

**Ludovico Vicentino
degli Arrighi**

Operina

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ISBN 978 1 934227 02 2 Paperback
ISBN 978 1 934227 18 3 Digital

PUBLISHED BY
Operina LLC
<operina.com> operina@gmail.com

Printed and bound in the United States of America.



 A O P E R I

di Ludouico Vicentino, da

imparare' di

scriuere

Re'

littera Can-

cellare

cha

IL MODO
 &
 Regola de' scriuere littera
 corsiuua
 ouer Cancellarescha
 nouamente' composto per
 LUDOVICO
 VICENTINO
 NO
 Scrittore de' breui
 aplici
 in Roma nel Anno di nra
 salute
 + M D X X I I +

A

The method and rules for writing cursive letters or chancery script, recently put together by Ludovico Vicentino, writer of apostolic letters in Rome, in the year of our salvation 1522.

>> *as I could and, if they do not match it at every point, ask you to forgive me, as the press cannot entirely represent the living hand; still I hope that by following my instruction you will reach your goal. Enjoy life and health.*

~: Al benigno Lettore:~

Pregato più uolte, anzi costretto da molti amici benignissimi Lettore, che riguardo hauendo alla publica utilità e comodo non solamente di questa età, ma delli posterì anchora, uolesti dar qualche' essemplio di scriuere, et regolatamente formare gli caratteri e note delle lre che (cancellare che hoggi di chiamano) uolentier pigliai questa fatica: E perche impossibile era de mia mano porger tanti essempli, che soddisfacessero a tutti, mi sono ingegnato di ritrouare questa nuoua inuentione de lre, e metterle in stampa, le quali tanto se' auicinano alle scritte a mano, quanto capera il mio ingegno, E se puntualmente in tutto nõ te rispondono, supplicoti che mi facci i scusato. Conciosia che la stampa nõ possa in tutto ripresentarte la uia mano, Spero nondimeno che imitando tu il mio ricordo, da te stesso potrai conseguire il tuo desiderio. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
Vini, e Sta Sano:~

Dear reader. As many friends have asked, indeed demanded, my dear reader, that I, for the public good, not only of our time but for posterity as well, provide some examples of writing and instruction about the regular shaping of letters that nowadays are called chancery style, I have gladly undertaken this task; and as I couldn't provide enough examples by my own hand to satisfy all, I exerted myself with this new invention of letters and printed them, copying handwriting as closely >> 2

A chiunque uole' imparare' scriuere' bra
 cor fina, o sia cancellaresca comuene'
 osseruare' la sottoscritta norma

&
 Primieramente' imparerai di fare' que=
 sti dui tratti, cioe - -
 da li quali se' principiano tutte'

le'
 littere' cancellare=
 sche',

De li quali dui tratti l'uno e' piano et
 grosso,
 l'altro e' acuto et sottile

le'
 come' qui tu puoi uedere' notato
 - - - -
 -

Anyone who wishes to learn the cursive or chancery style should observe the rules that follow. First learn to make these two strokes - ' one of which begins all chancery letters. Of these two one is flat and thick, the other slanting and thin, as you see here: - ' - ' -

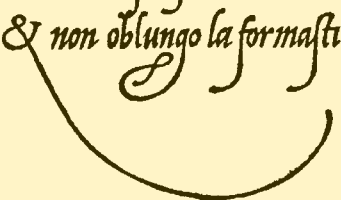
Dal
 primo adunq
 Tratto piano e Gros
 so cioe' --- che' alla riuersa
 Et tornando per il medesimo se' incom:
 mincia,
 principiarai tutte' le' infrastrate' littere'
 - a b c d f g h k l o q s f x
 Lo resto poi delo Alphabeto se' principia
 dalo
 secundo Tratto acuto
 e' sottile' con il taglio dela penna ascē=
 dendo et poi
 allo ingui
 Ritornando in questo modo designato
 'e e' i m n p r t u ij'

With the first stroke, flat and bold ---, reversed and turned on itself, begin these letters: a b c d f g h k l o q s f x y z. The remainder of the alphabet starts with the second stroke, slanting and thin, written upwards at the angle of the pen and then down, this way: 'e e' i m n p r t u ij'

Farai dal primo tratto grosso & pia-
 no questo corpo $\sigma - r \sigma$ dal
 quale ne caui poi cinque lettere
 a d c g q
 Dele quali hre' tutti li corpi che' toca-
 no la linea sopra
 la quale tu scri
 uerai,
 se' hanno
 da
 formare'
 in
 vno quadreto oblongo
 et
 non quadro perfetto in tal modo
 cioe' $\square :: r. \sigma. a. c. d. g :: q \square$
 a d c g q

From the first stroke, bold and short, make this lettershape $\sigma - r \sigma$ on which these five letters, a d c g q, are based. The bodies of the letters, which sit on the baseline, should fit a condensed rectangle, not a perfect square, thus: $\square :: r. \sigma. a. c. d. g :: q \square$

Tra le retro=
 scrute cinque littere a c d g q
 ti fo intendere
 che anchora quasi tutte le altre lre
 se hanno á formare in questo :: qua=
 dretto oblungo et non quadro per
 fetto □
 perche alocchio mio la littera
 corsua ouero cancellarescha
 vuole hauere
 del
 lungo & non del rotondo: che' rotonda
 ti veneria fatta qua=
 do dal quadro
 perfetto
 & non oblungo la formasti



Note that in addition to the five letters a c d g q that I mentioned nearly all the others should be based on this condensed rectangle ::, not a perfect square, thus: □. In my view the cursive, or chancery, style should be condensed rather than round: and round it would look if it were based on a square and not the condensed rectangle.

P seguire' poi l'ordine de' l'Alphabeto im=
 parerai di fare questa linea l' principia=
 dola con lo primo tratto grosso et piano

˘˘˘

dala quale ne' cauerai le' littere in=
 frascritte'

b d fff h k l s ff ll lb sl

& per fare' che habbiano la ragione sua
 li' farai incima quella te

stolina un poco piu' grosseta che' la linea,

La qual' grosseza tu facil=
 mente' farai

Se' facendo il primo tratto lo comen=
 ci alla riuersa, & dapoì

ritorni indrieto per

lo medesimo

lo medesimo

˘˘˘ b d fff h k l l l l h b s ff ll

˘˘˘

v

As we go through the alphabet, you should learn to make this stem f which begins with the first flat and bold stroke ˘˘˘. It is used in the following letters: b d fff h k l f ff ll lb sl and, to give them proper shape, make the top slightly thicker than the stem, which is easily done if the first stroke is reversed and then turned on itself:

˘˘˘ b d fff h k l h b s ff ll

Quando harai impara=
 rato
 di fare' le'
 tre' antescritte, quali tutte' comin=
 ciano da quel primo tratto grosso e'
 piano chio t'ho detto, te' ne' ve=
 nerai ad quelle'
 che'
 con il secundo tratto acuto et sotti=
 le' se' debbono principiare, come'
 seguendo in que=
 sto mio
 Trattatello facilmente potrai
 da te'
 stesso
 Comprendere=
 re'

B

When you have learned to write the letters I mentioned, which all begin with the bold, short stroke, you come to the letters that begin with the second stroke, slanting and thin, as you will easily understand by following my little treatise.

Le lettere per tanto, quali dal secundo trat-
to acuto & sottile se' princi-
piano, sonno le' infra scritte', Cioe'

' i e e' i j m n p r

t u

le' quali tutte' deueno essere' equali, saluo
che' il p et il t hanno da essere' un
poco piu' altette' che' li corpi dele' altre'
tre

come' quivi con lo exem

pio Ti dimostro

ap at mt um p not ur p gr st um put in at m pi

Et questa piu' alteza del p cioe' dela linea
et non dela panza, a l'occhio mio af-
sai piu' satisface'. Del t poi, si fa p farlo
differente' da vno, c.

Beginning with the second stroke, slanting and thin, are the letters ' i e i j m n p r t u.

All should be the same height, except the p and t, which should be slightly higher than the bodies of the others, as I show in this example: a p a t m t u m p n o t u r p q r s t u m p u t i n a t m p i. Greater height of the p, the first stem, not the bowl, is in my view more pleasing; a taller letter t distinguishes it from the c.

La perche' hauemo due' sorte' di s sco-
 me' uedi, & dela lunga te' ho insegnato,
 Resta dire de' la piccola, dela qua-
 le' farai che'l uoltare'
 di sotto sia
 maggiore' che' quello
 di sopra
 si come' qui uedi signato

s s s

IncominZandola pure' con lo primo tra-
 e' fo' grosso e' piano chio

Ritornando per lo medesimo idrieto
 voltandolo al modo che'l fia' vno


s

che sintenda

As we have two kinds of the letter s, the s and the f, which you see here, and since I have already instructed you on the long, it now remains to discuss the short. Make the lower curve larger than the upper: s s s. Begin with the first stroke, flat and bold, which I mentioned before; reverse it back on its path and curve it in a way that makes a distinct s.

Auemo anchora du dire' de lo x y z
de le' quali Tre bre' lo x et y comincia=
no quasi ad uno modo

medesimo

cioe'  cosi, tagliando nel mezo de lo
primo tratto per fare' lo x, et che' dinaci
non sia piu largo che' quanto e' alto

vno a,

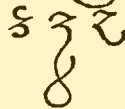
Lo simile' farai del y quanto a l'alteza,
in tal modo

xayaxayaxayaxy

de'

La z poi ti sforzera di far=
la con questi tratti che' qui sonno signati





I still have not mentioned the letters x y z; of these three the x and y begin much the same way: [see the fifth line]. Cut the first stroke in the middle to make the x, which should not be wider in front than the letter a. The letter y should be made the same height, thus: x a y a x a y a x a y a x y. Strive to make the z with the strokes illustrated here [see the two bottom lines].

Te bisogna poi imparato
 l'Alphabeto, per congiungere le l're
 insieme' aduertire che tutte le haste sia-
 no equali, come sonno b d h k l
 con lo suo punteto icima
 pendente rotundo e grossetto in modo del
 principio de uno c l l
 Similmente le gambe de sotto
 siano pari a una
 misura

f g p q s x y ss
 & che li corpi de' tutte le littere uadino
 equali cosi di sotto come di sopra
 in questo modo qui-
 ui signato
 A a b c d e m f m g m b i k l m n o p q r s t u s t u m v x y z

Now that you have learned the letters of the alphabet, make sure when you put them together that all the [long] ascenders are of equal height: b d h k l, with the very top leaning to the right, rounded and bold, just as the beginning of the c or l. Likewise the descenders should be the same length: f g p q s x y ss, and the bodies of all the letters should be even, both at baseline and midline, as shown here: A a b c d e m f m g m b i k l m n o p q r s t u s t u m v x y z.

Et perche' de' tutte' le' littere' de' lo
 Alphabeto, alcune' se' fanno in uno
 tracto senza leuare
 la penna desopra la carta, alcune' in
 dui tracti

Mi e' parso al proposito dirti, quali
 sono quelle' che' con vno, quali gl'
 le' che' con dui tracti se' facciano,

Quelle' che' con vno
 tracto se' fanno,
 sonno le' infrascriv-
 te. cioe

a b c g h i l l m n o q r s u y z

Lo resto poi de' l'Alphabe-
 to

se' fa in dui Tracti
 d e e' f k p t x &

As some letters of the alphabet are made in one stroke, without lifting pen from paper, and others in two, it appears timely to set out which letters are made in one stroke and which with two. Written in a single stroke are these: a b c g h i l m n o q r s u y z. The rest of the alphabet is written with two strokes: d e e' f k p t x &.

Saperai anchora *Le* for mio che' dele'
 lettere' piccole' delo Alphabeto,
 alcune' si pommo ligare' con le' sue' segue-
 ti, et alcune' no: Quelle' che' si
 pommo ligare' con le' sequenti, sono le'
*infra*scritte, cioe', a c d f i k l m
 n s s t u
 Dele' quali a d i k l m n u si ligano
 con tutte' le' sequenti: Ma c f s s t li-
 gano sol con alcune': Lo resto poi delo
 Alphabeto cioe' b e' e g h o p q r x y z
 non se' deue' ligar mai con lra
 sequente'. Ma nel liga-
 re, et non ligare' ti
 lascio in arbitrio
 tuo, pur che' la
 lettera sia e-
 guale'.

You should also note, dear reader, that some small letters of the alphabet may be joined to the letter that follows and others must not. Those that can be joined to a succeeding letter are: a c d f u k l m n s t u. Of these, any letter can be joined from a d i k l m n u, but only some from c f s. From the remaining letters of the alphabet, b e e g h o p q r x y z, no letter that follows may be joined. But whether to join or not I leave to your judgment, as long as the writing is even.

Seguita lo esempio delle' lre' che pono
ligar si con tutte' le' sue sequenti, in tal mo-
do cioè

aa ab ac ad ae' af ag ah ai ak al am an

ao ap aq ar as af at au ax ay az

Il medesimo farai con d i k l m n u.

Le ligature' poi de' c f s s t sonno
le' infra =
scrutte

ct, fa ff fi fm fn fo fr fu fy,
st st

st, ta te' ti tm tn to tq tr tt tu
tx ty

Con le restanti littere' de' lo Alphabeto, che'
sono, b e' g h o p q r x y z
non si deve' ligar mai lra'
alcuna sequente'

Here follow examples of letters that can be joined to any succeeding letter: aa ab ac ad ae' af ag ah ai ak al am an ao ap aq ar as af at au ax ay az. Join from the letters d i k l m n u in the same way. The ligatures from the letters c f s s t are these: ct, fa ff fi fm fn fo fr fu fy, st, ff ff fs st, ta te ti tm tn to tq tr tt tu tx ty. From the remaining letters of the alphabet, b e' g h o p q r x y z, there should be no joins.

&accio che' nel scriuer tuo Tu habbi
 piu facilità, farai che'
 tutti li
 caratteri, o uogli dire' lettere'
 pendano inanzi, ad
 questo modo
 (ioe'

Virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto :~

Non uoglio però che' caschino tanto Ma
 così feci l'esempio, per
 dimostrarti meglio la via doue' dite'
 lettere'
 hanno da stare'
 pendenti.,

C

To write more fluently, let your characters—letters, if you prefer—lean forward: "Virtue surpasses all else." I do not want you to tilt them as much as that, but wrote this example the better to demonstrate how proper letters should slope.

Nota, gratioso Lettor mio, che' quātunqz
 ti habbia dūto, che' tutti li
 carac'theri deueno eſſer pendenti inanzi,
 voglio che' tu intendi queſto
 quanto alle lre' piccole,

Voglio che' le' tue' Maiuſcule' ſempre
 ſiano tirate' drite'

E
 con li ſuoi tracti fermi e'
 ſaldi ſenſa tremoli per dentro, che
 altramente', a mio parer

non
 haueriano Gra
 tia
 alcuna

Note that, dear reader, although I told you that the characters should all slant forward, I want you to understand that this only applies to the lower-case letters, and want your capitals always written upright in firm strokes and without wavering; otherwise they will not be the least attractive.

Farai che la
distantia
da linea a linea de' cose che tu
scriuerai in tal littera,

Cancellaresca
non sia troppo larga, ne' troppo stretta, ma
mediocre

La distantia da parola a parola sia
quanto e' vno n: Da littera ad
littera poi nel ligarle, sia
quanto e' il biancho tra le due gambe
de lo n

Ma perche' seria quasi impossibile serua-
re questa regola, te' sforzarai di consiglier-
ti con l'occhio, et a quello satisfare, il
quale ti scusara bonissi-
mo compasso

Make the space between lines of what you write in the chancery script neither too large nor too small, but average, and the gap between words the width of an n. The distance between joined letters should be the same as between the stems of an n. But as this rule is almost impossible to follow, rely on your eyes: the best pair of dividers will absolve you.

Credo assai á bastanza hauerti dimostrato
 il modo del mio scriuere' littera
 Cancellarescha, quanto alle' lre' piccole':
 Hora ci resta da dirti p
 quanto alle' Maiuscule
 le' si pertenga,
 le' quali tutte' se' deueno principiare'
 da quelli dui tracti ch'io t'ho detto de
 le' piccole' (ioe' l'uno piano et grosso, l'al-
 tro acuto, e sottile'
 in
 tal
 modo
 - / - / - / -

I believe I have demonstrated enough of my method for writing the lower case of the chancery style; now the capitals remain, which all should begin with [one of] the two strokes that I spoke of when I dealt with the lower-case letters: one flat and thick, the other slanting and thin, thus: - / - / - / -

Graue' fatica non ti fia ad imparar fare' le'
 littere' Maiuscule', quando nelle' pic-
 cole harai firmato bene'
 la mano, e'
 co maxime' ch'io ti ho
 ditto che' li Dui principij delle'
 Piccole' sonno anchora quelli delle' Grandi'
 come' continuando il scriuere', da te
 medesimo uenerai
 cognoscendo
 Non ti dirò adunque' altro, Saluo che' te'
 sforzi' imparar fare' le' tue' Maiuscule'
 Come' qui apresso ri-
 trouerai per esse-
 pio designato

Learning the capitals will not be demanding when you have acquired a good, firm handwriting the lower case, not least because I have told you that the two beginning strokes of the minuscules also apply to the capitals, which you will understand as you continue to write. I need advise you no further except to take the trouble of learning the capitals from the examples that I have provided.

A A B B C C D D E E F F
 G G H H I I K K L L M M
 N N O O P P Q Q
 R R S S T T U U V V
 X X Y Y Z Z & & & &

~: Ludouicus vicentin. scribebat:~

+ Rome anno domini +

• MDXXII •

A a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v x y z.
 . r .

[Examples of capitals and ampersands.]

Ludovicus Vicentinus wrote this out in the year of our Lord 1522 in Rome.

[Examples of lower-case letters.]

Exempli per firmar la Mano :-

A - r o a b c o d i e e f o g h i k l m n o p q p p
 r s t u x x y z , e t s t s s s s s t u v w

No e' Gloria il principio, ma il seguire'. De'
 qui nasce' l'honor uero. &
 perfetto:

Che' vale in campo intrare, et poi fuggire'?

Ille Idem. L. vicentinus Scribebat Romæ.
 D

Examples for developing a firm hand.

[Model of the lower case.]

Glory is not achieved by setting out, but at the finish. That is the birth of honor, true and perfect. Why enter the field of battle, and then flee?

Written out in Rome by the selfsame L Vicentinus.

T: Deo optimo & Immortali auspice: ~
 A b c d e e f g g h i k l m n o p q r s t u x x
 x y x y z z e e e

Così uà il stato human: Chi questa sera finisce
 il corso suo, Chi diman nasce? Sol
 virtu doma morte' horrida
 , e, altera .

Ludo . vice timis Rome' in Parhione
 scribeba .

◊ ANN ◊ M D X X I I ◊

Deo, & Virtuti omnia debent ,

By the favor of perfect and immortal God.

[Examples of the lower case and ampersands.]

Such is the state of man: born at daybreak; at nightfall the course is run. Virtue alone conquers haughty and terrible death. Written out by Ludovico Vicentino in Rome at Parhione, in the year 1522. To God and virtue we owe all.

A B C D E F G H I K L M N
 O P Q R S T V X Y Z

abc deefggghiklmnopgrsstux
 xyzz&&

Est modus in rebus: sunt

certi

deniqz fines

Quos ultra citraqz nequit consistere

Rectum

A A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P Q
 R S T V X Y Z

Medium tenuere Beati

D

[Examples of swash capitals, lower-case letters and ampersands.]

Everything has its measure: beyond certain limits on either side nothing is right.

[Example of simple capitals.]

The middle way is best.

A a B b c C c d d e E e f f g g h h i i k k l l
 M m n n o o p p q q r r R r s s t t u u v v x x y y z z

z z s s & z z r r
 Fient autem commode omnia, si recte tempora
 dispensabuntur: Si singulis diebus statutas
 horas litteris dabimus, neq[ue]
 negotio v[er]o
 abstrahamur; quo minus aliquid
 quotidie legamus ..

Eodem Lud. Vicentino scribe r. VII. Augusti.
 In Alma Urbe

[Examples of swash capitals and lower-case letters.]

Everything will be well done if time is properly dispensed and every day we devote set hours to letters and let nothing prevent us from some measure of reading. Written out by the same Ludovico Vicentino on the seventh of August in his adoptive city.

F. Petrar. die

Segui già le speranze, el van desio: Hor
 ho dinanci agliocchi un chiaro specchio
 Dou'io veggio me' stesso
 el fallir
 mio.

Et quanto posso al fine m'apparecchio,
 Pensando
 al

breue' viuer mio nel quale
 Sta mane' era un fanciullo, & hor
 son
 vecchio :~)

Breue & irreparabile Tempus

[Francesco] Petrarch said this. I followed hope and empty desire: now I can see my failings in a clear mirror I have before my eyes. And I can prepare myself at last, thinking of my brief life in which I was a boy this morning and now am an old man. Fleeting and irreparable is time.

Regnam illam procacium uitioꝝ auaritia
 fuge;
 cui cuncta crimina detestabili deuotione
 famulantur,
 que quidem Auari-
 tia
 studium pecunie habet, quam nemo Sa-
 piens concupiuit: Ea quasi malis ve-
 nenis imbuta, corpus animumqꝫ
 virilem effemi-
 nat
 neqꝫ copia neqꝫ inopia minuitur

 Auarus in nullo bonus i se aut peſsimus :-

Dismiss avarice, that queen of disgraceful ills which all misdeeds serve with detestable devotion: greed strives for lucre, which no wise man craves and, as if steeped in malign poisons, weakens the manhood of body and soul and is abated neither by riches nor poverty. A miser has no goodness; he is base in every respect.

Hoc Excellentis est Sapien-
 tia'
 hominem sui ipsius habere notitiam,
 nec ex dilectione, quam habet in se,
 ipso falli

tur
 Q bonum se reputat, cum non sit.
 Dic tabat hoc Galenus: Scribebat
 Vicentinus i

VRBE
 Potens quippe est homo suos quosq;
 actus dirigere
 re
 seipsum si agnove-
 rit.

AVREA SENTENTIA

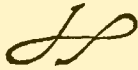
The highest wisdom in a man is knowing himself and not be misled by pride to fancy himself better than he is. This Galenus observed, and in Rome Vicentino wrote it out. A man who knows himself is the master of his actions. Golden sentiments.

Amant^{mo}. A. Beat^{mo} Car^o. Car^{mo}. Char^{mo}
 Dign^{mo} Ex^{mo} Exc^{sa}. R. Pn. Famos^{mo}
 Gnos^o. A Lon^o Hon^{mo} Hon^{mo}
 Ill^{mo} Ill^{mo} Ill^{mo} Ill^{mo} Ill^{mo} K^{co}
 L. Mas^{tas} Mag^{tra} Mag^{co} Nobil^{mo} o
 Principi Pres^o R^{mo} Reueren^o
 Scr^{mo} San^{tas} T. T. Ven^{us}. Vra^o X^{mo}
 YZ
 Licen^o Tin^o. Scibebo^o.

[Forms of address in flourished abbreviations.]

Most honorable, excellent, illustrious, noble, reverend etc. Written out by Ludovico Vicentino.

Lettor, se' truoui cosa che
 t'offenda
 In questo Trattatel del Vicenti-
 no,
 Non te' marauigliar, Perche' Diui-
 Et non humano, e' quel, ch' e' senza
 menda.



Qui viuer non si puo senza
 defetto
 Che' chi potesse' star senza pec-
 cato
 Seria simil á Dio
 ch' e' sol perfetto

Reader, if you find a flaw in Vicentino's little treatise be not surprised, for perfection is not a human but divine quality. Here one cannot live without blemish: without sin one would be like God who alone is perfect.

Finisce
 la
 A R T E
 di
 scrivere' littera Corsina
 ouer cancellaresca
 Stampata in Roma, per inuentione
 di Ludouico Vicentino,
 scrittore



Here ends the art of writing chancery script. Printed in Rome from the original of Ludovico Vicentino, scribe. By grateful privilege.

Operina

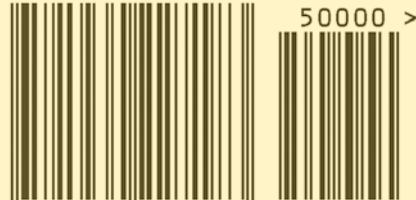
THE AUTHOR was a copyist, papal scribe, publisher and type designer. He called himself Ludovico Vicentino, and wrote the name eight times into his short text. Yet we know him as Arrighi, a name that appears nowhere in the book.

Operina shows great handwriting on every page. It is more than a set of model sheets, however. It describes Arrighi's underlying forms and two basic entry movements. It covers the spacing of lines, words and letters. It deals with slant and joins.

Operina is a slim volume of 32 pages. It teaches italic handwriting and is still essential reading. Each page was printed from a separate woodcut by Ugo da Carpi, who is best known as a master of chiaroscuro engraving.



ISBN 978-1-934227-18-3



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