

Pietro Bembo, *Motti*, translated and annotated by Ann Mullaney, Draft, July 30, 2019

Open draft for the use of scholars: please feel free to adapt as you see fit, I do not intend to keep working on the *Motti*. Adults only.

The text was transcribed from *Motti inediti e sconosciuti* di M. Pietro Bembo edited and annotated by Vittorio Cian (Venice, I. Merlo, 1888), available as PDF at Google Play Books and at Archive.org. Cian based his text on two manuscripts, the Magliabechiano VII.7.1192, and one containing fewer *Motti*, but specifically attributed to Bembo, Marciano Ital. Cl IX.113: *Rime burlesche di diversi autori del secolo XVI*, c.129v-135r.

Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) wrote and published in an era in which a highly developed erotic code was adopted by dozens and dozens of writers in Italy, and presumably understood by tens of thousands of readers in Europe. A most helpful text for decoding the erotic lexicon was written by Jean Toscan: *Le carnaval du langage: le lexique érotique des poètes de l'équivoque de Burchiello à Marino (XVe-XVIIe siècles)*, Lille, Presses Universitaires, 1981; thesis 1978, 4 vols.

For my annotations, the equal sign (=) merely means that the word seems to have been attested as signifying a given coded meaning.

1. Purché di lui pensier vi stringa il Core,
2. ogni cosa da voi gl'è dolce honore.

(1-2: As long as thought of him/ it tightens your Heart, everything from you is a sweet honor for him/ it.)

*Core/ cuore* (heart) = phallus.

3. Non impedir l'altrui fatal cammino,
4. et sappi che lo muove alto destino.

(3-4: Do not impede another's fated path, and know that he/ it is moved by lofty destiny.)

*Altrui* is perhaps like *tale*, *cotale* and other indefinite words used for phallus and other sexual terms. Starts with a slight variation on a famous line from Dante, "Non impedir lo suo fatale andare" (*Inferno* 5.22). If not sexually suggestive, what is the point?

5. Non ha fede quel cor, di cui la voglia
6. si volge, come al vento arida foglia.

(5-6: That heart does not have faith, whose inclination turns it as a dry leaf in the wind.)

*fede* (faith) = phallus, here stiffness; *cor* (heart) = phallus

7. Chi del suo dolce april non coglie i fiori,  
8. piange poi'l verno i suoi tempi migliori.

(7-8: He who does not gather the flowers of his sweet spring/ April, weeps then for his best times in winter.)

9. Come la neve al sol sparisce et fugge,  
10. così per voi quel tristo si distrugge.

(9-10: As snow from the sun recedes and runs, so for you that poor thing comes undone.)

*tristo* (wretch, poor thing) = phallus.  
Cf. 25-26 and the note there.

11. Chiara stella vi guida ad altra parte  
12. per porre il vostro nome in mille carte.

(11-12: A bright star guides you to the other side, to place your name inside a hundred cards.)

*chiaro* = hetero normative sex, *stella*, in plural = buttocks, *ad altra parte* = in back; *nome* = phallus; *carte* = buttocks.

13. Non ti doler se bosco è fatto il prato,  
14. che renderà poi meglio, lavorato.

(13-4: Don't be upset that the meadow has gone to bush, because it will then render better when worked.)

*bosco* (woods) can refer to pubic hair, and to the butt, *prato* to the female sex organ.  
Cf Bembo's *Stanze*, 30.4-8.

15. Non ci bisogna più Berta o Martino,  
16. Compare, io ti so dire il panno è fino.

(15-6: We no longer need Berta or Martin/ Dick and Jane, mate, I can assure you, the clothing is fine.)

Could refer to bisexuality: we no longer need a woman or a homosexual man because we are bisexual. Recalls *Paradise*, 13.136-42:

"e legno vidi già dritto e veloce  
correr lo mar per tutto suo cammino,  
perire al fine a l'intrar de la foce.  
Non creda donna Berta e ser Martino,

per vedere un furare, altro offerere,  
 vederli dentro al consiglio divino;  
 ché quel può surgere, e quel può cadere.”

17. Temo talhor, ch'al vostro alto lavoro  
 18. non siate Menedrablo al tesoro.

(17-8: At times I fear that as for your deep/ lofty work, you are like Mandrabulus with his treasure.)

Note: “*Mandrabiili more res succedit*. Proverb: ‘The business goes on as as it did with Mandrabulus’ – which is to say, worse and worse. Mandrabulus was a man who found a treasure, on which he presented to Juno a golden ram, meaning to make a similar offering each year: but repenting of his liberality, the next year he offered one of silver, and the following, one of bronze. Hence this phrase, very similar to our saying, ‘Out of the frying-pan into the fire,’” *Dictionary of Latin Quotations, Proverbs, Maxims, and Mottos*, edited by Henry Thomas Riley, (London, Bell and Daldy, 1866); saying cited by Erasmus in his *Proverbs*.

19. Mill’anime gentili, et forse è poco,  
 20. raccenderete ancor del vostro foco.

(19-20: A thousand noble souls, and maybe that is too small [a number], you will still rekindle from your fire.)

Perhaps: you will rekindle a thousand penises with/ from your back side; Toscan: “mille, substitut de “pénis”, p. 440; *anima* = phallus; *gentile* = related to sodomy; in the great majority of carnival songs and *capitoli, fuoco* carries the meaning of anus, 424, p. 611.

21. Così lontano anchor v’honora at ama,  
 22. et spesso con la lingua vi richiama.

(21-2: Even far off he loves and honors you, and often calls you back with his tongue.)

*lontano* in code refers to heterosexual acts (Toscan 440-443), *onorare* = to penetrate; to satisfy. Could refer to cunnilingus, cf. Bembo’s sonnet, *Moderati desiri, immenso ardore*:

mostrar a duo begli occhi aperto il core,  
 far de le voglie altrui legge a se stesso,  
 con la lingua e lo stil lunge e da presso  
 gir procacciando alla sua donna onore. (vv. 5-8)

(to show a heart open to two pretty eyes, to make of another’s wishes a law for oneself, with the tongue and ones style from far off and close up to go procuring honor for ones lady.)

23. Cresca in etate et crescerà in virtute,  
24. et con gl'occhi darà morte et salute.

(23-4: Let him/ it grow in age and he/ it will grow in power, and with his/ its eyes will give death and salvation.)

the subject seems to be a phallus

25. Misero, tristo, a che così ti sfaci,  
26. et perché non più tosto vivi et taci?

(25-6: Wretch, rascal, why are you coming so undone, hadn't you better stay alive and keep mum?)

The query and complaint are addressed to the phallus: compare the final verses of the canzone "Solingo Augello" in *Gli Asolani*, 1505 [1.27]: Che parli o sventurato?/ A cui ragioni? a che così ti sfaci?/ Et perché non più tosto piagni, e taci? (What are you saying, O luckless one?/ To whom are you speaking? For what are you coming so undone? And why don't you just cry and keep quiet instead?), Dilemmi, pp. 112-3. This poem began as a sonnet and turns up also as a similar canzone beginning *O rossigniuol*, with the final tercet identical (Dionisotti, p. 554). Cf. 9-10 above.

27. Non vive in questa età la più felice:  
28. et veramente sei nostra Fenice.

(27-8: The happiest does not live in this age, and truly you are our Phoenix.)

Speculation: the poet could be addressing his penis: You who are our phoenix, you rise again from the ashes (spent sperm from sexual intercourse).

29. Questo sì vostro è sì d'inganno pieno,  
30. che meglio fora un no di Philoxeno.

(29-30: This yes of yours is so full of trickery, that a no from Philoxenus would be better.)

Philoxenus of Cythera (c.435-380 BCE) was a Greek poet who wrote a pastoral burlesque, *Cyclops*, parodied by Aristophanes. Taken to Athens as a slave, later freed, Philoxenus lived in Sicily at the court of Dionysius I. Dionysius (c.432-367 BCE) was a Greek tyrant of Syracuse, fond of having literary men about him, but treating them in a most arbitrary manner. Diodorus Siculus relates in his *Bibliotheca historica* that Dionysius once had Philoxenus arrested and sent to the quarries for voicing a bad opinion about his poetry. The next day, he released Philoxenus because of his friends' requests, and brought the poet before him for another poetry reading. Dionysius read his own work and the audience applauded. When he asked Philoxenus how he liked it, the poet turned to the guards and said "take me back to the quarries." [*The Library of*

*History of Diodorus Siculus*, Book XV, Chapter 6.] Plutarch relates a version of this story in his *On the Fortune of Alexander*. [*On the Fortune of Alexander, Second Oration*, Chapter 1.] Wikipedia.

31. Non ti dolere: è cosa antica et piana  
32. ch'ogni virtute cede alla Galana.

(31-2: Don't feel bad, it is an ancient thing and plain, that every virtue/ strength cedes to the tortoise/ gemstone.)

Cian: *galana*: a play on words, a gemstone reputed to have special powers, from Greek *chelone*, *chelonina*.

33. Non è la pica al lusignuol conforme;  
34. frate, qui si può dire: la lepre dorme.

(33-4: A magpie is not similar to a warbler/ nightingale, brother, here one can say, the leper sleeps.)

Cian: where the leper sleeps is dangerous.  
*lusignolo, usignolo* (nightingale) = specialized phallus, Toscan, cit. 1307.

35. Quanto più di celarlo a noi t'adopri,  
36. tanto più alto et bello a noi lo scopri.

(35-6: The more you attempt to hide it from us, the more you reveal it tall/ deep and stunning.)  
a phallus?

37. Tu puoi sicuro andar dall'Indo al Mauro,  
38. se teco porti un ramuscel di Lauro.

(37-8: You can go from the Indus to the Mauro/ Moroccan [mountain range], if you bring with you a small branch of Laurel.)

*ramuscel di lauro* (small laurel branch): sounds like a sodomitic phallus

Indus river and "Mauro" mountain range in North Africa: markers for geographical extremes of the world. Mauro may refer to Giovanni Mauro D'Arcano (c. 1498-1536), a poet associated with Bembo: in December of 1529, while Charles V and Clement VII were in Correggio, "la casa di Veronica [Gambara] era un'Accademia, ove ogni giorno si riducevano a discorrere di nuove questioni con lei, il Bembo, il Capello, il Molza, il Mauro e quanti più famosi di tutta l'Europa seguivano quella Corte" ("the house of Veronica [Gambara] was an Academy, where every day they came together to discuss new matters with her, Bembo, Capello, Molza, Mauro and the most famous people from all Europe who followed that court"), Vittorio Cian, *Un decennio della*

*vita di M. Pietro Bembo (1521-1531)*, p. 148, where Cian is quoting from the life of Veronica Gambarà by Baldassare Zamboni.

39. Potria la luna ancor scendere a torme,  
40. ma non è sempre Endimion, che dorme.

(39-40: The moon could still come down in scads, but it is not always Endymion who sleeps.)

Selene, the moon goddess fell in love with handsome Endymion, and asked Zeus to make him immortal, Zeus put Endymion into an eternal sleep so Selene could keep kissing him.

41. Per amar altri a voi siete nemico,  
42. et d'un stesso piacer ricco, et mendico.

(41-2: In order to love another, you are hostile to yourself, and are rich and beggarly of the same delight.)

Love making: restraining oneself from attaining orgasm in order to be generous with one's partner, see 133-4.

43. In tutto è cieco, et molto ha grosso il pelo  
44. chi non ved'acqua in mare e stelle in cielo.

(43-4: He is blind in all and has really thick hair, who does not see water in the sea and stars in the sky.)\*

45. Chi non pesa il suo mal non può saperlo:  
46. Grave cosa è un gran fio a mantenerlo.

(45-6: One who does not weigh his pain cannot know it; a heavy thing it is to maintain a great tribute.)

Note the changes from Petrarch, Grave soma è un mal fio a mantenerlo (It is a heavy load to bear an ill tribute), *Mai non vo' più cantar*, 105.2.3, cf. *fio* (tribute) seems to mean sexual satisfaction in Bembo's strambotto *Città con più sudore*, Dionisotti, p. 684.

47. Per non star dell'altrui ricchezza in forse,  
48. io pongo sempre mano in su le borse.

(47-8: So as not to stay in doubt about another's riches, I always put my hand on his purses.)

*borsa*, plur. *borse* (purse, purses) = male sex organ.

49. Se per innanzi non sei più costante,

50. ti chiamerò la figlia di Taumante.

(49-50: If from now on you are not more constant, I will call you the daughter of Thaumatas.)

Iris is the child of Thaumatas with Electra, the Oceanid. She was a messenger goddess, associated with the rainbow and with winds: she married Zephyr.

51. O Maccheron mio dolce, tondo et sodo,

52. qual'è la cosa contraria del chiodo?

(51-2: O my pleasing Macaron, round and firm, what is the thing opposite the nail?)

There are other references to the orifice connotation of *maccheron* but none as clear as Bembo's definition. Teofilo Folengo (1491-1544) maintained that he wrote works in Macaronic Latin, a language composed of Latin and a variety of Italian dialects, because the Muses fed him macaroni which were little dumplings made with a variety of ingredients. His pseudonym-character Merlin Cocaio, declares *Sum macaronus ego, sic macaronus ero* ("I am macaronic and so I will be macaronic") although he agrees to write some *carmina* in actual Latin, (*Merlinus ad Baldus*, Cipadense c. 1535, p. 314). Also in the third edition of Folengo's Macaronic works a letter to the readers from a Nicolo Costanti praises the author, ending with an address to *Macharone* and *Macharoni*: "Venite dunque tutti che havete fame, Vedete, leggete, mangiate, sfamatevi, et ricordatevi sopra tutto che non è cosa al mondo piu Macharonesca ch'esser Macharone à Macharoni" ("Come then all you who are hungry: Look, read, eat, fill yourselves up, and remember above all that there is nothing in the world more Macaronesque than to be *Macarone* [female word ending] to *Macaroni* [male ending].") In his *Varium poema*, and in the two works which were published with it in 1533, Folengo gives many indications that he is homosexual, but he does not define the word *maccheron*. I have found only a few other occurrences of the word, one by Antonio Cammelli (1436-1502) in a *sonetto caudato*, "Molti sono i vocati,/ e pauci vero eletti a far passaggio,/ maccaronazzo mio senza formaggio!" ("Many are those called but really few are chosen to make the passage, my big old macaroni without cheese [= phallus]"), *Se tu fussi un di quei che fan minestra*, 123.15-7 in Percopo, p. 162-3. Two by Agnolo Firenzuola (1493-1543): in the sonnet *E anco talor mangia una civetta*, the poet implies that *grossi maccheroni* (perhaps butts used in heterosexual acts) are something that a "pastor" (perhaps a heterosexual sodomite) enjoys more than a king might enjoy *starne e capponi* (both words were used to mean male prostitute); and in his famous *Canzone in lode della Salsiccia* ("Song in Praise of the Sausage") Firenzuola equates poorly written burlesque capitoli, *capitolesse*, with *maccheronee*, in *Opere*, 1802 edition, p. 89; 197. Further research may continue to corroborate Bembo's meaning.

53. Misura il varco pria delle tue piante,

54. et lascia il ciel se non ti senti Atlante.

(53-4: Measure the gap before [you place] the soles of your feet and leave the sky if you don't feel like Atlas.)

*Piante* (soles), metonymy for foot = male sex organ; holding up the sky = posterior, hence: certain sex acts require a male (or just his member) to be the size and strength of Atlas.

55. Hor, pria che fondi il tetto, alzi i fastigi:  
56. hor vedi il porco et cerchi i suoi vestigi.

(55-6: Now, before the roof falls in, raise the gable; now you see the pig and are [still] looking for his tracks.)

57. Con una lingua et cor promette e crede,  
58. tal che a lui si può dire: Attica fede.

(57-8: With a heart and tongue he promises and believes, such that you could say of him “Attic faith”/ unwavering “faith”.)

*credere* (to believe) = to offer oneself or to submit to sodomy, Toscan, p. 1684; *fede* (faith) = phallus

59. Tu fai come la semplice villana,  
60. et vuoi portar col doglio acqua alla rana.

(59-60: You act like a simple country woman and want to carry water in a jug to a frog.)

The frog in other contexts seems to be a bisexual male; *doglia* is a big jug.

61. Ritornin l’acque alle lor alte fonti,  
62. a’l sol là oltre ond’alza, chini et smonti.

(60-1: Let the waters return to their lofty springs, and to the sun over there where it comes up bow and go behind the mountains.)

*chinare* (bow) = submit); *smontare* (dismount, here: go behind mountains) = finish up.

63. Che vi sforzava? a torto vi dolete,  
64. se ‘l pan mangiate, che taliato havete.

(63-4: What was troubling you so? Unduly you complain, if you are eating bread, that you ‘ve cut.)

*pane* (bread) = phallus, *tagliare* = to copulate; sounds similar to 135-6, where the implication is that men are taking turns in sodomy.

65. Pur diansi era il ciel fosco, hora è sereno:



66. così può ria fortuna venir meno.

(65-6: A bit ago the sky was dusky, now it is serene, thus bad luck can come up short.)

67. Non ci pensar, che n'haverai vergogna,

68. tu non se' Julio, et lei non è Bologna.

(67-8: Don't think about it, because you'll be ashamed, you are not Julius, and she is not Bologna.)

Don't feel bad if your female target did not immediately submit as did Bologna to Pope Julius II in 1506; cf below 79-80. Something of a common place remark in the era.

Readers of Latin: please see Bembo's poem supposedly addressed to Julius in *Carmina*, IULII SECUNDI PONTIFICATUS MAXIMUS. This poem seems like it is written in code. *Pietro Bembo: Lyric Poetry, Etna*. Edited and translated by Mary P. Chatfield, Cambridge MA, I Tatti Renaissance Library, 2005.

69. El mio pensar, senora, es muy doblado

70. o come fate ben lo descansado.

(69-70: My thought, lady, is very bent/ doubled up; oh, how well you play dead.)

Spanish: pensar (thought) = phallus; *descansado* (tired): cf. *fare il morto*

71. Questo ben ti darà lo gir sprezzato,

72. che mai con donne non farai mercato.

(71-2: Going around dejected will get you this: that with women you will never have success.)

*mercatare* (to trade, do business) = to copulate (Toscan)

73. Al sol ti volgi et con l'unghie lavora,

74. et granchi e castagnacci verran fora.

(73-4: You turn toward the sun and you work with your fingernails, and crabs and chestnuts/ mushrooms will come out.)

Meaning not clear to me, *granchio* (crab) = phallus, *castagno* (chestnut tree) = phallus

75. Tu quando cadi, come puoi, risorgi;

76. a me sempre giovò chiamar San Giorgi.

(75-6: You, when you fall, get back up however you can; me, it has always helped to call on St. George.)

San Giorgio: female on top, or saint of sodomy?

77. Felice questa età, se col tuo voto  
78. quanto 'l Nocchier potesse il Galeoto.

(77-8: Happy this age, if with your vow, Galeotto/ the galley slave could do as much as the Helmsman.)

*età* (age) could be phallus, *voto* could be anus; *schiavo* (slave) could be passive sodomite

79. Non ci pensar che n'haverai vergogna:  
80. tutte non son l'impresè da Bologna.

(79-80: Don' think about it or you will feel ashamed, not all endeavors are like [the march into] Bologna.)

cf 67-8.

81. La Boclac, Talmut, [e] Belsamin'Oga,  
82. venite, che si fa la sinagoga.

(81-2: Boclac, Talmut and Belsamin'Oga: come, because we're making a place of worship/ synagogue.)

[research need on synagogue in burlesque poetry and prose]

83. Qual son le biade al campo, al gregge il toro,  
84. tal sete voi l'honor del nostro Coro.

(83-4: As wheat [is] to the field, the bull to the herd, so you are the glory of our Choir.)

men's choir, it seems

85. Tempo ancora verrà che 'l vostro ardore  
86. manderà sopra il Cielo il suo splendore.

(85-6: The time will still come that your ardor will send its splendor above the sky/ heavens.)

87. In rete accogli l'aura, in ghiaccio i fiori,  
88. et spargi al vento i tuoi tempi migliori.

(87-8: You gather the breezes in a net, flowers in ice and scatter to the winds your best seasons/ times.)

*rete* (net) = anus, *aura* (breeze) = sexual activity, *tempo* (time, season) = sex organ, *ghiaccio* (ice) = posterior, *fiore* (flower) = anus

89. Contra le fata non alzar le corna:  
90. Sparta t'è tocca in sorte, et Sparta adorna.

(89-90: Don't raise your horns against fate: Sparta you got by lot, and [so] honor Sparta.)

I don't know. Sparta is usually referenced for homosexual activities. Cian cites *Inferno* 9.97.

91. Scriviti in fronte et di: questa magione,  
92. che voi vedete, è casa di prigionione.

(91-2: Write it on your forehead and say. "This dwelling, which you see, is a prison house.)

93. Altro vorrebbe, un tuo sguardo not pasce:  
94. et sappi, che fu ghiotto insino in fasce.

(93-4: It wants something else: one of your looks does not feed it, and know that it was insatiable even in swaddling clothes.)

*fasce* (wraps): often means the foreskin

95. Fuggite amanti, questo volto uccide  
96. se mira, o parla, o canta, o piange, o ride.

(95-6: Flee lovers: this face kills, whether it looks or speaks or sings or cries or laughs.)

97. Balla ancor tu, che non e' buona usanza  
98. lasciar altrui quando l'hai posto in danza.

(97-8: Keep dancing, you, since it's not a good habit to leave somebody when you have led them to the dance.)

Advice on love making: do not leave your partner unfulfilled.

99. Non ti doler della fortuna ria,  
100. che del tuo nembo sei stato Cecia.

(99-100: Don't complain about your bad fortune, because as for your stormcloud, you have been [the wind], Cecia)

You have been drawing down your own stormcloud. Cian: *caecias*: a north-east wind that draws clouds to it. Pliny; in Erasmus *Adages*, 62: “Mala attrahens ad sese, ut caecias nubes.”

101. Adegua i colli et fia ‘l giogo soave:  
102. nè l’un sia il Gariglian, l’altro la Piave.

(101-2: Adjust the hills and let the ridge/ yoke be gentle, so that one won’t be the Garigliano and the other the Piave.)

Garigliano: a river about half way between Rome and Naples; the Piave runs from the Eastern Alps south into the Adriatic.

Sounds like advice on positioning for sexual activity.

103. Chi ama et sofferenza in sè non have,  
104. piglia senza governo a regger nave.

(103-4: He who loves and does not have suffering in himself, takes to governing the ship without a rudder.)

*sofferenza* (suffering) sounds like know-how; *soffrire* (to suffer) = to perform sodomy.

105. Nè vuoi legar, nè vuoi essere avvinto,  
106. nè Aiace eleggi, nè lacinto.

(105-6: You do not want to do the tying, nor to be restrained, you don’t choose Ajax or Hyacinth.)

Both Greeks became red flowers after their deaths. Could mean: You do not choose either the active of the passive role in a homosexual encounter.

107. Per scoglier d’un ti legghi all’altro nodo,  
108. mentre vuoi d’asse trar chiodo con chiodo.

(107-8: To get free of one, you bind yourself to another knot, while you want to pul out a nail from a board with [another] nail.)

*nodo* (knot) = erection, *chiodo* (nail) = phallus

109. Prendi pur al tuo scampo altro partito,  
110. qui non ha luogo Tamero impazzito.

(109-10: Go ahead and make another plan for your way out, here raging Thamyris has no place.)

Thamyris – Greek god who challenged Muses and became blind.

111. Cerca pur al tuo legno un altro porto,  
112. che qui, fratello mio, tu parli al morto.

(111-12: Go ahead and look for another port for your boat, because here, my brother, you are talking to a dead man.)

*legno* (boat, wood) = phallus, *porto* (port) = orifice, fratello (brother) = homosexual partner  
Sounds like a homosexual relationship.

113. Non ben si corre sempre a quel che piace,  
114. et spesso in mezzo i fior la serpe giace.

(113-4: One does not always run straight to what one likes, and often in the middle of a flower lies a serpent.)

115. Pensavi su, mentre la colpa è nuova,  
116. che il pentirsi da sezzo nulla giova.

(115-16: Think about it, while the blow is fresh, because to repent at the end does not help.)

*che il pentirsi da sezzo nulla giova* -- Bembo's *Stanze* 49.8

117. Non è 'l vero giardin quale il dipinto,  
118. et non fa per ciascun gire a Corinto.

(117-18: The real garden is not like the painting, and it is not for everyone to go to Corinth.)

A saying alluding to the high-priced prostitutes in Corinth, in ancient times. Strabo, *Geography*, 8.6.20.

119. A quel ch'è del tuo ben maggior nemico  
120. tu sei simile più che fico al fico.

(119-20: You are more similar to what is surely your greatest enemy, than fig to fig.)

121. Non corre bene un cane ad ogni caccia,  
122. et poco stringe quel che tutto abbraccia.

(121-2: A dog does not run well at every hunt, and he holds little who embraces all.)

123. Ben ha da viver lieto et consolato

124. chi puote dire: amando io sono amato.

(123-4: One can really live happily and consoled who can say, in loving I am loved.)

125. Se quel di dentro si conosce al volto,

126. Amor et gelosia t'hanno il cor tolto.

(125-6: If one knows from your face what is inside, love and jealousy have stolen your heart.)

127. Nostro ben, nostro mal vien nelle fasce,

128. sua ventura ha ciascun dal dì che nasce.

(127-8: Our good, our bad, come in swaddling clothes: each of us has his future from the day he is born.)

129. Chi non sa con che stral ferisca Amore

130. miri i nostri occhi et poi riguardi il Core.

(129-30: He who does not know with what arrow Love wounds, let him look at our eyes and then regard the Heart.)

131. Chi vuol sua gioia fare eterna et soda

132. tacito seco del suo ben si goda.

(131-2: He who wants to make his joy eternal and solid/ hard, let him enjoy his forrtune quietly by himself.)

133. O quanti son color beati appieno

134. che governan due voglie con un freno.

(133-4: O how fully blessed are those who control two desires with one rein.)

Cf. the final verses of the capitolo *Dolce mal, dolce guerra, e dolce inganno*, Dionisotti, p. 677:

Dolce aver più d'altrui che di sé cura,

**E governar due voglie con un freno,**

E 'n comune recar ogni ventura.

Dolce non esser mai beato a pieno,

Nè del tutto infelice, e dolce spesso

Sentirsi innanzi tempo venir meno:

E per cercar altrui perder se stesso. (vv. 34-40)

See *Stanze*, 45.4, and above, 41-2.

135. Servi, non ti lagnar, ma soffri et taci,

136. ch'ancor potrai salir se bene hor giaci.

(135-6: Submit, don't complain, but suffer and keep still, because you will still be able to rise up if now you lie there.)

Sounds like a homosexual sexual encounter.

137. Odi nuovo piacere, odi malitia,  
138. per viver lieto simular tristitia.

(137-8: Hate new pleasure, hate wickedness, in order to live content feign sadness.)

139. Amor t'ha posto sì crudele assedio,  
140. che sofferenza è solo il tuo rimedio.

(139-40: Love has made such a cruel assault on you that suffering is your only remedy.)

141. O cattivello che ti credi fare?  
142. ogni' un non sa come si debba amare.

(141-2: O naughty thing, what do you think you're doing? Not every one knows how one ought to love.)

143. Che vuol due caccie in un corso tenere,  
144. s'ambe le perde non si può dolere.

(143-4: He who wants to catch two prey in one run, can't complain if he loses both of them.)

145. Qualunque usa vestirsi acerba doglia  
146. senza alcun dolce, presto se ne spoglia.

(145-6: Whoever/ Whatever is used to putting on bitter pain, without any sweetness, soon takes it off.)

147. Non ti doler se gran beltà non hai:  
148. chi piace ad uno amante è bella assai.

(147-8: Don't be sad if you're not a great beauty, whoever is pleasing to one lover is pretty enough.)

149. Senza le penne alla speranza eguali  
150. chi volar pensa, indarno spiega l'ali.

(149-50: When feathers don't measure up to hope, he who thinks he'll fly, spreads his wings in vain.)

*ala* (wing), plur. *ali* = testicles; *spiega le ali* (spread your wings) – common expression found in coded writings, seems to mean: go for it, engage in intercourse; *penne* (feathers) could = *pene* (penis), *speranza* (hope) = erection, *volare* = to have an erection, to copulate

151.           Piglia del tuo doler qualche conforto,  
152.           che non sei solo amante offeso a torto.

(151-2: Take some comfort from your pain because you aren't the only lover who has been hurt by mistake/ wrongly wronged.)

a torto: could have to do with injury from sodomy.

153.           Nel nostro petto Amor serva lo stilo,  
154.           Che servano bevendo i cani al Nilo.\*

(153-4: In our breast Love keeps the style that dogs keep when drinking from the Nile.)

*stilo* can mean phallus; dogs drink very quickly from the Nile so as not to become pre

155.           Quel peso che fortuna imposto t'have  
156.           porta ridendo, et s'il farai men grave.

(155-6: That weight that fortune imposed on you, bear it laughing, you will make it less heavy.)

157.           Di vetro è la tua speme et tu nol vedi,  
158.           che di diamante la ti stimi et credi.

(157-8: Your hope is glass and you don't see it, you esteem and deem it diamond-like.)

You think you are as hard as diamond, but you don't see how fragile your hardness is.

159.           Non creder men perch'ei ne parli poco:  
160.           chi può dir come gl' arde è 'n picciol foco.

(159-60: Don't believe it less because he talks little about it: he who can tell you how it burns him is in a small fire.)

161.           Più gode il mondo et maggio senno fa,  
162.           chi piglia il tempo et l'usa come va.



(161-2: He enjoys the world more and makes more sense, who snatches up time and uses it as it goes.)

mondo (world) = lower body; senno (wisdom) = male sex organ; variant for *senno: frutto*;  
tempo = sex organ

163. Ingordo amante et prodigo alchimista  
164. perde più tempo assai che non acquista.

(163-4: A greedy lover and a lavish alchemist loses a lot more time than he acquires.)

165. Per affisar nel sole humana luce  
166. tanto si vede men quanto più luce.

(165-6: When human sight fixes on the sun, one sees less the more it shines.)

167. Chi va da lungi assai più s'avvicina,  
168. et non s'innalza ben chi non s'inchina.

(167-8: He who goes far off draws much closer, and one does not rise up well who does not bow/ bend.)

Cf. 135-6.

169. Non si schermiscon sempre tutti i colpi,  
170. et danno nella rete anco le volpi.

(169-70: Not all blows can always be parried, and even foxes fall into nets.)

*rete* (net) = anus; *volpe* (fox) = sex organ

171. Da cui sue forze non son bene intese,  
172. il più si pente delle ardite imprese.

(171-2: From one who doesn't really know his own strength, the more one repents from daring deeds.)

may refer to injury caused by sodomy, or intercourse, cf. 169-70

173. A lui [quanto] è mercantia villana et sconcia,  
174. quel ch'a libra puoi dar vendere ad oncia.

(173-4: For him it is such vile and nasty dealing, to sell by the ounce what you could give by the pound.)

175. Degl'occhi vostri Amor par ch'esca et dica:  
 176. Tanto son io quanto m'è questa amica.

(175-6: It seems that Love issues from your eyes and says, "I am as much myself as she is my friend.")\*

177. Homai tu puoi ben gire in panno scempio  
 178. a render l'arme et offerirle al tempio.

(177-8: Now it is quite all right to go around in simple dress, and give up your arms and offer them to the temple.)

What does *panno scempio* (simple dress) mean? *arma* (weapon) = phallus, *tempio* (temple) = female sex organ

179. Dic mihi, Dameta, cuium pecus, an Meliboei?  
 180. bun, bun, bun, bun, son queste cinque o sei?

(179-80: Tell me Dameta, whose sheep are these? Are they Melibeus's? Boom, boom, boom, boom – is that five or six?)

A riff on the noted first verse of Virgil, *Ecloques* 3. Cian cites notes from Tassoni to a poem by Bracciolini on the election of Urban VIII, where the reference to sheep stands for cowardice. Toscan, numbers: five = sex organ; six = butt.

181. Dovea tacer, ma se pur vuoi saperlo,  
 182. già è di là dal rio passato il merlo.

(181-2: I should have kept quiet, but if you really want to know, the merle has already passed the river.)

Cian cites Petrarch, *Mai non vo' più cantar*, v. 21, and concurs with previous research that the expression may mean you are no longer young enough for amorous adventures, p. 70. A similar expression is used by Teofilo Folengo, when he tells of how a merle crossed the Po several times a day to bring food to the baby from the Folengo family who would become the bard Merlin Cocaio, thus giving rise to the saying, "Merla Padum passat propter nutrire Cocaium" ("The merle passes the Po to nourish Cocaio"), *Baldus*, 22.115-9.

183. Doppo la pioggia un sereno è più caro,  
 184. e 'l dolce piace più doppo l'amaro.

(183-4: After rain, a calm is more cherished, and sweetness pleases more after bitterness.)

generally true, *pioggia* (rain) = menstrual flow.

185. Quant'è più la fatica acerba et grave,  
186. tant'è più la merce dolce et soave.

(185-6: The more the effort is harsh and heavy, the more the merchandise is sweet and pleasing.)

*fatica* (effort): sexual activity; *merce* (merchandise): sexual activity, orgasm.

187. Che vuoi tu far? non sai ben che la rosa  
188. ha spesso sotto sè la spina ascosa?

(187-8: What do you want to do? Don't you know that the rose often has a thorn hidden beneath it?)

189. Non fa per voi tener d'Amor tenzone,  
190. che potreste esser moglie di Titone.

(189-90: It isn't fitting for you to hold a tenzone/ contest of Love, since you could be the wife of Tithonus.)

The wife of Tithonus is Eos, goddess of the dawn. She was condemned by Aphrodite to be perpetually in love, as punishment for having lain with Aphrodite's mate Aries. Eos fell in love with the mortal Tithonus, a prince of Troy. When she asked Zeus to make Tithonus immortal, she forgot to ask that he be granted eternal youth as well as immortality. Tithonus indeed lived forever, "but when loathsome old age pressed full upon him, and he could not move nor lift his limbs, this seemed to her in her heart the best counsel: she laid him in a room and put to the shining doors. There he babbles endlessly, and no more has strength at all, such as once he had in his supple limbs," *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, 218 ff. Wikipedia.

The couplet seems insulting, but I am not sure to whom or about what.

191. Sempre si vuol servire o poco o molto;  
192. una man lava l'altra, et ambo il volto.

(191-2: One always wants to be useful, either a little or a lot, one hand washes the other and both [wash] the face.)

193. Diman poi tornerai che fia mercato:  
194. per questa notte il lupo ha sbadigliato.

(193-4: Tomorrow then you will come back since it is market [day]; for tonight the wolf has yawned.)

*sbadigliare* (to yawn) = attain orgasm

195. Assai degn'è che poco frutto mieti  
196. chi vuole albar d'un gesso due pareti.

(195-6: It is pretty fitting that one harvest little fruit who wants to whitewash two walls with one chalk.)

The saying, reported by Erasmus in *Adages*, is “*Duos parietes de eadem dealbare fidelia*” (To whitewash two walls with one pail [of paint]).”

whitewash two walls with one piece of chalk could mean to ejaculate in two orifices

197. Ogniuno il sa: tu che ne vuoi tu fare?  
198. la nave non si può celar nel mare.

(197-8: Everybody knows it, what can you do about it? You can't hide the ship in the sea.)

*nave* (ship) = male sex organ, *mare* (sea) = female sex organ

199. Prega le tue venture ch'a ragione  
200. non ti si possa dire horto d'Adone.

(199-200: Thank your lucky [stars] that of you one cannot rightly say garden of Adonis.)

“Adonis was gored by a wild boar during a hunting trip and died in Aphrodite's arms as she wept... Aphrodite declared the Adonia festival commemorating his tragic death, which was celebrated by women every year in midsummer. During this festival, Greek women would plant "gardens of Adonis", small pots containing fast-growing plants, which they would set on top of their houses in the hot sun. The plants would sprout, but soon wither and die. Then the women would mourn the death of Adonis, tearing their clothes and beating their breasts in a public display of grief.”

so gardens of Adonis were short-lasting

201. Come il polipo fai, che per timore  
202. cangia in quel della pietra il suo colore.

(201-2: You act like the octopus that in fear changes its color to that of stone.)

203. Nel tuo grembo Amaltea di giorno in giorno  
204. versa più larga il suo beato Corno.

(203-4: In your lap, day after day, Amaltea pours most broadly her blessed horn [of plenty].)

Amaltea, a goddess who nourished baby Zeus, sometimes represented as a she-goat: little Zeus broke off one of her horns which became a horn of plenty.

205. Sciocco, ch'insegni al delphino notare,  
206. et vai mostrando all'aquila il volare.

(205-6: Fool – you go teaching the dolphin to swim and showing the eagle how to fly.)

207. Vuoi tu che'l vero homai ti si disnuvole?  
208. dico che cerchi l'aquila in le nuvole.

(207-8: Do you want me to reveal the truth to you now? I am saying that you are looking for the eagle in the clouds.)\*

209. Taci, ch'almen non è tenuto a schifo  
210. cicala in pruno, o rana di Serifo.

(209-10: Quiet you, because at least a cicada in thorns or a Seriphian frog is not held as disgusting.)

Seems to be urging the addressee to not make unpleasant noises. Cicacadas from Acanthon in Aeolia, Greece, and frogs from the island Serifos in the Aegean Sea were thought to be silent.

211. Non fate mai d'amante buon giudizio,  
212. che far non sappia a Vesta sacrificio.

(211-2: Don't ever make a good judgment on a lover who doesn't know how to sacrifice to the Vesta.)

The meaning of Vesta seems to be more akin to *vesta* = female sex organ, than to Vesta the virgin goddess of hearth and home.

213. Questo oro a cui pigliar muovi la pianta  
214. temo non sien le palle d'Atalanta.

(213-4: This gold for which you are moving your feet, I am afraid that they are not the balls of Atalanta.)

215. Egli è di te sì preso il cattivello,  
216. ch'avresti sin da lui latte d'uccello.

(215-6: The naughty thing is so taken with you, that you will even get bird milk from him.)

latte d'uccello = sperm

217. Un sol uccel la Tortora vagheggia,  
218. Et mille beffan poi la coccoveggia.

(217-8: The female turtle dove delights in only one male bird, and the [flirty] owl makes fun of a thousand.)

219. Torvi del tutto a quel che più v'affligge  
220. non potrebbe altro che l'anel di Stigge/ Gigge.

(219-20: Nothing other than the ring of Styx could take away all that most afflicts you.)

perhaps speculation that Gigge was meant instead of Stigge, does not take into consideration the sexual meanings: *anello* (ring) = anus; Styx synonymous with *inferno* (hell) which is related to sodomy

221. Hor puoi tu ben veder se 'ndarno merchi,  
222. che essendo lepre polpamento cerchi.

(221-2: Now you can surely see whether you are dealing in vain, because [being] a rabbit you are looking for stew.)

223. Ahi come sei tu folle et vano amante,  
224. che voi legar col filo un elefante.

(223-4: Oh my, what a crazy and quaint lover you are, that you want to bind an elephant with thread.)

225. Se levar te 'n potrai spedito et netto  
226. di bocca al lupo harai tolto il capretto.

(225-6: If you can pull yourself quickly and cleanly from the mouth of the wolf, you'll have taken away the kid.)

227. Chi 'l crederà, perchè giurando il dica,  
228. ch'al par d'un veltro corre una formica?

(227-8: Who will believe it, just because it is said under oath, that an ant runs as fast as a greyhound.)

229. Se non starai contento a questo poco,

230.           della padella caderai nel foco.

(229-30: If you won't stay content with this small thing, you will fall from the pan into the fire.)

*poco* (little) = anus, *padella* (pan) = butt, *fuoco* (fire) = female sex organ

231.           Non far soverchie le tu chiose al testo,  
232.           che puossi in bel soggiorno esser molesto.

(231-2: Don't make too many of your glosses to the text, because it could be unwelcome in a nice place.)

Don't use the anus too often as it could be bothersome to that area.

233.           Che giova far nel specchio il viso adorno,  
234.           se già per l'Alpi neva d'ogni 'intorno?

(233-4: What good does it do to adorn your face in the mirror if there is already snow coming down all around.)

235.           Innanzi che più lungo errando vada  
236.           ritorni indietro chi perdè la strada.

(235-6: Before one may wander longer astray, let him go back who has lost his way.)

often the reference to getting lost and going back alludes to sodomy

237.           Meglio l'intende et tienla assai più cara  
238.           colui, ch'alle sue spese l'arte impara.

(237-8: One grasps it better and holds it more dear, who learns the art at his own expense.)

239.           Che più? la Dio mercè vita t'avanza,  
240.           et per ogni paese è buona stanza.

(239-40: What more? Thanks to God life remains to you and in each land is a good home.)

You still have more *vita* = lively penis; *paese* = orifice, *stanza* = orifice.

Cf. CANZONA DEGLI UOMINI D'ARME:

No' ci siàn diliberati  
non combatter col marchese  
che ci ha tutti fracassati:  
**no' vogliàn mutar paese**

e cercar più salve imprese,  
dreto andando a sottil cura.

(Gist: we men of arms do not want to fight against your menstrual flow, so we change orifices, and use the one in back)

241. Ella il diria, ma per vergogna il tace,  
242. che il dormir sola troppo le dispiace.

(241-2: She would say it, but keeps it quiet from shame: that sleeping alone really displeases her.)

243. Chi quel che vuol non può, quel che può voglia,  
244. et se colpa non ha non se ne doglia.

(243-4: He who cannot do what he wants, let him want what he can do, and if he does not have guilt, let him not complain.)

245. Fior tutto aperto assai men vaghezza have,  
246. ch'ogni chiusa bellezza è più soave.

(245-6: A fully open flower is quite a lot less delightful, because every closed beauty is sweeter.)

anus vs vagina: better the *fior chiuso*

247. Se vuoi far con Amor dolce vendetta,  
248. del presente ti godi et meglio aspetta.

(247-8: If you want to have sweet revenge on Love, enjoy the present and wait for better.)

249. Tu non faresti, et vedil per te stesso,  
250. un scodellin di salsa tutto espresso.

(249-50: You wouldn't make – you see it for yourself – a little bowl of sauce all expressed/squeezed out.)

251. Si vuol del tarlo haver alcuna tema,  
252. però che tu nascesti a luna scema.

(251-2: One should have some concern for the woodworm, although you were born under a waning moon.)

The vehicle is moon phase harvesting, the tenor is “you” but the meaning is unclear to me.



253. Non ti maravigliar se tu li piaci,  
254. che sei più fredda assai che l'Acqua d'Aci.

(253-4: Don't be surprised if he likes you, because you are colder than the Waters of Aci.)

Could be addressed to Galatea: Polyphemus, the one-eyed phallus, may like her because she is very cold: *fredda* could mean a female receptive to sodomy.

255. Chi ha pieno il suo campo è ben villano,  
256. se nelle biade altrui stende la mano.

(255-6: He who has his field full is really a villain if he sticks his hands into another's fodder.)

*biada* (fodder) = sex, sex organ.

257. Che bisogna in lodarvi altre parole?  
258. Non vede un simil par d'amanti il sole.

(257-8: What need is there for other words to praise you? The sun does not see a similar pair of lovers.)

259. Se voi venir a fin del tuo lavoro,  
260. a te convien giostrar con lancia d'oro.

(259-60: If you want to get to the end of your toil, you had better joust with lances of gold.)

261. Guarda che, mentre il stringi a voglia ingorda,  
262. non per troppo annodar spezzi la corda.

(261-2: Look, although you squeeze it with insatiable desire, the string doesn't break from being too knotted.)

*corda* = phallus; *annodare* = to be hard, get hard

263. Già puoi sperar di questo fiore il frutto,  
264. ch'ogni principio è la metà del tutto.

(263-4: Already you can hope for fruit from this flower because one begun is half done.)

265. Deh porta in pace le sventure tue,  
266. ch'oggi si lega il carro innanzi al bue.

(265-6: Ah, bear your mishaps in peace, because today one puts the cart before the ox.)

267. Un cotal detto ancor s'usa in Toscana:  
268. Piaga per allentar d'arco non sana.

(267-8: Such a saying is still used in Tuscany: a wound does not heal just because you've loosened the bow.)

269. Già tosto potrai dir, falsa promessa,  
270. fra la spiga et la man qual siepe è messa?

(269-70: Soon you will be able to say, false promise, between the stalk/ cob and the hand, what bush has been placed?)

Cian compares Petrarch, *Se col cieco desir che 'l cor distrugge*: tra la spiga e la man qual muro è messo? Robert Durling translation, "Between the grain and my hand what wall is set?," *Canzone* 56.8. Cian also cites Giovanni Mauro D'Arcano, "il quale dice che al suo tempo ogni frate poteva entrare liberamente nella cella delle monache, e non era costretto a dire ciò che aveva detto a sè stesso il Petrarca: 'E so, che non può dir come colui: Tra la spiga e la man quel muro è messo,' *Capitolo de' Frati*, and see above, 37-38.

271. Che solo in un pensier tant t'aggravi?  
272. non vedi tu, meschin, chel muro lavi?

(271-2: Why do you get so deep into one thought, don't you see, knave/ wretch, that you are washing the wall?)

Cf. 195-6 and note

273. Ben la stringe di te qualche pietade,  
274. ma per un colpo l'albero non cade.

(273-4: Sure some pity for you wrings her, but the tree doesn't fall from one blow.)

275. Se tu m'ascolti, mai non errarai:  
276. non ti vantar nell'arte, che non sai.

(275-6: If you listen to me, you will not go wrong: don't boast about skills you don't have.)

277. O vita gloriosa, o presta morte,  
278. la fortuna sprezzate, o vital sorte.

(277-8: O glorious life, o ready/ quick death, disdain fortune, o vital/ lively fate.)

279. Ahi quanto senza pro si giugne e mira:  
280. col mosto il porco, e 'l granchio con la lira.

(279-80: Ah, how pointlessly one joins together and admires: the pig with must and the crab with a lyre.)

Not clear to me: must, fermented juice, is attested for anus, *porco* (pig) according to Toscan is a male prostitute; *granchio* = phallus, *lyre* = female sex organ.

281. Quando tu più non sia quel che sei stato,  
282. cagion honesta di morir t'è dato.

(281-2: When you are no longer what you were, you're given an honest reason to die.)

to die = to attain orgasm, which is justifiable when one is no longer what one was

283. Vorrei mentir, ma per quanto si vede,  
284. il tuo pensier non ha capo nè piede.

(283-4: I would like to lie, but as far as one can see, your thought does not have head or tail.)

*pensier* (thought): phallus

285. O quanto è ben che pera per veneno  
286. colui che si nutrisce il serpe in seno.

(285-6: On how good it is that he perish from venom, one who nourishes a serpent in his breast.)

287. A quel sia tu, ch'a te vuoi fare, amico:  
288. compagno, ama chi t'ama, è detto antico.

(287-8: Be a friend to the one you wish to make a companion, love the one you're with is an ancient saying.)

289. Ogni bestia che pasce non è toro,  
290. nè tutti i gialli son topazi et oro.

(289-90: Not every beast who grazes is a bull, nor are all yellows topaz and gold.)

291. Ben ti fa amore et la fortuna torto,  
292. ma sofferenza è nel dolor conforto.

(291-2: Sure, love and fortune are doing you wrong, but suffering is comfort in pain.)

This is a sentiment often expressed by Bembo, cf. the capitolo *Dolce mal, dolce guerra, e dolce inganno*, Dionistotti, p. 677-8.

293.           S'io non m'inganno, giovane, al vedere,  
294.           tu sei d'Arcadia? Sono al tuo piacere.

(293-4: If I am not mistaken, young man, from the look of it, you are from Arcadia? I am at your pleasure.)

Arcadia sounds like a code word for homosexuality.

295.           Lascia la lira, o sciocco, et piglia il zufolo,  
296.           et se pur vuoi cantar, canta col mutolo.

(295-6: Leave the lyre, you fool, and take up the flute, if you want to sing, sing with a mute.)

*lira*: lyre, female sex organ; *zufolo* (flute) = anus

297.           Non fo sonetti, et non mel reco a scorno,  
298.           ma sestine fo io quasi ogni giorno.

(297-8: I don't do sonnets, and I am not ashamed of that, but sestinas I do almost every day.)

Toscan: *sonetto* = rapport sodomitique; *sestina* = coit à tergo

299.           Se brami che già mai ti sia concesso  
300.           senza rivale amar, ama te stesso.

(299-300: If you yearn that you will ever be allowed to love without a rival, love yourself.)

301.           Che cosa è quel che sempre vive in fasce,  
302.           et se non getta il pasto non si pasce?

(301-2: What is that which always lives in sheathing, and if it doesn't throw out its meal, it doesn't eat.)

riddle answer: phallus

303.           Et quel che tanto calca et si dimena,  
304.           et sponde il sangue et non taglia la vena?

(303-4: And that which kicks so and thrashes about and sheds blood and does not cut a vein.)

riddle answer: phallus

305. Et quel Signor, ch'ha duoi cagniuoli appresso  
 306. et mai non entran nel giardin con esso?

(305-6: And [who is] that gentleman who has two little dogs by his side and they never enter the garden with him?)

riddle answer: phallus and testes/ cock and balls

307. Ancor mi dite, ove si trova un speco,  
 308. nel qual non entra mai se non un cieco?

(307-8: And tell me now, where does one find a cave, in which no one enters who is not blind?)

*speco* (cave) = orifice, *cieco* (blind, one-eyed) = phallus

309. Et dove è quella valle, ch'ogni mese  
 310. veste a fior rossi assai del suo paese?

(309-10: And where is that valley which every month wears the very red flowers of its country?)

fior rossi del suo paese: women's menstrual blood

311. Et dove in una valle allaga un fonte,  
 312. di cui non beve chi non fora il monte?

(311-2: And where in a valley does a spring pool, from which one cannot drink if he doesn't pierce the mountain.)

My text should be checked against a newish edition of Bembo's *Motti*, a cura di Vittorio Cian, *Nota al testo e Indici a cura di Giulia Raboni*. Cremona, Edizioni Sylvestre Bonnard, 2007.

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