

Questo ayatro in questo spado, significa qñ sette colori de la spada. Elli quatro animali significa qñro uertu: 3oe d'infinito, presteza, forteza, 2 ardimento. E chi uide ess' bono in questa arte de queste uertu conueni de lor auer parte.

A quello d' un l'ouo conuiero nò uede creata. En quello mette sem' a pesto e a misura.

Aupa molo.

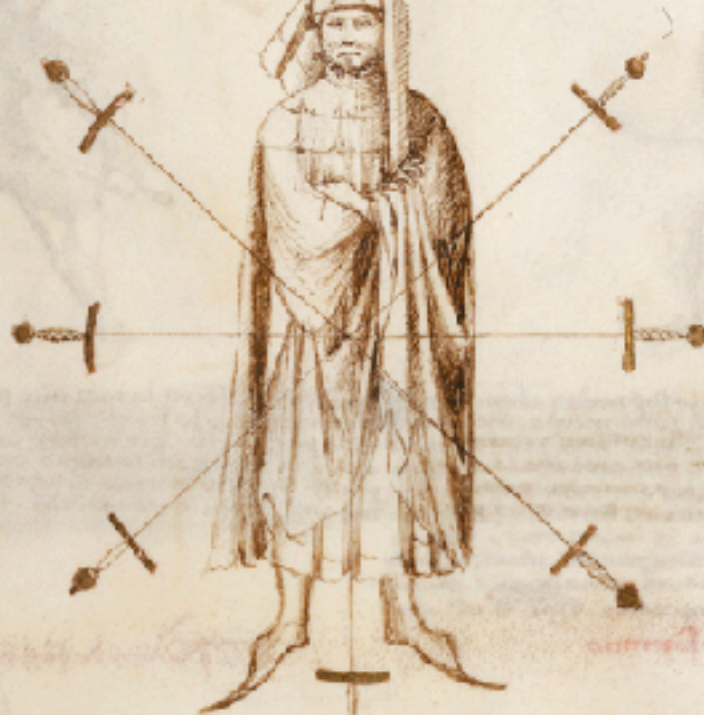
Lo ligro tanto s'ha f'isto ha correr euol' parte che la fugitta del cielo nò in paria uanzare.

Pu de ma l'cone nò p'ote bore ardito: p' di la lingua f'izo uss' p' h' m'isto.

Preteza.



Ardimento.



Elle fante s'ha e Enio mi l'zinocho

vn castello porto p' ch'ango ne p'ò uanto.



Forteza.

A Glossary of 15th Century Italian Fencing Terms

For use with the online courses *The Medieval Dagger* and *The Medieval Longsword*

Guy Windsor

Please distribute this freely to anyone you think may find it useful, unchanged and with attribution.

The table below includes words that are either unique to fencing manuscripts (Fiore or Vadi's), or have a specific technical meaning in a fencing context. There are still some areas of debate amongst scholars of these arts; where I am aware of such, I have mentioned so in the comments. The translations are not necessarily applicable to modern Italian or other historical sources. Students should also note that the terms are often spelled several different ways in the original sources. Those interested in the translation process should read my article "Half Full? Translating Mezza and Tutta in Il Fior di Battaglia" available free online from www.guywindsor.net/blog/resources

Italian grammar is quite simple, but has some aspects that English speakers may find odd—not least that a single word may have different forms, and to make a word plural, we can't just throw an 's' on the end. In general, nouns are either masculine or feminine, and adjectives will have both masculine and feminine forms that agree with the noun they describe. For example: *punta falsa*, false thrust. *Filo falso*, false edge.

In general:

- Nouns ending in -e when singular will end in -i when plural: *fendente*, *fendenti*.
- Nouns ending in -o when singular will end in -i when plural: *colpo*, *colpi*.
- Nouns ending in -a when singular will end in -e when plural: *ligadura*, *ligadure*.

While it is standard practice to place all adjectives in their masculine form first, in the list below I have placed each word in the form that is most commonly used in Fiore (e.g. *Longa*), and I have used the spellings that you will find in Fiore and/or Vadi's manuscripts, such as *zogho*, which would be *gioco* in modern Italian.

These terms are frequently combined: for example, *mandritto fendente* is a forehand descending blow.

Italian	English	Comments
Abrazare	To wrestle	
Accrescere	To step forwards	without passing.
Bicorno	Two-horned.	a guard.
Breve, posta breve	Short; short guard.	Refers to a specific guard position.
Cinghiare / cinghiaro	Wild boar.	The name of a specific guard position.
Colpo/i	a blow or strike.	
Corona	Crown.	The name of a specific guard position.
Coverta	Cover, parry.	
Destro/a	On the right.	
Discrecere	To step back	without passing.
Donna	Woman.	The name of a specific guard position.
Dritto, diritto, derito	Right, forehand or true.	<i>Filo</i> or <i>taglio dritto</i> is the true edge.
Elzo	Hilt; crossguard.	
Falcon	Falcon.	The name of a specific guard position.

Falso	False edge, back edge.	
Fendente	Descending blow.	Usually qualified by <i>mandritto</i> / <i>dritto</i> (forehand) or <i>roverso</i> (backhand).
Finestra	Window.	The name of a specific guard position.
Fora / for di strada	Out of the way.	Usually used in connection with a footwork action: thus <i>passo fora di strada</i> ; “pass out of the way.”
Frontale	Frontal, a guard.	
Giocco / giocho stretto	Close, narrow or constrained play.	
Giocho largo	Wide play.	
Gioco, giocho	Play.	This is used to describe a single sequence (such as the first play of the sword) and, when qualified as <i>largo</i> or <i>stretto</i> , the tactical situation. See the commentary on chapter III for an analysis.
Incrossare / incroce	Crossing. Also parry.	
Largo	Wide.	Used in contrast to <i>stretto</i> . A state of play, or tactical situation, in which you are free to strike.
Lunga/Longa	Long.	Part of the name of a specific guard position, <i>posta lunga con la spada curta</i> .
Mandritto	Forehand.	See <i>dritto/diritto</i> .
Mantener	Handle of the sword.	
Meza spada / mezza spada	Half sword.	A crossing made near the middle of both blades.
Mezana porta di ferro	Middle iron door.	A guard position.
Mezano/i	Middle blows, horizontal blows.	
Passare	To pass, as in stepping.	
Passo	A pass, also the length of a passing step, also the space between your feet when standing.	
Porta di ferro	Iron door.	Can also be “middle” (<i>mezana</i>) or “flat ground” (<i>piana terena</i>).
Posta / poste	Position or guard.	Used more commonly than <i>guardia</i> .
Quattro dita	“Four fingers.”	A unit of measurement.
Rebattere	To beat aside- to parry.	
Remedio	Remedy; the defence against an attack.	
Rendopiare / reddopiare	Redouble.	To strike again. Note: in 16th century Bolognese sources, <i>ridoppio</i> is a rising blow with the true edge, from the left. This is not the case here.
Riverso / roverso	Backhand.	

Rompere	To break, as in the breaking of the thrust.	
Rota	“Turn” from <i>rotare</i> . A rising blow.	Used by Vadi only. This blow gets its own chapter, chapter XV. It is also used on 15r in <i>rota da molin</i> , “millwheel.”
Sagitaria	Archer	Refers to specific guard positions, used differently by Fiore and Vadi.
Scambiare	To exchange, as in to exchange the thrust.	
Sinestro	On the left.	
Somesso	The width of a fist.	A unit of measurement.
Sottano	A rising blow.	
Stanco	Left (side or foot, usually).	In modern Italian, “tired.”
Strada	Way.	This is used in the sense of the direct line between the two combatants. Hence to step <i>fora di strada</i> , “out of the way,” is to step off the line.
Stramazzone	A whirling blow from the wrist.	
Stretto / stretta / strette	Close, constrained, narrow.	See the commentary on chapter III for an analysis.
Taglio/e	Cut, but also cutting edge.	
Traverso; ala traversa	Across, or diagonal.	Usually used in connection with a footwork action: <i>va for de strada per traverso passo</i> ; “go out of the way with a pass across.”
Tondo	“Round”: A horizontal blow	
Tornare	“To return”; to pass back.	
Vera croce	True cross.	A guard position (sword in armour).
Volta	Turn.	Specifically volta stabile (stable turn: when with both feet fixed you can play on the same side in front and behind), meza volta (half turn: when with a pass forwards or backwards you can play on the other side), tutta volta (whole turn: when one foot remains fixed and the other turns around it).
Vista, visteggiare	Feint, to feint.	This use of the word is absolutely clear from its context.
Volante / volanti	“Flying,” a horizontal blow.	This term is unique to Vadi.
Zenghiaro	Wild boar.	A guard.
Zogho largo	Wide play.	See <i>giocco largo</i> .
Zogho stretto	Close play.	See <i>giocco stretto</i> .