

Scola, overo Teatro  
By Nicoletto Giganti, Venetian

1606

(rev. 2020-07-24)



## Introduction and Notes on the Translation

This project began as a fun way to practise my Italian while working with material that was a little less dry than a textbook. With its inclusion of the translated dedication and forward, it ended up being the only complete translation of Nicoletto Giganti's 1606 work *Scola, overo teatro*.

Aside from being the text my fencing club regularly works with, *Scola, overo teatro* is reasonably short, avoids lengthy discussion of theory, and outside the dedication and forward is written in very straightforward Italian with the occasional Venetian quirk. In translating it I have tried my best to avoid putting words into Giganti's mouth and have used footnotes where I thought it would be helpful to clarify the text.

This version also includes my translation of the handwritten notes made by a previous owner of a 1628 copy of *Scola, overo teatro* which resides in the Austrian National Library, and reproduces the underlining and other markings. Opposite this copy's title page, someone (presumably our annotator) has written "Di me Tommaso de'gl' Obizzi 1700" (Tommaso Obizzi's 1700). The Obizzi were an illustrious but small northern Italian family with French origins, and if 1700 indicates the year he came into possession of the book it is possible that this is the same Tommaso who would become Marquis of Orciano (today known as Orciano Pisano) in 1702.

I have rendered the annotations which appear in the margins as footnotes, attaching them to the text they refer to where it is clear and roughly on the line of text they were located next to in the original where it is not. They are differentiated from Giganti's text by colour and font. I changed page references to be consistent with the layout of this document and keep them useful. Some of the figures were labelled by hand, and I have inserted these markings as well. I am indebted to Julian Schrattenecker and Florian Fortner, who produced a transcription of these notes in the summer of 2018 which I corrected and completed before translating. You can find their website and other work at <http://www.rapier.at/>.

Jeff Vansteenkiste  
<https://labirinto.ca/>

v. 2020-04-24

## Glossary of Italian Terms

I chose not to translate several Italian words that Giganti uses either as technical terms, in ways that don't line up neatly with their English translations, or that are commonly left untranslated by modern writers on historical fencing. Most of these are never explicitly defined in the text but likely would have been familiar to anyone involved in fencing at the time it was published. As Giganti's usage of the terms seems completely in line with that of other Italian fencing masters around the same period, I have provided definitions given by other writers where necessary.

### **Debole**

Italian fencing authors of the 17<sup>th</sup> century are of various opinions on how many sections the blade of the sword should be considered to have, dividing it into two (Capo Ferro 1610), three (Fabris 1606), and even five parts (Alfieri 1640). Although Giganti does not explicitly give his opinion, he refers to only two parts: the *debole* (literally “weak”) and the *forte* (literally “strong”). According to Ridolfo Capo Ferro, the *debole* is the half of a sword's blade from its middle to the point (1610)

### **Dritto** (pl. dritti)

See *mandritto*

### **Forte**

The half of a sword's blade from the hilt to its middle (Capo Ferro 1610)

### **Imbroccata** (pl. imbroccate)

An overhand thrust (dall'Agocchie 1572)

### **Incontro**

Literally an “encounter”. A situation where both fencers attempt to wound each other in the same *tempo* (Alfieri 1640). Giganti only uses the term when this results in both fencers being wounded i.e. a double hit

### **Inquartata** (pl. inquartate)

A type of attack made in the tempo of the opponent's attack by extending the arm with the sword turned to the inside, holding it in place while pivoting on the lead foot and passing to the outside with the rear. Giganti also refers to this action as a “slip”

**Mandritto** (pl. mandritti)

A cut thrown from your right side toward the enemy's left side (Fabris 1606)

**Quarta**

Literally “fourth”. In the numbered guard system used by some of Giganti's contemporaries, a guard in which the hand is held supinated, the sword's blade horizontal, its true edge facing toward the fencer's inside (to the left, for a right-handed fencer) and its false to the outside. Sometimes the term is used to refer to the hand position itself. (Fabris 1606)

**Riverso** (pl. riversi)

A cut thrown from your left side toward the enemy's right side (Fabris 1606)

**Rotella**

A type of round, curved shield appearing in a number of Italian fencing manuals including Capo Ferro's (1610) and Giacomo di Grassi's (1570), as well as in Giganti's *Libro secondo* (1608)

**Seconda**

Literally “second”. A guard in which the hand is held pronated, the sword's blade horizontal, its true edge toward the fencer's outside and its false edge to the inside. Sometimes the term is used to refer to the hand position itself. (Fabris 1606)

**Stoccata** (pl. stoccate)

An underhand thrust (dall'Agocchie 1572)

**Targa**

A type of small, square shield appearing in several Italian fencing manuals including Achille Marozzo's (1536) and Giganti's *Libro secondo* (1608)

**Terza**

Literally “third”. A guard in which the hand is held in a neutral position, the sword's true edge straight down and its false edge straight up. Sometimes the term is used to refer to the hand position itself (Fabris 1606)

**Tempo** (pl. tempi)

In his chapter TEMPO AND MEASURE, Giganti explains that a *tempo* is an opportunity to wound the enemy without being wounded in turn. However, he often uses the term to mean a discrete interval of time or motion e.g. “you must do three things in one *tempo*” or “immediately in the same *tempo* return backward outside of measure”

**Vita**

Although the word *vita* can mean “life” or “body”, Giganti typically uses it to refer to the band of the body above the hips at the waist i.e. your core



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*Tommaso Obizzi's*  
*1700*

# SCOLA, OVERO T E A T R O.

Nelquale sono rappresentate diuerse maniere, e modi di parare,  
e di ferire di Spada sola, e di Spada, e Pugnale;

*Donde ogni studioso potrà essercitarsi, et farsi pratico nella professione dell' Armi,*

DI NICOLETTO GIGANTI VINITIANO,  
AL SERENISS. D. COSMO DE' MEDICI  
GRAN PRINCIPE DI TOSCANA.

*Con licenza de' Superiori, & Priuilegio.*



I N V E N E T I A,

Appresso Gio. Antonio, & Giacomo de Franceschi. M D C V I.

*Title Page*

# SCHOOL, OR THEATRE

In which different manners and methods of parrying and wounding with the single sword and sword and dagger are represented

*Where every scholar will be able to exercise and become practised in the profession of arms*

BY NICOLETTO GIGANTI, VENETIAN

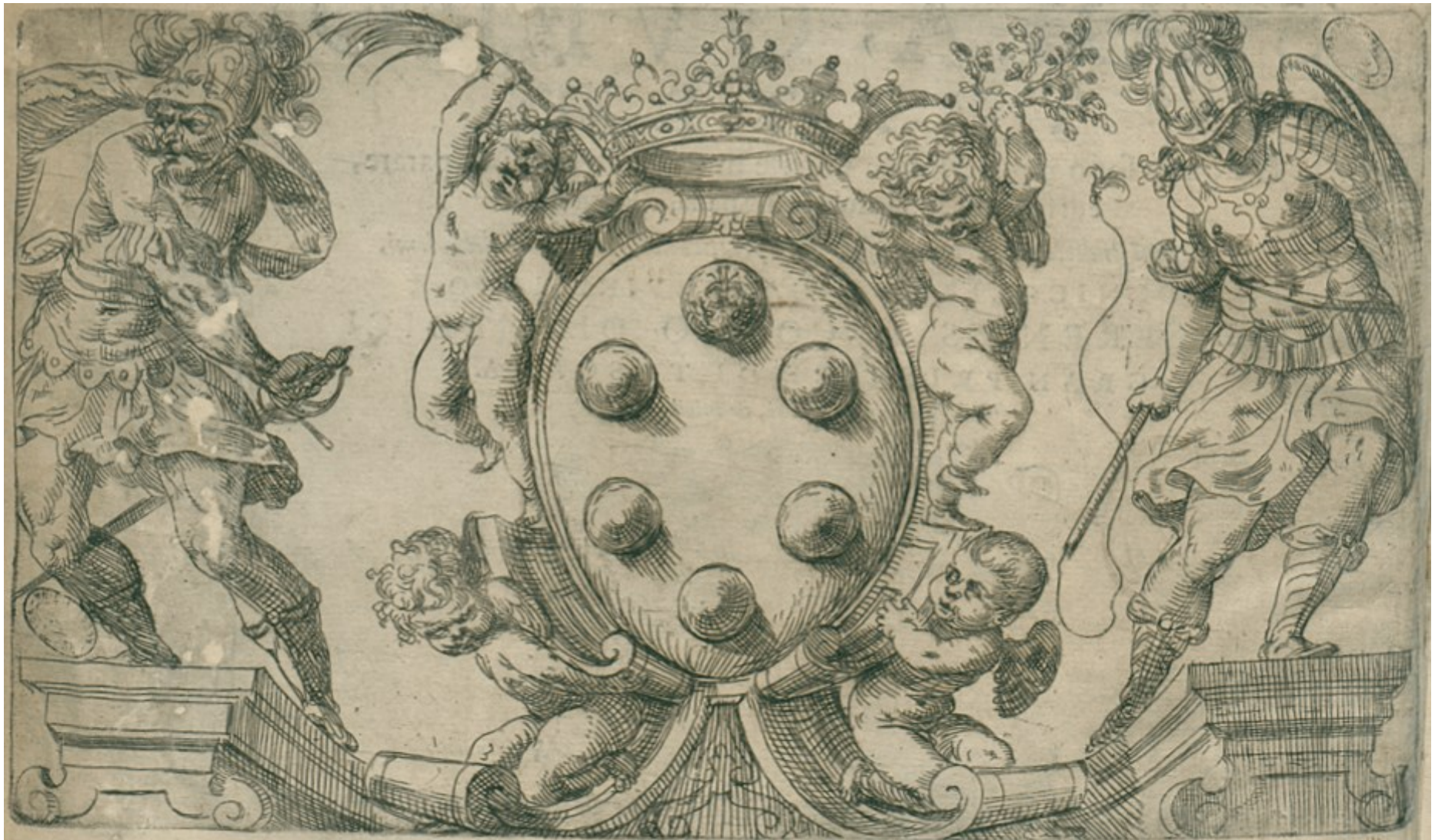
TO THE MOST SERENE DON COSIMO DE' MEDICI  
GREAT PRINCE OF TUSCANY

*With license and privilege of the Superiors*

IN VENICE

Printed by Giovanni Antonio and Giacomo de Frenchesi. MDCVI





*Arms of the Medici family*

TO THE MOST SERENE  
**DON COSIMO DE MEDICI**  
GREAT PRINCE OF TUSCANY  
my only Lord

Just as iron extracted from the rough mines would be useless if it had not received shape suited to human armies from industrious art, thus the same in the hands of the strong soldier can be of little profit if, accompanied by studious and wise valour, the way is not made clear for every difficult and triumphant success. In this way to a point since the Good Shepherd welcomes the operation, because almost all the noblest things proceeding from our actions receive appropriate material from His hands, which, refined and dignified by the industry of the spirit, achieve miraculous and powerful effects. Now I say that this temperament is wonderfully demonstrated in the excellent and illustrious greatness of Your Most Serene Highness, who holds the natural greatnesses brought back to their peak from the invincible glorious works of your Ancestors, not only in the ancient and royal histories, but reflecting in yourself all the light of the present and past splendour, adorning them with your own virtues so that everyone admires the most divine tempers, and with wonderment says such a Most Serene Lord is no less fitting to that Most Serene State, than such a Most Serene State to that Most Serene Lord. But I will only say that this proposition, just as is demonstrated clearly in all the arts; so it is evidently perceived in exercising arms. Discussing the strength of iron, although it is exercised by a strong arm and agile body, if it is not tuned with observed rules and exercised study it is shown to be perilous and of little valour: Whereas if the art can be known by a wise captain, and he obeys it as a bold minister, they make marvelous prowess of it. You serve us as a clear example, who Heaven had to grant all height of perfect quality as in the most complete illumination of the present age. You who have in the noblest proportion stature, puissance, vigour joined to agility, promptness, and strength, in order to draw with your highest ingenuity the finesse of industry, advice, time, and art that can make you most a complete and Most Illustrious Captain, a Most Serene and most singular Prince.

Wherefore I, recognizing and admiring with humblest affection the mature splendour of your newly made and happy years, and reading in the face of the world the secure hopes and fruits of the future age, adoring that hand from which Italy and the entire world is taking safe rest and glorious protection, to that I offer and consecrate with humble dedication this small, I will certainly not say fruit, but work of my labours. Therefore, it only must please you, being of material welcomed by you which deigns to bend your Most Serene eye. To that end, let many of your highest rays pass over where the baseness of my ingenuity with the exercise of this art that I have dealt with for 27 years does not arrive. Let this work, in itself humble, present itself happily to the view of the World.

It will be effected with the action of my devotion, together with the fruit of your Most Serene mercy, who serving being the full glory,  
I pray that Heaven makes me a worthy, even lowest servant. In Venice February 10, 1606

Of Your Most Serene Highness

A most humble and devoted servant

Nicoletto Giganti, Master of Arms

# TO THE LORD READERS,

ALMORO LOMBARDO

Son of the Most Renowned Lord Marco.

Desiring to write on the matter of arms, although the author does not mention that it is a science, to me it appears a necessary thing, Lord Readers, to treat with what share it has, and of which name it would adorn itself so that everyone knows its greatness, dignity, and privilege.

Whereupon first some students of this this most noble science read and discuss the most learned and easy observations of this valorous and knowledgeable professor Nicoletto Giganti, I, by observing the rule and general precept of a person who wants to address anything, will come to the definition, and then to the general division of this word Science, from which it will be possible for two things to finally be recognized by everyone, showing us that this beautiful profession is science.

Science, therefore, is a certain and manifest knowledge of things that the intellect acquires. It is of two sorts, that is, Speculative and Practical. Speculative is a simple operation of the intellect around its own object. Practical only consists in the actual workings of the intellect.

Speculative is divided in two parts, that is, in Real Speculation and Rational Speculation. The Real aims at the reality of its object, which demonstrates its essence on its exterior. The Rational consists of those things that only the intellect administers and does not extend itself to other goals.

Physics is a Real Speculative Science that only aims at moving and natural things, like the elements. Mathematics is a Real Speculative Science that only extends itself to continuous and discrete quantity. Continuous like lines, circles, surfaces, the measures of which deal with Arithmetic.

Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, and Logic are Rational Speculative Sciences.

Practical Science is divided in two: Active and Workable. Active is Ethics, Politics, and Economics. Workable can be divided in seven others, called mechanical, which are these: Woolcraft, Agriculture, Soldiery, Navigation, Medicine, Hunting, and Metalworking.

Now, coming to what I promised above about this noble science, I will go over its qualities and nature, discussing whether it is Speculative or Practical science. In my opinion I say that it is Speculative, and prove it with diverse reasons. That it is science there



is no doubt, because it is not acquired if it is not mediated by the operation of the intellect, from which it is born. That it is Speculative is certain since it does not consist in anything other than simple knowledge of its object, as I will be discussing below.

The object of this science is nothing more than parrying and wounding. The knowledge of those two things is a work of the intellect, and moreover with intelligence professors of this science do not extend it further than the knowledge of them, which cannot be understood at all unless one first has knowledge of tempi and measures, or rather, knowledge of Feint, Disengage, or resolution without knowledge of tempi and measures. These are all operations of the intellect, and moreover outside of this knowledge the intellect does not extend, because as I have said the aim of these professions is understanding parrying. We will see if it is Real Speculative or Rational Speculative.

Considering this, it cannot be Rational, and the reason is this: because if it is indeed an operation of the intellect, nevertheless it spreads further, wherefore I find it to be Real Speculative. Real, because the knowledge of its aim is shown to us outwardly by the intellect. As the understanding of wounding and parrying, with tempi, measures, feints, disengages, and resolutions, even though they are operations of the intellect, they cannot be understood if not outwardly, and this exterior consists in the bearing of the body and of the Sword in the guards and counterguards, which all consist of circles, angles, lines, surfaces, measures, and of numbers. These things, which must be observed, can be read about in Camillo Agrippa and in many other professors of this science. Note that just as those operations of the intellect without an exterior operation cannot be shown, so these exterior operations cannot be understood without the operations of the intellect first, in a manner that this science, which derives from the intellect, cannot be understood if not outwardly. Neither can one understand outwardly without operations of the intellect. These operations seek to understand the greatness, excellence, and perfection of this profession, and always come united. As there can never be Sun without day, nor day without Sun, never will there be those without these, nor these without those. In the end we see that it is Real Speculative Science.

This science of the Sword, or of arms, is a Real Speculative Mathematic Science, and Geometric, and Arithmetic. Geometric because it consists in lines, circles, angles, surfaces, and measures. Arithmetic because it consists of numbers. There is no motion of the body that does not make an angle or constraint. There is no motion of the Sword that does not travel in a line. There is neither guard nor counterguard that does not go by the number. The observations of these things all depend on knowledge of tempi and measures, whence I conclude that this most noble science is Real, Mathematic, Geometric, and Arithmetic, as I said a little above.

Perhaps some inquisitive person arguing over this could say that the science of arms is a Practical Science with this reason: that being a Practical Science, a science which not only extends to the knowledge of its own object but to the operation of it, this science is therefore Practical, and not Speculative. To this objection I respond: all things have from nature their operation. Three are the sorts of their operations; some are internal, and these have their being in pure and simple intellect, and result from a Rational

Speculative. Some are internal and external, and these have a commonality inside the intellect and outside, and are born from a Real Speculative. Some are completely external, and these have their being outside the intellect entirely and depend on a Practical Science, and are either Active or Workable. The Speculative Workable Real Science is no different from the Practical Science other than in this: the Real Speculative operates outwardly on its object and through the knowledge of that serves the intellect. The Practical Science not only cannot operate on its object if not outwardly, it cannot even come to the knowledge of it if not outwardly. The science of arms has the knowledge of its object in the intellect, and even though it operates outwardly, it cannot be said that it is Practical, but instead Speculative Real Science.

We have therefore seen that it is a science and it is Mathematics, of Geometry and Arithmetic, since it consists of numbers, lines, and measures. The author does not make mention of this in his observations, so that from him learned persons and those with no study may acquire some profit. Therefore, from his present figures and noted lessons, without learning to understand the multiplicity of lines, circles, angles, surfaces which would rather confuse the minds of readers that do not have understanding of these studies, nor give them any instruction, without a doubt everyone will learn to understand without difficulty the tempi, measures, resolutions, feints, disengages, and the way of parrying and wounding.

As for knowing how to understand the circles, lines, and other things mentioned above, every studious person will come to understand them with exercise. I will always advise everyone to apply themselves to the study of letters before this profession, because one that has studied in order to have understanding of the necessary things around this science will better profit and will make themselves more excellent and more perfect, with much more quickness of time for the acquisition, so that he can understand the aforesaid things of the guards, counterguards, covered just as uncovered. He that has not studied will not obtain it so easily, which, if he can learn it well, he will not therefore acquire understanding of this science without length of time and continuous exercise.

This profession is of so much dignity and consideration. What decorum does it seek? What reputation and how much honour must one give it? Under what obligation is one that carries the sword and makes a profession of it? I say its dignity and consideration derive totally from its qualities, and with the division of the same one can come to understand.

This science of the sword is divided into three parts. The first is divided in two: Natural and Artificial. Natural is a demonstrative discourse man makes use of naturally in parrying and wounding, since with his own ingenuity he proceeds with those goals extracting what mother nature administers to him for his needs. Here is what many men of courage and spirit have shown great measure of in their contentions with men of great art and knowledge. The Artificial is that which finds with ingenuity and long use and exercise under short rules and impossible methods different manners of parrying and wounding with the above noted things.

Accordingly, coming to some occasion the man extracts from this the real ends of his safety. In his lessons the author shows great understanding of those two qualities, and the reader will be fully satisfied with them.

The second part is this: the Artificial science of the sword is divided in two, Demonstrative and Exercised. The Demonstrative is that which demonstrates the proper method, and aims at knowledge of parrying and of wounding, by firm foot just as with the pass, when one must bind the enemy and when one must draw back by way of those lines, circles, or circumstances you remember from above, for which the intellect governs and imparts the many and multiple postures and counterpostures of the body. The Exercise is the same as the Demonstrative which, since we have acquired it, we apply to the understanding of a thousand warnings. There is no difference between them, except that the Demonstrative is self-contained, and the Exercised extends to serve the understanding of different things.

The third part is this: the Demonstrative science of the sword is divided in two: the first Demonstrative consists of uncomplicated ends, that is, in simple ends, or composite, that unite in themselves more ends for the same Demonstratives of various occurrences, such as being outside of measure with the arms open, the weapons high or low. These ends require incomplete ends, that is, ends not understood by the enemy. They are called simple because they are natural. They are called composite because they have in themselves many considerations, and these are divided into the first and the second concepts.

The first concepts are real things that are first learned from the intellect, like parrying and wounding, and these come in the first intention. The second concepts are formed from the intellect, and these make the second of our intentions, the knowledge in order to be able to wound and parry, and are made through the first, for the reason that immediately when our intellect has learned this aim of wounding and parrying, it soon discusses how this can be done in a different manner and with different methods.

The second Demonstrative consists of the complex ends, that is, of ends that unite in themselves more ends for the same demonstratives, and these aims either united at measure or separate at a distance demonstrate their ends, like being in guard with the weapons closed demonstrates, either at a distance, or at measure with the posture of the body, or counterposture which is the aim of that, and how many things can be done with that working. For this reason, one sees of how much consideration this beautiful science is for its qualities, and for the aims it contains.

Therefore, just as it is of great dignity because it is real Speculative Mathematics of Geometry and Arithmetic, and for many parts found under itself, such decorum and reputation I say it requires. No other will be the decorum and reputation if not this. And also considering, o Readers, that this science for the most part is found in royal courts, and of every Prince, in the most famous Cities, studied by Barons, Counts, Knights, and persons of great quality, and for no other reason if not because just as it is noble, it excites and inflames our spirits to great things, to learn, and to heroic actions, to match of the virtue of the spirit, the valour of the body, the

vigour of the strength, and the skill of the person. This always seeks parity, and does not allow any blemish to it. It wants to be understood and learned, but not to be professed for every folly one takes up. It flees the disputes of villainous persons. It does not do all that it can. It shows itself at the time and place. It avoids the practices of excess. It is of few words. It desires a serious comportment, an alert eye, an honoured dress, and a noble practice. This is enough about its decorum and reputation. In regard to the honour that it requires, advising that the observance of all the said things is honour to this profession, it remains only to be said what obligation one who carries the sword is under.

We will pass by the aims of these Duellists who, just as they have badly learned the said profession, so I say with many of their propositions they degrade it and have reduced it to such an unhappy state that it not only casts aside the virtuous life which demands such a science, and human discourse, and every reason, but forgetting the great God, and themselves as a consequence, their unjust aims can only possess it for the damnation of their spirits, postponing the divine church for their diabolical thoughts.

This profession, o Readers, puts one who practises it under obligation to learn, and considering this wants to be used in four occasions: the first for Faith, then for Country, for defence of one's own life, and finally for honour. It always wants to be a defender of reason, never taken hold of in order to do wrong, and one who does so makes an injury to this profession. Neither will a man of honour have held onto a wrong in order to fight, but will only do so for the said things. It is necessary to have occasion because fighting without one is a thing of the foolish and drunk. Some as soon as they have acquired some beginning of this mock, putting the Sword at their side, and using a thousand insolences, either stop or wound someone, and at such time kill some miserable person, believing themselves to have acquired honour and fame. They do evil, because other than making an outrage to the nobility of this which must not be put in use without reason, they offend the just God and themselves.

In order to not come to tedium I will not continue, but only exhort each to study such a noble and real science, begging him to keep in mind the underwritten observations of our noble professor, and practise in it, because with brevity of time one can acquire no small profit, observing how much it suits honour, glory, and greatness themselves.

# COPY

The underwritten Most Excellent Lord Captains of the most Illustrious Council of Ten have belief from the Lord Reformers of the Studio of Padua by report of the two elected, that is, of the Reverend Father Inquisitor and of the Secretary of the Senate Zuane Maravegia, with oath, that in this book titled School, or Theatre by Nicoletto Giganti, Venetian, nothing contrary to the law is found. It is worthy of print, granted licence, and may be printed in this city.

Dated the 31st of October, 1605.

D. Santo Balbi	}	Captains of the Most Illustrious Council of X.
D. Gio. Giacomo Zane		
D. Piero Barbarigo		

Most Illustrious Council of X. Secretary

Barth. Cominus.

October 3, 1605

Registered in the Office Against Blasphemy to the back of paper 135

Giovanni Francesco Pinardo Secretary

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December 23, 1605 in Senate

The power is granted to our faithful Nicoletto Giganti, Venetian, that other than him or one at his behest, it is not permitted for the space of the next thirty years to venture to print in this City, nor any other City, Land, or place of our Domain, nor printed elsewhere to conduct or sell in Our Domain the book composed by him, titled School, or Theatre, under pain of losing the printed or conducted works, which are by the aforesaid Nicoletto Giganti, and being obliged to observe what is required by our law in matters of Printing, of paying three hundred ducats: a third to our Arsenal, a third to the Magistrate that makes the execution, and the other third to the complainant.



*Nicoletto Giganti*



# GUARDS AND COUNTERGUARDS

It is necessary for someone wanting to become a professor of the science of arms to understand many things. To give my lessons a beginning, I will first begin to discuss the guards and counterguards, or postures and counterpostures, of the sword. This, because coming to some incident of contention it is first necessary to understand this to be able to secure oneself against the enemy. |To place oneself in guard then, many things must be observed, as can be seen in my figures: standing firm over the feet, that are low and the foundation of the entire body, in a just pace, restrained rather than long in order to be able to increase it, holding the sword and dagger strongly in the hands, |the dagger now high, now low, now extended, |the sword now high, now low, now on the right side, ready to parry and wound so that the enemy throwing either a thrust or cut can be parried and wounded in the same tempo, with the vita disposed and ready because lacking the disposition and readiness of that it will be an easy thing for the enemy to put it into disorder with a dritto, a reverso, a thrust, or in another manner, and even if such a person parried they would remain in danger. |It is advised to let the dagger watch the enemy's sword,<sup>1</sup> because if the enemy throws it will parry that. Always aim the sword at the uncovered part of the enemy<sup>2</sup> so that the enemy is wounded when throwing. This is all the artifice of this profession. Moreover, one must note that all the motions of the sword are guards to one who knows them, and all guards are good to one who practises, as on the contrary no motion is a guard to one who does not understand, and they are not good for one who does not know how to use them. This profession does not require more than science and exercise, and this exercise presents the science. |Placing oneself uncovered in guard is artifice and done because the enemy disorders themselves when throwing and ends up in danger. |Placing oneself covered is also artifice because in binding the enemy can be wounded. In this way it is understood that every guard aids one who has skill and understands, and no guard is valuable to he who does not have skill or understanding. This is enough about the guards. |As for the counterguards, be advised that one who has knowledge of this profession will never place themselves in guard, but will seek to place themselves against the guards.<sup>3</sup> |Wanting to do so,<sup>4</sup> be warned of this: one must place oneself outside of measure, that is, at a distance, |with the sword and dagger high, strong with the vita, and with a firm and balanced pace, |then consider the guard of the enemy. Afterwards approach him little by little with your sword binding his for safety, that is, almost resting your sword on his so that it covers it because he will not be able to wound if he does not disengage the sword. The reason for this is that in disengaging he performs two actions. First he disengages, which is the first tempo, then wounding, which is the second. While he disengages, in that same tempo he can come to be wounded in many ways before he has time to wound, as one will

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<sup>1</sup> *The dagger should be toward the guard ~~to the ene~~ of the enemy's sword*

<sup>2</sup> *Always aim your sword at the uncovered part of the enemy*

<sup>3</sup> *In a counterguard*

<sup>4</sup> *If the guard the enemy stands in can first be seen then you can put yourself in the counterguard and go to bind him well*



see in the figures of my book. |If he changes guard for the counterguard it is necessary to follow him along with the sword forward and the dagger, always securing his sword, because in the first tempo he will always have to disengage the sword and end up wounded. It will never be possible for him to wound if not with two tempi, and from those parrying will always be a very easy thing. This is enough about guards and counterguards.

# TEMPO AND MEASURE

One cannot know how to place oneself in guard, or against the guard,<sup>5</sup> nor how to throw a thrust, an imbroccata, a mandritto, or a riverso, nor how to turn the wrist, nor how to carry the body well, or to best control the sword, or say one understands parrying and wounding, |but by understanding tempo and measure which, of one who does not understand, even though they parry and wound, it could not be said that they understand parrying and wounding, because such a person in parrying as in wounding can err and incur a thousand dangers.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, having discussed the guards and counterguards it remains to discuss tempo and measure in order to know how to, then to accommodate an understanding of when one must parry and wound. |Therefore, measure means when the sword can reach the enemy. When it cannot it is called being out of measure.<sup>7</sup> |Tempo is understood in this way:<sup>8</sup> if the enemy is in guard, one needs to place oneself outside of measure and advance with one's guard, securing oneself from the enemy's sword with one's own, |and put one's mind on what he<sup>9</sup> wants to do. |If he disengages, in the disengagement one can wound him, and this is a tempo. |If he changes guard, while he changes is a tempo. |If he turns, it is a tempo. |If he binds to come to measure, while he walks before arriving at measure is a tempo to wound him. |If he throws, parrying and wounding in a tempo also is a tempo. |If the enemy stays still in guard and waits and you advance to bind him and throw where he is uncovered when you are at measure, it is a tempo, |because in every motion of the dagger, sword, foot, and vita such as changing guard, is a tempo |in such a way that all these things are tempi: because they contain different intervals, and while the enemy makes one of these motions, he will certainly be wounded<sup>10</sup> |because while a person moves they cannot wound. It is necessary to understand this in order to be able to wound and parry. I will be demonstrating more clearly how one must do so in my figures.

---

<sup>5</sup> In a counterguard

<sup>6</sup> *Someone who does not know how to avail themselves of tempo and measure cannot be said to understand parrying or wounding*

<sup>7</sup> *Thus, it is measure and being inside or outside measure*

<sup>8</sup> *What tempo is*

<sup>9</sup> *The enemy*

<sup>10</sup> *When the enemy cannot wound you due to being occupied in other motions*

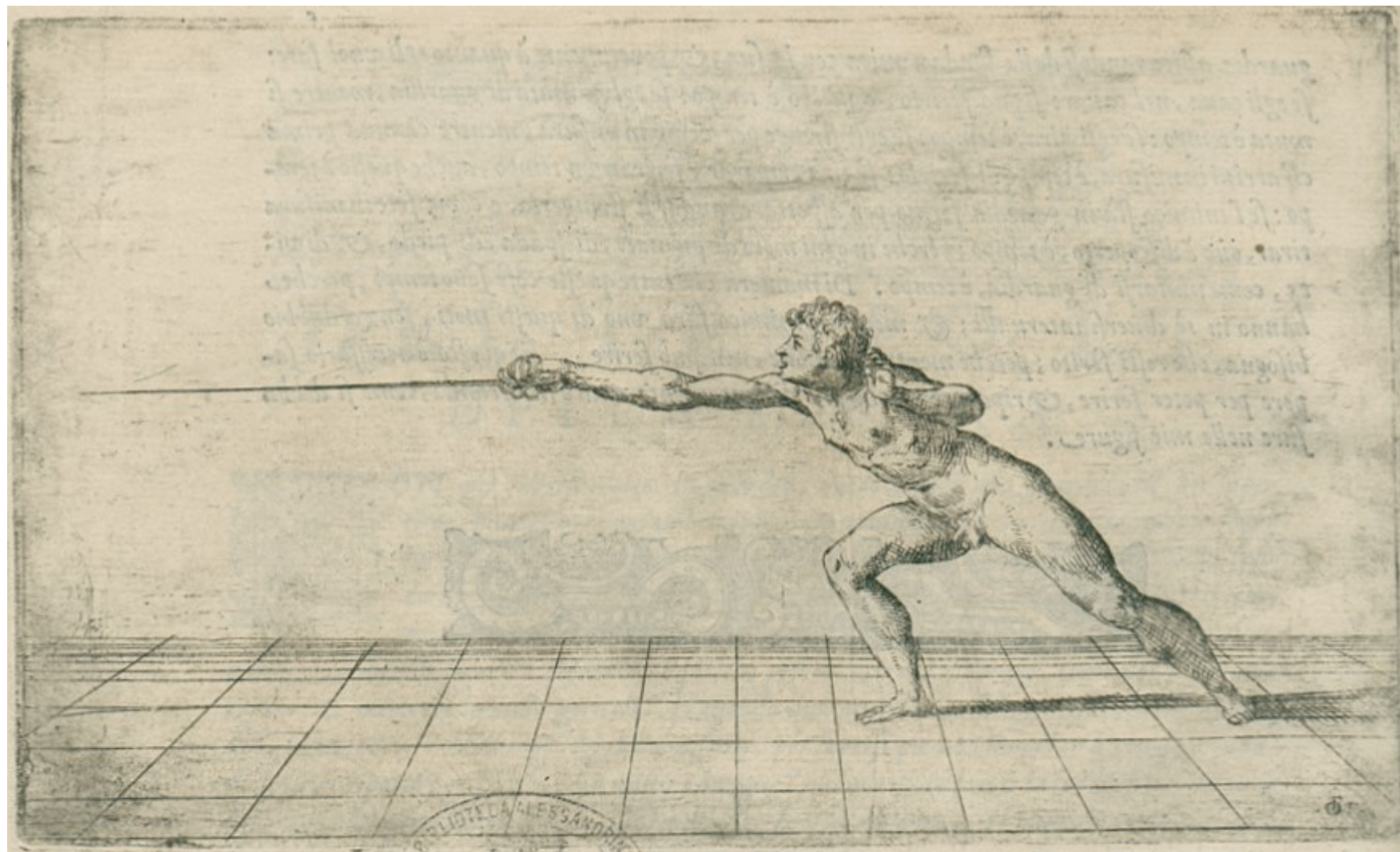


Figure 1

### *The method of throwing the stoccata*

Now that we have discussed the guards, counterguards, measures, and tempi, it is a necessary thing to demonstrate and give knowledge of how to hold the vita in order to throw a stoccata and escape since wanting to learn this art it is first necessary to understand how to carry the vita and throw stoccate that are long, as seen in this figure, and all is in throwing brief, strong, and immediate stoccate, withdrawing backward outside of measure. To throw the long stoccata, one must place themselves in a just and strong pace, short rather than long in order to be able to extend, and in throwing the stoccata stretch the sword arm, bending the knee as much as possible. |The proper method of throwing the stoccata<sup>11</sup> is after placing oneself in guard, it is necessary to throw the arm first, then extend forward with the vita in one tempo so that the stoccata arrives and the enemy does not perceive it. If the vita were brought forward first the enemy could notice it and, availing himself of the tempo, parry and wound in one tempo. |In withdrawing backward<sup>12</sup> one must first carry back the head because behind the head will follow the vita, and afterwards the foot. Carrying the foot back first and leaving the head and vita forward keeps them in great danger. |Therefore, to learn this art well one must first practise throwing this stoccata. Knowing it one will learn the rest easily, and not knowing it the contrary. Be advised, Lord Readers, that I will place this method of throwing the stoccata many times in my lessons at appropriate times. This I know makes the lessons better understood. It is not said of me that I say one thing many times.

### *Why begin with the single sword*

In my first book of arms I proposed to discuss only two kinds of weapons, that is, the single sword and sword and dagger, setting aside discussion of certain others. If it pleases my Lord, I will illuminate all sorts of weapons as soon as possible. Because the sword is the most common and most used weapon of all I wanted to begin with it, since one who understands playing with the sword well will also understand the handling of almost every other kind of weapon.<sup>13</sup> Since it is not usual in every part of the world to carry the dagger, targa, or rotella, and as fighting with single sword occurs many times, I urge everyone to first learn to play with the single sword, despite everything one might have in frays, such as the dagger, the targa, or the rotella, since occurring as it many times does that the dagger, targa, or rotella falls from his hand, a man would have to defend himself and wound the enemy with the single sword, and because one who practises playing with the single sword will understand just as well how to parry and wound as one who has sword and dagger.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> *How one must move in throwing the long stoccata*

<sup>12</sup> *How one withdraws quickly*

<sup>13</sup> *Someone who knows how to fence with the single sword will know a little bit about taking up every other weapon*

<sup>14</sup> *Someone who fences well with the single sword will know how to wound and parry as if they had a sword and dagger*



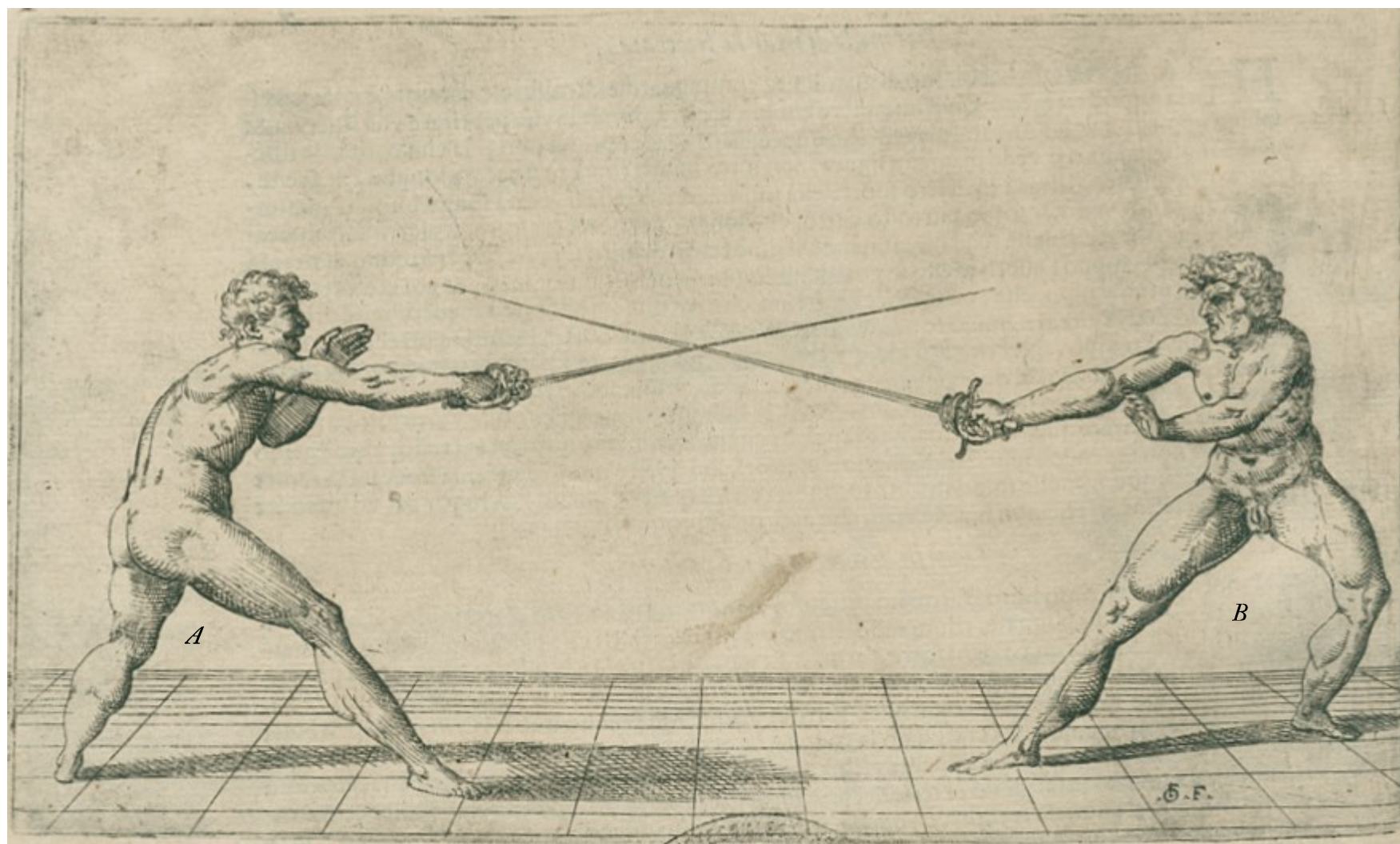


Figure 2<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Guard that goes to bind the enemy on its inside, called by other authors Quarta Guard. A disengages and B wounds him up ahead at page 23 and 24 by turning the wrist from Quarta to Terza.

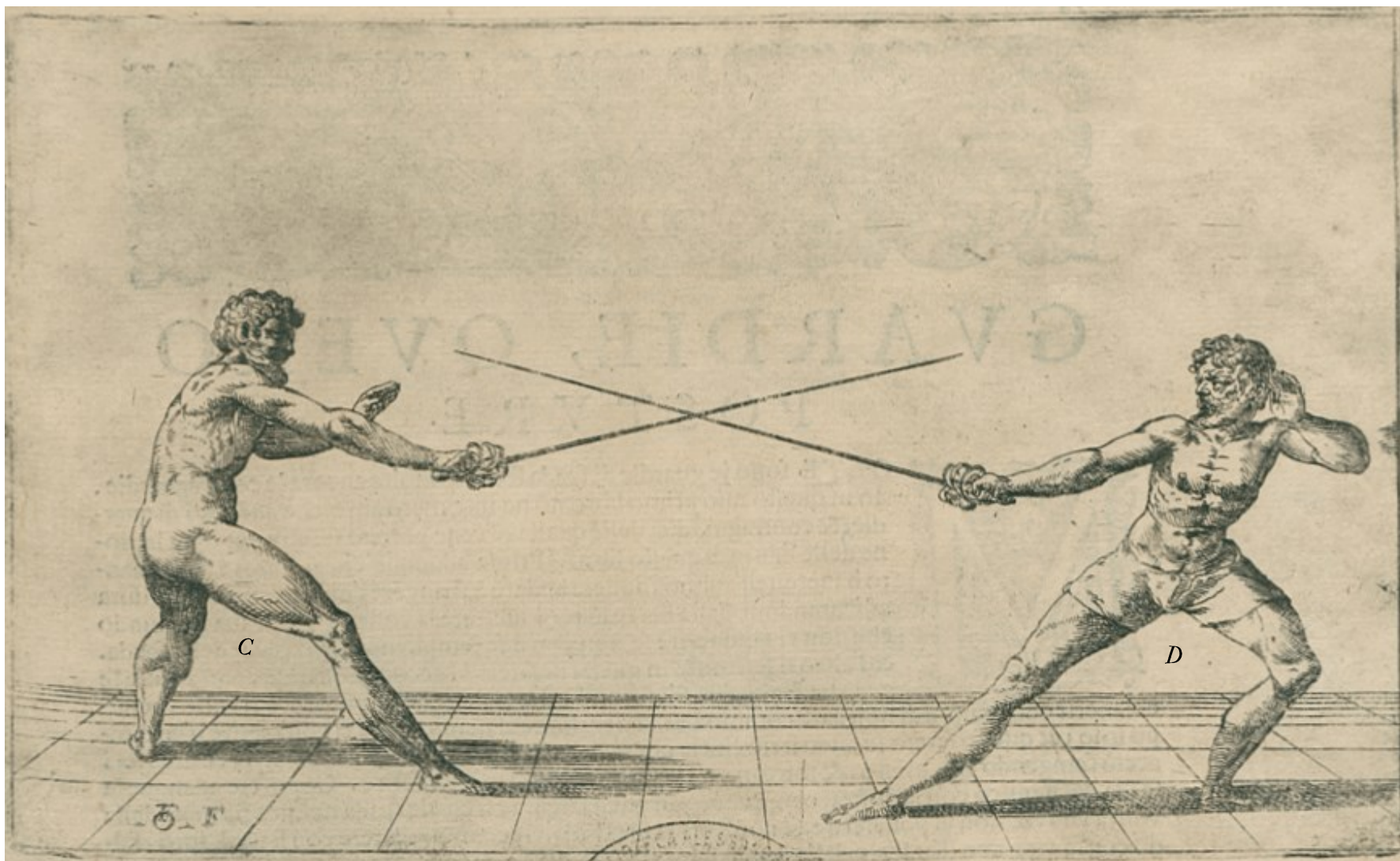


Figure 3<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Guard on the outside, called Guard 3 by other authors, and you will see that at page 25 and 26 A ends up wounded by B.

## GUARDS, OR POSTURES

Many are the guards of the single sword, and many still the counterguards. In my first book I will not teach any other than two sorts of guards and counterguards, of which you will be able to avail yourself for all lessons of the figures of this book. | Therefore, before coming to do what you desire, you must go to bind the enemy outside of measure, securing yourself from his sword by placing your sword over his<sup>17</sup> in a way that he cannot wound you if not with two tempi: one will be the disengage of the sword, and the other the wounding of you. In this way you will accommodate yourself against all the guards, either high or low, according to how you see your enemy accommodated, | always taking care to not give opportunity and occasion to the enemy to be able to wound you in a single tempo. | You will do this if you take care that the point of his sword is not toward the middle of your vita, so that pushing his sword forward quickly and strongly it will not be possible for him to wound you. Therefore, cover the enemy's sword with yours as you see in this figure, | so that the enemy's sword is outside of your vita and he cannot wound you if he does not disengage his sword.<sup>18</sup> You will settle yourself with your feet strong, stable with your vita, with your sword arm extended and strong in order to parry and wound, as the figure shows you. If you were to see the enemy in a high or low guard and did not place yourself in a counterguard and secure yourself from his sword you would be in danger even if your enemy had lesser science and lacked practice compared to you, since you could produce an incontro and both wound each other, or he could place you on the defensive, or rather, in obedience, with feints or disengages of the sword or other things that are possible. If you secure yourself from the enemy's sword as I have said above he will not be able to move nor do any action that you will not see and have opportunity to parry. | These figures here are two guards with the swords forward, and two counterguards covering the sword. One is made going to bind the enemy on the inside<sup>19</sup> and the other going outside,<sup>20</sup> as these figures show you, and as I will go about showing you in the subsequent lessons.

---

<sup>17</sup> Take care that the enemy cannot wound you in a single tempo. He can't do it if you by covering or undermining his sword make sure his point is not toward your vita.

<sup>18</sup> But in order to wound you he must attempt much by disengaging with the sword and by his placing two tempi in that you will be able to ensure that while he disengages, you wound

<sup>19</sup> Your standing in Quarta guard is called inside

<sup>20</sup> Outside will be when you settle in the guard called Terza



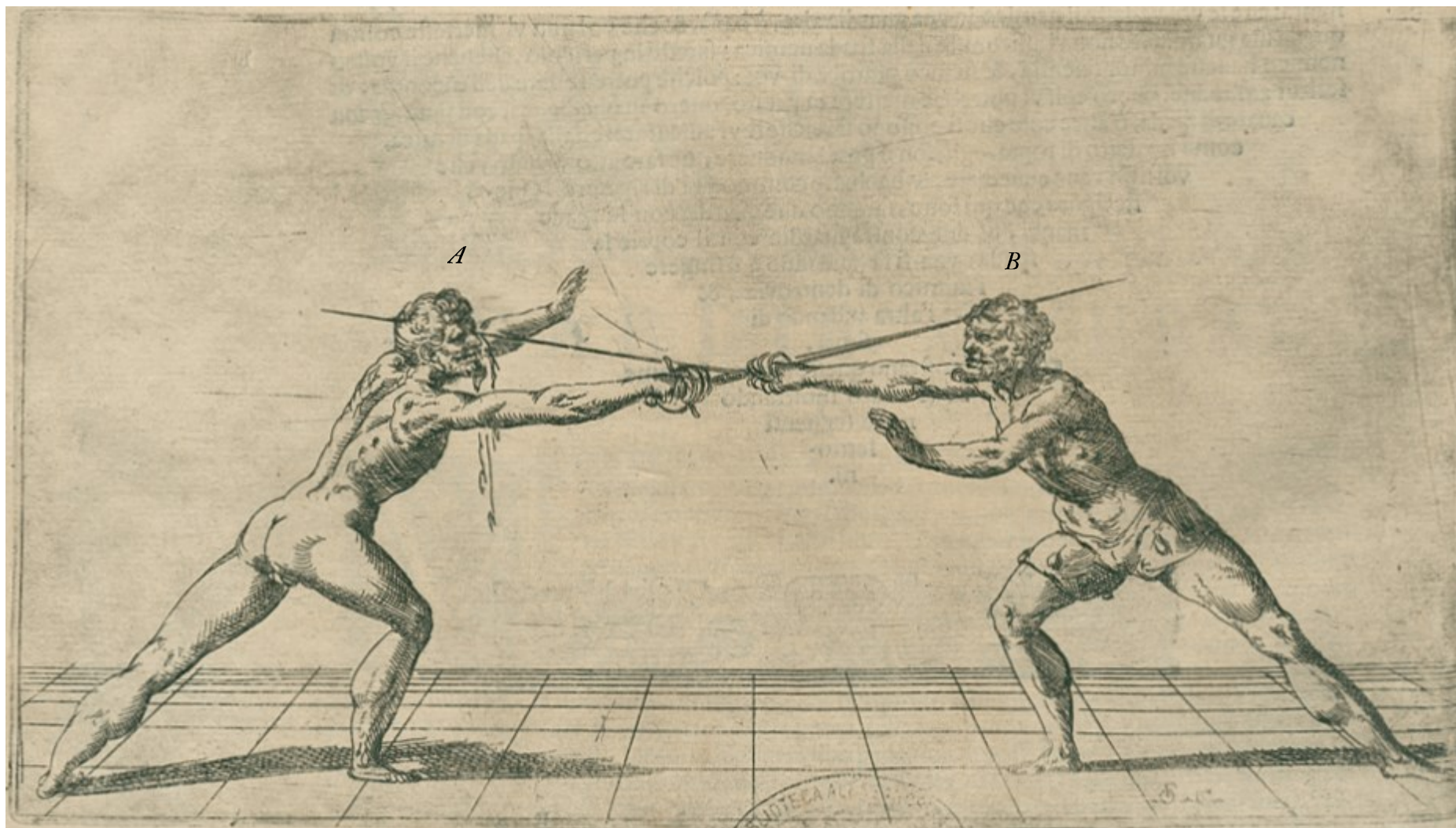



Figure 4<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> A disengages and B avoids A, turning his wrist to terza, or rather A [sic] wounds A outside



# EXPLANATION OF WOUNDING IN TEMPO

This figure teaches you to wound your enemy in the tempo he disengages his sword. You do this by approaching to bind the enemy outside of measure,<sup>22</sup> placing your sword over his to the inside as the figure of the first guard shows you<sup>23</sup> so that he will not be able to wound you if he does not disengage the sword. Then, in the same tempo that he disengages to wound you, push forward your sword, turning your wrist<sup>24</sup> in the same tempo so that you wound him in the face as is seen in the figure.<sup>25</sup> In the case that you were to parry and then wound it would not be successful, since the enemy would have tempo to parry and you would be in danger, but if you enter immediately forward with your sword in the tempo he disengages his, turning your wrist and parrying, the enemy will have difficulty parrying. This done, the enemy wounded or not, to secure yourself return backward outside of measure with your sword over that of the enemy, never abandoning it.

 In the case that the enemy<sup>26</sup> does not disengage his sword to wound you, I want you to advance to bind him outside of measure and immediately throw him a thrust where he is uncovered, returning backward outside of measure and resting your sword over his.

---

<sup>22</sup> *Binding outside of measure means still standing at a distance such that without approaching as well as not being so close that you can be wounded by the swords*

<sup>23</sup> *Although the plates depicting the guards and counterguards are somewhat less than clear, we know from this chapter that Figure 2 depicts binding the enemy's sword on the inside.*

<sup>24</sup> *Here it says turning the wrist so much it may as well have been called in quarta.*

<sup>25</sup> *Which is observed while the enemy disengages in order to resolutely throw at you in terza, which is done with just a turn of the wrist in the tempo, so that with the increased step you push your hand and wound with a stoccata. This is shown by A Page 20 and here at Page 23 he escaped so that B in terza, who at Page 20 was in quarta, now turns to wound A's face in terza*

<sup>26</sup> *The enemy is shown*

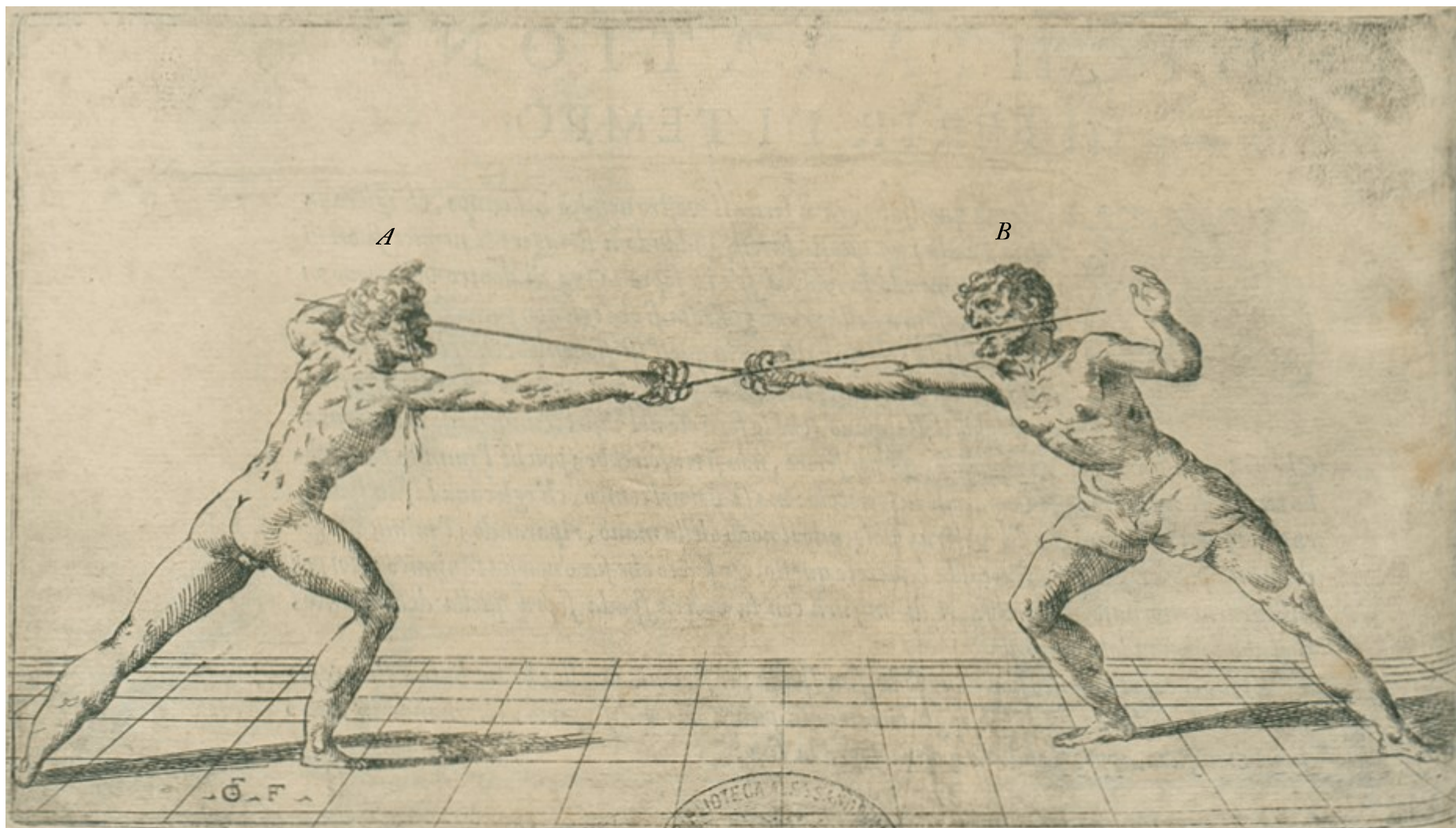


Figure 5<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> A disengages, turning the wrist from terza to quarta, [B] wounds A

# THE PROPER METHOD OF GOING TO BIND THE ENEMY AND STRIKE HIM

while he disengages the sword

From this figure you learn that if your enemy is in a guard with the sword on the left side, high or low, you approach him to bind him outside of his sword<sup>28</sup> outside of measure, with your sword over his so that it barely touches it, with a just and strong pace, with your sword ready to parry and wound, with an alert eye, | as you see in the second figure of the guards and counterguards.<sup>29,30</sup> You being accommodated in this way,<sup>31</sup> your enemy will not be able to wound you with a thrust if he does not disengage the sword. While he disengages, turn your wrist and in the same tempo throw a stoccata at him as the fourth figure<sup>32</sup> teaches you. Having thrown this stoccata, immediately in the same tempo return backward outside of measure, resting your sword over his so that if he wants to disengage anew, you will return to throw to him the same stoccata, turning your wrist as above, returning outside of measure. As many times as he disengages, that many times you will use the same method of turning your wrist and throwing the stoccata at him. | To perform this game well much practice is necessary,<sup>33</sup> since from this one learns to parry and wound with skill and great speed. | Take care to always be balanced with your vita and to parry strongly with the forte of your sword because if your enemy throws strongly at you, parrying strongly will make him disconcerted and you will be able to wound him where he is uncovered. | This must be the first lesson that one learns with the single sword,<sup>34</sup> since all the others that I have placed in this book arise from it.<sup>35</sup> Knowing how to do this in the tempo teaches you to parry all the cuts and resolute thrusts that can come for the head, which I will teach hand in hand in the subsequent lessons.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Binding the enemy outside in terza, his sword on your left*

<sup>29</sup> *The two figures are those that you see standing in terza guard at Page 21*

<sup>30</sup> *Figure 3, which we know from the description of this chapter's action depicts binding the enemy's sword on the outside.*

<sup>31</sup> *How the enemy cannot wound you if he does not disengage, and if he disengages he will never be able to wound you if you throw at him in the tempo that he disengages, do not be discouraged, turning your wrist, and that thrown, do not be slow to pull yourself outside of measure*

<sup>32</sup> *This fourth figure is at Page 25*

<sup>33</sup>  *Practise those that are important - parrying and wounding quickly, parry it with the forte of your sword*

<sup>34</sup> *Lesson that the following [lessons] of the single sword depend on - practise and perform them well*

<sup>35</sup> *Lessons to understand what has been said of the wound until now, outside and inside, in quarta and in terza*

## THE PROPER METHOD OF DISENGAGING THE SWORD

The two figures that were placed here above taught to wound the enemy while he disengages his sword. Because I would not leave a thing in my lessons that is not more than clear, I want to show you the method of disengaging the sword. But note that your enemy being settled in whichever sort of guard he wants, you having gone to bind him, throw a stoccata at him where he is uncovered and if he knows as much as you, you will always be with your swords equal. | I want you then to disengage the sword<sup>36</sup> under the hilt of that of the enemy, quickly turning your wrist and throwing a thrust in the same tempo where you find him uncovered. This is the proper and safe method to disengage the sword and wound in one tempo. | If you were to disengage your sword without turning your wrist<sup>37</sup> you would give a tempo and place to the enemy to wound you, as you will see quite well in exercising and trying it yourself. If the enemy were to parry return to disengage in the aforesaid way, always turning your wrist. As many times as he parries, disengage as many other times in the above way, which is safest, then throw the stoccata at him in the tempo that you disengage. This method of disengaging is no less necessary than what we taught in the explanation of the previous figure of the method of parrying, since this is the main thing that one seeks in knowing how to manage the single sword. Therefore I exhort everyone to practise well in these two things, since being at measure against the enemy, as soon as it is the tempo to disengage the sword one would know how to disengage quickly and well, and as soon as it is the tempo of parrying to understand parrying similarly well.

---

<sup>36</sup> *You disengage and wound*

<sup>37</sup> *Nor must you avoid turning the wrist because you can end up wounded*



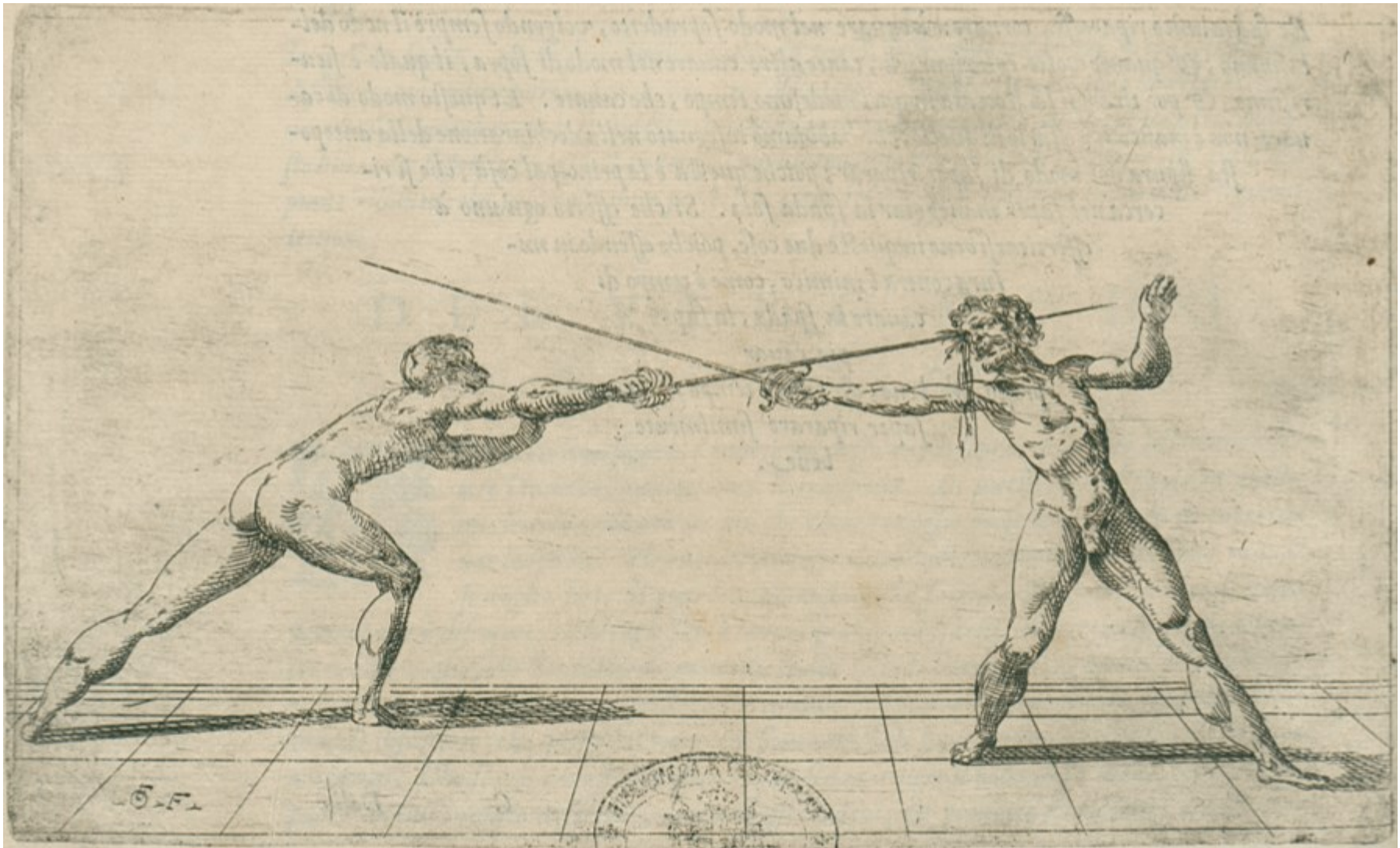


Figure 6

## THE INSIDE<sup>38</sup> COUNTERDISENGAGE OF THE SWORD

In this figure<sup>39</sup> another method of parrying and wounding by way of counterdisengage is represented and shown to you, which is done in this way: having covered the sword of your enemy so that if he wants to wound you he must disengage, while he disengages I want you to also disengage so that your sword returns to its first position, covering that of the enemy. But in the disengaging that you do, availing yourself of the tempo, throw a stoccata at him where he is uncovered, turning your body a little toward the right<sup>40</sup> side and holding your arm stretched forward so that if he comes to wound you he will wound himself of his own accord. Having thrown the stoccata, return backward outside of measure.

---

<sup>38</sup> *Means: Inside of the sword which means being in quarta and returning to quarta with the counterdisengage*

<sup>39</sup> Reading the text, Figures 6 and 7 appear to be swapped, meaning this lesson's text refers to Figure 7. Interestingly the plate order does not appear to be corrected in subsequent printings, even in Jakob de Zeter's German/French version (1619), which uses entirely new plates created by a different artist.

<sup>40</sup> *Throw but also turn your wrist and lean with the vita to the right that so you will be more covered to the inside of your sword and outside the line distancing yourself from the enemy's point so that it passes far from your vita*



Figure 7

## THE COUNTERDISENGAGE OF THE SWORD ON THE OUTSIDE<sup>41</sup>

This method of wounding<sup>42</sup> by way of outside counterdisengage is similar to the inside counterdisengage, only there is a difference: that your enemy being in guard and you coming to bind, being outside of measure you must place yourself against his guard,<sup>43</sup> securing yourself from his sword outside and making the enemy resolve himself to disengage. While he disengages, in the same tempo you will again disengage, turning the point of your sword under his together with your wrist, resting the forte of the edge of your sword and going along the edge of it, holding your arm long and extended, loosening the vita and lengthening the pace, as is seen in the figure, so you come to wound him without him sensing it. | But be advised that if the enemy throws the sword strongly<sup>44</sup> and you want to disengage yours so that the enemy does not reach and wound you, you need to hold your vita back in your disengage so that you stay safe. Supposing the enemy had thrown strongly, he would disconcert himself and come to wound himself on your sword. Then you will stay superior to him, being able to wound him where you parry, taking care to always hold your sword outside of your vita so that he cannot wound you.

---

<sup>41</sup> Means: outside - that is to say, standing in terza guard, the counterdisengage and wounding is done as taught in the fourth chapter, and the figure there shows this

<sup>42</sup> This lesson's text refers to Figure 6

<sup>43</sup> In a counterguard

<sup>44</sup> It means throwing the thrust strongly so that it happens much as the author says here



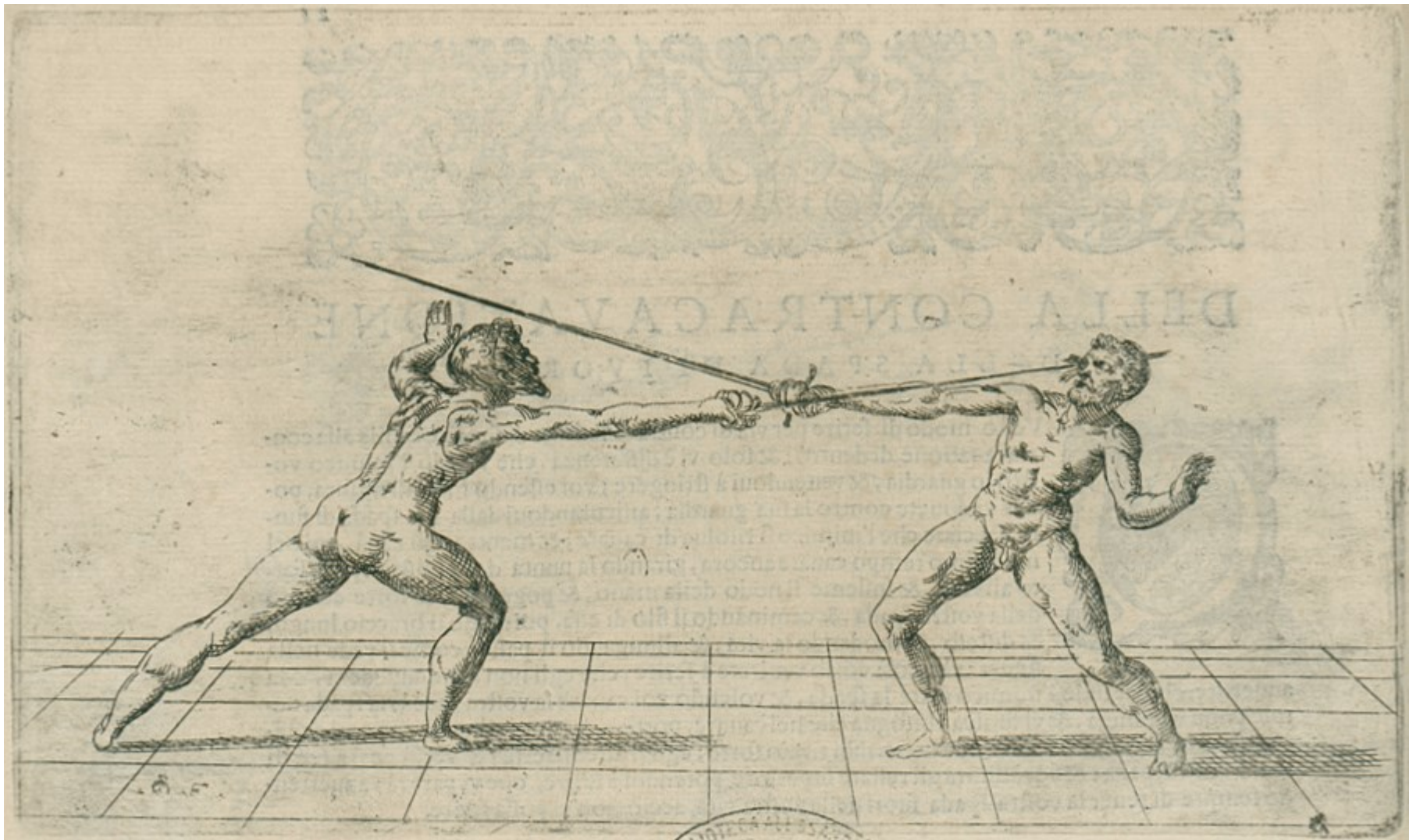


Figure 8

# EXPLANATION OF THE FEINT

## *Making a show of disengaging the sword with your wrist*

The ways of wounding are various and consequently my lessons are also various. But do not expect at all that I will tell all the things that are possible to do in this profession because, those being infinite, my work would be too long and would bring tedium to the Readers. However, I will untangle those things that to me appear most beautiful, most artificial, and most useful, from which arise many others easier and less artificial. Therefore, among all the methods of wounding artificially the feint, in my opinion, exceeds all others. This is nothing more than hinting at doing one thing and doing another. It is done in different ways, and they are these: | I want you to place yourself on your feet,<sup>45</sup> on the right side with the sword forward, with the right arm extended in order to give your enemy occasion to come to bind you. As he comes to measure with you, watch if he wants to wound you from fixed feet or instead with a pass. You will know at the disengage you make with the sword. Disengage the sword with your wrist and feint a thrust at his face, but throw wide of the enemy's sword so that it does not find yours. If the enemy does not parry throw it resolutely so that you wound him. If he parries, in his parrying redisengage the sword and wound as you see in this figure, where the enemy carelessly wounds himself. Take care that in redisengaging you do not let the sword be found because then your plan could be in vain, and in disengaging bring the head and vita back a little in order to see what the enemy does, because if he were to throw and you had not withdrawn backward, he could produce an incontro and you would wound each other. | Moreover, you are advised to run with the right edge of your sword<sup>46</sup> along the edge of the enemy's sword, turning the inside of your wrist upwards in wounding with your sword over the debole of that of the enemy. As soon as the stoccata is given, either resolute or feinted, return backward outside of measure, securing yourself as shown to you above. The feint<sup>47</sup> is therefore performed in this way: first one displays the sword to either the face or chest of the enemy, and then one lengthens the arm without stepping. If the enemy parries, disengage the sword in the same tempo, accompanying it forward with the step so that you wound him unawares. | If he does not parry, increase the step and strike him. This is the method of wounding by feint.

---

<sup>45</sup> *How one must proceed in the feints and wounding and in order to not be wounded*

<sup>46</sup> *Note: Run along the edge of the enemy's sword's debole with the edge of your forte*

<sup>47</sup> *How one performs the feint - how one wounds resolutely and how with the disengage*

Although they appear similar, the following two figures are nevertheless different from each other since they contain different methods of feinting. Although they contain almost the same goal of wounding, and although it would have sufficed to give you a single figure to discuss and teach different methods of feinting in order to wound, to show clearly the different ways of feinting I wanted to put two of them here that differ widely from one other, which is shown to you in their explanations.

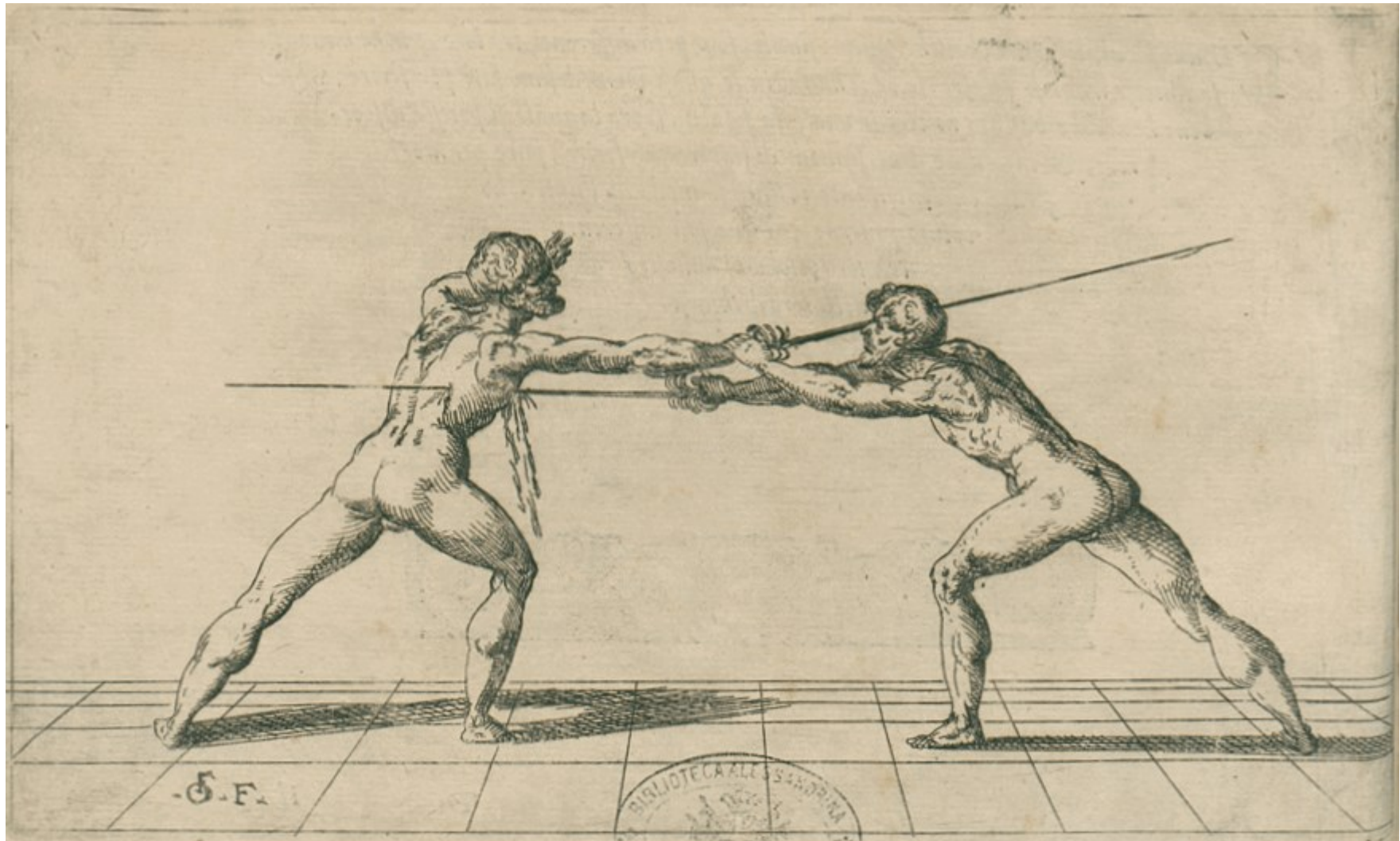


Figure 9

## METHOD OF WOUNDING IN THE CHEST WITH THE SINGLE SWORD WHEN THEY<sup>48</sup> ARE AT measure with the swords equal

The present figure is an artificial way of wounding the enemy in the chest and securing oneself from his sword so that he cannot offend while you pass to wound him. It is done in this way: one needs to place themselves in guard with the sword forward on the left side<sup>49</sup> and if the enemy comes to bind you and cover your sword with his let him come until he finds himself at measure with you. When he is at measure with you disengage, putting your sword inside of his, straightening the point against the enemy's face. If he does not go to parry, wound him resolutely, going as I have said above with the right edge of yours on the edge of his, turning your wrist and carrying the body across a bit. But if the enemy comes to parry and wound you while you disengage do not throw the thrust<sup>50</sup> but hold it a little outside, and in the same tempo that he wants to parry and wound, redisengage your sword under the hilt of his, done aiming at the chest of the enemy so that you strike him in the chest safely, increasing a little with the sword, as you see in the present figure, taking care to disengage and redisengage it in the same tempo, never holding it still so that the enemy does not find it. In the movement he makes to parry, pass to him with your vita on the outside, taking care to place your hand on the hilt of the sword. This pass makes this effect: he takes the chance to wound you and you can wound him how and where you like and please.

---

<sup>48</sup> The two fencers

<sup>49</sup> *On the left side means as said, you put yourself in quarta and disengage and proceed in terza in order to wound the enemy either resolutely (he doesn't parry) or with parrying. If your left foot passes you will come to grips and wound as the figure shows.*

<sup>50</sup> *Means if the enemy throws the stoccata, do not throw during it*



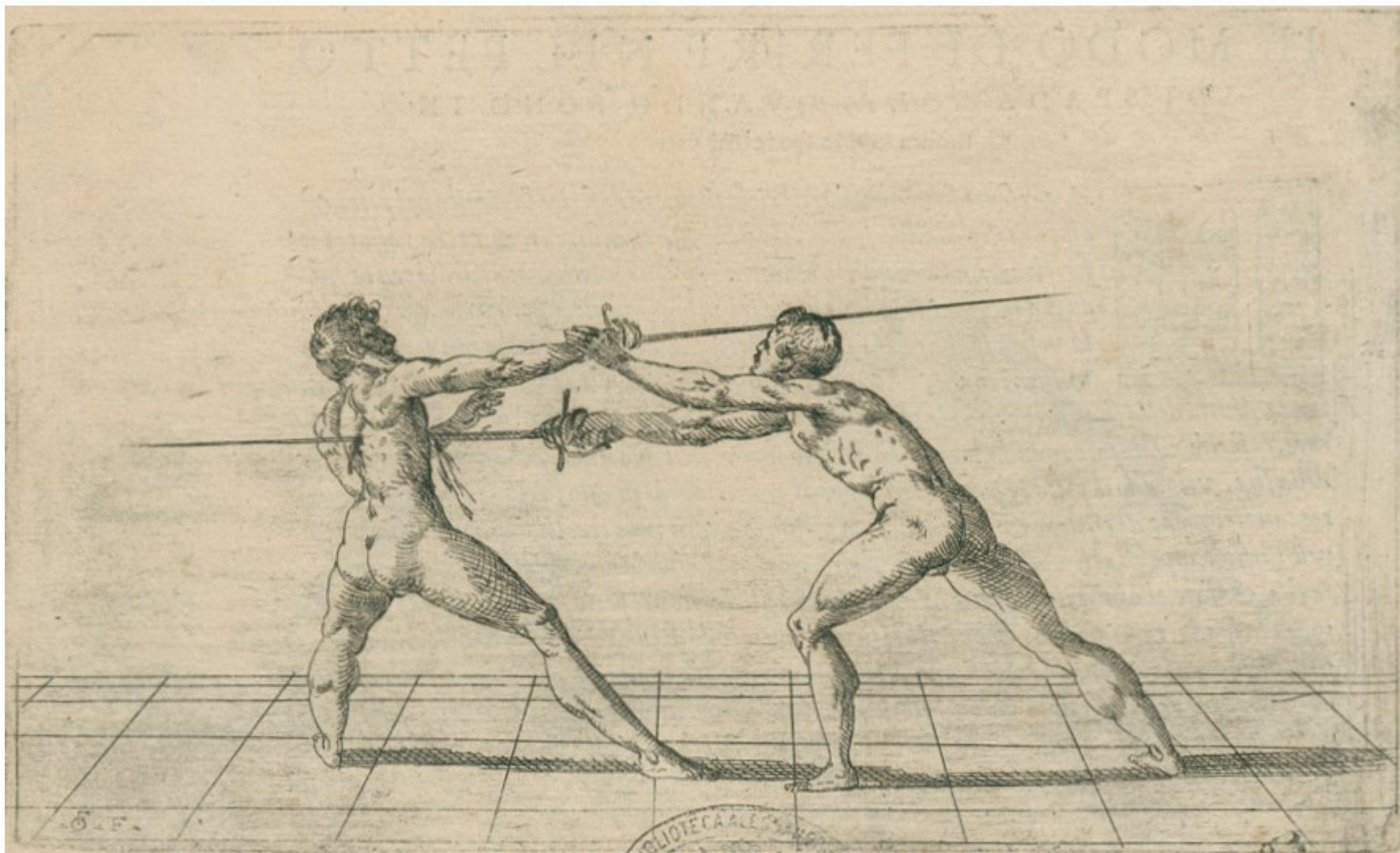


Figure 10



### *THE PASS WITH FEINT AT A DISTANCE*

This is an artificial way of passing at the enemy so that he does not perceive it, and it is of great consideration for the effect it shows, as is seen in the present figure, where one passes with a feint and wounds the enemy. It is done in this way: you need to see in what guard your enemy places himself and how he is accommodated. Go to bind him in guard, directing the point of your sword at his face, and when you find yourself almost at measure, if you see that he stays waiting and doesn't move, throw a thrust at his face strongly as figure number ....<sup>51</sup> shows and if he does not parry strongly you make the effect of figure number ....<sup>52</sup> not having to make other feints, but if he parries you will both be with the swords equal. Immediately return backward outside of measure and put yourself in the same first guard, and when you are almost at measure feint throwing the same thrust at his face. While he goes to parry it, disengage the point of your sword underneath the hilt of the enemy's sword with your wrist, making sure you keep the enemy sword outside your vita. Then in the same tempo pass, going with your sword over the furnishings of his, accompanying it with the left hand, and immediately put it<sup>53</sup> over the hilt of the enemy sword so that he cannot give you a *riverso* in the face, so that without doubt you wound him if he does not see your goal. This done, leap outside of measure and replace the sword within that of the enemy, securing yourself in the above way, and beating his sword, return to wound him with two or three resolute and irreparable thrusts.

#### *The pass with feint over the point of the sword*

This is another kind of disengage and feint not commonly used, which produces the effect of the previous two figures. It is done so: one must put oneself in guard with the sword to the left side, with the arm extended and long. Letting the enemy come to bind you in the described way, when he is at measure disengage your sword over the point of his and if you see that he does not parry throw at him strongly and resolutely, as I have said to you, so that you will not make other feints. But if he parries, do not stop with the sword but avoid the guard of the enemy sword and pass in the above way and wound him in the chest, withdrawing yourself then as was said.

---

<sup>51</sup> The placeholder was never replaced with the proper figure number reference when the book went to print, and it remains missing in Paolo Frambotto's 1628 reprint. Jakob de Zeter's 1619 German/French version refers to Figure 7.

<sup>52</sup> The figure number is missing in both the 1606 and 1628 printings. Jakob de Zeter's 1619 German/French version refers to Figure 8.

<sup>53</sup> Your hand

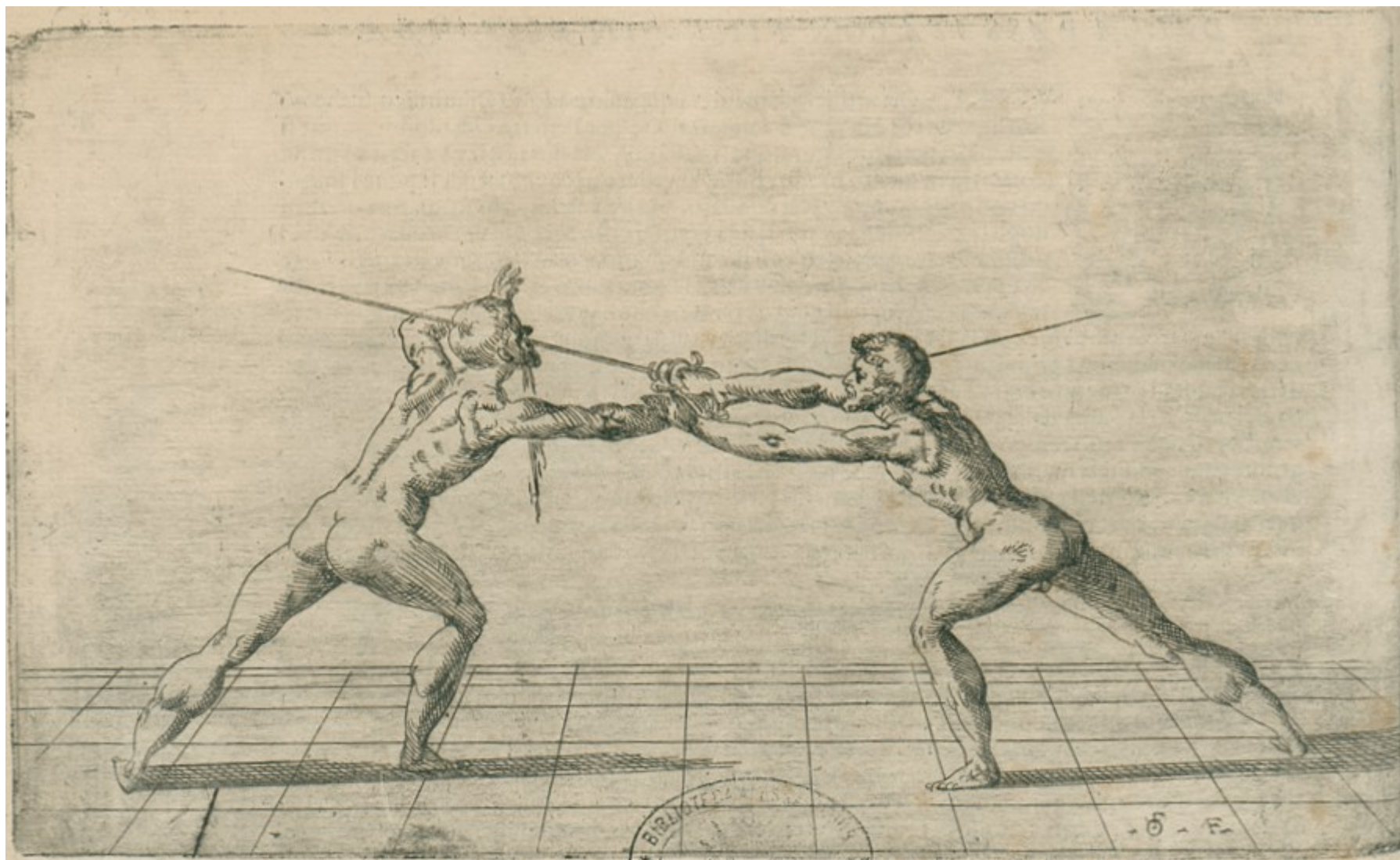


Figure 11

## THE FEINT TO THE FACE AT A DISTANCE

This feint is no different from the other except that the first has its disengage under the hilt of the sword and this has it over in order to throw at the enemy's face. This stoccata becomes a feint if he parries and is resolute if he does not parry. In the rest then, the same guards, distances, and measures are observed, and one carries the vita equally, as is seen in the figure, and immediately returns outside of measure as soon as the thrust is thrown. The most important thing is knowing how to make the feint natural so that it cannot be distinguished from the resolute, which is done in this way. One presents the point (for example) over the outside at his face, and in going with point underneath the hilt of the enemy sword in order to wound him inside, it must be done so that the thrust wounds his face or chest with the disengage. This is what is meant by "natural feint". |But be advised that you never perform a feint if the enemy does not parry resolutely, because you would be in danger of wounding each other and you would end up in danger.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Note!*

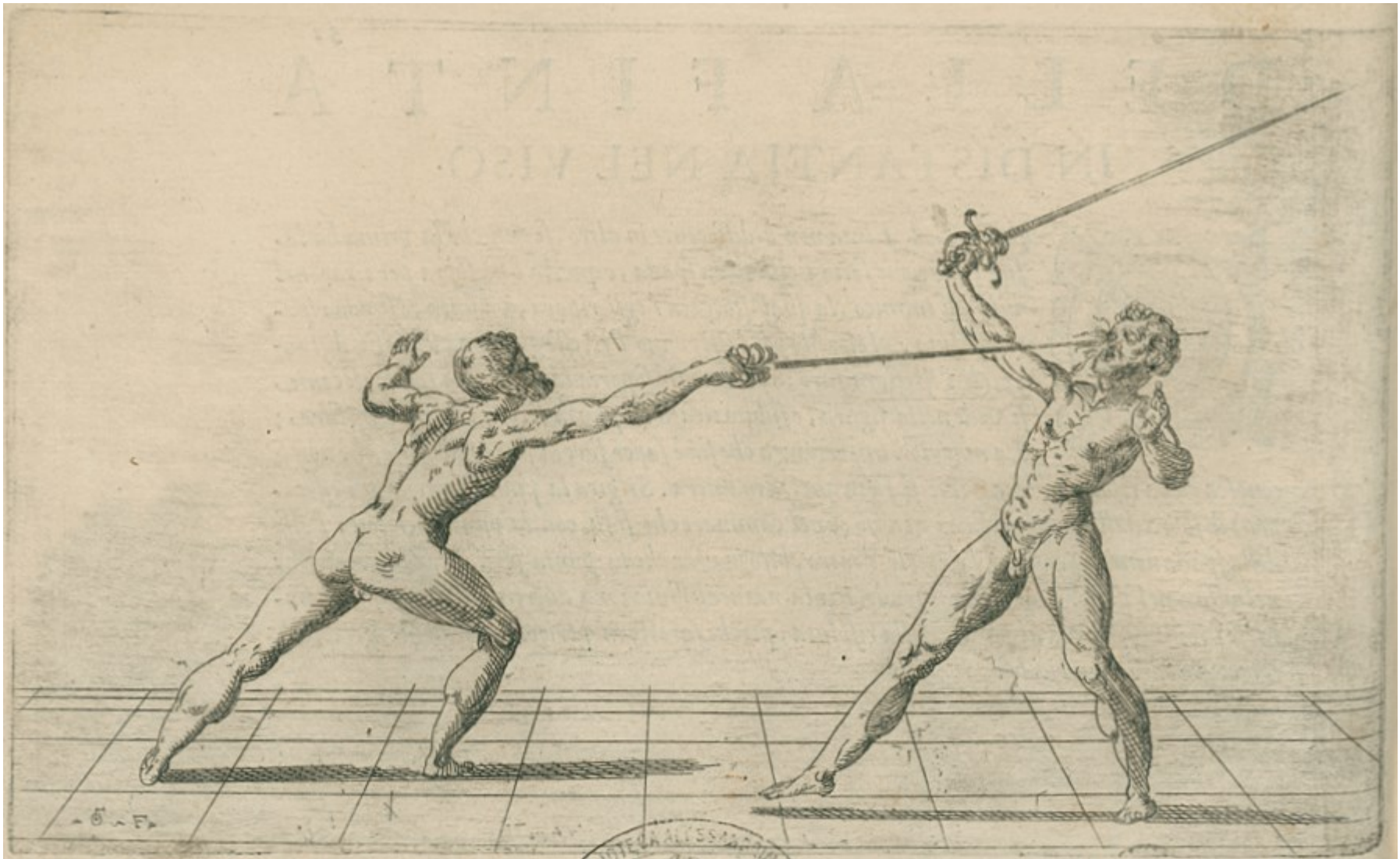


Figure 12

# THE PROPER METHOD TO GIVE A THRUST WITH THE SINGLE SWORD WHILE THE ENEMY THROWS

a cut

This figure teaches you to avail yourself of the tempo in order to give your enemy a stoccata to the face while he raises the sword, if he can be given a stoccata while his sword is in the air, and before he reaches you. Note how this is done. After having placed yourself in whichever guard you like, go to bind your enemy and when you are at measure if the enemy throws a cut toward your head, in the raising of the sword you make use of the tempo, enter forward, and throw the sword at his face so that without doubt you wound him while the enemy sword is in the air, as you see in the figure.<sup>55</sup> But, in throwing turn the inside of your wrist and the right edge of the sword upwards, holding your arm long and high, and make the guard of your sword cover your head so that if the enemy disengages his sword he would find you covered and it will not be possible to offend you. It is necessary, however, to throw this thrust quickly. When it is not made quickly the enemy could parry it and wound you. After you have thrown, quickly withdraw yourself backward outside of measure, securing yourself with your sword against that of the enemy.

I did not want to put all the ways of parrying the cuts, which are many, in my first book, but I have placed this alone for you, this appearing to me most useful and commodious for understanding the tempo and making use of it, which is necessary to understand in every occasion.

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<sup>55</sup> *The fourth figure at page 25*





Figure 13



## *THE PROPER WAY TO SAFELY WOUND*

*with the single sword using both hands*

This figure shows you a method of safely wounding the enemy which is impossible to parry. It is done in two manners. First one needs to find the occasion to have your sword equal with the enemy's, having yours outside, then affront your sword toward the enemy's face which, if not parried strongly, strikes him in the face as is seen in the fourth figure.<sup>56</sup> If he parries well and strongly, increase with your left foot, putting your left hand over your sword, driving strongly with both hands, straightening the point against the enemy's chest and lowering the hilt of your sword as is seen in the present figure, taking care to do all these things in one tempo.

Next<sup>57</sup>, accommodated in guard in the aforesaid way but with your sword inside, I want you to disengage the sword in place to wound outside, and in the same tempo that you disengage the sword, place your left hand over your sword and with the strength of both hands beat the enemy sword with yours. That beaten away, immediately pass with your left foot forward as seen in the figure. So that this succeeds well, it is necessary to take care to do all these things in one tempo. That is, disengaging the sword, placing your hand over and beating the enemy sword with yours, and passing forward with the left foot. Not doing these things in one tempo you would not succeed and be in danger, as you would be with some valiant men that know how to disengage the sword quickly and well. Therefore, so that you succeed at this you must do it quickly and suddenly.

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<sup>56</sup> *The fourth figure is at Page 25*

<sup>57</sup> This is the second manner mentioned at the beginning of the lesson, rather than an action that follows from the first

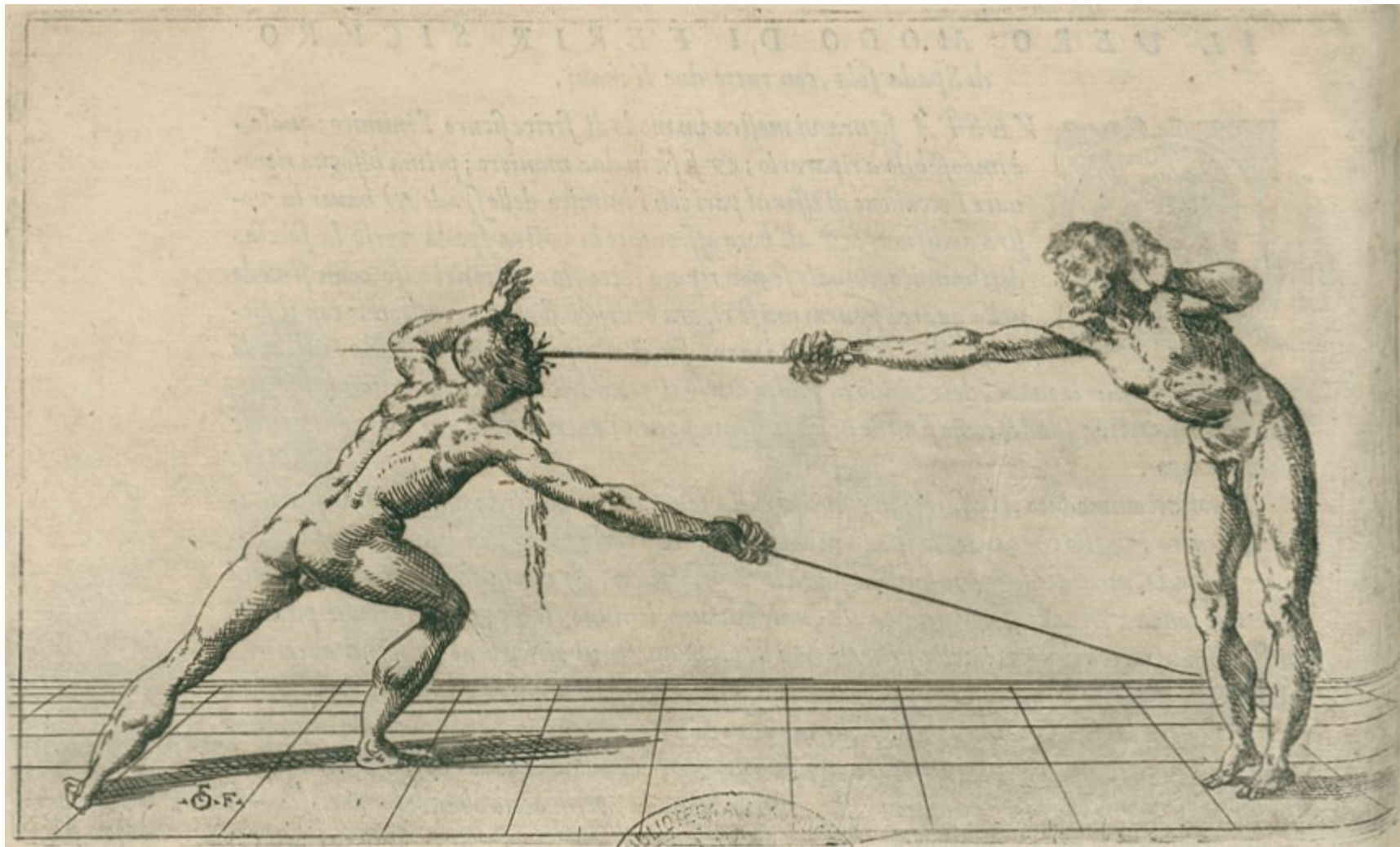


Figure 14

# THE PROPER WAY TO PARRY THE CUT OR RIVERSO THAT COMES AT THE LEG

In this lesson, in which we reflect on the mandritto or riverso cut to the leg, I cannot say anything further on parrying and wounding the enemy in one same tempo. Rather, I will say why the enemy ends up offending himself on the point of your sword, except to say that the enemy dropping a dritto or riverso to your leg, it is necessary that he lengthen his step, and his vita, and carry his face forward. While the enemy drops to wound you, you then carry the front leg, lifting it backward, and in the same tempo throw a thrust at his face that is impossible to parry. He wounds himself, neither can you then be wounded. You then (as I have said other times) return backward outside of measure.

And since the present lesson is very artificial it is necessary to learn it in order to be able to make use of it in such occasions as the figure clearly demonstrates to you.

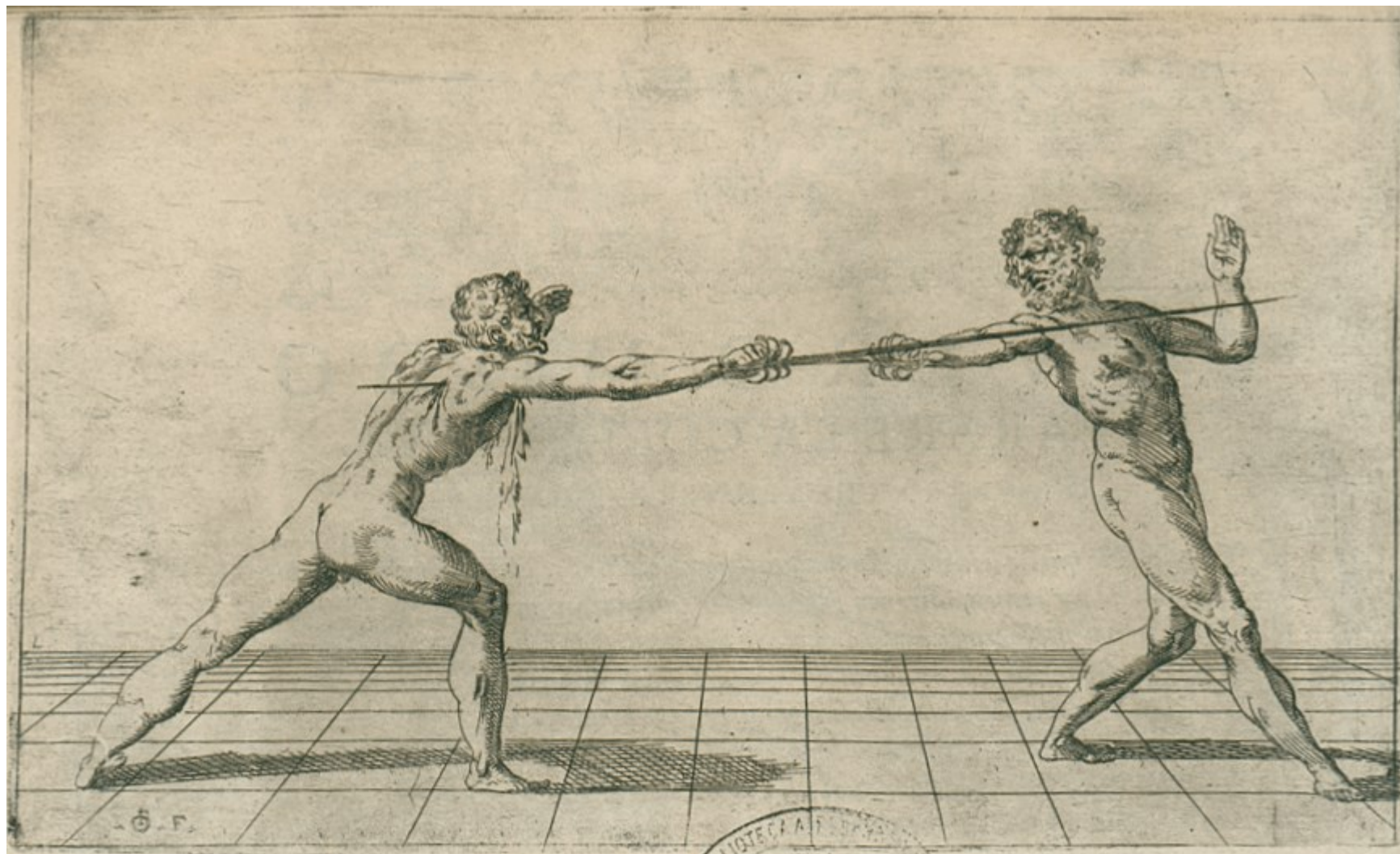


Figure 15

# THE INQUARTATA

## OR SLIP OF THE VITA

Knowing the inquartata, or slip, is necessary in order to master the body. But this not ordinarily used in the schools, except by the French in order to exercise the body. In truth many are these slips, or inquartate, but I judged in my first book to show only three of them, in my judgement the safest and most beautiful, as appears in the present figure.

The first of these is done putting yourself in guard outside of measure with the right foot forward, with the sword long and the arm extended, standing strongly on the right side, holding the point of the sword at the face of the enemy. Let the enemy come to bind you, and when he is almost at measure disengage the sword in a feint a little wide, and in the tempo the enemy parries, redisengage it, returning it to its first position, running along the edge of his sword with the disengage in a way that as soon as you have disengaged you have wounded the enemy, because if you were to disengage the sword and then wound you would be in danger, since there would be two tempi. Carry the left leg and equally the left shoulder across, turning, and make the effect, giving him (as is seen in the figure) a thrust either in the face or chest without him perceiving the aim, holding the arm stiff, and with the hilt of your sword covering you, far from the sword of the enemy. Keep your eye on his face, taking care not to turn your face with the vita as some do<sup>58</sup>, because you would find yourself in danger and not see your action. After this immediately return back out of measure with your sword over his, securing yourself as above.

### *The inquartata, or slip of the vita*

This is no different from the other inquartata from before, except in the way in which it wounds. That is, having regard in going to the edge of the enemy sword, approaching to wound him under the pommel of his sword, lifting the arm with the wrist, as seen in the figure, and after having turned your person, stopping yourself and not passing upon the enemy in order to not come to grips, because you would go into danger, compared to returning outside of measure and securing yourself from that. This inquartata is very difficult to parry, in fact I will say impossible, when it is done judiciously.

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<sup>58</sup> Camillo Agrippa (1553), for example, recommends turning the face away



*THE THIRD INQUARTATA,  
or slip of the vita*

This third in quartata is the most beautiful and safest of all, which is done in this way. Placing yourself in guard, as in the other two, holding the sword to the right side with the arm extended and firm, as the enemy comes to bind you with his sword over yours and you are at measure, disengage the sword with the turn of your wrist. If he does not parry, strike him in the face and make the effect of the figure, nor should you do more. But if he parries, you find yourself with the swords equal. Affront his sword strongly with yours so that he affronts, and as he affronts disengage, going with the disengage under the hilt of his sword, turning your body as above, wound him in the chest, which he will not perceive, and do the effect of the present figure. Then return outside of measure, securing yourself as in the other lessons.

*An artificial method to strike in the chest, affronting the swords<sup>59</sup>*

In the previous lessons I demonstrated the method of the in quartate, that is, how one would affront the swords outside in order to come to wound the enemy inside. Now I will briefly say how one would carry the swords inside and wound outside. As you meet with the enemy, affront strongly with the edge of your sword, holding the point at his face, with the forte over the enemy sword. If he is weaker than you, give him a stoccata, either in the face or chest that he cannot parry. If he is stronger than you, feeling how much your sword is affronted disengage the sword under the hilt of his so that his falls downward, and he equally takes a thrust from which there is no defense. In the same tempo pass without any danger and put your left hand on his hilt, wounding him with three or four thrusts that cannot be avoided. Then return outside of measure, securing yourself as above.

*Method of playing single sword against single sword with resolute thrusts<sup>60</sup>*

Many are those in the schools that when they assail the enemy come resolutely throwing thrusts, imbroccate, and cuts, nor do they give any tempo, throwing always with fury and very great impetus. These things ordinarily mess up and disorder every beautiful player and fencer. Accordingly, in such occasions it is necessary to know how to defend oneself. It is necessary that you place yourself to the guard of the enemy sword with yours ready to defend, outside the measure, in a pace that is restrained rather than long, and in the tempo that he throws a thrust, imbroccata, stoccata, or other similar blow, beat the enemy sword with the forte of yours and immediately lengthen your pace, and throwing him a thrust wound him in the chest or face and quickly return backward with the lead foot to where you were before, resting your sword on his in order to secure yourself from it, in a way that he cannot


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<sup>59</sup> For the fourth

<sup>60</sup> Note: How you must strive against one who throws resolutely like a beast



wound if he does not disengage. Turning your wrist inside, return to beat the enemy sword with the forte of yours, lengthening your pace throw him a thrust and wound him and quickly return backward with the foot as above, likewise securing yourself from his sword with yours. If he returns anew to redisengage, always return and do the same.

 This lesson is more useful than beautiful and contains two tempi which you can make before the enemy has time to make one of them. The first of which is the parry, the other is the wound. Which, as has been observed, you have understood.

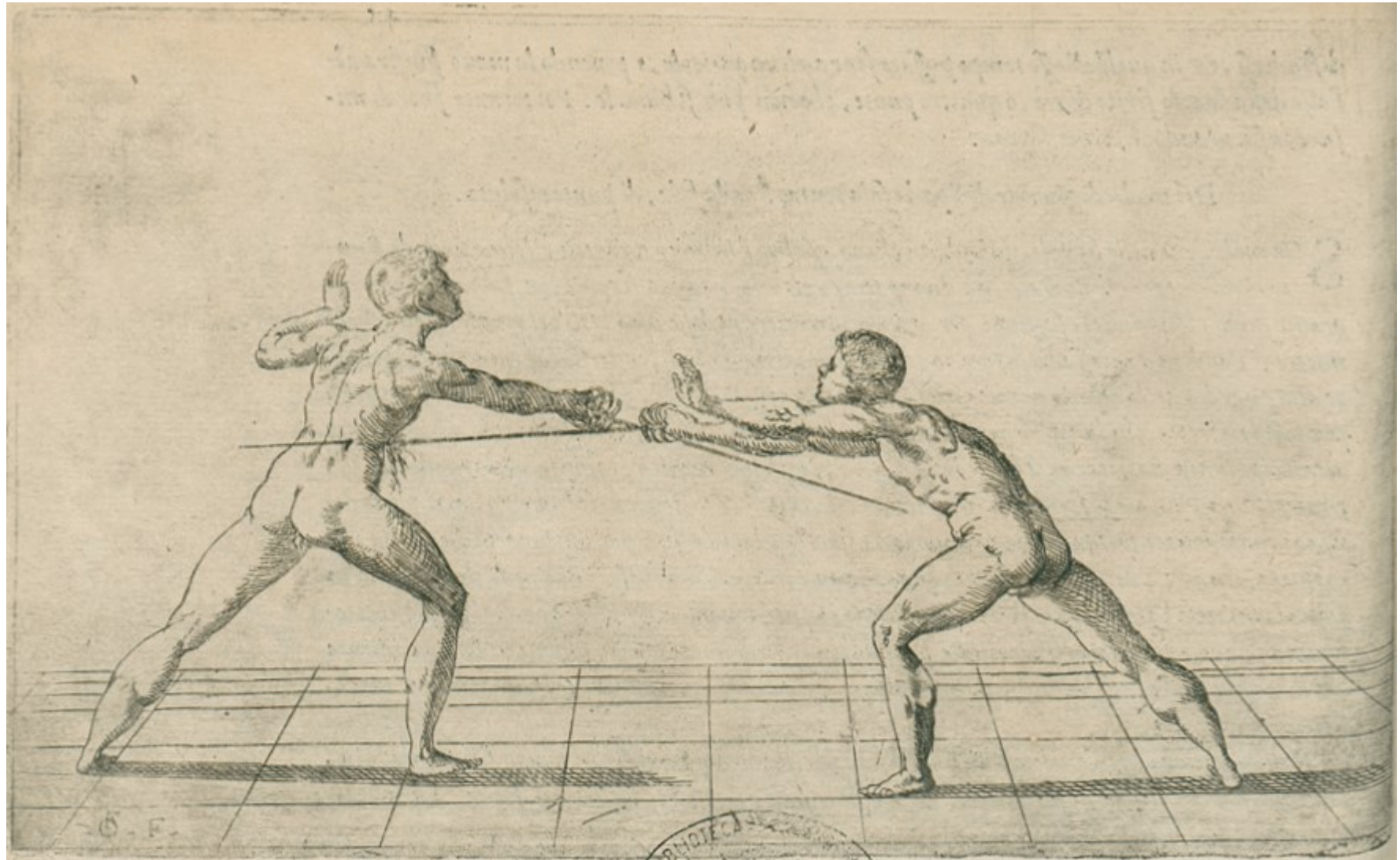


Figure 16

# PARRYING STOCCATE

## THAT COME AT THE CHEST WITH THE SINGLE SWORD

Seen in this figure is the safe method of parrying thrusts that come at your chest, wounding the chest. It is done in different ways because some may pass at a distance, others stay at measure, and others inside the measure, but one who has understanding of tempo and knows how to parry well as my figure demonstrates will parry all the methods. From which you note that, being with your enemy with the swords equal and he passes in order to wound you in the chest, by necessity in that same tempo follow his sword with yours, lowering, however, the point of yours and raising your wrist, parrying with the same and passing with your left foot toward his right side, taking yourself away from his sword<sup>61</sup> wound him in the chest, holding your left hand over the hilt of his sword. Then, the stoccata given, disengage the sword in the way described above, returning backward outside of measure.

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<sup>61</sup> *Here one avoids with an oblique step of the left foot, removes oneself from the line, and wounds. The same can be done with sword and dagger by wounding in terza outside.*

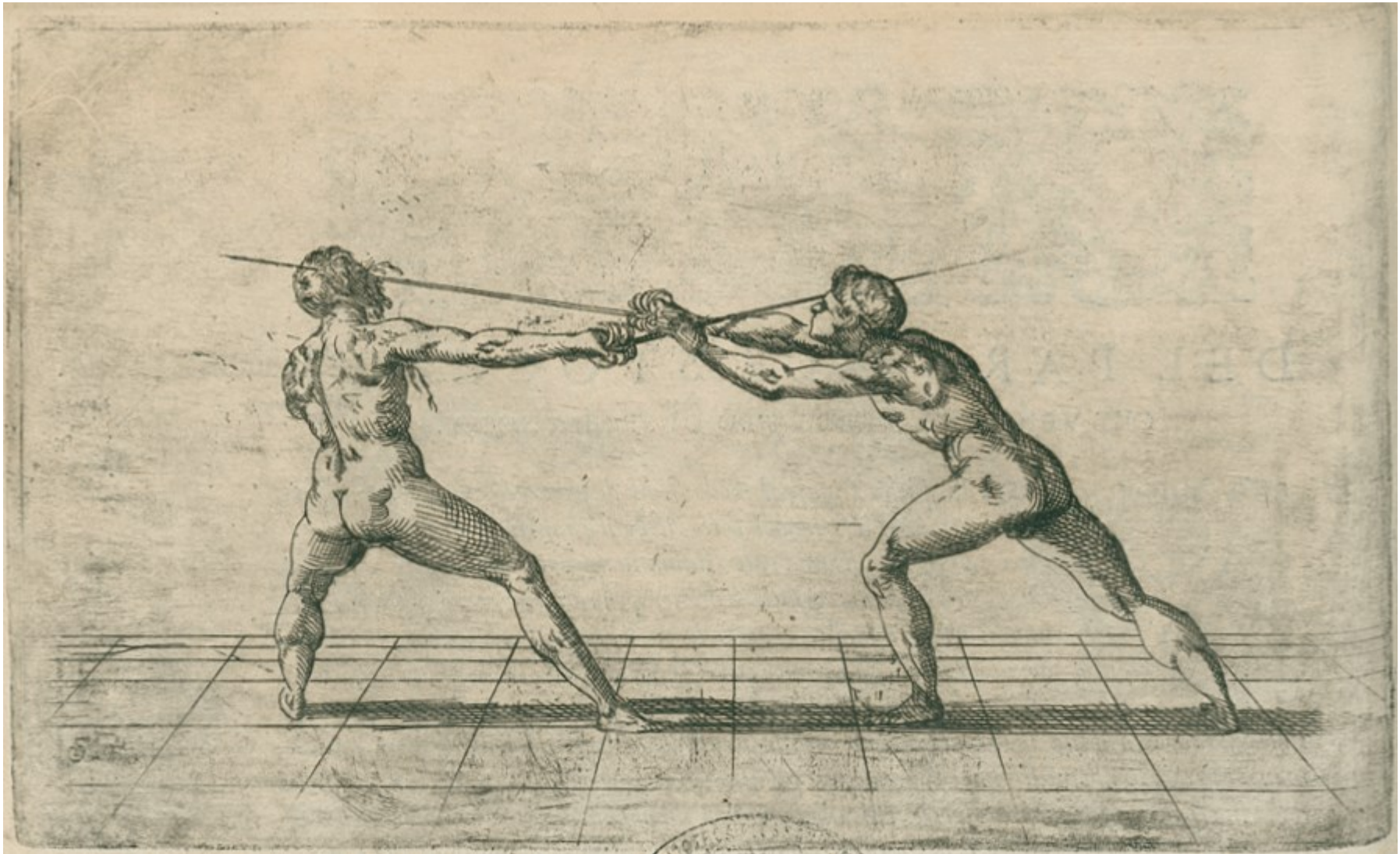


Figure 17

# THE THRUST IN THE FACE TURNING YOUR WRIST

With this figure you are taught a very beautiful method of wounding your enemy's face, and it consists entirely of seizing the occasion of being with the swords equal, causing your enemy to be in the motion of parrying by giving him suspicion that you want to disengage the sword. In the same tempo, turn your wrist, put your left hand on the guard of his sword, and increase with the foot in one tempo so that you strike him in the face, as you see. Doing it properly it cannot be parried. Having given that, increase with your left hand over the hilt of the enemy sword and redisengaging the sword you can give him two or three stoccate where you like. Then return backward outside of measure, always holding your sword over theirs, as above.



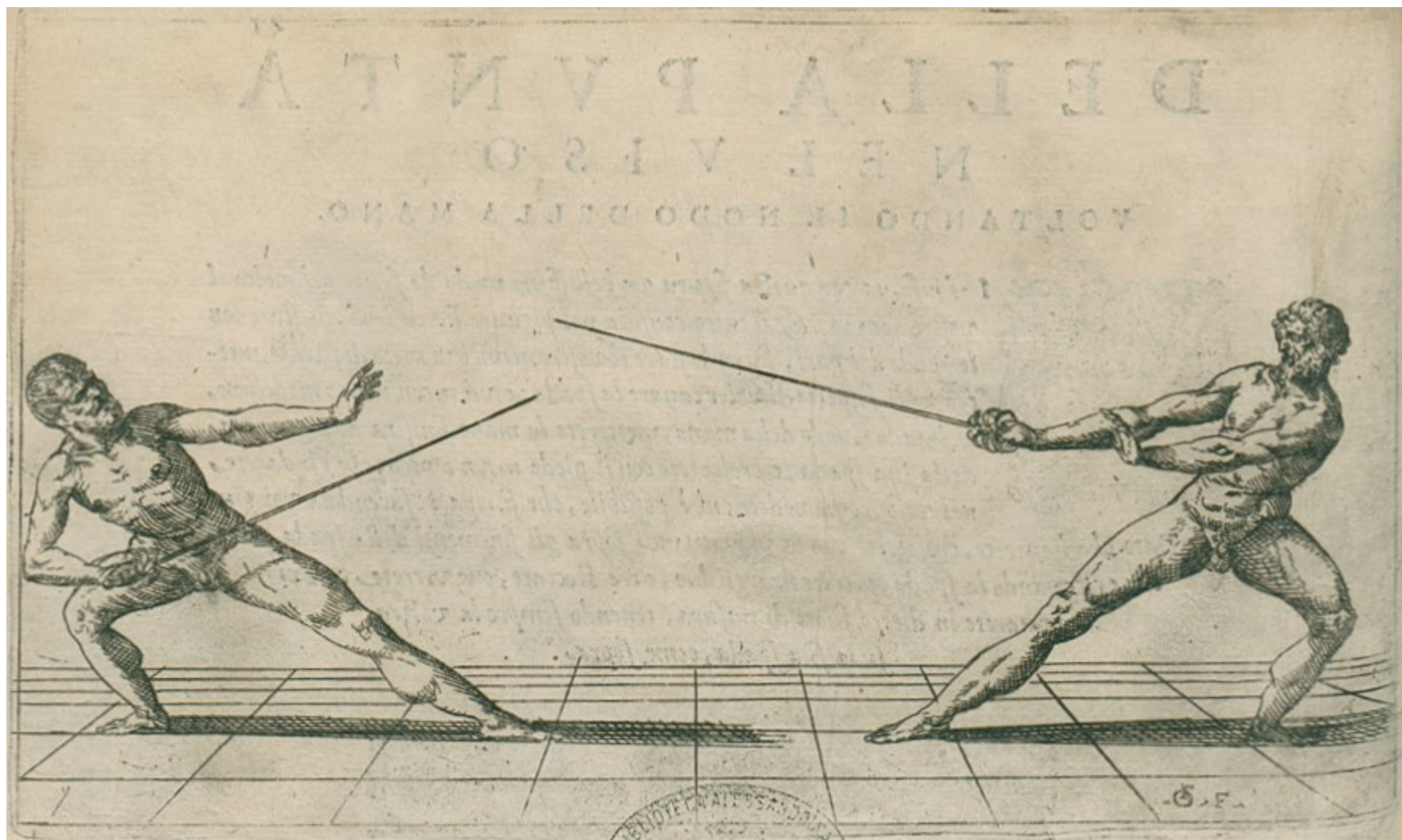


Figure 18



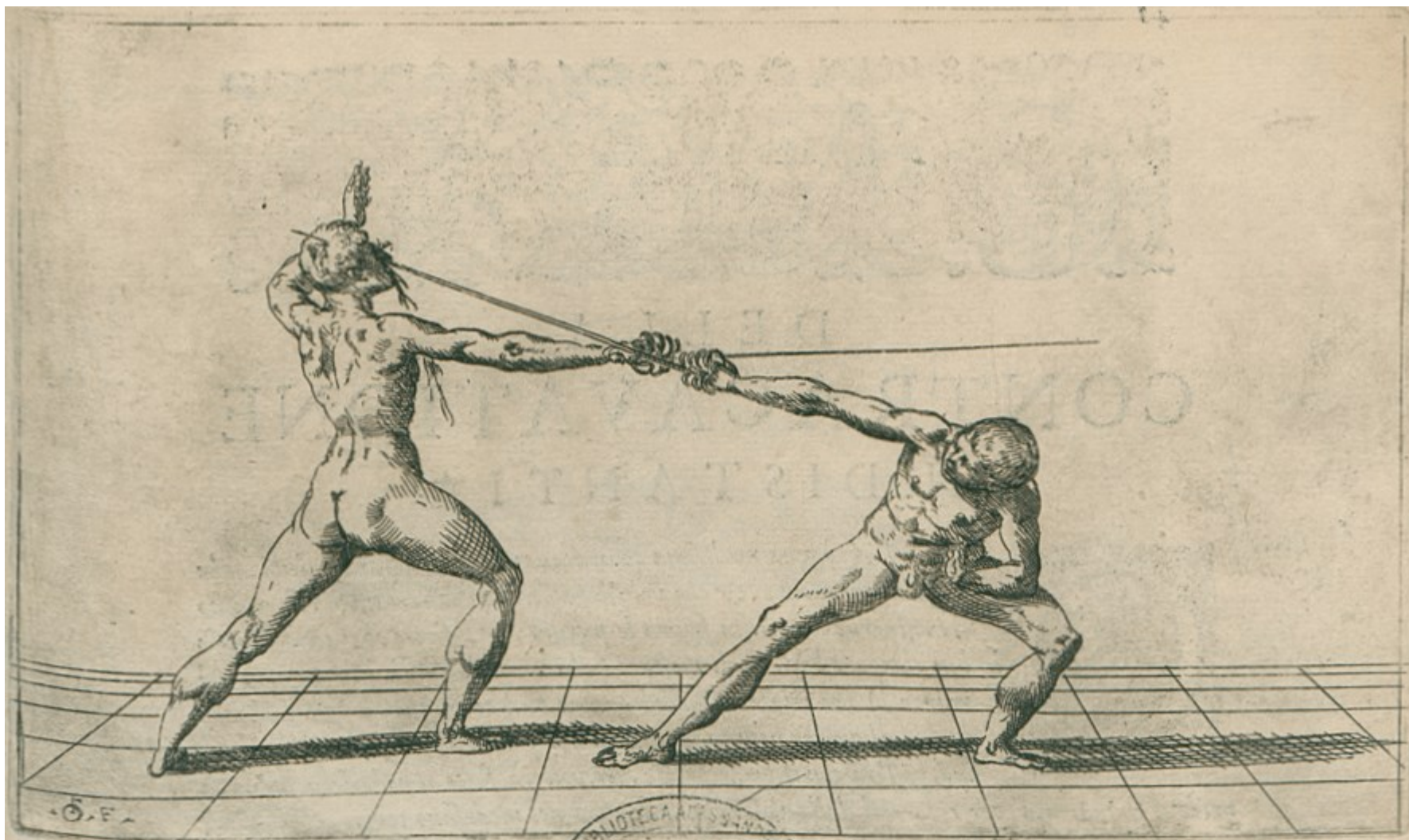


Figure 19

## THE COUNTERDISENGAGE AT A DISTANCE

This<sup>62</sup> is one and the same counterdisengage at a distance against one who has their left foot forward and wants to pass by in quartata. I wanted to demonstrate to you with this figure the postures and wound so that it is possible to comprehend it well for the sake of necessity (when one is coming to bind you with their left foot forward). Stand in guard as you see in this figure, giving occasion to your enemy to throw at your chest. If he is a valiant man he will pass with his foot quickly and strongly turn his wrist in the manner of the in quartata in order to defend himself from your sword. In the same tempo that he passes, redisengage the sword under the hilt, lowering your vita as you see in the present figure so that you wound him in the face before he wounds you. In fact, while he carries his foot forward in order to pass it is not possible to parry. At times it is necessary to make the effect of this figure. Exercise well these two figures placed before.

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<sup>62</sup> The two preceding figures

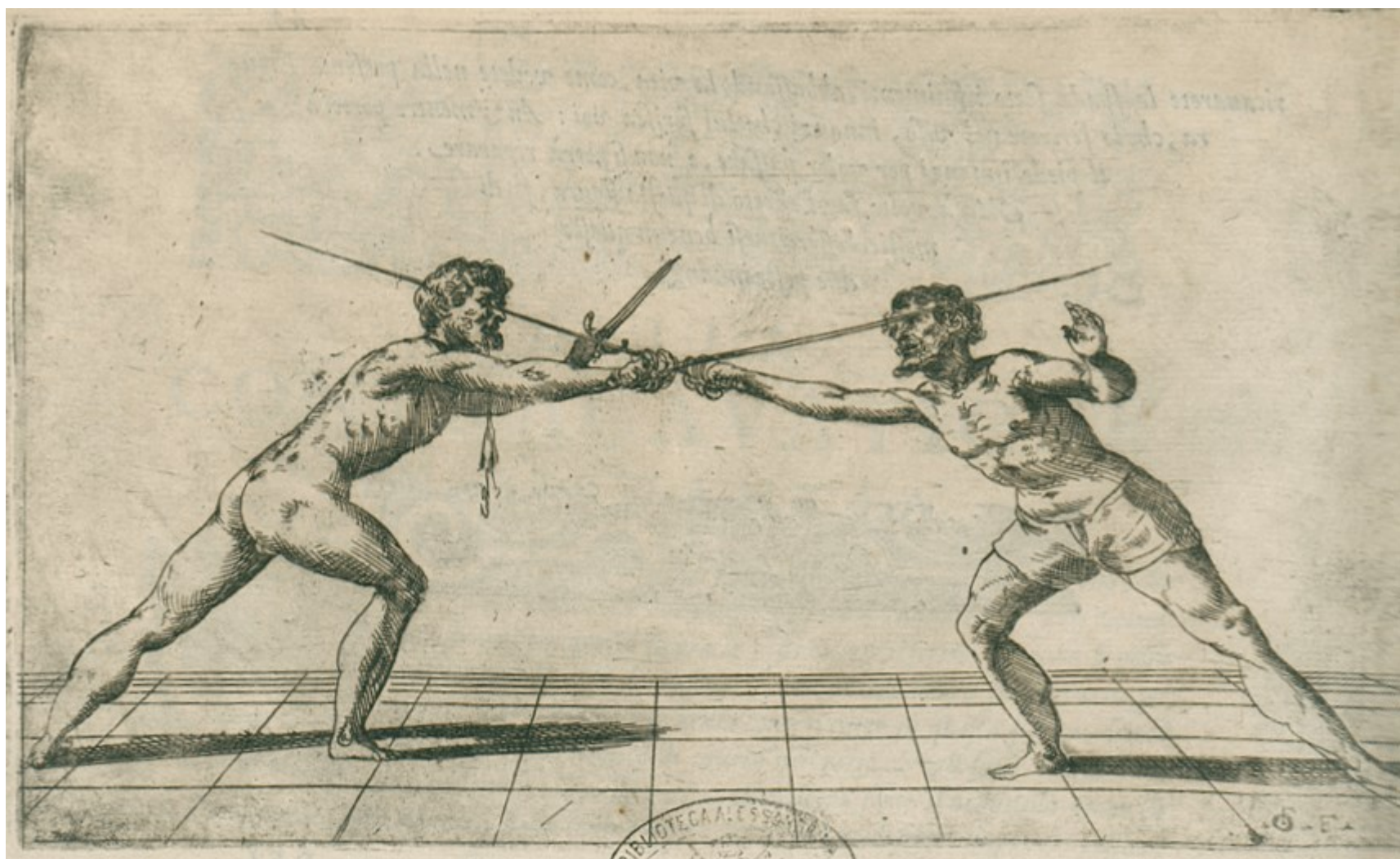


Figure 20

*METHOD OF PLAYING WITH THE SINGLE SWORD,*

*while the enemy has sword and dagger*

With this figure I will demonstrate parrying and wounding to you, you with the single sword against an enemy who has sword and dagger. You will stand with your right foot forward with a just pace, with your vita back, holding the sword forward ready to parry and wound when there is a tempo. It is necessary you not be first to throw because you will be in danger, since in throwing your enemy could parry your stoccata with the dagger and if he were a valiant man you would not be able to parry his. If you stay in guard as I have said above, ready to parry, showing fear of him so that he throws disconcerted. While he throws parry strongly with the forte of your sword and throw the stoccata at his face, because he will throw at you strongly and long and while throwing his dagger will remove itself so you can strike him safely. That given, immediately return backward outside of measure, holding your sword in his in the way described above. As many times as he throws, you will wound the same, taking care however not to throw at his chest, which would not be safe, since the one that has sword and dagger will be much bolder than one who finds themselves with the single sword, and thus thinking to give you as many stoccate as he likes, he will come to be disconcerted at throwing forward at you, not thinking of anything else. | If you stand in guard judiciously you can parry safely and strongly and wound your enemy, always in the face, returning safely outside of measure with your sword over his. If your enemy were to disengage the sword to the inside, turn your wrist and parry and throw strongly as I have said. | If you see that he wants to fly upon you, pull yourself backward and throw at him in the tempo that he moves to come forward. | If you were to find yourself in guard with your sword in his and he would like<sup>63</sup> to first parry with the dagger and then wound, in the tempo you see that he lowers the dagger in order to parry, immediately disengage the sword above the dagger in the way described in figure number ...<sup>64</sup> Immediately after return outside of measure with your sword over his. Take care, however, not to throw if he stays in guard if by chance you do not see some tempo that when you throw he cannot wound you, as described above when tempo and measure were discussed. | If he stands in guard waiting, either out of fear, or rather with art in order to deceive you, stay outside of measure with your sword over his and seek to parry and wound safely according to the occasion.

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<sup>63</sup> The original text is “vorreste”, or “you would like”. As our fencer’s opponent is the one with the dagger, it is likely that this is a mistake in the text

<sup>64</sup> The figure number is missing in both the 1606 and 1628 printings. Jakob de Zeter’s 1619 German/French version refers to Figure 21.



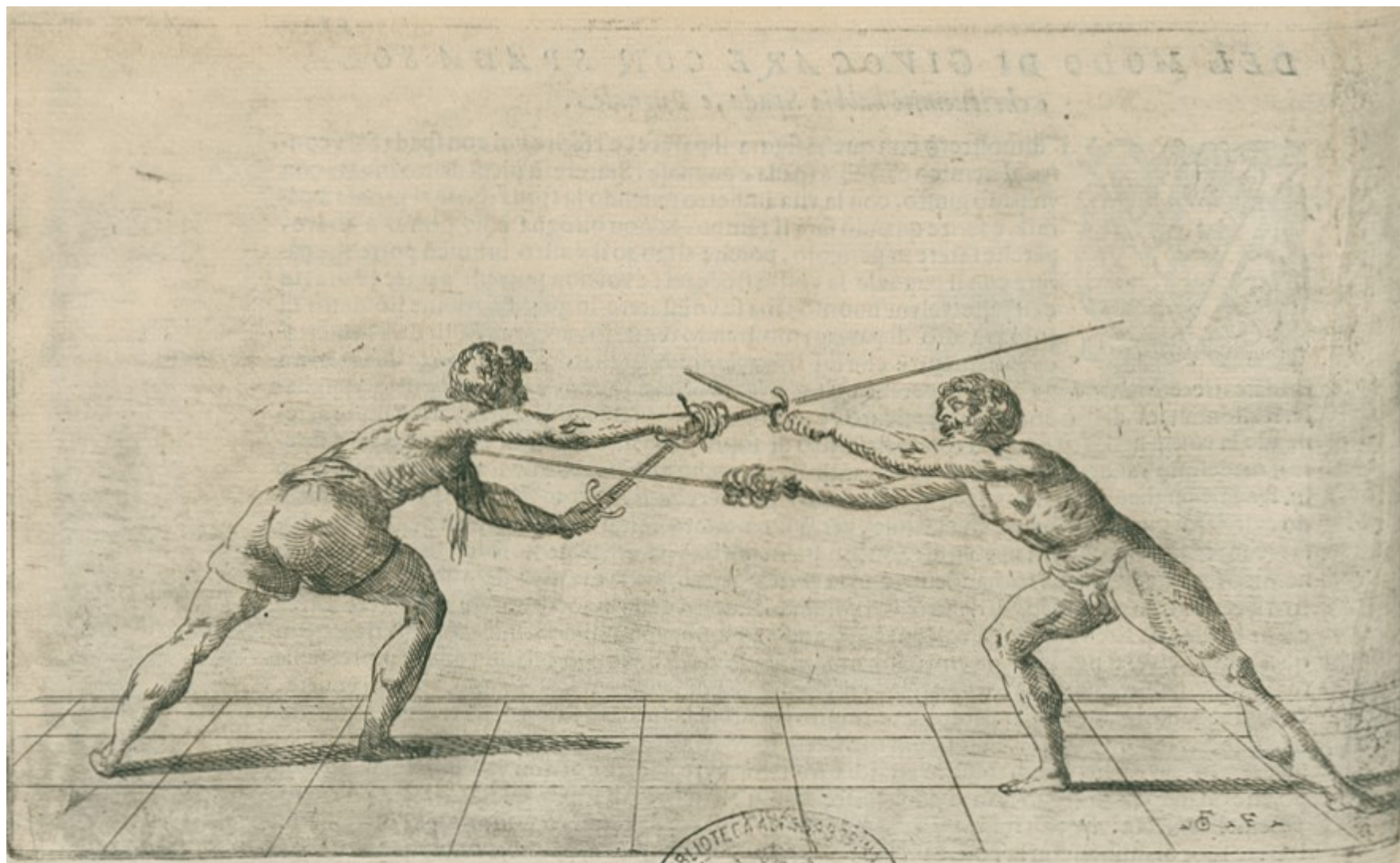


Figure 21<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> First figure of the sword and dagger



## METHOD OF PARRYING THE STOCCATA THAT COMES

at your face from the right side with sword and dagger

To achieve the effect of the present figure, it is necessary to stand in guard as you will learn. I say it is necessary to stand in a just pace, strong, holding the weapons ready to parry and wound, with the dagger toward the guard of the enemy sword and your sword ready to wound where it is most convenient. If you see that your enemy wants to wound you with a thrust to your face, parry with the edge of the dagger and wound the enemy in the right shoulder in the same tempo, so that doing it in one tempo it will be difficult to parry. To make the effect so that he cannot parry, it is not enough to only understand these things, but also necessary to know how to put them into effect. That is, in the same tempo to stand strongly in guard, with the right foot forward, with the left foot strong on the ground supporting all the body, holding the right foot back as in various other lessons in order to increase quickly forward and back according to the occasion, always holding the point of your sword at the face or chest of the enemy, the dagger high in proportion to the enemy sword, inclining the vita back rather than forward, standing with an alert and vigilant eye, with a bold heart, and without one bit of fear of the enemy. If (while you stand in this guard) your enemy comes to throw a thrust or imbroccata at your face, then parrying with the edge of the dagger throw him a stoccata in the same tempo so that you make the effect of the figure. Take heed that you parry strongly and safely, turn your head and vita a little, and while he throws at you, parrying strongly, throw your stoccata in the same tempo. If you were to parry first then throw it would not be possible, since your enemy could withdraw his arm and body and would be in tempo to parry, and your life would be in danger. But if you parry and wound in the same tempo, give him the stoccata under the flank of the sword while he comes forward so you do it justly and in tempo and it is difficult for him to parry. Taking heed that when you have thrown the stoccata you hold your left foot on the ground firmly and strongly and as soon as you have thrown carry your vita backward, returning outside of measure. Having thrown, to return backward safely<sup>66</sup> it is necessary to first bring the head, then the vita backward, then the leg will come by itself. If you were to pull your leg first your head would go forward, your life would be in danger, and you would not be able to return outside of measure. Throwing a long and strong stoccata without knowing how to return backward with the vita is worthless. In order to make the effect of the figure it is necessary to practise, so that when you see that your enemy wants to throw, you throw in that tempo so that your stoccata will arrive before his, although he is first to throw.

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<sup>66</sup> *How to withdraw after the blow is thrown*

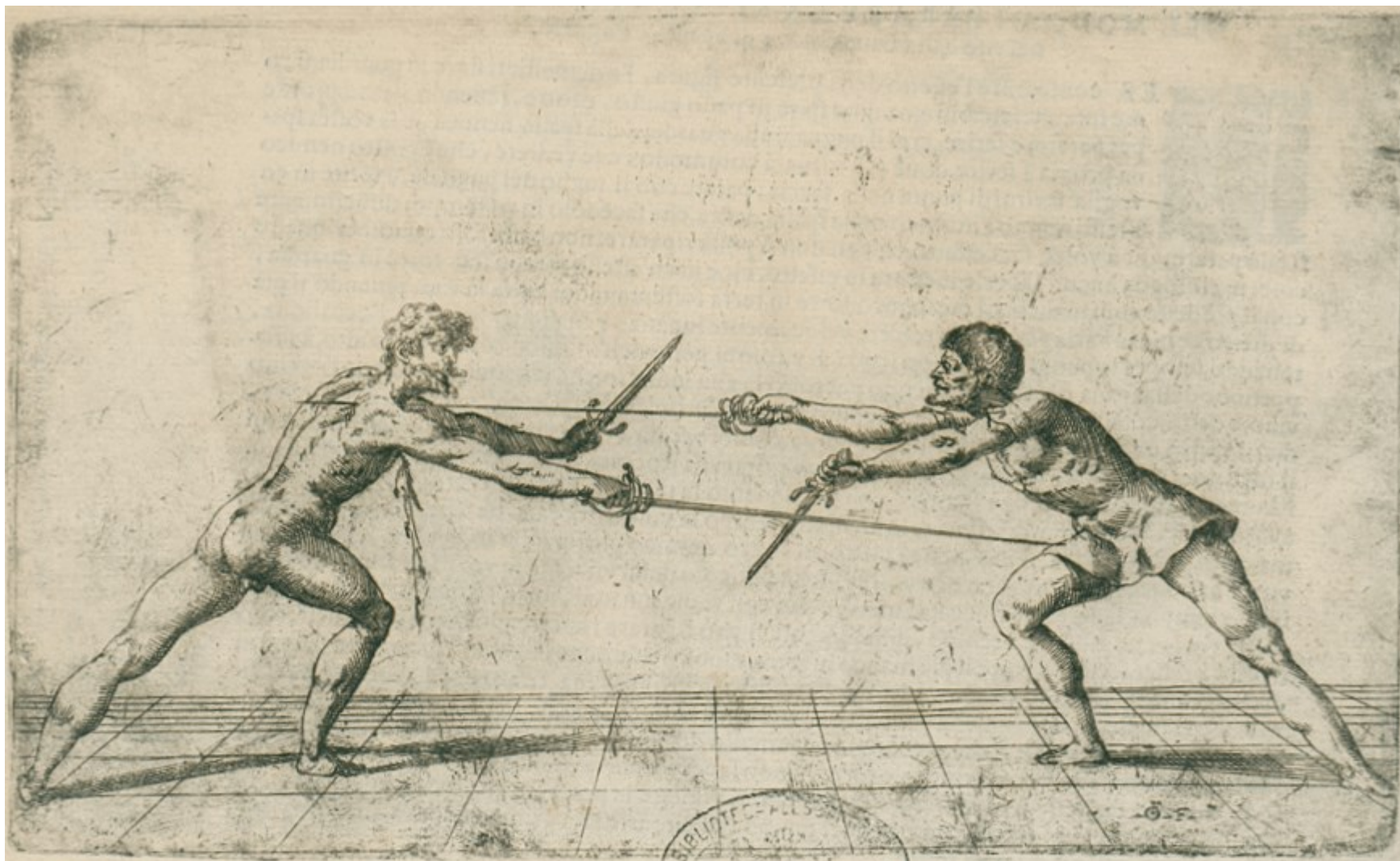


Figure 22<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Second figure of the sword and dagger

# THE PROPER METHOD OF PARRYING THE STOCCATA

## THAT COMES TOWARD YOUR LEFT FLANK

In the present figure it is necessary to place yourself like in that above. If your enemy intends to throw at your left flank, stand with your dagger toward the guard of his sword and in the tempo that he throws parry with the edge of the dagger and wound the enemy in the sword shoulder in the same tempo. Nay, throw yours sooner than he throws his stoccata, staying alert with your eye and mind, collected in the vita, and in the tempo you see he wants to throw his throw yours at his shoulder and parry his in that tempo, so that he cannot parry yours because you wound in that tempo he comes forward, as is seen in the figure. The stoccata thrown, return backward outside of measure in the same way as the first figure of sword and dagger.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Figure 21

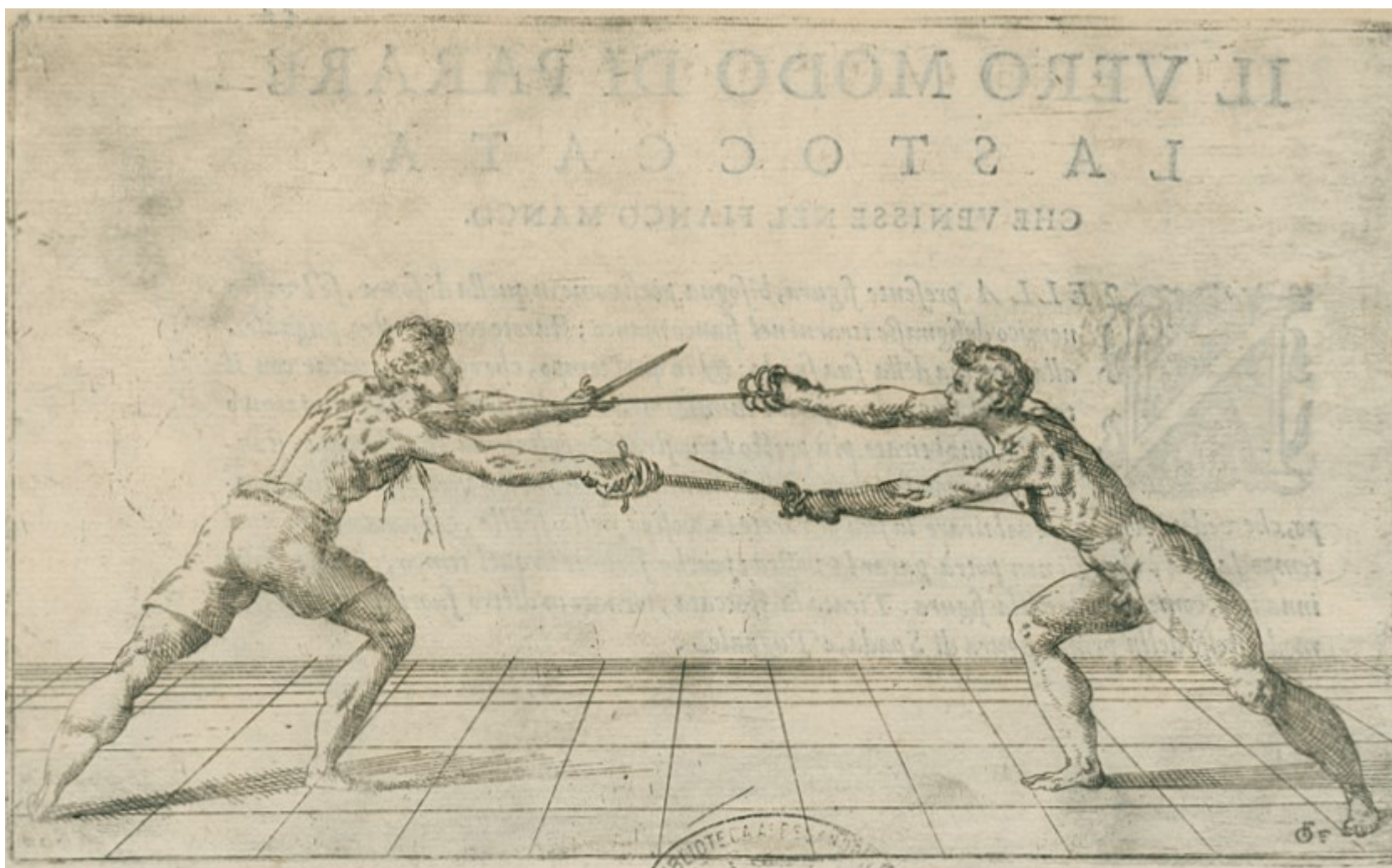


Figure 23<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Third figure of the sword and dagger

# METHOD OF PARRYING A THRUST THAT COMES AT YOUR RIGHT FLANK WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

As you see in this figure, if you are in this same guard described above and your enemy were to come to bind with the sword low in order to wound you in the right flank it would be necessary for you to raise your sword arm and stand in third guard<sup>70</sup> for an imbroccata with the point of your sword toward his face or chest, with the dagger a little low and the arm to the guard of the enemy sword. As the enemy throws the thrust at your flank, parry and throw an imbroccata at the enemy sword shoulder in the same tempo so that you see the effect of the figure. In fact, it would be better when you see your enemy wants to throw the thrust to throw yours forward so that you will more easily wound him. The stoccata or imbroccata given, immediately return backward outside of measure.

These are the four kinds of wounding and parrying stoccata and imbroccata, and they proceed in the same way, that is, parrying and wounding in the same tempo and in carrying the feet always taking care as you throw the stoccata to increase a little with your right foot, keeping the left foot strongly on the ground. Be advised that keeping the left foot on the ground will appear difficult to you at first, but with practice you will succeed easily.

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<sup>70</sup> The guard Giganti refers to here is unclear



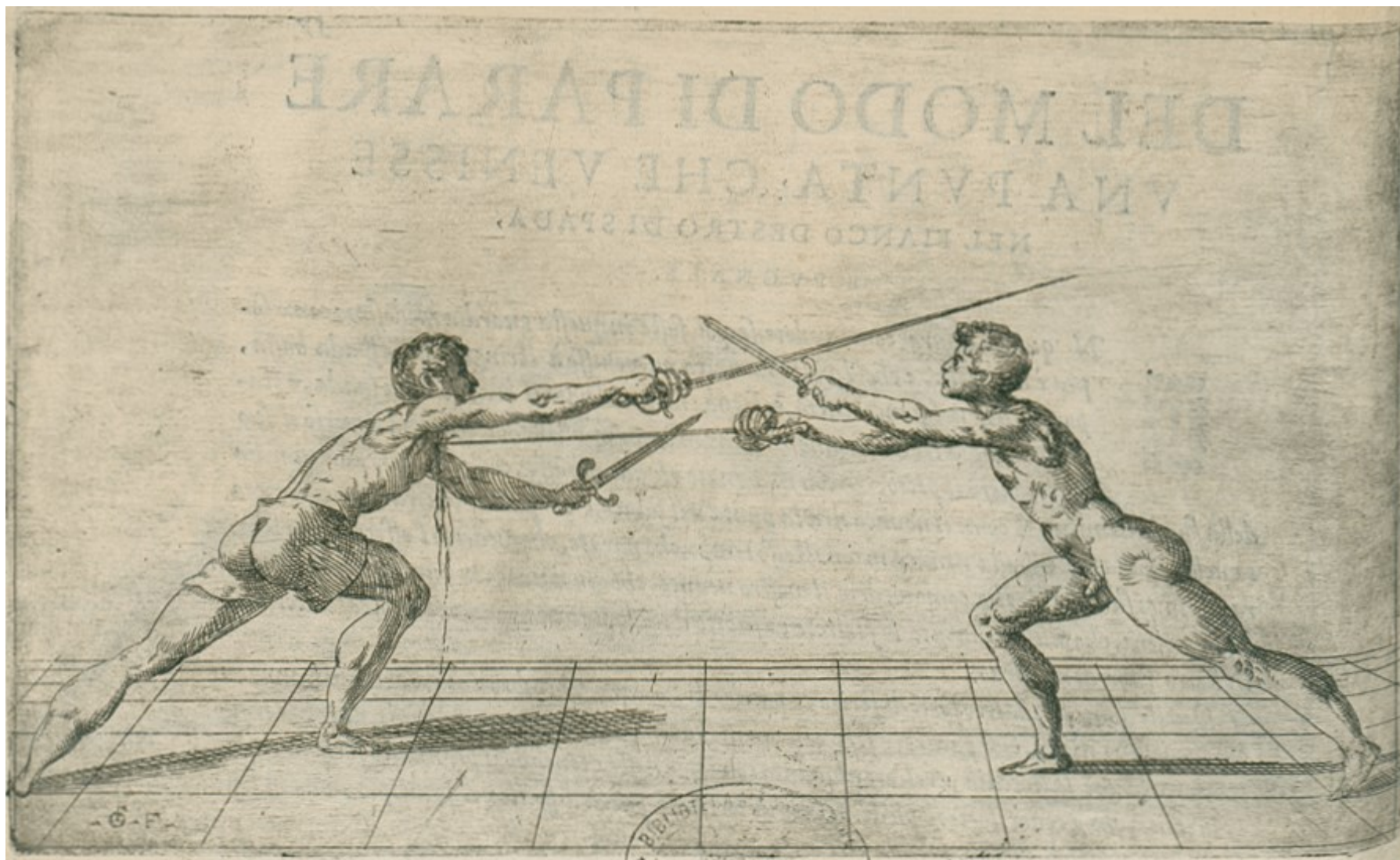


Figure 24<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Fourth figure of the sword and dagger

# METHOD OF PARRYING THE THRUST OF SWORD AND DAGGER AT YOUR FACE

In order to put into effect that which is shown to you by this figure it is necessary that you stand in the same guard, and seeing the enemy coming to throw a stoccata at your face, parrying with the edge of the dagger, to push forward the stoccata at his flank in one tempo so that you make this effect. Be advised, however, when you see the enemy's thrust at your face, to hold the dagger a little wide from it, giving him occasion to throw at you, and when he throws at you parry with the dagger and turn your head a little in order to pull it away from his sword. In the tempo you parry, wound him with a thrust in the flank that is uncovered and closest to wound. As soon as you have wounded, return backward in the described way.

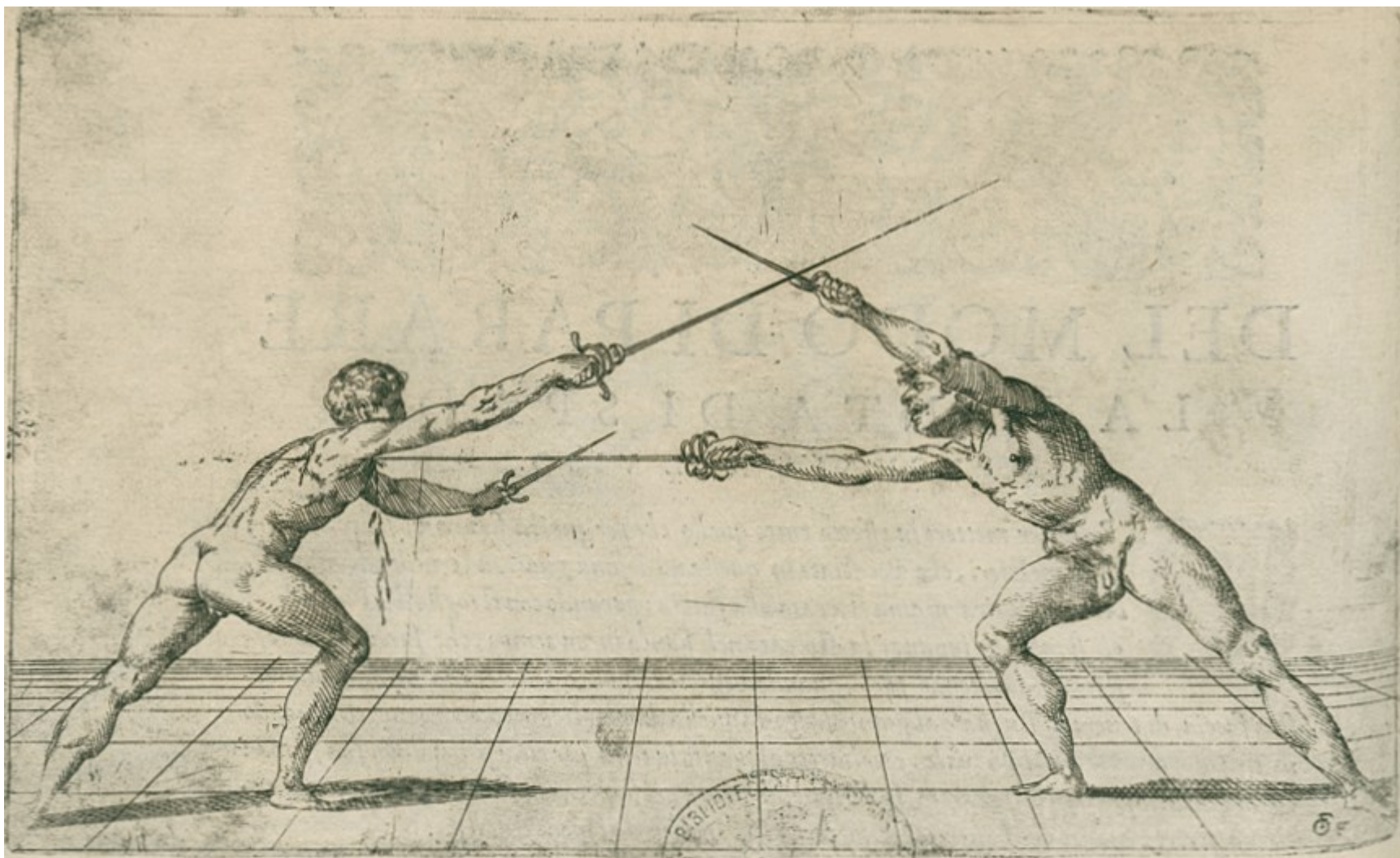


Figure 25<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Fifth figure of the sword and dagger

# METHOD OF PARRYING THE CUT

## ON THE HEAD WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

As you see, one learns from this figure to parry the cuts with the dagger that come at the top of your head. It is necessary to place oneself in the guard of the first lesson,<sup>73</sup> and if your enemy comes throwing you a cut on the head meet it with your dagger edge, in that same tempo throwing the thrust to the enemy's face and increasing forward a little with your right foot. Do these three things together so that you see the effect of the figure. For a great cut that comes it would be better to kill it so that it does not have half the strength. While your enemy lifts the sword to throw the cut, throw your stoccata at his face so that he will need to withdraw his head a little backward. He will clamp his eyes and you will take the strength of the cut. To make this effect, it is necessary to be bold, to not be afraid of the sword or of the enemy, to understand parrying with the dagger well, and to understand how to throw a straight and long stoccata well. | Watch that you do not parry the cut with the flat of the dagger, as a strong cut would cast the dagger from your hand and wound you on the head.<sup>74</sup> If you parry with the edge holding the arm extended there will be no danger.<sup>75</sup> Having thrown the thrust return backward outside of measure, as above.

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<sup>73</sup> First lesson of sword and dagger – Figure 21

<sup>74</sup> *If one parries with the flat of the dagger it is dangerous - that casts it from your hand and you end up wounded*

<sup>75</sup> *It must be parried with the edge*



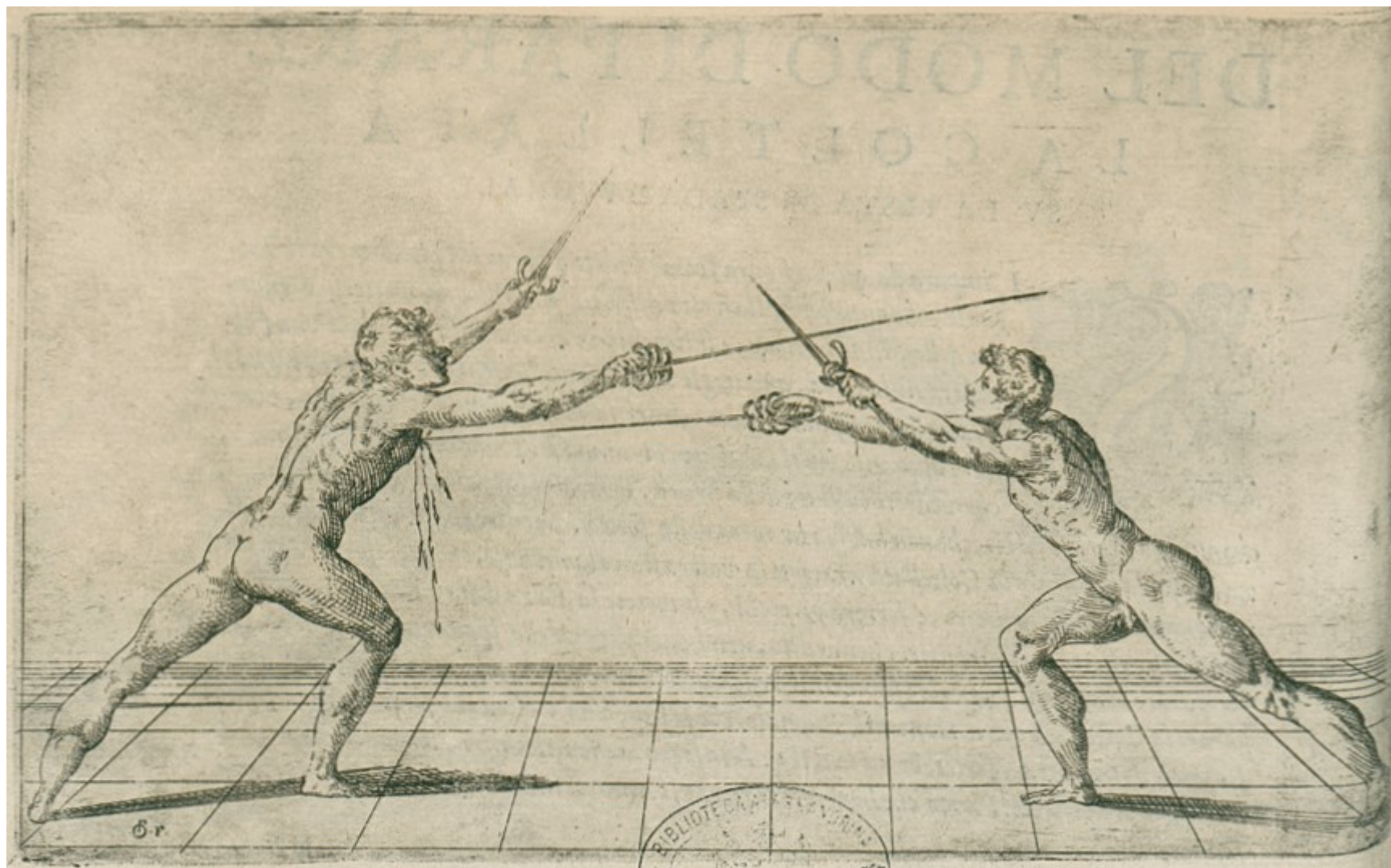


Figure 26<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Sixth figure of the sword and dagger




# METHOD OF PARRYING

## A RIVERSO

### WITH THE DAGGER

As you see, one learns from this figure how to parry a riverso that comes at your face. It is necessary to place oneself in guard of the first lesson<sup>77</sup> with the dagger high and strong, and when you see the riverso come go to meet it with the edge of the dagger. In the same tempo increase a little with your right foot, throwing the stoccata at his uncovered flank so that you see the effect of the figure. Be aware that all six of these figures<sup>78</sup> are of one manner, but it is necessary to parry and wound in one tempo. If you were to delay an instant from parrying to wounding, you would not create the effect. To create the effect it is necessary to exercise, to practise, and the stoccata given, to immediately return backward outside of measure.

 Be advised that these six lessons are the most important and the most beautiful that are found in fencing,<sup>79</sup> but it is necessary to perform them well holding the dagger strongly, and when you see the sword come against you, with the thrust as with the cut, go to meet it with the dagger and in that same tempo throw the stoccata where the enemy is uncovered.

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<sup>77</sup> Figure 21

<sup>78</sup> Figures 21-26

<sup>79</sup> *The most beautiful lessons that are in it*



Figure 27

# THRUST THROWN AT THE CHEST WITH THE SWORD AND DAGGER

The first quality that one who delights in making a profession of arms must have is<sup>80</sup> the knowledge of how to approach to bind the enemy, give a stoccata to him, and return in guard outside of measure. To do this it is necessary to have understanding of the counterguards and know how to throw the stoccata where you see the enemy is uncovered. If he were a little uncovered in the chest it would be necessary to approach to bind him slowly, with the sword low, holding the point toward the enemy's chest with the dagger to the guard of his sword, and when you are at measure throw the sword first, then the vita, and after the foot so that you see the effect of this figure. This is because if you throw the sword arm and then the vita you will give him the stoccata in the chest and he will not perceive it. Otherwise, if you were to move the vita first and then throw the stoccata, since he could see it and be able to parry and respond in the same tempo you would then be in danger. Having thrown the stoccata, immediately retreat outside of measure, standing in guard with your weapons ready to parry and wound because the enemy seeing himself wounded will become disconcerted enough to throw either a thrust or cut at you. You will then parry and wound in one tempo as described in the first six figures<sup>81</sup>. The importance of this figure consists (after having thrown) in knowing how to return outside of measure. In order to return safely it is necessary (as has been said above) to carry your head back first so that the vita will come, and the leg,<sup>82</sup> because if you were to pull your leg first you would be in danger either of falling or of your enemy wounding you since your head would go forward. This one of the principal things that you learn.

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<sup>80</sup> *Quality that one who practises with weapons must have*

<sup>81</sup> **Figures 21-26**

<sup>82</sup> *In order to return quickly and therefore outside of measure and in guard, the head is withdrawn first, then the vita follows on its own, and the leg, and this must be done strongly and quickly*

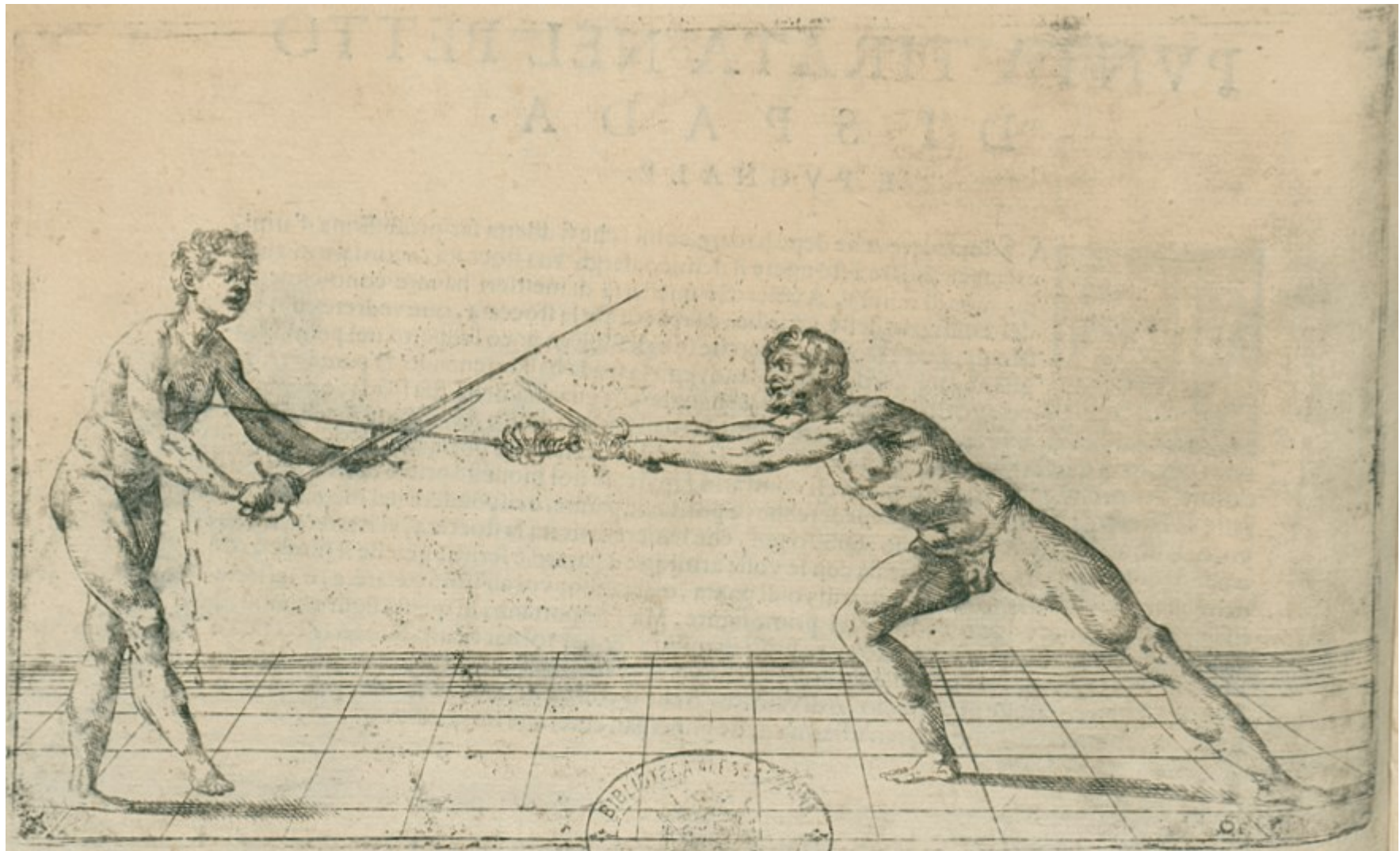


Figure 28



# THROWING THE STOCCATA WHILE THE ENEMY MOVES

In fencing the principal things are understanding measure and tempo, which we discuss in this figure.<sup>83</sup> When you have the sword in hand so that you go against your enemy, go to bind him with an alert eye, with the weapons ready to parry and wound. In that tempo take heed of whether he wants to be the first to wound or not. If you see that he wants to be first<sup>84</sup> give a tempo to him so that he throws and meanwhile you, going to the parry, throw at him in the same tempo as above. But if you see that he is timid and stays in guard in order to wait approach him little by little to bind on the side where he is uncovered, and when you are at measure, holding the dagger forward to the guard of his sword, first throw the point, then the vita, and after the foot, always holding the dagger forward, so that if the enemy throws in that same tempo you are able to parry so that he does not produce an incontro and strike both of you.<sup>85</sup> Having thrown, return backward outside of measure in the described way. It is necessary when you approach to bind him that he do one of these three things: either he throws, stays firm in order to parry, or he moves himself to one side or another in order to take himself outside. Therefore, it is necessary whether he throws or stays firm when you are at measure that you do it in the way described in the present lesson, but if he were to move himself, either withdrawing himself or here, there, or in whichever way, throw the stoccata at him strongly and quickly while his foot is moving, because while he moves you can wound him<sup>86</sup> there in the tempo that you throw. Then return outside of measure as usual.

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<sup>83</sup> *Note: Tempo and measure are the principal things in fencing*

<sup>84</sup> *~~If you see~~ If the enemy wants to be first to wound give him the opportunity to throw and in the same tempo parry and wound*

<sup>85</sup> *If he waits in order to parry, bind him and [when] you reach measure throw where he is uncovered, but in the same tempo put your dagger where his sword is in order to parry if he throws*

<sup>86</sup> *While the enemy moves he cannot wound in that brief tempo. If at that point he moves, quickly throw the stoccata at him, that is, an imbrogata.*



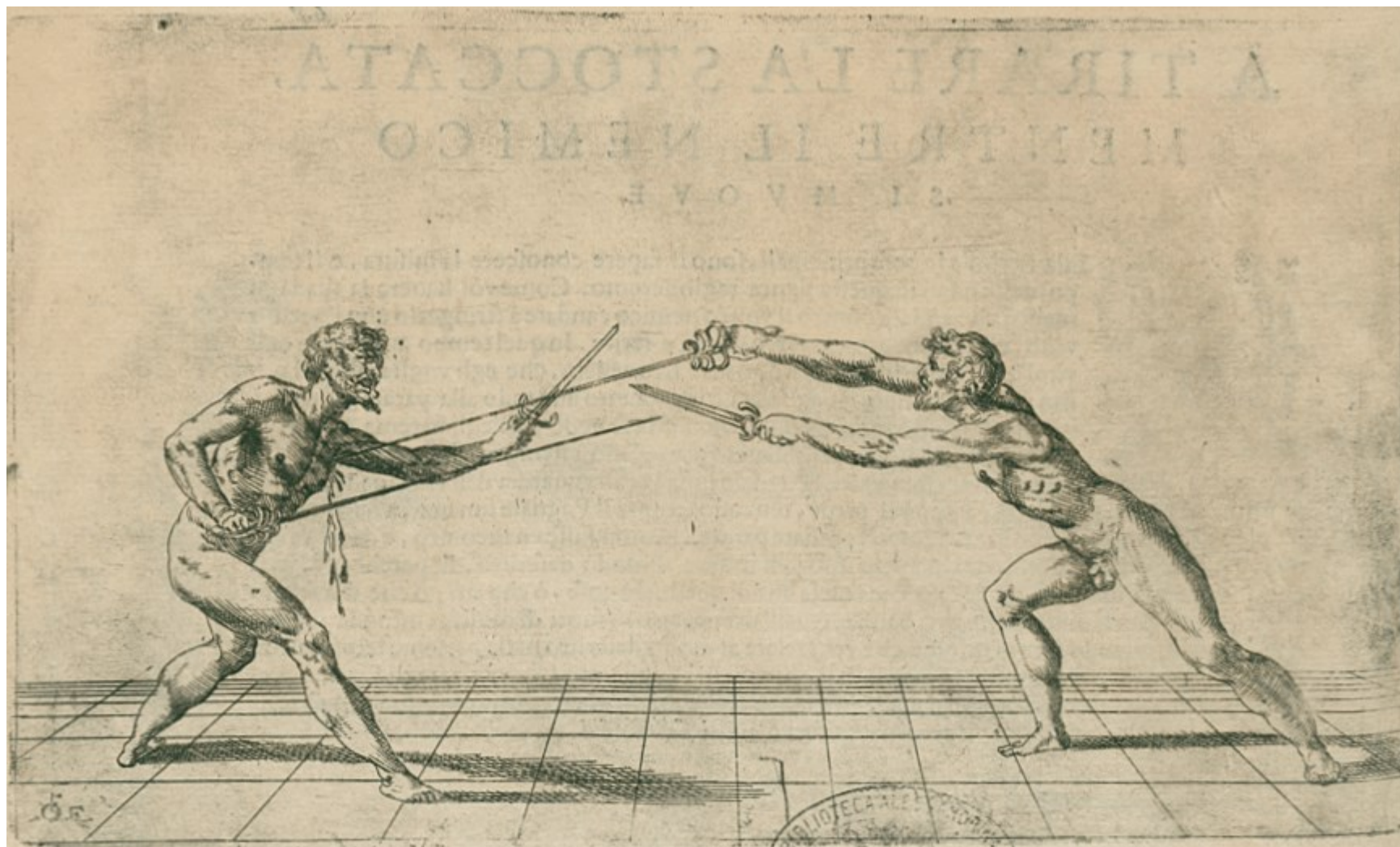


Figure 29

## THRUST THROWN OVER THE DAGGER

To give a stoccata to someone who holds the dagger low it is necessary (as one sees in this figure) to approach him to bind on the side of the dagger, and when you are at measure first throw the sword, and then the vita, raising your wrist a little so that you make the effect. Then return backward in the way described in Figure .....<sup>87,88</sup> It is very difficult to defend oneself from one who is practised at first throwing the sword, then the vita, and after this quickly returning backward in the way described in lesson .....<sup>89</sup>, who understands approaching to bind with tempo, and when he is at measure throwing where the enemy is uncovered, |since it is necessary that he<sup>90</sup> is uncovered somewhere, as the sword and dagger cannot cover everything<sup>91</sup> and where he is uncovered it is necessary to approach him to bind in the described way.

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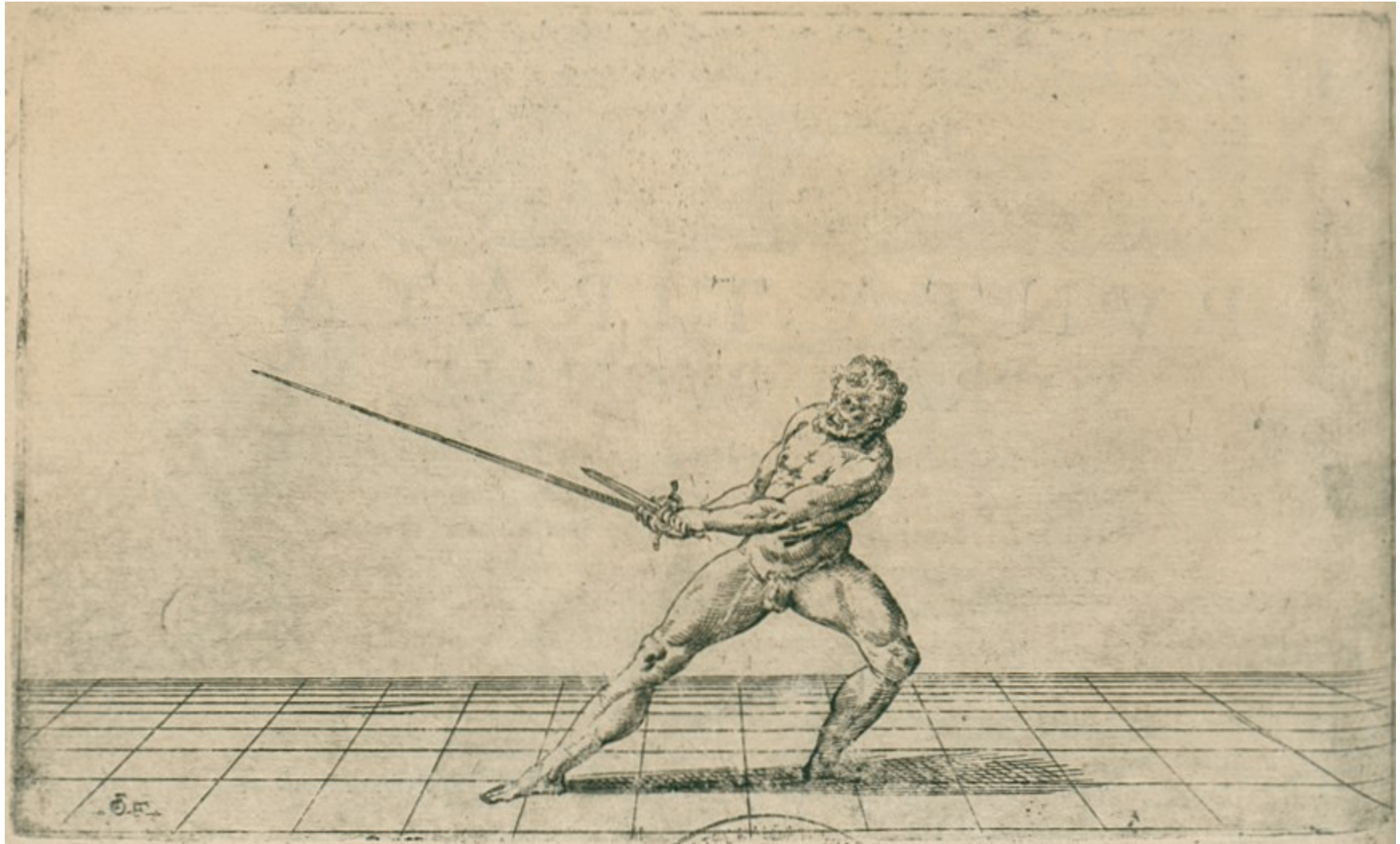
<sup>87</sup> The figure number is missing in both the 1606 and 1628 printings. Jakob de Zeter's 1619 German/French version also omits a figure reference

<sup>88</sup> *As discussed in the first figure of the sword and dagger - Page 60*

<sup>89</sup> The figure number is missing in both the 1606 and 1628 printings. Jakob de Zeter's 1619 German/French version refers to Figure 27

<sup>90</sup> The enemy

<sup>91</sup> *The sword and dagger cannot cover everything*



*Figure 30*

Many are the guards that can be made, because every method of holding the sword is a guard, as has been said, and all the guards are good to one who understands tempo and measure. In war one who knows how to make guards with artifice will always deceive the enemy.

## ARTIFICIAL GUARD

### UNCOVERING

#### THE LEFT SIDE

The artificial guards are infinite, but I will only place three of them in my first book, which for those who understand will be a light and road to making as many guards as they wish.

The proper and first method of standing in artificial guard is this: uncovering a part of the body while the other parts are completely covered, so that the enemy cannot wound you if not in one part alone, as you see in this figure where all of the left shoulder is uncovered. This is done so the enemy will intend to wound you in the uncovered part, and when he sets out to wound he will be in danger, since as he aims to throw at you either with a thrust or cut you can parry and wound him in the same tempo, increasing with the foot so that it accompanies the sword while you parry. As soon as the stoccata is thrown return outside of measure as above. These artificial guards are for studious men that understand tempo and measure and have practised well, because many things can be done in these guards. Most of all in this first one can approach to bind the enemy, and when you are at measure, that same enemy waiting, it is possible to wound him in the part that is uncovered. If he throws you are able to do many things, such as parry and wound in one tempo, parry and make a feint, a pass, or all that you know how to do in other guards in which you are practised. If your enemy standing in guard throws disconcerted you parry and wound in one tempo, or rather, disconcerted, and return immediately backward out of measure. This guard deceives many of those that know and do not know playing at weapons. Seeing you uncovered, he will throw at that uncovered part, and you easily parrying and wounding in the way described above in the first lessons of sword and dagger will strike him safely and easily.





Figure 31



## ARTIFICIAL GUARD UNCOVERING THE RIGHT SIDE

This is another artificial guard, as you see, that uncovers all the right side, and the rest of the vita is completely covered so that the enemy cannot wound if not in your uncovered right shoulder. However, you can parry with the sword or dagger as you like and wound with a firm foot or else pass with your foot, as is convenient. In this guard you can do many feints. These guards are good with those desirous to wound, who do not have patience to wait to throw with tempo and measure, and who as they see the enemy uncovered come toward him without considering that which he could still do, often finding themselves in danger. They are still good with those that know much, since you see your own work better. Making a feint at you, you will be able to parry it better than standing in a narrow guard, and the resolute thrusts are parried more easily still by carrying the vita back, and parrying, turning the body, according to how quick and long the thrusts will be.

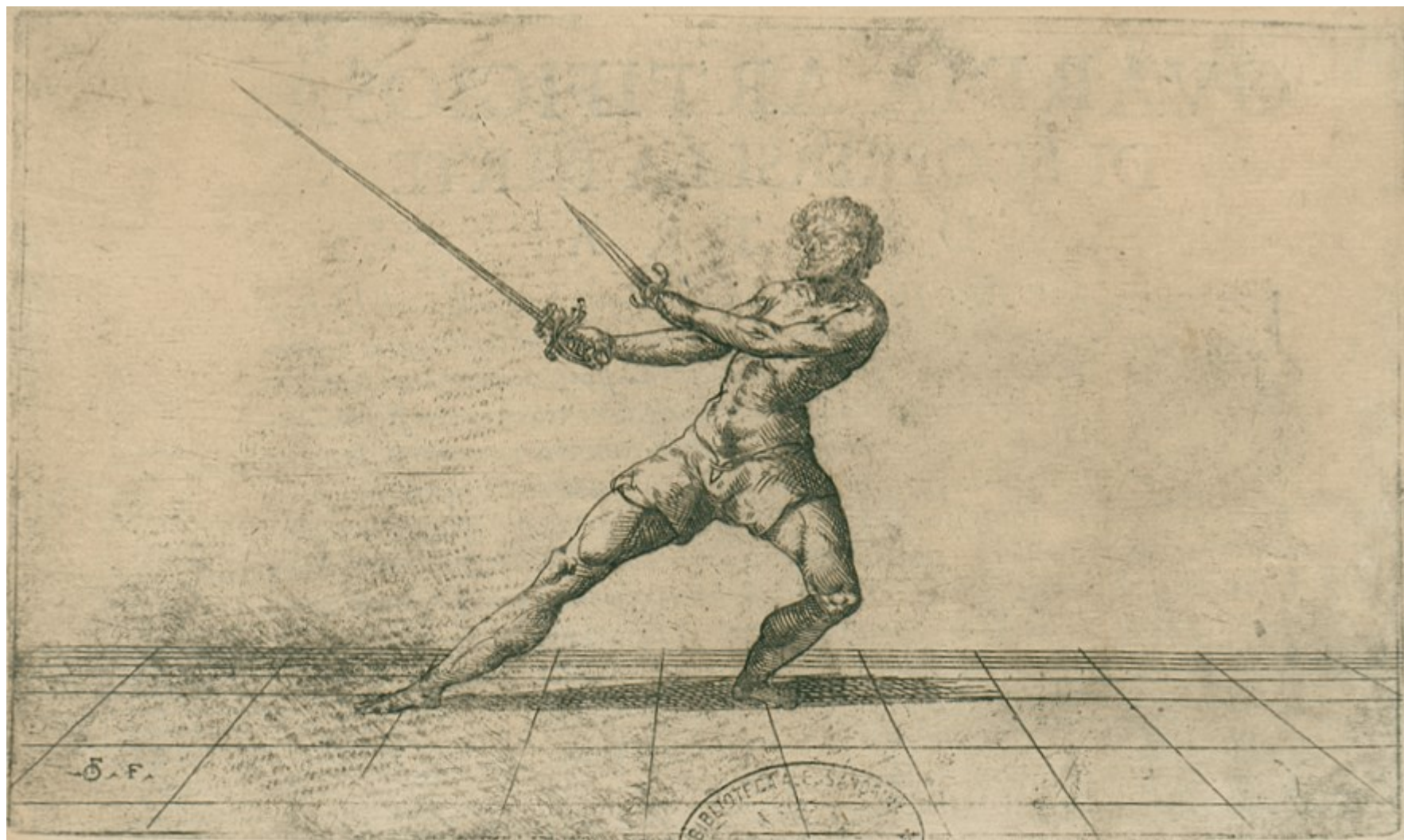


Figure 32

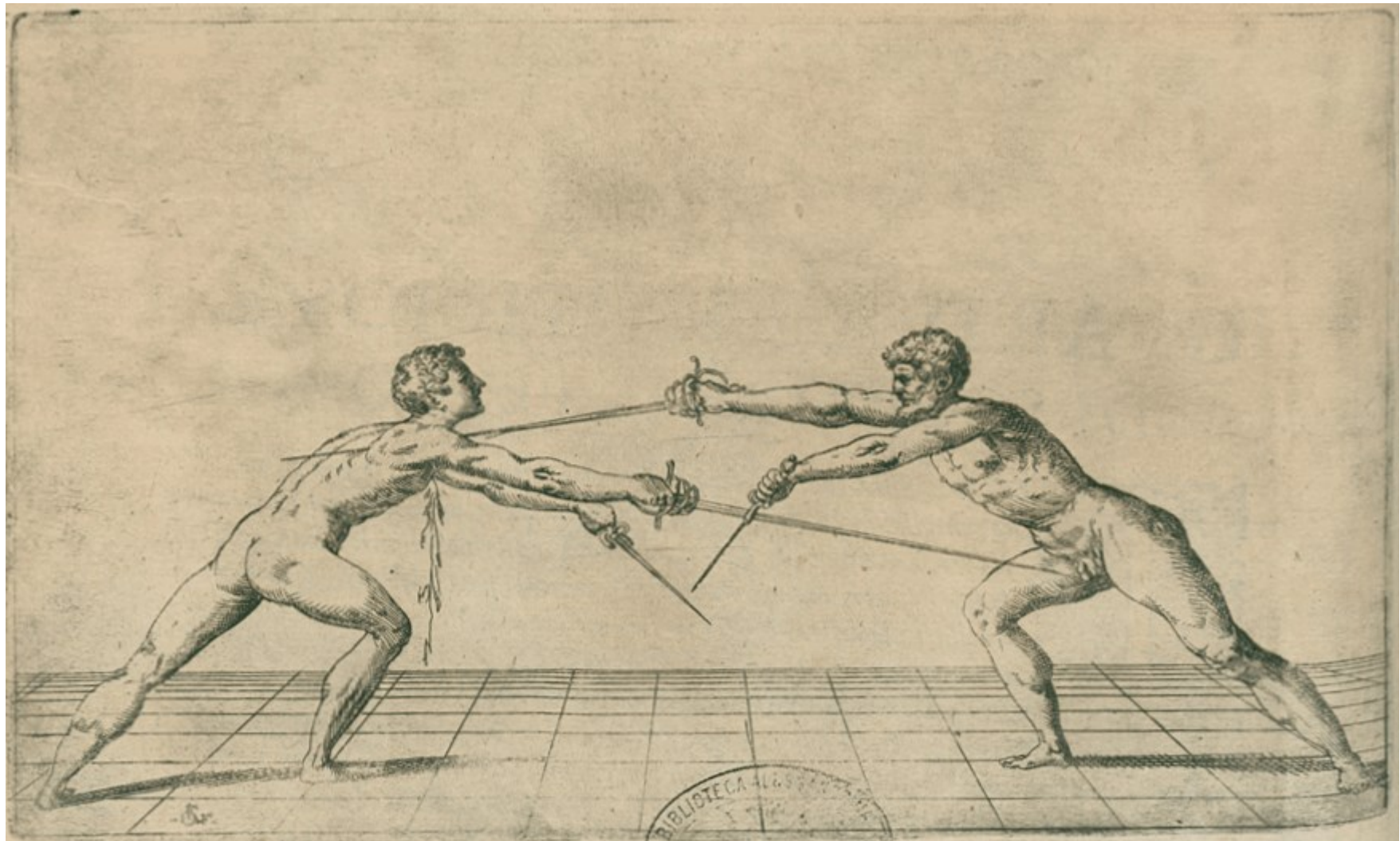
## ARTIFICIAL GUARD UNCOVERING THE CHEST

In this other guard, where the chest is uncovered, it is<sup>92</sup> because your enemy cannot wound you either on the side of the sword or on that of the dagger, because coming in order to wound you he will throw at your rib cage, that being the only thing uncovered. While he throws, parry and wound in the same tempo, either in the right shoulder or the face, these being closest to you. You can also perform feints in this guard, pass with your foot, and all that you have learned in the other guards. It is also good with the choleric, who throw resolutely and do not perform feints. | With those that have tempo and measure and know well how to throw a resolute thrust and a feint it is not to be used.<sup>93</sup> Instead, bind with the weapons and seek to cover the enemy sword with yours outside of measure where you can parry and wound safely according to the occasion.

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<sup>92</sup> The chest is uncovered

<sup>93</sup> *Do not use this with an enemy who is an expert fencer*



*Figure 33*

# FEINT WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

## IN ORDER TO WOUND OVER THE DAGGER

Just as the understanding of tempo and measure are the principal foundation of fencing, so the disengage and feint are the ornament of it. The disengage consists entirely in the wrist. The feint is showing the doing of one thing and not doing it. It is not possible to do the feint without the disengage. One disengages above or under the guards of the sword, or over or under the point of the dagger, or inside or outside. I cannot discuss the feint without including the disengage. The feint is a deadly deception, almost irreparable to persons of valour and professors of this science, and hardly to those without understanding. This is done in this way. At times in order to give a stoccata over the dagger in the chest or face of the enemy it is necessary to do it like so: bind him with the sword low under the dagger, holding your dagger to the guard of his sword. When you find yourself at measure, throw a resolute stoccata and then return backward, and if you run at him nothing else will happen, but if he parries, return to bind and when you are at measure, throw the thrust without extending your step, standing with the vita firm underneath the dagger. And while the enemy goes to parry it, in his lowering of the dagger raise the point of the sword with a turn of your hand then, extending your step and vita, wound him either in the chest or face, which he will certainly not perceive, as you see in the figure. To have the effect it needs to be done with great speed so that he will not know if it is resolute or a feint. Be advised that in approaching with the point of the sword over the enemy's dagger you must proceed with the disengage so that it has disengaged and wounded in the same tempo. Then return outside of measure, as above, securing yourself from the enemy's sword.



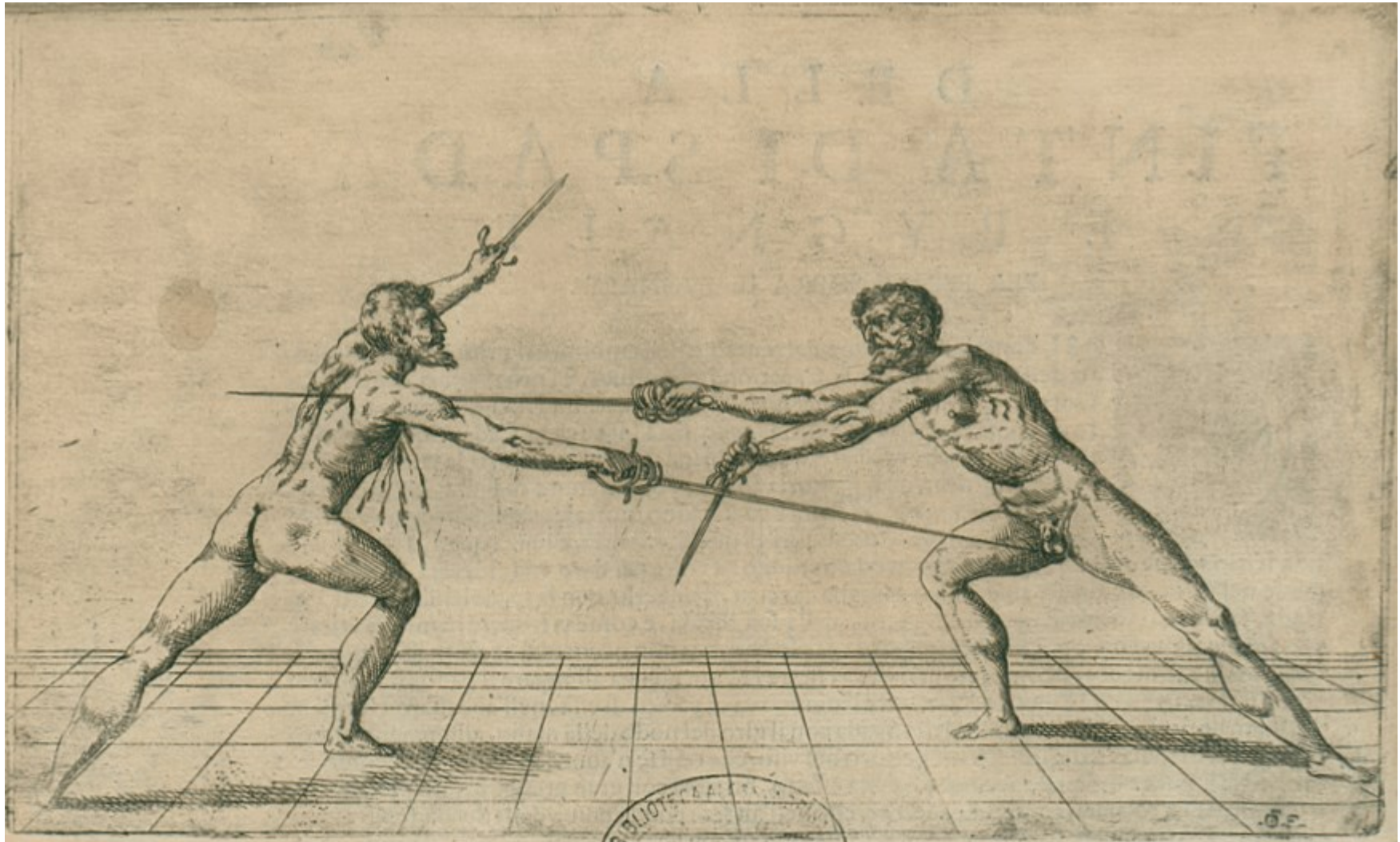


Figure 34

# FEINT

## WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

### IN ORDER TO WOUND IN THE CHEST

This feint is no different from the last, except that wounds over the dagger and this underneath. One does this with the same rule as the other. In this you have to hold the sword high, and when you have the enemy close throw a thrust at him over the dagger, raising your sword arm a little more. This method of wounding is called “Cutting the Dagger’s Throat”.<sup>94</sup> If he does not parry nothing else will happen, but if he parries, you must present the point to him, not more or less, standing with your pace and foot firm, and while he goes to the parry, running with the point of the sword under the hilt of the dagger, turning your wrist and extending your pace, wound him in the chest so that he will not perceive it. Then return backward outside of measure, securing yourself as above.

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<sup>94</sup> “*Scannare*” – to slaughter or cut the throat of

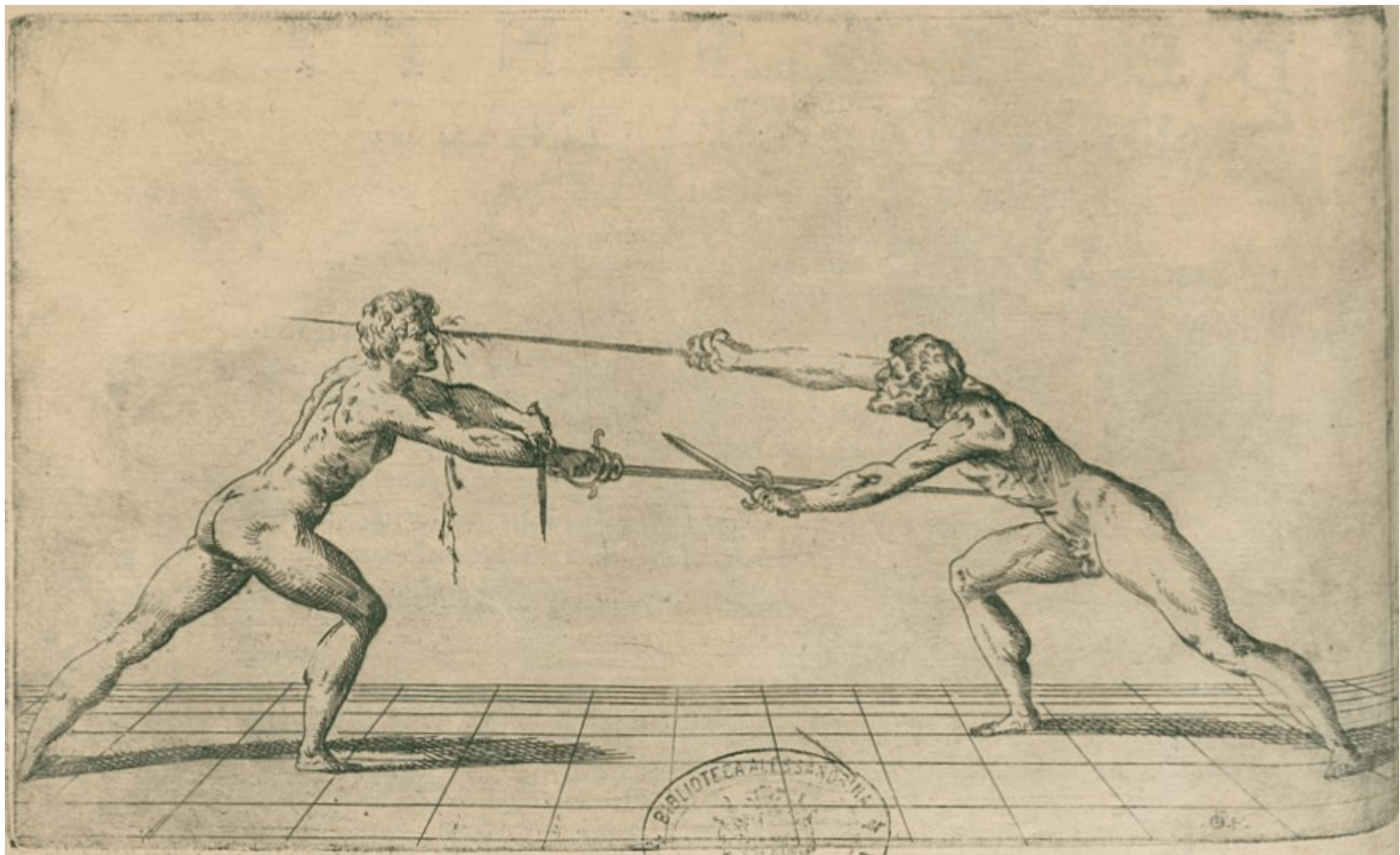


Figure 35

# FEINT WITH SWORD AND DAGGER AT THE FACE

*Disengaging the sword over the point of the dagger*

To give a stoccata at the outset to your enemy's face, it is necessary to do this feint which, just as it is the most difficult, is yet the most beautiful. It is necessary therefore to bind the enemy from the sword side, holding the point to his face from the right side, in order to wait for if he wants to wound, or rather if he wants to stand in guard in order to parry. If he is in guard, feint a thrust at his face and as he goes with the dagger to obedience turn the point of the sword over the enemy dagger with your wrist and wound him so that he will not perceive it, since in parrying he will completely uncover himself. The thrust being given, do as above.



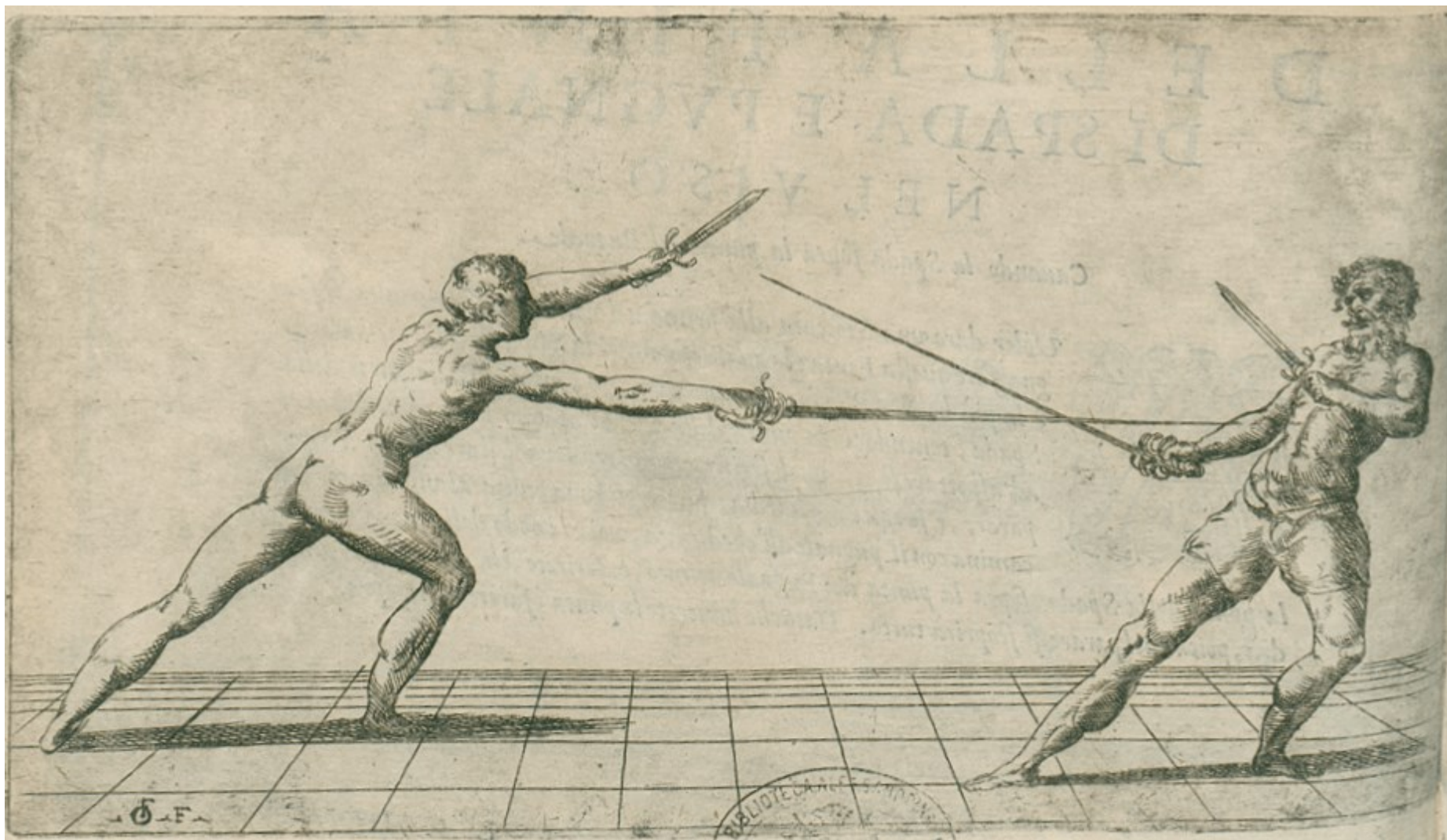


Figure 36



# PARRYING THE LONG STOCCATA WITH THE SWORD BY BRINGING

the vita back

It is such a necessity to be good at parrying that I hold that understanding parrying well is the most important thing in this profession. Now I want to teach you three ways to defend yourself from long stoccate. Stand in guard in the above way with the sword and vita forward, holding the chest a little uncovered, and stand either at measure or outside of measure, but not inside the measure. Being at measure when you see the stoccata being thrown at you, carry your vita backward and parry with the sword as you see in the figure. In the same tempo (because throwing yourself backward you escape from the thrust of the enemy's sword, a little far, so that it does not reach you), dropping down with the vita he puts himself into disorder and it will be difficult for him to parry, whence you can lengthen your step, wounding him, and escape from him as above, taking care to stand strongly over your feet while you parry or return backward.

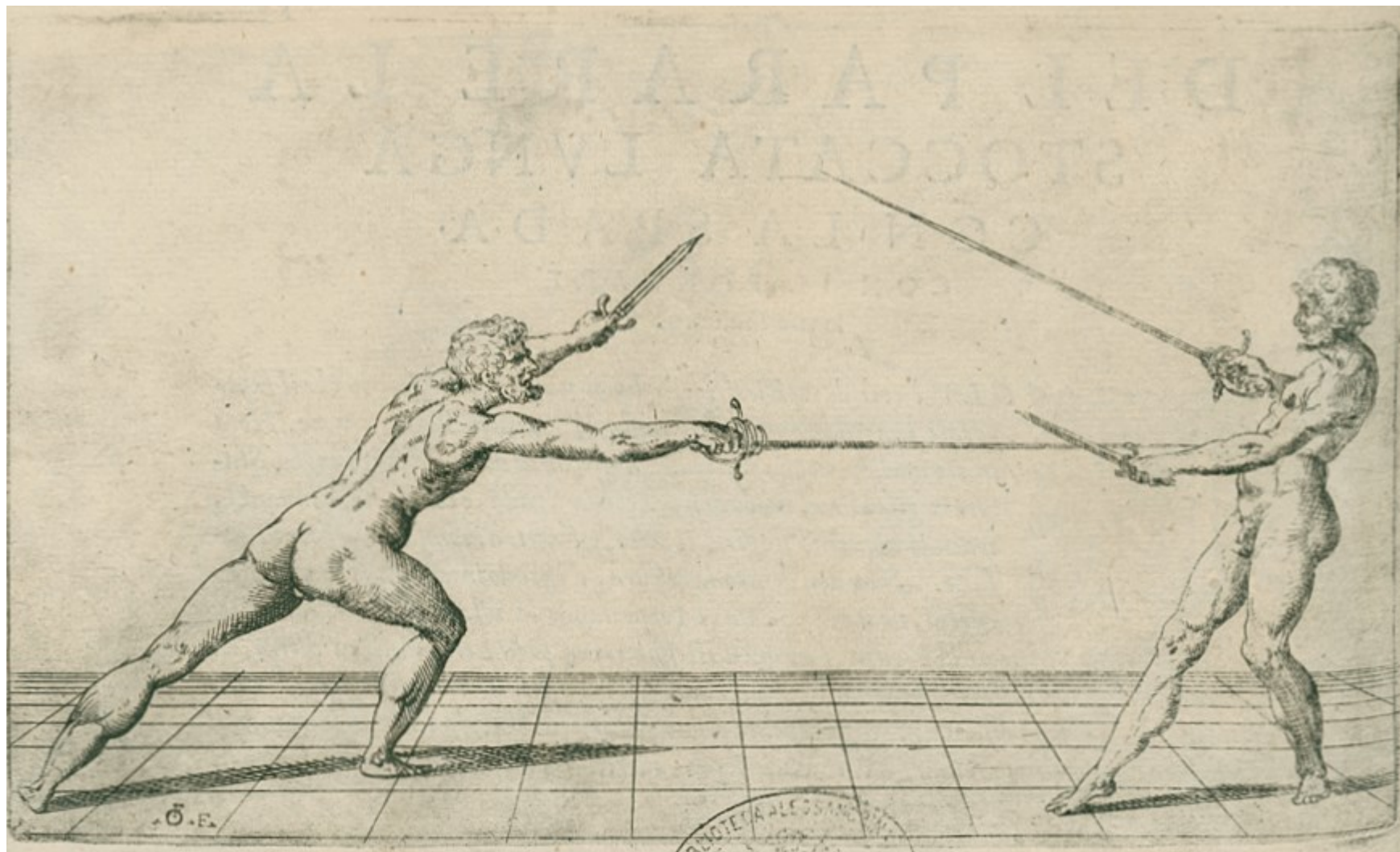


Figure 37

## PARRYING WITH THE DAGGER, BRINGING THE VITA BACK

Stand in the same guard as above, with the vita forward with artifice, holding the dagger to the guard of the enemy's sword. When you are at measure and you see that he throws the thrust at you, parry with the dagger in the same tempo and bring the vita back with a withdrawal of your forward leg and the sword holding ready to wound, as you see in the figure where standing with the feet strong and the sword free you can do many things before he returns to guard, since throwing long and falling with his vita he will give you opportunity to do them.

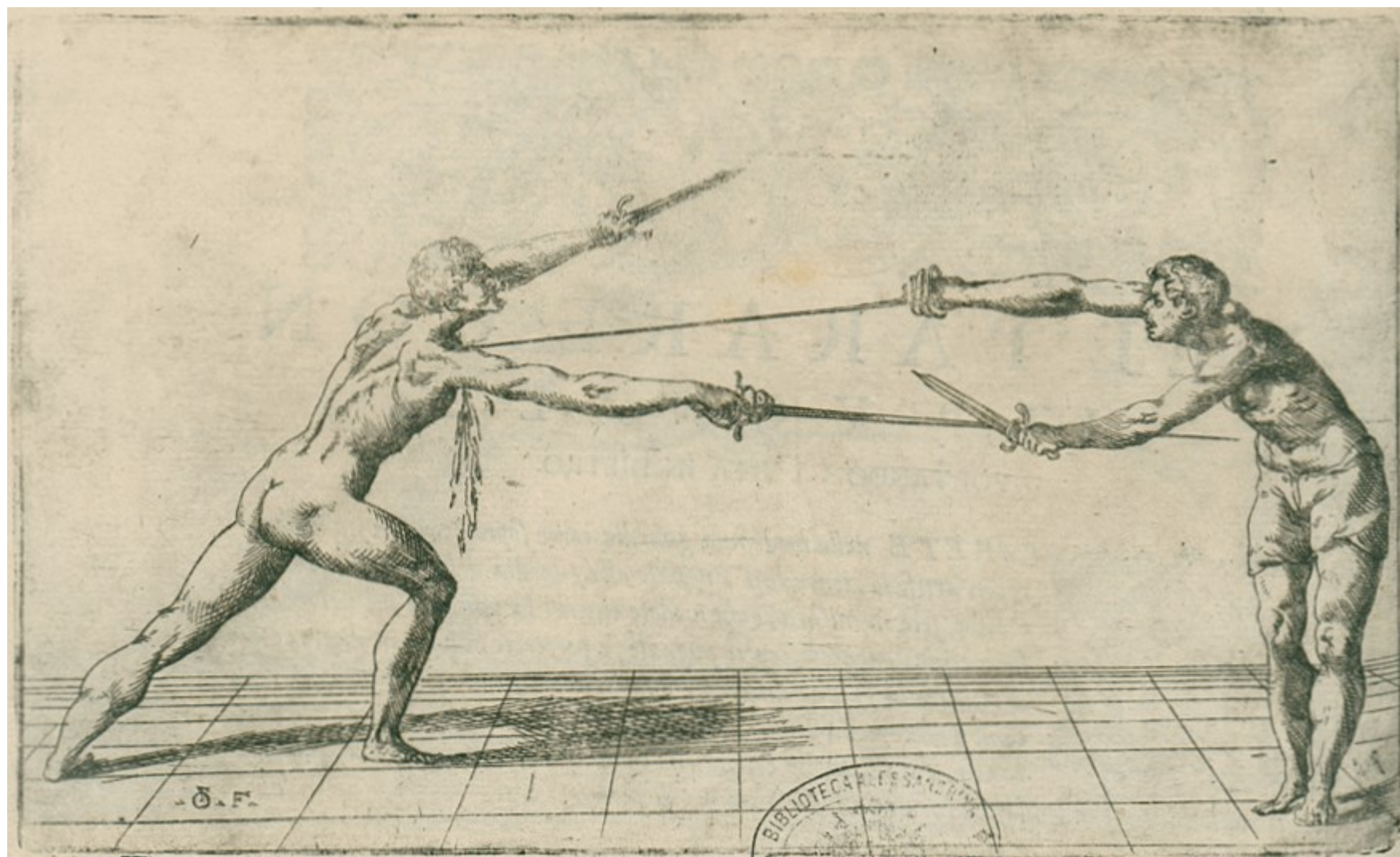


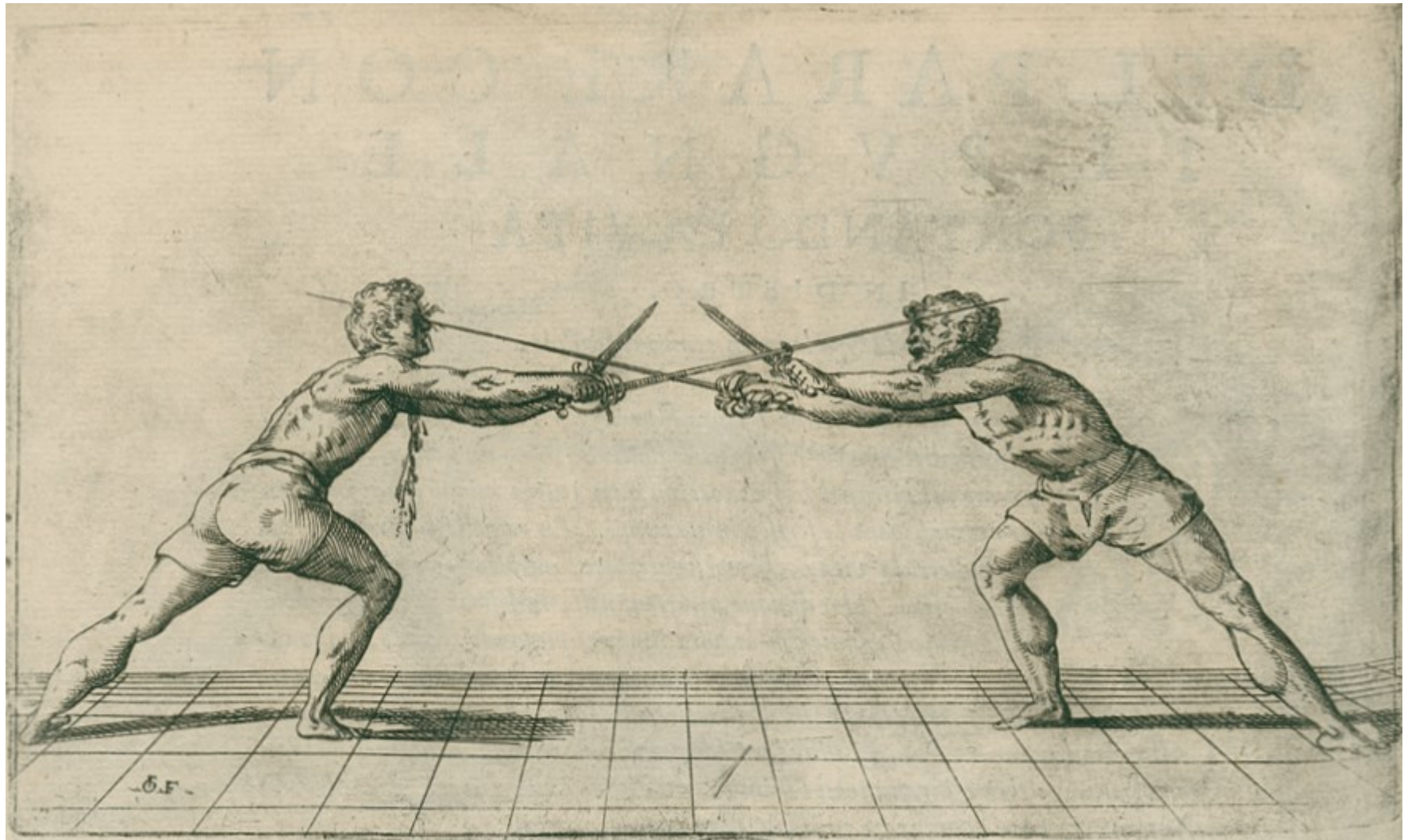
Figure 38

# PARRYING WITH THE DAGGER, CARRYING THE VITA BACK,

*and wounding with the sword in the same tempo*

In the previous two figures one parried with the dagger, carrying the vita backward and then wounding. These show two tempi: one in the parrying and the other in the wounding. With this other figure you are shown how to parry and wound in one tempo. The reason for this carrying back of the vita is that you disconcert the enemy and better see your work. Now, therefore, put yourself in the same guard as above, with sword, dagger, and vita forward, leaning your body. When you are at measure forgo throwing, and when he throws at you you must do three things in one tempo. That is, parrying with the dagger, bringing the vita backward, and pulling your front foot even with the rear, ending up curved with the body, your arm lengthened, and throwing the thrust at his chest. This method of parrying and wounding so deceives the enemy that it is impossible for him to defend himself. After this return outside of measure and secure yourself as has been said.





*Figure 39*

## THRUST AT THE FACE, PARRYING WITH THE SWORD

Demonstrated in this figure is a very useful thrust of the firm foot, beautiful to those that know how to put it into work and who practise it.<sup>95</sup> It is done in this way. If your enemy wishes to throw an imbroccata at your face, or rather a straight thrust, parrying with your sword straighten the point in the same tempo to the enemy's face so that, you throwing in the same tempo that he does, he will not be able to parry with the dagger in the same tempo, because if he attempts to parry with the dagger he will bash his sword with it and you will end up with the point in his face. This lesson only teaches how to wound him in the face - if you wished to throw at his chest he would be able to parry it with the dagger. If you want to do it more artificially so that you deceive even the knowledgeable, it is necessary to uncover your left side<sup>96</sup> and hold the dagger low, giving the enemy occasion to throw either at your face or over the dagger, so that he believes you will parry with the dagger. In the same tempo you will parry with the forte of your sword and increase with your right foot, holding the point of your sword toward his face. If he attempts to parry he bumps into his own sword and cannot parry or wound, as in the figure. The thrust thrown, return backward outside of measure as above.

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<sup>95</sup> *Note: Wound the enemy with this beautiful method, although the figure does not show clearly how the sword fist must be in quarta*

<sup>96</sup> *Note: that if you uncover your right side in order for the enemy to ~~switch~~ arrive to throw at your right shoulder or arm, standing in terza, parrying strongly you will place the forte of your sword on the debole of the enemy who is wounded by the resolute thrust*

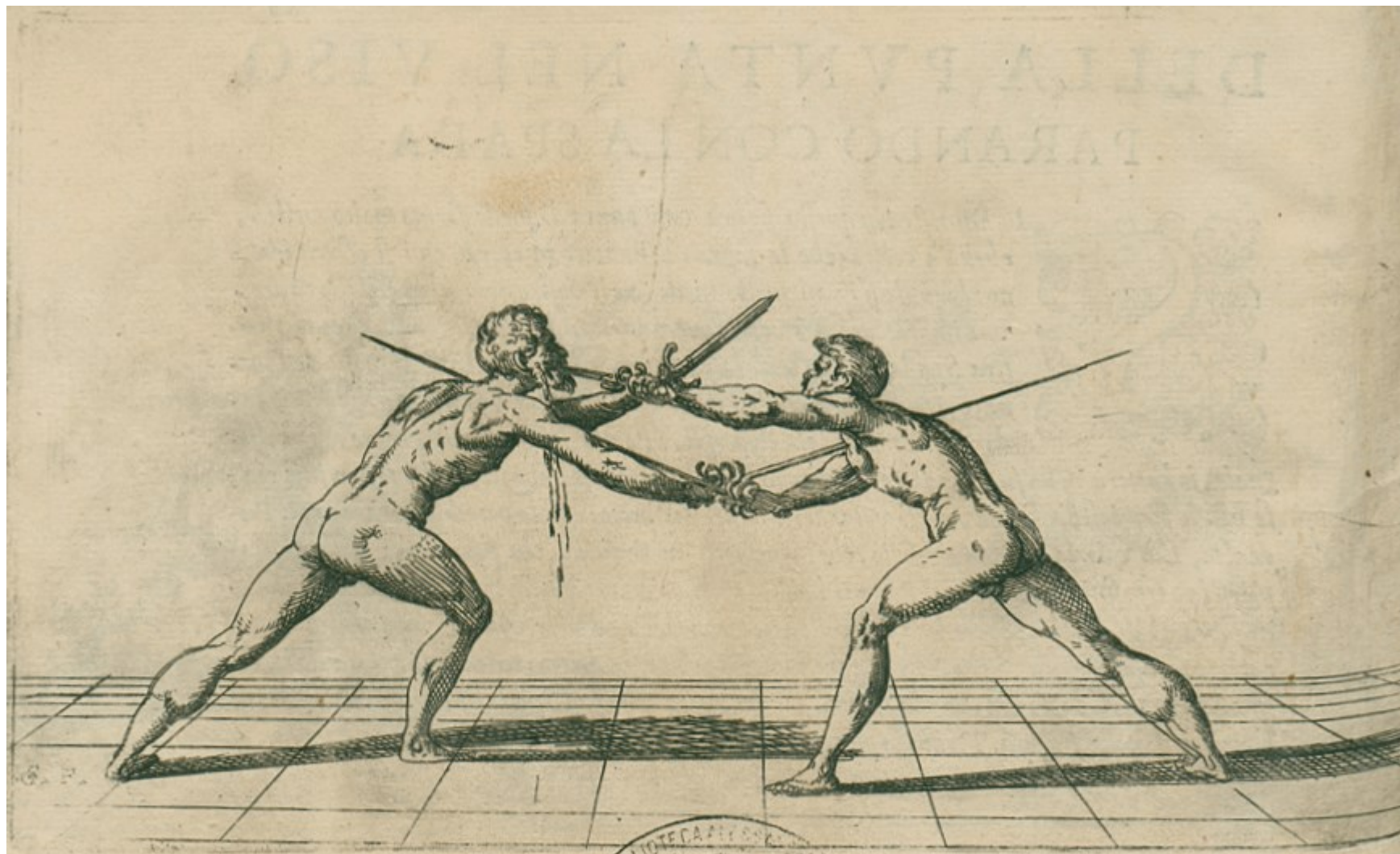


Figure 40

# PASS

## WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

### IN ORDER TO COME TO GRIPS

and wound with the dagger in the face

The approach to the grips and wounding with the dagger is done in many ways according to the occasions in which the enemy is found. Many that come to the grips cannot do otherwise, as is the case when the enemy is furious in the passing. Others who do not have patience in judging the thrust of the sword pass from cholera. Others pass with artifice in order to wound with the dagger. In my first book I will only write a pass with artifice in order to wound safely with the dagger so that your enemy will not be able to offend you with either the sword or dagger. This pass is done in this way. It is necessary to place yourself in guard in a way that you end up with all your right parts uncovered and give occasion to the enemy, who throws resolutely, namely by thrust or cut. You then parry with your sword, passing with your foot, strongly affront his sword with yours and place your sword in his dagger arm, as you see in the figure, for the reason that your enemy will not be able to move either the sword or the dagger and you will be able to give him as many dagger wounds as you like.<sup>97</sup> This lesson is very safe to those who have practised.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *Note!*

<sup>98</sup> *Note!*



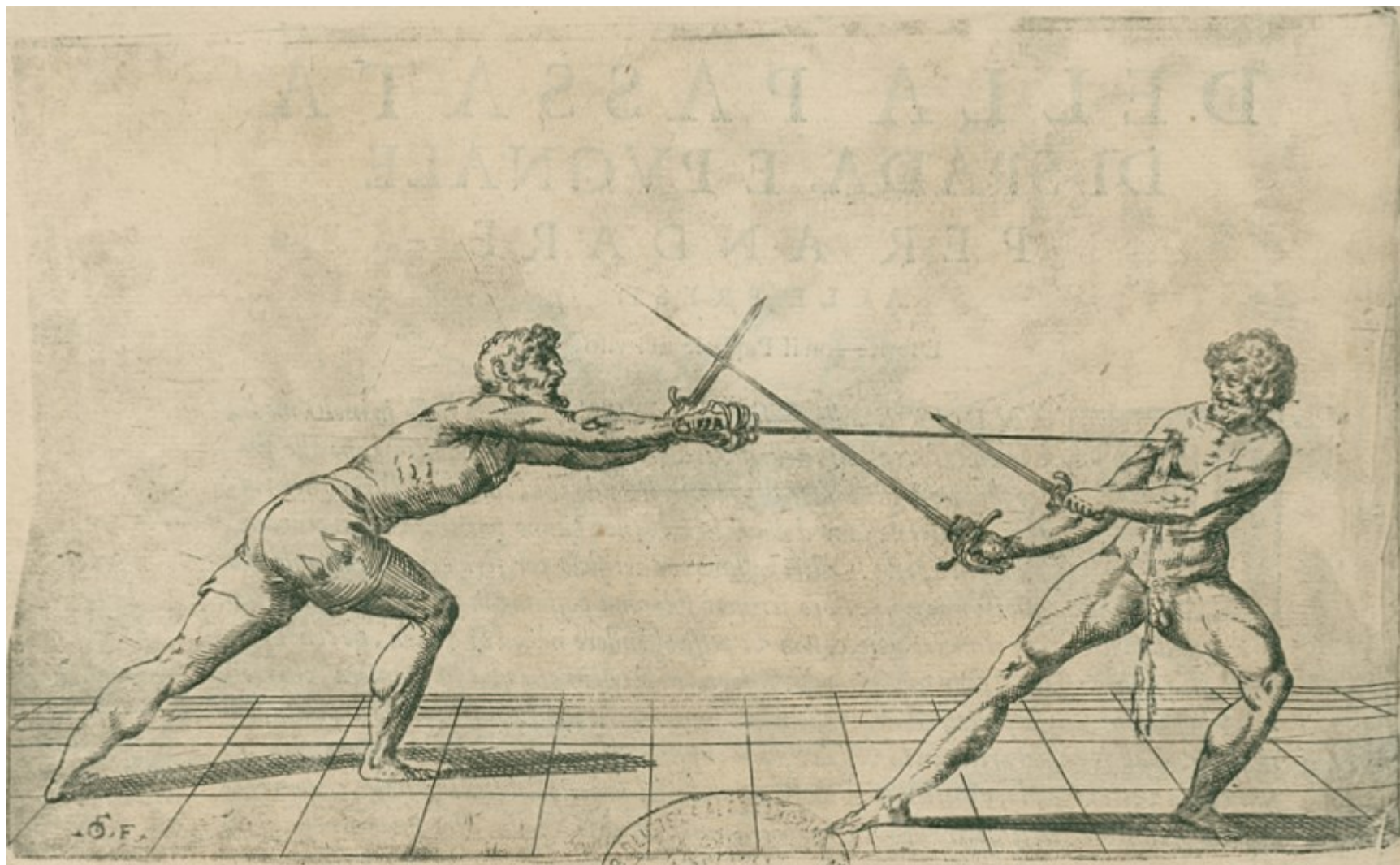


Figure 41



# THE THRUST WITH THE SWORD AND DAGGER THROWN ON THE SIDE of the right shoulder

Someone in this profession who wishes to be a valiant man will never place himself in guard,<sup>99</sup> but will stand well outside of measure, consider the guard of the enemy, approach to bind him little by little at his uncovered place and when he is at measure will throw according to the method of the present figure, in which the right shoulder<sup>100</sup> is uncovered, taking care to approach to bind him from the side of the sword.<sup>101</sup> If he<sup>102</sup> sees that he<sup>103</sup> stands in guard in order to wait, he will throw the stoccata strongly in the described way, | turning his wrist on the side of the enemy's sword, as is seen.<sup>104</sup> After the stoccata is thrown, return outside of measure as above.

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<sup>99</sup> *If you can it is good to first see what guard the enemy is in, in order to then place yourself advantageously in the counter guard*

<sup>100</sup> *Of the enemy*

<sup>101</sup> *Bind on the sword side, that is, you in terza will dominate that of the enemy standing to your outside*

<sup>102</sup> *Our fencer*

<sup>103</sup> *The enemy*

<sup>104</sup> *The wrist turned and [it] wounded toward the enemy's sword*

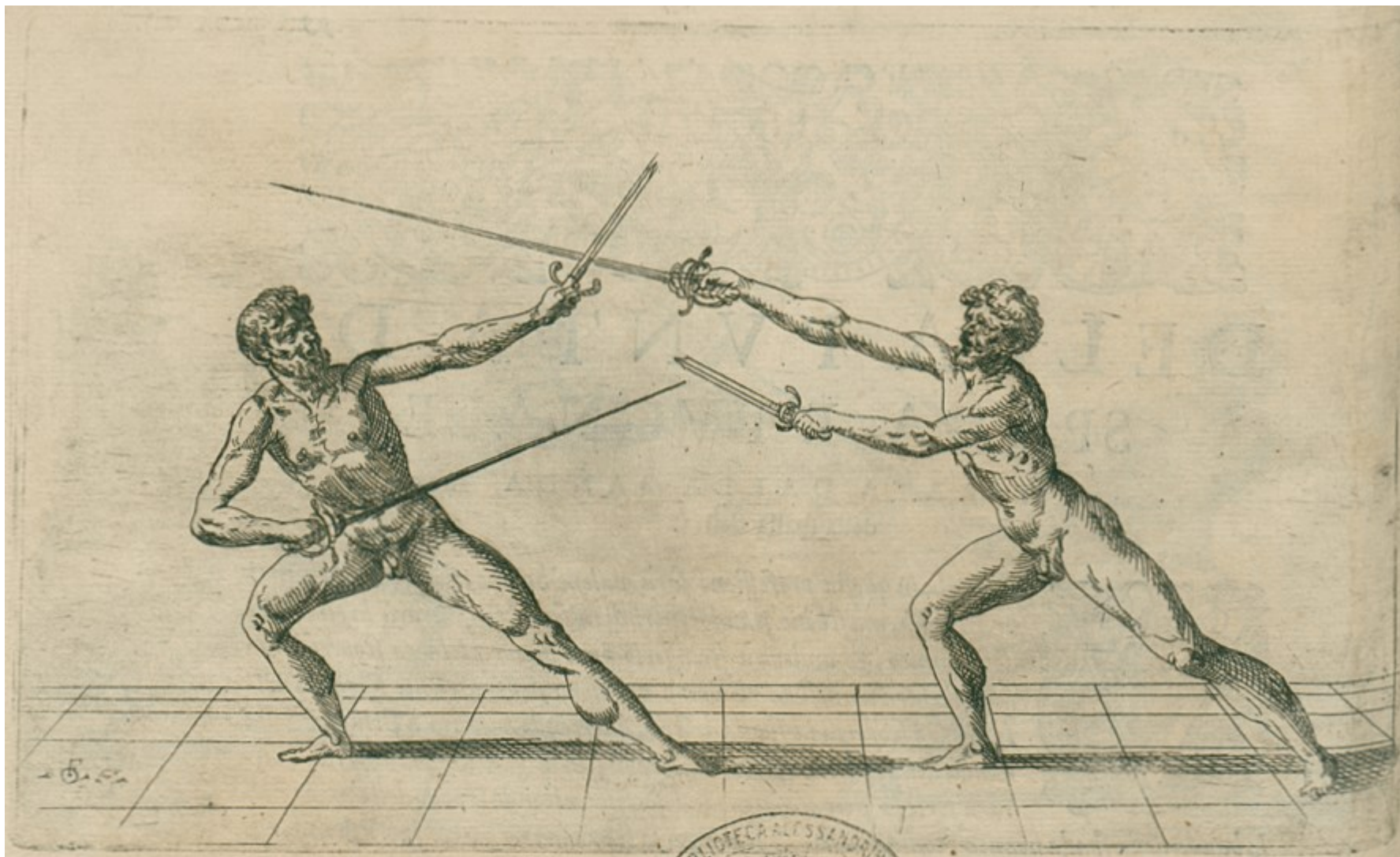


Figure 42

# PASSING WITH THE FOOT WITH SWORD AND DAGGER

This figure does not serve as a demonstration of what I did in my first book, but of the others that I will, God willing, bring to light. I will discuss the passes<sup>105</sup> of sword and dagger, that is, passing with the foot, since in this book more than the firm foot were not discussed because all that one does with firm foot, if one knows how to take the tempo, one can do with a pass of the foot. |The pass done then,<sup>106</sup> it is necessary to know how to disengage the sword and then escape as you see in this figure, where it is seen that he passed, has disengaged the sword, and can safely give as many stoccate as he likes, holding the enemy's sword with his dagger. If the enemy were to disengage the sword it would be necessary to follow it with the dagger and then wound with the sword, and when you have given the stoccate that you wish return backward outside of measure. If one knows how to take the tempo well and passes with the foot but does not know how to disengage the sword, it must be said that he knows nothing since in passing, although he wounds, he finds himself in danger in regard to the enemy who still will attempt to make his blow. This is because those courageous are found that even wounded still want to avenge themselves. Thus infuriated, they throw in the worst way possible, so that you can still end up wounded and dead. Even if in passing the enemy were to parry the stoccata you would find yourself in huge danger if you did not know how to disengage the sword and were you to not know how to fight at half-sword,<sup>107</sup> as you see in the figure, and be able to return backward and escape as I, God willing, will discuss in my other books, My Lord.

*THE END*

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<sup>105</sup> *Passing, that is, carrying the left foot forward with a step*

<sup>106</sup> *The pass done, it is necessary to know to disengage with your sword and keep that of the enemy controlled with your dagger*

<sup>107</sup> *One who passes must know how to play at half-sword*

First Chapter at Page 15 deals generally with the guards and counterguards

1. Says that one must accommodate oneself in a just pace, narrow rather than long, and this is in order to increase
2. Hold the sword and dagger strong in your hands
3. The dagger is held now high, now low, now extended
4. The sword is held now high, now low, now to the right side, always ready to parry and wound, so that the enemy throwing either a thrust or a cut you can parry and wound in the same tempo
5. It said to take care that the dagger must look toward the enemy's sword, because if the enemy throws you parry
6. Your sword always pointing at the side the enemy is found to keep uncovered makes it so that throwing at the enemy, he ends up wounded
7. You use placing yourself uncovered in guard when you wish to affect the enemy so that he throws at you, so that he disorders himself in throwing and gives you the opportunity to throw at him and wound him, which he would not have without you being uncovered thus
8. As for the counterguards, someone who is an expert never places themselves in guard but seeks to place themselves in the counterguards
9. That wanting to be in the counterguards it must be done placing oneself outside of measure, outside of measure means when you are so far that the enemy cannot arrive at you due to you being to him and he to you distant so that you cannot reach with any blow either thrust or cut
10. You will stand with the sword and dagger high and the vita strong, with the pace firm and solid
11. Then consider the enemy's guard and approach little by little with the sword binding him, that is, placing yourself in order to secure yourself from his sword, which is done by resting your sword over his, by holding your thumb in the hilt over the spine of his sword, that so, you will be able to press better over that of the enemy so that he cannot throw a blow if he does not disengage, and disengaging he makes two tempi, then gives you tempo to wound him if you are quick to throw while he is delayed in the disengage
12. If the adversary changes guard it is necessary that you follow him along with your sword forward and with the dagger, always securing yourself so from his sword, because wanting to free himself he agrees to disengage, and while he does this you can wound him in the same tempo, and he cannot wound himself wound there, if not with two tempi – one that he makes in disengaging, and the other in attempting to strike, which you will very easily parry.

1. The measure is said to be “at measure” when you are so close that it is not necessary for you to approach him more in order to arrive at and be able to wound him, that is, to reach him with the thrust or cut, so that you will attempt to throw at him only with increase of your right foot

2. Outside of measure is when you can neither reach him nor he arrive at you in order to wound you, due to being so distant that the blows cannot reach

The tempo is recognized then, that is, if the enemy is in guard it is necessary that you put yourself outside of measure and then proceed in guard, approaching him and securing yourself from his sword with yours, which is done by going increasing forward with the right foot and stealing ground, and the left, so that always standing well and strongly on your feet, you walk in guard binding toward the enemy and placing your sword over his, holding yours the right edge of yours over, your thumb in the hilt of yours over the edge

If the enemy disengages, you are in tempo to wound him while he does it

If he changes guard, while he changes is tempo to wound him

If he turns, while he turns is tempo to wound him

If he binds in order to come to measure, while he binds and walks and before he comes into measure is tempo to wound him

If he throws you parry, in the same tempo parry and throw, that is tempo to wound him

If he stands still in order to wait, approach to bind him and when you are at measure, it is tempo to throw at him where he is uncovered

 Note that while he moves he cannot wound because a motion of his is an impediment so that he cannot make another in the same tempo<sup>108</sup>

At Page 18      There is the figure that shows how one throws the longest stoccata and that in withdrawing from the thrust, first withdraw the head, then immediately the body and foot follow, thus one withdraws with quickness and ease, which does not occur if the foot is withdrawn first because the head ends up in danger of being wounded

At Page 20      A stands in guard and presses B's sword. It is called “on the inside” because A presses with the edge of their sword that of B, covering it such that I will say by holding the hand in mandritto , and B in the same toward A

At Page 21      A covers the B's sword with the edge by holding his hand in riverso , and B does the same to A, which is called “on the outside”

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<sup>108</sup> This group of notes refers to the chapter TEMPO AND MEASURE



- At Page 54*      *He wants you to approach with your left hand, to be cautious that the enemy's sword cannot wound you, and stand in order to parry*  
*How if it were held with the dagger toward the guard of the enemy's sword hilt, you certainly do not take the enemy sword*  
*It must be understood where he says "toward the guard" he does not want you to infer "toward the hilt", but toward the blade, because your hand being entangled in his sword, he does not disengage while you throw and pass with the left foot*
- At Page 75*      *He says that you throw while the enemy has his foot "varying", that is, is moving it, because if you throw in such a tempo he cannot wound you due to being impeded by his own motion, because he cannot make two motions in the same tempo.*
- At the single sword*      *At Page 48 Deals with the inquartate and avoidances, and does 4 lessons, two are by being started in the guard called terza with the sword outside and then you disengage and wound inside, turning your wrist to quarta and arm to seconda, as in the figure*  
*But the second lesson wants you with your wrist in quarta guard, your hand raised and your point under the pommel of the enemy's sword, and as you hang you feel your sword as if he [is going to] wound you with the imbroccata, and this is an reverse imbroccata with an avoidance of the vita as in the figure*  
*The third inquartata makes the same motions, guard and wounding, but strikes with artifice, and he says it is the most beautiful and safest.*  
*The fourth inquartata is opposite to the previous three because [in] this one places themselves in the guard called quarta and performs a disengage that wounds with the wrist in terza, and the avoidance will be done by carrying the vita to one's left side and such returns comfortably by increasing the left step and with the left hand taking his hilt and giving the stoccate one wishes*
- At Page 49 it shows how one must govern themselves against one who throws resolutely and like a beast, and how one must wound such with two tempi*

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