, Francesco Sforza for Milan and Federigo Montefeltro for Urbino. Translating from Pius II’s eulogy for Andreas Benzi’s prosecuting oratory from Vatican MSS,

cuius completa iniquitas est: cuius factor non ecclesiam solum: et
ipsum inficit terrarum orbem: sed in caelum usque sentitur.
Ipsisque beatissimis spiritibus: nisi essent passionis incapaces:
nauseam faceret,³⁶

Pound made a magnificent raillery,

“Whence that his, Sigismundo’s, foctor filled the earth
And stank up through the air and stars to heaven
Where—save they were immune from sufferings—
It had made the emparadised spirits pewk”
from their jeweled terrace (10/45).

Together with such rhetoric, the poet slipped in a very effective judgement against the Pope. He added to the charge against Sigismondo one line whose source even *A Companion to the Cantos* left unidentified, “and that he [Sigismondo] said the monk ought not to own property” (10/44).

Pound did not revise history. It was Giovanni Soranzo who dug up the Vatican

archives and included in Benzi's charge that Sigismondo "negò il dritto di essa [the Church] al civile e temporale dominio"³⁷ (denied the right of the Church for the civil and temporal dominion). The same "misconduct," of "avere asserito che il papa e i prelati non devono avere un dominio temporale"³⁸ (having asserted that the Pope and the prelates must not have temporal dominion), was counted for one of his heresies which he should repudiate for surrender in 1463. Pound's implication in adding this issue of the Church property is clear. Sigismondo in fighting against the Pope resorted to this Protestant-like idea, whereas the Pope claimed that Rimini was technically a vicariate of the Church. The sudden downfall of the Lord of Rimini caused an awe among the Italians. In 1457 the House of Malatesta was a grand and glorious power in Marca. After his surrender to the Pope in 1463, his territory was taken "Right up to the door-yard" (11/49). After the death of Sigismondo in 1468, his eldest son, Roberto, was rewarded with the title, "Il Manifico," for rescuing Pope Sixtus IV's Rome,³⁹ but with his death Rimini fell into the hand of the Church. Why did the House of Malatesta, famed for the most beloved and pathetic scene of Paolo and Francesca in Dante's *Inferno* (V, 88–108), perish so utterly? Clementini's suspicion of some hidden sin on the part of Sigismondo certainly represents the attitude of people:

. . . e ciò forse permise Iddio, per li gravi peccati da lui commessi,
vedendolo scordato delle virtù, e de' tanti doni, che con si larga mano
haveva in lui compartiti⁴⁰

Because such doubts lurk through history, even though Pius' theatrical gestures were considered absurd,⁴¹ all the more our poet found it his duty to open the court of poetry and to reclaim Sigismondo from the hell to which the Pope consigned him.⁴² Pound declares that the Pope seized his territory for a hypocritical avarice, unprincipled for the Vicar of Christ.

Of Pius II's charges Pound ignored such absurdities as parricide, committer of incest, sodomite, wife-killer. No historian ever found evidences for the last charge of his killing of the two wives, Ginevra d'Este and Polixena Sforza. None can believe that the awesome fathers-in-law, Niccolò d'Este and Francesco Sforza, would ever shut up at their daughters' murders. The charge of his being a necrophilist and rapist refers to the horrifying rumour that Sigismondo killed a German lady who visited Italy for the Jubilee year, 1450, and violated her corpse after (Terrell, p. 45). Among Sigismondo's biographers, Clementini carefully recorded the whole rumours in details, but refused to believe the fact, indicating for his evidence that any of the contemporary chronicles of Rimini, especially Gaspare Broglio's *Cronaca Universale*, did not mention the incident.⁴³ Edward Hutton followed Clementini carefully, taking the rumour as true,⁴⁴ whereas Battaglini absolutely denied the fact adding that Pope Nicolas V did not think Sigismondo was guilty.⁴⁵ Pound took notes, "Her hair like a rain of gold, CLEMENTINI, p. 375,"⁴⁶ as if recalling Arnaut Daniel's "*lo soleills provil*"⁴⁷ (The sun rains, 4/15). Yet he dismissed the rumour with just one line in Canto IX,

And there was the row about that German-Burgundian female (9/36),

showing as good sense as that of Lodovico Antonio Muratori, who in *Annali d'Italia* dismissed the scandal with the clear statement, "S'egli veramente fosse reo di tale eccesso, non saprei dirlo, perchè per quanta inquisizione ne facessero i savi Veneziani, non si potè scoprirne l'Autore"⁴⁸ (Whether he was really guilty of such extremity, I would not know to tell, because for so much inquisition the wise Venetians could not find the culprit). For the reason, Pound's defence was very simple. Stating how the Pope had his great effigy made with the script, "SIGISMUNDUS HIC EGO SUM / MALATESTA, FILIUS PANDULPHI, REX PRODITORUM" (10/44, "I am he, Sigismondo Malatesta, Son of Pandolpho, King of Traitors), and had it burnt on the street of Rome in 1462, our poet added to the script, "I. N. R. I." (10/46, Jesus Nazare-nus Rex Judaeorum),

God's enemy and man's enemy, *stuprum, raptum* [debauchery, rape]
I.N.R.I. Sigismund Imperator, Rex Proditorum (10/46),

suggesting that Sigismondo merely suffered from the malice of his enemies even as the Son of Man did.⁴⁹

With all those charges swept away, still the fact remains, as Muratori observes, that Sigismondo was so ill-reputed that the whole Italy listened to such fearful scandal ("Certo è, che la voce comune addossò ad esso Malatesta questa iniquità, e ne parlano fino i Giornali di Napoli.")⁵⁰ It is true that Sigismondo made enemies everywhere. King Alfonso of Naples and his son, Ferdinando, never relented until his utter defeat in 1463, because Sigismondo 'betrayed' Alfonso in 1447 for defending Florence. Ravenna had a grievance against the Lord of Rimini for his "stealing" their marble in 1450, though it turned out to be a mere purchase.⁵¹ On the other hand, he lost in the same year the generalship of Venice for his claiming the hereditary right for Pesaro against Federigo Montefeltro and Francesco Sforza (9/36-37). Pius II and the Siense could never forgive him, because when he fought for Siena against Count Pitigliano, he made secret peace with the count in 1454 (9/37-10/43). Such infamy of his makes too remarkable a contrast with his two rivals most popular and successful, Francesco Sforza and Federigo Montefeltro, for all these three worked as condottieres, and the two established the dukedoms, except Sigismondo. Sforza seized the dukedom of Milano, and Montefeltro served as the Captain of Pius II, not only was rewarded with the dukedom of Urbino, but also eulogized for his virtue and piety in Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtiers*. Pound elaborately studied all these sources of Sigismondo's ill-fame, most convincingly exposed the treacheries of the rivals and the enemies, their cut-throat struggles and unfairness in a subdued, elegiac voice.

True to his technique of Ideogram, Pound first introduces a portrait of Sigismondo at the height of his career between 1449 and 1452 by quoting from his two letters and from a contract to be a Captain of the Florentine army. In 1448 he "smashed at

Piombino” and drove “out of the / Terrene of the Florentines” (10/46) the army of Naples, thus rescuing Florence together with the early efflorescence of the Renaissance.⁵² As the most successful condottiere of the days, he was appointed the commander of the Venetian army in September 1449, camping at Cremona.⁵³ He was much solicited by Florence, Venice and even by his very enemy of Naples.⁵⁴ Yet soon the Peace of Lodi⁵⁵ would throw him out of these major employments in 1454. Such was the impact of the fall of Constantinople in 1453 that Venice secretly made peace with Milan and Florence in order to fight against the Turks threatening their Oriental dominions. The contract with Florence in 1452 quoted here was unfortunately the last honour Sigismondo could serve the Florentines with.

Bright with justifiable pride, the hero meets the reader immediately before his gradual decline started. How magnificently the first letter of Canto VIII proves that Sigismondo’s mind was capable of writing with entire honesty just to fit in Pound’s ideal of 正名 (51/252) or the rectitude in language, together with his inexhaustible passion and resources to invite good artists for Tempio Malatestiano then under construction, Piero della Francesca in this case according to the side gloss of *A Draft of XVI Cantos*,⁵⁶

But I want it to be quite clear, that until the chapels are ready
I will arrange for him to paint something else
So that both he and I shall
Get as much enjoyment as possible from it,
And in order that he may enter my service
And also because you [Giovanni de’ Medici] write me that he needs cash,
I want to arrange with him to give him so much per year

For I mean to give him good treatment
So that he may come to live the rest
Of his life in my lands—
Unless you put him off it—
So that he can work as he likes,
Or waste his time as he likes . . . (8/29).

The original letter in Yriarte’s book proves that Pound adds nothing to augment its clarity.⁵⁷ The second letter addressed to Giovanni de’ Medici also, “Venice has taken me on again” (8/30),⁵⁸ accounts for why Sigismondo was camping at Cremona: Francesco Sforza was on march to seize Milan. Quietly and ominously looms up the success of his major rival, whose consequence already was asserted in the contract document placed before this second letter. There in 1452 Sforza became “the aforesaid most illustrious Duke of Milan” (8/29), with whom even Florence had to make it their steady policy to ally.⁵⁹ Thus like a good tragedy, the first picture of the protagonist is threatened remotely with the on-coming calamities.

Sigismondo married an illegitimate daughter of Sforza, Polixena, in 1442 because he needed Sforza's help for claiming the city of Pesaro, which was owned by his kinsman, Galeazzo Malatesta.⁶⁰ The location of Pesaro that just intersects Sigismondo's territory of Rimini and that of Fano explains sufficiently Sigismondo's persistent try to get it for himself. With the gorgeous procession of the Renaissance festivity, Francesco Sforza and his wife who was a daughter of the Duke of Milan⁶¹ arrived at Rimini in May the same year,

The small white horses, the
 Twelve girls riding in order, green satin in pannier'd habits;
 Under the baldachino [canopy], silver'd with heavy stitches,
 Bianca Visconti, with Sforza,
 The peasant's son and the duchess,
 To Rimini, and to the wars southward,
 Boats drawn on the sand, red-orange sails in the creek's mouth,
 For two days' pleasure, mostly "*la pesca*," fishing,
Di cui in the which he, Francesco, *godeva molto* [enjoyed much].⁶²
 To the war southward
 In which he, at that time, received an excellent hiding (8/31).

Translating the record of Clementini and Battaglini, that the visitor "sotto un baldachino di broccato d'argento,"⁶³ as "Cavalcava similmente la moglie tra dodici donzelle tutte vestite ad una livrèa di color verde,"⁶⁴ Pound depicted the joyful day. The red orange sails going the Adriatic Sea is Pound's own colorful image. Yet the idyllic scene of Sforza's departure on the contrary brought Sigismondo a Herculean labour of fighting against Pope Eugenius and the King of Naples' armies for the sake of Sforza. Thanks to the son-in-law, Sforza in 1443 could retire to the City of Fano fortified by Malatesta after his defeat at the King of Naples' Realm.⁶⁵ Pound's line that Sforza "received an excellent hiding" in the South is a real anti-climax after the heightened hope of Sigismondo. Nevertheless our hero continued to be the indispensable support for Sforza, because he met the Pope's captains at Monteluro, "fought like ten devils . . . / and got nothing but the victory" (9/34) in November the same year. Sigismondo killed the principal captain with his own hand, and enabled the Count Sforza to return to the North of Marca.⁶⁶

Outrageously, this venerable father-in-law of Sigismondo stole Pesaro and gave it to his brother, Alessandro in 1450. The incredible details are seen in Canto IX. Francesco Sforza seems to have been a man of such personal magnetism that he could win a boundless devotion from individuals he had to deal with. ". . . die Feinde bei seinem Anblick die Waffen weglegten und mit entblösstem Haupt ihn ehrerbietig grüssten, weil ihn jeder für den gemeinsamen 'Vater der Kriegerschaft' hielt"⁶⁷ (. . . the enemies at his sight laid down the arms with naked heads and reverentially greeted to him, while each held him for common the father of the men-at-arms), wrote Jacob Buruckhardt.

Otherwise how could he shift his allegiance so rapidly as he in 1449,

stood with the Venetians in November,
With the Milanese in December,
Sold Milan in November, stole Milan in December
Or something of that sort . . . (8/32).

His acrobatic is narrated in *Annali d'Italia*. At the death of Filippo Maria Visconti, Duke of Milan in 1447, the Milanese set up the Ambrosian Republic. Knowing Sforza's claim for the Dukedom because he married Filippo's daughter, the Venetians would rather keep him on their side than resist him, until he secretly obtained the City of Lodi. Detecting the plot in the air, the Venetians protested. Sforza marched out of Lodi with dignity, went to camp in the territory of Milan. For the threat of the Venetians, however, he agreed to come in terms with either of Venice and Milan, "Mostrò ancora di voler pace colle parole, ma il contrario apparve ne'fatti . . . attese ad affamar Milano, Città allora mal provveduta di viveri"⁶⁸ (With words still showed the will of making peace, but contrary seemed in facts . . . waited for Milan to be starved, a city then badly supplied with foods). For betraying Milan and Venice together, Sforza had an excellent opportunity at the death of the condottiere of Milan, which he seized suddenly in December, routed the Venetian army captained by Sigismondo, and captured the City of Milan with ease.

The temperamental difference of Sforza and Sigismondo was revealed by the two complicated ideograms in Canto VIII: the one is that of alchemy in Sigismondo's "teeming with cattle thieves" (8/32),⁶⁹ for Sforza is figured to be Hermes in Canto XXIV having stolen Apollo's cattle (24/114); the other in Gemisto Pletho's concept of "Poseidon, *concret Allgemeine*" (8/31). Terrell's *Companion* refers for the latter to Schultz's *Georgios Gemistos Plethon*, explicating the concrete universal as the general principle visible in particulars (p. 40). According to Pletho's *Nomoi*, Poseidon is such universal principle as makes simultaneously the first cause of the form and the creator of Juno, the cause of the primitive matter. Furthermore it is the principle "qui donne aux êtres leur caractère spécifique" (that gives the beings their specific characters).⁷⁰ In other words Poseidon creates both form and the cause of matter, and as such, identifies himself with the watery substance from which the form leapt forth in fire⁷¹ as the genesis of the universe is envisioned in *Corpus Hermeticum*. Since the creation of art by form enwrapping matter is one of the major themes of *A Draft of the First XXX Cantos*, we understand why Pound compares Sforza to Hermes, the first matter in alchemy. Brilliant and slippery, Sforza is most properly called Hermes, constantly changing himself, shifting his sides, intractable, unseizable, forever prevailing and infinitely successful. Sigismondo was on the contrary an impliable one, a wrong head (*mala-testa*) like his symbol of an elephant. His one virtue was to adore the ineffable, heavenly beauty of form, which adoration ended up in building the Tempio. Hence he represents form, while Sforza stands for matter. When Pound started writing these early cantos,

the Hermetic genesis of “Poimandres” was presumably in his mind,

Fire unmixed leapt forth from the watery substance, and rose up aloft;
the fire was light and keen, and active. And therewith the air too,
being light, followed the fire, and mounted up till it reached the fire,
partly from earth and water; so that it seemed that the air was sus-
pended from the fire,⁷²

partly because the poet refers to Ficino’s Renaissance translation of “Poimandres” in *Gaudier-Brzeska*,⁷³ and because he describes the ascent of the fire of form being separated from matter as Poimandres observed in Canto V,⁷⁴

Iamblichus’ light,
the souls ascending,
Sparks like a partridge covey,
Like the “ciocco”, brand struck in the game.
“Et omniformis”: Air, fire, the pale soft light (5/17).

Thus Pound vindicated Sigismondo best against Sforza. A hero eager for the heavenly, transparent fire of form is an artist and privileged elite in Pound’s world.

Moreover, Sigismondo was counted as a poet in Canto VIII, for his poem of soldiery, rapid beat is quoted with gorgeous images and the imaginary strumming of a lyra:⁷⁵

“Ye spirits who of old were in this land
Each under Love, and shaken,
Go with your lutes, awaken
The summer within her mind,
Who hath not Helen for peer
Yseut nor Batsabe” (8/30).

For Pound the Tempio Malatistiano itself was “a song caught in the stone.”⁷⁶ The stone in Pletho’s Poseidon, the stone in the shining water of Canto XVII, must be the Tempio that Sigismondo as an alchemist of art created in struggle with Sforza the first matter.

Neptune’s seat, Appollinaire, raised from the sea
washed marbles, but here (Rimini) and the graces,⁷⁷

scribbled Pound in an early draft of “Malatesta Cantos.” Here the sea is an alchemist’s pot and the philosopher’s stone of the truth is hatched out of matter with the burning fire of form. Is it not this alchemy of art that first attracted Pound to write a poem of Sigismondo’s life? “Gemisto stemmed all from Neptune / hence the Rimini has relief”

(83/528), mused Pound in *The Pisan Cantos*. Observing such bas reliefs in the Tempio as the water babies, the musical angel, the musical woman and Diana, we suspect that Pound had a good reason to believe Sigismondo built not a family church but a temple for his own Hellenic gods of art and poetry. Pythagoras left a testament to build a temple for muses in order to preserve the harmony in all existences,⁷⁸ and Pound left an inconspicuous but very noteworthy concern to Pythagoras,⁷⁹ writing, “Yet the mind come to that High City . . . / who with Pythagoras at Taormina” (91/616). Since all Renaissance churches were built according to Pythagoras’ principle of harmony,⁸⁰ Sigismondo makes a curious link to transmit the Hellenic worship of muses to the Renaissance intellect.

Canto IX reveals to the reader how the very ground of Sigismondo’s soldiery career crumbles under his feet mainly because of Pesaro and his discord with the King of Naples. To Odysseus the voyager in the underworld of the dead at the end of Canto VIII, “the wind is still for a little / and the dusks rolled / to one side a little” (8/32–33). Out of the pale light is heard a quiet, rhythmless voice, as Sigismondo’s brother, Novello Malatesta, speaks among the dead.⁸¹ In 1430, the year after Sigismondo’s uncle and the Lord of Rimini died, the territory of Malatesta was attacked, because the dues the Malatestas had to pay to the Pope for holding the vicariates of the Church had not “been paid for three years” (8/33). The twelve-year-old hero then led his army across the river and dispersed the invading neighbors.⁸² The following year the boy “got out to Cesana / and brought back the levies”⁸³ (8/33). Without Sigismondo’s valour and unusual talent, the House of Malatesta could not have stood even a while.

One year floods rose,
 One year they fought in the snows,
 One year hail fell, breaking the trees and walls,
 Down there in the marsh they trapped him in one year (9/34),

traced the poet the record of Clementini in a quiet voice. The year of the flood, 1440,⁸⁴ was also the year that Genevra d’Este, Sigismondo’s first wife, died. It was in 1444 that Sigismondo had to fight in the snow near Pesaro “per non ricever il sacco”⁸⁵ (lest it should be sacked), for the power of Federigo Montefeltro was constantly appearing to seize the city. The hail year was 1442,⁸⁶ the winter after Sforza visited to assure Sigismondo’s support against the King of Naples. Unconcerned with these political struggles in Marca, here stands the lovely land of Rimini itself, easily flooded by the river in the midst of the ancient marsh, famous for the relics of the Pre-Roman inhabitants, where Sigismondo was ambushed in 1446.⁸⁷ Gradually the princeling had his name heard, first through the perilous fight at Fano in 1431,⁸⁸ then for having married the daughter of Niccolò d’Este in 1434, which occasion was celebrated with “a wooden castle set up for fiesta” (9/34).⁸⁹ Sigismondo’s first appointment⁹⁰ with the Venetians in 1437 was followed with his first glorious victory at Lombardy, and the first son born simultaneously (9/34).⁹¹ By building the great Rocca (the castle at Rimini), which is a miracle of

fortification⁹² in 1437 and by the construction of the Tempio which started ten years later,⁹³ Sigismondo gradually put his principedom in order until all these efforts suddenly met a setback because in 1445.

March the 16th:
“that Messire Alessandro Sforza
is become lord of Pesaro (9/34).

Pesaro was the vicariate of Galeazzo Malatesta, Sigismondo’s kinsman, whom Federigo Montefeltro secretly persuaded to sell the city to Francesco Sforza for the sake of his brother, Alessandro. At the success Federigo himself was rewarded with the City of Fossembrone (9/35).⁹⁴ As Pound claims they “Hadn’t the right to sell” (9/35) without the consent of the Church which desired to put it under their direct rule (“senza il consenso della Chiesa, allaquale spettava il diretto dominio d’esse”).⁹⁵ The cattle thieves drove their wedge in the midst of the Malatesta powers so that Sigismondo after this had to approach his Southern territory only by ship.⁹⁶ “And he, Sigismundo, spoke his mind to Francesco / and we drove them out of the Marches [Marca]” (9/35), talks Novello Malatesta in the underworld dusk. At this victory against Sforza in 1445, Sigismondo had a medal inscribed with an elephant pushing down a column,⁹⁷ for the wrong-headed man characteristically nerved the most crafty rival.

As soon as Sforza “slipped into Milan” (9/35) in 1450, Federigo Montefeltro contrived with Sforza to deprive Sigismondo’s employment at Venice for revenge. This laudable prince “who was the light of Italy in his day,”⁹⁸ actually invited Sigismondo out to attack Alessandro Sforza together at Pesaro. Sigismondo marched, sent out Broglio to Federigo as an envoy.⁹⁹ Hence we have the precious testimony of Broglio to report Federigo’s swindling:

And he went down to the old brick heap of Pesaro
and waited for Feddy
And Feddy finally said “I am coming! . . .
. . . to help Alessandro” (9/36–37).

“Broglio, I’m the goat. This time / Mr. Feddy has done it (*m’l’ha calata*)”¹⁰⁰ (9/37), says Sigismondo, “per astuzia di costui perdetti la condotta de’ Veneziani, e ora non acquisto Pesaro.”¹⁰¹ Bitterly he realized that he had lost the employment of the Venetians without being able to acquire Pesaro. This fear was realized according to Muratori.¹⁰² Even though Pound discovered that Francesco Foscari, the Doge of Venice, had sent to Sigismondo an encouraging letter,¹⁰³ “*Caro mio* [My dear] / “If we split with Francesco you can have it [Pesaro]” (9/36), the Venetian policy apparently changed.

“And the King o’ Ragona, Alphonse le roy d’Aragon, / was the next nail in our coffin” (9/35) sounds the gloomy voice of Sigismondo’s brother. The hardest blow inflicted on the House of Malatesta was that King of Naples, Alfonso of Aragon, insisted

to exclude Sigismondo from the Italian League, that is, twenty-five years' suspension of wars proposed by the Pope in 1455.¹⁰⁴ When the secret Peace of Lodi signed by Florence, Milan and Venice angered King Alfonso because his campaign against Florence had to be stopped with Sigismondo's victory at Piombino, the King was determined to vindicate himself against Sigismondo by all means. Hence the King's condition to join the Italian League that Sigismondo should not participate the benefit.¹⁰⁶ King Alfonso first employed Sigismondo for 32,400 ducats against Florence in 1444, but characteristically procrastinated the payment. In December 1447, Sigismondo received only 25,000 ducats, having waited for five months already for any further payment, until he could no longer trust the King. Thus at the very end of the year, Florence with a support of Venice obtained Sigismondo,¹⁰⁷

and this change-over (*haec traditio*)
 As old bladder [Pio II] said "*rem eorum saluavit*"
 [saved thier affairs]
 Saved the Florentine state; and that, maybe, was something (9/35),

tells Pound, being more sympathetic to his hero than Soranzo who argues Sigismondo "salvò la repubblica e tramò imprudentemente la propria rovina"¹⁰⁸ (saved the Republic but thoughtlessly plotted his own ruin). Relentlessly Alfonso planned Sigismondo's isolation so that any enemy could invade his territory with no fear of interference from the major powers.

If Sigismondo had returned 25,000 ducats he had already received, King Alfonso would not have set Giacomo Piccinino against him.¹⁰⁹ Piccinino was a count without his own castle, and thence in the close pact of the Italian League after 1455, "Piccinino out of a job" (10/43) was a burning problem, which Alfonso solved by setting him against Sigismondo, now an outcast of Italy. Actually when Sigismondo called a town council on whether he should return the money or not, Valturio, the famous author of *De Re Militarii* advised him not to, because Rimini was already in the disgrace of the King, and should certainly keep any means to sustain themselves.¹¹⁰ ". . . as well for a sheep as a lamb" (9/35), summarized Pound Valturio's idea. For such ill advice Sigismondo had to pay dearly, because even though his conduct was strictly legal, certainly it lacked in the common loyalty and courtesy.¹¹¹

Nevertheless there is something fatal in Sigismondo's able diplomacy having failed one after another to make up peace with Naples. The Malatestas

had had three chances of
 Making it up with Alfonso, and an offer of
 Marriage alliance . . . (10/46),

mused wistfully Novello Malatesta after everything was over. The first opportunity came in 1452. Because Siena too dangerously approached Sigismondo, the King

offered a peace on the very advantageous condition of reducing Sigismondo's debt to half and a marriage of his niece and Sigismondo's son, Roberto.¹¹² Clementini believes that Alfonso put off his negotiation for the fear of Sforza's jealousy.¹¹³ Disgusted, Sigismondo went to the last contract with Florence whose document we have seen (8/30). The negotiation was renewed, however, in 1453, for Venice stepped in as a peace-maker.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately the secret peace of Lodi infuriated the King too much for him to continue the talk. In the third opportunity, when not only the Pope Calixtus III, Borso d'Este but also Cosimo de' Medici and Sforza joined the mediation, Alfonso accepted to reduce the debt to 23,000 ducats,¹¹⁵ and might have been satisfied, unless Federigo Montefeltro rushed to Naples to interfere. Right before this, Borso d'Este invited the two enemies for reconciliation at Belfiore, but a quiet talk ended up in uproars, "Te caverò la budella del corpo!" "Io te caverò la corate a te!" ("I will pull out your guts!" "I will tear out your liver!" 10/43).¹¹⁶ When Sigismondo's envoy brought to the King 23,000 ducats, Alfonso demanded the absurd sum of 27,000 ducats and the expenses of the war against Sigismondo in addition. God knows that Alfonso had already engaged Piccinino and Federigo to invade Marca.¹¹⁷

Altogether concerning Sigismondo's quarrel with Naples, Pound could give only one defence besides his saving Florence, that the House of Aragon, Alfonso and his son Ferdinando, did not deserve his trust anyway. Witness Piccinino's death. Jobless alike after the pact of the Italian League 1455, Sigismondo and Giacomo Piccinino were driven to fight against each other. Nevertheless, Pound's hero came out of the cruel arena alive, but Piccinino married 1465 with Sforza's daughter and,

fell out of a window . . .

Three days after his death, that was years later in Naples,
For trusting Ferdinando of Naples,
And old Wattle could do nothing about it (10/43).

In 1454, right after Sforza interfered the prospected marriage of Sigismondo's son and King Alfonso's niece, he offered his daughter, Drussiana, to Piccinino, attracting this territoryless count with the City of Lega for her dowry. With the participation of Cosimo de' Medici, Sforza arranged the engagement, "ma dall' altra parte il Duca, ch'odiava il Piccinino a morte, fece saper a Veneziani segretamente"¹¹⁸ (but on the other hand, the Duke who hated Piccinino to death, informed it to Venetians secretly), expecting them to be alarmed. "And that day Cosimo smiled, / That is, the day they said: "Drusiana is to marry Count Giacomo . . ." (10/43), said Pound. Knowing the history to details, Cosimo's "sorriso malizioso" (malicious smile, 10/43) makes an excellent ideogram. The Florentine statesman expected that Sforza would betray Piccinino just as he had betrayed Sigismondo with Pesaro, and sent away out of his Tuscany all the future troubles this castleless count would cause. After the marriage took place at the long last in 1465, Sforza sent the couple with his ambassador¹¹⁹ to Naples, where Piccinino was strangled in the prison by the order of Ferdinando and

reported to have fallen from a tower.¹²⁰ Casella's edition of Machiavelli's *Istorie Fiorentine* bears a note, "La pubblica fama disse lo Sforza corresponsabile in tutta la macchinazione" (The public reputation told Sforza to be jointly responsible in all the conspiracies).¹²¹ Pound's irony, "... old Wattle could do nothing about it," is driven to the heart of the matter. Instead of being murdered by these smiling villains, Sigismondo at least expelled his traitorous father-in-law out of Marca.

The last and most important charge against Sigismondo was his having dumped the job at Siena in the winter of 1454/1455, by negotiating with the very enemy and quitting the battle. Broglio's chronicle particularly emphasized its unfortunate result that the Siennese antipathy incited the distrust of the Siennese Pope, Pius II, against Sigismondo eventually.¹²² Right after the Peace of Lodi, no major war could be expected so that for sieging one small castle of Count Pitigliano at Sorano, three captains gathered together:¹²³ Sigismondo, Carlo Gonzaga sent by the Venetians and Giberto da Careggio.¹²⁴ "... there were three men on a one man job / And Careggi wanting the baton" (10/42), noted Pound. Count Pitigliano sustained the siege valiantly while trying to win Sigismondo on his side. When the war prolonged into winter, the season when the army customarily retired to a winter camp, the Siennese not only urged Sigismondo to continue the war, but also prohibited to contact with Pitigliano. Sigismondo, however, decided to lift the siege because of the discomfort of the soldiers and "trattò accordo col Conte, accioche cō maggior onore de Senesi, & terminasse la guerra"¹²⁵ (discussed agreement with the count, for which he worked with greater honor of the Siennese, and terminated the war). Surprised the Siennese

"anno messo a saccho el signor Sigismundo"

[have beaten the Lord Sigismondo]

As Filippo Strozzi wrote to Zan Lottieri, then in Naples,

"I think they'll let him through at Campiglia" (10/42).

The Siennese attacked the camp of Sigismondo, which had been so hastily evacuated that they found a mailbag left behind. Thanks to the Florentines who gave him safe conduct,¹²⁶ Sigismondo could return to Rimini. Concerning this precarious march, Luciano Banchi in "La Guerra de' Senesi col Conte di Pitigliano" (10/42) found a contemporary letter sent by a certain Filippo Strozzi to a man called Zanobi Lottieri in Naples.¹²⁷ Pound discovered the letter in Florence, "*Archivio Storico 4th Series t. iii*" (10/42).

Did Sigismondo betray the trust of the Siennese? Pound emphatically claims that the soldiers should be allowed to retire for winter, "And the poor devils dying of cold, outside Sorano, / And from the other side, from inside the chateau" (10/42). Second, the castle of Sorano did not deserve all the troubles, for "what was it, anyhow? / Pitigliano, a man with a ten acre lot, / Two lumps of tufa . . . And Sidg had got back their horses . . ." (9/37).¹²⁸ Pitigliano's letter to Sigismondo, found in the confiscated mailbag and still preserved in Siena, includes a strange passage to show how deserted

is the place of Sorano, which Pound translated from Yriarte's French freely,¹²⁹

“... wd. you not stop making war on
“insensible objects, such as trees and domestic vines that have
“no means to hit back . . . but if you will hire yourself out to a
“commune (Siena) which you ought rather to rule than
“serve . . .” (10/42).

Sorano in winter became a curious hell of freezing ice like Dante's lowest stratum of *Inferno* in Pound's vision. There a “Greek” hero, wielding his sword against a castle with nothing to protect but trees and vines, looks exactly like Sophocles' mad Ajax, fighting cattle.¹³⁰

The third defence is to suggest that Sigismondo never tried to capture Siena, even though Pitigliano's flattery seems to instigate it. Carlo Gonzaga actually captured, instead of fighting for Siena, Orbetello, a place within the territory of the City,¹³¹ where Sigismondo saw him, “sitting like a mud-frog” (10/42). Together with Pitigliano, “Trachulo's damn'd epistle”¹³² (10/42) stung the pride of the Sieneese with his contemptuous prospect that the City would fall into Sigismondo's hand, because

a tempo venendo, essendo divisi tra loro, come sonno stati più volte,
quella parte che perdesse, voria più presto stare soctoposta ali altrui,
che ali soi medesimi; ricordandovi che in questo mondo non è la più
pazza cosa ch'uno popolo et più volontarosa¹³³

(in time to come, being divided among themselves, as they have been
increasingly more often, the party that would lose will more readily be
submitted to the others than to themselves; recalling you that in this
world nothing is more insane than a people and more willing . . .).

Yet Sigismondo was naturally honest, a “poor hand at villainy,”¹³⁴ as Pound noted in his drafts. Awkward, and with dauntless independence, he invited himself a trouble by ignoring the greed of Gorro Lolli, the nephew of Pius II and a baily of Siena, whom “Broglia says he [Sigismondo] ought to have tipped” (10/43). For the same characteristics, he could save his life by refusing the invitation for lunch of Boniface Castelatiero, “In commemoration of Carmagnola” (10/42). The invitation was actually a trap set by the Sieneese Commission.¹³⁶ Pound could not help recalling how Carmagnola, the most trusted captain of Venice was suspected of treason, invited with honour to explain his conduct and executed “between the two columns” (10/42) of Piazza di San Marco.¹³⁷ Sigismondo haughtily refused to comply, as his unfortunate would-be father-in-law once did and met his death.¹³⁸

Fourth, Pound claims that a condottiere can resign the post even abruptly under an extremity of a personal peril:

(And there was another time, you know,
He signed on with the Fanesi,
and just couldn't be bothered . . .) (10/42).

Terrell believed such conduct of Sigismondo "improbable" (p. 49), while Kimpel and Eaves called it "a curious fact, since Sigismondo ruled Fano until just before he went to the Morea [1466] and could hardly have 'signed on with' his own city."¹³⁹ However, Sigismondo did contract with his own city in 1463, towards the end of the war with Pius II, for the Pope released Sigismondo's subjects from their obligation of loyalty.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless the people of Fano wanted to consolidate their tie with Rimini, and Sigismondo promised to provide them continuously with sufficient force and food. He kept his words, first by procuring the help of the Venetians' navy,¹⁴² until September 9, when the Pope asked the Venetians to withdraw. Even after that Sigismondo entered Fano with the two galleys of the French Angevins.¹⁴³ He was enthusiastically welcomed, but had to depart at once in order to protect Rimini, leaving Fano to Roberto Malatesta, and an eventual surrender on September 24.

The best and most effective defence of Pound for his hero, however, is to display the content of the mailbag. Pound quoted from nine letters and one order document, of which Yriarte printed nine, and one more letter (9/38, 11. 27–28; 9/39, 11. 10–11) was directly translated from the Archive at Siena.¹⁴⁴ Reading these letters we realize Pound's line that they all prove "he [Sigismondo] 'lived and ruled' " (9/41) is an extreme understatement. Leon Alberti,¹⁴⁵ the humanist, architect, poet, inventor and athlete representing the universal man of the Renaissance, drew the design and plan of the Tempio. As his vision was to create a church of an entirely new style, modelling after the Emperor Augustus' triumphant arch and Roman aqueducts,¹⁴⁶ the craftsmen naturally met the new difficulties they had never been trained for. Considering that the Mantuans could not bring his plan to completion either in the Church of S. Sebastiano or in that of Sant' Andrea,¹⁴⁷ the local craftsmen's courage and inventiveness at Rimini should be highly praised. In the first letter, a Matteo Nutti is consulting Sigismondo about the execution of the design of the nave and the wall so different from the style of a Gothic church (9/37, 11. 27–32; 9/39, 11. 12–13). The second one was by a son of a Master Alwidge, who is offering to go to Rome and ask Alberti himself (9/37, 1. 33–9/38, 1. 6). "Sogramoro" is a secretary of Sigismondo,¹⁴⁸ inspecting the whole construction work, for the word is followed by "a veduto tutte la labore de la S. V. . . ." ¹⁴⁹ (has seen all the works of your lordship . . .). The third letter signed by Matteo da Pasti and Piero di Gienari is represented by just one line, "*Illustre seignor mio, Messire Battista*" (9/38, 1. 7). Yet the excitement of Matteo da Pasti, whose curiosity led him to a perilous journey to the Turks later¹⁵⁰ (10/46), is vividly conveyed, as he wrote to Sigismondo how he admired the design of the façade and the beautiful capitals of Leon Battista Alberti, "ma ho speranza in Dio che la S. V. veniera à tempo e vederete la cosa con l'ochio . . ." ¹⁵¹ "(But I wish to God that your lordship will come in time and see the thing with your own eye . . .). The order list of the stone materials (9/38, 11.

8–12) is not a part of the mailbag,¹⁵² but the joy of craftsmen is throbbing in the precise list of precious stones, “*Primo. Lastras rubias finas boni . . . numero decem septem longitudinis et latitudinis quinque pedum et grossissiei unius tertii . . .*”¹⁵³ or “First: Ten slabs best red, seven by 15, by one third . . .” (9/38). The situation of the fourth one is so complicated that Yriarte had to ask the opinion of Luciano Banchi, who decided that the writer signed as D is Isotta’s waiting woman, and that Isotta and herself visited a Galeazzo’s daughter who had a passing love affair with Sigismondo.¹⁵⁴ “The man who said young pullets make thin soup, knew what he was talking about” (9/38, 11. 15–16) is a nice saying from a mistress of long standing and woman Sigismondo loved to his distraction (*perdutamente*, 9/41), especially if the letter was dictated by Isotta as Carroll Terrell believes (p. 47). The peaceful letters of the young Sallusio, Isotta’s son (9/39, 11. 14–33) and of Lunarda da Palla, Sallusio’s tutor (9/38, 1. 29–9/39, 1. 9) recall us of this favorite son’s being murdered by his half-brother, Roberto,¹⁵⁵ bringing us back to the cruel *Inferno* momentarily which Sigismondo suffered all his life. The two lines, “Illustrious Prince: / “Unfitting as it is that I could offer counsel to Hannibal . . .” (9/40, 11. 1–2) is what Pound called “Trachulo’s ‘damned epistle.’”

At the very end, nevertheless, Pound celebrated the creative life of Sigismondo by quoting the whole letter of Peterus Genariis, secretary and most trusted partner (9/40, 11. 3–33). Not only the letter includes the whole subjects of the other craftsmen, Matteo Pasti’s sculptures of elephants, the wall of Matteo Nuti’s problem, the stone ordered from Verona having arrived,¹⁵⁶ but also it tells us quietly the artist of the tomb was Agostino di Duccio and not Matteo de’ Pasti as usually accepted.¹⁵⁷ Summarized together in this way, these letters blows up any alleged charge against Sigismondo by revealing him to the best light, the beloved head of a family, a trusted prince and before anything a patient, passionate and extremely able leader for creating beauty and form.

At the center of Canto X, suddenly burst into stinking, lurid flames the Greek hell of the mad Ajax, of frozen devils and a mudfrog, in which Pius II presides the condemning fire. The Pope first desired with all good intention to realize the reconciliation of Sigismondo with Piccinino, with Ferdinando of Aragon, with Siena by keeping some territories of Sigismondo in deposit for returning the debt to Naples in 1459.¹⁵⁸ Yet backed by the French Angevins, Piccinino suddenly betrayed the King of Naples, came to help Sigismondo.¹⁵⁹ Excited at Piccinino’s victory in 1460, Sigismondo expelled an arrogant deputy of the Pope from a deposited area and invited the fury of the Pope, who excommunicated the Malatesta brothers immediately, deprived them of the vicariates.¹⁶⁰ Thereafter started the most extravagant pomposity of the Pope’s exercise of the damning power. In January 1461, “Andreas / Benzi, da Siena / Got up to spout out the bunkum” (10/44), reading the Latin invective¹⁶¹ in the presence of the Pope’s court. Pius II praised the “*Orationem | Elegantissimam et ornatissimam | Audivimus venerabilis in Xti fratres ac dilectissimi | filii*” (10/45, the most elegant and embellished oratory we heard of the venerable brother in Christ and the most beloved son), ordered that “kid-slapping fanatic il cardinale di San Pietro in Vincoli” (10/45) or Niccolò Cusa¹⁶² to lead the court for trial. Next April, on the ground of Niccolò Cusa’s verdict to be guilty, the Pope gathered

all the cardinals, “PRO GRADIBUS BASILICAE S. PIETRI EX ARIDA INGENS PYRA EXTRUITUR IN CUJUS SUMMITATE IMAGO SIGISMUNDI COLLOCATUR” (10/43, “in front of the step of St. Peter’s there was built a great pyre of dry wood on top of which was placed an effigy of Sigismondo . . .”).¹⁶³ While the populace stood by, “. . . IGNE IMMISSE, ET PYRA SIMULACRUM REPENTE FLAGRAVIT” (10/44, fire was applied, the pyre and the image suddenly blazed up). These infernal ceremonies are all so grotesquely unreal. Pound’s defence is so far successful enough to make the gorgeous Renaissance scenes look nonsensical and nightmarish in contrast with the intrinsic joy of creating the Tempio. The only realistic episode is a charge of the Pope that Sigismondo poured ink in the sacred font of a church.¹⁶⁴

That he might in God’s dishonour
Stand before the doors of the said chiesia [church]
Making mock of the inky faithful, they
Issuing thence by the doors in the pale light of the sunrise
Which might be considered youthful levity
but was really a profound indication . . . (10/45).

The mock serious tone makes a marvellous joke of the mischief and simultaneously suggests the reader that it is more proper to laugh at the Pope’s impassioned theatricality than to be shocked at.

After these colorful travesties the tone of poetry is deliberately lowered. There was nothing more to defend but miserable struggles for life in which the hero was ultimately defeated. Pius II had to gesture hard because he was fighting against the invasion of the French Angevins into the Realm of Naples when he fought against Sigismondo. In the Realm, Orsini and his faction allied themselves through Sigismondo with René and Jean Anjou already in 1458.¹⁶⁵ “And we dragged in the Angevins / and we dragged in Louis Eleventh” (10/46), wrote Pound briefly. When Louis XI of France took the throne in 1461, he contacted Sigismondo at once to help the Angevins’ claim for the kingdom of Naples, which was as authentic as that of the Aragons.¹⁶⁶ Sigismondo’s brother, Novello, secretly drew Piccinino away from the Aragons into the pro-Angevins’ league,¹⁶⁷ which made of course Sigismondo’s reconciliation with the Pope impossible. “Novvy’ll sell any man / for the sake of Count Giacomo [Piccinino]” (10/47), imagined Pound a ridicule of the contemporaries. Yet how could Sigismondo stay alone when all close to him were on the Angevins’ side? Broglio contacted with Orsini while Borso d’Este got a bow shot rowing down the canals of Venice (10/46) probably because of his sympathy for the Angevins.¹⁶⁸ Even Venice stood behind the Angevins, for otherwise how could the Malatestas have ever sailed on the Adriatic Sea?

Impoverished, isolated as Sigismondo’s army was, he could defeat the three thousand horsemen of the papish (11/48) near San Lorenzo,¹⁶⁹ July 1461. Like a Homeric war, an eagle descended on the tent pole, as “*li antichi cavalier romanj | davano fed a quisti annuti*”

(10/47, “The ancient Roman knights put great faith in such omens.” Terrell, p. 55). Like a Homeric epic, Pound called the names of Sigismondo’s captains one by one (11/48). Yet the voice is swallowed in the dusk of the underworld, leaving no echoes. Sigismondo with “mille tre cento cavalli [horsemen] / and hardly 500 fanti [footmen] (and one spingard [battering ram])” (11/48) fought through a dyke gate, took numerous loots including 500 horses.¹⁷⁰ Three months later the Church sentenced him guilty and “destituito di ogni autorità e potere sul suo stato e sui sudditi”¹⁷¹ (having no authority and power over his state and his subjects). As the result Sigismondo could no longer furnish his soldiers with the help of his subjects, so that he was beaten next summer, August 1462 at Sinigalia by Federigo.¹⁷² He sailed right away to Tarentum, as he promised to support Orsini,¹⁷³ only to find “the anti-Aragons, / busted and weeping into their beards” (11/49). Federigo attacked Rimini in 1463, but lifted the siege on account of the plague.¹⁷⁴ It was really fortunate that Sigismondo could keep Rimini even in “the mos’ bloody rottenes’ peace” (11/49), because Venice and Borso d’Este never tired themselves to negotiate for Sigismondo with Rome, and because the Pope heard that Venice offered 10,000 scudi to purchase Rimini.¹⁷⁵

Defeated, infamed, Sigismondo still left his name in the history of the Roman Academy at the persecution of Pope Paul II, for singing a Latin hymn to Zeus.¹⁷⁶ Bartholomeo Plautina, the Chief Librarian of Vatican was caught with others first for an alleged treason, then for loving the Antiquities to the degree of heresy.¹⁷⁷ Being questioned what he possibly could talk so long with Sigismondo, Plautina testified:

Yes, I saw him when he was down here
 Ready to murder fatty Barbo, “Formosus” [Paul II],
 And they want to know what we talked about?
 “*de litteris et de armis, praestantibusque ingeniis . . .*” (11/51).

It is true that Sigismondo rushed to Rome in order to stab the Pope in 1467, when Paul II tried to make him concede Rimini in exchange of Foligno and Spoleti.¹⁷⁸ Sigismondo “left three horses at one gate / and three horses at the other” (11/51) when he entered the Papal palace, possibly in preparation to run off after a catastrophe. At the pope’s chamber, however, “Stupefatto alquanto della sua imaginatione, fremendo infra se come fa el perverso liono, non ostante se mise in genocchione . . .”¹⁷⁹ (Astonished a great deal by his imagination, trembling inside as the perverse lion does, nonetheless he fell on his knees . . .). An honest old soldier’s extremely emotional behaviour characterizes Sigismondo as a really sympathizable figure. Pound’s interest, on the other hand, is not Sigismondo’s character but in the subject of his dialogue with Plautina: “*De litteris inquam, de armis, de praestantibus ingeniis tum veterum, tum nostrorum hominum loquebamur*”¹⁸⁰ (Of literature, I say, of arms, of ingenuous superiorities of both ancient and modern men we talked). Any reader of Virgil at once hear, especially in Pound’s shortened form, the suave echo of the first line of *Aeneid*. Both Plautina and Sigismondo were identified here with Virgil in the sense that they were travelling through the

underworld on the steps of Homer's Odysseus to the destination of Elysium.¹⁸¹

"In the gloom, the gold gathers the light against it" (11/51), wrote Pound enigmatically as a conclusion of "Malatesta Cantos." The gold can be the gold mosaic in the tomb of the Roman Empress, Golla Placidia, in Ravenna as Hugh Kenner believes,¹⁸² or the gold stars of any dome in an ancient Mythraic shrine. In either way, Pound's image of gold in the early cantos means the truth in Isis Mysteries,¹⁸³ as "the gold light of wheat surging" is "Persephone in the cotton field" (106/753). For the travellers of the underworld, Pound-Odysseus, the gold of Isis gradually comes to be seen, as Sigismondo reveals his hidden aspect of a hero of mysteries. Especially he loved collecting the infallible beauty in the Tempio, following Isis' collecting the torn pieces of the body of Osiris. "Hang it all its [*sic.*] a bloody good period, a town the size of Rimini, with Pier Francesca, Pisanello, Mino da Fiesoli, and Alberti as architect," envied Pound in a letter.¹⁸⁴ If the Renaissance most essentially means the resurrection of Greece in the West, why should the spiritual life of Greece in Isis Mysteries not have been resurrected? With a great trust to the power of the mysteries, Pound called the year 1450 Sigismondo's "Messianic Year,"¹⁸⁵ for he finished the basic work of the Tempio (9/36). In Canto XI, Pound gathered some episodes of Sigismondo after his defeat and disillusion, such as asking for a puppy of Piero de' Medici (11/49), for instance.¹⁸⁶ Yet the best ideogram of them all is the hero inspecting the Tempio so quietly in the dark that a woman came across almost stumbled on him (11/49-50). Sigismondo as a Poundian hero is thus hiding himself, having shaped up in the solid stones, the beauty forever chased and forever fair. The second best is the last concluding image that Sigismondo gave his favorite, Enricho de Aquabello,¹⁸⁷ his green and silver brocaded cloak on condition that Enricho should stand any practical joke of Sigismondo for four months, and that Enricho could play back (11/52). In the sick, smoky air of the dreaded judgment hall of Osiris, the cheerful, forever youthful eyes of the highly imaginative soldier are looking at the reader.

NOTES

1. "Seems to have been fairly active for some weeks. Various XVth century wash lists are turning up." Paris, August? 1922. Addressed to Isabel Pound. Yale University Collection of Letters. Courtesy of Beinecke Library.
2. Harper, "Truth and Calliope: Ezra Pound's Malatesta," *PMLA*, 96 (1981), 86-103. Bornstein, "The Poet as Historian: Researching the Malatesta Cantos," *Paideuma*, 10 (Fall 1981), 283-291. Kimpel and Eaves, "Pound's Research for the Malatesta Cantos," *Paideuma*, 11 (Winter 1982), 406-419.
3. "Ezra Pound to LU—a Statement in order to put the facts straight," Rapallo, 1932. Courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard University.
4. "Frevelmut, Gottlosigkeit, kriegerisches Talent und Höhere Bildung sind selten so in einem Menschen vereinigt gewesen wie in Sigismondo Malatesta . . ." *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1930), II, 23-24.
5. *Paideuma*, 7 (Spring & Fall 1978), 73-111.
6. Lucius in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is initiated into the Isis Mysteries, adorned like the sun with palms and carrying a torch. See *The Metamorphoses or Golden Ass of Apuleius*, tr. H. E. Butler (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1910), Book XI, 24. The deceased who was

- allowed to live in the Elysian field was arrayed like Rā, the god of the sun. See E. A. Wallis Budge, "Introduction" to *The Book of the Dead*, tr. Budge, 2d rev. ed. (1899; rpt.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), I, lxvi–lxx.
7. How often Pound depicts the paradise as a bright morning on the sea and the Elysian Island! See "The Alchemist," "Blandula, tenulla, vagula," and Canto XVII.
 8. See Herakles' voyage at night on an amphora of the sun god. Karl Gustav Jung, *Psychologie und Alchemie* (Olten & Freiburg: Walter-Verlag, 1980), p. 384. Abb. 171.
 9. Jacob Burckhardt, *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1930), II, 200 ff.
 10. Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis* (1912; rpt.; Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1974), pp. 372 ff.
 11. See Pound's idea of "new scholarship" by collecting luminous details. "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," *Selected Prose, 1909–1965*, ed. William Cookson (London: Faber & Faber, 1973), p. 24.
 12. *The Book of the Dead*, II, 375. Note that Pound quotes from Dante's *Paradiso* (7/26), "O voi che siete in picciotta barca," in order to warn the reader that he is approaching a holy place.
 13. See Confucian Ode, iv.
 14. See Carroll F. Terrell, *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1980), p. 39. Cited hereafter in the text with "Terrell" and the page number in parentheses.
 15. It was Cosimo de' Medici who was deeply impressed by the discussion with Gemisto Pletho at Ferrara and Florence in 1438–1439. In 1462, Cosimo gave to Ficino his enormous collection of Greek Platonic and Neoplatonic manuscripts to study and translate (21/96). See *The New Century Italian Renaissance Encyclopedia*, ed. Catherine B. Avery (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 389.
 16. ". . . the collapse of Italy after 1500, the fall of Lodovico Moro [Sforza], and the sack of Rome. That is to say, human lucidity appears to have approached several times and then suffered a set back." "How to Read," *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (London: Faber & Faber, 1954), p. 40. In 1494 Rodovico Sforza of Milan invited King Charles VIII of France to claim the right of the Angevins to the Kingdom of Naples, with the approval of Pope Alessandro VI. The French King swept through the country like a tornado. The French Invasion also brought about the invasion of Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire, in which the mismanagement of the Medici Pope, Clement VI, caused the most thorough and atrocious sack and the ruin of the Renaissance Rome in 1527. See Ferdinand Schevill, *The Medici* (New York: Harper & Row, 1949), pp. 200–202.
 17. *The History of Italy*, tr. Sidney Alexander (New York: Collier-Macmillan, 1969), p. 22.
 18. Cesare Clementini, *Raccolto Istorico della Fondazione di Rimini e dell' Origine e Vite de' Malatesti* (1617, rpt.; Bologna: Forni Editore, 1969), II, 269.
 19. The frank and generous character, the natural eloquence, the knowledge, the erudition, the humanist culture, the propensity towards scholars, refined taste and judgment of arts so much distinguished Sigismondo out of the community of Princes." Francesco Gaetano Battaglini, *Della Vita e de Fatti di Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Basini Parmensis Poetae, Opera Praestantiora* (Arimini: Typographia Albeptiniana, 1794), II, 455.
 20. Clementini, p. 297. Concerning Pound's lines, "and he took the the wood out of the bombs/ and made 'em of two scoops of metal" (9/37), see Charles Yriarte, *Un Condottiere au XV^e Siècle* (Paris: J. Rothschild, 1882), p. 128 and Bornstein, p. 290.
 21. And Pius II praised before the assembly the noble council of Malatesta. Giovanni Soranzo, *Pio II e la Politica Italiana nella Lotta contro i Malatesti* (Padova: Fratelli Drucker, 1911), p. 146. Although Pound's notebooks at Beinecke Library mention only Soranzo's "Un' Invettiva della Curia Romana contro Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta," Soranzo's *Pio II* is certainly one of the most frequently used sources of Pound. Besides the evidences Kimpel and Eaves pointed out in "Pound's Research for the Malatesta Cantos" I would like to add

some more crucial ones in this paper.

22. Yriarte, p. 84. For Pisanello's medal see F. Arduni and others, *Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta e il Suo Tempio* (Rimini: Neri Pozza Editore, 1970), Figure 56.
23. Yriarte, p. 256.
24. Battaglini, p. 260.
25. *Guide to Kulchur* (1937; rpt.; New York: New Directions, 1970), at the opening page.
26. Drafts of Malatesta Cantos, Beinecke Library, Yale University. Courtesy of Beinecke Library.
27. P. J. Jones, *The Malatesta of Rimini and the Papal State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [n.d.]), p. 178.
28. Yriarte, p. 146.
29. "Truth and Calliope: Ezra Pound's Malatesta," *PMLA*, 96 (Jan. 1981), 91.
30. Clementini, p. 474.
31. She was beautiful to sight, constant in purpose, dear to people and pleasing to the prince. Giovanni Soranzo, "La Sigla X di Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta," *La Romagna*, 6 (July 1909), 324.
32. Yriarte, p. 142. Of Isotta of Rimini, by beauty and virtue proper to Italy. Pound changed the last words, "Italiaesque decus" (also the ornament to Italy).
33. *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, tr. J. Gwyn Griffiths (Swansea: University of Wales Press, 1970), p. 243.
34. See the relief of Diana in the Tempio, Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971), p. 480.
35. Herakles as the sundaimon is discussed in Harrison's *Themis*, p. 369. The line in Canto LXXI, "THEMIS CONDITOR," proves most easily Pound's reading of Harrison's work (71/417).
36. Quoted by Harper, p. 98. "... whose iniquity is consummated; whose stench fills not only the church and the whole earth but stinks even as far as heaven. It would make the most blessed spirits themselves sick to their stomachs—if they were not incapable of suffering." Harper, *ibid.*
37. *Pio II*, p. 228.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 448. On November 13, 1463, Sigismondo's deputy renounced the heresies at Rome.
39. Clementini, pp. 374–376.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 297. "... and this [to be deprived of all Sigismondo had acquired in his life] God probably permitted for the grave sins, seeing him forgotten the virtue and such talents that with so generous a hand He has distributed to him"
41. Even Federigo d'Urbino, captain of Pio II and Sigismondo's prime enemy did not conceal his disapproval ("... non celò la sua disapprovazione"). *Pio II*, p. 289.
42. After Andreas Benzi read his communique to the princes and prelates on January 15, 1461, Pius II condemned Sigismondo and his brother to hell. See *Pio II*, p. 229.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 377. Gaspare Broglio, who was a captain to Sigismondo and close friend to him, left an MS of *Cronaca Universale* in the dialect of Rimini. Pound's use of the chronicle has been proved by Daniel Bornstein, a specialist on Quattrocento Italy. See pp. 285–286.
44. *Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini* (London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1906), pp. 220–225.
45. Battaglini, pp. 427–428.
46. Pound's Notebooks for Malatesta Cantos, Beinecke Library. The poet refers to the passage, "... la bellezza de' capelli ... scendeva dal capo, lungo crine sopra il rotondo collo, il rilevato petto ... scintillava d'intorno pioggia d'oro" Clementini, pp. 374–375. The beauty of hair ... fell from the head, long hair on the round neck, the protruded breast ... sparkled around rain of gold.

47. Arnaut Daniel, IV. The image of the rain of gold seems to have attracted the poet, in reference to the image of Danaë in Canto IV. Yet it is obvious that Pound did not believe in the wild slander. Concerning the alleged rape and murder of the German lady, Pound wrote to John Quinn, “. . . in fact all the *minor* points that might aid one in forming an historic rather than fanciful idea of his character seem ‘shrouded in mystery’ or rather lies.” Terrell, p. 45. Here Pound’s conclusion is identical to that of Battaglini. Searching the source of Pius II’s charge about this murder, he found the diaries in Naples Muratori mentioned in his *Annali d’Italia*, inferring “. . . Piccolomini, il quale affettò sempre l’amicizia degli Arragonesi, mostrò d’averne creduto facilmente reo Sigismondo” (Piccolomini, who always pretended the friendship of the Aragon, showed easily to have believed Sigismondo to be guilty). Battaglini, pp. 427–428.
48. *Annali d’Italia* (Monaco: Agostino Olzati, 1763), IX, 239. Muratori’s reference to the subject is seen both in Terrell, p. 45 and Battaglini, p. 427. Andreas Benzi’s another charge against Sigismondo is a murder that he had killed Ugolino Pili, a Fanese and tutor to Sigismondo. See *Pio II*, p. 227. Yet as Pound wrote, he “came out of jail living later” (10/46), possibly being imprisoned during the war. See Kimpel & Eaves, p. 414, and their source, Soranzo, “Un Invettiva della Curia Romagna contro Sigismondo Malatesta,” *La Romagna*, VIII (March-April 1911), 168.
49. In Soranzo’s book, Pound found a sympathetic Florentine on the street of Rome, who remarked of the execution “mal hecho” (ill-made), and whom “they nearly jailed” (10/46). When he was caught by the Pope’s guard, he excused himself that he did not criticize the Pope, but criticized the effigy badly reproduced. *Pio II*, p. 289. See also Kimpel and Eaves, p. 414.
50. Certain it is that the common voice charged upon this Malatesta this iniquity and even the Diaries of Naples talk about it. Muratori, p. 239.
51. Canto 9/36. See Battaglini, p. 431. On this “stealing” the marble see Kimpel and Eaves, p. 410. Cardinal Filippo Calandrino received 200 florins from Sigismondo, though the people of Ravenna appealed to Doge Foscari of Venice to investigate the case.
52. Luigi Tonini, *Rimini nella Signoria de’ Malatesti* (Rimini: Albertini, 1882), V, 191.
53. “A dì primo di Settembre Sigismondo fù creato Governatore delle genti d’arme della Signoria di Venezia, e rimandato con sei milia cavalli sotto Crema . . .” Clementini, p. 363.
54. Even after the defeat of Piombino, Alfonso of Aragon, the King of Naples, negotiated repeatedly with Venice to engage Sigismondo until the Peace of Lodi, 1454. See *Pio II*, pp. 34–37.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
56. (Paris: Three Mountain Press, 1925), p. 27.
57. Yriarte, p. 381. As Harper researched carefully, Pound corrected Yriarte’s misidentification of the addressee of the letter. See Yriarte, p. 380 and Harper, p. 92.
58. The original letter from which Pound quoted the passage about the contract, bombarde and the violent rainfall (8/30) is seen in Yriarte, pp. 384–385.
59. The original document of contract is taken from Yriarte, pp. 382–383. Florence in 1452 tried to help, with the power of Sigismondo, Sforza’s fight against Naples. See Clementini, p. 379.
60. Battaglini, p. 347.
61. *Ibid.* Filippo Maria Visconti, the Duke of Milan, gave his illegitimate daughter in marriage, Bianca Visconti to Sforza, who was his condottiere, 1441.
62. “. . . con varie ricreazioni, e particolarmente della pesca, di cui godeva molto . . .” Clementini, p. 325.
63. *Ibid.*
64. Battaglini, p. 348.

65. Muratori, p. 201.
66. Clementini, pp. 330–331.
67. *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, p. 17.
68. Muratori, p. 237.
69. Kimpel and Eaves wrote that they could not find any source for this image of cattle thieves. Even if Prof. Bornstein's thorough editing of Broglio's *Cronaca* may find the source of this image there, I believe that my interpretation will stand.
70. *Pléthon: Traite des Lois*, ed. and tr. C. Alexandre & A. Pellissier (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1966), p. 105. "... il [Neptune] est après Jupiter la cause première de la forme de cet Univers; aussi est-il le principe mâle par excellence, car c'est le principe mâle qui donne aux êtres leur caractère spécifique. Son image créée comme lui-même par Jupiter et la première après lui, c'est Junon qui renferme aussi toutes les espèces, mais qui cependant ne possède pas une puissance égale à celle de Neptune . . . seulement elle [Junon] produit la matière primitive qui renferme toutes les formes en puissance . . ."
71. "The Poimandres," *Corpus Hermeticum*, Book I, 8b. *Hermetica*, ed. & tr. Walter Scott (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924), I, 117.
72. *Ibid.*, pp. 117–119.
73. "Ficino was seized in his youth by Cosimo dei Medici and set to work translating a Greek that was in spirit anything but 'classic' . . . messing up Christian and Pagan mysticism, allegory, occultism, demonology, Trismegistus, Pselus, Porphyry, into a most eloquent and exciting and exhilarating hotch-potch . . ." *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* (1916; rpt; New York: New Directions, 1970), p. 112.
74. Iamblichus' divine "ineffable species of light" which seizes a soul, *Iamblichus on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, tr. Thomas Taylor (Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1821), p. 125, is paralleled with the fire of Dante's image of "ciocco" or brand (*Paradiso*, XVIII, 100–108), suggesting how a sudden flame spreads in heaven as if a burning log struck the part of heaven.
75. Pound summarized from Sigismondo's sonnet for Isotta, no. 1, printed in Yriarte, pp. 391–392:

O Spreti che gia fusti in questi regny
 Voi ciaschaduno dalo Amor pcosso
 Siatime gratiosi et poi benigny
 Se con vostro gar non son riscosso . . .
 O re David che amor te fe credulé
 Per Betzabé morir facesti Uria . . .
 O Tu Paris Hellena p cuy geme
 Troya disfacta el re Priamo e morto . . .
 O tu Tristano Aisotta a cui non valse
 Tenere amore nelli bracce Strette
 Che ti fe poi provare amare salse . . .

A translation is seen in Hutton's book:

O spirits that were once in these realms
 Each of you by Love shaken
 Be gracious and kind to me
 If by chance through your aid I may be rescued . . .
 O King David whom love made cruel
 Who for Bathsheba didst put to death Uria . . .
 O Paris, and thou Helen, for whom
 Troy groaned and was undone, for whom King Priam is dead . . .
 O Triastram whom it availed not
 To hold thy love Isotta in thy arms
 For it made thee prove the bitterness of loving . . . pp. 211–214.

76. Yale Drafts.
77. Ibid. The scene of marble in the water of course means Venice, where "Borso, Carmagnola" went (17/78). Yet we can add there the meaning of the Tempio, too.
78. *The Life of Pythagoras by Iamblichus*, tr. & abridged by Thomas Taylor (Krotona, Los Angeles: Theosophical Publishing House, 1905), p. 22.
79. Pound visited Pythagoras's city, Taormina in 1924 while he was busy finishing up the "Malatesta Cantos" and *A Draft of the First XVI Cantos*. See Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 257.
80. Concerning Pythagoreanism in the Renaissance art, see S. K. Heninger, Jr., *Touches of Sweet Harmony* (San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1974).
81. "My brother was twelve at the time / They tried to finish him in a street fight / And he beat them, beat Eugenio troops at fifteen . . ." Yale Drafts.
82. Battaglini, p. 280.
83. Ibid., pp. 291–293.
84. Clementini, p. 320.
85. Ibid., p. 333.
86. Ibid., pp. 325–326.
87. "... fù astretto per la moltitudine de' nemeci valersi del beneficio del cavallo, & à pena si salvò, dopò haver lungamente penato, e patito in alcune paludi, vicino à Bagnacauallo . . ." (He was constrained by the multitude of the enemies to avail himself of the benefit of the horse, and barely saved himself after having longtime suffered and endured in some marshes near Bagnacauallo). Clementini, p. 343. That he was haunted by dogs (9/34) is not seen here. Prof. Bornstein wrote that he found the source in Broglio's *Cronaca*. See p. 285.
88. Clementini, p. 298.
89. Battaglini, pp. 310–311.
90. Ibid., p. 328.
91. Battaglini, p. 329.
92. Ibid., p. 326. That Sigismondo sold small castles for building the Rocca (9/34) is mentioned in Clementini, pp. 310–311.
93. October, 1447. Battaglini, p. 400.
94. Clementini, p. 338.
95. Ibid., p. 344.
96. *Pio II*, p. 23.
97. Clementini, p. 342.
98. Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtiers*, tr. Charles S. Singleton (New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 13.
99. "And he [Sforza] talked it over with Feddy; / and Feddy said 'Pesaro'" (9/35). Pound's view that Federigo Montefeltro and Sforza conspired to let Sigismond lose the job at Venetians is shared by Clementini, pp. 366–367.
100. "Federico me l'ha pur calata" (Federigo has really let it down to me). Tonini, p. 203. Pound's "m'l'ha calata" seems to be taken from Broglio's *Cronaca*. See Bornstein, p. 285.
101. Clementini, p. 369.
102. *Annali d'Italia*, p. 239.
103. Archivio di Stato at Venice. Kimpel and Eaves, p. 409.
104. *Pio II*, p. 39.
105. Battaglini, p. 453.
106. *Pio II*, p. 39.
107. Ibid., pp. 30–34.
108. Ibid., p. 33.
109. Ibid., pp. 45–50.

110. Clementini, p. 356.
111. *Pio II*, p. 35.
112. Clementini, p. 382.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 384.
114. *Pio II*, p. 38.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
116. *Ibid.*, p. 26. The place name of "Belfiore" appears only in Soranzo's book. However, Pound's source seems to be an MS according to his notebooks. Another source of Pound's, entitled "Vita di Federico d'Urbino" (which is included in *Atti e Memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia per le Province delle Marche*, Ancona, 1901, vol. V), tells that the meeting place was the palace of the Este at Ferrara. Hence Pound's lines, "Or perhaps in the palace, Ferrara, Sigismund upstairs / And Urbino's gang in the basement" (10/43). See the Drafts at Yale.
117. *Pio II*, p. 47.
118. Clementini, pp. 387-388.
119. Niccolò Machiavelli, *Istorie fiorentine*, Book VII, viii (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1962), p. 466.
120. Muratori, pp. 236-237. Anthony Manganaris-Decavalles, *The Analyst*, XI (August 1956), p. 9.
121. Machiavelli, p. 466.
122. Tonini, p. 247.
123. Luciano Banchi, "La Guerra de' Senesi col Conte di Pitigliano" (1454-1455), *Archivio Storico Italiano*, III, 186. Vatican Library.
124. Clementini, p. 392.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 394.
126. *Ibid.*, p. 396.
127. Banchi, p. 188.
128. Sigismondo's returning the horses that Pitigliano looted was found by Kimpel and Eaves in Giuseppe Bruscalpi's *Monografia storica della contea di Pitigliano*. See Kimpel & Eaves, p. 414.
129. "... de ne pas faire la guerre aux choses insensibles qui ne peuvent se défendre, telles que vignes et arbres domestiques, s'étonnant . . . de le voir, lui si grand, à la solde d'une Commune dont il lui conviendrait mieux d'être le seigneur." Yriarte, p. 280.
130. Sophocles' tragedy, "Ajax." Ajax, an Achaian hero that joined the battle of Troy, was crazed and found fighting against cattle in a stable. Having regained sanity, he committed suicide for shame.
131. Banchi, p. 187.
132. *Ibid.*, p. 186. Trachulo was a courtier and man of letters at Rimini.
133. Quoted by Banchi, p. 187.
134. Yale Drafts.
135. Clementini, p. 392. Tonini, p. 247.
136. Clementini, p. 395.
137. Muratori, p. 150.
138. Clementini, p. 300. Sigismondo was offered by Carmagnola his daughter for marriage with grand dowry in 1432, right before his death. Sigismondo accepted the dowry, but the marriage was never realized for Carmagnola's death. Pius II accused Sigismondo's "theft" because he did not return a part of money already paid. See Soranzo, "Un'Invettiva della Curia Romana contro Sigismondo Malatesta," *La Romagna*, VII (Nov.-Dec. 1910), 472.
139. Kimpel and Eaves, p. 407.
140. *Pio II*, pp. 409-410.
141. "... assolviamo e liberiamo i vassalli e i sudditi di Signismondo dal giuramento di fedeltà e da qualsiasi obbligo di sudditanza . . ." *Pio II*, p. 291. As the result any who paid the tax to Sigismondo or govern his territories in his name should be excommunicated.

142. Ibid., p. 420.
143. Ibid., p. 424.
144. See p. 409. This letter is not counted by Terrell.
145. Yriarte, p. 421.
146. Avery, p. 14.
147. Ibid.
148. Yriarte, p. 439.
149. Ibid., p. 421.
150. “. . . and they caught poor old Pasti / In Venice, and were like to pull all his teeth out . . .” (10/46). The Grand Turk, Mahomet II, invited Matteo de’ Pasti for carving his effigy to Constantinople. He was caught at Candia, a territory of Venice in 1461, suspected to be Sigismondo’s envoy to Mahomet, because he was carrying a copy of Roberto Valturio’s *De Re Militari* as Sigismondo’s gift to the Grand Turk. See *Pio II*, p. 272. Soranzo studied this mission to details in “Un Missione di Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta a Maometto II nel 1461,” *La Romagna*, V (Jan. 1909), 43–54.
151. Yriarte, p. 419.
152. Ibid., pp. 398–399.
153. Ibid., p. 399.
154. Ibid., p. 396.
155. Clementini, p. 479.
156. Notice the craftsmen who signed the order document stayed at Veronca to furnish the stones. See Yriarte, p. 398.
157. Avery, p. 316.
158. *Pio II*, p. 152.
159. Ibid., p. 204.
160. Ibid., pp. 205–212.
161. Ibid., p. 227.
162. German theologian and canon lawyer, whose pantheistic tendencies anticipated Giordano Bruno. See Avery, pp. 676–677.
163. The Latin from Pius II’s *Commentarii* is quoted from Yriarte, p. 288, as Pound noted (10/44). The translation is by Florence A. Gragg, quoted in Terrell, pp. 51–52.
164. “. . . una volta di sabato, giorno di penitenza per i credenti, entrato in Chiesa votò le pile dell’acqua santa e le riempi d’inchiostro, per assistere alla mattina seguente all’ uscita dei fedeli con le facce imbrattate . . .” (. . . once on a Sabbath day of penitence for the believers, [he] entered church, emptied the fonts of the sacred water, and replenished it with ink, to help on the subsequent morning at the exit of the faithful with the faces soiled . . .). Soranzo, “Un’ Invettiva della Curia Romana contro Sigismondo Malatesta,” *La Romagna*, VII (Nov.-Dec. 1910), 472.
165. *Pio II*, p. 78.
166. Ibid., p. 268.
167. Clementini, p. 408.
168. The bow shot is only mentioned in Pound’s notebooks. “Borso in Venice (for Anjou), a cross [*sic.*] 12 Apr. ’59.” Yale Drafts. No other sources are known.
169. *Pio II*, pp. 248–249.
170. Tonini, pp. 286–288.
171. *Pio II*, p. 271.
172. Ibid., pp. 301–304.
173. Ibid., p. 307.
174. Ibid., p. 417.
175. Ibid., pp. 443–444.
176. See “Un Carme Latino sopra la Persecuzione di Papa Paolo II,” *La Rivista Cristiana*, I (Feb.

- 1899), pp. 59–66. The journal is mentioned in Pound's notebooks, Yale Drafts.
177. See Baptista Plautina, *The Lives of the Popes, from the Time of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, to the Reign of Sixtus IV*, tr. Paul Rychaut (London: Christopher Wilkinson, 1685), pp. 409–411.
 178. Clementini, pp. 462–463.
 179. Broglio quoted by Tonini, p. 315.
 180. Yriarte, p. 319.
 181. Virgil followed the example of *Odyssey*, Book XI, to have his hero descend into the underworld of Avernus. See *Aeneid*, VI, 11. 126 ff.
 182. *The Pound Era*, p. 343.
 183. The image of gold are particularly gathered together in Canto IV; the golden ship of Cadmus reminding the moon of Isis, "e lo soleills povil" (4/15), Zeus' descent in the golden rain. These certainly refer to the hidden treasure of gold shown to the initiates in the Eleusinian Mysteries. See my article in *Paideuma*, VII (Spring & Fall 1978), 95.
 184. Addressed to John Quinn, 10 August 1922. Printed in Daniel Pearlman, *The Barb of Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 303.
 185. Clementini wrote that Tempio was completed in 1450. See p. 371. Even though such works as paving the floor, covering the wall with stones, decorating the façade and the tomb were still going on in 1454 as we see in the letters of the Siena mailbag, it is known that the Church was already open to the public, because the German lady who met an unfortunate end came to see the famous Tempio at Rimini according to Clementini, p. 375. Leon Alberti's involvement started probably in 1449 or 1450. See *Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta e Il Suo Tempio*, p. 132.
 186. *Pio II*, pp. 456–457. The other two letters addressed to Roberto, his first son, were taken from Carlo Grigione, "Documenti Inediti intorno a Sigismondo Malatesta," *La Romagna*, VII (August-Sept. 1910), 382. One letter advises at Giuliano's death, "If he's left anything we must see the kids get it" (11/50); and the other about his son, Giovanni, who "must give that peasant a decent price for his horse" (11/50). Pound's source here was found by Kimpel and Eaves, p. 414.
 187. The name of Aquabello is not seen in any of Pound's sources, except that in Soranzo's "Una Missione di Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta a Moametto II nel 1461" we find a name, "Aquadello." Probably Pound made a mistake in deciphering an MS. After Matteo de' Pasti was caught by Venetians in 1462, Sigismondo planned to send his faithful and favorite subject, Enrico Aquadello, again with a copy of Valturio's *De Re Militari*. He did not depart after all. See *La Romagna*, V, 53.

April 4, 1983

Appendix

