



Acta Periodica Duellatorum

E-ISSN: 2064-0404

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Acta Periodica Duellatorum, vol. 5, núm. 1, 2017, pp. 109-130

Universität Bern

Bern, Suiza

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The plays with the axe in armour of the Anonimo Bolognese (1510-1515)

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Abstract – This contribution examines an anonymous text (*Di Accia armato di tutt'arme*) addressing the handling of the axe for armoured combat, compiled in a two-volume anonymous manuscript collection of the beginning of the 16th c. This collection is of particular interest since it predates the “classical” authors of the Bolognese school of the 16th c. and marks a turning point from an earlier late Medieval tradition. Moreover the inclusion of a text dedicated to armour fighting is equally interesting since this kind of combat tends to fade away from the technical register of the next Bolognese authors.

The manuscript is shortly described and the text is presented in a diplomatic edition, with a translation and a reproduction of the manuscript in appendices. The content is described and analysed from a technical and a historical point of view, allowing comparison with other similar treatises, identification of the arms and armour, and discussion of the context of application.

Keywords – Anonimo Bolognese, axe, chivalric game, armoured fencing, Historical European Martial Arts

Di Accia armato di tutt'arme (the axe armed with full harness) is exceptional for several reasons. First, the inclusion of such a text in the discourse of the anonymous compiler (Anonimo Bolognese), considered as one of the first authors of the Bolognese school of the 16th c. whose writings have come to us, is surprising, because none of the following authors addresses this register anymore after him. Then, the text is a unicum, difficult to connect to any known tradition and its authorship is uncertain. It might be an original contribution of the compiler of the manuscript, or a text of an unknown origin compiled in the collection of the Anonimo Bolognese.

This source was brought to light in 2005 by Marco Rubboli and Luca Cesari, who offered a commented edition of the text and studies about the manuscript and interpretation of the fighting system¹. This undated manuscript was never studied before, nor even described according to current scientific standard. It is only mentioned in the catalogue of the library in 1894². The first volume contains an introduction (with principles, guards

¹ Rubboli and Cesari, *L'Arte della Spada*.

² "[Mss.] 345-6. Trattato della "gentilissima arte del schirmire", adesp. e acef. (Sec. XVI)" Bernicoli, *Inventario dei manoscritti della Biblioteca Classense di Ravenna*, p. 78. It can be traced to the library di San Vitale, deposited in the library Classense in 1811, but not earlier. There is a short note of Claudia

and stepping), sword alone (*spada sola*), and sword alone against hafted weapon. The second volume contains sword in two hands, sword and combination (sword and small/large buckler, sword and targe, sword and rotella, sword and *quanto da presa*, sword and *quanto da huomo d'arme*), the axe in full harness, and the sword against *mancino*. The second volume is less organized than the first one, for the author addresses several registers in a miscellaneous order. This observation leads Rubboli and Cesari to consider the work as a personal collection, maybe a preparatory work, unachieved, for an intended printed book³.

This contribution focuses the analysis of *Di Accia armato di tutt'arme*. It discusses on the one hand its context of application and on the other hand its comparison with other similar treatises of the 15th and 16th c. In appendices are to be found a revised transcription and translation of the text, as well as a reproduction of the manuscript.

I. IDENTIFYING THE CONTEXT

I.1. Arms and armour

There is little doubt to the context of application of these plays. Although the source is not illustrated, the subtitle itself renders it quite clear: *Di Accia armato di tutt'arme* (the axe armed with full harness). The seventh play specifies that the thrust (*punta*) can be delivered “in the face or in whatever other part of his body that you find unarmed, such as the testicles...” (*ferirlo di una punta ne la faccia, o in qualunque altra parte de la persona ti venesse destro, che non si trovasse armata, come ne li testicoli, ...*). Thus, the fighters were fully armed, probably with a head defense open or with a closed head defense, but with the visor open as was customary in chivalric games in the 15th c. (see below).

The weapon is described as *Accia* (axe), composed of an *aste* (wooden shaft) on the lower end with a *calcio* or *pedale* (heel) that is reinforced with a *spontone del calcio* (metal point of the heel) used for thrusting action, and on the higher end with the metal head of the axe. The latter is composed of a *corno* (horn) – that is a spike named *bec de faucon* in old French –, a *spontone* (point) in the axis of the haft and a hammer (unmentioned in the text). This type of weapon is then similar to the one illustrated in the beginning of the 15th c. by

Giuliani (director of the library) about its provenience in the book of Cesari and Rubboli, *L'Arte della Spada*, p. 394. Besides its dimension, and a non-documented mention of a watermark, there is no published information nor scientific investigation of this manuscript available. This area is left for further studies. I thank Benedetto Gugliotta (Ufficio Manoscritti e Rari, Biblioteca Classense, Ravenna) for the provided information about the catalogue.

³ Ibid.

Fiore dei Liberi and in the last quarter of the century by Filippo Vadi in the relevant sections (Fig. 1)⁴.

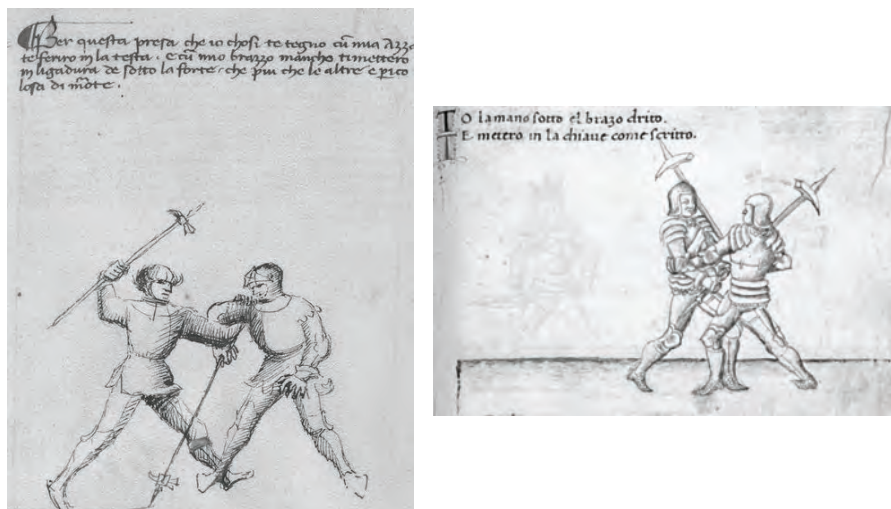


Fig. 1: Left panel: Fiore dei Liberi, *Il Fior di Battaglia*, 1410 (Los Angeles, Getty, ms Ludwig XV 13, fol. 37r, detail. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program). Right panel: Filippo Vadi, *De Arte Gladiatoria Dimicandi*, 1482-1487 (Roma, Biblioteca Nazionale, Ms Vitt. Em. 1324, fol. 25r, detail. Reproduced from ed. Mele/ Porzio, p. 131).

1.2. In a playful or in a more serious context?

Fighting with an *Accia* (axe) in the fifteenth century was mainly related with chivalric games. These single confrontations were ruled by norms and usually understood as display of martial skills for knights in armour in a great variety of events commonly referred to as tournaments today, even if the term is actually misleading⁵. In other words, the related technical content of the fight books dealing with such type of fights is mostly inscribed in a playful context (mhg: *schimpf*, it. vulg.: *per la cortesia*), as opposed to a more

⁴ Fiore dei Liberi, *Flos Duellatorum*, 1409 (ed. Rubboli/Cesari, pp. 201-212) and Filippo Vadi, *De Arte Gladiatoria Dimicandi*, 1485 (ed./transl Porzio/Mele, pp. 126-131 and ed. Rubboli/Cesari, pp. 100-102). For a discussion of the type of axe (opposed to the views of S. Anglo) related to the anonymous *Jeu de la Hache*, see Raynaud, *A la Hache*, pp. 531-536.

⁵ See the discussion of the secondary literature about this matter, put in the context of the Italian sources in the recent articles of Cavina, “La scienza dell'onore, il duello e la vendetta: Il disagio della trattatistica” and Cardini, “Il duello: alcune fonti e qualche problema”. For the misuse of tournament, see *ibid.* p. 119 et seq.

serious one (mhg: *ernst*; it. vulg.: *per la vita*)⁶. Nonetheless, specific plays are sometimes shown or described as being potentially deadly in a minority of cases in the 15th-16th c. fight books⁷.

The text compiled in the Anonimo Bolognese shows some insights allowing placing this text in the playful context. In the beginning of §4, the author specifies a technique that would allow “hurting the opponent to the head”, if “perchance” that was the intent (*ma se per Aventura volendo tu ferire il tuo nemico a la testa*), meaning that it was not the case by default. Similar comment is to be found in §7, where the author details the thrust (*punta*) to be delivered if this is the last solution (*così non ti dovrai mai rimanere*). Finally, the play of §9 ends with an enlightening passage: “... if you are wary with this art, and courageous, the enemy may do what he wants, and yet he will remain, against his will, conquered and taken prisoner”. The use of the terms *vinto* (conquered) and *pregione* (taken prisoner) is indeed quite specific and – beyond the symbolic image – refer to technical terms for chivalric ethos in the context of chivalric games.

A careful analysis of the ending of the plays reveals that most of the techniques might end with a throw (9 plays, 60% of the content). Out of the 15 plays, 27 different outcomes are mentioned, as shown by Fig. 2. One must note that the throw might be considered as a playful technique, since this outcome is usually ending the encounter in the context of a chivalric game, but also as a more serious one, since it could be followed up by a deadly technique. The same is true for the thrust, which might be considered as a deadly technique, whereas it is most of the time considered in the text as a technique actually leading to a throw (or a fall as a consequence)⁸. Indeed, the use of the heel or the spike of the axe is mainly used either to pull, push or “take” as shown in Fig. 2, but it can be used for more serious purpose as mentioned above (§7).

⁶ For a discussion of these context in the light of the judicial duel and the authors of the fight books, see Jaquet, “‘Personne ne laisse volontiers son honneur être tranché.’ Les combats singuliers ‘judiciaires’ d’après les livres de combat”. For a discussion about Schimpf und Ernst in the context of German fencing practices, see Jaser, “Ernst und Schimpf - Fechten als Teil städtischer Gewalt- und Sportkultur” and for “giochi military”, see Cardini, “Il duello: alcune fonti e qualche problema”.

⁷ Cfr. discussion about German sources below (section II).

⁸ For example §8: “... thrusting the point of your axe with great force into his belly, or into his groin upon the testicles, or in his throat, so that possibly, you will make him fall backward head over heels.”

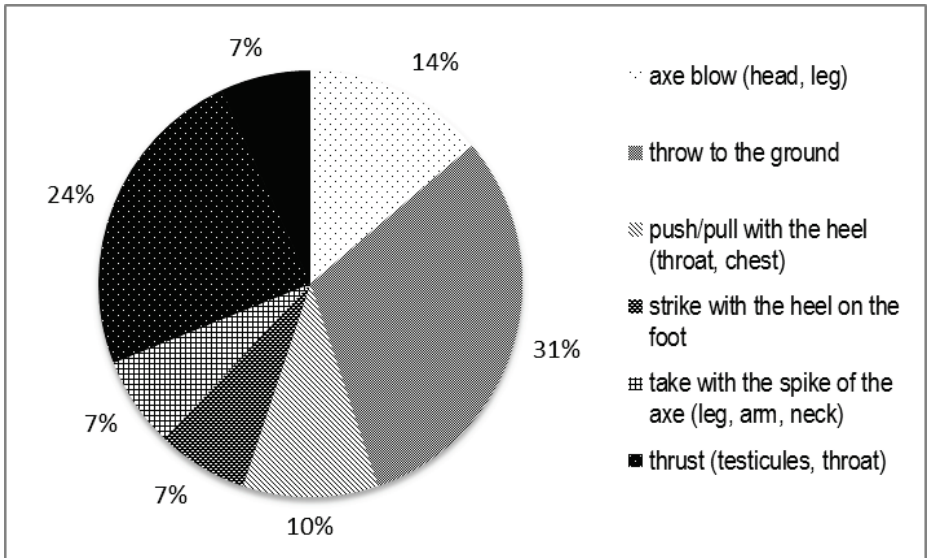


Figure 1: Ending of techniques (percentage of the number of occurrences). Author's diagram.
Corresponding legend on the table below.

Paragraph	Ending	Original text	Occurrences
1, 4, 11, 13	axe blow (head, leg)	<i>acciata (testa, gambe)</i>	4
2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	throw to the ground	<i>tirarlo in terra / cadere in terra</i>	9
4, 9, 10	push/pull with the heel (chest, throat)	<i>spingere il calcio de l'Accia nel petto</i>	3
5, 15	strike with the heel on the foot	<i>col calcio ferirgli un piede</i>	2
6, 13	take with the spike of the axe (leg, arm, neck)	<i>prendere col corno de l'accia (gambe, braccia, collo)</i>	2
7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14	thrust (testicles, throat)	<i>punta (testicoli, gola)</i>	7
8, 9	disarm	<i>levargliela di mano</i>	2

II. ANALYSING THE CONTENT AND COMPARING IT WITH OTHER FIGHT BOOKS

Di Accia armato di tutt'arme is composed of 15 plays, without prologue or other paratext. The two stances are named *guarda alta* (high guard) and *porta di ferro* (iron door), the latter being specified as *stretta* (narrow) for 3 out of 4 mentions. The *guarda alta* is taken with the left foot forward and the axe held high over the right shoulder with the heel pointing towards the opponent (§1) and the *porta di ferro* is taken with the right foot forward and the axe held low towards the opponent (§2). The offensive actions are usually not described in details. The thrusts are referred to as *punta*. The blows are mostly referred to

as *acciata*, and most of those are blows from above. Only once the author did specify a specific manner to deliver it referring to a common terminus technicus from the Bolognese tradition: “in the manner of a *mandritto tondo*” (§13). Most of the other actions, disarming, pull or push in order to take, disarm or throw correspond to the ending of plays illustrated on fig. 2.

The authorial hermeneutical choices of describing the plays are most of the time organized as a defensive action followed by a sequence of offensive actions, usually to the second or third intention. There are few counter-techniques mentioned in the plays, and the content is mostly organized as setups depending of different opposition between guards or specific defense against a specific offensive action. Basic actions of the system are described in §1-4, going through the main opposition of guards. §5-7 contain mostly principles and general advises to dominate the fight. §8-14 develop specific techniques, following previous setups but going through alternative and more complex sequences. Finally §15 is a feint.

There is little formal connection between the *Accia armato di tutt'arme* and the tradition of the play with the axe of the 15th c. Italian authors. Fiore dei Liberi composed a section of 8 plays based on 6 stances followed by two tricks – including a recipe of a caustic powder to be hidden in the axe hammer⁹. Filippo Vadi compiled a shorter section of 4 plays based on 4 stances. The stances are not named alike and few of the technical content might be similar in some rare but not relevant cases (as for the *Jeu de la Hache*). Some of the termini tecnici can be traced in the discourse of Italian authors before and after the Anonimo Bolognese (such as the stance *porta di ferro*, or the offensive action such as *punta* or *mandritto*). Despite these very limited points of connection, there is no significant mark allowing us to postulate that this text is part of a previous tradition (faithful or unfaithful copy of text or image, similar technical content, order of presentation). Therefore this text is to be considered as a unicum (original that has no tradition) or part of an unknown tradition, which written or illustrated witnesses are lost or were never found. *Di Accia armato di tutt'arme* is one of such out of three, as pointed out by Terminiello¹⁰.

The closest fight book is technically the anonymous *Jeu de la Hache*, dated 1401-1500 by the BnF, but probably written in the second half of the 15th c. in a Burgundian area¹¹. This is not surprising, since the duchy is famous for his champions of armoured combat with the axe (notably Jaques de Lalaing) and the dukes were fond of such chivalric games,

⁹ Mondschein, *The Knightly Art of battle*, pp. 116, 122-123.

¹⁰ Terminiello, “Three Short Chapters from the Anonimo Bolognese”. The two others are: *Del modo da tenere nel combattere con la spada et col guanto da presa* and *Spada et guanto da huomo d'arme*. See also the comments of Rubboli and Cesari, *L'Arte della spada*, p. 181, footnote 125 and p. 201, footnote 137.

¹¹ See Dupuis/Deluz in this volume. See also Dupuis, “The French Fencing Traditions, from the 14th century to 1630 through Fight Books”. For an analysis on le *Jeu de la Hache*, see Raynaud, *A la hache!*, pp. 496-592.

turning Burgundy as one of the most famous place for such display of martial skills¹². Moreover, there is at least one mention of an Italian master-at-arms, *Ambroise de Milan*, specialized on axe plays, paid by the duke Phillip the Good 12 *livres* to teach the young knights¹³. This kind of exchange might point out a center of excellence for the play of the axe in armour in Northern Italy. Further research needs to be done, but I am confident that there are other sources documenting fencing praxes with the axe coming from Italy to Burgundy. The *Jeu de la Hache* is structured in 26 plays, divided by plays for right- and left-hander, based on two main stances – high and low, similar as those of the Anonimo Bolognese. Although there is no direct connection between the two, technical similarities with the *Accia armato da tutt'arme* are notably the context of application, the number and similarity of stances, the majority of the endings being throws, the feint with the feet as targets and at least 6 plays that are similar, although worded differently.

The aftermath of the *Accia armato di tutt'arme* is nowhere to be found, as for the *Jeu de la Hache*. The authors of the Bolognese school tended not to address anymore such type of combat in the course of the 16th c. Instead, they address unarmoured combat with hafted weapons. Manciolino dedicated his sixth book of his work *Opera Nova* to the hafted weapons in 1531. He deals with unarmoured combat with *partegiana* (partisan), *spiedo* (spetum), *ronca* (bill), and *lancia* (spear). Similarly, Marozzo dedicated his the fourth book of his work *Opera Nova* to the hafted weapons in 1536. He deals indeed with unarmoured combat with *partesana* (partisan), *spiedo* (spetum) *roncha* (bill), and mentioned the *acia* (axe) as equivalent to *alabarda* (halberd)¹⁴. This echoes a principle formulated by Pietro Monte in his *Collectanea* published postmortem in 1509, but probably written in the last decades of the 15th c.: “All staff weapons should be treated like the pollaxe, when we carry it low and with the heel extended forward. We should deliver the blows we use in the *levada* or in the initial teachings.”¹⁵ It is also noteworthy to underline that Pietro Monte is actually the first to compile teachings for the great variety of hafted weapons mentioned above, addressed by the later Bolognese authors.

This collusion between axe and halberd is already found in the dedicated section of the late 15th c. fight book of the German master Peter Falkner, still placing such type of

¹² See Priezel, “Schauspiele von Ehre und Tapferkeit. Zweikämpfe in Frankreich und Burgund im späten Mittelalter” and esp. Hiltmann, “Un État de noblesse et de chevalerie sans pareilles?: tournois et hérauts d'armes à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne”.

¹³ Archives Départementales du Nord, B 1972, fol. 198. Quoted in Sommé, “Les jeunes nobles à la cour de Bourgogne sous Philippe le Bon”, p. 82. This reference is cited by numerous authors, usually without reference.

¹⁴ Achille Marozzo, *Opera nova*, Cap. 185: *Che tratta delle arme inastate contra a roncha, alabarda o acia*.

¹⁵ Transl. from Forgeng, “Pietro Monte's Exercises and the Medieval Science of Arms”, pp. 111-112. Nota bene: the *levata* is a game explained in the first book of the *Collectanea* in the sword in two hands section, mainly composed of a sequence of two mounting blows. The author notes also the similarity between the plays with the sword in two-hands and the plays of the axe (*triscuspidis*).

fighting in the context of “judicial” combat (*kampff gericht*)¹⁶. Several fight books from the German areas also contain a section dedicated to the armoured combat with the axe, however there is little connection with the *Accia armato di tutt’arme* on the technical point of view, nor from the context of application. It is interesting to note that, unlike on the Italian areas, the armoured fighting content is still compiled in the second half of the 16th c. German fight books (such as in Paulus Hector Mair or in the manuscript version of the work of Joachim Meyer¹⁷). The content is then probably archaic for the readers and serves mainly as collection of authoritative texts. This function is eased by the manuscript medium and probably not ideal for the printed material. That may be one of the reason why the Bolognese authors of the 16th c. did not include such content anymore in their printed work and may also explain why the *Accia armato di tutt’arme* is compiled in the anonymous collection of the Anonimo Bolognese.

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¹⁶ *Merck das ist auch ein leer wie du mit kemplicher wer solt warten mordt agst vnd bellebarthen daß ist auch zu dem kampff gericht schleg stöß ringen macht zu nicht* (Note this is also a lesson of how you should, with dueling weapons, act with the murder axe and the halberd, which is also for the judicial duel; striking, thrusting and wrestling counter-techniques). Tobler (ed. transl.), *Master Peter Falkner’s art of knightly defense*, p. 274 et seq.

¹⁷ See for instance the text attributed to Hunsfeld, Lew and Lignitzer. For a discussion of their tradition, see Jaquet/Walczak, “Lignitzer, Hunsfeld or Lew? The question of authorship of popular Medieval fighting instructions”.

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APPENDIX 1. EDITION AND TRANSLATION

Norms

This edition is a revised version of the transcription of Rubboli/Cesari, following the usual guidelines of diplomatic editions. The reader can refer to the reproduction of the manuscript in Appendix 2. The following editorial choices have been applied:

Punctuation: The punctuation of the original text is respected. The text is punctuated with regular point <.> and comma <,>. No additional punctuation added in the edition.

Case: The upper and lower case of the original text is respected.

Original revisions: Erasure are signaled with the text crossed over (~~text~~). The in-line or superscript addition/correction are added in superscript.

Special signs and abbreviation: Abbreviation are resolved with the resolution underlined. Very few abbreviations in the original text, mainly <P> (per) and the tilde. The <f> and <s> are transcribed as <S>.

The translation is a revision of the translation of Jon Pellet. *Termini tecnici* are left in italic, followed by the translation (cf. glossary) in brackets. Translator notes or additions are added within straight brackets.

Edition – translation

[24v] [§1] Trovandoti contra al tuo nemico con l'Accia in mano in guarda alta, col piede manco innanzi, et con la man destra in alto levata, trovandosi la sinistra innanzi col calcio de l'Accia potrai passare col tuo destro piede innanzi, et mandargli uno mandritto a la testa, provocando il nemico a schermirsene con	1. Finding yourself opposed to your enemy with axe in hand in <i>guardia alta</i> [high guard], with the left foot forward, and with the right hand raised high, finding the left forward with the heel of the axe, you will be able to <i>passare</i> (pass) forward with your right foot, and deliver a <i>mandritto</i> [right blow] to the head, provoking the
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<p>l'Accia, ovvero con l'asta, et così fatto vi verrete a trovare con l'aste de l'Accie incrociate insieme, onde tu starai aveduto, perciochè volendo passare il tuo nemico col suo piede manco innanzi, per percolare con il calcio de la sua Accia l'asta de la tua, per ferir poi col detto calcio il petto, o la faccia, potrai in quel tempo levare la tua Accia in alto, lasciando gire a voto il colpo suo, et subito mandargli una Acciata a la testa, et questo farai ciascuna volta, che tu ti trovassi con l'Accie incrociate, et chel nemico tuo si movesse a fare uno tale effetto col calcio de l'Accia sua.</p>	<p>enemy to defend himself with the axe, or with the haft, and that so done you will come to find yourselves with the hafts of the axes crossed together, whereby you will be attentive, so that your enemy wanting to <i>passare</i> (pass) forward with his left foot, to beat the haft of your axe with the heel of his, and then to wound your chest or face with the said heel, you will in that <i>tempo</i> [moment of time] lift your axe up high, letting his blow go by void, and suddenly deliver a <i>acciata</i> (blow) to his head, and this you will do every time that you have found yourself with axes crossed, and your enemy has moved to make such an effect with the heel of his axe.</p>
<p>[S2] Trovandoti con l'Accia in mano contra al tuo nemico col tuo piede manco innanzi in guardia alta, ovvero col destro in porta stretta di ferro, starai aveduto, percio che volendoti con alcun colpo offendere il tuo nemico la testa, passerai in quel tempo se sarai in porta di ferro, gran passo col tuo piede manco innanzi, alargando le braccia ben distese, sì che tu raccogli il suo colpo sopra l'asta de la tua Accia tra l'una et l'altra tua mano, volgendo subito con la manca il calcio de l'Accia tua sopra la sua testa et pigliatelo nel collo da la banda sinistra, ti procaccierai [25r] di tirarlo per il contrario a forza in terra, ma sij accorto, che nel tuo passare farà bisogno, che la tua gamba manca sia posta <u>per</u> fuori dal suo lato destro.</p>	<p>2. Finding yourself with axe in hand opposed to your enemy with your left foot forward in <i>guardia alta</i> (high guard), or with the right in <i>porta di ferro stretta</i> (narrow iron door), you will pay attention, so that your enemy wanting to offend you with some blow to the head, if you are in <i>porta di ferro</i> (iron door), in that <i>tempo</i> (moment) you will take a large step forward with your left foot, spreading your arms well outstretched, so that you receive his blow on the haft of your axe between your hands, suddenly turning the heel of your axe with the left [hand] over his head, and catching his neck on the left side, you will procure to pull him strongly backward to the ground, but be aware that in your <i>passare</i> (pass) it is necessary that your left leg is positioned to the outside of his right side.</p>
<p>[S3] Ma quando ti trovasti in guarda alta come è detto disopra, et volend^o il tuo nemico offendere la testa tu passerai col tuo destro innanzi schermendo il colpo nel sopradetto modo, et così passerai con la manca gamba innanzi, facendo la medesima volta con il pedale de l'Accia tua, et con ogni destrezza et forza ti procaccierai di farlo cadere in terra.</p>	<p>3. But when you find yourself in <i>guardia alta</i> (high guard) as said above, and your enemy wants to offend you in the head, you will step forward with your right [foot] fending off the blow in the manner above said, and so stepping forward with the left foot, making the same turn with the heel of your axe, with all skill and force you will procure to make him fall to the ground</p>
<p>[S4] Ma se per aventura volendo tu ferire il tuo nemico a la testa, usase egli quello medesimo schivamento, per avolgerli poi il pedale de l'Accia sua atorno al tuo collo per farti cadere come è detto disopra, preponendo percio chel tuo colpo gli fosse mandato con la tua destra mano innanzi, potrai stare aveduto, percioche come egli</p>	<p>4. But if perchance you wanting to hurt your opponent in the head, he uses the same <i>schivamento</i> (defence), to turn at that time the heel of his axe about your neck to make you fall as said above; supposing therefore that your blow were delivered with the right hand forward, you will pay attention, so that as he</p>

<p>havra schermito il detto colpo tra l'una et l'altra sua mano come è detto, per volerti prendere col calcio nel collo, potrai tu in quel tempo abbandonando con la tua mano manca il pedale de l'Accia tua, et prender l'asta con la detta mano dal canto di l'Accia, et con il pedale dela tua ^{calcio} potrai percolere il calcio de la nemica verso il suo destro lato, et così trovandosi di fuora, gli potrai poi spingere il calcio de l'Accia tua nel petto, overo se piu ti piacerà prenderlo nel collo et mandarlo a terra, o pur vorrai ripigliare il pedale de la tua Accia con la mano manca, et dargli subito di una Acciata sopra la testa.</p>	<p>defends the said blow between his hands as said, wanting to take you in the neck with the heel, you will be able in that tempo to release the foot of your axe with your left hand, take the haft with your said hand by the corner [junction of head and haft] of the axe, and with the heel of it you will be able to beat the enemy's heel toward his right side, and so finding him on your outside, you will be able to thrust the heel of your axe into his chest, or if you would prefer take him in the neck and send him to the ground, or if you like retake the foot of your axe with your left hand, and give him a sudden <i>acciata</i> (blow) on the head.</p>
<p>[§5] Serai anchora aveduto, che trovandoti a mezza Accia col tuo nemico gli potrai sempre col calcio ferirgli un piede.</p>	<p>5. You will moreover observe, that finding yourself at <i>mezza accia</i> (half-axe) with your enemy you will always be able to wound him in the foot with the heel.</p>
<p>[25v] [§6] Serai anchora aveduto di atterrare il tuo nemico, ogni volta, che essendo seco a zuffa, ti venesse colto di poterlo prendere col corno de l'Accia in alcuna dele gambe, o dele braccia, o nel collo, o in alcuna altra parte dela persona.</p>	<p>6. You will moreover be attentive to harass your enemy, at all times, that being in a quarrel with him, you could catch him with the <i>corno</i> (horn) of the axe in some part of the leg, or of the arm, or in the neck, or in some other part of his person.</p>
<p>[§7] Così non ti dovrai mai rimanere, venendoti colto, di ferirlo di una punta ne la faccia, o in qualunque altra parte de la persona ti venesse destro, che non si trovasse armata, come ne li testicoli, o petenecchio, che dir ti piaccia.</p>	<p>7. So that you will never have to give in, you could hurt him with a <i>punta</i> (thrust) in the face, or in whatever other part his body is convenient, that you find unarmed, such as the testicles, or groin, as you please.</p>
<p>[§8] Se tu ti ritrovassi contra il tuo nemico con il tuo piede destro innanzi, et con l'Accia posta in guisa di porta stretta di ferro, et egli contra di te ne la medesima guardia, et col piede destro ditto innanzi, potrai con il corno de la tua Accia prender la sua, et senza indugia dandogli con ogni tua forza una tratta verso te, farai opra di levargliela di mano, pur se colto non ti venisse, almeno seguira questo, che egli si proccacciera levarti la tua da la mani, come tu farai la sua, il che succedendo, serai presto di passare in quel tempo col tuo piede destro innanzi, spingendogli con gran forza il spontone de l'Accia nel ventre, overo nel pettinicchio sopra li testicoli, o ne la gola, si che possendo, trabocando a l'indietro levi le gambe al cielo tu gli faci levare</p>	<p>8. If you again found yourself opposed to your enemy with your right foot forward, and with the axe positioned in the manner of the <i>porta di ferro stretto</i> (narrow iron door), and him against you in the same guard, and with the right foot likewise forward, you will be able to catch his [axe] with the horn of your axe, and without delay giving him a pull toward you with all your force, you will try to remove it from his hand, yet if this doesn't succeed, at least this follows, that if he attempts to remove yours from your hands, as you will do his, you will be quick to step forward in that <i>tempo</i> (moment) with your right foot, thrusting the point of your axe with great force into his belly, or into his groin upon the testicles, or in his throat, so that possibly, you will make him fall backward</p>

	head over heels.
<p>[S9] Ma se tu ti trovassi col tuo piede destro avanti in guisa di porta stretta di ferro, et che lo nemico tuo, ti spingesse del spontone de l'Accia, per ferirti la gola, o il pettenicchio, o li piedi anteposti, potrai far opra di prendere nel medesimo tempo [26r] con il corno de l'Accia quella de lo nimico, dandogli una grandissima tratta verso di te per cagione di levargliela di mano, et forse non sera meraviglia, levandogliela, con cio sia cosa, che in quello tempo, che ti tirera il colpo, tu prendi l'Accia sua et tiri non havendo egli in lei piu forza di quello, che haver si pote, porto ferma credenza, che ti verra colto il tuo pensiero, pur se non ti venisse, successivamente scorrerai col tuo piede destro alquanto innanzi dandogli del spontone con tutta la forza tua nel pettenecchio sopra gli testicoli et nota, che se con questa arte tu starai aveduto, et animoso, faccia cio che vole el nemico, et pur rimara, mal suo grado, vinto et pregione.</p>	<p>9. But if you found yourself with your right foot forward in the manner of the <i>porta di ferro stretta</i> (narrow iron door), and that your enemy thrust at you with the spike of the axe, to hurt your throat, or groin, or foremost foot, you will be able in that same tempo to try taking with the horn of your axe that of your enemy, giving him a tremendous pull toward you in order to remove it from his hands, and maybe it will be no marvel, removing it from them, with this being so, that in that <i>tempo</i> (moment), that he will strike the blow at you, you take his axe and pull, he not having in it more force than this, that he could have, I firmly believe, that you will accomplish your intention, yet even it did not come to you, subsequently you will move your right foot somewhat forward giving him the point [of your axe] with all your force in the groin on the testicles and note, that if you are wary with this art, and courageous, the enemy may do what he wants, and yet he will remain, against his will, conquered and taken prisoner.</p>
<p>[S10] Se ti trovassi agiato con il tuo piede manco innanzi, et in guisa di porta stretta di ferro similmente con la manca tua mano innanzi, et che 'l tuo nemico con il simile piede manco, et mano innanzi, ti mandasse una ferita de l'Accia sua al capo, potrai passare col tuo piede destro innanzi, schermendoti da cosi fatto colpo con il calcio de l'Accia tua, dandogli poi del spontone de la detta tua Accia ne la gola, ovvero vorai pigliarlo con l'asta del calcio ne la gola, con ogni tua forza verso le tue parti destre tirando talmente, che lo ponghi in terra, et molto meglio lo farai cadere se 'l tuo piede destro si troverà fuori dal suo sinistro.</p>	<p>10. If you found yourself at settled with your left foot forward, and in the manner of the <i>porta di ferro stretta</i> (narrow iron door) likewise with your left hand forward, and that your enemy with the like left foot, and hand forward, delivered a blow of the axe to your head, you will be able to step forward with your right foot, and defend yourself from the blow so made with the heel of your axe, giving him afterward the spike of your said axe in the throat, or you will want to catch him with the haft of your axe in the throat, pulling him with all your force toward your right side, such that he is knocked to the ground, and you will make him fall much better if your right foot is found outside his left.</p>
<p>[S11] Se tu trovasti il tuo nemico col suo manco piede innanzi, et con l'Accia in guisa di guardia alta, tu ti aconcerai, con l'Accia in guisa di porta di ferro stretta, et con il tuo piede destro innanzi [26v] et se quivi il tuo nemico scorresse avanti, per mandarti una Acciata al capo, tu subito passerai col tuo piede manco innanzi, schermendoti con l'asta del calcio, et fatto questo gli potrai subito spingere il spontone del calcio ne la gola, ovvero pigliandolo con l'asta del detto calcio ne la gola,</p>	<p>11. If you found your enemy with his left foot forward, and with the axe in the manner of the <i>guardia alta</i> (high guard), you will place yourself with your axe in the manner of the <i>porta di ferro stretta</i> (narrow iron door), and with your right foot forward and if there your enemy moved forward, to deliver a <i>acciata</i> (blow) to your head, you suddenly will step forward with your left foot, defending yourself with the haft of your heel, and this done you will be able to suddenly</p>

<p>tirarlo sì verso le tue parti manche cha mal suo grado vada a terra.</p>	<p>thrust the point of the heel into his throat, or catching his throat with the haft of the said heel, to pull him toward your left side so that against his will he goes to the ground.</p>
<p>[§12] Ti potrai anchora agiare in cotal modo contra al tuo nemico, cioè fare che il tuo piede manco sia innanzi, et la tua mano destra in alto appresso a l'Accia sendo la manca innanzi con il calcio, et in cotal modo cercherai stringere il nemico, facendo, che il tuo piede destro spinga il manco innanzi, con sembiante di dargli col spontone del calcio sopra il piede, et perché per questo sera astretto di accompagnare il calcio de la sua Accia con quello de la tua, li potrai levare l'Accia di mano in questa guisa, che mandandogli tu con grandissima forza uno colpo con l'Accia nel calcio della sua, sera sforzato egli senza fallo abbandonare l'Accia sua con la mano manca, perche successivamente potrai passare col tuo piede destro innanzi, rinovandogli uno colpo nel pettenicchio sopra i testicoli, col spontone de l'Accia tua, et con ogni forza in quel tempo con la detta tua Accia sollevarlo in suso, et spingendolo a l'indietro mandarlo a forza in terra</p>	<p>12. You will be able moreover to settle yourself in such a manner against your enemy, that is that your left foot be forward, and your right hand high near the axe [head], the left forward with the heel, and in such a manner you will seek to press your enemy, doing it so that your right foot pushes your left forward, with the semblance of giving him the point of the heel on the foot, and because of this he will be compelled to bring the heel of his axe to that of yours, so you will be able to remove the axe from his hand in this manner, that you delivering a blow of your axe with tremendous force on the heel of his, he will of force without fail release his axe with his left hand, so that subsequently you will be able to step forward with your right foot, redoubling with a blow in the groin on the testicles, with the point of your axe, and with all force in that <i>tempo</i> (moment) with your said axe raising him upward, and thrusting him backward, send him forcefully to the ground</p>
<p>[§13] Sel tuo nemico si agiasse [sic] con il suo piede manco innanzi, et con il calcio de l'Accia sua medesimamente innanzi, potrai tu agiarti col tuo piede destro innanzi, tenendo la manca tua [27r] mano al calcio, et la destra verso l'Accia, ma tanto alto quanto piu tu possi, et dandogli quivi a vedere di volerlo ferire con una Acciata sopra la testa, attenderai, che egli sollevi l'Accia sua in alcuna guisa per schermirsi, et in quel tempo serai tosto a mandargli una acciata in maniera di uno mandritto tondo per la gamba anteposta, et così gli leverai la gamba di sotto con il colpo, overo lo potrai pigliare col corno ne la detta gamba, tirandolo a forza sì che mal suo grado a terra giaccia</p>	<p>13. If your enemy settles himself with his left foot forward, and with the heel of his axe forward in the same sort, you will be able to settle yourself with your right foot forward, holding the heel with your left hand, and the right toward the axe [head], but as high as you can, and there giving him the impression that you want to hurt him with a <i>acciata</i> (blow) on the head, you will observe, that he raises his axe in some manner to defend himself, and in that <i>tempo</i> (moment) you will be quick to deliver a <i>acciata</i> (blow) in the manner of a <i>mandritto tondo</i> [upward right blow] to his foremost leg, and so you will remove his leg from under him with the blow, or you will be able to catch the said leg with the horn [of your axe], pulling him forcefully so that against his will he will fall to the ground</p>

[§14] Ma se tu ritrovassi, et similmente il tuo nemico, col piede manco innanzi, et similmente con la medesima manca mano pur innanzi, potrai passare col tuo piede destro innanzi, mostrandogli di volergli dare d'una acciata sopra il capo, et come egli vorra schermirsene in alcuna guisa, subitoamente raccogliendo l'Accia alquanto indietro, gli spingerai fortemente il spontone de l'Accia nel pettenecchio sopra li testicoli, o pur voi dire ne li testicoli, et dico tanto forte, che a l'indietro trabocchi et vada in terra.	14. But if you found yourself the same as your enemy, with the left leg forward, and with the left hand forward likewise, you will be able to pass forward with your right foot, pretending to give a <i>acciata</i> (blow) on the head, and as he would defend himself in some way, at the same time collecting the axe somewhat backward, you will thrust the point of the axe strongly into this groin over the testicles, or if you want to say in the testicles, and I say very strongly, so that he falls backward to the ground
[§15] Trovandoti anchora tu, et tuo nemico col manco piede innanzi, et con la medes(i)ma mano pur innanzi, tu gli potrai mostrare di volerlo ferire col spontone del calcio a la faccia, et in uno momento col detto spontone ferirgli il piede.	15. Once more finding yourself and your enemy with left foot forward, and with the same hand also forward, you will be able to pretend to strike him with the point of the heel to the face, and instantly strike him with the said point in the foot.

Glossary

guardia alta	High guard: Stance with left foot forward, the axe head over the right shoulder and the axe butt in front.
passare	To pass: stepping with the back foot over the front foot.
mandritto	Right blow: downward blow delivered from the right handside
acciata	Blow: cutting or chopping blow from the right or the left handside.
tempo	Moment: time where a fencing action is performed.
porta di ferro	Iron door: Stance with left foot forward and left hand close to the body in front. This stance can be narrowed (<i>stretta</i>).
schivamento	defence: technical defensive action
mezza accia	Half-axe: Situation when the two axes are bound by the shafts between hands.
punta	Point: thrusting action

APPENDIX 2. REPRODUCTION

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Fol. 24v

Di Accia armato di tutt'arme

Trouandoti contra al tuo nemico con l'Accia in mano in guarda alta col piede manco innanzi, et con la mandragola in alto tenuta, trouandoti la sinistra innanzi col calcio de l'Accia potrai passare col tuo destro piede innanzi, Et mandargli una mandriato ala testa, promouendo il nemico a schermirsene con l'Accia, ouero con l'asta, et così fanno in ueritate a trouarsi con l'asta de l'Accia inuociale insieme, onde tu starai anchora, percioche uedendo passare il tuo nemico col suo piede manco innanzi per percotere con il calcio dela sua Accia l'asta de la tua, per ferirte poi col detto calcio il petto, o la faccia, potrai in quel tempo lenare la tua Accia in alto, lasciando gire a uoce il colpo suo, et subito mandargli una Accia ala testa, et questo farai ciauna uolta, che tu ti trouassi con l'Accia inuociale, et chel nemico tuo si mouesse a fare uno talo effetto col calcio de l'Accia sua.

Trouandoti con l'Accia in mano contra al tuo nemico col tuo piede manco innanzi in guarda alta, ouero col destro in porta stretta di ferro, starai anchora, percioche uouendoti con alcun colpo offendere il tuo nemico la testa, passerai in quel tempo se serai in porta di ferro, gran passo col tuo piede manco innanzi, alargando le braccia ben distese, si che tu raccogli il suo colpo sopra l'asta de la tua Accia tra l'una et l'altra tua mano, uolgero subito con la manca il calcio de l'Accia tua sopra la sua testa et pigliarelo nel collo dala banda sinistra ti proccacciami

fol. 25r

di tirarlo per il contrario a forza in terra, ma s'è accorto, che nel tuo passare fuori bisogna, che la tua gamba manca sia posta y fuori dal suo lato destro.

Ma quando ti trouasti in guardia alta come è detto di sopra, et uolendo il tuo nemico offendere la testa tu passerai col tuo destro innanzi schernendo il colpo nel sopradetto modo, Et così passerai con la manca gamba innanzi, facendo la medesima uolta con il pedale de l'Accia tua, et con ogni destrezza et forza ti procaccierai di farlo cadere in terra.

Ma se per auentura uolendo tu ferire il tuo nemico alla testa, usasse egli quello medesimo schinamento, per anolgerli poi il pedale de l'Accia sua a torno al tuo collo per farti cadere come è detto di sopra, preponendo perciò còl tuo colpo gli fosse mandato con la tua destra mano innanzi, potrai stare anchuto percioche come egli haurà schernito il detto colpo tra l'una et l'altra sua mano come è detto, per uolerti prendere col Calcio nel collo, potrai tu in quel tempo abbandonando con la tua mano manca il pedale de l'Accia tua, et prender l'asta con la destra mano dal canto di l'Accia, et con il ^{calcio di essa} ~~pedale della tua~~ potrai percuotere il calcio dela nemica uerso il suo destro lato, et così trouandoti di fuori, gli potrai poi spingere il calcio de l'Accia tua nel petto, ouero se più ti piacerà prenderlo nel collo et mandarlo a terra, o pur uorrà rigigliare il pedale dela tua Accia col'mano manca, et dargli subito di una Accia-ta sopra la testa.

Serai anchora anchuto che trouandoti a mezza Accia col tuo nemico gli potrai sempre col Calcio ferrigli un piede.

Serai anchora auuto di ~~antexar~~ il tuo nemico ogni uolta che essendo seco a zuffa, ti uenisse colto di poterlo prendere col corno de l'Accia in alcuna de le gambe, o de le braccia, o nel collo, o in alcuna altra parte dela persona.

Così non ti deurai mai rimanere uendoti colto, di ferirlo di una punta nela faccia, o inqualunqua altra parte dela persona ti uenisse d'estro, che non si trouasse armata, come ne li testi colij, o peteniccio, che dir ti piaceua.

Se tu ti ritrouassi contra il tuo nemico con il tuo piede destro innanzi, et con l'Accia posta in guisa di porta senza di ferro, et Egli contra di te nela medesima guarda, et col pie de d'estro d'oro innanzi, potrai con il corno de la tua Accia prendere la sua, et forza indugia dandogli con ogni tua forza una tratta uersote farai opra di leuargliela di mano, pur se colto non ti uenisse, almeno seguirà questo, che Egli si precacciera leuarti la tua da le mani come tu farai la sua, il che succedendo serai presto di passare in quel tempo col tuo piede destro innanzi, spingendogli con gran forza il spon-tone de l'Accia nel uentre, ouero nel peteniccio sopra a li testicoli, o nela gola, si che possendo iraboccano al'in dietro leua le gambe al cielo tu gli faci leuare.

Ma se tu ti trouassi col tuo piede destro auanti in guisa di porta senza di ferro, et che lo nemico tuo, ti spingesse del spon-tone de l'Accia, e ferirti la gola, o il peteniccio, o li pie di anteposti, potrai far opra di prendere nel medesimo tempo

con il corno de l'Accia quella de lo nimico dandogli una gran-
dissima trana verso te per cagione di leuargliela di mano, et forse
non sara meraviglia leuandogliela, conciosia cosa che in qlo
tempo, che ti tirera il colpo, tu prendi l'Accia sua et tiri
non hauendo egli in lei piu forza di qlo, che haue si pote,
potro ferma (relenza), che ti uerra colto il tuo pensiero,
pur se non ti uenisse, successiuamente scorrerai col tuo piede
destro alquanto innanzi dandogli del spontone con tutta la forza
tua nel pentecocchio sopra gli testicoli et nota, che se
con qsta arte tu starai aneduto, et animoso, faccia cio che
uole il nimico et pur rimara mal tuo grado, uinto et pre-
gione.

Se ti trouasti agiato con il tuo piede mano innanzi, et in guisa di
porta stretta di ferro similmente con la manca tua mano innanzi
et che il tuo nimico con il simile piede manco, et mano innanzi
ti mandasse una ferita de l'Accia sua al capo, potrai passar
col tuo piede destro innanzi schernendoti da cosi fatto colpo
con il calcio de l'Accia tua dandogli poi del spontone de la
dextra tua Accia nela gola, ouero uorrai pigliarlo con l'asta del
calcio nela gola con ogni tua forza verso le tue parti destre
tirando talmente, che lo ponghi in terra, et molto meglio lo
farai cadere, sel tuo piede destro si trouera di fuora dal suo
sinistro.

Se tu trouasti il tuo nimico col suo manco piede innanzi, et con l'Ac-
cia in guisa di guarda alta, tu ti aconcerai con l'Accia in guisa
di porta di ferro stretta, et con il tuo piede destro innanzi

Et se omni il tuo nemico scorresse avanti, per mandarti una Acciaa al capo, tu subito pancerai col tuo piede manco innanzi, e berramen-
dotti con l'asta del calcio Et fatto questo gli potrai subito pangi-
gere il spontone del calcio ne la gola, ouero pigliandolo con l'asta
del detto calcio ne la gola, tirarlo si uerso le tue parti mancho
e be mal suo grado uadi a terra.

Ti potrai anchora agiare in cotal modo contra al tuo nemico, cioè fare
che il tuo piede manco sia innanzi, Et la tua mano de tra in
alto appresso a l'Accia sendo la manca innanzi con il calcio,
Et in cotal modo cercherai stringere il nemico facendo che il
tuo piede destro spinga il manco innanzi, con sombianza di dar-
gli col spontone del calcio sopra il piede Et perche q questo
sera affretto di accompagnare il calcio de la sua Accia con
quello de la tua, li potrai lenare l'Accia di mano in questa
guisa, che mandandogli tu con grandissima forza uno colpo con
l'Accia nel calcio de la sua, sera sforzato egli senza fallo
abbandonare l'Accia sua con la mano manca, perche succe-
ssivamente potrai passare col tuo piede destro innanzi, rino-
uandogli uno colpo nel pettemicchio sopra i testicoli, col spontone
de l'Accia tua, Et con ogni forza in quel tempo con la detta
tua Accia solenarlo in su, Et sprigendolo a l'indietro ma-
darlo a uina forza in terra.

Sel tuo nemico si agiasse con il suo piede manco innanzi, Et con il
calcio de l'Accia sua medesimamente innanzi, potrai tu
agiarti col tuo piede destro innanzi, tenendo la manca tua

fol. 27r

mano al calcio, et la destra uerso l'Accia, ma tanto alto quanto più tu poni. Et dandogli quini a uederlo ferir con una Acciata sopra la testa. attenderai, che egli soleu l'Accia sua in alcuna guisa per leuermi, et in quel tempo serai tosto a mandargli una acciata in maniera di uno mandrino tondo, & la gamba anteposta, Et così gli leuerai la gamba di sotto con il colpo, ouero lo potrai pigliare col corno nella detta gamba, tirandolo a forza sì che mal suo grado a terra giaccia.

Ma se tu ti ritrouassi et similmente il tuo nemico, col piede manco innanzi, et similmente con la medesima manca mano pur innanzi, potrai passare col tuo piede destro innanzi mostrandogli di uolergli dare d'una acciata sopra il capo, Et come egli uorra leuermi, serai in alcuna guisa subitamente raccogliendo l'Accia alquanto indietro, gli spingerai fortemente il spontone de l'Accia nel petto, ouero sopra li testicoli, o per uoi dire mi li testicoli, et dico tanto forte, che a l'indietro irabbotchi et uada in terra.

1. *Conandoti anchora tu et il tuo nemico col manco piede innanzi, et con la medesima mano pur innanzi tu gli potrai mostrare di uolergli ferir col spontone del calcio a la faccia et in uno mometo col detto spontone ferirgli il piede.*

