

# Meyer 1570

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[Frontmatter 1r]

A Thorough Description  
of the  
Free Knightly and Noble Art of Combat  
with all Customary Weapons,  
adorned and presented with many fine and useful illustrations

By Joachim Meyer, *Freifechter* of Strassburg

1570

By privilege of His Majesty the Holy Roman Emperor not to be printed again in any form for ten years

[Frontmatter 1v: Coat of arms of the duke of Bavaria, bearing initials GWDZ; Frontmatter 2r]

[Dedicatory Preface]

To the illustrious high-born prince and lord, Lord Johann Casimir, count palatine of the Rhine, duke of Bavaria, my gracious prince and lord:

Illustrious high-born Prince, may my very willing and due services, to my utmost ability, be submissively ready before your princely grace.

Gracious prince and lord: the knightly and noble art of combat at this time has gone somewhat in decline with many people, and this is without doubt the greatest and chiefest cause of all, namely that in recent times the ignoble gun has arisen and so taken the upper hand, that by its agency the most manly and skilled hero can be suddenly deprived and robbed of his life sometimes even by the pettiest and most timid men; and often friend as well as foe is hurt and harmed by it.

Therefore it is no wonder that this free knightly practice has not only come into decline, but also somewhat come into contempt, not without some prejudice to the commendable custom of the combat masters of old. \*Yet perhaps these causes shall be accepted by intelligent soldiers, particularly since nothing is accomplished with firearms without other armour, weapons, and arms; indeed sometimes the entire battle

must be halted on account of such commonly used weapons and sidearms, when the firearm cannot be used because of the situation of the moment, as experienced soldiers can attest. [*Frontmatter 2v*]

Thus in addition to the firearm, other armour, weaponry, and arms serviceable for war are as necessary today as with our ancestors, and yet, as is known to many, not only does one need good armour, weaponry, and arms, such as harness, mail shirt, sword, halberd, pike, and such, but it will also be quite necessary to learn to use them well and skillfully by daily practising, to one's own advantage and the enemy's harm and disadvantage. For daily experience shows that for many a man his armour, weaponry, and arms are more detrimental than helpful in protecting his body and life, no matter how well equipped he is, if he does not know how to conduct himself in it, nor to defend himself judiciously with it.

And since this knightly art (like all others) is hard to grasp and learn correctly and fruitfully in adulthood, intelligent and noble persons of all nations, and of every time, have busied themselves about it, so that along with other virtues that are free, good, and pertinent to honor and manfulness, their youths may also be instructed as necessary in this knightly art, and how one shall use all kinds of armour and weapons, both on horse and on foot, as reliable old history books of all nations, and especially the Roman histories, clearly and plainly state. It follows from this that many skilled knightly heroes and valuable protectors of the fatherland arose and were educated among these peoples; and the usefulness of applied diligence manifested itself even in youth, before they came to the full age of manhood, as can be seen especially in Scipio Africanus, who [*Frontmatter 3r*] when he was still young—around eighteen years old—rescued his father, the citizen and supreme field marshal, in a battle that took place against Hannibal at the Ticino River, using the skills that he derived from this noble practice.

Moreover no proof is needed that it was the custom with our ancestors and the ancient Germans to raise their youth in knightly practice along with other good arts, since this is self-evident from what they achieved. For once the Romans thought they had conquered the entire world, as an overconfident nation they devoted themselves to sensualities more than to good arts, policy, and knightly practices, and through this the entire empire was undermined, attacked on every side, and torn apart by enemies; and the knightly Germans were appointed and advanced before all peoples to save it, take it over, and erect it again.<sup>1</sup>

This would never have happened, were not the excellent Germans wisely trained and experienced in all kinds of knightly play and matters of war, as can be seen in the mighty deeds of many indomitable German heroes, such as Pepin, Charlemagne, Louis the Pious and Henry I, who were always so graced with well trained knightship, that the same exalted emperor Henry I, after he had triumphed through his knightly Germans in a dangerous battle, did not merely wonder at their well ordained and trained knightship, but with true imperial temperament considered both how they could be kept in this state in the present (as they

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<sup>1</sup> *The allusion here is to the founding of the Holy Roman Empire.*

came to advance \*His Majesty praiseworthy through diligence in it), and also how it might be established and planted in succeeding generations, and therefore [*Frontmatter 3v*] he established the true chivalric school, namely the commendable German tournaments at Magdeburg, and passed it on to his successors. Although this tourneying field may have been closed down for valid reasons, such tourneys are still held today in many of our praiseworthy German princes' courts, and not without some renown—all so that young high and admirable princes, counts, lords, and the knightly nobility, may be trained in all knightly affairs on horse and on foot, and as they say, may be coursed and whetted, so that in the time of need they may serve the fatherland more intelligently, and better preserve their own body and life, and conversely may do impressive harm to the enemy, since the trained always overcome the untrained.

Then since, gracious prince and lord, I have thought and intended to show my due service to the common fatherland in this, with such little talent as the Almighty has graciously allotted to me; and, to speak without vainglory, I have not only learned the praiseworthy knightly art of combat from skilled and famous masters, but have also now practiced it for many years, and have instructed young princes, counts, lords, and nobles in it, and was graciously and kindly requested by your kind princely grace on many occasions to write up this praiseworthy art of combat in a sound order, and publish it openly through the press, and to let it come to light for the use of many people of our nation; so I no longer wished to resist this gracious and kind request, and have therefore in the name and through the fatherly grace of the Almighty, brought together that which I have learned and experienced with care and work in this praiseworthy and sophisticated art over many years, and compiled it in the most comprehensible order as seems possible to me in this [*Frontmatter 4r*] treatise, in the consoling hope that it should be very serviceable to many people of high and low degree, who value and care about the art of combat, considering that, as far as I know (not to speak to any one else's detriment), nothing of the sort has come out in German before.

And, gracious prince and lord, I have all manner of considerable causes for submissively undertaking to dedicate this work to your princely grace, and particularly these.

Firstly, it is evident that our German nation has every reason to have a reassuring confidence in your princely grace as a particularly courageous prince, for your princely grace has already in young years shown and demonstrated himself to be manly, princely, and greatminded, in the late arduous French expedition, concerning which I can make extensive report from the account of reputable people.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, I have no doubt that among the appropriate studies and other good arts, to which your princely grace was brought up with highest diligence in princely fashion by my most gracious lord, the greatly loved lord your father, the most brilliant high-born prince, Lord Frederick, count palatine of the Rhine,

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<sup>2</sup> *Meyer is referring here to Johann Casimir's military support for the French Huguenots, which began in 1562; Johann Casimir was about 19 at the time.*

archsteward and elector of the Holy Roman Empire, duke of Bavaria, etc.,<sup>3</sup> your princely grace will have been instructed in this praiseworthy art of combat, and have no small experience of it, and therefore will know how to judge this slight yet true and diligent work of mine, graciously and favorably with typically lofty princely understanding.

For these and other considerable reasons, I could not seek a patron more suitable for this work of mine than your princely grace. Therefore, gracious prince and lord, I submissively and most diligently present to your princely grace this [*Frontmatter 4v*] work of mine, a thorough description and explanation of the much discussed knightly art of combat, composed with all diligence on the basis of long experience, praying that your princely grace will take and accept it from me with all grace, and be and remain its high patron, as that which is now more your princely grace's own; and also, my gracious prince and lord, humbly praying the Almighty from my heart that he will keep your princely grace and the entire electoral house of the praiseworthy Palatinate in long-lasting peaceful rule, with all temporal and eternal prosperity. \*Your princely grace may graciously command your submissive servant.

Strassburg, 24 February, 1570

Your princely grace's submissive and obedient Joachim Meyer, *Freifechter* and citizen of Strassburg

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<sup>3</sup> *Frederick III, the Elector Palatine; see Introduction.*

## Foreword to the Reader

The free knightly practice and art of combat has hitherto not particularly been published, even though all other free arts at this time are so much written of and brought into public view, that they have almost risen to their apex; and this has happened without doubt for two reasons. First, because this knightly art is grasped with the fist and practiced with the application of the entire body, and so must be learned more through experience than out of books; and indeed this reason has impeded me for a very long time, and in consideration of the great trouble and expense has almost entirely held me back. However many honorable people have responded to me with these and other effective reasons:

- And namely first, that even though this art must be learned chiefly through the practise of the body, yet it is certain and true that as with others, students can conceive it in their memory much better when it is assembled, written out, and placed before their eyes with good instruction in proper order, and it can also be more readily learned and grasped through the practice of the body, than when it is recounted to them only by mouth and demonstrated piecemeal.
- Secondly, this way the students' intellects are not so hard troubled to retain it through much study, and they may apply to their other studies the time that they otherwise must devote to it.
- Thirdly, the students can refresh their memories with it once they have been instructed by a proper master whom they cannot always have with them, and every day practice these things at their appointed time; also when they have learnt them, they will not soon lose them from their attention, or forget the greater part, as is wont to happen.

Therefore this book may be of some use and benefit to these people, and particularly young lords and others of the nobility to whom this knightly art especially pertains and who should learn it.

The other cause is that this knightly art of combat hardly allows itself to be written in books, or composed in writing, since it must be executed through the practice of the entire body in the work. Since I have experienced this cause myself, I hold it, as intelligent people can judge, [Frontmatter 5v] for the greatest and most weighty, but as with the first, I must again acknowledge (as I have said), that every art can be shown with less trouble, and may also be grasped by the learner with the hand through the practice of the body more readily when it is presented in good order.

And I have no doubt that if this art had been written and published before our time in comprehensible good order, then not only would the noble art not have so declined with many people, but also many abuses would have entirely been avoided, which today have become quite common. Therefore I hope that even if

my writing is little heeded by some, yet many honest fellows and young fighters will come forth, and diligently restrain and guard themselves from the disorderly life, gluttony, boozing, blasphemy, cursing, whoring, gambling, and the like through which this noble art has been besmirched by many people, since this knightly art has been used by many people only to for shameful lewdness and foulness, which are most deeply deplored by honorable people and all honorable combatants; and instead they will seek to thoroughly understand this art, and to learn to apply a true honorable earnestness, to purge themselves of useless peasants' brawling, and to be diligent in all manliness, discipline, and breeding, so that when they have truly and fully learnt this art, and lead an honorable life, then they may be thought able to direct others, and particularly the youth, and thereby to be of service. If I shall see that this work of mine finds a place with some, not only will it somewhat lighten the trouble I have undertaken through it, but I will also be stimulated to bring it more widely to light after my limited faculties.

And so that these young combatants can better navigate this book, in the first chapter of each of the three first weapons, I have assembled and presented in a short summary the order in which the weapon is described, and how it can be properly presented and learned. And I will also now describe the whole art of combat in a short summary, which shall also serve for a greater understanding of this book.

And the whole art of combat rests especially on two elements. The first consists of the cuts and thrusts with which you intend to harm and vanquish your opponent. The second element is the parries, which [*Frontmatter 6r*] teaches how to turn aside or strike out these cuts when they are sent in at you or directed against you by your opponent.

Now concerning the first chief element pertaining to the cuts, you shall know that regardless of how many cuts are presented and taught, yet essentially there are no more than four chief and principal cuts, from which all others originate, namely the High Cut, Wrath Cut, Middle or Horizontal Cut, and the Low Cut. And no cut can be created so strange that it is not embodied in these; for although many names are used for the cuts, such as Change, Plunge, Scalp, Crooked Cut and so on, nonetheless they are executed within the scope of these four. For the Plunge is essentially nothing but a High Cut, although it is given this name, since in cutting it plunges above over the head; likewise the Change is so named, since with this cut the sword is changed off from one side to another—and although this can also take place with another cut, yet it is most properly to be executed with this diagonal cut. And you will find the reasons for all the names and cuts, and how they are to be carried out, in the treatises on both the sword and dusack, laid out at length in their fourth chapters.

The second chief element is executed in two ways; namely first, when your opponent crowds in upon you with cuts and thrusts, that you must so catch and bear them off with extended hilt or weapon, that you are quickly ready with counterstriking before he recovers from the stroke or thrust he has executed. Secondly

these cuts and thrusts that your opponent sends in at you are also turned aside and cut away from you with the first chief element, that is with simultaneous counterstrokes; for when your opponent cuts in against you with a stroke from across, you can both suppress it down to the ground from above with the High Cut, with the appropriate stepping out, and also cut him with it upon the head. Conversely, when he cuts from above, you can take it out and send it away from you with a Horizontal Cut.

From these two chief elements, through the Craft, arises the third, which I have here named the Middle or Handwork. This third includes the first two chief elements, using them [*Frontmatter 6v*] so close together, that sometimes the parrying and hitting can take place together in a single stroke. Finally comes the Craft itself, which teaches how one shall arrange, deliver and use these elements in the work against the opponent correctly and well, each in its proper place, since when you will lay on against your opponent with these elements, then you must first divide it in an orderly fashion into various parts, so that you can turn your techniques diversely from one place to another according to opportunity; also you should know how to execute them depending on whether he is big, little, strong, weak, quick or slow. And so that you may always be more mindful in this, the postures have arisen, which are essentially just a lingering or holding of the weapon in the furthest place, to which you have come in pulling up for the stroke, so that before the cut is fully completed you still have space in the middle of it to decide either to complete this cut according to your first intent, or that it will be more useful to turn it elsewhere; thus you will miss no opportunity that arises in the Before and After, rather (according to the admonition of the word Instantly) you can be shrewdly mindful of every opportunity. And the postures or guards arise from this, as I have said.

From these two chief elements of combat that I have now enumerated, along with their circumstances, not only have students always been educated with the greatest diligence by their combat masters who are authorised and experienced in this, but also all outstanding military leaders among all nations have so earnestly kept the troops they commanded in this practice, that sometimes when they would lie idle before the enemy, they would personally teach their soldiers how to handle their armour, weapons, and arms advantageously, and also skillfully to bear off the enemy's strokes and thrusts, and to place their own correctly, which is particularly documented concerning Hannibal; and for this reason even in recent years, every proper combat master was allotted extra pay during campaigns and the like.

Now for the sake of brevity we should here forbear to speak of how the art of combat is a particular element of the practice of war, and through this practice, the student is very masterfully stimulated to greater reflection to use every kind of advantage, along with many more other uses that this practice brings with it. It is likewise with the fact that single combat is a [*Frontmatter 7r*] fine image in miniature of how a war leader should conduct himself against the enemy, which can be compared appropriately with one another in this way. For on the one hand it is necessary for a wise intelligent man of war to be well armed and provided with good arms of war, along with other pertinent things; and he must have found out the



enemy's power, arms, and intention, as well as the lay of the place or location in which he intends to act, through good reconnaissance. Next he must previously be well mindful of how he will conduct himself against every kind of unforeseen event, eventually to encounter him, and conduct the war to the end. Likewise he must be trained and experienced in every kind of craft, to deliberately entice the enemy out of his advantage before him, and provoke him out of it; then he must also be judicious and manful, so that as soon as he has seen his opportunity, he will know with swift circumspection how to attack judiciously and manfully, so that excessive reflection does not deprive him of an opportunity that has befallen, and may perhaps never come to him again very soon. Then he must also know how to press after earnestly, and if his opponent yields ground, not to be too eager in rushing after, so that he should not lose through injudicious pursuit that which he has previously attained through his skillfulness and manliness. Thus shall he pay good heed to all opportunity, so that he can finally withdraw with victory.

In like manner every good single combatant in performing with his weapon shall also fully heed all the particulars of his opponent, as well as his own, so as not to attack him injudiciously when his opponent has the advantage, but to use craft with every kind of technique to entice and provoke him out of his advantage; and as soon as he perceives his opportunity, judiciously, quickly and rapidly to attack, manfully and discriminatingly to press after, and so crowd him with every kind of technique to every part of his body, that he can come to no useful work or defence. Then when he has executed his intention, he must judiciously draw away such that he does not receive harm at the end through overconfidence; and when it befalls because of some cause that arises, that he cannot come to his intent, then he shall not remain long before his opponent, so that he does not exert himself uselessly, but see how he can withdraw from him suitably, so that he may gather for a fresh attack, and thus skillfully make himself ready to address the shortcoming that held him off from his intent the first time. In [*Frontmatter 7v*] all this he shall also be diligent to find out his opponent's character in combat, and not let his own techniques be too visible, because of \*proprietaryness, but keep them most secret with himself. Thus there is almost no technique that is proper to a soldier, that cannot also be usefully heeded in individual combat. Therefore I will let experienced soldiers judge whether the example of those aforementioned ancient national leaders is still useful to follow today.

Since I have undertaken this work to honor the art, and to describe it according to my limited capacity, I have especially emphasised the cuts, as the true chief elements of all combat. Next I have presented the opponent against whom you shall send these cuts and thrusts, and his division. Then thirdly I have shown how to send the cuts against the divisions of the opponent (who will not be idle), using many kinds of examples, not with the intent that one must follow only these examples, but rather that the student will be guided and taught through these examples, such that he may learn to deliver and conduct these cuts in time of need according to opportunity and the capacity of his own body, since the cuts, however and whenever one shall deliver them, cannot be executed in a set and immutable form, but here 'only the Market can

instruct the buyer.’

Therefore it is my advice, if you wish to get the hang of this art, that, as I have now often said, you learn to deliver the cuts or thrusts powerfully, correctly, and well, with extended arms, and with the strength of your whole body. You will find a useful way to learn the principles of these cuts in the treatise on the dusack, laid out through four precepts in the third chapter. When you can cut them correctly and well as I have said, then next learn to pull them back again skillfully in mid-flight or mid-course, and to make them flit, so that just as a cut is about to hit, and you see that it will be useless in this place, you can turn it from there to another place in mid-flight before he actually realises it. Now when this has taken place, then you are at last trained and ready to step into the ring, and to begin these cuts in the Craft, and to learn to direct them against your opponent in the work. Here the cuts begin to arrange themselves according to everyone’s character, nature, strength, and ability, since the weak must [*Frontmatter 8r*] seek a different advantage in the cuts than the strong, and vice versa.

Now when two people meet with these cuts, the two chief elements, that is cuts and parries, produce a wonderful struggle, since everyone will be more inclined to strike than parry, so that now the one strikes, now the other; now the one parries, now the other; thus they both struggle over the Before with the simultaneous devices, and strive for mastery.

Although this Craft is very difficult to write about, namely when or where every cut can be laid upon the opponent and executed at the right time, yet I have been so diligent about the Before and the After with all devices, that I hope the diligent reader will be able to have a meaningful introduction to the Craft, since no separation may be found between the three divisions, that is between Before, Simultaneously, and After. For whenever the two will go together with weapons, one of them cuts before, that is at first; from this it follows that the other will cut after, or both will have to cut at the same time. Now he who will execute the first stroke will do well to consider if he does not somewhat put himself into danger with it, and so, if he cannot derive some advantage from it, will be taken and overcome in his own cut. Likewise there is another consideration in the countercutting, and another advantage with the cuts that take place at the same time, so that the combatants do not both hit one another, as often happens. Therefore (as I have said before) in all cuts and devices I have laid out and particularly taught with diligence and at length the distinction that one shall use some cuts for provoking, to bring him out of his advantage; some for taking, that is when through this provoking you have goaded him to cut, you put it off with a countercut, or catch it with parrying; and thirdly some for hitting, as you will see throughout in the treatises on the dusack and rapier. And indeed the true art and Craft is found here above all, in which the combatant’s reason, acuity, shrewd consideration, judiciousness, skillfulness, and manfulness can be seen and manifests itself, since here the art depends upon the person, so that a poor device will be executed by an ingenious mindful person much more usefully in the work, than the best one will be executed by a fool. [*Frontmatter 8v*]

Now since everyone thinks differently from everyone else, so he behaves differently in combat; and so I have thought it best to consider the cuts in every way, both how one shall deliver them and how one shall send away those that are delivered against him, so that everyone, be he strong, weak, quick or slow, will have something useful to learn from this. For combat is properly a sort of exercise through which the body will be trained to skill in wielding the weapon; then when one is trained in it, he must at last arrange it in the work itself, and wield the weapon depending on what the opportunity requires; so the better trained he is, the better he will be able to meet every opportunity that happens. Whatever additional benefit this practice will yield for the fitness and health of the body, I will leave for the more perceptive to recognise.

And whatever is not elegantly carried out here in the manner of writing, as it ought to be, may the reader mindful of my good intent take favorably, and so accept and regard favorably the diligence and trouble I have had.

### **Contents of the Whole Book**

Namely what weapons and how many are discussed here:

- Firstly, the Sword as a basis of all combat
- The Dusack
- The Rapier
- Dagger
- Wrestling
- Quarterstaff
- Halberd
- The Pike

# Part 1: Longsword

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## Contents of the First Book concerning Combat with the Sword,

and what sort of order is followed in describing it;  
also on what the foundations of this knightly art are based<sup>4</sup>

Since I have undertaken to describe most diligently and truly the art of fighting with those knightly and manly weapons that nowadays are most used by us Germans, according to my best understanding and ability; and since experience shows and it is obvious that combat with the sword is not only an origin and source of all other combat, but it is also the most artful and manliest above all other weapons; therefore I have thought it necessary and good to begin with this weapon, and to discuss it very briefly but clearly in such a manner as is done with all other arts and practices:

- Firstly to show the vocabulary and manner of speaking that pertain to it, which have been invented by the masters of this art with particular diligence, so that one may learn and grasp the secret and genius of it more promptly and rapidly.
- Next to explain and interpret this vocabulary, so that everyone may properly understand what is meant by this manner of speaking.
- Then thirdly to present the practice of the art itself, and how it shall be carried out in the work from the cuts and postures that I will have explained.

This is not only so that the youths who wish to dedicate themselves to this art will not be made confused and given reason to scorn [1.1v] this art because of words that are unfamiliar to them; or else so that in the middle of the discussion when these words appear, it should not first be necessary to explain them, which would be very tiresome to read; but also so that the experienced practitioner may understand that the practice of combat has its origin in a true rational foundation, and is not based on slipshod sword-mummery. For there is a very big difference between such mummery and combat, and indeed the knightly art of combat has always been held in great esteem by all widely experienced soldiers, especially the Romans, while street-mummers are taken for the most worthless and useless folk in the world.

Now combat with the sword is in essence a practice in which two opponents strive against each other with the sword with the intent that one will outmaneuver and overcome the other with intelligence and nimbleness, artfully, finely, and manfully, with cuts and other handwork; so that if it were necessary in earnest cases, through such practice one may be more quick and skillful, and more judicious for the

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<sup>4</sup> *Running Head:* In What Order the Sword will be Discussed

protection of his body.

This can well and properly be divided into three main parts, namely the beginning, the middle, and the end. These three parts must each be held in mind in every single device that you undertake to execute: namely that you should know with what cuts you will lay on against your opponent from the guards; then when you have laid on against him, how you shall further work in the middle with the Handwork, flying readily to the openings to keep the initiative when you have rushed on him in the Onset; and finally, how you may well and properly withdraw from him, if not with harm to him, then at least without injury to yourself.

Now the beginning I call the Onset [*Zufechten*], when one lays on against the opponent he has before him.

The middle I call the secondary work or Handwork [*Handarbeit*], when one stays against his opponent in the bind or further in his work and nimbly presses him.

The end I call [*1.2r*] the Withdrawal [*Abzug*], which is how the combatant may cut away from his opponent without harm.

The Onset takes place in the beginning using the cuts from the postures. The postures are of two kinds, namely the chief postures and the secondary postures, which arise from the chief postures.

There are four chief postures: the Day or High Guard, the Ox, the Fool, and the Plow. There are eight secondary postures: Wrath Guard, Break-Window, Longpoint, Crossed Guard, Unicorn, Key, Irongate, and Change.<sup>5</sup>

Now there are two kinds of cuts with the sword, which are commonly called the straight and reversed cuts. The first are called the chief or principal cuts, from which all other cuts have their origin, and there are four of these: High, Low, Middle, and Wrath Cut. The others are called the secondary or derivative cuts, of which there are twelve, namely Squinting, Crooked, Short, Clashing, Rebound (single and double), Blind, Winding, Crown, Wrist, Plunge, Change Cut, etc. From both of these are selected the true Master Cuts, which are so named because all masterful and artful techniques with the sword are conceived, carried out, and completed with them, namely Wrath, Crooked, Thwart, Squinter, and Scalp Cut. How all of these shall be executed and carried out, I will clearly set forth in their descriptions when I come to the Onset, and speak of the cuts.

The secondary work or Handwork in the middle embodies the greatest art and skill that can take place in

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the list on *1.5r*, which lacks *Break-Window* and *Crossed Guard*, but adds *Side Guard* and *Hanging Point*.



combat. For it not only teaches how one shall use the sword to bind, wind, change, deceive, chase, slice, double, and run off; or in what way one shall strike around, sling, slide, set off, pull and jerk, block, wrestle, run in, cast, and crowd after; [1.2v] but it also includes the openings, which must be understood through the division of the combatant and the sword. Furthermore the correct standing and stepping is also pertinent to this, which I shall also discuss in its place.

The Withdrawal at the end arises from the Middle, and has great use in the practice; therefore at the end of every device, I shall explain in good order the withdrawal appropriate to it. And all this shall be fully discussed in the first part of this treatise on combat with the sword.

Now in the second part I shall explain more fully and sufficiently about master devices, and what is useful for greater agility with this weapon, so that this book might be useful both for beginning students and also for those more experienced in this art.

And I have thought it worth writing this introduction, so that this book may be that much easier for everyone to understand, and so that they will be able to find their way in it, having first learnt in what order I shall present this knightly art. Therefore now in the first chapter I will give instruction concerning the division of the combatant, and show how he is divided into four quarters, as it is extremely useful to speak of it at the beginning. [1.3r: *Image A*; 1.3v]

## Chapter 1: Concerning the Combatant and His Division<sup>6</sup>

Although the division of the combatant (from which the openings and postures originate, and to and from which attacks are carried out) especially pertains to the Middle or Handwork, and therefore discussion of it also takes place in the body of this book, nonetheless I have particular cause to present and describe it here at the beginning. For in combat as in all matters and arts, it is necessary first to know what the goal is, and so one must discuss it. Therefore it has been appropriate to offer instruction on this topic at the beginning, so that in the Middle or Handwork, when these openings are mentioned, I should not first need to write about them, and be pulled back in the course of my writing.

Now the combatant is divided into four quarters or parts: the upper and lower, and each into the right and left. I do not need to describe more extensively what these things are, since the very act of looking shows a person what the upper or lower, and right and left parts are. Yet for the better understanding of what I mean by these, see the figure on the right in the previous image [*Image A*].

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<sup>6</sup> *Running head*: Concerning the Division of the Combatant

And although these four parts of the combatant would be enough, according to the use of German combatants of former days, who allowed thrusting as well as cutting, nonetheless since with us Germans nowadays, and especially in the handwork with the winding, attacks are made mostly and chiefly toward the head, I will also divide it, like the whole person in general, into the same four parts, namely into the upper, around the scalp, [1.4r] and the lower, around the cheek and neck, and that into the right and left parts; since the ear is found on both sides, these are commonly called the right or left ear.

Now although this division may seem very childish to some people (since all things have more critics than improvers), the benevolent reader must understand that I discuss this chiefly and only because all other elements that are necessary and pertinent to the fight arise and originate from this division, as from a source and spring. For since combat (as I have said) is, when two people fight against one another with the same weapon, how one harms the other with skill, or may defend and protect himself judiciously; and it is my intent, as with all the other weapons, to show and explain this through specific devices and short examples; I cannot and should not omit to speak of this division of the person here, so that if you see your opponent attack from one part or another, you will know how to make yourself secure against it with appropriate parrying; or if he reveals himself somewhat with an opening on one side or another, you can also correctly place your stroke upon him with advantage. For a man is always hit in one of these four places, because he reveals an opening, or else he must place himself in the guard or parrying to protect it.

Therefore whatever I will teach hereafter concerning the guards, cuts, and openings, it is easy to gather that all this arises from this description and division of the combatant, which is now sufficient. [1.4v]

## Chapter 2: Concerning the Sword and its Division<sup>7</sup>

Now that I have explained the subject of combat, namely how one man may in knightly manner harm the other in some part of his body, or contrarily may protect his own; thereafter having also briefly explained the parts of the combatant; now it is necessary to show more fully how and by what means to carry it out against one another. And although the title of this part of my book indicates clearly that here we will just be speaking of combat with the sword, yet since this happens not just in one single manner, but sometimes with the short edge, sometimes with the long edge, sometimes with the forte, sometimes with the foible, it will be fitting here to say something about the division of the sword that is customary and pertinent to this art.

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<sup>7</sup> *Running head:* Concerning the Division of the Weapon

Concerning the parts of the sword, as regards its form and figure, its pommel [*Knopf*], point [*Ort*], quillons [*Creutz*] or hilt [*Gefeß*], haft [*Hefi*] or grip [*Bindt*], and the blade [*Klinge*], it is needless to use more words to say what each is.

Now the blade has two distinct divisions, of which the first is into the forte [*Stercke*] and foible [*Schweche*], the second into the short and long edge [*kurtze und lange Schneide*], that is front and back.

The forte of the sword is the part from the quillons or haft to the middle of the blade, the foible from the middle to the point or end, from which arises the division of the techniques into long and short.

The long edge is the full edge facing from the fingers straight out toward your opponent. The short or half edge is the part that faces toward the thumb or between the thumb and index finger toward the combatant himself; by analogy with [*1.5r*] other weapons, one might say it was the back of the sword, as may be seen from the previous image [*see the letters KV. S. and LAN. S. near the hilt of the left-hand figure in Image A*].

From these divisions of the sword arise the proper full divisions, which are very useful in combat, namely that the sword is commonly further divided and distinguished into four parts, as may be seen in the previous image [*A*].

The first is called the grip or haft; it includes the pommel and quillons, and is useful for running in, wrestling, grappling, casting, and other work.

The second is the forte as I have said, useful for slicing, winding, pressing, and other things that are executed from the forte.

The third part is the midpart; it is taken equally from the forte and foible around the middle part, and pertains to various work that may be used according to the opportunity.

The fourth is the foible, appropriate for changing through, flicking, slinging, and such things that are executed at a distance, of which you will have plenty of examples later.

### Chapter 3: Concerning the Postures or Guards<sup>8</sup>

Since in all combat (for the sake of better usefulness and comprehension for those who intend to learn this

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<sup>8</sup> *Running head*: Concerning the Postures

knightly art) three chief elements are to be held in mind, the first being the subject of combat, namely the combatant; the second its means, [1.5v] in this case the sword; and at this point in the two previous chapters there has been sufficient instruction concerning both elements; now logic further requires that I explain the third part and element, which is in what manner all combat shall be executed, and this happens chiefly through three components, the beginning, the middle, and the end, as I have already shown.

Now since the beginning must be carried out through two separate elements, namely the postures, and the cuts that begin from them, I will list them and explain how they shall be executed.

Now the guards or postures are a graceful but also necessary positioning and comportment of the whole body with the sword, in which the combatant places and positions himself when he is the first to come to his opponent in the place of encounter, as often happens, so that he will not be unexpectedly rushed upon and injured by him, but will be on the lookout to guard against him. And as soon as he comes within range of the opponent, he will lay on and cut with advantage and sound skill, and conduct himself against his opponent such that his opponent cannot cut at him without injury: instead when the opponent works at his openings, either he makes himself open, while the combatant deprives him of the opening he expected to have with a step forward or around; or at least when the combatant is provoked from his advantage through this attack, he can take out his opponent's blade to hinder and intercept him in his work.

Now as I have said before, the postures or guards have their origin in the division of the combatant, for as the combatant is divided into four quarters—high, low, right, and left—so there are four openings in which the opponent is chiefly to be hit; and like the four openings, there are also four chief postures or guards, from which the others all originate and arise, that is the Ox, Plow, Day, and Fool. And the others that arise from them are Wrath Guard, Longpoint, Change, Side Guard, Irongate, Hanging Point, Key, and Unicorn.<sup>9</sup> I shall discuss these in order and briefly. [1.6r: *Image B*; 1.6v]

### **Ox [*Ochs*]**

The upper part of the combatant is allotted to the Ox, and as that has two quarters, the right and left, so one can divide the posture of the Ox into two parts, namely the right and left. The right Ox is done thus: stand with your left foot forward, and hold the sword with the hilt up by your head on the right side, so that your point extends toward your opponent's face. For the left Ox, position yourself opposite to this, that is, stand with your right foot forward, and hold your sword with the hilt by your head on the left side as I have said. Thus you have both Ox guards or postures; this posture is depicted on the left side of Image B.

### **Plow [*Pflug*]**

The lower part of the combatant belongs to the Plow, and as that has two quarters or two sides, right and

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. the slightly different list on 1.2r.

left, so the Plow is called right or left. Both are in essence merely the position of a thrust from below. Execute the right Plow as follows: stand with your right foot forward, hold your weapon with the hilt by your forward knee, and aim the tip or point at your opponent's face as if you intended to thrust at him from below; thus you are in the right Plow. If you stand with your left foot forward and do the same thing, then you are in the left Plow. And the right Plow is also illustrated in the same image [B] on the right.

### **Day [Tag]**

The guard of the Day, which is also called the High Guard, is executed in the following manner: stand with your left foot forward, and hold your sword up over your head so that the point extends right upwards, as shown by the figure on the left in Image C. [1.7r: Image C; 1.7v] Now any attack that is delivered from above is said to be executed from the Day or High Guard; therefore this posture is called the Day.

### **Fool [Olber]**

The Fool in my opinion takes its name from the word *Alber*, which is to say 'simpleminded', since from this guard no proper stroke can be readily achieved, unless one gathers for a new cut after the opponent's cut has been caught by means of a parry, which is truly the part of a fool and simple man, to allow someone to strike him without a prepared counterstroke. It is performed thus: stand with your left foot forward, and hold your sword with the point extended toward the ground in front of you before your forward foot, such that the short edge lies above, the long edge below. Thus you lie properly in this guard, as you can see in the same image [C] on the right.

### **Wrath Guard [Zornhut]**

The Wrath Guard is so named because this posture displays a wrathful attitude. It is done thus: stand with your left foot forward, and hold your sword on your right shoulder, such that the blade hangs down behind prepared for a stroke. And it is to be noted here that all the techniques that are executed from the guard of the Ox can also be carried out from the Wrath posture, except that one uses different conduct to deceive the opponent in this quarter; and sometimes you can use this guard, sometimes the other. Concerning it, see Image E.

### **Longpoint [Langort]**

Stand with your left foot forward, and hold your weapon with your arms extended long in front of your face so that your point stands toward your opponent's face; thus you lie in the guard of the Longpoint, as shown by the figure in Image A. [1.8r]

### **Change [Wechsel]**

This guard is executed thus: stand with your right foot forward and hold your weapon with the point or foible extended toward the ground by your side, so that the short edge faces toward your opponent, as you can see in the figure in Image D.

### **Side Guard [*Nebenhut*]**

In this guard, position yourself thus: stand with your left foot forward, hold your sword by your right side, with the point toward the ground, so that the pommel stands upwards, and the short edge toward you.

### **Irongate [*Eisenport*]**

You will find the true Irongate presented more fully later in the treatise on rapier combat.<sup>10</sup> For since thrusting with the longsword is abolished among us Germans, this guard has also entirely fallen into disuse and been lost; however these days the Italians and other nations use it. Nowadays the term is taken as equivalent to the Crossed Guard, and is used for it by the inexperienced, since they lack knowledge about the Irongate.

Yet since there is a difference between them, I will explain them both here briefly. And the Irongate is done thus: stand with your right foot forward, and hold your sword with the hilt in front of your knee with straight hanging arms, so that your point extends up toward your opponent's face. Thus you have your sword in front of you for protection like an iron door; for when you stand with your feet wide, so that your body is low, you can put off all cuts and thrusts from this position.

### **[Crossed Guard (*Schrankhut*)]**

Now the Crossed Guard is when you hold your sword with crossed hands in front of you with the point toward the ground, as is clearly to be seen in the following Image F. [*1.8v: Image F; 1.9r*]

### **Hanging Point [*Hangetort*]**

The figure on the right in the same image [*F*] teaches you how to execute the Hanging Point, except that it does not show the arms extended enough. Therefore position yourself in this guard thus: stand with your right foot forward, and hold your weapon with arms extended in front of you such that the blade hangs somewhat down toward the ground. This posture is quite similar to the Ox, except that in the Ox you hold the arms vertically, but here they shall be extended forward in front of your face, and you let the sword hang toward the ground, which is why it is called the Hanging Point.

### **Key [*Schlüssel*]**

The Key is illustrated in Image D. If you stand with your left foot forward and hold your sword with the hilt and crossed hands in front of your chest, so that the short edge lies on your left arm and the point is toward your opponent's face, then this posture or guard is correctly executed.

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<sup>10</sup> See 2.54r.

## Unicorn [*Einhorn*]

In the Onset, come with your left foot forward, and execute a Winging (?) upward on both sides, as if you intended to position yourself in the Key; go with crossed hands up to your right, so that the tip extends up in the air; this is called the Unicorn, and you stand as you can see in Image E in the figure on the right.

[1.9v]

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And this is the list of postures or guards briefly described by name, and how each of them is executed or carried out in the work. Now since in all combat, whatever you should cut, work, parry, or execute by way of work, you must not remain in one guard, but always move from one to another and transform one into another, it will behoove you to pay good attention to how these guards follow from one another, which I will briefly explain with cutting through the lines or routes.

Firstly, when you execute the High or Scalp Cut, you find three postures: for in the beginning you lie in the Day, in the middle in the Longpoint, at the end in the Fool; thus in the straight line down from above from A to E you have three guards or postures [*see the cutting diagram on 1.36r.*]. Conversely, if you go up from below with crossed hands to parry, you again find three postures, namely at the beginning the Irongate, in the middle the Hanging Point, in the end the Unicorn up at the top. If you pull your sword with the hilt in front of your chest so that the short edge lies on your left arm, then you stand in the Key. Thus you come from one posture into another as you go up and down in the line A-E.

There are two other lines that run diagonally down through the vertical line, one that runs from the upper right quarter, marked H-D, the other that goes from the upper left to the lower right, marked B-F. Now whichever one you cut through (for I have said before and will briefly repeat here that all cuts and postures can be executed on both sides, right and left, even though for the sake of brevity I describe them for the most part in only one form), you come first into the Wrath Guard, from which the cut takes its name, that is [1.10r] the Wrath Cut, named for its wrathful comportment; halfway through the cut into the Longpoint; and at the end into the Change. If you draw the stroke back up from there with the long edge, then you again go through three postures, that is in the beginning the Side Guard, in the middle the Longpoint again, and in the end up into the Unicorn. If you slash through one of these lines, whatever side it is from, then you come from the Change through the Longpoint into the Wrath Guard. Also in slashing upward you can turn your sword into the Hanging Point, and if you go further upward from there you come into the guard of the Ox. Thus whenever you go through one of the lines, you always find at least three postures.

Now a good combatant should not expect to wait long in his posture, but as soon as he can reach his opponent he should attack him and carry out his intended device. For long waiting requires many parries,

from which it is hard for a man to come to strike, as I will discuss more fully below in the section on parrying.

The postures are also very useful for the classification of the devices; for if one comes into a posture in the Onset, he can at once remember what devices to carry out from that posture. Furthermore they serve not only for graceful and proper changing from one posture into another, but also for deceiving of the opponent, and to make him confused and uncertain what he should execute against you. And lastly in this context, it is also useful and good to be readily able to perceive and recognise the technique your opponent might execute against you, and encounter him more appropriately.

All this concerns the beginning of this art, namely the Onset against the opponent, which occurs with cuts from the postures. Next comes the second component of this art, which is still part of the beginning, namely the cuts. [1.10v]

## Chapter 4: Concerning the Cuts<sup>11</sup>

Now we come to the art and noble knightly practice itself, namely to the cuts, which are the true chief element in combat, as I said in the beginning. It is necessary to say something here of how many there are, what each of them is, and how it shall be executed and carried out. But I will here remind the friendly reader at the outset, since there is a great difference between sword combat in our time and how it was practised by our predecessors and the combat masters of old, that this account of the cuts will only cover what is currently in use and pertinent to the sword. And as to the practice of former days, when they fought dangerously both with cuts and thrusts, I will discuss it in its proper and separate place.<sup>12</sup>

Now as to the sword at present, there are two distinct kinds of cuts, that is to say straight and reversed cuts. I call those straight that are delivered at the opponent with the long edge and extended arms, of which there are four: High, Wrath, Middle, and Low Cut. They are also properly called the chief or principal cuts, since all the others arise from them, and none can be imagined or found in the world that is so strange that it cannot be conceived properly under the heading of one of them.

The reversed cuts are those where one reverses the hand and sword in the cuts, so that one does not hit the opponent with the full or long edge but rather with the short edge, flat, or some angle, as happens with the

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<sup>11</sup> *Running head:* Concerning the Cuts

<sup>12</sup> *Meyer does not seem to follow up on this intent; this may allude to further material planned but never published.*



Clashing, Short, Crown, Squinting, Crooked, Thwart, Rebound, Blind, Winding, Wrist, Plunge, and Change Cut. [1.11r] Since these arise from the four straight cuts, they are called their derivative cuts.

Now among both of these, five are selected that are called the Master Cuts—not that whoever who can correctly execute them should at once be called a master of this art, but rather because they are the root of all true artful techniques that a master ought to know; and he who can execute and use them properly should be considered a skilled combatant, since all master techniques are hidden in them and one cannot do without them. These are the Wrath, Crooked, Thwart, Squinting, and Scalp Cut.

I will describe how all of these shall be done, one after another in order, and first will speak of the straight cuts, and of these first the High Cut.

### **High Cut [*Oberhauw*]**

The High Cut is a straight cut direct from above at your opponent's head toward his scalp, for which reason it is also called the Scalp Cut [*Scheidelhauw*].

### **Wrath Cut [*Zornhauw*]**

The Wrath Cut is a diagonal cut from your right shoulder at your opponent's left ear or through his face and chest, diagonally through as shown by the two crossed lines that pass through the vertical line. This is the strongest of all cuts, and embodies all the might and virility of the combatant against his opponent in duelling and combat; therefore it is also called the Strife Cut [*Streithauw*] or Father Stroke [*Vatterstreich*] by the combat masters of old. Concerning these lines you will find hereafter, etc.<sup>13</sup> [1.11v]

### **Middle [*Mittel*] or Horizontal Cut [*Überzwerchhauw*]**

The Middle or Horizontal Cut can in most respects be executed like the Wrath Cut; the only difference is that where the Wrath Cut is executed diagonally, this is executed across, as can be seen on the horizontal line marked G-C; you will this line find later in the section on the dusack.<sup>14</sup>

### **Low Cut [*Underhauw*]**

- 1.11v.1** ➤ This one you execute thus: cut into the right Ox, concerning which I have spoken in the previous chapter, and as soon as you can reach your opponent, then step and cut across from below at his left arm, so that you come up over your head with the quillons; thus have you executed it. Concerning this see the small figure on the left in Image B.

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<sup>13</sup> See the diagram on 1.36r; in this case, Meyer is referring to lines H-D and B-F.

<sup>14</sup> See Dusack Image A.

### **Squinting Cut [*Schielhauw*]**

The Squinting Cut is also a High Cut, but is so named because it is delivered as if with a bit of a squint. It is done thus:

- 1.11v.2** ➤ Position yourself in the guard of the Day or Wrath (concerning which I have spoken in Chapter 3), with your left foot forward; when he cuts at you, then cut in return, but in the stroke, turn your short edge against his stroke, and strike in at the same time as your opponent, palm away from his sword; step with your right foot well to his left side, and with this, nimbly take your head out of the way. Thus you have executed it correctly against him, and you stand as shown by the large figure on the left in Image G. [*1.12r: Image K; 1.12v*]

### **Crooked Cut [*Krumphauw*]**

- 1.12v.1** ➤ This cut is executed thus: stand in the Wrath Guard with your left foot forward; if your opponent cuts at you, then step with your right foot well out from his stroke toward his left side; cut with the long edge and crossed hands against his cut, or across on his hands between his head and blade, and let the blade shoot well over his arm, as can be seen in Image D in the figures on the upper right.<sup>15</sup>

### **Thwart [*Zwerch*]**

- 1.12v.2** ➤ For the Thwart, conduct yourself thus: in the Onset, position yourself in the Wrath Guard on the right (concerning which see the previous chapter), that is, set your left foot forward, and hold your sword on your right shoulder, as if you intended to deliver a Wrath Cut. If your opponent cuts at you from the Day or High, then cut at the same time as him with the short edge across from below against his cut; hold your quillons up over your head, as a parrying for your head, and at the same time as the cut, step well to his left side. Thus you parry and hit simultaneously, as shown by the two figures on the left in Image H.<sup>16</sup>

As you have done this Thwart Cut on the left, so you shall also do it on the right, except that you shall hit with the long edge against his right.

### **Short Cut [*Kurtzhauw*]**

This is a stealthy action that goes through against your opponent, and is done thus:

- 1.12v.3** ➤ When your opponent cuts at you from above, then act as if you intended to bind on his sword with the Crooked Cut, that is with the short edge; but forego this, and quickly go through under his sword; strike with the short edge and crossed arms [*1.13r*] over his right arm at his head; thus you have caught

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<sup>15</sup> Compare the version in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fols. 25r-v.

<sup>16</sup> Compare the version in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fols. 27r-v, and the *Von Danzig Fechtbuch*, fols. 18v-19r.

his sword with the long edge and executed the Short Cut, and you stand at the end of it as shown by the figure on the right in the small scene on the upper left in Image B.<sup>17</sup>

### **Clashing Cut [*Glützhauw*]**

- 1.13r.1** ➤ The Clashing Cut is done thus: if someone cuts at you from above, then strike with the back of your hand against his stroke to the upper left opening; let your blade slip off on his blade with the outside flat so that in the impetus, the short edge hits his head, palm away from him.

### **Rebound Cut [*Prellhauw*]**

This is of two kinds; one is called the single, and the other the double.

- 1.13r.2** ➤ The single is done thus: if your opponent cuts at you from above, then intercept his stroke with a Thwart. As soon as it clashes, pull the sword around your head and strike from your left with the outside flat at his ear, as shown by the large figure on the right in Image K, so that the sword rebounds back away. Pull it back around your head in the impetus of the rebound; cut with the Thwart to his left; thus it is done.
- 1.13r.3** ➤ Do the double this way: in the Onset as soon as your opponent brings his sword into the air to work, then position yourself in the right Ox (concerning which see the previous chapter), pull your sword around your head, and cut strongly with the inside flat from your right against his blade, so that in the blow your pommel touches underneath the radius-bone of your forearm, as can be seen in the large figure on the left in Image I, and in the stroke step with your right foot well around his left. And as soon as it clashes or connects, then jerk it upwards and at the same time wrench to the left, and strike quickly outside with the back of your hand, back [*1.13v: Image G; 1.14r*] into the same opening, that is with the outside flat, such that it has rebounded around and right back in; thus you have done it rightly.

### **Blind Cut [*Blendthauw*]**

- 1.14r.1** ➤ Bind your opponent from your right on his sword; in the bind, wind through below with your hilt or haft toward [your]<sup>18</sup> left side. When your opponent tries to slip after the winding, then nimbly flick the foible, that is the point, at his head from your right at his left with crossed hands. Quickly wind back through, or wrench to your left side with the short edge; thus you have executed the Blind Cut.

This Blind Cut is done in many ways; there will be more about it in the section on devices.

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<sup>17</sup> Compare the version in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fol. 26r.

<sup>18</sup> 1570: seiner ('his'); read: deiner ('your')

### **Winding Cut [*Windthauw*]**

- 1.14r.2** ➤ The Winding Cut is done in the following manner: if your opponent cuts at you from above, then cut from below with crossed hands from your left onto his sword, so that your pommel sticks out under your right arm. And as soon as it clashes, step with your left foot out from him well toward your left side, withdraw your pommel again in a loop back out toward your left side, so that in the impetus, your long edge connects with his head over his right arm behind his blade, or hits over his right arm (concerning which see the large figure on the right in Image H), and so that your sword flies out by your side; and quickly cut back opposite to it with the Cross; thus it is done.

### **Crown Cut [*Kronhauw*]**

- 1.14r.3** ➤ This is executed thus: when you stand in the Plow or else lay on up from below from some posture (concerning which I have spoken in the previous chapter), and your opponent cuts at you from above, then go up with horizontal quillons and catch his stroke in the air on your shield or quillon bar; and as soon as it clashes, push the pommel quickly upward and strike him with the short edge behind his blade on his head; thus have you correctly executed the Crown Cut. [*l.14v*]

### **Wrist Cut [*Kniechelhauw*]**

This is so called from the body part to which it is directed. Do it thus:

- 1.14v.1** ➤ After the initial Onset, when you have come under your opponent's sword with your hands up above your head, and he holds his head thus between his arms, then cut with Thwart Cuts under his pommel up toward his wrist-bones or wrist-joints. If he holds his hands too high, then cut with these Thwart Cuts up from below toward the knob of his elbows; thus it is done.

### **Plunge Cut [*Sturtzhauw*]**

Although this cut is a High Cut, and so considered because there is not much difference between the two, yet this is called the Plunge Cut because in cutting through, it always plunges over above, so that the point comes against the opponent's face in the Ox; and it is most used in the Approach or Onset.

### **Change Cut [*Wechselhauw*]**

The Change Cut is simply to change off before your opponent with your cuts, from one side to another, from above to below, and vice versa, in order to confuse him.

### **Flick [*Schneller*] or Tag-Hit [*Zeckrur*]**

The flick or Tag-Hit is not actually delivered as a cut, but is rather flicked; it is executed in the middle of combat when one has occasion, namely when you make your weapon snap at your opponent from above or from either side or from below with the flat or foible of the blade, or flick it in an arc over or under his

blade.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is in brief terms the proper description of the cuts as they are usually executed in sword combat. But since [1.15r] they are described here with their striking, stepping, and cutting as if they were only executed on one side and in a single manner, when in fact they can be executed on both sides, I wish to remind the benevolent reader that in the same way as each of these cuts is presented and executed from one side, so it can also be executed well and properly from the other; therefore I will gladly pass over such extensive repetition and redundant description as superfluous.

But since one might ask concerning many of the cuts and their diversification, why this takes place, since everything is sufficiently covered by the four chief cuts along with the Squinting Cut (through which the other reversed cuts are conceived and understood), I will inform the gracious reader in this art that the cuts I have described are all well embodied in the five Master Cuts, since they arise from them, but they are properly invented and named with their individual names by those experienced in this art for the more diligent and useful study and categorization of the art, so that the art that is hidden, when it is wrapped up together, can be understood, grasped, and distinctly remembered more readily and easily.

## Chapter 5: [Handwork]

### **Some Useful Advice about Parrying [*Versetzen*]<sup>19</sup>**

Since combat is based on two chief elements, that is first on the cuts with which you seek to overcome your opponent, then secondly on parrying, which is how you may bear off the cuts that your opponent directs at you and make them weak and unforceful; and I have already sufficiently described how to execute the cuts in the work; and since every cut is used to defend against your opponent's stroke and put it off, as well as to injure his body, to teach the cuts is also to teach the parries. Therefore now that you have learned to deliver the cuts [1.15v], you have also been taught at the same time how to bear off the cuts. Although this cannot be separated from the cuts, as you have just heard, yet it will be necessary to discuss it here specifically with different classifications.

Therefore note first that there are two types of parrying. The first is when you parry without any particular advantage in the common fashion only out of fear, in which you do nothing but catch the strokes that come

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<sup>19</sup> *Running head:* Concerning Parrying

from your opponent by holding your weapon against him, and you do not seek to injure him, but are content to get away from him without injury.

Now if you are forced to this parrying by your opponent's power and onrush, then see that you nonetheless free yourself with back-stepping, and may beneficially recover the initiative. And Liechtenauer speaks of this kind of parrying when he says:

Guard yourself from parrying;  
if need befalls you, it will cause you trouble.<sup>20</sup>

With these lines he does not entirely forbid parrying, namely that you should only learn how to cut; for as it will harm you (as you have heard before) if you will rely on parrying, since you would be compelled to parry too much, so it is no use to be overly aggressive with striking, or to cut in at the same time against his strokes recklessly as if with closed eyes, for this resembles not combat but rather a mindless peasants' brawl.

Now to be more useful, I will here classify cutting and parrying that is executed with a stroke, and solely teach you how you should execute such cuts for parrying, which also may take place in two ways. The first is when you first put off your opponent's stroke or send it away with a cut, and then rush at his body with a cut having taken his defence. [1.16r]

The second way to parry is when you parry your opponent and hit him at the same time with a single stroke, which the combat masters of old especially praise as suitable. Hence the proverb has arisen: 'A true combatant doesn't parry, but when the opponent cuts, then he cuts too; when the opponent steps, then he steps too; when the opponent thrusts, then he thrusts too.'<sup>21</sup>

Concerning the first way, you need to know that the High Cut suppresses all other cuts downward from above, namely the Wrath, Middle or Horizontal, and Low Cut, in this manner: spring out from his cut, and at the same time cut strongly at his cut as it comes in, so that if you hit correctly, you weaken his weapon so much that you can well cut the second one at his body before he fully recovers.

Now as the High Cut suppresses all the other cuts downward from above, so it is driven off by the Wrath or Horizontal Cut; and the Low also takes out the High Cut upward, if it is done strongly and assisted with stepping out.

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<sup>20</sup> Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 133-34.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the *Ringek Fechtbuch*, fol. 35r: 'When he cuts, then cut too, and when he thrusts, then thrust too.'

Now where two simultaneous cuts take place together with their appropriate stepping, the one step a little bit before or after the other, as can happen in the blink of an eye, then they bring their parrying with them; and this parrying is embodied in the first and straight cuts.

Now the other parrying is when you simultaneously parry and hit; it happens with the reversed cuts, such as the Squinting Cut, Clashing, Crown, and Thwart Cut. You have already heard how this is done in the explanation of each cut. For these reverse cuts are especially invented so that you can simultaneously parry and hit. But so that I do not fail to help you to a better understanding and instruction, I will give an example of parrying with the Thwart Cut. [1.16v]

- 1.16v.1** ➤ Position yourself in the Wrath Guard; when you are cut at from above, then step with your right foot toward your opponent's side, and simultaneously cut across with a short-edge Thwart, so that you catch his cut on the forte of your blade near your quillon bar, and hit his left ear with your foible; thus you have simultaneously parried and hit.

The other cuts with which one neither parries nor hits, such as the Short Cut and Failer etc., are not a core component of combat but only allowed *per accidens* or circumstantially, to deceive the opponent, provoke him, make him angry, and to drive him out of his advantage, which generally does not happen without risk, since they do not incorporate any parrying.

### **Handwork [*Handtarbeit*]<sup>22</sup>**

Now that in the first part of combat I have sufficiently explained both postures and cuts, and they come to the point where they bring you under your opponent's sword, now the true seriousness and contest begins, namely where you drive him, crowd him, and constrain him, with all the Middle-work, such as deceiving, chasing, changing, doubling, and pressing after, so that, having been stopped at first, with swift work you may reach and obtain the prize that all combatants crave as their goal.

For it is by no means enough to have begun well and rightly, if you do not also press after judiciously, for the greatest art depends on this, and it all falls under this chapter concerning handwork. Now since this must take place in various ways, each of which has its own vocabulary, it will be necessary to offer clear explanation and rationale concerning each of them, what they are, and how they shall be executed. [1.17r: *Image D*; 1.17v]

That is, the whole handwork consists chiefly of binding or remaining, chasing, slicing, striking around,

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<sup>22</sup> *Running head*: Handwork

running [off]<sup>23</sup>, deceiving, flitting, setting off, parrying, pulling, doubling, reversing, snapping, failing, circling, looping, winding, winding through, changing, changing through, slicing off, pressing hands, sliding, hanging, wrenching, barring, blocking, gripping over, running in, etc.

### **Binding [*Anbinden*]/Remaining [*Bleiben*]/Feeling [*Fühlen*]**

This is when the swords connect with one another. There are two kinds of remaining: the first is when the swords are held against one another to see what the opponent will execute and where he intends to attack his adversary. The other happens with striking, when you act as if you were pulling to gather for a stroke, only you simply flick back around, and come back in with the short edge, where you cut first with the long edge. Note here the word ‘feeling,’ which means testing or perceiving, to find out whether he is hard or soft on your sword with his bind, etc.

### **Chasing [*Nachreisen*]**

This is a particularly good handwork, and he who is very skillful in it and knows well how to use it may properly be praised as a master. And chasing is executed thus: if your opponent cuts with his weapon either too far up or down, or too far out to the side, then you rush after him at his opening and thus prevent his cut coming to completion; for this may properly be used against those who fight with their cuts sweeping wide around them. So that you may better understand this, I will explain it for you with this example:

- 1.17v.1 ➤ When an opponent is fighting with you, then observe in which part he holds his sword. Now if he holds it in the right Ox, that is in the upper right quarter, then the moment he takes his sword away from there to change to the other side, or simply pulls up for the stroke, you shall cut in quickly and skillfully, [*l. 18r*] using those cuts and techniques from which you can at once achieve a parry.
- 1.18r.1 ➤ Now if he attacks from the lower guards (whether he fights from the left or right side), then as soon as he goes up, see that you pursue him at once under his sword skillfully with the long edge and strike to the nearest opening.

### **Slicing [*Schneiden*]**

This is also one of the true core techniques in the handwork; for when your opponent rushes upon you with quick and swift devices, you can stop and hinder him with no other technique better than with the slice, which you should hold in stock for yourself among all techniques as a particular gem to discover. Now you must execute the slice thus:

- 1.18r.2 ➤ After you have caught your opponent’s sword with the bind, you shall remain there to feel whether he

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<sup>23</sup> 1570: Umblauffen (‘running around’); read: Ablauffen.



intends to withdraw from the bind or strike around. As soon as he strikes around, then pursue him with the long edge on his arm; push him back from you with your forte or shield, let your weapon fly, and cut to the nearest opening before he can recover.

### **Striking Around [*Umbschlagen*]**

It is called striking around with the sword when, having bound from your right against his left, you go back out of that bind and strike around or flick to the other side.

### **Running Off [*Ablauffen*]**

- 1.18r.3** ➤ This is, from whichever side you bind your opponent's sword, then reverse your hands as soon as it touches and let it run off with the short edge down, and meanwhile pull your hilt up in the air for a stroke; and do this on both sides. [*1.18v*]

### **Deceiving [*Verführen*]**

This happens when you act as if you intended to lay on to one of your opponent's openings, but you don't do it, and instead deliver the stroke to another opening where you believe you can arrive most conveniently without harm. And various techniques fall under the category of deceiving, such as the Squinting Cut with the face, failing, flitting, deceitful glancing, running off, pulling, the Circle, and others. And various deceptions not only with the sword but also with body language arise here. Thus there are as many versions of this as there are types and qualities of fighters, for it depends entirely on everyone's character and custom in combat: as one fights wrathfully, another circumspectly, this one swift and fast, that one slowly, so also deceiving takes like form and is so carried out in the work.

### **Flitting [*Verfliegen*]**

This happens thus: in the Onset or the middle of the work, when you cut at your opponent's opening, and he goes against you to catch your stroke in the air, then do not let his blade connect with your sword, but pull the stroke back in the air with a single motion to another opening. This work is very useful against an opponent who is only eager to chase your sword and not to harm your body.

### **Setting Off [*Absetzen*]**

Since (as I have shown) all combat devices require two things, namely cutting, and using the sword to bear off or parry the cuts, note that this handwork is the true bearing off or parrying, with which you do not simply catch the stroke without cutting back, but at the very moment the setting off connects, you hit to his opening with a step out.

- 1.18v.1** ➤ For instance, if you come in the Onset into the Change, and he cuts at you [*1.19r*] from above, then go up with the long edge against his stroke and step the same time with your right foot toward his left and set him off; then at the moment it clashes, turn the short edge and flick it at his head.

### **Slinging [*Schlaudern*]**

This is simply when you let a cut fly with a fling against your opponent's head.

- 1.19r.1** ➤ For example, position yourself in the guard of the Fool, and pull your sword back through by your right side; just as you pull your sword back, step with your right foot toward him and sling your cut at his head.

This Slinging Cut shall fly just as a stone is thrown from a sling. Whatever else is necessary concerning slinging you will find written later in the section on devices.

### **Pulling [*Zucken*]**

You can deceive your opponent masterfully with pulling, which is a very good handwork. You shall do it thus:

- 1.19r.2** ➤ After you have bound your opponent or cut in at his opening with the long edge, then quickly pull back up as if you intended to cut at the other side; however, do not proceed, but quickly complete the cut with the short edge back at the spot from which you have gone away.

### **Doubling [*Doplieren*]**

This is to make a cut or technique double in this way:

- 1.19r.3** ➤ Cut first from your right to his ear; at once when the swords clash together, push your pommel through under your right arm; go up at the same time with both arms and strike him with the short edge behind his blade on his head.

This handwork is called doubling, because through it a cut is doubled or executed twice, first with the long edge, then with the short. [1.19v]

### **Reversing [*Verkehren*]**

- 1.19v.1** ➤ Reversing is this: bind your opponent's sword against his left, and as soon as it connects, push your pommel through under your right arm; at the same time withdraw your head well from his stroke to your right. Then press his blade or arm down from you with crossed hands so that you trap him such that he can no longer attack, but you make yourself space to work at will.

### **Snapping Around [*Umschnappen*]**

Snapping around is of two kinds.

- 1.19v.2 ➤ The one is when you come on his arm or blade by reversing (as I have just described), then hold his blade or arm firmly below you with the quillons and meanwhile let the blade snap around at his head.
- 1.19v.3 ➤ The other: if he has forced you down with reversing, then slip from him with your left foot toward his right, and with this, catch over his right arm with your pommel, jerk it down, and let your weapon snap around out from under his blade with the short edge at his head, so that your hands come crosswise over one another.

### **Failing [*Fehlen*]**

Anyone can well deliver a failing attack, but only a well trained combatant knows how to execute it suitably at the proper time. Therefore if you wish to deliver a failing stroke advantageously such that you can gather another from it, then take care when you cut at an opening and your opponent seeks to parry you, that you do not let the cut connect, but run off and cut at another opening. For example:

- 1.19v.4 ➤ In the Onset, come into right Wrath, and as soon as you can reach him, then step and cut at his left ear as far as his sword, but before the cut connects, lift the pommel and let the blade run off by his left side without hitting and pull it around your head; then cut at his other side outside over his right arm at his head. [*1.20r: Image L; 1.20v*]

### **Circle [*Zirckel*]**

When you stand before your opponent in the bind, and both of you have your swords overhead in the air, but neither will make himself open before the other, then the Circle is an extremely good work to use. You shall do it thus:

- 1.20v.1 ➤ Cut through from above with the short edge and crossed hands past his right side, so that your hands remain above your head, and in the cut cross your right hand well over the left so that you may well reach or graze his right ear with the short edge. But if he then slips with his arms down after your sword, then step with your right foot well sideways to his [*?read: your*] right or back, and deliver a straight Scalp Cut at his head.

### **Looping [*Rinde*]**

There are two sorts of looping, single and double. Single looping is when you pull your sword away from your opponent's blade or opening in an arc over your head, and let it fly around in the air so that you describe a circle. Double looping is when you pull away from his sword so strongly that it runs around twice in a continuous motion over your head, once to each side. These loopings, both single and double, are also very useful for deceiving, as you will see and learn more extensively in the section on devices.

### **Winding [*Winden*]**

The word ‘winding’ in proper German is *Wenden* [‘turning’]. This work shall be done thus: when you have bound from your right against his left on your opponent’s sword, then remain fast in the bind, and turn the foible of your blade in at his head and back out, yet such that [1.21r] during this you always remain firm on his sword with the bind, as I have said. It can be seen here in this example:

- 1.21r.1** ➤ If someone cuts at you from the Day, then bind from your right with a Thwart on his sword, and as soon as it clashes, then push your pommel through under your right arm, and thus turn the short edge in a flick inward at his head; and in all this remain hard on his sword with the slice. If he sees the flick and parries, or if you can feel that he is going to fall down from the sword at your opening from above, then jerk the pommel back out from under your arm upward to your left, and strike back with a short-edge Thwart at his left ear.

### **Winding Through [*Durchwinden*]**

- 1.21r.2** ➤ When you have bound with a Thwart Cut and (as I have said before) wound the short edge in at your opponent's head, then step through with your right foot between you and him, toward your opponent's right side, and at the same time wind through with your haft under his blade to your left side, and send your pommel outside over his right arm. Step back with your right foot, and with this, wrench down on your right side, and strike with the long edge on his head. Thus have you not only wound through, but caught over with the pommel.

### **Changing [*Wechseln*]**

Changing demands an experienced combatant, for he who changes inexpertly and not at the right time only delays himself and makes himself open without cause. But for him who is experienced in combat and knows how to use changing, it is an artful work, and appropriate to execute against those who only work toward the sword and not toward the body. Now changing is diverse: changing in the Onset from one side to another, changing before the Onset from one guard to another, also in the Onset to change through against the cut.

- 1.21r.3** ➤ Thus in the Onset deliver a straight Wrath or High Cut from your right at your opponent's left side. [1.21v] If he cuts at your sword and not at your body, then in the cut, let your point slip through underneath with crossed hands; step and cut long in to the other upper opening. But be careful that he does not catch you or set his weapon upon you by chasing.
- 1.21v.1** ➤ Likewise in the Onset come into the Longpoint and extend it long in front of you. If he cuts against your sword and intends to strike it out or wind, then let your point sink through underneath, and work at his other side. If he slips after it and intends to parry, then change through again, either until you

have an opening or else until you come upon a suitable work with which you can cut.

### **Slicing Off [*Abschneiden*]**

You should execute slicing off thus:

- 1.21v.2** ➤ Hold the sword with your arms extended long in front of you, or sink into the guard of the Fool; if your opponent cuts at you with long cuts, then slice them off from you with the long edge to both sides, until you see your opportunity to come to another work more suitable for you.

Chasing and the slice are also hidden within this slicing off. Therefore Liechtenauer also writes of this in a maxim where he says:

Slice off the hard ones  
from both dangers.<sup>24</sup>

That is, slice off the hard strokes from you from both sides. But concerning this slicing off I will write more later in the examples and in the other weapons.

### **Pressing Hands [*Hendrucken*]**

Pressing hands strongly resembles the slices on the arm, concerning which I have spoken above, since it is always executed as with the High and Low Slice.

- 1.21v.3** ➤ For example, if an opponent overruns you with cloddish blows, then go under his stroke with the Crown, or else a high parrying, or go under him with hanging, and catch his sword on the flat of your blade. And when you come under his sword, then [1.22r] if he goes back up from your weapon with his stroke, see that you pursue him with your forte, and fall on him with your shield from below in front of his fists, so that you get them with the forte of your blade. Push him up away from you with your shield, and cut long toward the opening.

### **Sliding [*Verschieben*]**

- 1.22r.1** ➤ When you stand in the right Wrath, and he cuts at you, then let the blade hang behind you, and slide your hanging blade over your head and under his blade, so that you catch his stroke on your flat, and your thumb lies under the flat of your shield. Then you can wind or else undertake a suitable work as seems best to you.

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<sup>24</sup> *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 178-79.*

### **Hanging [*Hengen*]**

Hanging is easy to understand from the previous. Do it thus:

- 1.22r.2 ➤ When you stand in the Plow and your opponent cuts at you, then go up with your hilt so that the blade hangs somewhat toward the ground, and catch his stroke on the flat of your blade. Then work with winding to the nearest opening.

### **Wrenching [*Ausreißen*]**

- 1.22r.3 ➤ If you bind an opponent from your right, then reverse your sword in the bind, and wrench to your left side, such that you both stand close together in the bind. Then try to come at him from below with your pommel between his arms, and wrench upward. Or if you have caught over his arms from above with your pommel, or wound in whatever way it might happen, then wrench downward, as you will hear more fully later in the section on devices. [1.22v]

### **Barring [*Sperren*]**

- 1.22v.1 ➤ Note when an opponent stands before you in the Change or guard of the Fool, and fall forcefully with your long edge on his blade, and as soon as it clashes or touches, then cross your hands and bar him so that he cannot come out.
- 1.22v.2 ➤ Or when he slashes up before you, then fall with crossed hands on his blade and bar him.

### **Blocking [*Verstüllen*]**

You shall do blocking thus: if an opponent comes before you who works quickly with every sort of attack to the four openings, and will do this swiftly overhead, then fall with the slice on his arm or sword, and do not let him come away again, but wherever he goes, pursue him closely with the slice on his arm, and thus block his course so that he cannot work. Then as soon as you see your opportunity, push him away from you with the slice and let your weapon fly in to the nearest opening.

### **Gripping Over [*Übergreifen*]**

- 1.22v.3 ➤ Gripping over is this: cut from your right to his upper left opening; and in the cut, grip with your fingers out over the quillons or shield, while keeping your thumb on the haft; and raise the pommel with your left hand and strike him on the head with hanging blade over or behind his parry.

### **Running In [*Einlaufen*]**

Running in is simply to run in under an opponent's sword such that both swords connect together. As to that which further belongs to wrestling and casting, it will be more sensible to discuss it in the section on devices, so I will save it for there, and now proceed to the third part of my epitome. [1.23r]

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At this point, dear gracious reader, you have not only heard in what way you shall lay on against your opponent with the cuts, but also by what means you may come to him further in the handwork without harm to yourself. But since this is not enough unless thirdly a good withdrawal is made, I will in the following chapter give you true and clear instruction concerning the withdrawal.

## Chapter 6: Concerning the Withdrawal [*Abzug*]<sup>25</sup>

Although, as they say, to have begun well may in all things practically half acquit you, yet equally on the other hand a poor finish may ruin and bring to nothing everything that was well and properly done up to that point, as may daily be seen. Now so that it does not befall you in combat, that after you have laid on well and soundly pressed after, you end up getting shamed at the last, I will here properly explain to you how the withdrawal shall take place.

Now it is particularly to be noted that after every device has been executed, you must always withdraw in one of these three ways: either first, before your opponent; or last, after him; or else at the same time as him.

If you want to withdraw before him, then see that you first crowd him and drive him up with your techniques to such a degree that he must go up to protect himself; while he then tries to see what you plan to do next, then strike through at once with the withdrawal cut, and go away before he realises it.

Now if you want to withdraw after him, then note that this may take place in two ways. First, when you wait for your opponent's withdrawal, and then as he cuts away from you, you chase him skilfully over [1.23v] his blade with your withdrawal. Second, when you act as if you intended to withdraw before him, but hold back your cut artfully and without him realizing it, so that when he rushes after you, you let him miss with his cut and fall, so that you can cut after him over his weapon to the opening.

Now if you want to withdraw at the same time as him, then conduct yourself such that by stepping out you always come over his blade with your cut; and when he cuts away from his right side, you cut on his left side; but if he cuts on his left, you step out to his right, and cut in at the same time as him.

However since all devices involve this, you will well be able to learn it sufficiently in its place where I

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<sup>25</sup> *Running head:* Concerning the Withdrawal

discuss the devices.

## Chapter 7: Advice about Stepping<sup>26</sup>

Some might here be astonished, and particularly those who were inexperienced in combat, that I offer instruction about stepping; they might believe that nothing much depends on how one steps, or even if something depended on it, that ‘The marketplace will teach it to you well enough’ (as the saying goes).<sup>27</sup> But so much depends on this, that as experience shows, all combat happens vainly, no matter how artful it is, if the steps for it are not executed correctly. Therefore the combat masters of old who were very learned and experienced in this, stated in their twelve rules:

Whoever first steps after the cuts  
should not rejoice much of his skill.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore each stroke must have its own step, which shall take place at the same time as the stroke, [1.24r] if you wish to achieve anything with the devices you use. For if you step too soon or too late, then it is over with your device, and you thus defeat your own cuts. Therefore learn to execute the steps correctly, so that your opponent cannot proceed with his device as he wishes, but so that you, as it were, steal away the ground or space from him.

Now in the Onset you should act as if you intended to take a big and broad step, but then actually keep your feet close together; and contrarily when he thinks you will approach him slowly, then be on him swiftly with broad stepping and lay on against him. For so much depends on this that everyone who has learned and practised combat must acknowledge it.

Now there are three chief forms of stepping:

- Firstly, back and forward; it is not necessary to explain at length what these are, namely when one steps toward or away from the opponent.
- Secondly, there are also steps to the sides, which are described by the triangle, namely thus: stand in a straight line with your right foot before your opponent and step with your left behind your right

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<sup>26</sup> *Running head: Concerning the Steps*

<sup>27</sup> *I.e., practical experience is the best way to learn it.*

<sup>28</sup> *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 20-21; cited as the fourth of the ‘Twelve Rules’ in the Egenolph Fechtbuch (?c.1535): fol. 4r.*



toward his left; and this is the single. The other, which is a double step, happens thus: step as before with your right foot toward his left; follow then with your left behind the right toward his left somewhat to the side, and then thirdly with the right again to his left.

- Thirdly, there are the broken or stolen steps, which are done thus: act as if you intend to step forward with the one foot, and before you set it down, step backwards with it behind the other foot. Since these properly belong in the rapier, I will save it for there. [1.24v]

## Chapter 8: Concerning Before [*Vor*], After [*Nach*], Simultaneously [*Gleich*], and Instantly [*Indeß*]<sup>29</sup>

Now that I have properly explained in good order the true chief elements of combat with the sword—how many of them there are, what they are called, and how they shall be carried out and executed—it is time that you should, as it were, be brought to the place of encounter to execute these elements in the work.

However since your opponent may possess the same information as you, and can counter all this, you need to know beforehand upon what opportunity you may come to him. For daily experience attests how much depends on the opportunity, and especially in combat, since no technique, no matter how good it is, may be usefully carried out, if it is not used at its proper time.

Thus take heed in all three parts of every device—namely in the Onset, in the Middle or Handwork, and then in the Withdrawal—of the Before, Simultaneously, After, and Instantly, the use of which will be no small help to you in combat.

It is called Before when you attack your opponent with your cutting in the first Onset, and further drive on, so that he cannot come to his undertaking or device, but must restrict himself to parrying so that he may defend himself from you.

The Simultaneously is when both you and your opponent execute your cuts at the same time, which is also signified by the word *Indes* [‘Instantly’].

Now the After is when you are rushed on by your opponent, as has been described before, so that you cannot carry out your intention.

There is thus a constant changing [1.25r] and transformation between the Before and After, for now your

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<sup>29</sup> *Running head*: Concerning Before and After

opponent gets it, now you in return. But he who has the After, that is, is so crowded upon that he must always parry, shall be well mindful of the word Instantly, and not forget it; for through it he must rush back to the Before, if he wishes to withdraw without harm. But whoever does not pay attention to it, even though he conducts himself fiercely, he will nonetheless never learn to execute anything good.

### **Instantly [*Indes*]**

Many have believed that the word *Indes* has its origin from the Latin word *intus* [‘inside’], and indicates the inside combat, which arises from the windings and similar work; but you will hear now that this is not true.

I leave the meaning of the word *intus* to the Latinists, but the word *Indes* is a good German word, and embodies a serious exhortation to quick judgement, so that one should be constantly swift of mind. For example, if you first strike to the left, and secondly you see at that moment an opening to the right, then thirdly when you rush at the opening you have seen, that you pay good heed where or with what techniques he may come to you, so that you do not overcommit to your attack at your opponent's opening, and receive harm from it. Thus the word *Indes* admonishes you to have a sharp lookout, which involves seeing and heeding many things at once. Also you may learn sufficiently from your opponent's body language, what kind of techniques he intends to use, and what they will entail by way of openings, and where they will offer you opportunities. For the whole art of combat lies in all these things that the word *Indes* admonishes you, as Liechtenauer says.<sup>30</sup> And if you do not heed it, and execute all cuts wisely and judiciously, you will easily run into your own harm, as can be seen in those combatants who are overly aggressive and (as the saying goes) ‘will extend up but never on.’<sup>31</sup> [1.25v]

## Chapter 9: Introduction to the devices [*Stücke*], and how they can and shall be executed from the elements explained so far<sup>32</sup>

Since the elements described and explained up to now are properly just a beginning and primer from which all combat devices with the sword can be learned, it is necessary that before I derive some devices from them, first I should show in what way this shall take place. For if you wish to write a full proper word, you must hold in your mind and memory all the letters, and also know thoroughly what the nature and property

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Liechtenauer (1965: l. 33) and the fuller exposition in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch* (fol. 38v): ‘Instantly doubles and Instantly transmutes; Instantly runs through and Instantly takes the slice, Instantly also wrestles, Instantly takes his sword; Instantly does in the art whatever your heart desires.’

<sup>31</sup> The proverb apparently refers to those who aggressively dominate the space above the opponent, but never actually land a hit.

<sup>32</sup> *Running head*: Introduction to the Devices

of each one is, so that the useful and appropriate letters will fly into the pen one after another in order; so likewise in combat you shall hold and conceive the previously explained elements in your mind, so that whenever you come to fight with an opponent, the ones you need at that moment will come to you at once. But as not all letters can be used for every word, so it is also impossible to undertake all the elements that I have described here all at once in every device. Therefore you shall take heed what the situation requires; how your opponent conducts himself against you; also what kind of person he is, whether he is swift or slow, big or little; and you need to know how to use your work and confront him accordingly.

As I have said, every combat device is divided into three parts, namely the Onset, Middle, and Withdrawal, and I have explained these three parts in order, and shown what is to be heeded in each one. Thus in the Approach you must begin from the guards using those cuts with which you best think to lay on and rush upon your opponent. And after you have laid on against him in the first part, [1.26r] and have come within range of him or perhaps under his sword, then you must have yet more elements with which the full device may be carried out, which you learn from the second portion of this book, namely the Handwork, so that you further crowd upon all his four openings, and he may come to no harmful work against you, or to such a technique as you will then have in ample surplus. And so that you may then bring the device to completion, you must lastly have more letters for this word; thus in the third section of this book you must seek how to finish this device and withdraw without harm or allowing your opponent a hit. Therefore see that you so crowd him in the Middle-work that you come to the Withdrawal before he realises it (something I will teach much about in the individual devices); or entice him to cut away from you, so that you can simultaneously cut at him above over his sword as you step out, and suitably take your withdrawal and recover.

So that you may understand this quite properly, I will offer you a full device with all three things:

- 1.26r.1** ➤ In the Onset come into the right Change; take heed as soon as he pulls up his sword for a stroke, and quickly slash through upward before him, and cut in with a Thwart from your right at the same time as him; in the cut, step well to his left side. If he sends his cut straight to your head, then you will hit him with the Thwart on his left ear. But if you see that he does not cut straight to your head, but turns his cut with the long edge against your Thwart to parry, then before it touches, cut quickly with a long Thwart at his right ear; step at the same time with your left foot well around to his right. Now you have laid on with two Thwart Cuts to both sides, opposite each other; this you take from the first section of this treatise. After this Onset, if you wish to proceed further to the Middle Work, then the second [1.26v] section helps you thus: if he strikes around from your sword to the other side, then chase him with the slice on his arm. Push him from you with the forte of your blade or with your shield with a jerk; while he is still faltering from the push and has not yet recovered, then go rapidly up with crossed arms and strike with the short edge over his right arm at his head, and this (as I have said) before he

recovers from the push. Now if he should recover and slip upward to parry, then let your sword fly back away and deliver a Thwart to his left ear with a back-step on your left foot.

- 1.26v.1** ➤ Or if he does not go away or strike around, but remains with the slice or long edge on him, then reverse your sword so that your short edge comes on his; wrench his sword to your right side; then let your weapon snap around in the air, so that your hands come back together crosswise up over your head; and strike with the short edge at his head as before, before he recovers from the wrenching. Afterwards step back with your left foot and deliver a horizontal Middle Cut with the long edge from your right at his neck, and as soon as it clashes, then draw away to his right with high strokes.

Thus you now see how always one element after the other must be used and assembled according to the opportunity and necessity, until a full combat device is executed.

And lastly note that full devices can also be completed with only two or three strokes, as when you rush upon him with the first stroke, and with the second cut away again, and in these strokes you hit either with the first or last, with whichever it may most conveniently take place. Or when you execute it with three cuts, then you lay on with the first, and pursue with the others. However, it is needless to talk here about when and at what due time this must take place: ‘The marketplace will teach you this well enough’, as the saying goes, if you study diligently all the other combat devices that are included in this treatise. [1.27r: *Image A; 1.27v*]

## Chapter 10: How one shall attack to the four openings<sup>33</sup>

I believe, gracious reader, that I have now sufficiently explained all the elements that are useful for sword combat, so that everyone who will be serious to study this with diligent practice will have sufficient introduction to understand all the devices that follow. I will therefore now show one by one how to act in each guard and how to fight from each of them. But first, since all your cuts and techniques shall be directed at or toward the four parts of your opponent, and conversely you must also be ready for his techniques in the same four parts, it is necessary at the beginning of the section on combat from the guards that I offer proper instruction in this matter, which I will present and set forth through the following examples, and firstly:

- 1.27v.1** ➤ In the Onset when you come within a fathom of your opponent, then slash up from your right before him through his face, once, twice, three times; and in the third slashing up before him, come into the

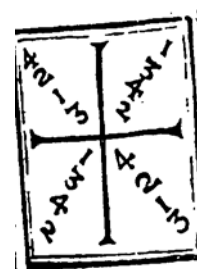
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<sup>33</sup> *Running head:* How One Shall Attack to the Four Openings

Longpoint, yet such that you remain with your left foot forward. From there, let the foible of your blade run off toward your left, and while your blade is dropping, pull your haft up at the same time; step and cut the first from your right at his left ear. As soon as this cut has hit, pull back away in a single motion and cut the second from below diagonally opposite to it at his right arm; and with this cut, keep your quillons up above your head; and with this Low Cut, step with your left foot somewhat toward his right out to the side toward him. And when this has also hit, you shall quickly jerk your sword back up toward your right, and cut from your right to his lower left opening. Just as it connects or [1.28r] hits, then pull back away around your head, and cut the fourth diagonally downward at his right ear. From there, deliver a Thwart around and withdraw. These first four cuts shall be executed quickly and swiftly from one opening to another along with their steps.

Moreover, since the sword or blade, when it is sent in for the cuts, may hit and connect chiefly in three ways, that is firstly with the long edge (as I have just taught), then with the short, and lastly with the flat, therefore it will also be necessary that you can send the short edge quickly to all four openings just as you have done with the long edge; and afterwards lastly with the flat, just as I have now said with the short edge, flying smoothly to strike from one opening to another, that is with the inside flat to the right and with the outside, that is the rear flat, to his left.

Now so that you may become better trained at this, you shall always change off with the first cut. Thus once you have delivered your first cut to the upper left opening and the second to his lower right opening and so forth as I have just taught (as indicated by the outermost numbers in the adjacent diagram), then you shall cut the first at his lower left, the second at his upper right, and so forth, as indicated by the second number in the same diagram. Afterwards cut the first to his lower right, the second to his upper left, and so forth as indicated by the third number. Lastly cut your first at his right, and so forth as indicated by the innermost number. And learn to execute all this in the work first with the long edge (as I have said), then with the short edge, and lastly with the flat.



Now when you know how to do this well, then there follows the next element, namely that you should know how to defend these four openings from the cuts you have learnt, and either that you hold them off with your blade, or [1.28v] even better that you send them away from you by cutting against them.

These are the two chief elements in combat, from which all other elements derive, and they are the foundation.

Further there follows thirdly a contingent element which is properly called the Craft. The Craft is this: when you can well send your cuts from the guards to all parts of the opponent, which is the first element in

combat that must be carried out in the Before, but your opponent is also quickly ready to send away or hold off your cuts in the After with the second element of parrying, so that you cannot attain your intended goal with these cuts, therefore now comes the third element, which is called the Craft, which is the art that teaches you, when you realise that your cuts are futile or useless in one place, how you may quickly pull that cut back before it hits, or allow it to go past without hitting, and send it to another opening. If he will also parry this, then pull that away too; and thus let it flit from one opening to another until you can find an attack that will hit.

But so that the student may better observe and understand this, I will teach, present, and set forth for their benefit some examples that I consider simple and clear, from which the benevolent reader may be sufficiently instructed in all manner of incidental and deceitful techniques, as I have related them in the Middle-work, in order to understand them, thus:

- 1.28v.1** ➤ In the Onset when you have slashed upward and gathered yourself for the stroke (as I have already taught), then let the first and second hit hard as before, but do not let the third hit, instead pull it quickly back away again in a single motion before it hits, so that you can let the fourth hit that much more swiftly and sooner.
- 1.28v.2** ➤ *Item*, let the first hit, and pull the second and the third in a single swift motion, [1.29r] and let the fourth hit.
- 1.29r.1** ➤ Likewise threaten the first and second toward the opening but pull it back away and send it to one of the other nearest openings.

With this pulling you shall also change off with the first laying on, as you have been taught with the numbers, so that now in this quarter, now in another you pull away and let it fail. And meanwhile still pay heed, if he should fall in at your opening, to be on his sword from the pulling at once with a bind.

From this pulling arises now further the running off and failing and such. Thus when you send a cut to one of these parts of the opponent, but meanwhile you realise that he will parry the cut, then nevertheless do not pull back away, but (so that he does not perceive your realization) allow it to run off right past by the same side without hitting, and cut him quickly at another opening, before he fully realises what you are doing. Example:

- 1.29r.2** ➤ When you have gathered yourself for the stroke by slashing up as I have already taught, then step and cut from your right high in at his left ear. As soon as he slips after it, then quickly let your blade drop beside his left leading with the short edge and with this, jerk your pommel and haft up, and cut quickly

with the short edge at his right ear, so that your hands come crosswise in the cut.

- 1.29r.3** ➤ *Item*, let the first hit hard at his left ear, let the second quickly run past beside his right without hitting, in the aforementioned manner, and hit deep to his left ear.

Thus when you have cut the first hard in with him, you may also quickly let it run off from there on both sides, and afterwards fall in to the nearest open target. You can carry out everything you have learnt so far diagonally and horizontally opposite each other, and also execute it opposite one another singly and doubly [1.29v] according to your will and opportunity. Further, also learn to send your blade in combination in the middle of the work, firstly with the long edge, then with the short, or also with the flat, against his side to the upper or lower opening, quickly in a single motion, thus:

- 1.29v.1** ➤ In the first Onset, deliver a long High Cut at his left ear; as soon as it clashes, then pull both hands up so that your pommel is pushed through under your right arm as it goes up, and cut quickly with the long edge from below also to his left; at the same time, step to him with your left foot behind your right, and in this cutting come with your haft up over your head.
- 1.29v.2** ➤ Conversely, first deliver a Low Cut at his lower opening with the long edge with a step forward on your right foot; pull quickly back up by your right and cut the second from above also at his left, with a back-step on your left foot behind your right toward him as before, such that you stand protected behind your blade.
- 1.29v.3** ➤ *Item*, gather for a high stroke with the short [read: long] edge from the right at his left, but in the air cross your hands and strike with the short edge at his left ear, as you can see it in the two figures on the upper left in Image C. Pull your crossed hands back up, and strike with a Thwart back from below to his left ear.
- 1.29v.4** ➤ Conversely, cut the Thwart from below to his left with a step forward, pull quickly up by your right, and in pulling up, push your pommel through under your right arm, and flick thus with crossed hands back from your right above in at his left.

In this way strike it also with the flat, below and above in combination on one side; this applies to both sides. And note when you strike at the lower right opening, whether it is flat, long edge, or short, let your hands come crosswise, but when you [1.30r] strike to his upper right opening, then your hands do not always come crosswise. Concerning this, observe the following example:

- 1.30r.1** ➤ In the Onset, shoot through before him and strike with the short edge from your left at his right ear, not

with crossed hands, but such that your pommel stands out toward your left. Pull quickly back up toward your right and cross your hands in the air; strike with crossed hands at his lower right opening from your left. In all this see that you have stepped out with a double step to his right, with your head well behind your blade.

Thus you can also strike in combination with the flat and the long edge from below and above by his right side. As I have just taught you to pull and threaten the cuts from one opening to another, so you shall also threaten and pull them on one side, to the lower and upper opening in combination. That is, when you send a cut at his upper opening, and see that he does not cut but goes against your sword, then do not let your cut hit, but send your blade to the lower opening; but if he should cut meanwhile, then continue forth with your cut against the forte of his blade. From this work arise the windings on the sword, that is:

- 1.30r.2** ➤ When you have bound his sword from your right against his left, then remain hard on his blade; push your pommel suddenly through under your right arm; remain on his sword, and at once jerk your pommel back out and wind the short edge outward at his head.

Thus you have three variants of the edge and flat; namely outward and inward with the long edge; *item*, outward and inward with the short edge; likewise inward and outward with the flat; and this on both sides.<sup>34</sup>

Thus you now understand that this third element of combat is nothing other than [1.30v] a true craft based on the two first chief elements of combat. Through this Craft you learn, according to the opportunity that arises, how to let the guards and cuts of the first chief element transform, run off, change through, flit, and fail, so that these cuts are snatched away from the one who parries and bears off. Likewise in the second chief element of the parrying, the Craft teaches you how you pull your parrying away from him, chase him, slice, press, etc. Thus you handle his cuts such that he does them vainly, or at least does not bring them completely to his intended goal or target.

And this is the summary of all Craft: namely that firstly from the guards you lay on against your opponent with cutting, manfully and without harm to yourself, to his disadvantage, with such artfulness and quick deceitfulness as can be; and then after you have laid on against him, you crowd him further with outmaneuvering handwork or the like, so that afterward in the third part you either pull away safe at your will, or if he should yield ground to you, you pursue him judiciously. And how much further this Craft extends and how many variants of it are used both in the names and in execution, you will find more fully described in the previous chapter concerning the handwork. I will therefore now proceed to describe fighting from the postures.

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<sup>34</sup> *Meyer here appears to be speaking specifically of winding, with each attack surface of the blade used to wind both inward and outward. Cf. the Ringeck Fechtbuch, fol. 125r-v.*



## Chapter 11: Fighting from the Postures<sup>35</sup>

Now as regards the postures, I would not have you remain long in any of them, since they are not invented or devised for this purpose, but [1.31r] so that when you draw up your sword for a stroke, and it is time for you to cut in the middle of pulling up as you gather your joints, you will know how to send your sword at once quickly back against him when you reach the furthest point in drawing up your sword. I will explain this using the guard of the Day, which is produced by the High Cut. Thus when you pull up to execute the High Cut, the furthest point to which you pull up is called the Day; and if your opponent does not cut in first while you are pulling up for the stroke, then you proceed with your High Cut. However, this is the reason that even experienced fighters sometimes linger in a guard, namely that you not only should undertake no cut or stroke thoughtlessly, but also that after you have pulled up and gathered yourself for this stroke, and at that moment shall send the stroke forth, you shall linger in that furthest point for just a bit, almost only for the blink of an eye, to reconsider whether it is worth completing your intended stroke, or whether in the mean time a better opportunity has arisen for you, so that you should change it at the furthest point to another cut, and complete the High Cut, for which you have pulled up, with a Thwart. This is the chief cause of the invention of the postures, and therefore he who sometimes lies in a posture should see what the intention of the other one is, so that he may know better how to catch him in his own devices. This does not happen unless he observes and is sure of his intention; for this watching demands art and great experience, etc.

### [High Guard]

Now so that you may know how and in what way you shall use your sword from the Day against your opponent's incoming strokes, I will present the following examples of both when he cuts or will not cut. [1.31v]

### The First Device

- 1.31v.1 ➤ And firstly when you come before your opponent, and have come up in the air with your sword by slashing up or else by drawing up for a High Cut, and he cuts in the mean time against your left at your head, then spring around well out from his cut toward his left, somewhat to him, and strike with your outside flat against his incoming stroke, hitting the forte of his sword so strongly that the foible of your blade in this cut swings in over his sword at his head, which will surely hit, if you strike at the same time as him and come with your sword over his. After this cut, whether it has hit or not, then pull your sword back up away, and cut diagonally opposite to it, from below at his right arm; in this cut, step with your left foot well out toward his right, and lean your head right behind your blade. From there pull quickly back up and nip at his left ear with the short edge; if you perceive that he slips after it,

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<sup>35</sup> *Running head:* Fighting from the Postures

then do not let it hit, but let it run off without hitting, and at once cross your hands in the air (the right over the left) and strike with the short edge deep at his right ear; at once deliver a Thwart around and withdraw. And note here, if he pursues you so quickly after the Low Cut you have just been taught, and will be so promptly in the Day, that you cannot come to the running off, then take heed when he pulls away from your sword, and pursue him with the slice on his arms, etc.

### **The Second Device**

- 1.31v.2** ➤ Now if he cuts from below against your left, then step out again toward his left, and cut with the long edge on top of his forte. As soon as your sword connects or clashes on his, then pull your sword back up in the air, and strike in a flick back down with the short edge deep in at his left ear, stepping further around toward his left. He will parry this rapidly and go up against it; therefore cut quickly with the long edge back at his right ear; in this striking around, step well toward his right as before, and keep your quillons up over your [1.32r] head. And note as soon as he strikes around, and fall again with the slice on his arms; if he does not want to permit this, but seeks to work himself free, then pursue him, remaining on his arms, and when he least expects it, then let your weapon fly away to another opening, and cut away from him.

### **The Third Device**

- 1.32r.1** ➤ Now if he cuts to your right, when you have thus come into the High Guard, then quickly step out from his cut with your left foot toward his right, and at the same time let your long edge fall on top of his forte. And when you fall thus on his sword, then push your pommel through under your right arm, so that you strike at his head with crossed hands with the short edge right over or beside his sword. Now if he goes up with his sword toward his right, then let the short edge run off by that side, and meanwhile step out to the side well toward his left, and cut with the long edge straight from above at his head. And pull quickly back up and strike with a Thwart from below at his left ear with a back-step on your left foot; at once cut away from him, etc.

### **The Fourth Device**

- 1.32r.2** ➤ Note when you thus come in the Onset with your sword in the air in the guard of the Day, and you perceive that he does not cut so quickly at you, so that you can well begin your device in the Before, then cross your hands above your head (the right over the left), so that it seems as if you intended to thrust at his face; meanwhile step to him with your right foot, and with this, pull your sword around your head toward your left, and cut powerfully from your right with a short-edge Thwart at his left ear. Pull quickly back away, and threaten him with a long Thwart at his lower right opening; yet do not allow it to connect, but in the same motion pull your sword back up, and thirdly let the short edge run off deep against his left ear, and afterward strike the short edge with crossed hands deep in at his right

ear. As soon as this hits, step back with your left foot and [1.32v: *Image H*<sup>36</sup>; 33r] cut with the long edge from below at his left arm; thus you stand as shown by the figure on the left in the small scene on the upper right in Image G.<sup>37</sup>

- 1.33r.1** ➤ Here note, when in the back-stepping you are delivered such a Low Cut toward your lower left opening, then step toward him with your left foot, and fall on his sword with crossed hands and the short edge; thus stop his Low Cut as can be seen in the figure on the right in the same scene. And furthermore note, as soon as he pulls his sword back up toward him, then jerk your sword thus with crossed hands well toward your left, and when he strikes back in, then take out his incoming cut strongly with your outside flat across from your left against his right, so that your sword flies back over your head in a single motion, and so that your hands cross back over one another in the air, while your sword is thus flying around above; then step well toward his right; and keep your hands up, and let the short edge run off in a Thwart by his right ear (yet such that it hits or grazes); at once cut long after with a back-step.

I have described this device so particularly because quite a few good techniques can be learned and executed from it; therefore you would do well not just to learn it, but also to think diligently about it further. And along these lines I will offer yet another device with another beginning, thus:

#### **Another**

- 1.33r.2** ➤ In the Onset when you come into the Day or High Guard, then let your blade drop before you as before, toward your left side, and pull it around your head; step and deliver a horizontal Middle Cut with the long edge against his left at his neck or temple. As soon as it connects, then pull back around your head, and secondly deliver another Middle Cut across from your left against his right, also at his neck. As soon as it clashes, then thirdly cut a high stroke with the long edge straight from above; and these three cuts must happen quickly in a single motion one after another. \*Then if more space comes to you, raise your pommel up toward your left, pull around your head, and take out his blade with the flat or short edge by your left from below through his right toward your right by slashing upward, so that your blade flies back around in the air, [1.33v] and cut with the short edge down from above with crossed hands, by his right ear without hitting—though if you can reach him with the short edge in running past, then let it hit. Then deliver a strong Wrath Cut at his left side; and then cut away from him. This is indeed quite a serious and strong device, that no one will be able to ward off once you have the Before.

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<sup>36</sup> *The woodcut is mislettered as G.*

<sup>37</sup> *1600: C. This could be based on a misreading of the errata in the 1570 edition.*

### **A Counter against the Posture or Guard of the Day**

- 1.33v.1** ➤ If you perceive that after your opponent has slashed up over his head, he is inclined to linger a bit in the guard of the Day, then come in the Onset into the guard of the Key; from there raise both hands thus crosswise over your head and at the same time step with your right foot toward him; and with the step, slash through with the short edge by your right thigh through your opponent's Scalp Line, strongly up from below, so that your sword flies above your head back from your left to his right for a Low Cut, keeping your hands up in the parrying. When it connects, then step quickly with your right foot to his left, and cut with the short edge deep in at his left ear in an arc. From there, deliver two Low Cuts in a row; then strike with a Thwart Cut at his right ear, and step simultaneously with your right foot back behind your left; thus the Thwart goes that much deeper. When this has taken place, then you can at once cut away from him.
- 1.33v.2** ➤ Or if an opponent comes before you who is quick to go up high, then take heed when he goes up out of the lower guard, and pursue him quickly with two strong Low Cuts from both sides; from whatever guards or postures you will, at once cut quickly from below. Secondly, cut with your short edge quickly in a single motion from both sides deep at his head. After this, bind him quickly back on his blade. If he goes away from it, then pursue; if he stays, then wind, wrench, and whatever may arise for you most readily by way of work. [1.34r: *Image E*; 34v]

### **Wrath Guard**

- 1.34v.1** ➤ In the Approach when you come into the Wrath Guard, then as soon as you can reach him, step and deliver a swift Wrath Cut at his left ear, which he must then parry; afterwards quickly deliver a Low Cut opposite it at his lower right opening; thus you have now laid on. Meanwhile, before he gathers himself to work, and gathers his arms for the stroke, then fall with your sword below on his arm, and thus hinder his course so that he cannot work. Then before he knows it, shove him away from you with a sudden jerk, so that he falters as if he were going to fall, and strike meanwhile to his nearest opening, which you will then surely have. However, if he recovers and cuts in at you, then be back there with the setting off or slice, and fall on his blade against his stroke. If he goes back away from the blade, then slice back on his arms; but if he remains on your sword, then shove his sword out to the side with your shield, and let your sword fly quickly back to the nearest opening; and from there quickly back on his sword. If he will not let his sword be caught, then pursue with your sword on his arms, so that you constrain him as you will.

Thus you shall now go in all devices from the sword to the body, and from the body to the sword. But if he will pull or flit from you, then always take the slice as a help. For he who does not know the slice, will not usefully execute it; but if you can do it correctly, then you will constrain him as you will, unless he knows how to counter the slice, of which you will find few. But he who cannot correctly execute the slice is

readily countered.

- 1.34v.2** ➤ When you stand in the right Wrath Guard, and your opponent cuts at you from his right against your left, then slide over your head and under his blade with a step forward on your right foot, and catch his cut on your flat, so that your thumb stands underneath, and the blade hangs down by your left side somewhat toward the ground. And when it clashes, then step with your left foot toward his right side, and wind the short edge under his sword inward at his head, as shown by the small middle scene in Image L. Now when you have wound, then hold your sword with the short edge on his sword, and wrench with your sword upwards to your right, as the small figures in the middle of Image F teach you etc., so that [1.35r] at the end of the wrenching, your cross your hands in the air; strike him with the inside flat at his lower right opening (yet such that your hands remain up); and as soon as he slips after to parry, then do not let it connect, but pull back up, and deliver a Clashing Cut at his left ear; and in this stroke let the blade swing deep in, palm away from him; and thus swiftly fight away from him.
- 1.35r.1** ➤ If your opponent cuts at you from above, then step and cut his incoming stroke away from you from your right with a horizontal Middle Cut with the long edge, right through, so that your blade flies back around with the short edge at his left ear. Let it run off again by his ear, and pull at once from your right back around your head toward your left; step and strike with the outside flat from your left at his right ear, across through the Middle Line, as may be seen in the large figure on the right in Image A.
- 1.35r.2** ➤ Now if he will not cut, then position yourself in the right Wrath, and drive over your forward thigh thus: keep your left foot in place, and cut from your right diagonally over your left leg into the left Change; from there slash with the short edge back up through the Stroke Line through which you have cut in from above, so that your sword comes back on your right shoulder. Do this one to three times, and at last when you see your opportunity, go up above in the air with the short edge, slashing from your left, and let it thus snap around in the air over your head for a Low Cut toward his lower right opening with a double step forward. And just as it connects, then strike back with the short edge deep in at his left ear, palm away from him; in this, let your pommel snap well upward; thus it goes that much deeper. Then pull back around, and threaten a cut at his right; but at once deliver a Thwart opposite it with a back-step to his left, and then withdraw.
- 1.35r.3** ➤ In the Onset, cut into the right Wrath, and as soon as your opponent goes up, lift your hands up over your head, and let the point shoot at his face, as if you intended to thrust; however, pull back toward you, and strike from your right with the back of your hand or outside flat up from below at his left ear or arm, along with a back-step. If he cuts in from above at the same time as you, then pull quickly back around once the swords have hit, and strike with the inside flat opposite to it deep in at his upper right opening, such that your hands come crosswise. At once pull back toward you, as if you intended to cut

at his left; [1.35v] however do not do this, but pull back away before it hits, and cut with the short edge in a Circle at his right ear, so that the short edge grazes his ear, and your hands remain up over your head; and as the Circle runs around, then step back and deliver a straight Scalp Cut at his head; pull it quickly back up with horizontal quillons, that is, come with the Crown over your head. From there deliver a Thwart to both sides, the first to his right with the long edge, the second to his left with the short edge, so that your thumb always remains below on your shield, and withdraw.

### Precept

- 1.35v.1 ➤ When you stand in the right or left Wrath, and an opponent cuts at you from below, either to the right or left opening, then cut on it with the long edge from above, and when it hits, then shoot your point on his sword in at his face; with this, go up with your hands, and attack to the nearest opening with such techniques as you will find above or below in this treatise.

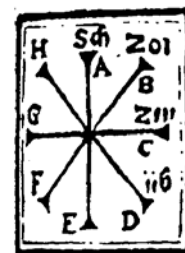
### Left Wrath Guard

- 1.35v.2 ➤ In the Onset when you come into the left Wrath Guard, then drive over your right thigh, as previously over the left, one cut, two, three; then step and cut through from your left up from below through his right, strongly upward, so that your sword flies back around in the air for a Low Cut against his right. At once pull around your head, and deliver a strong Thwart Cut at his left ear. Flick further to all four openings diagonally and horizontally from one to the other, palm away from him (that is, with the back of your hand) at his left, whether below or above, and on his right with the inside flat (that is, palm toward him). [1.36r]

### The Ox

From the devices I have now taught, I expect you have had an adequate introduction to how you shall execute your cuts and devices against the opponent's four openings, and how you shall sometimes add to them a winding, slicing, running off, Circle, or flitting. And this shall be executed not only from the postures in which I have taught it, but also from the greater part of all other postures. Therefore since the Ox is a particularly good posture for laying on against your opponent, I will offer a short lesson and precept how you shall lay on against your opponent in the Before, rush upon him, and compel him to parry you.

And note firstly that on each side you have four chief attacks, following the four chief lines, as is clearly shown at the beginning of this section. These lines are the true routes for all cuts that you send against your opponent.



[The cutting diagram. The abbreviations represent the four straight cuts: *Scheitel* (Scalp), *Zorn* (Wrath), *Zwerch* (Thwart)—evidently as an error for *Überzwerch* (Horizontal)—and *Unter* (Low)—here the woodcut actually has *üb[er]* (High)]

Therefore when you approach against your opponent with the Plunge Cut, if you you hold and keep the point toward him, this Plunge is called the Ox, since it threatens a thrust, as I have taught. From there you can lay on as soon as you can reach your opponent, either from below or above, diagonally or across, as indicated by these lines. Whichever line you follow to lay on from one side, you shall also cut horizontally or diagonally opposite to it, either with the long or short edge or with the flat. If you execute this powerfully and quickly in the Before, you compel him to allow you another attack against his will; even if he works to fight against it, you are already upon him to follow up with chasing, slicing, pressing, and such like, so that you do not let him come to any complete work. The devices I have taught so far are also arranged on this basis, both in the initial attack and in the followup. Example:

- 1.36r.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you come into the guard of the Ox through the Plunge, then as soon as you can reach him, deliver a powerful Wrath Cut from your right diagonally at his left ear, with a broad step forward on your right foot. As soon as the cut connects or hits, at once pull back around and cut opposite to it [1.36v] at his [right]<sup>38</sup> arm, also with the long edge; and with this cut, step with your left foot well toward his right, and take your head well out to the side behind your blade. Meanwhile he may be ready to cut, or else to extend his sword forward to parry; therefore let your blade hang down behind you away from his right arm, and meanwhile pull your haft around your head toward your right, and take his blade out (whether he is striking in or has extended it to parry) with your long edge or flat, powerfully and strongly across from your right against his left, so that you break right through with your blade; and in this taking out, let your blade fly in a single motion back around above your head for a Thwart at his left ear. From there pull your sword back around your head, and cut a strongly inward-arc-ing stroke with the outside flat outside at his right ear (you will see this stroke with the flat depicted in the large figure on the right in Image K); and in this stroke, see that you step with your left foot well out to his right side. From this stroke with the flat, or Rebound Cut, pull your sword up over your head; hold your hands up, and let the blade fly around with the long edge at his right arm; but do not connect, rather deliver a Thwart quickly at his left ear with a back-step on your right [?read: left] foot, and withdraw. Even if you should be stopped in this device, then (as I have taught before) you still have the slice in store, with which you can make space for yourself again, either to complete the device, or to undertake another device, etc.
- 1.36v.1** ➤ *Item*, when you can reach your opponent from the Ox in the Onset as I have just taught, then pull your sword around your head, and strike with the outside flat from your right strongly and straight across at his left ear. From there, quickly pull around your head again, and strike across with the outside flat from the other side, opposite to it. After these two cuts, fight according to the opportunity as you think best.

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<sup>38</sup> 1570: lincken ('left')

Thus you can always lay on with attacks diagonally and horizontally opposite one another, and likewise in the middle of the fight.

Also, when the opportunity arises, you can sometimes attack from one side diagonally, from the other across, and on one side sometimes with the long edge, from the other opposite to it with the short edge or flat.

Lastly note also when an opponent will rush upon you in this guard, so that you can come to no device in the Before, then shoot the point forward in his face into the Longpoint with a step forward, and as you thrust forth, turn the long edge against his incoming cut. As soon as you have caught it, then wind on his sword to the nearest opening. [1.37r: *Image I*; 37v]

### Unicorn

- 1.37v.1** ➤ *Item*: in the Onset come with your left foot forward, and slash upward with the short edge from your right, once, twice, through his face; and the third time remain in the Longpoint with your sword extended before you. Turn the long edge up toward your right, so that your pommel comes through under your right arm, and your hands come crosswise over one another. Go up thus with crossed hands; thus you stand as I have said before concerning the Unicorn. From there deliver two Low Cuts in a row (yet such that your left foot always remains in front), the first from your right, the second from your left, both of them upward right by your body, so that with the second Low Cut your hands come back crosswise as before. Go thus quickly back up into the Unicorn; with this Winging upward, lift your left foot somewhat, but set it back down at once. With such conduct and appearances you will provoke him to cut at your left opening; and when he cuts in, let your blade drop before you, and at the same time pull your sword around your head; cut with the long edge across from your right against his incoming stroke with a step forward on the same foot, so that you catch his stroke from across on the forte of your blade. As soon as the swords clash together, then spring with your right foot further around toward his left, and rapidly lift your sword a bit up from his blade; and as you go a bit upward (as I have said), then at the same time push your pommel through under your right arm, so that your hands come crosswise; thus flick quickly behind his sword at his head with the inside flat or short edge as you step out toward his left, as can be seen in the small scene on the left in Image C. With this you open your left side; if he will rush at it, then simply pull your pommel back out from under your right arm, and turn your sword into the Longpoint so that the long edge stands turned against his blade; thus you stand in the Straight Parrying, as shown by the other small scene on the right in the same image [C].
- 1.37v.2** ➤ Or when you have thus crossed the short edge inward against his head with crossed hands, so that you make your left side open, if he rapidly attacks to it (as I have said before), then keep your hands



crosswise, and withdraw your head from him well toward your right, and shoot your blade right over his, the nearer to his shield the [1.38r] better; thus wrench his blade toward your left, as you can see in Image D in the small scene on the right. And when you come close to your left with this wrenching, then go up with your hands, and strike back with the short edge in at his left ear, palm away from him. After this, come quickly with the long edge back on his sword; thus you stand in the Longpoint. Afterwards withdraw as you will.

- 1.38r.1** ➤ Or when you have come before your opponent in the Unicorn, then note when he cuts in from above, and let your blade travel around your head, and bind him on his sword from your right across against his left. And as soon as he goes up away from this, let your blade snap around again, so that your right hand comes over the left, and fall on him with your short [read: long] edge and crossed hands while he is still going up, in front of his arms, as you can see in the figure on the right in the small scene on the right in Image I. Shove him from you with your shield forcefully toward your left out to the side, and cut quickly to the nearest opening while he falters; or hold him off this way by pursuing him, until you can get an opportunity.
- 1.38r.2** ➤ *Item*, when you thus have executed a Winging upward to both sides, and have come up to the Unicorn, if your opponent cuts from his right against your left at your head, then step well out from his stroke again with your right foot toward his left, and fall on him (yet such that your hands remain crosswise) with your short edge on top of his forte; this falling on and stepping out shall be executed simultaneously against his incoming blade. And when the swords clash together in this manner, at once let the short edge snap around away from his sword again, and strike with it at his head, palm away from him. Or with this falling on, break through down toward your left, and pull your haft back up around your head; cut after with the long edge with a step outward, etc.

From this Unicorn you can also well and fitly attack and fight with the Low Cuts and the Thwart, and many other good techniques, which you should study further. [1.38v]

### Key

This guard is called Key because from this posture all other devices and postures can be countered. For although this can also take place from others, yet you must apply more power to it than in this one. And as a key, a small instrument, opens a great powerful lock without particular trouble, which would otherwise require great force, so all other techniques can be countered from this weak posture (as it seems to be) without particular difficulty, artfully and elegantly, and it can happen in this manner:

- 1.38v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in this guard, in much the same way as you have fought previously in the Unicorn. If your opponent then positions himself to the right or left in one of the high or low

postures, then thrust straight in front of you at his face from the Key into the Longpoint. He must fend off this thrust if he does not wish to be hit; from whatever side he strikes you out, then deliberately let your blade go around your head the way that he has sent it with his stroke, and cut in at him to the same side from which he has struck you out. But if he slips after you, then you should not hit, but let it flit to another opening; and cut away from him to another opening before he realises it.

- 1.38v.2** ➤ Now secondly, if your opponent does not lie in a posture, but crowds on you with cuts, whether he cuts from above or below, from the right or left, then note when he cuts in, and again shoot the Longpoint in before you at his face, and as you thrust, turn your long edge against his incoming cut. Now when you have caught his cut on the forte of your long edge, then remain hard on his blade, and wind quickly in and out at his head. But if he goes quickly away from your blade to cut against the other side, then cut or flick at his head or arms while he is still bringing his sword around. Then quickly rush back with the bind on his sword; and think all the time of chasing, slicing, wrenching, and deceiving.

Now what you may execute and carry out from this guard by way of devices in the Before, you can learn from the device that I have already presented as a counter against the High Guard from this Key [*Sequence 1.33v.1*]. [*1.39r: Image F; 39v*]

### **Hanging Point**

- 1.39v.1** ➤ In the Onset, slash through forcefully up from your left against his face, in a wheel, once, twice; and the third time, let your sword swing before your face, or turn to the Hanging Point, as shown by the figure on the right in Image F on the previous page; and do this once or a few times until you see your opportunity to lay on with a device. But while you thus stand in the Hanging Point, if your opponent cuts meanwhile at you from above, across, or from below, or also at your fingers, or against your left at your head, then step at once with your left foot behind your right out to his left, and at the same time as he cuts, pull your hanging sword up toward your right shoulder; from this position, cut against his left at his head at the same time as him along with the step that I have just taught; in this cut pull your pommel right to the inside of your arm on the sinew; thus your blade swings more powerfully at his head. Hold your pommel right on your arm and wrench with extended blade up toward your left. With this wrenching, let it fly around your head, and deliver a Thwart strongly in at his left.
- 1.39v.2** ➤ Now if he cuts at your right from above, then catch his stroke on the flat of your blade and step out toward his right; when the swords have connected together, you can remain with your blade on his and wind the short edge in at his head. Turn the sword quickly out of the wind into the Longpoint, so that you can send his counterattack away from you with the long edge.
- 1.39v.3** ➤ But if he attacks under your blade in at your right ear, in whatever way this may happen, then turn your

sword again into the Longpoint, the long edge downward. Thus you set off his blade; and as you set him off, at the same time step with your left foot quickly toward his right. And just as the parry connects, push your pommel through under your right arm; thus raise your sword up in the air with crossed hands, and strike quickly with the short edge back down at his right ear. If he parries this, then let the blade run off by his right, step back again with your left foot, and at the same time as you step back, deliver a powerful Middle Cut across at his left ear or his arms; then withdraw.

It is easy to gather from this what else can be executed from this guard. [1.40r]

### **Irongate**

As I have said before, this Irongate is actually the Crossed Guard. Fight from it thus:

- 1.40r.1 ➤ If your opponent cuts at you from above, then go up with crossed hands and catch his cut on the forte of your blade. When he takes his sword away from your blade after his cut, then cut powerfully at his arms with Low Cuts while he is pulling his arms upward. As soon as he falls downward, then attack at his head.
- 1.40r.2 ➤ *Item:* parry his High Cut as before, and when the swords clash on one another, then quickly wind the short edge in at his right ear, and then quickly wind through beneath again with your pommel up toward his left side, and strike long against his left at his head with a back-step.
- 1.40r.3 ➤ Now if he should attack you from below, then fall with the long edge on top of his sword in the Longpoint.
- 1.40r.4 ➤ This Irongate or Crossed Guard is broken by the Key: that is, thrust toward his face, with which you force him upward, then attack him from below as he goes upwards.

### **Side Guard**

From this Side Guard you shall especially execute the Crooked Cuts. For example:

- 1.40r.5 ➤ If your opponent cuts at your opening when you stand in the right Side Guard, then spring well out from his cut with your right foot to his left, and cut with crossed hands above and behind his blade at his head. If you do not wish to wrench toward your left, pull quickly up with crossed hands, and strike with the outside flat strongly around from below at his left ear.

But if he will not cut, then fight in such a manner as you will learn in the Middle Guard. [1.40v]

## Middle Guard [*Mittelhut*]

Concerning this Middle Guard you will be instructed later in the section on the dusack; as you do it there with one hand, so shall you do it here with both hands. I did not initially intend to present it here, but I have not been able to avoid it, since the Rose can be more fitly taught from no other guard.

- 1.40v.1 ➤ And note when an opponent comes before you who holds his sword extended before him in the Longpoint, or else in Straight Parrying, then send your blade in a circle around from the Middle Guard right around his blade, so that your blade comes almost back to your initial Middle Guard; from there swing the foible powerfully from outside over his arms at his head.
- 1.40v.2 ➤ Or when you have thus gone around his blade with the Rose, if he meanwhile should fall in down from above to your opening, then take his blade out with the short edge, that is when you have come for the second time in the Middle Guard; for he will not come so quickly as if by surprise to your opening, but that you will meanwhile come around with the Rose, such that you will come to take him out in plenty of time. And after you have thus taken him out, then let your weapon run around in the air over your head (in order to deceive him), looping for a Circle to the next opening, etc.
- 1.40v.3 ➤ Or in the Onset when you have cut into the Middle Guard on your left, and meanwhile your opponent cuts at you from above, then step well out from his cut toward his right side, and cast your short edge over or outside his right arm at his head; and as you cast in, let your blade shoot well in, either at his head or over his arms. Afterwards pull your sword quickly back up, and cut from your left with the long edge strongly upward at his right arm. From there, attack him further as you will, with such techniques as you will find above or below in this treatise.

And since the Rose can also fitly be executed in the Longpoint, I will describe the rest of the devices that I intended to present with the Longpoint, thus: [1.41r]

## Longpoint

The combat masters of old called Longpoint the ‘Break-Window’ [*Brechfenster*], because all other devices can be countered [*lit.* ‘broken’] from it. Now although one can sufficiently deduce from the devices I have already taught what one shall execute from this posture, based on similar ones, I will show something about it through examples, since the Longpoint is the end of all binding.

- 1.41r.1 ➤ In the Onset, bind on your opponent’s sword with the High Cut, and as soon as he goes back up again from your sword, then cut at his chin from below between his arms while they are going up. Concerning this device see the two small figures on the upper left in Image I.

- 1.41r.2** ➤ *Item:* bind him as before, and as soon as the swords connect in the bind, then break through below with the Rose between you and him, and cast the short edge in at his head on the other side.
- 1.41r.3** ➤ Or after you have broken through below from the bind with the Rose, then wrench his sword sideways from the other side with the short edge, so that your hands cross over one another in the air; strike deep with the short edge over at his head.
- 1.41r.4** ➤ *Item:* bind him against his incoming cut, and as soon as the blades connect, push your pommel through under your right arm, stepping at the same time well out toward his left side; and go up with crossed hands, and cut with the long edge through the Rose sideways from below behind his arm at his head.
- 1.41r.5** ➤ *Item:* when you bind your opponent, then release your left hand from the pommel, and use it to grip his blade to yours in the bind, and do it quickly; then go through below with your right hand and the haft, and strike up toward your right, as you can see in the two small figures on the right in Image H; thus you take his sword away from him.<sup>39</sup> [1.41v: Image H; 1.42r]
- 1.42r.1** ➤ *Item:* if your opponent binds you with extended sword on yours, then note when the binds connect together, and quickly change through below, and flick the little flat of the foible at his ear from the other side. From this changing through you will learn to do many fine devices, if you diligently study it.
- 1.42r.2** ➤ *Item:* when you see that your opponent will bind or cut at you, then send your sword in against him, as if you also intended to bind, and just when the blades are about to connect, push your pommel up quickly, and turn your blade up from below through the Rose, catching his stroke on your long edge, as is shown in the small scene on the right in Image N. After you have thus caught his cut, you can finish this device in two ways. Firstly thus: when the swords have connected, then go right through below with your blade, and wrench his blade toward your right, and let your hands snap around in the air again, or cross over one another, and cut with the short edge strongly at his head. This is a masterful going through that will not fail you, if he should cut from above.
- 1.42r.3** ➤ For the second, when you have caught his sword, then as the swords clash together, step well to his left side, and cut back with the long edge from outside over his left arm at his head. This last cut proceeds unexpectedly, very swiftly, surely, and strongly.

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<sup>39</sup> *A technique well documented in the German sources; cf. the versions in the Ringeck Fechtbuch, fols. 44v, 123r, and the Von Danzig Fechtbuch, fols. 34r, 66r.*

## Change

Although it is unnecessary to present the Change in particular, since in fact all devices can be executed from this posture more appropriately than in any other, I will not omit to present a couple of devices with it, in which you can observe some particular ingenuity, thus:

- 1.42r.4** ➤ If you find an opponent in Straight Parrying or in the Longpoint, as described before, then slash through with the short edge from the right Change strongly upward, once, twice; the third time, however, slash through under his sword, and step to him with your right foot, and strike in powerfully and high at his left ear with the flat or short edge, as shown by the small scene on the left in Image F. [1.42v] Thus you force him to go upward rapidly; as soon as he does this, then release your left hand from the pommel, and let your blade snap around in one hand up from below against his right, and set the point on his chest; meanwhile grab your pommel again, as shown by the small figures on the right in Image F. Jab at him thus with reversed hand; at once release your pommel again, let your sword go around your head, and cut long after at him, recovering your pommel. You shall use the same technique against those who are inclined to run in.
- 1.42v.1** ➤ *Item*, if you observe that your opponent is inclined to go up in the air, then slash up again forcefully before him, and as soon as you perceive that he goes up, then cut across from your right at his left arm while he is still pulling upward. As soon as it hits, at once strike opposite to it with the inside flat at his right ear in a very deep arc.

## Break-Window [*Brechfenster*]

This is essentially a variation on the High Guard, and is only used in the bind after you have come under your opponent's sword; but from a distance while you still see your opponent's point and blade in front of you, you should not go into this guard, for you are not at all safe in it. But as soon as you have come under your opponent's sword, then it is one of the chiefest guards. Use it thus:

- 1.42v.2** ➤ When you have come under your opponent's sword, so that you must send your sword over your head in the Break-Window, such that both your arms and fingers are open, then as soon as he cuts at your fingers from above, step well out from his stroke to one side—it doesn't matter which one—and cut with a Thwart against his incoming stroke; thus you will not only catch his cut near your shield on your forte, but (if he should complete his cut without pulling away) you will also hit his head with your foible at the same time.
- 1.42v.3** ➤ Now if he cuts at one of your arms, then cut from the side belonging to the arm at which he is cutting, with a Thwart up from below against his incoming cut. And observe diligently when he pulls his sword [1.43r] back up, and cut at the same time with Thwart Cuts upward or across at his arm. As soon as he

falls back down again, then catch his blade again on your horizontal blade or shield.

- 1.43r.1** ➤ Now if he delivers a Thwart or cuts from below, then cut on top of his blade, or see that you come first with a Thwart under his blade. But if he should come with his Thwart under yours, then let your blade hang down well over his, and press it down from you with your shield; you may thus reach his head behind his blade with the short edge, or strike around after you have pushed his blade downward from you, etc.

Also you can grip over against him thus:

- 1.43r.2** ➤ If an opponent cuts from above, then cut against him from your left from below with the long edge, and when he pulls his sword back away from yours, and is going up with his arms, then grip over your quillons onto the blade with your fingers, and send your blade over both his arms, as shown by the two lower figures in the following image [*M, leftmost scene*]; wrench thus to your right side. If you wish, you may then cast him thus: step with your right foot behind his right, and catch him by his neck with your short edge, and at the same time shove your pommel away from you over your right arm toward your right; cast him thus on his back toward your left over your right leg.
- 1.43r.3** ➤ *Item*, if an opponent delivers a Thwart at your left ear, then fall down with the long edge onto the middle of his blade; and when you fall on it, again grip over your quillons onto the blade with your fingers, and lay the short edge behind his blade on his head; concerning this see the large figures in the same image [*M*]. Shove your pommel away from you, holding him such that he cannot get free until you have hit him. However, if he forces out from under your blade, then quickly pursue him, and again catch over both his arms as before.
- 1.43r.4** ➤ Or when he delivers a Thwart Cut, then catch his Thwart on your hanging blade, and grip with your left hand on his shield and quillons; turn them out away from you, as shown by the small figures on the upper right in the same image [*M*].

And lastly note, whenever you bind against a High Cut with a Thwart, then wind the short edge inward at his head. Conversely, when an opponent will thus wind in at you, then observe just when he winds the short edge out of the Thwart in at your left ear, and turn your long edge upward against his blade; thus you stand in the old Squinting Cut that I have spoken of before, and you hit him on the head; this goes [*1.43v: Image M; 1.44r*] to both sides like all the other techniques. For when he winds in at your right or left, then he opens his other side; therefore you can easily hit his head by counterwinding. For when he winds inwards, you should wind outwards; thus you hit and he misses. Note as you thus wind in against someone, and you realise meanwhile that he seeks to counterwind against you as I have just taught, then continue to wind, but

in the winding, wrench with your short edge to the side toward which you have wound in; let your blade snap around, or execute some other technique. These windings are of eight types, which will be sufficiently discussed here and there in the section on devices.<sup>40</sup> And what further pertains to these windings will be discussed more fully in another place.

Thus up to this point in the first and second part of this treatise on combat with the sword, you have been properly instructed concerning the division of both the combatant and the sword; afterwards concerning the Onset, Middle Work, and Withdrawal; besides other necessary elements and teachings, as well as the examples in the second part which are drawn from the first. Whatever else pertains to necessary elements, you will find sufficiently taught in the following part of my treatise on combat with the sword—as much as I intend to write at present. [I.44v]

### The Third Part of the Treatise the Sword,

in which the following verses are explained with many fine and shrewd devices, which a combattant who loves this art can usefully read and practice<sup>41</sup>

Here Follow the Verses

[I.44v/a]

Observe, if you will learn to fight artfully,  
you should attend to these verses with diligence.

A combatant shall conduct himself properly,  
not be a boaster, gamer, or toper,

5 and also not swear or blaspheme,  
and shall not be ashamed to learn.

Godfearing, modest, also calm,

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<sup>40</sup> Traditionally, winding was subdivided into eight variants, inward and outward from each of the four possible binds (high from the right, high from the left, low from the right, low from the left). Cf. the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fol. 125r ff. (misbound in the manuscript, and should follow 47v), and the *von Danzig Fechtbuch*, fol. 37v ff.

<sup>41</sup> Running head: The Third Part concerning the Sword



especially on the day when he shall fight;  
 be temperate, show honor to the old,  
 10 and also to womenfolk. Attend furthermore:  
 all virtue, honor, and manliness,  
 you shall cultivate at all times,  
 so that you can serve with honor  
 emperor, king, prince, and lord,  
 15 and also be useful to the fatherland,  
 and not a disgrace to your native country.<sup>42</sup>  
 The word Instantly, also foible and forte,  
 the Before and After, also observe diligently.<sup>43</sup>  
 Test the soft and hard, learn to feel,  
 20 step with the stroke, be it near or far.<sup>44</sup>  
 [1.44v/b] Hold the targets in good ward,  
 guard yourself against great wrath.  
 Pay heed to the guards and the cuts  
 so that the use of them will be clear to you;  
 25 High, Wrath, Middle, and Low,  
 from them conduct all your wonders,  
 such as the Squinter, Scalper, Crooked, and Thwart,  
 and all other techniques according to your desire.  
 See that you are the first in the field;  
 30 before your opponent adopts a posture, lay on against him.  
 Pay heed to Instantly, understand me rightly,  
 hit him before he adopts his posture.  
 Whatever good posture comes to you,  
 in the After you will hit him with free mettle.<sup>45</sup>  
 35 Send your cuts powerfully from your body;  
 carry out your work to the four openings.  
 When you deliver a Crooked Cut, go up quickly,  
 cast the point crosswise on his hands.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *For the introductory verses, cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 1-6.*

<sup>43</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 32-33.*

<sup>44</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 19-20.*

<sup>45</sup> *Very similar to two lines from Egenolph: 'Keins Legers ich dir wird sein gut/Im Nach dich trifft uß freiem mut.' [c. 1535: fol. 7r]*

<sup>46</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: l. 79.*

Let the Circle connect to the right;  
 40           hold your hands high, if you wish to deceive him.  
 [I.45r/a] When you cut crooked at his forte,  
               be sure to wind through, and overrun with it.  
 You shall pay heed to the deceit of the pommel;  
               with the Tag-Hit and flicking you will vex him.<sup>47</sup>  
 45 Step well with the Crooked, if you wish to parry;  
               the crossing over will do him harm.  
 You will strengthen yourself by going crooked to his flat;  
               you shall diligently see that you weaken him.<sup>48</sup>  
 As soon as it connects and clashes above,  
 50           pull away to the opening, if you wish to confuse him.<sup>49</sup>  
 Also if you wish to shoot through correctly,  
               Crooked, Short, change through on his shield.<sup>50</sup>  
 Note when he seeks to confuse you with the Crooked,  
               remain on the sword, conduct the War correctly  
 55 with winding, slicing, and everything else;  
               with flitting let yourself not go too far.<sup>51</sup>  
 Also flick the foible at the right;  
               doubly flick, protect yourself with the shield,  
 also wind forcefully against your opponent's shield;  
 60           instantly shove him away, and strike swiftly.  
 The Squinting Cut you shall execute wisely;  
               with winding you can also double against him.  
 The Thwart you shall also consider valuable;  
               with it your skill in the sword becomes great.  
 65 For whatever attack he delivers from the Day,  
               the Thwart may parry it for you.<sup>52</sup>  
 [I.45r/b] In the Onset execute the Thwart with strength;  
               note also to deceive and fail with it.  
 Be quick to the Plow and Ox;

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<sup>47</sup> *Lines 41-44 are expounded out of order in the commentary; they are discussed on 1.50r.*

<sup>48</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 80-81.*

<sup>49</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 82-83.*

<sup>50</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 84-85.*

<sup>51</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 93-94.*

<sup>52</sup> *Cf. Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 90-91.*

70           at once threaten him with the Thwart at the target.<sup>53</sup>  
Note that when the Thwart is executed with a spring,  
            and you execute failing with it, it connects at your will.  
You shall do the Failer double,<sup>54</sup>  
            likewise double the step and slice;  
75   from the sword to the body, reverse with it  
            twice, or slice on the weapon.<sup>55</sup>  
Chasing is extremely good;  
            with slicing and winding protect yourself.  
Some twice or so  
80           let it flit, begin with it,  
and send the hits to all four targets.  
            Learn the pullings, if you wish to fool them.<sup>56</sup>  
Also execute slicing off and slinging;  
            send away the hard dangers with the slice.<sup>57</sup>  
85   Do not rely too much on the Crown:  
            you will tend to get scorn and shame from it.  
Slash the Longpoint through forcefully,  
            hold off all hard danger with it.  
See that you counter all cuts and devices rightly  
90           if you will avenge yourself on your part.<sup>58</sup>  
Execute the hangings wisely;  
            do not grapple at the wrong time if you wish to wrestle.

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 94-95.*

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 104-5.*

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Liechtenauer 1965: l. 142.*

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 172-73.*

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 196-97.*

<sup>58</sup> *Lines 89-90 are not included in Meyer's commentary, but others appear in their place on 1.61r.*

[1.45v] If you also wish to know the Master core,  
learn to step rightly for all techniques.<sup>59</sup>

95 If you do not parry too much, it will be that much freer;  
So Joachim Meyer admonishes you.

### **Introduction to the Third Book**

Now that I have, benevolent reader, presented these verses of mine on combat, which I have composed, improved and brought into proper order from the true basis of the ancient authors, I will also explain them somewhat through many fine and shrewd devices and examples, and will offer some instruction for understanding them, so that everyone may have that much more use from them. For they are so rich in techniques and all kinds of ingenuity, that the longer you study them, along with their explanations, the more techniques you will be able to learn from them—for it is clear from other previous booklets on combat that the verses are not much use without explanation. Now the first part of the verses is sufficiently explained in what I have already taught concerning combat, so I will I begin with this one, thus:

See that you are the first on the field;  
before your opponent adopts a posture, lay on against him. [= ll. 29-30]

That is, when you wish to fight with someone, then see that you are the first to be in place against him, so that you can act in a timely manner in your intended devices; then you shall be so persistent against him with cuts and steps that he can have neither time nor space to choose a posture or device, and you shall thus rush upon him with sudden steps before he realises it. And you can sufficiently gather from the following verses how to carry this out.

Pay heed to Instantly, understand me rightly,  
hit him before he adopts his posture. [= ll. 31-32]

You shall understand this thus: when you are in the Onset, and he acts as if he will adopt a posture, [1.46r] then do not let him be in peace or come to it, but always attack first; and as he is choosing a posture, lay on at once to the nearest opening, and act as if you intended to cut strongly; but let it fail, or flit, and attack to another opening; then as soon as you have come halfway in or onto his sword with your blade, then do not be idle, but deliver a Thwart, or strike around, or wrench, or slice, or wind, or do whatever work may most properly come to hand for you.

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<sup>59</sup> Lines 93-94 are not included in Meyer's commentary, but there is a section on stepping; see 1.59r.

No posture will come to you that is so good;  
in the After you will hit him with free mettle. [= ll. 33-34]

Here one might ask how this is to be understood, since there are so many good postures, and also I show and teach many devices from them here and there. Concerning this you shall note, although there are many good postures, and also fine and good devices can be executed from the various postures, some of which have been shown and included here, yet you learn from these verses that it is always better not to entirely settle into a posture, since from the postures your opponent can easily deduce what kind of devices you have in mind to execute, something that cannot be deduced from the cuts.

Also you learn from these verses how, when an opponent stands in front of you in a posture, you shall hit him or come to the opening, which may be accomplished through the After. Understand this thus: if your opponent stands in a posture, then cut opposite it to the other opening; as soon as he goes out of his guard to parry your cut, then pull around your head just as it connects (or even better, before it connects at all), and strike in at the very same part or quarter from which he has gone away to meet you. But so that this shall be that much easier, I will offer you an example of it:

- 1.46r.1** ➤ In the Onset, as soon as you see that he adopts the Wrath Guard, then cut through from your left toward your right before him, but such that you are not too near him; and in cutting through, let your sword shoot around in the air, as if you intended to thrust from the right Ox. But just as you are in a position to do this, and act as if you were about to do it, then step quickly and cut in from below at his left, such that your hands remain high. Thus you force him either to come out of his posture to parry you, or to cut in at the same time with a back-step. If he cuts, then note as soon as the swords connect, and pull around your head, and cut the short edge in at his right ear in an arc with crossed hands, [1.46v: *Image G*; 1.47r] as this figure [G] demonstrates. In this Onset or attack, which is a very fine technique, you shall pay good heed to the steps, and let your body fully follow the cut.

When you threaten to strike to a place, then you can very readily deceive an opponent. To do this, you must take the ground away from him in laying on, and in the Approach, act as if you were going to take a small and tight step; then before he knows it, step broadly to the attack. Contrarily, at first act as if you intend to step broadly, so that your opponent perceives it, and will meet you rapidly in earnest to get there before you; then restrain your step, and do it moderately, so that he wears himself out for nothing. When you perceive your opportunity, then as soon as you see it, you should be rapidly upon him with broad stepping.

Send your cuts powerfully from your body,  
carry out your work to the four openings. [= ll. 35-36]

These verses teach how you shall send your cuts powerfully and long, flying fluidly to all four targets, that is to all four openings, along with the body, which shall fully follow the cuts as I have said.

When you deliver a Crooked Cut, go up quickly,  
cast the point crosswise on his hands. [= ll. 37-38]

The Crooked Cuts are executed in many ways, for all cuts that are delivered with crossed hands are called Crooked Cuts; thus the one Squinter is also reckoned among the Crooked Cuts. It also doesn't matter whether they are done with the short or the long edge, as long as you hold your hands crosswise.

- 1.47r.1** ➤ And firstly note when an opponent cuts at your head straight down from his right, then step with your right foot well out from his stroke toward his left, so that you escape his stroke in a spring toward his left side, and cut with crossed hands from your right against his cut; thus your blade comes between his head and sword onto his short edge, which is facing him. As soon as it connects, then step further with your right foot around toward his left side and parry or transfer with your blade from his blade onto his arm, between his head and sword. Push his arm down thus with crossed hands with a jerk; meanwhile you will surely find an opening to which you may cut [1.47v] according to opportunity, and you shall not long delay as soon as you see the opening.
- 1.47v.1** ➤ Further, in the Onset when you come to your opponent, then see when he pulls his arms up for the stroke, and at that moment cross your hands in the air, and cast the point, that is the foible or furthest part of your blade, on his hands or arms. And note that this shall take place as he draws up for the stroke, as I have said; and before he is ready with it you shall already be back on his blade with a Thwart; for these techniques shall take place flyingly and quickly.

Let the Circle connect to the right,  
hold your hands high, if you wish to deceive him. [= ll. 39-40]

The Circle also comes from the Crooked Cuts, and is a particularly good technique for deceiving, compared to others, since it does not run off without connecting (as do other deceiving techniques, like running off, flitting, and such); but if one does it rightly, the Circle hits very hard with the short edge as it runs by. Now execute this technique thus:

- 1.47v.2** ➤ After you have come under his sword through the Onset, when you stand before your opponent in the bind, and send your sword up above your head, as soon as he allows you space and does not bind after your sword, but also sends his sword-point high, then cross your hands in the air, and cut down from above at his right ear in this crossed position with the short edge, so that afterwards your blade,

whether it hits or not, runs around past by his right arm in a Circle; and meanwhile keep your hands up over your head. As soon as he slips after the Circle, then step with your left foot well out to his right side, and cut at his head with the long edge behind his blade over his right arm; take your body and head well out from his stroke on your left side as you step.

### **A Good Device with the Circle**

- 1.47v.3** ➤ When you stand in this sort of work before your opponent (as I have said), then take heed when the opportunity comes to you, and step sideways with your left foot out to your left side, and cut a Circle past at his right as you step, but such that in running past to the right it grazes and hits. And after this Circle, step through with your right foot between you and him to his right side, and as you step through, deliver a Thwart Cut from your right at his left, forward at his face, as you can see in the upper figures in Image K; with this, spring well out to his right, and cut long after at his head. [*1.48r: Image K; 1.48v*]

Step well with the Crooked if you wish to parry;  
the crossing over will do him harm. [= *ll. 45-46*]

This should be understood thus: when you cut in with the Crooked at the same time as him, then as you cut, step well out from his stroke, so that you pull your head out from his stroke behind your blade. Secondly, when you have bound with a Crooked Cut on his sword, you should quickly cross over (if you have the opportunity), then snap around, or wind the flick at his head, or wrench, or overrun, and such like.

### **A Fine Device with Reversing**

- 1.48v.1** ➤ In the Onset, if your opponent goes up before you, then step and cut from your left with the short edge and crossed hands to or over his right arm; but with this Crooked Cut, step well to him, reverse your sword, and wrench down to your right side. If he works upward with his arms so that you cannot force him down, then go between his arms with your pommel from inside; release your left hand from the haft, grip your blade, and wrench upward as in Image O.
- 1.48v.2** ➤ Counter this thus: release your left hand so that he wrenches in vain; and pursue his jerking upward with the slice on his arm, and do not let him come to any further work or get free. When you see your opportunity, then let your weapon fly to the next opening.

You will strengthen yourself by going crooked to his flat,  
you shall diligently see that you weaken him. [= *ll. 47-48*]

This teaches how you shall weaken your opponent's incoming stroke; and you shall execute it thus:

**1.48v.3** ➤ In the Onset, take heed when your opponent cuts at you from his right, and step well out from his stroke, and cut with crossed hands and the long edge on his forte in the flat; thus you weaken [*l.49r: Image O; l.49v*] him so that he can scarcely recover for another; then before he recovers, you can be on his head with winding or flicking.

**1.49v.1** ➤ Now you shall thus execute the counter to this: if you see that an opponent meets you with a Crooked Cut on your incoming stroke to weaken you, then quickly change through under his blade, and attack him to the side from which he has sent in the Crooked Cut.

As soon as it connects and clashes above,  
pull away to the opening if you wish to confuse him. [= *ll. 49-50*]

These verses are very necessary to heed, since they admonish you seriously to pay heed to the opening that appears. For if you pursue the matter correctly, it is certain that whenever two strokes connect or clash together above, you can rush to an opening below; this will not fail you. And so that you can better understand this, observe it through these following examples and devices, thus:

**1.49v.2** ➤ In the Onset, as soon as you can reach your opponent, then step and deliver a powerful High Cut with him in from your right. As soon as it clashes, then quickly strike around again to his left ear, and at the same time step with your left foot behind your right. Thus you hit him twice, or complete two strokes on one side before he gets one.

**1.49v.3** ➤ Similarly, if an opponent cuts at you from above as before, then cut from your left from below against his stroke, so that you catch his High Cut up in the air on your sword with crossed hands. As soon as it clashes, then cut off of his sword with the short-edge foible thus with crossed hands, with a Circle at his right ear. And this shall take place swiftly almost at the same time, so that when the blades connect, the short edge will at once hit down from above.

**1.49v.4** ➤ In the Onset, act as if you intended to cut from above; but as soon as you see that he slips up against the cut, then turn your High Cut into a Low Cut before it actually connects above, which is a proper Failer; and you thus hit his left ear before he realises it.

**1.49v.5** ➤ Lastly, if your opponent cuts from below, then fall on it from above with your long edge. As soon as it clashes, then strike quickly to the nearest opening in a single motion, or strike around from his sword with the flat in a flick that you wind to the nearest opening. [*l.50r*]

When you cut crooked at his forte,



be sure to wind through and overrun with it. [= ll. 41-42]

**1.50r.1** ➤ When you deliver a Crooked Cut at an opponent, and he opposes hard against it so that you cannot get him from above with crossing over or other work, then wind through below with the pommel, and use it to catch over his blade or arm outside on the other side, and wrench down; strike him on his head with the long edge as you wrench; or catch with the pommel between his hands, as can be seen in the previous image [O] in the two figures on the left.<sup>60</sup>

**1.50r.2** ➤ \*Counter: if an opponent delivers a Low Cut at you, then cut on top of his forte with your long edge so that you have your hands crooked or crosswise. Then when this clashes, thrust the blade right in before you, and in thrusting forth, wind the short edge to flick it around at his face or head. If he goes up and wards off your flick, then go up also, pull around your head, and strike at his lower opening.

You should pay heed to the deceit of the pommel,  
with the Tag-Hit and flicking you will vex him. [= ll. 43-44]

**1.50r.3** ➤ This is to say, if you cut in with a Crooked Cut at his right, and he opposes or parries high, then wind through below with the pommel, and act as if you intended to catch over with the pommel, as I have already taught; and before he realises it, flick the short edge back in at him, to whichever side you first did the Crooked Cut.

**1.50r.4** ➤ *Item*, in the Onset, lay on against your opponent with a powerful horizontal Middle Cut strongly at his left ear. Quickly pull your pommel around your head, and threaten him with it as if you intended to jab at his other side with the pommel; and when he slips against it to prevent the jab, then flick back at his left ear with the short edge, and as you flick, step with your left foot back behind your right; and cut away from him. [1.50v]

Also if you wish to shoot through correctly,  
Crooked, Short, change through on his shield. [= ll. 51-52]

**1.50v.1** ➤ This is a truly fine master device: when you are in the Onset, then position yourself in the right Wrath; as soon as he brings his sword in the air, then deliver a free High Cut at him; but do not complete it, instead cross your hands in the air, so that the right hand comes over the left, and thus deftly cut through crooked with the short edge against his cut. Then step with a double step well out to his right, and cut with the long edge at his right ear, or use changing through to come onto his shield against his right; then work with winding, slicing, and whatever work arises for you.

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<sup>60</sup> Compare the version in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fol. 35v.

### A Device with Shooting Through

- 1.50v.2** ➤ Take heed in the Onset as soon as your opponent pulls up his sword for the stroke, and at the same time cut through crooked quickly and deftly before him (as I have said) so that you come to his right outside on his shield. And as soon as it connects, then wind the short edge in at his head, and in this winding, jerk your pommel well upward, so that the short edge comes that much deeper. If he goes up to parry, then let your blade snap around again so that your right hand comes back over your left; and thus in snapping around, flick back in below at his right ear; and meanwhile step with your left foot well out to his right. Then at once deliver a Thwart deep at his left ear with a back-step, and wind your short edge on his sword back out below at his left ear; afterwards cut away from him. And all this shall be completed quickly by winding.

Note when he will confuse you with the Crooked,  
remain rightly on the sword; carry out the War  
with winding, slicing, and everything else;  
with flitting let yourself not go too far. [= ll. 53-56.]

[1.51r]

From these verses you learn how to conduct yourself against an opponent who binds you crooked on your sword. And I will here speak usefully of two elements, namely remaining and the War, which take place thus: when an opponent binds you crooked on your sword, then do not pull away at once, but remain on his sword to feel what kind of work you will need here; for example, if he withdraws, that you chase; or if he remains, that you wind.

For winding, slicing, reversing, and wrenching, is called the War, through which one always counters the opponent's devices. And one counter follows from another; for if he wards off one, then he gives you occasion or helps you to another; and thus you both make war over the Before. Also you shall note when an opponent lays on against you with a Crooked Cut, that you do not flit from one opening to another; for as soon as you go away from the Crooked Cut, then you are quite open to him, if he has any idea how to respond.

- 1.51r.1** ➤ In this matter note a good device: if an opponent delivers a Crooked Cut at you from his right, then set off his cut upward with the long edge. When it clashes, then remain with the bind on his blade; meanwhile wind your pommel up toward your left, and the blade down toward his left, the short edge at his left ear; and all this shall take place at the same time as one step. Thus you will certainly hit; but if he should be shrewd enough to turn the Crooked Cut into the Longpoint, then wind the short edge inward at his head in a flick. Afterward quickly wind through again underneath with the pommel on your left side; thus catch over his blade or arm with the pommel, and wrench, or depending on your situation, then undertake another device as seems fitting to you here.

Quickly flick the foible at the right,  
doubly flick, protect yourself with the shield. [= ll. 57-58]

- 1.51r.2** ➤ In the Onset, come into the right Change; from there, slash up through his face, so that your sword runs around in a loop over your head; step with your left foot well to his right, and strike with the outside flat from your left against his right across at his ear; with this, take your head well out of the way as I have said before. And when it clashes, then quickly push your pommel through under your right arm and flick with [1.51v] the inside flat up from below back at his right ear. In this winding, remain hard on his shield with your sword, and at the same time press hard from you. If he resists, then let your sword go away without resisting him, and pull around your head; strike a strong Clashing Cut with the outside flat and the back of your hand at his left, so that your pommel goes well upward; thus the cut goes that much deeper. Wind through with the pommel back under your arm, and flick from inside behind his blade at his head. Remain hard on his shield and wind rapidly back out; thus you stand back in the Clashing Cut as before. Work further as you will to the four openings.
- 1.51v.1** ➤ *Item:* if your opponent delivers a High Cut at you from his right, then likewise deliver a High Cut in against his at the same time. When it clashes, then rapidly push your pommel through under your arm, and flick back inward at his head; just as it connects, pull your crossed arms up toward your left, and force upward around on his blade; flick back with the outside flat at his left ear from below, as in the previous device. This double flicking shall happen quickly, and I have presented it to you so particularly since it is an especially shrewd device.

For when you bind from one side on his sword, and remain hard on it, and wind at him in and outward in a flick, doubly on one side to the upper and lower part of his head, then when he parries the flicks, you will certainly have an opening on the other side that you may hit with a Circle, or by flicking around in a single motion. In my opinion you can well observe and learn the windings from this.

Also wind forcefully against his shield,  
instantly shove him away and strike swiftly. [= ll. 59-60]

- 1.51v.2** ➤ That is, when an opponent wards off your double flicking, and sets you off, then catch his shield with yours, as the small figure on the right in Image I has caught the arms of the other (but do not release your left hand from the haft); and jerk his sword away from you sideways with a shove. Instantly let your short edge snap around deep at his other opening on the opposite side. [1.52r: *Image N*; 1.52v]

### Another

- 1.52v.1 ➤ If a powerful brute cuts at you, so that you cannot come at him with such subtle work, then cut the first at the same time as him, and just as he pulls his arms back toward him, go at him from underneath with horizontal blade on his arms; and in going under, release your left hand from the pommel and grip your blade in the middle, as shown by the small figures on the left in image N on the previous page. Wrench his arms to the side with your shield and quillons, and as you shove or wrench, release your left hand; quickly cut after, either short or long.

Therefore note, when you encounter a brute who is always cutting from above, then see that you parry him one stroke or two, until you see the opportunity, when he has gone up the furthest for a stroke. Then go quickly under his arms, and step well under him; thus he will strike his own arms on your blade.

The Squinting Cut you shall execute wisely,  
with winding you can also double against him. [= ll. 61-62]

There are three Squinters, namely two Squinting Cuts, one from the right, the second from your left, which is done with crossed hands not unlike the Crooked Cut, as described above concerning the Crooked Cuts. The third is a Squinter with the face, when I look at a place, and act as if I intended to strike there, but I don't do this, but strike in somewhere else.

You have already been taught about these Squinting Cuts in the first part, and since I speak of them here and there in the devices, it is needless to discuss them more fully. I will therefore only say something of a few counters and the like that arise from them.

### Counter against the Squinter

- 1.52v.2 ➤ Note whenever an opponent sends a Squinting Cut against your long cut, he opens his right side; therefore do not let him come onto your sword, but change through beneath, and cut at his right long in from your left after going through. [1.53r]

### Counter

- 1.53r.1 ➤ *Item:* if an opponent changes through to your right side under your Squinting Cut, then remain with the point right before his face, and turn the long edge against his blade; with this, let your pommel go through under your right arm, and step with your left foot well to his right side. Thus he has changed through in vain, for you come at his head with the other Squinting Cut and crossed hands. At once let it run off by his right side using the Circle, and deliver a Thwart at his left ear.

### **Counter against the Plow**

- 1.53r.2 ➤ When an opponent comes before you in the guard of the Plow, then promptly lay on against him with the Squinting Cut.<sup>61</sup> As soon as he goes up, then work to his lower openings, and then to all four targets.

### **Counter against the Longpoint**

- 1.53r.3 ➤ *Item:* if an opponent stands before you in the Longpoint, then act as if you intended to deliver a long High Cut at his left ear; don't do this, but turn around in the air, and deliver a strong Squinting Cut on his sword. When it clashes, then thrust the point in before you at his face. He must parry this: when he goes up, then pull your sword around your head in a single motion; cut the short edge with crossed hands across at his right ear. I call this the other Squinter; let your left hand go well up under your right arm; thus the short edge goes deep. Pull back around your head, and wrench his blade across with the flat from your right against his left, so that your sword flies back around over your head, and let your short edge shoot in deep at his left ear. At once deliver two Low Cuts at his right and left; then cut away. [1.53v]

### **Another**

- 1.53v.1 ➤ *Item:* if an opponent comes before you who likes to bind long on you from above, or sends his first stroke long at you from the Day, then when you come near him, slash through before him up toward your left, so that your blade shoots around over your head in the Plunge against his left. Menace him as if you intended thus to strike at his left; thus he will doubtless be prompt to cut in; therefore let your sword instantly snap around back over your head, the right hand over the left, and strike in at his right ear with the short edge at the same time as his stroke, as I have taught before. If you do this correctly and step well with it, then you will certainly hit. But if he parries and goes up (for he must go up if he wants to parry), at once pull around your head, and cut in with the long edge from below across at the radius-bone of his forearm, close to his pommel at the wrist-bone. One of these two openings will come to you, either the right ear or the radius. Pull your hilt back up around your head, and deliver a strong long cut at his left at his head; in this third stroke, step with both feet in a double step well around his left side; thus the cut proceeds well. This is a good serious device, if you want to bring it home to the opponent.

### **Another Device with the Squinting Cut**

- 1.53v.2 ➤ In the Onset when you are almost in range of him, then act as if you intended to deliver a long strong High Cut; when he goes up to meet you, then turn the short edge in the air from your right against his left, and jerk your pommel upward; strike him with the short edge over his arm or hands; step well to his left side. Let it run around past in a Circle, and cut long after at his nearest opening, or attack him

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<sup>61</sup> *A classic precept of the Liechtenauer tradition; cf. the Ringeck Fechtbuch, fol. 35r.*

with Low Cuts. [1.54r]

### **Doubling the Squinter**

- 1.54r.1** ➤ *Item:* in the Approach deliver a Squinting Cut from your right against his cut on his sword. As soon as it clashes, then reverse your sword on his blade, and slip out on his blade toward your left side; then step with your right foot further toward his left; let your blade go around your head, and deliver the second Squinting Cut also from your right deep above in behind his blade, one after the other quickly in succession, with a double step to his left. This is a handy device against slow fighters who send their arms far from themselves.
- 1.54r.2** ➤ Or when you have executed the first Squinting Cut, and will send in the second, then as you send your sword in the air, thrust your pommel rapidly through under your right arm, and cut the second with crossed hands also at his left as before, and take your head well toward your right.

### **The Third Squinter is a deceit with the face**

- 1.54r.3** ➤ In the Onset, slash up into the guard of the Day; as soon as you can reach him, at once turn the short edge against him while it is still in the air. Make your face look as if you intended to cut in with the Squinting Cut at his left; but don't do this, instead let the Squinter run past by his left without hitting, and work to his right; or glance toward his right, and strike quickly back in at his left; take your body well out of the way with it. This is a fine and swift work that does not really admit of writing but must be shown with the living body.

### **Note a deft device with the Squinter**

- 1.54r.4** ➤ When you are just about in range of him, then execute a Winging upward before him, so that you come with crossed hands into the Unicorn; as you execute this Winging upward, lift your left foot somewhat, following the impetus of the cut. And when you come with crossed hands up with the Unicorn, stand as if you intended to shoot through. As soon as he extends [1.54v] his sword, then cut from above with crossed hands and the short edge down against his right, onto the foible of his blade; and before it connects, turn your short edge around, and strike with the Squinting Cut, that is with the short edge, from your right at his left ear, arm, or face, with a forward step on your right foot toward his left; thus you will hit as shown by the large figure on the left in Image G. And when it hits, let your blade run out from his left somewhat to the side, and at the same time push your pommel through under your right arm; thus cross your hands, so that your short edge snaps around again before him against his left over his head or arm; wrench his sword thus with crossed hands from your right toward your left, or cross over his arms. If he opposes so that you cannot wrench or cross over, then let your pommel run through underneath, and catch over his right arm; use wrestling against him.

### Concerning Changing Through

Changing through is useful against those who fight with the Squinter or Crooked Cuts. Take note of this: if he does not extend his hands far from him in his cuts, but holds them close to himself in combat, you may readily change through at a distance against him.

*Item*, if he fights with winding, reversing, Crooked Cuts, Squinting Cuts, or any other techniques with which he shortens his stroke, or cannot fight long from himself, as happens with those techniques, then before he brings his technique halfway through, you shall also change through against him, to the other side which he opens with this shortening. Thus you force him to parry, so that he must let the Before pass to you.

*Item*, if an opponent fights broadly and long from himself with the long edge, but more at your sword than your body, you shall also change through against him to the nearest opening, and let him fall right down with his cuts.

Therefore, whatever technique you are executing, whether with the long or short edge, see that you cut chiefly at his opening, that is at his body. And although it cannot always happen that you can cut most readily at his body, yet as soon as he changes through, you shall fall in after his sword at his opening. Also note this precept in all cutting: when you connect or catch his blade with your forte in the bind, as soon as it clashes, you shall cut in at his body or his nearest opening with your foible, that is with your forward part, [1.55r] so that your sword hits his blade and body at the same time. Or as soon as your forte connects with his sword, then as they clash together, you shall turn the foible to the nearest opening with flicking, snapping, and winding.

Furthermore also observe this instruction, when you will execute these techniques against someone who knows how to change through against you, for example when you send your sword into the air for a Squinting Cut or Crooked Cut, or for crossing, falling, and such like: as soon as you realise that he intends to change through, then fall from this work into the Long Slice, that is into the Longpoint, to the opening he gives you by changing through. For whenever he changes through, he opens himself. And when you slash through to his opening, then watch for his sword with the long edge; if it comes too near you, turn against him with the forte, and remain on his opening with the short edge. As soon as you have connected, then do not tarry longer, but let it quickly fly away from one opening to another.

The Thwart you shall also consider valuable,  
with it your skill in the sword becomes great. [= ll. 63-64]

The Thwart is one of the chief master techniques with the sword; for you shall know, if the Thwart did not

exist in modern combat, then fully half of it would go out the window, particularly when you are under the opponent's sword, where you can no longer attack with long cuts through the Cross. Although I have already written enough about the Thwart such that if someone knows how to fight, he could derive sufficient understanding from it; yet since much depends on the Thwart (as I have said), I intend to offer further description, partly for great masters but especially for students. Therefore I will not only repeat the Thwart here, but also write more fully about it, for the instruction of those who love this art.

- 1.55r.1** ➤ In the Onset, take heed if your opponent will lay on against you from the Day, that is from above; then slash up from the right Change toward your opponent's face; when he will strike or cut, then let your blade go by your left side around your head, such that your flat faces upward, and your thumb is underneath on your shield, or the shield lies on your thumb; step with your right foot well around his left side toward him; along with [1.55v] the step, cut with the short edge from your right side at his left ear, so that your hilt stands up over your head as a parrying, with the thumb underneath, so that should he strike, you will catch his stroke on your forte; and at the same time you hit with the short-edge foible across from below at his left ear. As soon as the swords connect or clash together, then strike with the long Thwart diagonally opposite it deep at his right ear, such that your thumb remains underneath.

Next, note when you strike in or bind at the same time as him with a Thwart Cut, at once seek the opening above and below on the same side with reversing and snapping around again, or delivering a Thwart, crossing over, chasing, slicing, pressing hands, or wrenching. For as soon as an opponent cuts at you from above, you should parry him with the Thwart; when the swords clash or connect, then reverse, crossing your hands, and go upward to the opening,<sup>62</sup> and execute whatever attack may first arise that is spoken of in this regard. Concerning this, Liechtenauer speaks truly in his enigmatic verses:

The Thwart takes  
all that comes from above.  
Also Thwart with the forte,  
observe your work with it.<sup>63</sup>

That is, parry all Day Strokes with the Thwart, or as I have presented it here in my verses:

For all that which comes from the Day,  
the Thwart may parry it.

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<sup>62</sup> 1570: *verkehr schrenck ubersich die Blöß*. *The meaning of this phrase is unclear, and words may be missing. But cf. the following sequence, which appears to illustrate what Meyer has in mind.*

<sup>63</sup> *Liechtenauer 1965: ll. 90-91.*



In the Onset, execute the Thwart with strength,  
note also to reverse and fail with it. [= ll. 65-68]

- 1.55v.1** ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from the Day, then deliver a Thwart against his stroke with force; thus you force him to fall that much further downwards with his cut. When it clashes, then push your pommel through under your right arm; thus reverse and press downwards. At once let the blade snap around again, with the short edge in his face, yet such that in the reversing and snapping around you remain with the slice on his arms. This device proceeds well when you do it nimbly. However, if he escapes you upward too quickly with his arms, then let your blade go around your head, so that your long edge comes across in front on his arms with a Low Cut, as shown by the small scene in Image [N]<sup>64</sup> on the left; but do not release your left hand from the hilt, rather push him from you with crossed hands. [1.56r: Image I; 1.56v]

To the Plow and the Ox you are quick,<sup>65</sup>  
threaten the cut at once against the target. [= ll. 69-70]

This verse is essentially very clear, like the others, namely that you shall quickly deliver the Thwart Cut to the Ox and Plow, that is to the lower and upper opening, to the left and right, horizontally and diagonally opposite to all four parts, as with other cuts, as I have already taught more fully in the section on the four openings.

Note when the Thwart is executed with a spring,  
and you execute failing with it, it connects at your will. [= ll. 71-72]

- 1.56v.1** ➤ Note in the Onset when you wish to deliver a Thwart to the upper left opening, then spring well up with it, and also let your pommel go well upward; thus the Thwart goes deep at his head, particularly when you can spring in suddenly with the Thwart, so that he does not take notice of the spring until it has happened, and the Thwart has hit. But if he perceives it and defends or parries it, then step rapidly with your left foot toward his right side, and deliver a Thwart from your left at his lower right opening with lowered body. This you will surely have, if he has parried your first Thwart.
- 1.56v.2** ➤ *Item:* when you thus strike at your opponent high and deep with a spring, with the Thwart or else a flat,

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<sup>64</sup> 1570: I. Alternatively, Meyer could be referring to the scene on the right in I, but here the left hand has not been released from the hilt.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Liechtenauer (1965: ll. 94-95) and the Ringeck Fechtbuch, fol. 28v.

and yet do not let it hit, but run beside his left without hitting, and you strike rapidly with the Thwart at another opening, then you will hit at your will. For before he thinks to parry the Thwart, you have hit elsewhere, provided you do it with the whole body, i.e. use the correct body language for such a device.

You shall do the Failer double,  
likewise double the step and slice. [= *ll.* 73-74]

The Failer is a good technique against combatants who are inclined to parry, as with the previous techniques with the Thwart—for example when you cut at an opening, and note that he parries at the cut, then let the cut run past without hitting, [*l.* 57r] and strike at another opening. Double failing is a very artful technique, and demands a very skilled combatant. And I will here present and describe for you some devices, double and single, from which you can well learn all kinds of Failers.

- 1.57r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Wrath Guard on the right; as soon as he brings his sword in the air, then cut from your right around your head with the long edge and extended arms through at his right side without hitting, so that the Thwart flies back around forcefully in the air at his left ear. But do not let it connect, instead pull back around your head, and cut with the long edge so that the flat swings well in at his right ear. Now reverse, snap around, let it flit, and whatever kind of work may present itself.
- 1.57r.2** ➤ *Item:* in the Onset deliver a long High Cut at his upper left opening; when you have almost connected with his blade above in the air with the cut, then transform the High Cut into a Thwart, and strike with the Thwart from below at his left ear or arm.

These are true combat techniques, from which many fine devices are executed.

#### **A Failer with a False Step**

- 1.57r.3** ➤ In the Onset deliver a lofty High Cut, and when your blade almost connects with his blade, at once transform the High Cut into a Thwart, and along with the Thwart step through to the side with your right foot, between you and him toward his right side, using the Thwart to cut with your point between his arms at his mouth, as you can see in the small upper figures in the following image [*K*]. At once let it snap around again, and strike him with the short edge and crossed hands opposite it at his right ear, or cut after with the long edge; yet with this stroke spring well out sideways to his right.

#### **Twofold or Double Failing**

- 1.57r.4** ➤ *Item:* in the Onset before you actually come within range of him, cut through beside your right, so that

your weapon shoots over in the Plunge; step forward to him with your right foot; let your sword go around your head, and gather in the air for a [1.57v: *Image K*; 1.58r] high stroke from the Day, but cross your hands, and threaten to strike him with the short edge. If he slips after it to parry, then turn your hands back around, and turn your short edge<sup>66</sup> to a Thwart. Do not let the Thwart connect either, but run past without hitting, and secondly strike his right side; this is double failing. These two Failers are executed together in the air as you wind around his blade in a single motion. However if you want, you can break off in the middle to parry or to turn him, if he should come upon you, so that you may not come at him with your device. But when you have crowded him into parrying you, then the double Failer is very good, and proceeds very swiftly.

*Item*, it is also called double failing when one lets it run off doubly or twice to deceive the opponent.

### **Another with the Double Failer**

- 1.58r.1 ➤ In the Onset begin a high stroke from your right, and in the air, before it connects, turn the short edge against him, as if you intended to deliver the Squinting Cut; but do not let the short edge connect either, rather let it run past quickly without hitting, and swing your foible at his right ear with crossed arms. Let it quickly fly away back around, and fall on him with the slice to the nearest opening, or on his sword, and from there at his body and on his arms.

### **Counter against the Thwart**

- 1.58r.2 ➤ Note when you bind with an opponent from above, or cut in at the same time as him, then see whether he will strike around with the Thwart; when he strikes around, then come first with the Thwart under his blade on his neck, as shown by the large figure on the left in image L.<sup>67</sup>
- 1.58r.3 ➤ *Item*: if he delivers the Thwart from below, so that you cannot come underneath it, then catch his Thwart on your shield by sliding, and push your pommel well away from you over your right arm, and turn your long edge from outside over his blade up from below at his head, as shown by the large figure on the right in Image N. [1.58v: *Image N*; 1.59r]

### **On Stepping**

Much depends on stepping, therefore see that you give every stroke its step. For when you cut at his opening and do not step with the foot from the side from which you have cut, then the cut is useless. But when you are not really cutting but only threatening to do it, then you should also not really step, but only act as if you were stepping. However, practice will teach you this better.

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<sup>66</sup> 1570: verwandle die Krumpschneide. *This would literally mean 'transform the crooked edge'; 'crooked edge' is used for the short edge of the dusack, but not normally for the longsword.*

<sup>67</sup> Compare the versions in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fol. 28v and the *Von Danzig Fechtbuch*, fol. 19v.

Do a double step thus: when you have stepped with your right foot to his left, and your technique requires that you should step yet further around, then step with your left foot after the right one, outwards or past behind your right foot; then when you have barely set the left down, you can step forth with the right, to double the slice [*?read: step*]<sup>68</sup>.

Observe this following device:

- 1.59r.1** ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from his right, then cut also from your right against his stroke, but with the short edge and crossed hands. As soon as the swords connect, then step quickly with a double step with your right foot further around his left toward him, and fall away from his sword with the long edge onto his arm; now cross over. If he goes up and will not permit the slice, then pursue him with the Low Slice on his arm. Push him away from you with your quillons and shield before he recovers; cut after. This is the true Ancient Slice, and requires a master to execute it.

*Item*, when you have sliced an opponent's arms from above, then you may draw the slice through his mouth.

From the sword to the body, reverse with it,  
twice, or slice on the weapon. [= *ll. 75-76*]

This is the correct gloss for the previous verses, which tells you to wind twice or slice on the weapon. Understand it thus:

- 1.59r.2** ➤ When you slice from the sword onto his arms, you shall at once reverse. If he then escapes you upward, then you shall wind your pommel back out from under your arm; thus your sword turns back around.
- 1.59r.3** ➤ To slice on the weapon is this: when the double reversing has failed you, then you shall chase twice, remaining with the slice on his arms. If he wards this off, then fall on his blade with the slice, and see that you do not let him come away without your advantage, but always chase him. [*l. 59v*]

Chasing is extremely good,  
with slicing and winding protect yourself. [= *ll. 77-78*]

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<sup>68</sup> *The text reads Schnitt, which could be an error for Tritt, but cf. the slice in the text that follows, and ll. 73-74 in Meyer's verses.*

Chasing is diverse and manifold, and should be executed with great judiciousness against combatants who fight inexpertly swinging around with long cuts. Do it thus:

- 1.59v.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you approach him with your left foot forward and hold your sword in the Day, if he cuts long from above at your head, then do not parry him, but see that you escape through from him toward the other side with your head and sword under his blade while it is still in the air flying in, so that he does not hit you. Thus let him miss, and as you step through, while his sword is still falling toward the ground with the cut, cut artfully and quickly in from above at his head, before he recovers or comes back up. But if he goes up so quickly that he parries you, then remain hard on his sword, and feel whether he pushes strongly upward; if so, then quickly let your sword escape upward without resisting him; step and strike around with the Thwart to his right.
- 1.59v.2** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent binds on you from his right, then take heed when he strikes around, and pursue him with the slice on his arms to his right.
- 1.59v.3** ➤ Or if you stand in the guard, and he falls on your sword with his own before you come up, then remain below on his sword, and lift upward; feel meanwhile whether he intends to execute a cut or winding against you from the parry; if so, then do not let him come away from your sword, but pursue him, and work meanwhile to the nearest opening.

Also note that chasing is when an opponent goes too high upward, and you chase him below either with cutting or slicing as he draws up for the stroke; likewise if he strays too wide to the side, and you chase his weapon to the opening from above. And in all chasing, if he escapes you, be sure to turn your long edge against his weapon; and take good heed of the slice, for with it you can force him out of all his work.

Some twice or so

let it flit, begin with it. [= ll. 79-80] [1.60r]

That is, when you have made contact with him with the slice, you shall see that you do not let him free, but once or twice pursue with the slice, and thus hinder him in his work and device. Then when he least expects it, you shall artfully fly away with the sword to the nearest opening before he realises it. This is a true master device; therefore it is a beginning.

Send the hits to all four targets,

learn the pullings, if you will deceive them. [= ll. 81-82]

You must be well instructed in the four openings, if you wish to fight at all surely. For whatever cuts and

devices you may execute, however good they may be, if you do not know how to break off in each quarter, and to transmute the intended devices, transforming them into another more appropriate attack, always depending on how he fights against you and counters your devices, then it can befall that you are planning on one device for a particular opening, and yet he conducts himself against you such that another opening is more accessible; this opportunity will escape you, if you execute your intended devices without heeding other opportunities that arise. Therefore be diligent always to fight flying fluidly to the four openings. For you have only three ways to cut and strike, that is with the long edge, short edge, and flat, from which all combat is assembled, directed at the four parts of the opponent; from these arise all other incidental techniques, such as pulling, doubling, running off, concerning which I have spoken enough already.

Also execute slicing off and slinging,

send away the hard dangers with the slice. [= ll. 83-84]

Now when you thus let your devices run to all four openings, as I have just taught, then also pay attention to his course, that is to his device, so that you forestall him and slice off against him according to opportunity; thus hinder and slice off his devices, until you see your opportunity for other work. The [1.60v] two dangers are the strokes from both sides; when you slice them off, then see that you overlook no opportunity, and also do not slice too wide from his body, so that he does not go through against you.

Also pay heed to the slinging; as soon as he makes one side open, then rush up from below at his ears with the flat; slice quickly back down to the opening. Concerning slinging see also the first section in the chapter on handwork.

Do not rely too much on the Crown,

you will tend to get harm and shame from it. [= ll. 85-86]

Note when you parry with horizontal quillons up over your head, that is called the Crown.

- 1.60v.1** ➤ When you see that an opponent will run under your High Cut with the Crown, then do not let your High Cut actually connect, but pull the cut from him, so that he goes up in vain, and deliver a horizontal Middle Cut with the long edge at his arms or the radius-bone of his forearm, if you will harm him.

Therefore whenever you see that an opponent goes eagerly up in the air to parry, then act as if you intended to strike high; but don't do this, rather strike around quickly to the lower opening with the Thwart, flat, or long edge. In sum, if someone will execute the Crown against you, then execute a Failer against him.

Slash the Longpoint through forcefully,  
hold off all hard danger with it. [= ll. 87-88]

- Stand with your left foot forward, and slash through your opponent's face from your right, so that your short edge goes forward, one to four times in succession. As soon as you drive him up, then lay on against him from below, either with a Thwart or the long edge. And note as you slash up against him, take heed if he cuts at you from your right from above. If he does this, then in slashing up, turn your long edge against his blade, and catch his cut in the air on your forte, so that your blade stands somewhat horizontal, your point upwards out toward his left. Step at once with your left [*?read: right*] foot to his left, and meanwhile push your pommel [*l.61r*] through under your right arm; strike at his head with the short edge by slipping off behind his blade, as shown by the scene on the left in Image B [*?read: C*]; with this, step with your right foot well toward his left; jerk the pommel quickly back out, so that you stand with your sword in the Thwart or in the Hanging Point.

- 1.61r.1** ➤ *Item:* slash up before him, and let your sword fly around above by your left side; step and cut from your right from below powerfully at his arm. If he parries, then wind through below with your haft, and catch over his right arm with your pommel on the outside; release your left hand from the haft and grip your blade to help the right; strike him with the long edge on his head, as shown by the figures on the right in Image O.

You shall let the Blind Cut rebound,  
cast the Thwart around, be diligent about the flicking.<sup>69</sup>

- 1.61r.2** ➤ Slash the Longpoint in his face; step and pull your sword around your head, and strike with the inside flat from your right at his left ear through the Middle Line; take your head well out of the way with this, and wind the outside flat quickly back in on his sword also to his left.

The hangings shall you wisely execute,  
do not grapple at the wrong time if you wish to wrestle. [= ll. 91-92]

That is, when you have both run in together, you shall make sure of the grappling, if you wish to wrestle. For if you miss, you can put yourself in danger by grappling, from which you can scarcely save yourself without harm.

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<sup>69</sup> *These lines are not in the full text of Meyer's poem, but the first strongly resembles a line in Martin Siber's verse epitome (the Speyer Fechtbuch, fol. 2r): 'Den plintt hauw laß prellen' (Let the Blind Cut rebound).*

**Concerning this grappling and wrestling note these following examples, among which the first is derived from the High Cut**

- 1.61r.3** ➤ In the Onset, send your sword in before you with extended blade, so that the point stands out toward his face. As soon as you can reach him, then let your blade drop from his face toward your left; [1.61v] then pull your sword around your head with hanging blade, and in a forward spring, cut a high and powerful stroke at his left ear. As soon as the cut has hit, at once pull your blade directly up away, and remain with your hands up over your head, and let the blade sink by your left side for a Low Cut at his right arm; with this, rapidly lower with upper body, and at the same time release your left hand from the haft, and grip your blade in the middle; thus go at his arms quickly up from below while they are up to parry the first stroke. When you have thus caught his arms between your hands with your long edge, then wind forcefully with the point outside over his arms. If he is too strong, and forces upwards, then keep your blade hard on his arms, and wind through underneath with the pommel; use it to catch over his left arm on the outside, and wrench forcefully downward; as you thus wrench downward to yourself with your pommel, then set your point with your left hand over his left arm, inside his right in his face. And if he seeks to work further with his sword, then catch his right arm with the foible of your blade, and wrench downward, and strike him in the face with your pommel.

**Counter**

- 1.61v.1** ➤ When you realise that an opponent will wind outside with his blade over your arms, then release your left hand from the pommel, and grip your blade in the middle; at the same time send your pommel between his arms, and use it to catch over his right arm from inside; wrench toward yourself with the pommel, and push from you with the blade; thus you will take his sword from him. Thus always one counter follows upon another.

**Another**

- 1.61v.2** ➤ In the Onset, send your sword in long in front of you with extended arms, and watch diligently for your opportunity; when you see it, then again pull your sword around, and cut powerfully [1.62r] from above at his left ear. When the cut hits, then go up with both arms, and at the same time push your pommel through under your right arm; then rapidly release your left hand from the haft, and grip with it over your right arm back on your pommel; thrust thus at his face behind his sword; or if you have a shortened sword, then thrust at him from above in between his arms, and set the point on his chest; and step back with your right foot; jab at him thus with the point. With this, let your sword travel back, and cut right through from your right across at his left ear with a back-step on your left foot; then a last withdrawal cut from your left through his right.
- 1.62r.1** ➤ Or when you have thus thrust in at your opponent between his arms from above, then release your left hand from the pommel, and grip your blade with it under his right arm; wind upward with it before



his face toward his left, and wrench downward with your pommel or with your right hand; thus you will take his sword away from him.

By reflecting on the previous devices, you can learn many counters that are useful here, but I will also present one for you thus:

- 1.62r.2** ➤ If an opponent goes to you with his haft or both hands thus up in the air as I have taught, then go also up in the air with the Crown, so that he can not set his point on you; with this, come even nearer to him, and release your right hand from your haft; reverse it, and grip with it between his arms on his haft; jerk thus with reversed hand to your right side; thus you will take his sword away from him.
- 1.62r.3** ➤ In the Onset, slash up from your right with extended sword, strongly and forcefully through his face. At once step and cut up against his neck with the long edge from across from your right, with a forward step on your right foot. As soon as it has hit, then cut the second from your left against his right, also across from below; but when you send in this Low Cut, release your left hand from your haft, and again grip your blade in the middle, and wind with the tip of your blade over his right arm at his face. But if he goes up with his arms, and intends to parry, then remain up with your right hand and quillons, and change downward from above with your left hand and the point of your weapon, around beside his right arm, and send the point [1.62v] in between his arms, and use it to catch over his right arm from inside. Push away from you with the pommel, and wrench toward you with the blade; thus you take his sword away from him again.

#### **Counter**

- 1.62v.1** ➤ Note when the Low Cut hits against your right, and you have parried it, then release your right hand from the sword, and use it to grip outside over his left arm onto the pommel of his sword. Wrench it to you toward your right side; thus you take his sword away from him.

#### **Another Device against Running In**

- 1.62v.2** ➤ When you realise that your opponent will rush upon you with a high stroke, and intends to run in with it, then go up with your haft and open hands; thus catch his stroke on your haft, as illustrated for you by the figures on the upper left in Image O. As soon as the cut hits on your haft, then send your quillons from above between his arms; step back with it and wrench down toward yourself with the quillons; with this pull, cut him on the head.

#### **Casting**

- 1.62v.3** ➤ When an opponent has run under you with his sword, so that you two come very near together, then throw your sword back away from you, bend rapidly down before him, and grip his legs with both hands. Pull toward you; thus he will fall on his back. Concerning this see the small figures on the upper

left in Image D.

- 1.62v.4** ➤ Or when you two have come this close together, and he has his sword over his head, so that his blade hangs somewhat behind him, then release your right hand from the sword, and send it outside over his left arm, and use it to grip his right hand by the wrist; as you grip his hand, step with your right foot behind his left. Pull him backwards away from you with your right hand, and push him with your left hand and sword in front on his chest; thus you make him fall on his back over your forward leg. [1.63r]
- 1.63r.1** ➤ When you have come this close together, then step between his legs with your left foot; with this, release your left hand from the sword, and turn your back a bit toward him; meanwhile, send your left hand (which you have released from the sword) through under his arms and grip outside over his left arm; and send your right hand, along with the sword (unless you cast it away from you), outside over his right arm, to grip your left hand over his arms. Press his arms together on your left shoulder; meanwhile, step with your left foot in front of his feet; with this, swing yourself to your right side, and in the swing, bend forward and down, and cast him down before you.

**Another**

- 1.63r.2** ➤ Or when you two have come so close together through running in, that it must come to wrestling, then step with your right foot between his legs; release your left hand from the sword, and grip through with your right hand and sword under his right arm outside around his body, and with your left hand grip him from inside through his right thigh, the lower the better; and see that you have stepped well through with your right foot between his legs, so that by using it to block against his legs and to jerk them out you can assist the cast. Raise him thus in a swing, and cast him behind you on his head.

**Another**

- 1.63r.3** ➤ If an opponent runs under your sword with the Thwart, then note when he delivers the Thwart against your left, and parry his Thwart with hanging blade, and grip through under your blade and his with your left hand (which you shall release from your sword), outside over his right arm; thus fall with your reversed left hand on his throat; step at the same time with your left foot behind his right; cast him again on his back.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now that you have a foundation for wrestling and grappling, I will present and explain hangings and windings for you a bit more, from which the duelling techniques with shortened sword arise and originate. And the hangings are used for two purposes in the work. First, they are used [1.63v] to catch the cuts, and to let them slide off on the flat of the blade and counterattack, or to go under the opponent's sword with the hanging, and to wind in underneath it; and these are mostly executed from the Plow or from the Low Cuts.

Secondly they are used for the inward or high hangings, which are executed from the High Cut and from the Ox. Understand these two types of hanging thus:

#### **How you shall wind in and out from the Low Hanging**

- 1.63v.1** ➤ In the Onset, come with your left foot forward, and slash up with extended arms against his sword, so that in this slashing upwards the short edge stands above, and goes first. As you slash upward, when your point comes even with your opponent's belt, and he is meanwhile just striking in, then rapidly push your pommel through under your right arm, and go thus with crossed hands up toward his left, so that your point hangs somewhat toward his right side; and see that in this going up, the flat of your blade comes to lie on your thumb. Thus catch his cut on the flat of your blade which lies horizontally, so that in this catching and going under, both swords connect on the forte, and your head is covered and well protected under your sword. As soon as his cut connects on your blade, jerk your pommel back out from under your right arm toward your left side, and with this, turn your short edge inward behind his blade across over his head; but as you wind in, remain with your sword hard on his, so that you can feel if he intends to go away. Also with this winding in you shall pull your head well out from his blade toward your left side. But since you somewhat open yourself with this winding in, if you see in the meantime that he intends to rush downward from above to the opening, then step with your left foot quickly out toward his right side, and push your pommel back through under your right arm, and go up with your arms; thus turn the short edge back outward on his right ear. In this way you can wind in and out under his sword on the one side with your blade.
- 1.63v.2** ➤ On the other side however you may catch over with the pommel, thus: when you have caught his sword in the aforementioned manner with hanging, then just when the swords connect, step quickly with your right foot toward [1.64r] his left side, and catch over his right [?read: left] arm with the pommel, in and downwards from outside, and wrench toward yourself.
- 1.64r.1** ➤ Or after you have wound in and out against him, and he has gone up in the air with his arms, then wind your pommel inside between his arms, and use it to catch over his right arm from inside, and wrench toward your left. If you wish, you can release your left hand from the haft, and grip in the middle of your blade; then as you pull with your right hand to your left side toward you, you push away from you with your left hand against his left.

Also you may slide under him and parry him from all postures with hanging blade, and thus wind in and out on his sword, as I have taught, and that on both sides.

#### **How you shall carry out the inward hangings and windings from above in the work**

- 1.64r.2** ➤ In the Onset, send a powerful cut from above at his left ear, and when your cut connects or clashes on

his sword, then again push your pommel through under your right arm, and hang the blade thus with crossed arms well behind his blade in at his head. Or after you have wound in at him thus from above, then hang your blade well over his arms, and wrench with your sword toward your left side. But in this winding in, as soon as you feel that he intends to rush down on your opening from above, then jerk your pommel back out, and go back up in the air with it, and hang the short edge back outward at his head. If he wards this off, then quickly wind through beneath with your pommel, and in from outside over his right arm; thus wrench downward to you again. Or catch him from inside between his arms, snagging one of them from inside with your pommel, and again wrench toward yourself.

- 1.64r.3** ➤ *Item:* when you send a High Cut in at your opponent, and he parries this with the Thwart, then note as soon as your cut connects on his blade, and push your pommel up in the air, either under your right arm or not, and hang your blade over his in at his head. You may thus remain hard on his blade, and wind in and outward according to opportunity. If he wards off this winding and goes up, then [1.64v] when he goes upward, again wind the pommel around his arm. Thus you can wind out and inward against him forcefully from all sides, depending on how you have bound him.

Lastly you shall also always consider three things whenever you wish to wind in: namely first the cut, second the winding itself, with which you shall hit; third the slice.<sup>70</sup> For since you must open yourself with the winding, then while you are winding you shall keep your sword hard on his, so that if he pursues or goes away, you will pursue him with the slice, and remain on his sword, and send it out and turn it away with the slice, or as he is going away, fall in with the slice at the nearest opening.

#### **A Good Counter Against All High Cuts**

- 1.64v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position your sword in the left Change, and note when he cuts in against you from above, and step with your left foot toward his right, that is to your left, well out to the side; along with this stepping out, cut upwards with your long edge against his incoming cut, so that in cutting upwards you push your pommel through under your right arm, and thus catch his cut with crossed hands up in the air on your long-edge forte. Now when the swords connect and clash together, then jerk your pommel forcefully back out from under your right arm, so that through this jerking out the foible of your blade swings in behind his sword over his right arm, and diagonally back out through his face; and when you thus wind the Low Cut back out for a High Cut at his face, at the same time step out backwards with your left foot further toward the left side, as illustrated in Image H by the large figure on the right; cut thus through his face as you back-step. Now when this Low Cut is executed along with the step out and winding out quickly in a continuous motion, then it will proceed surely and well for you. From this

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<sup>70</sup> Cf. the different version of this precept in the *Ringeck Fechtbuch*, fol. 48r, and the *Von Danzig Fechtbuch*, fols. 38r-v, in which the “winding itself” is replaced with the thrust—a technique no longer permitted in Meyer’s day.

Winding Cut many other fine devices are also derived and carried out.

**End of the sword**

## Part 2: Dusack

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## A Systematic Description and Teaching of Combat with the Dusack,

in which many manly and shrewd devices are discussed in good order, and presented one  
after another, through which prospective students may be better trained to skill in this,  
and then in combat with the rapier.

With this weapon extend far and long,  
hang over forward after the cut.  
With your body step far as well;  
send in your cuts powerfully around him.  
To all four targets let them fly;  
with comportment and pulling you can deceive him.  
You shall parry in the forte,  
and meanwhile injure him with the foible.  
Also you shall come no nearer  
than where you can reach him with a step.  
When he is about to run in at you,  
the point drives him from you.  
But if he has run in on you,  
with gripping and wrestling you shall be the first.  
Pay heed to the forte and foible,  
'Instantly' makes the openings apparent.  
Also step correctly in the Before and After;  
watch diligently for the right time,  
and do not let yourself be easily unnerved. [2.1r]

### Chapter 1: Contents of the Treatise on Combat with the Dusack, and in What Order this Combat Shall Be Described

Now that I have laid the groundwork with longsword combat, next comes the dusack, which takes its basis



from the longsword, as the true source of all combat that is carried out both with one and with two hands. Since it is, after the longsword, not only the weapon most used by us Germans, but also an origin and basis of all weapons that are used with one hand, I will here present it and then discuss and explain it in orderly fashion with all its particulars and techniques.

Now since the dusack is so nearly related to the longsword that the greater part of the techniques that are used in the sword with both hands, are executed with very little variation in the dusack with one hand, I will follow the same order in describing it as I previously observed in the section on the sword.

- And since previously in the treatise on the sword there has been sufficient instruction concerning the division of the combatant, who is the subject of combat, and concerning the division of the weapon, I will first cover the postures or guards, and recount how many of them there are and how they shall be executed in the work.
- Secondly, I will present and discuss the cuts one after another and how they shall be executed.
- Thirdly, I will thoroughly teach the division of the combatant, according to which these cuts shall be arranged, specifically its use and employment, which [2.1v] I had passed over in the treatise on the sword as being appropriate for here, to ensure that nothing pertinent to the subject should be left out.
- Fourthly, I will add some necessary and useful instruction and advice about parrying, and how one shall use the cuts for three distinct purposes.
- And lastly, once all the elements necessary for combat with the dusack have been handled, I will cover one guard after the other, and present through diverse examples how you shall fight from each of them when you have come into it in the middle of combat or at the end of a cut, and correctly describe how to assemble the elements you have been taught, to make a full combat device from them. [2.2r]

## Chapter 2: Concerning the Postures or Guards and their Use

Although these postures that are generally used in the dusack take their origin from the sword, and are understood to be pretty similar, yet they have a distinct use according to the specifics of the weapons, both in their names and in how one fights from them.

Therefore I have considered it necessary to present these guards in order no less than those previously in the section on the sword, and to show how each of them may be profitably used. And firstly there are five postures, namely:

- the Wrath Guard;

- the Steer;
- the Middle Guard;
- the Boar;
- and the Change.

As you execute these on the right, so you shall also perform them on the left. Furthermore you also have five postures straight down in front of you through the vertical Scalp Line. That is:

- firstly the Watch;
- secondly the Slice, which is the parrying from above;
- the Longpoint;
- the Bastion in two forms;
- in going back up, you have the fifth, namely the Bow, which is the other parrying from below, as you will hear in the chapter about parrying.

Now since the postures will be illustrated later in the images near the devices assigned to them, I have thought it best to save for there the discussion of the postures and how you shall position yourself in them, since it will be more appropriate to describe them near the images; for every posture is to be found marked with its individual indicator in the listing that follows.

I will therefore now proceed to describe their use and what purpose they serve. And firstly, I do not want you to wait in the postures for the opponent's attack, but as soon as you can rush upon and reach him, you shall lay on against him with your devices according to your opportunity, and fully execute them; nonetheless it often happens that you cannot begin your device in the Before, much less carry it out usefully, without some harm befalling you as a result. Therefore it necessarily follows that you should position yourself judiciously with fine yet serious comportment in a posture in which he cannot readily cut at you without incurring his own harm and disadvantage, so that being safe in this posture you can look to lay on against him according to your opportunity, or are prepared to wait for his cuts.

Secondly they are also useful for this, that you may organise all your devices in orderly fashion by the postures, so that whenever you have cut into a posture, or else have come into one by preparing to attack, at once you may know what [2.2v] technique you can most appropriately execute against him from that place and posture, so that you are not delayed with long reflection. For in all cuts and devices you always come from one posture into another.

Thirdly you shall learn to recognise your opponent's combat from his posture, and what techniques he will execute against you, in order to easily deduce what techniques he might execute against you when he has

brought his weapon above or below into a posture.

And fourthly, since one can generally find out or perceive the opponent's combat by his postures, as I have taught, you shall know that you should not lie still in any posture, but always change off from one posture into another, and this not only to deceive him, but also to make him confused, so that he cannot know what sort of device will be carried out against him or he should carry out against you. Concerning this, see the treatise on the rapier concerning the use of the guards. Now I will proceed to the cuts, which are the true chief element in combat.

### Chapter 3:

## Concerning the Four Cuts, with Four Good Drills Teaching How to Execute and Learn Them Correctly, along with Some Pertinent Examples

Now that I have explained the postures or guards along with their uses, I come next to the true chief element of combat, and this is the cuts, which derive from the postures. Now there are essentially no more than four of these, from which all the others have their origin and beginning, as I will show later. And since these four cuts are the true basis of all combat, I will explain them in order for the benefit of the benevolent reader, not only how they are cut in their basic form, but also how they also can be learnt and executed usefully in many ways, so that you may see and recognise how one technique always arises from the other, and an initial one leads to the next. And since these four cuts may not be learnt naturally and properly, much less be understood by the learner, without prior knowledge and skill in the lines that serve for teaching the cuts, I must first teach you the forms and names of these lines.

Now since there are four cuts, so there are also four routes or [2.3r: *Image A*; 2.3v] lines through which they are cut:

- Firstly, the vertical line, through which the High Cut is sent and delivered, and therefore it is called the Scalp Line [*Scheittellini*], since it divides [*unterscheiden*] the combatant into left and right.
- The second diagonal or hanging line, through which the Wrath Cut is sent, is called the Wrath Line [*Zornlini*] from the Wrath Cut, or also the Stroke Line [*Strichlini*].
- Through the third Thwart or Middle Line [*Zwerch oder Mittellini*], the Middle Cut is executed.
- The fourth rising diagonal line shows the Low Cut its way, just as it shows the route for the Wrath Cut from the other side down from above, so that the Low Cut is sent upward through the same line through which the Wrath Cut is delivered diagonally from above.

If you imagine these four lines standing with the Midpoint, at which they cross over one another, at the level of the chin, such that the Thwart or Middle Line runs across above the opponent's shoulders, then the Cross stands correctly; and you can then not only arrange the four chief cuts well and soundly according to it, but also all other cuts. However you should not suppose that you may not also send the cuts lower or higher than the lines indicate; rather it is only to be understood in this regard that you should first learn to execute and deliver the cuts through them.

Secondly, note also that when your opponent cuts at you, and you cut in at the same time as him, then you must send your cut at the height of the line, otherwise you are not parried or protected with your cut. But when you send your cut against your opponent in the Before, and he is not ready with a stroke to encounter your cut, you may then cut to his body under or over his dusack, regardless of where the lines indicate, as I will teach sufficiently later in the devices. As to what further pertains to the use and purpose of the cuts, and which ones counter one another or how, I will discuss this later at length in the fourth chapter. I will therefore now proceed to teach how to deliver the cuts through these four lines in four ways and forms, for they will be no small advantage to you in correctly executing and understanding the devices. [2.4r: *Image B*; 2.4v]

**The First Drill, teaching how to send each of the four cuts through its line; firstly halfway, that is into the Longpoint, secondly all the way through the line, cut after cut from one side**

- 2.4v.1** ❖ Stand with your left foot forward and hold your dusack in the Steer, as shown by the large figure on the left in the previous image [B]. Step and cut straight from above down through the vertical line, as far as the Midpoint where the lines cross over each other; thus you stand with your arm extended in the Longpoint, concerning which see the large figure also on the left in the image on the following page [C]. From there, let the foible of your dusack drop and run off toward your left, and at the same time as your foible drops, pull your hilt up with hanging blade around your head for a stroke; meanwhile as you pull up your dusack for another cut, then at the same time also pull your rear foot up to the forward right one, so that you have another full step forward with your right foot to go with the cut you have prepared. Cut as before through the vertical line, yet no further than to the crossing of the lines, into the Longpoint. From there, gather to cut as before; and do this one cut to three or four forward. As many cuts as you deliver forward, you shall also execute the same number of cuts and steps backwards again; and as you have drawn the rear foot up to the forward foot in cutting forward, so that you can step further forward with the front foot, likewise when you will step backward in cutting, you must also give ground with the front foot as far back as the rear one, as you pull up to the stroke; and as you have previously stepped forward for the stroke with your right foot, so you must now step back in cutting with your rear left one.

As you have previously delivered the High Cut through the vertical line to the Midpoint, so you shall also execute the other cuts through their lines, namely:

- the Wrath Cut through the hanging diagonal line;
- the Middle Cut through the horizontal;
- and the Low Cut through the upward sloping line;

and always no further than to the middle at the Midpoint. Then let it run off again toward your left, and gather yourself for another similar cut by pulling up your hilt.

These cuts shall serve to teach you to hold off all your cuts halfway before they are fully completed, and to turn to a parry, so that you can catch your opponent's cuts in mid-course with simultaneous cuts. [2.5r: *Image C*; 2.5v]

Secondly, you shall cut right through these lines, thus:

- 2.5v.1** ❖ Position yourself with your dusack as I have taught; from there, cut through the vertical line with extended arm, all the way through, and turn your right side well toward your left after the cut, so that in this cut your dusack runs back past your left side; and as your dusack runs back through by your left, then meanwhile pull your hilt up by your left around your head, into the Watch for another stroke; thus you stand as shown by the figure on the right in the previous *Image B*. At the same time as you pull your dusack up for the stroke, as I have said, you shall pull your rear foot up as far as the forward foot, so that you have another step forward for this cut with the forward right foot, as I have just taught. Then step further forward with your right foot, and cut from the Watch straight from above as before, right through the vertical line. Do this also one cut to three or four, forward and backward, so that you will be well trained in it.

As you now have executed the High Cut through the vertical line, so you shall also cut the other three all the way through their lines. And so that you may better understand this (since it is difficult to do for someone who has not practised it), I will describe how the Low Cut is to be delivered all the way through the lines, thus:

- 2.5v.2** ❖ Stand with your left foot forward and hold your dusack again in the Steer; then step and cut with the long edge across from below following the upward diagonal line, through his face; in this cut turn your hand in the air, so that your thumb points toward your left, and in the completion of the cut your short edge comes onto your left shoulder; also turn your right side well to your left after the cut, as I have said before. As soon as you have come with this cut near your left shoulder, then pull your hilt quickly back up around your head for another stroke, and pull your left foot up to the right foot. Then cut again from your right diagonally up from below through his face, with a step forward on your right foot, so

that your dusack comes to your left shoulder as before; from there gather yourself again for another cut. Do this one cut to three or four, back and forth, as you have done with the previous half-cuts.

As you have previously been taught to catch your opponent's stroke with the half-cuts, here you learn to send away and cut away his cuts entirely by cutting through. [2.6r]

**The Second Drill, teaching how to drive the cuts through one line opposite one another**

Secondly, once you can deliver the four cuts from your right each through its appropriate line, half and full, as I have just taught, you shall also learn to cut through each line from both sides opposite one another, thus:

- 2.6r.1** ❖ Stand with your right foot forward, yet with your feet not too far apart, so that you may have a step forward for the first cut. Then step and cut with extended arm all the way through from your right, from above through the vertical line, so far that your dusack shoots into the left Steer as it runs back through by your left side. Then from there cut right back through up from below with your long edge, forcefully and strongly up through the vertical line, so that your dusack shoots back around over your head through the Plunge into the right Steer. In this cutting you shall always keep your right foot forward in standing and stepping, and gather yourself for the stepping so that you have a step forward for every stroke, as I have taught.

In this way drive the High Cut from your right from above, the Low Cut from your left from below, one right after the other through the opponent's face. And let the High Cut plunge over from above, and also let the Low Cut shoot around through upwards from below, so that after the shooting, the point always stands toward his face. As you now have cut through the vertical line from below and above in opposition, so you shall also cut through the other two lines, namely the downward diagonal, and the horizontal, always from both ends in opposition.

However, when you cut from your right in opposition through the upward sloping line marked D-H, you shall not allow it to shoot forth, but simply drive over your forward right thigh from your right up from below, into the left Wrath or on your left shoulder, diagonally through the upward sloping line, up and down opposite one another.

You have already learnt at length about this driving and its use in the section on the sword.<sup>71</sup> [2.6v]

**The Third Drill, concerning the beginning of the deceiving, and how you shall pull the cuts away, and**

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<sup>71</sup> Meyer may be thinking of 1.27v ff., where he offers drills to attack the opponent from various quarters in combination. See also Glossary sv. *driving*.

### **change them into one another**

Once you have learnt to drive through each line in opposition, you shall next learn to pull the cuts away, namely thus:

- 2.6v.1 ❖ After you have positioned yourself in a stance before your opponent according to opportunity, then step and cut with extended arm and the long edge, from above at his head following the vertical line. And meanwhile watch to see if he will meet your cut with parrying; as soon as you see this, do not let your cut connect or hit his parrying, but pull your cut quickly back away before it hits his parrying, and forcefully cut through beside your left up from below through the same vertical line, as shown by the figure in this image on the right [*D*].
- 2.6v.2 ❖ Contrarily, cut the first beside your left from below, almost right onto his parrying, and just when it should connect, then pull quickly back again up around your head, and cut from above right through the vertical line, that is through his face.
- 2.6v.3 ❖ In this way cut from your right at his left following the Middle Line, as far as his parrying, and do not let it connect either, but just when it should hit, pull back away around your head, and cut from the other side, right through the same Middle Line.

You shall learn to execute this against and through all four lines, just as with the previous two cuts. This pulling is the beginning of all deceit.

### **The Fourth Drill, teaching how one shall change the cuts into one another**

Fourthly, it is also necessary and useful to be able to change off the cuts in a fluid motion into one another. Since this can take place in three ways, I will first show you the basis of this changing through the three lines, namely through the two diagonal (downward and upward), and through the horizontal Middle Line, and after that add some examples, thus:

- 2.6v.4 ❖ When you cut diagonally through the opponent from your right from above or below, [*2.7r: Image D; 2.7v*] so that your weapon comes to your left, then cut the second right back across from your left through your opponent's right, along the Middle Line. However if you have cut from your left through one of the diagonal lines, either through the rising or falling line, so that you come through with the cut toward your right, then from there cut at once through the Middle Line again, from your right through his left, as you did before from your left through his right. For whenever you cut through a diagonal line from one side, you should at once cut from the other across through the Middle Line.
- 2.7r.1 ❖ Furthermore note when you have cut the first diagonally through from above from your right side, and

the Middle Cut from the other side opposite it, so that you have come back to the right side, then do not cut back from above through the downward diagonal, but up from below through the upward diagonal line, and then also up from the other side, through the upward diagonal line. Then deliver another Middle Cut from your right through his left, so that you can further deliver the High Cut diagonally through his right.

And the basis of changing off with all the cuts rests in the two lines, that is the diagonal and horizontal. For whenever you cut across from one side, then you shall cut back diagonally from the other opposite to it. Therefore if you cut from this side diagonally, whether from below or above, then cut across from the other. And so that you may better understand this changing, I will present three useful examples for you here.

*Example with Six Cuts*

- 2.7r.2** ❖ First, step and deliver a Wrath Cut from your right at his left, through the downward diagonal line marked B-F. Second, cut from your left against his right through the horizontal Middle Line. Thirdly, cut from your right at his left, through the upward diagonal line, strongly through with a Low Cut upward, so that at the end of the cut your dusack hangs down behind your left shoulder. From there, forcefully deliver another Low Cut diagonally upward through his right. Then for the fifth, deliver a Middle Cut from your right at his left through his horizontal line. And cut the sixth straight from above [2.7v: *Image D*; 2.8r] along the Scalp Line at his head or through his face, with a broad step forward. These six cuts shall run swiftly one after another. For these cuts, always keep your right foot forward, and as you step forward with the cuts, since you will need a step for every cut, always gather the rear foot somewhat toward the forward foot; thus you can have a further step forward with your right foot.

*Changing the Cross by means of the Middle Cut*

It is very good to cut the Cross long and to change from one side to the other by means of the Middle Cut, in which you shall always deliver the Middle Cut with extended arm more strongly from you than the other two diagonal ones through the Cross. And do this thus:

- 2.8r.1** ❖ Cut the first from above diagonally through against his left; cut the second from your left through against his right, also diagonally from above; cut the third from your right at his left across through the Middle Line; thus your dusack comes to your left into the Middle Guard. From there begin again, and cut the first from your left diagonally through his right; and the second diagonally through his left, both of them from above; the third, another Middle Cut from your left against his right; and then cut back from your right. Do this once to six or seven times, one after another. With these cuts, always keep your right foot forward.

*A Cross Change*

- 2.8r.2** ❖ Execute Cross Changing thus: stand with your right foot forward as always, and cut the first from your



right through his left Wrath Line with a broad step forward; thus you come into the left Change. From there slash back up with the short edge through the same Wrath Line through which you have come down with the Wrath Cut, upward toward your right shoulder. Let it go above in the air around your head, and cut the second through his right Wrath Line, diagonally over your [2.8v] forward right thigh, so that your dusack comes with the point beside your right toward the ground. From there slash up again with the short edge toward your left shoulder through the same line through which you have cut from above. Let the dusack go back around over your head, and cut back from your right through his left, so that you come back into the left Change. From there slash through upward again as before, and so forth. Do this once to three or four times, at your will, forcefully through your opponent's face.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus you now have the four chief cuts, and how you shall cut them in four ways, which I have discussed at such length, because all combat is embodied in these four cuts, as I have said before. And it is certain when you know how to deliver the four cuts well in the manner I have described, then all devices will be easy for you to carry out. Now follow the Secondary Cuts.

## Chapter 4: Concerning the Secondary Cuts<sup>72</sup>, Which Have Their Origin from the Four Chief Cuts, and How One Shall Execute Them in the Work

Now that I have presented the four chief cuts as a basis of all other cuts, I will also present here the secondary cuts that arise from them (as many of them as are necessary); and first I will explain their purpose and how they are distinct from the chief cuts. And firstly you shall know that the cuts are delivered not only straight (as I have already taught) but also reversed—something I have already discussed in the section on the longsword—when your hands are turned around or reversed in cutting, so that you do not hit with the forward long edge, but with the rear short edge or with the flat. Therefore as the cuts are delivered differently through this reversing, so they are also named differently, regardless of whether they are delivered from above, diagonally, across, or from below, as can be seen in the Crooked Cut, which is so named in the dusack because in reversing the crooked edge goes forward, and the hit is delivered with it. Thus the reversing is the first and chiefest cause of these diverse names of the cuts. [2.9r]

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<sup>72</sup> 1600: Vier Beyhauwen ('Four Secondary Cuts'). Vier is apparently inserted by dittography.

Now some cuts are not reversed in delivering them, and yet are named differently, and the reasons are these. The first is according to the intention of the one who delivers it, as happens with the Failing and Knocking Cut, which although they are High Cuts, yet they are so named because my intent is to miss with the one, with the other to knock against my opponent if I have an opening. And some names are based on the emotion of the mind, like the Wrath and Anger Cut. Also some receive their names from the shape they resemble in cutting, like the Rose Cut. Some are named for the limb at which they are delivered, as you will see in the section on the rapier in the Hand Cut and the like. On the basis of what I have now presented, you can now easily understand the cuts that are presented afterwards, and observe how much they are distinct from the chief cuts. And the secondary cuts are fifteen<sup>73</sup> in number, as follows:

### **The Plunge Cut [*Sturtzhauw*] is executed with the High and Wrath Cuts**

The Plunge Cut is used mostly in the Onset, thus:

- 2.9r.1** ➤ In the Onset, step and deliver a High Cut from your right, going back through beside your left, so that your dusack shoots back around above your head, or plunges over, such that after plunging around, the tip of your weapon points back at your opponent's face, not unlike the left Steer, except that you must thrust the point further forward from you toward your opponent's face. It has its name from this plunging over, otherwise it is essentially just a High Cut. At once let the tip of your weapon drop toward your right again with your palm away from your opponent, and meanwhile pull your hilt upward around your head, and at the same time as you thus pull up, lift your left foot; step forth with that foot, and cut from your left [2.9v] back through beside your right, so that the tip of your weapon plunges around over your head as before, such that the tip of your weapon points at your opponent's face. At once let it run off again toward your left; and cut from one side to the other until you come to your intended place.

### **Crooked Cut [*Krumphauw*]**

The Crooked Cut is done thus: turn the grip of your dusack right around, so that the crooked edge goes forward in cutting and hits; then cut from above or below with the crooked edge according to opportunity.

### **Short Cut [*Kurtzhauw*]**

- 2.9v.1** ➤ Execute the Short Cut in the Onset: when you realise that he intends to cut from above, then take heed when he goes up with his dusack for the cut, and meanwhile pull your weapon toward your left shoulder; from there cut at the same time as him with your short edge across over his arm through at his face, so that your palm stands upward in the cut; thus you catch his stroke and hit at the same time, etc.

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<sup>73</sup> *The text actually lists sixteen.*

It is also a Short Cut to go through short to the sides under his weapon. You have learnt about this in the section on the sword. [2.10r]

### **Constrainer Cut [*Zwingerhauw*]**

The Constrainer Cut is executed in two ways. Firstly when you stand in the Middle Guard on the left, and from there cut away your opponent's cut before you with the long edge; concerning this see the Middle Guard. As to the second, it happens in this way:

- 2.10r.1** ➤ Stand again with your right foot forward, and hold your dusack with straight arm before you in the Slice or Straight Parrying. If your opponent cuts at you from his right, and sends his cut high, then let your point drop, and at the same time pull your hilt toward your left through under his dusack, so that he cuts over your dusack without hitting; and cut quickly outside over his right arm at his head, while his dusack is still falling toward the ground. See that in going through, you pull your head away from him under your parrying with your body leaning, such that he cannot reach you.

### **Roarer Cut [*Brummerhauw*]**

The Roarer Cut has this name because it goes so swiftly in its course that it sends forth a kind of bellowing wind; do it thus:

- 2.10r.2** ➤ See that you drive your opponent high with his parrying; with this, turn your grip around so that you have your dusack crooked; pull your hilt around your head with hanging dusack, and cut beside your right from below across with the crooked edge under his dusack at the radius-bone of his forearm, or inside at the tendon, [2.10v: *Image P*; 2.11r] depending on how high he has gone, with a step out on your right foot toward his right; but let your dusack shoot back before your face for parrying.

I will teach more about this Roarer Cut later in the section on devices, since it is used and executed in many ways.<sup>74</sup>

### **Waker Cut [*Weckerhauw*]**

Execute the Waker Cut thus in the Onset:

- 2.11r.1** ➤ Deliver a powerful High Cut in at him; if he parries the cut, then note as soon as it clashes or hits on his parrying, and turn the cut into a thrust; thrust your dusack around on his, in at his face, as shown by the two figures on the right in this image [P]. If he goes up, then cut upward with the crooked edge

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<sup>74</sup> See *Glossary for other references to this cut*; note that there could be unnamed instances as well.

through his arm, as you can see in the large figures.<sup>75</sup>

### **Rose Cut [*Rosenhauw*]**

- 2.11r.2** ➤ *Rose Cut*: if you find an opponent waiting in the Bow, then act as if you intended to cut from above at his head; do not let the cut connect, but go outside his right arm and through below, so that you come around in a circle around his dusack, and let it run off again in the air beside his right, and cut at his face.

You may go around his parrying this way on the other side in a circle, and cut in where you find him open.

[2.11v]

### **Danger Cut [*Gefehrhouw*]**

- 2.11v.1** ➤ *Danger Cut*. Do it thus: in the Onset when you come before your opponent, then take heed as soon as you are able to reach him, and note diligently when he will cut; as soon as he pulls up his dusack for the stroke, then cut beside his hilt from above at his face or chest, while he still has his dusack high.

This Danger Cut must be done with prudence, otherwise it is dangerous; this is why it is named the Danger Cut.

### **Anger Cut [*Entrüsthauw*]**

The Anger Cut is also executed in many ways, and also has two names, the other being Armour Cut<sup>76</sup>, since it catches the High Cut in the air and holds it off like a suit of armour. It is called Anger because it comes so suddenly and earnestly, as if you had suddenly become angry with wrath against him. To use it to intercept his cuts, do it thus:

- 2.11v.2** ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from above, then note as he pulls his dusack in the air for the stroke; as he does this, pull quickly around your head and cut across against his cut, a little upward from below, so that you catch his cut while it is still up in the air, with the long edge and horizontal dusack, so that your dusack stands across between you and him, as shown by the large figure in this image on the right [G]. Once the dusacks connect, you can execute many fine devices, etc.

It is also done in this manner:

- 2.11v.3** ➤ Stand with your left foot forward and hold your dusack in the Boar, as you shall find written of later. If

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<sup>75</sup> *Meyer apparently means the large figures in the same image.*

<sup>76</sup> *1570: Rüsthouw; 1600: Rückhouw*

he cuts from above, then go up with both arms to parry, so that the back of your dusack comes to lie on your left arm, and spring under his stroke. When it clashes, then thrust outside his right arm at his face; back-step and at once cut [2.12r: *Image G*; 2.12v] across at his left, also through his face, as you can see in the small figures on the left in Image O.

### **Failing Cut [*Fehlhauw*]**

- 2.12v.1 ➤ *Failing Cut*: in the Onset if you find your opponent in the Bow or Straight Parrying, then step and cut outside at his right arm from above, and when you see that he will parry, then let the short edge drop just in front of his arm, and at the same time pull your hilt back up, so that you do not hit with the cut, but let it run past in front of his arm without hitting, so that he goes as quickly as possible to parry. Step quickly out to his left, and cut straight through his face. You may thus let the cut run past and miss every opening against those who go against the cut to parry.

### **Blind Cut [*Blendthauw*]**

The Blind Cut is done in many ways, but here note it in this way:

- 2.12v.2 ➤ If your opponent cuts from above, then catch his stroke up in the air over your head on your long edge with horizontal dusack, so that your point stands out toward his left, as I have taught above concerning the Anger Cut. As soon as it knocks or connects, then turn the short edge inward in a flick into his face. And at once after the flicking, turn the hilt of your dusack back up toward your left; pull quickly back toward your right and cut forth with the long edge at his face; with this cut, step well around toward his left away from his stroke. [2.13r: *Image H*; 2.13v]

### **Flicking Cut [*Schnellhauw*]**

- 2.13v.1 ➤ *Flicking Cut*: when you stand in the Bow before an opponent, and he will not cut, then pull up into the Watch as if you intended to cut from above, but do not do this, rather turn it in the air, and cut with your long edge up from below at his right arm in a flick, and turn the dusack back toward your left shoulder. From there cut a Defence Stroke through his right, either under or over his arm, through his face.
- 2.13v.2 ➤ *Item*, when an opponent stands before you in the Bow and will not work, then flick at him with the short edge over his dusack at his head, or flick under his parrying at his face if he holds his dusack high in the parrying.

### **Winding Cut [*Windthauw*]**

The Winding Cut, a cut that one winds, is essentially from whichever side you strike in, to come back out

toward the same side, thus:

- 2.13v.3** ➤ When you cut in above from your left, then pull and turn the dusack back out down toward your left, all in a single motion, as if you intended to strike \*something like a half man from his side; and this goes to both sides.

### **Knocking Cut [*Bochhauw*]**

- 2.13v.4** ➤ Do the Knocking Cut thus: when the two of you stand before one another in the Bow in a high parrying and neither will cut before the other, but each waits for the other's stroke, [2.14r] then sink down before him, and cut straight before you in against his dusack, so that you hit his chest with your hilt, so strongly that his dusack rebounds toward his face once or twice. Thus you compel him to work; and as soon as he goes up, step out on his left side, and cut beside his hilt in at his face; or undertake another device that is more appropriate for you, once you have driven him up.

### **Change Cut [*Wechselhauw*]**

The Change Cut is also taught to the student with the five cuts<sup>77</sup> at the beginning. Essentially it is simply to change from one side to another with the cuts. But since I often speak in this book of changing off with the cuts and devices, it is unnecessary to discuss it here.

### **Cross Cut [*Kreutzhauw*]**

The Cross Cuts are essentially two Wrath Cuts from both sides; they are executed through the two downward angling lines that run through the opponent diagonally from both sides, and cross over one another. Deliver it thus:

- 2.14r.1** ➤ Stand with your right foot forward, and cut the first from your right through his left, the second from your left through his right, both diagonally through his face. Learn to do this one cut to four, five, or six, forward and back, but such that you always keep your right foot forward; [2.14v] therefore when you wish to step, gather your rear foot forward, so that you can step forward with the right foot; for you shall always have at least one step for both cuts that are delivered from both sides through the Cross.

You shall learn to deliver this Cross Cut, along with the aforementioned four cuts, in a fluid motion, powerfully and quickly with extended arm, and when you are cutting, to avoid holding your arm 'in the

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<sup>77</sup> *It is unclear what five cuts Meyer has in mind here. The Five Master Cuts appear in the longsword, but not in the dusack; he may in some way be referring to the four straight cuts in addition to the Cross Cut in the drills in Chapter 3; cf. the allusion to the four cuts in the following entry on the Cross Cut.*

bosom' (as they say), i.e., not fully extended from you; for he who fights short and holds his arms near him is easy to deceive and hit, although the stretching out must also have its moderation and limit according to the situation of the moment.

Therefore I particularly wish to advise you, if you want to make this book useful for yourself, that you will above all things learn to deliver the cuts fluidly, long, and well; and when you well know the principal cuts, then all the others will be easy for you. For whatever devices you should wish to execute, however good they may be, if you do not fully know the cuts themselves, each one individually according to its manner, and execute the techniques correctly, then you will not accomplish much of use. For as I have often said, all combat rests upon the cuts.

\* \* \* \* \*

Finally, briefly note this precept how the cuts counter one another, as follows. First, the High Cut counters all other cuts that are delivered at you, whether from below, diagonally, or across, provided you send it against your opponent's dusack upon the forte against his right hand. Conversely, the Wrath Cut or the horizontal Middle Cut counters or takes the High Cut. Also note that two simultaneous cuts that are delivered against one another with their steps always put off and parry one another. But he has the best with his cut who comes with his weapon above the other's in the cutting. Therefore whenever someone cuts at you across from below, whether from the right or left, counter him with [2.15r] a High Cut. But if he cuts at you from above, then take his High Cut away with a Horizontal Cut or diagonal Wrath Cut. This precept should be well heeded in all combat, and particularly take heed here of the forte and foible in the Before and After.

## [Chapter 5:]

### How One Shall Make Use of the Four Openings

You have previously heard somewhat here and there in the treatise on the sword what the division of the combatant is, and what it is useful for, as much as was necessary there. And since nothing less depends on this division than on the cutting itself, I have thought it necessary to offer further instruction concerning its use and function, and particularly what it is useful for here with this weapon, since the opportunity how and when you can usefully lay the cuts upon your opponent must be perceived in part from this division. Therefore you should here learn firstly how to recognise the opening quickly, secondly how to act against it. And although this can take place in many ways, and therefore it is entirely useless to recount it here at length, yet I will present it in brief, such that I hope if you will be serious to study it through diligent practice, you will be sufficiently able to see and learn the use of this division from the instruction I have

offered. And firstly observe this instruction on how to perceive the openings in your opponent's cuts:

In the Onset, pay diligent heed from which side he will cut, and when he cuts, see that you escape his stroke, or catch it and send it away from you without harm; at once cut quickly at the same part from which he has cut at you. For you should diligently note that he is always most open in the part from which he sends in his stroke. This is a very noteworthy precept, which you shall study diligently and to which you shall give attention, so that you can attack with artful and quick work at the same opening from which he has come in with his weapon.

Secondly, it is easy and useful to perceive the opening in his parrying or in his positioning. For when he holds his weapon too high or low, or else too far to the side, you shall send your cuts powerfully and long (albeit judiciously) at his part that you perceive to be most open, and just as it hits, quickly cut back opposite it—always provided he has not offered you this opening intentionally. [2.15v] For you shall not cut quickly and uselessly at an opponent who offers you an opening intentionally, but take good heed of your situation, since if you cut injudiciously at his opening, as you will see later in the devices, he can at once take it away from you by stepping out, and overreach you with his cut at the same time. For example:

- 2.15v.1** ➤ When he holds his weapon in Wrath on the right, and you cut straight at his head, then he can step out to the side with his right foot to his right, toward your left, and at the same time cut in from above toward your head, so that you not only miss his opening, which he has withdrawn from you, but you also make yourself more open by extending, so that he can better overreach you with his cut. Thus you miss with your initial cut and he hits with his countercut.

Therefore it follows secondly, how you shall attack the openings with deception, namely:

- 2.15v.2** ➤ If he holds his dusack on his right side in a guard, whatever guard it is, below or above, then send a powerful high stroke at his left side which he has in front, not that you expect to hit him, but because he must intercept your cut from [his]<sup>78</sup> right side to parry it. But do not let your cut connect on his parrying, rather pull your cut back away in mid-flight without him realizing it, and send it quickly for a second cut at his right side from which he has come to intercept your cut, so that he may easily stray with his parry.

Do this not just to both sides but against all four openings, that is if he sends his weapon into one of the four quarters, attack with a cut opposite to it, not to hit, but to draw him out of that quarter. When he goes out of that part with his weapon, at once cut deftly in at it. Thus you shall be judicious and circumspect in all initial cutting.

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<sup>78</sup> 1570: *deiner* ('your'); *read: seiner*



Further you shall arrange your cuts in such a way that of two, one will always hit, whether it is the first or second, and I will also offer you some examples of this, thus:

- 2.15v.3** ➤ If your opponent stands before you in the Bow and holds his parrying so low that you can see his face over his dusack, then deliver two Middle Cuts from both sides opposite one another, that is cut the first from your right with extended arm across over his dusack close in front of his hilt through his face, and turn your body well toward your left after the cut; cut the second across from your left underneath his dusack through at his right arm. Now if he does not want to be hit by the first cut in his face, then he must go up, and by going up he will give you space to hit his right arm with the second stroke from your left. [2.16r] At once deliver thirdly a Wrath Cut from your right diagonally at his left through his face.
- 2.16r.1** ➤ Now if he holds his parrying high, then cut the first from your left under his dusack through at his right arm, and when he falls after the cut, then cut the second quickly from your right over his dusack at his face. When you do these two cuts quickly one after another, then you will hit either his arm with the first under his dusack, or his face with the second over his dusack, for he will hardly parry both of them.
- 2.16r.2** ➤ Likewise, if he holds his weapon too far to his right side, then cut the first powerfully through from above at his left side; when he sends his weapon to his left side to intercept your stroke, step and cut the second outside over his right arm.
- 2.16r.3** ➤ Contrarily, when he holds his weapon too far to his left side, then cut the first through from above against his right, the second at his left with a back-step.

And these cuts shall always go quickly one after another with their steps. And throughout the section on devices, you will find sufficient instruction on how to deceive from one opening to another.

## Chapter 6: Concerning Parrying, and How All Cuts Are Divided into Three Types, namely the Provoker, Taker, and Hitter

I have now explained at length the postures and cuts, as well as the openings at which the cuts are directed. But it is not enough to have learnt how to deliver the cuts against your opponent well and long from you: it is also necessary to be equally able to send away and parry these cuts when they are delivered at you by

your opponent. Therefore although I have written in the treatise on the sword concerning parrying in general<sup>79</sup>, yet I must discuss parrying somewhat more particularly here in the the dusack as with the other chief elements of combat. It is therefore to be noted that there are two chief types of parrying, namely one from above, the other from below. From the first, which comes from the High Cut, the posture arises named the Slice or Straight Parrying. [2.16v: *Image O*; 2.17r] The second parrying comes from the Low Cut, from which the Bow derives its origin.

These two parryings are each executed in two ways, firstly by catching or intercepting the stroke, secondly by cutting away. Now catching is simply when you intercept and hold off your opponent's strokes with parrying, whether it be with the Bow from the Low Cut, or with Straight Parrying from the High Cut. However, you shall not understand this parrying as some do it, namely that they merely hold out their weapons and let them be struck upon; but if you want to catch and parry an opponent's stroke, then you shall send your parrying up from below with extended arm against his High Cut in the air; for the higher you catch his cut in the air, the more you weaken it, and you can not only lay your countercut on your opponent that much more usefully, but also execute it that much more safely.

Likewise if you wish to parry the Low Cut, then you shall go from above against the cut, and fall on it with extended arm. Both these parryings end in the Longpoint, namely thus:

- 2.17r.1 ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from below or across, then fall on it with Straight Parrying, and note as soon as it connects or knocks, and turn your point in his face, with a step out from his cut.
- 2.17r.2 ➤ Now if he cuts from above, then catch it from below in the Bow, and when the dusacks knock together, then thrust the tip of your weapon in before you at his chest. This is sometimes called the Stork's Beak [*Storcken Schnabel*].

The other way to parry happens with simultaneous cuts, when one cut is countered with the other. And here you shall note that the countercut always counters the Low Cut.

- 2.17r.3 ➤ Thus when he cuts in, then cut at the same time as him, and with this simultaneous cut, spring well out sideways from his cut; thus in connecting together his dusack comes underneath, and yours above. The step has then served you for this, that he has come below with his initial cut and you above with your countercut.
- 2.17r.4 ➤ Thus you can also counter his High Cut with your Low Cut, namely when his cut flies in, then step out

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<sup>79</sup> See 1.15r ff.

sideways from his stroke, and forcefully cut through upward against his High Cut. For although the Low Cut is too weak against the High Cut, yet the step sufficiently strengthens the Low Cut for the taking out.

Thus one cut always counters another, as I have also said before; and the High Cut counters [2.17v: *Image K*; 2.18r<sup>80</sup>] all other cuts, as you will hear later in the section on the Watch.

Now so that you may better understand this, I will distinguish the cuts into three uses: that is, firstly they are used to provoke; secondly to take or parry; thirdly to hit. The Provoking Stroke is what I call the cut with which I goad and provoke the opponent to go out of his advantage and to cut. The Taker is what I call the cut with which I cut away and take out the cuts to which I have stirred and goaded him. The Hitter is what I call the cut when, after I have first goaded him to strike, and secondly taken out the stroke to which I provoked him, then thirdly I cut quickly to the nearest opening before he recovers from his parried stroke.

- 2.18r.1** ➤ Now in the Onset when your opponent positions himself in a posture, guard, or parrying, and will not strike, and you cannot cut against his advantage at his opening, then do to him thus: extend yourself long before him, and deliver one cut, two, or three, through before him against his opening or through his parrying, somewhat with earnest wrathful comportment, as if you were overcommitting to your cuts. And meanwhile diligently watch for him to go up and cut in; then step sideways out from his cut, and cut his cut away from you with a powerful cut. But if he is not sufficiently weakened with one cut, then do this with two or three cuts crosswise through his dusack, until you feel that he is sufficiently weakened; at once before he is back up to strength or comes up and recovers, then cut at his nearest opening, and from the opening be quickly back on his dusack, either with binding or with cutting.
- 2.18r.2** ➤ But if he stands before you in such a guard that you cannot cut him through his parrying, or he holds his parrying such that you do not believe you can execute your first Provoking Cut to the opening without harm, then see that you cut through at once with a stroke to or against his weapon, the nearer his hand the better, with one or two strokes opposite one another according to opportunity.

Further you shall also know and note that one always changes off with the three cuts, such that sometimes the first, sometimes the second, sometimes the third will be a Provoker, Taker, or Hitter. Therefore when you can hit with the first, you shall use the second for parrying; but if you hit with the second, then parry with the third. For if you want to fight soundly with one-handed weapons, then you shall accustom yourself always to send three cuts quickly one after another; nor should it be just a single kind of cut, but always vary and change between the High, Middle, and Low, in such a manner that always one of the three hits, either the first, the second, or the third. And I will remind you of this as examples arise later in the devices.

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<sup>80</sup> *Misnumbered as 19.*

## Chapter 7:

### Now Follow the Postures along with the Devices

Now that I have taught all necessary elements pertaining to this weapon, I will proceed to explain the postures along with their devices. And you shall well note here (as I have also said previously) that the postures must be understood not merely as a position in which to wait for the opponent's fighting, but much more as a beginning or end of the cuts and parrying. So for example when you are standing in the Bow, if you will now strike out of the Bow, then in gathering for the cut you come up into the Watch or Steer; and when you pull your dusack around your head for the stroke, then in pulling around you come through the Wrath Guard; from there the cut is first completed; then when you have completed the High Cut, if you do not go through to the side with the cut, you come at the end of it into the Change; if you will parry up from there, then you come into the Bow, or into the Longpoint.

And note that the body positions are named for the shapes they assume in pulling around or gathering for a cut, as the Wrath Cut from its wrathful attitude, the Steer from its thrust, and the Boar because it cuts from the side like a boar.

Now this is the chiefest reason for the invention of these postures, that when you pull up into a posture for a cut, you can change it while you are still in the air, and turn or send it to another opening; also when you pull up for a cut, that at the furthest point into which you come with pulling up, you can tarry an instant to see whether he will cut at your opening as you cut, so that you may perceive in the air whether you can reach him over his incoming cut by [2.19r] cutting simultaneously over it. Nonetheless you shall tarry no longer in any posture than as long as it takes to gather for the stroke, but always change off from one posture into another, until you perceive opportunity to cut. Also you shall fully fix in your mind the devices that are appointed for every posture, practice them, and make them familiar to you, so that as you come into a posture in the middle of the fight, you are ready and prepared with counterdevices.

Further you shall also know that although I have assigned to every posture its particular devices, it is not my intention that these devices shall not be executed or take place from other postures. The chiefest reason that I have assigned some devices to one posture, others to another, is so they can be discussed in an orderly fashion. Also these devices are not so set in stone that they cannot be changed in practice—they are merely examples from which everyone may seek, derive, and learn devices according to his opportunity, and may arrange and change them as suits him. For as we are not all of a single nature, so we also cannot all have a single style in combat; yet all must nonetheless arise and be derived from a single basis. [2.19v:

## Chapter 8: Concerning the Watch [*Wacht*]<sup>81</sup> and the Devices Assigned to It

This High Guard [*Oberhut*] is the beginning of the High Cut, and it is called the Watch because you attend with a prepared stroke, and hold watch, so that if he opens himself before you by cutting, you can overreach him at once by cutting from above. For no matter how your opponent cuts at you, from this guard you can overreach him, or at least bring his cut to nothing and suppress it.

For this guard position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, hold your dusack over your head, and let the blade hang down behind you, as shown by the figure on the right in the previous image [*B*]. And so that you may also know what is to be executed from this guard, I will explain it for you through some examples, namely first:

### **How and in what way you shall overreach an opponent with a simultaneous cut**

- 2.20r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the High Guard; if your opponent cuts outside at your body, whether at your arm, high, or low, then note when he extends his arm for the cut, and step toward his right away from his stroke, and cut forth outside over his right arm at his head, strongly through, so that after the cut has taken place, your dusack comes to your left into the Middle Guard. From there cut across against his right arm through his face; it doesn't matter whether this takes place with the flat or with the long edge. Thus at the end of the cut your dusack comes to your right shoulder; from there quickly deliver two Wrath Cuts in the blink of an eye from both sides crosswise opposite one another through his face. [2.20v]
- 2.20v.1** ➤ Now if he cuts forth at your face at your left, then when he cuts in, step out from his cut with your left foot behind your right around toward his left side, and follow up with your right foot somewhat to him; as you step thus, deliver two long straight cuts with extended arm diagonally from above through to his face and at his hand, both swiftly one after another; thus you come at the end of the second cut to your left in the Middle Guard. And by following through with this cut you make your right side open; therefore if he should meanwhile cut at the opening you have given him, see that you cut his incoming cut away from you upwards from your left toward your right with a powerful cut, so strongly that your dusack shoots around again above your head into the right Steer; as you cut him out, step with your left foot toward his right; and threaten to thrust at him with the tip of your weapon outside over his right arm. But quickly pull your thrust back to you and cut forth through his face with a back-step. However

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<sup>81</sup> *Running head*: Concerning the Watch or High Guard

if he does not cut at the opening you have given him, then cut nonetheless with the long edge upward from your left through his right, and complete the device as I have just taught. Then cut away from him with the Cross.

### **Precept**

In sum, when you stand in the High Guard, and he cuts outside or inside at your body, that is to the left or right, then always step out from his stroke, and cut long at the same time above his stroke, in at his head. And whenever you execute such a High Cut from one side, always deliver a Middle Cut opposite it from the other side, through his face. Then pursue him further with other devices, or cut away from him with the Cross. [2.21r]

### **How you shall fight from the Watch if your opponent will not cut first: the First Device with the Failer**

- 2.21r.1** ➤ Note when your opponent will not cut, but positions himself in a parrying before you, then step with your right foot around toward his right, and cut the first from above outside at his right arm. He will have to defend against this; as soon as you see that he sends his dusack against your cut to parry it, then do not let your cut hit or connect, but as he goes up, let it run off past without hitting; with this, step quickly back around toward his left and again cut forward through his face.

### **A Device and Example, teaching how you shall provoke your opponent so that he goes up, such that you may injure his right arm**

- 2.21r.2** ➤ Another: cut the first straight from above at his scalp, and as your cut flies in from above, then turn the short edge outward toward him in the air, as if you intended to hit with it. And when he goes up to catch the cut, at once pull it back away around your head without hitting, and cut with the flat outside from your left across at his right arm, strongly through; and this shall take place as he falls down with his cut. At once follow up with Cross Cuts. This is a clever failing device, for as you turn the short edge toward him, you gather to execute the Middle Stroke more quickly and strongly; for even as he goes up with his arm, your blow flies in across and hits. [2.21v]

### **Another that teaches how to provoke your opponent to a cut, catch it, and when he intends to go up again, how to cut meanwhile through his face or arm**

When you see that your opponent is inclined to counter-cut at once, then you shall execute this device against him, with which you provoke and induce him to cut, thus: act as if you intended to cut powerfully, yet do not let it hit, but withdraw that cut to a parrying. Thus you catch the cut with which he intends to rush upon you, and drive him from his advantage. Take an example of this:

- 2.21v.1** ➤ Send a high stroke at him with a step forward, and just as it should hit, turn the short edge against his left, gathering for a Low Cut against his right. However, you shall not complete this Low Cut, but as

soon as he pulls up and cuts in, then deliver the Low Cut for which you have just gathered to catch his incoming cut from your left while it is still in the air. And as soon as he goes back away from the parrying and goes up, then at the same time deliver a powerful Middle Cut from your right quickly through his face, then a Wrath Cut long after from your left.

**How you shall drive an opponent up and down forcefully, so that he must give you space to cut both to his arms and through his face with Middle Cuts**

- 2.21v.2 ➤ Turn your right side well toward him and deliver two high straight and strong cuts, driving through his face with two steps forward on your right foot. As soon as you have driven him up in the air with his dusack, then quickly deliver two Middle Cuts from both sides opposite one another, the first from your right under his dusack through against his inward arm; the second when he goes down, [2.22r] from your left against his right over his dusack through his face. Thirdly cut a high stroke back from your right from above through his face.

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Two particular techniques are allotted to the Watch that are executed with the High Cut, namely first to overreach, which I have already partially taught, second to suppress the cuts, which will follow more fully later in the Straight Parrying.

## Chapter 9: Concerning the Steer [*Stier*] and Its Devices

This posture is not unlike the Plunge, and is one of the best postures, from which all kinds of techniques can be appropriately executed using all the cuts at the Onset in the Before. For this posture, position yourself thus: stand with your left foot forward, hold your dusack with the hilt on the right beside your head, so that the tip of your weapon stands against your opponent's face, as shown by the large figure on the left in the present image [L] who is in the middle of a step. And the posture is essentially a gathered thrust from above. [2.22v: *Image L*; 2.23r]

**The First Device, which teaches how you shall overreach him with a simultaneous cut from the Steer, followed by a Middle Cut, along with a thrust and afterwards a Cross Cut**

- 2.23r.1 ➤ In the Onset when you come into the guard of the Steer and your opponent cuts at you from his right, whether from below or above, then spring well out from his stroke toward his left side, and cut right through at the same time as him at his face and against his weapon-hand, with extended arm, yet such that you keep your weapon over his; and cut so strongly that your dusack shoots back around over your

head into the Plunge, that is into the left Steer. From there cut a Middle Blow with the outside flat against his right, back through at his face, so that your dusack again shoots around over your head into the right Steer. These two cuts shall go quickly and strongly one after another. From there, threaten a thrust; however, when you are halfway in, pull the thrust back and cut after with two strokes using the Cross.

**The Second Device, which teaches how you shall cut through his arm when he goes up, and when he cuts back down, how you shall cut over his weapon at his head at the same time**

- 2.23r.2 ➤ In the Onset when you come into this guard, then take heed as soon as he cuts, and as he pulls up to the stroke, cut him across or from below from your right through against his hand; then as he cuts back in, quickly cut outside over his right arm at his head, with a great step out toward his right away from his stroke. [2.23v]

**The Third Device, which teaches how you shall parry and counter-cut from the Steer if he cuts outside at you, that is at your right**

- 2.23v.1 ➤ Now if he cuts at your right side when you stand in the Steer, whether from below or above, then step out sideways to him toward his right with your right foot, and extend your dusack away from you against his right; in this thrusting forward let the tip of your weapon hang toward the ground, and thus send his stroke away from your left toward your right with hanging dusack; this setting off and stepping out shall take place with one another. As soon as your [*?read: his*] cut connects on the outside flat of your dusack in the parrying, then pull your dusack back up away from his, toward your left for the stroke, and cut outside over his right arm at his head; with this cut, step further around toward his right. Or if you have set off his stroke with hanging dusack using the Bow, and he pulls up from your parrying to cut, then step well out with a double step to his right side, and along with this stepping out, pull your dusack up around your head, and cut with the crooked edge from your right diagonally up under his dusack at the inside of the radius-bone of his forearm, or the tendon, as can be seen in the following image [*I*]. This Low Cut must take place when he pulls up to cut, so that your dusack comes to your left shoulder. From there, cut two strokes long after using the Cross.

**The Fourth Device is a precept that teaches how to catch all cuts surely in all postures, whether they come from the right or left**

This is a good precept: if you come into the posture at some time intentionally or by following through with a cut, and he counter-cuts at you rapidly and suddenly, then go from the posture with the point at his face, yet such that in thrusting forth, your long edge is turned against his incoming stroke [2.24r] to catch it, such that at the end of the thrust you stand in the Longpoint. Take an example of this thus:

- 2.24r.1 ➤ In the Onset, when you come into the Steer before your opponent and he cuts at you from his right



against your left, then step out quickly with your right foot toward his left somewhat to the side, and as he cuts in, thrust at his face with extended arm; and as you thrust in, turn the long edge against his incoming cut; thus you parry his stroke and thrust at the same time. If he parries your thrust and sends it up, then go up with your hilt toward your left. From there, deliver a Low Cut through his right, and then quickly cut back straight from above through his face with a step forward on your right foot.

**What you shall execute from the Steer against an opponent who will not strike first**

- 2.24r.2** ➤ In the first Onset when you see that he will not cut or lay on first with his devices, then note diligently how he positions himself in a guard or posture, to see whether he holds his hand too high or low, or else too far to one side. As soon as you see that he sends his hand and weapon too high, see that you attack him thus: step and cut through from the Steer from your right across from below under his dusack while he is still sending it on high, up at his face and against his right weapon-hand, so that at the end of the Low Cut you come to the left in the Wrath Guard. From there cut again as before with the long edge powerfully and strongly up against his right through his face; with this Low Cut you shall step forth toward him with your right foot which you have in front; thus you come with this cutting upward into one of the right high postures. From this, quickly cut long after with a strong Cross Stroke through his face. [2.24v]

**An Example and Device teaching how you shall bring down an opponent who holds his weapon high in fighting, and shall come over it at his head or face**

- 2.24v.1** ➤ In the Onset, approach him with your right foot and thrust under his dusack at his face or chest, as shown by the small upper scene in Image K; as soon as he falls down after the thrust to parry it (for he must parry it if he does not want to get hit in the face), then pull your dusack back around your head again, and just as he falls down with his dusack, cut over it across through his face. Then cut thirdly straight from above through the vertical line with a step forward on your right, so that at the end of the cut you come into the left Change. From there, go quickly with your long edge outside his right arm up against his weapon to parry; thus bind him from below on his dusack. Then note diligently as soon as he goes away from your weapon and draws up to cut, and cut while he is still drawing up, close beside his hilt from above down through his face; with this cut you shall also step around to him with your right foot, such that your upper body is well lowered forward after the cut, and with your feet wide apart; thus you can come back up with the dusack to parry that much sooner.

**How you shall encounter an opponent who holds his weapon too low**

- 2.24v.2** ➤ However if he holds his dusack rather low with his parrying, namely in the Bow, so that you can well see and reach his face over his hilt, then step and cut from your right from the Steer above his hilt across through his face, so close to his hilt [2.25r] that you meet and hit it with this cut. And when your cut thus flies in through his face, then with this, pull your hilt back up, and meanwhile step with your left foot behind your right toward his left, and follow up with the right to him toward the same side;

with this stepping, quickly cut the second straight from above through his face. These two cuts, namely the Horizontal and then the High, shall be completed quickly and swiftly one after another along with the steps I have taught; thus the device proceeds well.

**An Example and Device teaching how to goad an opponent who is quick to counter-cut by cutting through the foible of his dusack, then to catch his cut, and cut with the crooked edge to the right and with the long edge to the left through his face**

- 2.25r.1** ➤ Next, if he holds or sends his dusack extended far in front of him and is quick to counter-cut, then step and cut the first from your right from the Steer against his left, again through the foible of his dusack. He will quickly counter-cut against this cut, intending to rush upon you; therefore after the first stroke quickly pull your hilt back up around your head, and cut the second also from your right, but across against his cut (to which you have provoked and goaded him with your first cutting through), so that you catch it while he is still flying in, as shown by the large figure on the right in Image G. As soon as his cut connects or knocks on the long edge of your dusack, then quickly step out with your left foot around toward his right side, and with this step, pull your dusack back away from his weapon around your head, and cut with the short edge outside his right arm at his head, as shown by the small figures between the large ones in the same image. He must parry this if he does not wish to be hit; however when he defends and parries this, [2.25v] he makes his face open; you shall then quickly cut strongly through at it with a back-step on your left foot. After following through with this cut, go quickly back up into good parrying.

**An Example and Device teaching how you shall forcefully break through your opponent's parrying from below and above**

- 2.25v.1** ➤ If your opponent confronts you in a posture (it doesn't matter what posture it is), then position yourself in the Onset in the guard of the Steer, again on the right. From there threaten a powerful thrust from above at his left; as soon as he goes up to intercept your thrust, then before it is completed, pull it quickly back to you up toward your right, and sling from there forcefully with the short edge up against his left through his face and parrying. With all this you shall step in this way: when you threaten the thrust, then raise your right foot for the step, and pull the threatened thrust so quickly, that just as you complete the Low Cut, you set back down the foot you raised in stepping forward, so that the step and the stroke are completed at the same time. After this Low Cut, cut quickly from above through his face powerfully and long from you with another step out toward his left. When you thus send the slashing from below along with the High Cut swiftly one after another with their appropriate steps, then the device proceeds well.

However if someone uses this device against you, then counter him thus:

- 2.25v.2** ➤ When you have gone up against his thrust to catch it, and at that moment realise that he is pulling it back from you, and intends to cut from below, then step well toward his [*?read: your*] right side with your right foot, and fall with the long edge strongly from above on his incoming Low Cut, so that in falling on him, the tip of your dusack extends toward your opponent's right side; thus bar his Low Cut, so that he cannot come through. From there, quickly pull back away toward your left shoulder. From there, cut outside over his right arm at his head. However if he should break through upward with his slashing, [2.26r] then in addition to sending away his Low Cut from above without harm to you, also catch his High Cut upward on your long edge. And when his cut knocks or connects on your parrying, see that you pull your dusack toward your left shoulder as before, and cut at his nearest opening. Or when you have caught his High Cut on your parrying, then quickly thrust in under his dusack at his face before he recovers again; he must defend against this, and thereby give you room in the upper opening.

**An Example and Device teaching how you shall goad an opponent with body language as well as cuts, so that you can better injure the radius-bone of his forearm with the crooked edge**

- 2.26r.1** ➤ Note when you are in the Onset, and diligently take heed if your opponent will position himself in the Bow. As soon as you see this, then step and send a powerful High Cut at his left from the guard of the Steer with earnest comportment. However, do not let this cut hit or connect, but note diligently as soon as he goes up to parry it, and pull your cut quickly back away around your head toward your left; and in this pulling away, turn your grip right around, so that when you cut, the crooked edge goes in front to hit. And when he has gone up to catch your cut, cut from your right under his dusack inside at his arm up through toward your left, as you can learn and observe in the figure on the right in this image [I]. However you shall not come nearer to him with this cut than that you can just reach his arm between his elbow and hand with the foible of your dusack. After this cut, let your dusack go above around your head, and deliver a Middle Cut along with a High Cut through his face, etc. [2.26v: *Image I; 2.27r*]

**A Good Device with the Danger Cut that also can be appropriately executed from the Steer**

- 2.27r.1** ➤ If you find your opponent in the Bow, then step and deliver a powerful cut from above strongly on his hilt. He will quickly counter-cut against this cut; therefore see that you do not come through with your cut, but as soon as your cut knocks on his, then let your blade run off down beside his right arm, and at the same time pull your hilt back up; thus cut the second quickly inside through his face as he pulls up for the stroke, beside his hilt while he is still sending it in the air for his stroke. And see nonetheless that you come no nearer with your foot than you can readily reach him with your foible.

**Another with the Waker**

- 2.27r.2** ➤ Note in the Onset when you find an opponent in the Bow to parry, then step and deliver a powerful cut

from the right Steer. As soon as the cut knocks or connects on his parrying, then turn the tip of your weapon over his dusack inward at his face, and thrust in at him on his dusack. He must parry this upward and defend against it; therefore note when he goes up, and pull your dusack around your head and strike from your right across against his left at his face, while he is still up in the air with his dusack. If he parries it again from above, then remain with your dusack on his in the bind, and turn your point around on his dusack inward at his face. If he defends against this too, then go through under his right arm with your point, and thrust outside over his right arm also to his face. If he wards off your thrust again, then let your dusack go around your head, and cut across through against his nearest opening with Middle Cuts. [2.27v]

### **A Good Device from the Steer with which you can break through powerfully**

- 2.27v.1** ➤ Note in the Onset, as soon as you can reach your opponent, then step and deliver a strong cut with extended arm powerfully through his parrying, so that at the end of the cut your dusack swings right beside your left with the tip extending behind you. From there, cut in the opposite direction powerfully and strongly upward from below through his right. Thirdly, cut from your right at his left, either below or over his dusack, through his face.

### **A Common Precept to counter all kinds of devices**

Although I originally intended to lay out and present for every device its particular counters, yet I have thought it best to defer this here, particularly since I have presented and described many fine devices along with their counters in my second book (which if I have the time, not to mention the skill, to do it, I will get into print). I will therefore here only present a general precept, from which you can derive and learn all kinds of counters. For in combat you cannot easily know or quickly see what kind of device he will execute against you, much less be so quickly able to think how to counter it. Therefore I always hold with the one who knows many devices and few counters, and how to execute them judiciously in the Before and After, and allows his opponent to concern himself about the counters, and is so prepared with devices, that when one is countered against him, he will have two other fine ones upon the spot in the middle of the work.

But the common counter that I will present here is this: when you are rushed upon by your opponent with cuts, so that you must parry him, then go under his cuts with strong parrying, and hold them off, so that he cannot come through with them, and must pull his dusack back from yours again; as he pulls up from [2.28r] your dusack for another stroke, thrust straight before you in his face, and meanwhile also turn the long edge against the place from which you see that he will cut back in: thus you are parried. However when you cannot hold off his cuts, since he may be too strong, and will break through with force, then when his cut falls through from your dusack toward the ground, or has strayed out to the side, then you should again thrust straight at his face while his dusack is going through, and complete this thrust before his weapon has fully fallen to the ground. And if he encounters you with deceitful cuts, then as he sends his dusack around from one place to another, again thrust straight forward from the Longpoint at his face or

chest; and meanwhile take diligent heed if he will fall in with his cut: turn the long edge in that direction with the hilt up, and meanwhile keep the point before his face or chest; and whenever you perceive your opportunity, let a cut fly to the next opening.

And that is the true summary and final intent of all counters, namely whenever two cuts connect or bind, that just as they knock in the bind, you thrust in before you on his dusack, regardless of where his dusack goes from yours.

You shall well heed and observe this precept in all hitting; thus you will easily counter everyone, whatever attack he will execute against you, and be able to drive his devices away from you.

Now if your opponent will not cut at you, and positions himself before you such that you cannot blithely cut in at his opening, you will need to know how to counter all postures, and how to drive him out of them, namely thus: if your opponent positions himself in whatever guard he will, then thrust straight from the Longpoint in his face; from whichever side he then strikes out your thrust, cut in at him on the same side. This is something I will frequently discuss later. [2.28v: *Image M*; 2.29r]

## Chapter 10: Concerning the Wrath Guard [*Zornhut*]

This posture is also used on both sides; from it one delivers the most powerful cut, which is called the Father Stroke [*Vaterstreich*]. Now the only difference between this posture and the Steer is that the Steer threatens the thrust, and the Wrath threatens the cut with wrathful comportment; and as regards the devices to execute from them, you can fight from one as from the other. And although this Wrath Guard presents the one side quite open, you can nonetheless execute many and diverse clever and strong devices from it, a few of which I will relate and present here.

Now how you will position yourself in this guard is shown by the figure on the right in the previous image [*M*]. From this posture you shall send away from you all strokes that are cut at you, and counter-cut.

### **The First Device teaches how to take his cuts from above and below, then counter-cut with Winding Cuts**

- 2.29r.1** ➤ When you come in the Onset into the right Wrath Guard, you present your whole left side open, which will induce your opponent to lay on against it with cuts. Therefore note diligently as soon as he cuts at you from above, and meanwhile step out from his stroke with your right foot well sideways to his left side toward him, and cut at the same time as him in at his head and weapon-hand (yet such that in this

simultaneous cutting your dusack comes over his dusack), so that at the end of the cut your dusack comes beside your left into the Change. From there (if he cuts at your right opening) take out his incoming stroke with your long edge strongly up toward your right; along with this taking out, step with your right foot well toward his right side; and in taking him out, let your dusack go entirely around your head; then cut him with Winding Cuts outside over his right arm. [2.29v]

#### **The Second Device teaches further how to take his cuts and counter-cut from the same side**

- 2.29v.1** ➤ If you stand in the right Wrath as before to wait for your opponent to lay on, then as soon as he cuts at the opening you have presented, whether from below or above, then step out toward his left, and cut his incoming stroke away from you with a Wrath Cut against his hand. Before he recovers from this stroke you have taken, then quickly cut the second to the opening before he comes up, as I have said, also from your left, springing forward on your right foot. After these two cuts you shall at once come back from outside up against his right arm with a Low Cut, ending in a parrying.

#### **An Example and Device teaching how you shall turn the point in his face in all hits**

- 2.29v.2** ➤ Next, if he cuts outside your right arm at your body, whether it takes place from above or below, then meanwhile step out from his stroke with your right foot well toward his right, and just as his stroke is coming in, cut over it from outside over his right arm at his head, or deliver a Suppressing Cut from above on his hand. But if he turns his parrying against your cut, then note when the dusacks connect together and hit, and thrust your point on his dusack or on his right arm before you in at his face. He must ward off this thrust, and strike or send out your dusack to the side. From whichever side he takes out your thrust, then quickly cut in to the same side, either to the left or right, as you have already been taught concerning counters. But if he sends your dusack upward in taking you out, then at once let it go over your head, and cut across from below with the crooked edge through his face, while he is still sending his arm in the air with taking you out. [2.30r]

#### **Another, teaching how you shall turn your point in before you into his face**

- 2.30r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Wrath Guard, and note diligently as soon as he cuts in at you, and step and cut with extended arm at the same time as him, against his left at his head. And as soon as the cuts connect or knock together, then immediately thrust the tip of your dusack before you into his face, and in this thrusting forth, turn your long edge and hilt upward against his incoming weapon. And as soon as his second stroke knocks on your long edge, then go up in the air with your hilt, and keep it over your head, and meanwhile strike with the inside flat and hanging dusack outside at his right arm. As soon as he slips after your blow, then step back and cut forward through his face.

#### **How you shall catch your opponent's cuts from the Wrath Guard by sliding, and then counter-cut**

- 2.30r.2** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself again in the Wrath Guard, and note as soon as your opponent cuts at you, and send your dusack over your head under his incoming stroke, and catch his cut with the long

edge of your dusack, so that in catching his cut your dusack hangs down with the point toward your left at the ground. Then as soon as his cut clashes on your dusack, then cut two swift and strong strokes with the crooked edge from both sides up from below through his face. After these Low Cuts quickly cut back with a horizontal Middle Cut and a straight High Cut from your right, also through his face, or where he is open, so that at the end of the last cut you come to your left in the Change. From there go back up with your long edge to parry. [2.30v]

### **Another**

- 2.30v.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you come into the Wrath Guard, and you see that your opponent will not cut first, then send a powerful high stroke at his head with a step forward on your right foot. Meanwhile note diligently as soon as he goes up with his dusack into the Bow to parry, and do not let your cut hit on his parrying, but pull your dusack back up around toward you, and jab with your point under his dusack at his chest, as shown by the small upper figures in Image K.
- 2.30v.2** ➤ If you wish, you may also let the first hit strong from above, and afterwards let your dusack snap around in the air as before, and jab forth at his chest; however, as soon as he falls down after your jab, then quickly cut over his hilt across through his face.

### **A Good Laying On from the Wrath Cut [*?read: Guard*] with four cuts**

- 2.30v.3** ➤ Note in the Onset when you come into the Wrath Guard, as soon as you can reach him, then raise your hand from your right shoulder and meanwhile turn the point of your dusack at his face. Thus threaten to thrust at him, but pull your dusack quickly back around your head and cut the first below his dusack up through his face; cut the second across from your right also through his face; and cut the third diagonally from above back at his left, again through his face; and cut the fourth from your left diagonally through at his right arm. And note also, however many cuts you deliver from one side, you shall also take as many steps with the right foot to him toward the same side after your cuts—for in these devices, you shall always keep your right foot forward in stepping. [2.31r]

### **Steer and Wrath to the Left**

Since you have now briefly heard about these two postures from your right and what you shall execute from them, it is also easy to understand from it without specific instruction what you may execute from these guards on the other side, namely merely to reverse the devices. But to give you a little introduction to such reversing of devices, I will offer a few devices here by way of example. And these two postures are taken together, because there is little you can execute from one that you cannot execute from the other. Now the left Wrath is shown by the figure on the right in the previous Image L; as to the left Steer, note how you have executed it previously on the right: thus you shall also do it on the left.

### **The First Device from the left Wrath**

- 2.31r.1** ➤ In the Onset when you come into the left Wrath, drive from your left from above and from your right from below in close succession over your forward right thigh through his face, following the downward diagonal line marked H-[D]<sup>82</sup>, one cut to three or four, until you see an opening. Cut in at it; then quickly cut back long after through the Cross, so that you protect yourself from his cuts.

### **A Good Device how you shall compel him down with his parrying, so that you may come at his face**

- 2.31r.2** ➤ *Item*, drive over your right thigh as before, but send all the cuts under his dusack at his arm or toward his fingers; thus you will incite and compel him to go down with his parrying. As soon as he falls down with his cut, then cut quickly and suddenly [2.31v] over his dusack from your left against his right diagonally through his face; or deliver a Middle Cut across from your left over his hilt against his right, again through his face; then cut the second quickly through at his left.

### **A Quick and Strong Device to execute from the left Steer, which is executed with five cuts**

- 2.31v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the guard of the left Steer, and as soon as he cuts outside at your right, then step with your left foot well out from his cut toward his right, and cut at the same time as him, diagonally against his right through his face (yet such that you come with your dusack over his in striking in), so that at the end of this cut your dusack comes beside your right thigh with the point toward the ground. Then turn your long edge back up and deliver a strong Low Cut with the long edge from your right up toward your left, so that at the end of this cut your dusack comes to your left shoulder. From there, deliver a Low Cut strongly up through his right side, so that after this cut your dusack shoots into the guard of the right Steer. From there, deliver a swift cut across through his face. Then finally deliver a powerful High Cut long after, also straight from above, through his face with a broad step forward [*?read: backward*] etc. [2.32r]

### **A Good Device executed from the left and right Steer in combination**

- 2.32r.1** ➤ *Item*, forcefully drive one cut to three diagonally over your right thigh through your opponent's face from below and above in combination; and note when you have come the third time to your left shoulder, then deliver two Low Cuts, one from your left, the other from your right, both strongly upward through his face, so that at the end of the two Low Cuts you come back into the left Wrath Guard. From there cut with the short edge or strike with the flat with extended arm across through his face, so strongly that at the end of the cut your dusack shoots into the guard of the right Steer. From there step to him with your right foot, and thrust with extended arm from above toward his face. Then finally cut quickly after the thrust also from above through his face. And in all the stepping keep your right foot forward.

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<sup>82</sup> 1570: B



### Precept

- 2.32r.2 ➤ *Item*, if an opponent cuts at your right when you stand in one of the left high postures, then deliver a powerful Winding Cut outside over his right arm at his head, with a step out toward his right.

For whenever you come into one of these two postures, then you shall always be diligent to step out from his incoming stroke, and cut at the same time as him over his dusack at his head, extending far. [2.32v]

### Counter against the Steer and Wrath on the Left

- 2.32v.1 ➤ In the Onset, when you see that your opponent confronts you in these left high postures, then position yourself at once in the guard of the right Steer. From there, thrust at his face from your right with a broad step forward. He must ward this off, and strike out your thrust; then let it go around your head toward the side to which he has sent it away with his striking out, and cut against the other side at his opening. But if you see that he will also bear off and parry this, then let your dusack run off before that side without hitting, and cut to his other side.

## Chapter 11:

### The Straight Parrying [*gerade Versatzung*] or Slice [*Schnitt*]<sup>83</sup>

In this parrying, position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward and hold your dusack in front of you with your arm extended, so that your long edge stands toward the opponent and the tip of your weapon is forward, as shown by the large figure on the right in the adjoining image [F]. I consider this posture the best of all, because you can wait for your opponent in this position more safely than in any other. [2.33r: *Image F*; 2.33v]

### An Example and Device teaching how to work from below to the opening

- 2.33v.1 ➤ Now when you come before your opponent in the Straight Parrying, then note when he will cut forth at your face: turn your long edge against his cut, and catch it in the air toward his right; with this, step with your left foot behind your right toward him; and quickly follow up with your right foot toward his left; as soon as his stroke knocks on your dusack, turn your long edge back away from his dusack, and draw it toward your right through his mouth. And with this, pull quickly back around, and deliver a Middle Cut with good parrying against his left at his face, so that if he should cut, you will hold off or send away his cut with this Middle Cut. After this Middle Cut, pull quickly back around your head and flick outside at his right arm. At once cut long with Cross Strokes. You shall complete the slice and step behind simultaneously; thus the device proceeds well.

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<sup>83</sup> *Running head*: The Straight Parrying from Above

- 2.33v.2 ➤ Next, if he cuts in front at your face, then turn your long edge against his cut as before. As soon as the dusacks knock together, then pull your dusack back away again, around before your face, and cut outside at his right arm; then quickly cut the second back in front through his face.

**Another**

- 2.33v.3 ➤ *Item*, parry his High Cut with your long edge as before, and when the dusacks knock together, then jerk your hilt up toward your left so that you come into the left Steer. From there deliver a Low Cut or Middle Cut, or else cut diagonally over his right arm against his right through his face, powerfully and long from you. Then at once cut long after with Cross Strokes, also through his face. [2.34r]
- 2.34r.1 ➤ *Item*, parry his stroke with your long edge as before, and when it connects, pull your dusack back again toward your right and around your head; step and thrust outside over his right arm at his face. Pull quickly back and cut forward, also at his face.
- 2.34r.2 ➤ *Item*, if you stand in this parrying, and your opponent cuts outside at your right, then parry his cut with your long edge, and at once deliver a Low or Middle Cut from your right at his left through his face; do this cut so strongly that with this \*winding [*in solchem windt*] your dusack runs around twice over your head, once to each side; with this running around you will confuse and deceive him; and at once cut after with a Cross Stroke.

**How you shall set off his cuts, hang in, and draw up through his face**

- 2.34r.3 ➤ *Item*, if you stand before your opponent in Straight Parrying, and he cuts outside at your right, then as he cuts in, quickly step out from his stroke toward his right with your left foot, and meanwhile turn your long edge against his cut; with this parrying, go up with your hilt, and thrust your point on his dusack outside over his right arm in his face. Rapidly hang your dusack outside over his right arm in before his chest; with this hanging in, step further to his right side; draw your long edge back up toward your left through his face; then at once cut back long with the Cross.

**A Good Device how you shall set off, step out, and slice through his face from the Straight Parrying**

- 2.34r.4 ➤ Or if you stand in this parrying, and he cuts or flicks outside at your right arm, then as he is striking, step well toward his right, and turn his cut away from you toward your right with your long edge, with a back-step. From there draw your [2.34v] long edge over his arm back toward your left through his face into the Middle Guard. From there, fight further as you will learn later in the section on the Middle Guard.
- 2.34v.1 ➤ But if he cuts at you from both sides so swiftly that you cannot thus quickly attack him in the first cut, then turn away a few of his cuts with your long edge toward both sides, and then see that you rapidly counter-cut him, to wherever he makes himself open by cutting.

- 2.34v.2 ➤ *Item*, if your opponent delivers a Wrath Cut from his right against your left side, and sends the cut in high, then do not take the cut with any parrying, but let your point drop; go through thus under his right arm with a broad step out to his right side as you have been taught previously with the Constrainer, and cut at the same time as him outside over his right arm to the same side or opening from which he has cut. You shall use this against those who cut high, and more at the dusack than at the body.
- 2.34v.3 ➤ But if an opponent will not cut at you when you stand in this parrying, then note how he positions himself against you; if he positions himself in a side posture, whether below or above, then thrust with extended arm straight in before you at his face, into the Longpoint. He must ward this off; then note from which side he strikes or takes out your thrust, and let it go around, and cut at him to the same side from which he has struck or taken out your thrust. You may do this counter-cut from above, across, or from below. Then cut after with Cross Cuts.

Or if you see that he will parry both the thrust and cut, then thrust straight at his face, as I have taught before; when he bears off your thrust, then act as if you intended to cut at the side from which he has parried you; yet do not let the cut hit or connect, but pull it back away around your head, and cut to the other side. For whenever you see that he will parry one of your cuts, then do not let it hit, but pull back away to another side; but if he goes after to parry, then pull away again, and so on until you believe you can hit an opening. [2.35r]

### **Precept**

- 2.35r.1 ➤ If an opponent cuts at your right or left, then parry him with your long edge, and as soon as it clashes, then pull back up, and cut straight from above back to the nearest opening, with stepping out.
- 2.35r.2 ➤ *Item*, if he binds you, or stands before you in a parrying, then note diligently when he goes up, and as soon as he pulls up for a stroke, then cut through across at the radius-bone of his forearm.

### **A Swift Deceitful Device to execute against this Straight Parrying**

- 2.35r.3 ➤ Note when you find your opponent in Straight Parrying, then position yourself in the Onset in the Wrath Guard or Steer, and send a high stroke with earnest comportment from your right shoulder at his face. Yet do not let it hit, but just as the cut should connect above, go below with your dusack and toward his left right around his dusack in a circle through the Rose, so that your dusack comes under his right arm and out toward your [*?read: his*] left up in the air. Then quickly let it run off twice in the air, once against his left, the second time against his right, and deliver a Middle Cut through from your right at his face. For all this you shall have two steps forward, the one for the first Wrath Cut, with which you will not hit but go around beside him without hitting, the second for the double running off

and the Middle Cut; for when you bring your dusack in the air for the running off, you shall at the same time lift up your right foot, and execute the double running off so quickly that you hit with the Middle Cut just as you set your foot back down again. This is a fluid and swift device and proceeds well, if you first learn to do it well. As soon as the Horizontal Cut has hit, then strike back across from below to his right arm with good parrying. When you hit with this cut, then note whether he is high or low with his arm: if he is high, then turn your point under his arm with a thrust at his chest or hip; but if he is low, then turn your point [2.35v] above his arm at his face, palm away from him, so that your long edge stands upward in the thrust. One of these two thrusts will be most suitable for you, either palm toward or away from him. Then follow up this thrust powerfully and quickly with a cut, namely the High Thrust with a Low Cut through his right, the Low Thrust with a High Cut through his left.

- 2.35v.1** ➤ *Item*, if you find an opponent in Straight Parrying, then cut from your right quickly across against his hilt, with a step forward. When the weapons connect, then step and wind through underneath with your hilt, and send it outside over his right hand. Force it down to you, and draw the dusack through his face.

And you will find in the Middle Guard how you shall further counter this Straight Parrying.

And lastly when you stand in this Straight Parrying, then note as I have also said before, if your opponent cuts at your right or left, then turn your long edge against his cut, and along with this parrying, thrust your point forth at his face. Thus you force him to go up to parry, and give you room to the openings. But if he does not cut, then attack him with whatever devices seem most appropriate to you—you will find plenty of them in this treatise. [2.36r: *Image N*; 2.36v]

## Chapter 12: How You Shall Fight from the Bow [*Bogen*]<sup>84</sup>

In this guard, which is the parrying from below, position yourself as shown by the figure on the left in the nearby image [*N*]. **How you shall let his cuts glance off your Bow, and countercut**

- 2.36v.1** ➤ Note when you come before your opponent in the Bow, then take heed as soon as he cuts from his right against your left at your head, and turn your long edge upward with hanging dusack against his stroke; at the same time as this parrying, step out from his stroke to him with your left foot behind your right; and thus let his cut glance off your long edge down beside your left; then step with your right foot to his left, and cut forward through his face.

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<sup>84</sup> *Running head*: Fighting from the Bow

- 2.36v.2 ➤ Or when you have parried his cut with your Bow up toward your left, as I have just taught, then just as it clashes or knocks, pull your dusack toward your left shoulder; at once cut from your left shoulder against his right, diagonally through his face or arm. Then cut away with Middle and Cross Cuts.

Concerning this parrying see the small figures between the large ones in Image B.

**Another that teaches how to cut below or above his dusack at his face, depending on whether he has gone too high or low in parrying**

- 2.36v.3 ➤ Note when you stand before your opponent in the Bow, and he cuts at you powerfully through your parrying, then take heed how he goes back up to parry, whether he comes too high or low. If he is too [low]<sup>85</sup> in going up, so that you can see his face over his dusack, then quickly deliver [2.37r] a Middle Cut across through at his face over his dusack, before he fully comes up to the parrying; at once pull back around your head and cut away with a Cross Stroke. But if he goes up too high after he has cut, then as he is going up, counter-cut under his dusack across at his face.

**A Precept that teaches how to make him miss, and counter-cut**

- 2.37r.1 ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Bow, and see that you are not too near him. As soon as you see that he will cut, then do not catch his stroke, but let him cut and miss, thus: as he cuts in, pull your dusack up toward you, and give ground with your forward foot to the rear one, so that he does not hit; and as his dusack falls toward the ground, then quickly counter-cut with a step forward. You may execute this counter-cut from above, diagonally, across, or from below, depending on where you see he can be hit; and you shall quickly follow up this counter-cut with Cross Cuts, unless you perceive an opportunity for other devices.

**How you shall cut at the radius-bone of your opponent's forearm when he pulls up for the stroke**

- 2.37r.2 ➤ If you find your opponent in the Bow, then position yourself the same way, and take heed as soon as he pulls up to strike, and as he pulls up, cut through inside at the radius-bone of his forearm with a Middle Cut, as you can see in the small figures on the left in the previous Image P.
- 2.37r.3 ➤ You can also attack him as he pulls up with Winding Cuts outside over his arm. [2.37v]
- 2.37v.1 ➤ Or when he goes up, step out toward his left, and turn your dusack right around; cut beside or under his hilt inside at his face as he is pulling up.

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<sup>85</sup> 1570: hoch ('high'); read: nider

### Counter against the Bow

Now if he will not cut from the Bow, then execute devices with the High Cut against him thus:

- 2.37v.2 ➤ Deliver a swift High Cut at his face through the foible of his dusack. With this cut you will provoke him to strike; as soon as he goes up to cut, then cut his incoming stroke away from you with a Middle Cut against his hand; at once quickly cut after with the third.
- 2.37v.3 ➤ Note if you and your opponent stand in the Bow, then pull your dusack toward your left shoulder. From there send your outside flat beside his hilt up at his face; thus you will unnerve him such that he goes up; with this rushing up, let it go around your head, and cut through with the second one from your left across at his right arm.
- 2.37v.4 ➤ *Item*, in the Onset when you come into the Bow, then pull your dusack from the Bow toward your left into the Middle Guard; from there send your outside flat outside his right arm up at his face and toward your right shoulder; and give it a strong swing, so that your dusack snaps around over your head. Threaten to flick with the inside flat outside at his right ear; as soon as he slips after this flick, at once pull back up around your head, and cut through with your crooked edge across from your right at his face or arms. This is a very good device if you do it correctly; it will not fail you.

### The Flicking Cut

- 2.37v.5 ➤ When you stand in the Bow before an opponent and he will not cut, then pull up into the Watch. Act as if you intended to cut from above, but do not do this, rather turn while you are still in the air, and cut with the long edge from below in a flick at his right arm, and turn the dusack [2.38r] back toward your left shoulder. From there cut back opposite it through his right shoulder, either under or above his arm, through his face. At once deliver Cross Cuts or straight Driving Cuts long from you.
- 2.38r.1 ➤ *Item*, if he cuts from above, then parry up toward your left, and when he draws his dusack back up from his cut, then meanwhile cut quickly from your left through against his right, either below or above his dusack, depending on whether he has gone up quickly or slowly. Thus you come at the end of the cut with your dusack by your right side; from there cut through quickly and strongly back across up from below with your long edge, so that your dusack comes back on your left shoulder. From there, cut after straight and long from above.
- 2.38r.2 ➤ When an opponent cuts at you from above, then note as he draws up, and pull your weapon above your left shoulder. Cut in at the same time as him with your long edge across from your left; with this cut, step well out toward his right. Thus you hit him and take his cut away with the Cross.

### **A Good Device with three Middle Cuts**

- 2.38r.3** ➤ Deliver your first Middle Cut from your right over his hilt through his face, the second from your left under his right arm also strongly through, the third back opposite it from your right against his left at his face. If you cut them correctly, one of these three will hit.
- 2.38r.4** ➤ Note when you come in the Onset before your opponent, and he does not strike at once, but waits for your stroke, then see that you provoke him with comportment until he goes up and strikes. Meanwhile note diligently as soon as he goes up to strike in, and pull your dusack around your head for the stroke, and strike in at the same time as him such that you catch his stroke on the forte of your dusack, and at the same time as his dusack knocks on yours, you hit his head with the short-edge foible, as you can see in the two small figures between the large ones in Image H. From there, let it quickly snap around again, and thrust at him with reversed hand under his dusack in front on his chest, as shown by the small figures on the right [2.38v] in Image K. Then cut away long with the Cross.

In the second part of this treatise you will find what else can be executed from both of these parryings.<sup>86</sup>

### **How you shall change through, chase, slice, and fight from the binds**

- 2.38v.1** ➤ Namely thus: if you and your opponent stand in the Bow, then bind him on the middle of his dusack—it doesn't matter whether it takes place with the Bow or Straight Parrying. Remain on his dusack with the bind, and provoke him with your point over or under his dusack depending on how you have bound him, until he goes up to cut. As soon as he pulls around away from your dusack, then as he is sending his hand in the air to cut in, cut through beside his hilt at his face or against his arm with a back-step.

Thus one must take good heed that in all binds, with whatever cut they take place, you can rush at an opening with the windings on his dusack, as you can gather from the following verses from my epitome, which I will somewhat explain before I go on to describe the other postures, and, among others, it goes thus:

For whenever your cut connects in the binds,  
the point is sent to the opening by winding.  
And you feel correctly in all remaining,  
likewise slicing off and counterslicing.  
You draw the cuts straight and directly,  
you go through quickly, thus you rightly find him.  
You change through at once, go with stepping,  
you greatly harm his chest and face. [2.39r]

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<sup>86</sup> Meyer presumably is referring to the *Slice and Bow*, which he has been discussing in these two sections.

The first element embodied here is this: whenever you bind with your dusack on his, whether it takes place from below or above, then just as your weapon connects on his, you shall turn your point inward against his body. Likewise whenever two cuts hit against one another, again always turn your point quickly inward on his dusack, as I have said, and do it just as the dusacks connect or bind together. This shall or can be executed in all cuts. Yet you shall take heed that you cut and bind against the High Cut from above, and bind from above against the Horizontal or Low Cut. And whenever two cuts connect in this way, then turn your point inward—still remaining on his dusack—and thrust at his body. If he rushes meanwhile at your opening, then wind back against his dusack and send him from you with a counterslice.

The second element embodied in these verses teaches you how to draw the cuts correctly from the bind to the body, and from the body to the bind, that is to the dusack. That is, whenever the weapons hit together in the bind, or you have caught his cut with parrying, you shall slice from that bind with your dusack with a drawn slice against his body; and then from the body you should be at once on his dusack again with counterslicing, so that you pull your weapon to his body, from his body back to his weapon using the slice, concerning which I have already taught in the section on the Straight Parrying.

The third element I will teach about here is changing through. This changing through, although it is also executed outside the context of the binds, yet it is also very serviceable and artful to execute it from the binds. For whenever two cuts hit against one another, then when the weapons connect or bind together, you can properly go through under his weapon with a step out and attack to his weapon and body on the other side with all kinds of techniques.

The fourth is how to pull your cuts and parrying from him. That is, when your opponent cuts in at you, you shall make him miss just as his cut should hit, and counter-cut at him quickly, concerning which I have also spoken before. Or you shall send a powerful cut against one of his openings, and as soon as he goes up against it to parry, you shall pull back away and send it to another opening.

Lastly you shall also learn to step correctly and to feel diligently, which will be the best of all these techniques for you to execute rapidly; for with the word ‘feeling’ you should here also understand that you should learn to recognise the true and ordained time for every technique. [2.39v]

But since I discuss these techniques here and there in the guards, it is unnecessary to speak of them at length here; I will only show what is most necessary in the briefest form.<sup>87</sup>

And firstly, you have heard already how you shall turn the point inward at his body in both the guards,

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<sup>87</sup> *This paragraph is printed as a header.*



namely the Steer and Wrath. Therefore as regards the drawn cut, note this example:

- 2.39v.1** ➤ If you find an opponent in the Bow, then bind him with your own Bow on the foible of his dusack; and when it connects, send your point outside around his weapon in at his body, and draw the long edge between his body and dusack up through his face, \*F.I. and although you may overextend in the air with your drawing up and make yourself open, yet you can hasten back and recover by slicing down or counterslicing.
- 2.39v.2** ➤ *Item*, bind him with your Bow on his on the forte, and when the weapons hit together, turn your hilt over his dusack in against his chest with a step forward, rapidly press his dusack down, and draw your long edge through his face behind his dusack.
- 2.39v.3** ➤ *Item*, if you bind him near his hilt, then as soon as your bind connects, if he should hold his parrying against you, cut from outside over his right arm inward through his face.
- 2.39v.4** ➤ But if he holds his parrying high when you have bound him with the Bow on the middle of his dusack, then turn your short edge under his dusack inward at his left, and meanwhile remain on his dusack with the bind; and turn your short edge quickly back against his right; thus the short edge comes on his head, or through his face, as shown by the small figures in Image K. Quickly pull your hilt back up toward you, and cut long after. This device seems to be impossible, but when you do it at its proper time, which is quickly in the first hitting of the bind, then you will have completed it before he knows it.
- 2.39v.5** ➤ *Item*, if an opponent binds you with [his]<sup>88</sup> Bow on yours and is high with his parrying, then again turn your short edge under his dusack inward against his left. Thus you make yourself open in front; when he rushes to this opening from above, slice him on the arm from your right as he goes in with his stroke, with a step out, as shown by the large figures in Image K. From this slice, go quickly at his face with the point.
- 2.39v.6** ➤ *Item*, bind on his Bow with Straight Parrying, that is [2.40r: *Image K*; 2.40v] with the High Cut, and when this cut connects, remain on his dusack, and turn your long edge either down or up in the bind, against or through his face, as you can see in the small figures on the right in Image P. Thus you drive him up; therefore cut across through his arm as he goes up.

Moreover you will find here \*in some places, how you shall slice off and counterslice; namely thus:

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<sup>88</sup> 1570: deinem ('your'); read: seinem

- 2.40v.1** ➤ When an opponent cuts in at you from above, then cut across against it, and when your cut connects on his, then meanwhile step quickly out sideways toward his left, and draw your long edge away from his dusack toward your right through his face. And if he rushes meanwhile at your opening, then at once slice back again against his weapon. But if he goes after your dusack, then quickly go through below, as follows in the section on changing through.

Concerning changing through, note this precept:

- 2.40v.2** ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from his right, then cut also from your right against his cut, and just as the cuts should hit together, then go through under his dusack toward the other side with a broad step out, and cast your blade outside his right arm at his head, etc.
- 2.40v.3** ➤ Or if he will not cut, then cut with serious comportment at him against some opening. As soon as he sends his dusack to catch your cut, then do not let it hit, but just as it should connect, then go through under his dusack and sink your point outside over his right arm at his face. If he wards this off and sends the thrust away from him, then draw your long edge inside his right arm up through his face, and cut quickly from your right back against it. However, should it meanwhile become necessary for you to parry, you should not let anything hinder you from it.
- 2.40v.4** ➤ *Item*, if your opponent stands before you in the Slice, then cut from your right at his left, and just as it should hit, then step well to his right side, and again go through underneath with your dusack, and thrust outside his right arm again to his face. If he parries this and goes up, then go back with the point outside around his arm and underneath it, to the right side of his chest. If he wards this off again and goes down, then send the point back around his right arm and thrust back from above outside over it at his face. In this way you shall always send your point around [his]<sup>89</sup> arm, so that you are sometimes below, sometimes above his dusack, with your point on his body. [2.41r]

Learn chasing, with every danger,  
whether he is soft or hard in the binds;  
if you chase and follow with slices,  
pay heed to his arm, be quick with stepping.

You have already sufficiently heard what chasing is, and that it is a particularly artful technique. Therefore I will here only give a brief introduction how in chasing you shall use the forte and foible, and the hard and soft, and how you shall fight against it.

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<sup>89</sup> 1570: deinen ('your'); read: seinen

- 2.41r.1** ➤ And note when he is hard on your dusack holding against you in the bind, then quickly go or change through underneath, or let it snap around away from him, concerning which you have already been instructed at length.
- 2.41r.2** ➤ But if he does not hold hard against you, but is soft on your dusack in the bind, then push his dusack from you with a jerk; yet you shall not fall too far with this jerking out, so that you can be upon him quickly with the slice or with cutting to the opening before he takes it away from you again.
- 2.41r.3** ➤ Now when you have bound him on the forte of his dusack, however that were to happen, then if he strikes around from there at you, follow with the slice against his arm and to the opening, and see that you do not stray after his arm, if he should go through against you.

Understand all this from both sides. Now as to how you shall chase from the foible with slicing or pulling, you will find here and there in the devices sufficient clear examples of it.

## Chapter 13: Concerning the Boar [*Eber*]

You have heard something about the high postures along with their devices; now follow the low postures by which the high guards are countered; for when your opponent fights you from above, then you shall fight him from below. The guard of the Boar is used only on the right side, as shown by the figure on the left in Image M. [2.41v: *Image M*; 2.42r]

**The first device tells how you shall let his stroke slide off on [your]<sup>90</sup> dusack, and counter-cut long**

- 2.42r.1** ➤ When an opponent encounters you in one of the high postures on the right, then position yourself in the Boar; as soon as he cuts at you from above, then step well out from his stroke with your right foot toward his left, and at the same time as this step go up with hanging dusack so that you let his stroke slide off on your Bow. And quickly cut long after through his left with two strokes, one after the other.

**Another that teaches how to step through against him and fight with Winding Cuts outside at his head and arms**

- 2.42r.2** ➤ If he cuts from above, then step with your right foot toward his right, and thrust the point of your dusack straight at his face, and with this thrusting forth, catch his cut on your long edge. When the cut knocks or connects, then wind through with your hilt under his right arm up toward your left, as shown by the small figure on the left between the large ones in this Image F etc. Then step quickly toward his

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<sup>90</sup> 1570: seinem ('his'); read: deinem

right and cut with Winding Cuts powerfully outside over his right arm. As soon as you meanwhile perceive that he has gone too far from his face with his parrying, at once attack forward at his face.

**How you shall run under his cuts, and jab in front on his chest so that he must make his face open**

- 2.42r.3 ➤ In the Onset, when you come into the Boar and your opponent cuts at you from above, then go up in the air with the Bow, and catch his stroke in the air with a step forward on your right foot; at once lower your body, and jab with your point under his dusack on his chest; [2.42v] quickly step back and cut through his face with Cross Cuts.
- 2.42v.1 ➤ Or after you have caught his cut from the Boar with the Bow, then quickly step with your left foot well around his right, and thrust outside over his right arm at his face. He must ward this off or be hit; if he wards it off, then he makes his face open in front; therefore quickly step back again with your left, and drive against him powerfully with High Cuts through his face.

**Counter**

- 2.42v.2 ➤ Parry the thrust and stroke, and deliver a Middle Cut through his face; then cut after with the Cross.

**How in the middle of your parrying you shall thrust under his dusack at his face**

- 2.42v.3 ➤ Catch his High Cut up in the air on your Bow, and pull your dusack back out from under his stroke in the air, and thrust by your right side up from below under his dusack at his face; meanwhile keep your left hand above your head, until you turn your hilt back up into the Bow. From there you shall at once pull around your head, to cut from above. The thrust from below must take place quickly, before he has recovered from his cut.

**How you shall thrust in the Before from the Boar**

- 2.42v.4 ➤ If an opponent will not cut at you, then pull your dusack back out from the Boar beside your right; step and thrust at him from above; with this step, pull your thrust quickly back again without completing it, and thrust beside your right up from below under his dusack as before; pull it back up and finish as before. [2.43r]

**A Good Device in which you shall flick over out of the parrying, and seek his right arm with Winding Cuts and flicking**

- 2.43r.1 ➤ *Item*, position yourself in the guard of the Boar; if your opponent cuts at you from above, then step toward him with your right foot and go forcefully upward with the Bow. As soon as his cut knocks on your dusack, at once flick the short edge above his dusack at his left ear, palm away from him; quickly step with your left foot across out toward his right, and cut him powerfully with a Winding Cut outside over his right arm. Or as soon as the flick has taken place, let your dusack snap around again, and flick outside at his right arm with hanging dusack and the inside flat; then cut in front through his face with

a back-step.

The Roarer and the Waker both counter the Boar.

## Chapter 14:

### Concerning the Middle Guard [*Mittelhut*] and How One Shall Fight from It

I call this the Middle Guard because it arises from the Middle Cut. Now you can come into this guard at the end of three cuts: first when you strike a Crooked Cut from your right through the Wrath Line, and let it swing beside your left right back into the Middle Guard; then through the Middle Cut itself; thirdly when you strike a Crooked Cut from below through the upward diagonal line from your right toward your left. These three cuts always swing most readily to the Middle Guard, even if you try to pull them to another.

Position yourself for it as shown by the figure on the right in this image [C]. From this guard you can execute all the devices that are taught in the left Wrath and Steer; therefore I will only briefly recount a few devices, from which you will sufficiently learn the use of this guard. [2.43v: *Image C*; 2.44r]

#### **How you shall send your opponent's cuts away from you from the Middle Guard, and counter-cut**

- 2.44r.1** ➤ And firstly, in the Onset when you come before your opponent in the Middle Guard, and he cuts at your nearest opening, then cut his incoming stroke away with your long edge from your left against his right from above through the downward diagonal line, so that your dusack comes to your right side; with this cut, step well out to his right side with your left foot. As soon as this has taken place, then step to him with your right foot, and before he recovers from his first stroke, which you have taken, cut quickly from your right over his dusack through his face or over his right arm. But if he is so quick after the first stroke that you cannot come over his arm with your second stroke, then nonetheless cut through from your right as he is drawing up, or goes upward, inside at his arm or hand. Thus you come back into the Middle Guard as before.

#### **How you shall cut his stroke up from below away from you from the Middle Guard, and pursue with Winding Cuts**

- 2.44r.2** ➤ If he cuts at you from above when you stand in the Middle Guard, then take out his incoming stroke up from below with your long edge, so strongly that your weapon flies back around over your head for the stroke; quickly double-step well to his right, and cut him with a powerful Winding Cut outside over his right arm or to the side where you can reach him in this onrush. These two cuts shall take place swiftly so that you hit with the second stroke before he recovers from his first stroke, which you have taken. But if he is swift enough to come up before you have completed the Winding Cut, then see that you at

least come at the same time as him outside with the Winding Cut over his right arm. [2.44v]

**How you shall cast in your dusack outside over his right arm and draw your long edge upward through his face**

- 2.44v.1** ➤ Or when you stand in the Middle Guard, then note when he cuts at you, and step out from his cut to his right; meanwhile cast your crooked edge against his right, outside over his right arm in at his face; and in this casting in, lean your head well away from his stroke behind your dusack. And note diligently if he does not resist hard in the first hitting; if so, then rapidly push down away from you with a jerk with your forte; then draw your long edge up through his face up in the air, as shown by the small upper figures in Image L; and in the air draw your dusack back around for a Middle Cut against his right back on his dusack. And when you have thus bound him with a Middle Cut from your left against his right, then take heed as soon as he goes up away from the bind, and as he is going up, cut forth at his face, or what is even more certain, inside toward his arm, with a back-step. At once defend yourself with the Cross.
- 2.44v.2** ➤ However if he turns his cut into a parry against your casting in, then pull your hilt back up toward your left, and let it fly above in the air around your head; then cut through forcefully from your right up from below with the crooked edge, so that your dusack comes back to your left, either in the Wrath or Middle Guard. From there at once cut after with a Cross.

**How you shall fight from the Middle Guard against an opponent who will not cut**

However if your opponent will not cut at you, then fight against him from the Middle Guard as follows:

- 2.44v.3** ➤ Note as soon as you can reach him, and cut a Cross through his face; and if he has his dusack extended for parrying, then attack his weapon-hand with this Cross. With this Cross Cut you will drive or provoke him to cut in response; as soon as he does this, then quickly be ready [2.45r] to cut through forcefully with two Middle Cuts from both sides opposite one another, against his incoming strokes. Thus you not only weaken his stroke, but tire his arm so much that you can well come to his opening with further countercuts.

**Another, teaching how you shall attack from the Middle Guard against someone who will not cut**

- 2.45r.1** ➤ Note when you find an opponent in the Bow or else the Straight Parrying, and you have your weapon in the Middle Guard; then step out sideways with your left foot well toward his right, and with this step, cut across outside at his arm. Meanwhile take heed if he will ward off or parry this; then do not let your cut connect, but at once pull it back to you around your head, and cut inside through his face with a back-step toward his left side.

- 2.45r.2** ➤ Or when he encounters you with Straight Parrying, then cast the crooked edge outside over his right arm at his face, as shown by the small figures on the upper left in the previous Image C. He must ward this off; thus he will give you an opening in his face, so that you can well cut at it with back-stepping.

**How you shall flick from this guard outside at his right arm**

- 2.45r.3** ➤ Another: if an opponent encounters you in the Bow or in Straight Parrying, then position yourself in the Middle Guard; from there strike outside at his right arm with the outside flat in a flick. Quickly pull your hilt up, so that in this pulling up, your blade hangs down, and with this, jerk your dusack around your head. Then cut through with the crooked edge from below inside at his right arm with a step forward on your right foot, so that at the end of the cut your dusack comes [2.45v] into the left Wrath Guard. From there cut powerfully from below through his face; then quickly cut after with the Cross.

Also you can attack from this guard using the Rose, with Flicking Cuts and other deceits. For the Rose Cuts go particularly well with a deceit from this Middle Guard, thus:

- 2.45v.1** ➤ If you find an opponent in the Bow who is smaller than you, then send your outside flat from your right above his hilt toward his right, outside his right arm, and in a single motion under his dusack back up toward your right. Let it fly back around above your head in the air, with your foot raised, and strike him with hanging dusack and inside flat in a flick outside to his right arm. Then pull upward, and cut the Roarer across through the Middle Line, as you have learned previously in the section on the cuts. And this must take place in a single motion, so that in the beginning of the motion you lift your right foot, and as the Roarer hits, you set it back down with a step forward.

## Chapter 15: Concerning the Change [*Wechsel*] and Its Devices

In this guard, position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, and hold your dusack beside you pointing to the side with extended arm, with the tip toward the ground, so that the short edge stands toward the opponent, as shown by the large figure on the right in the previous Image N. It is called the Change because you come into this guard through the Change Cuts; and it goes on both sides.

**How you shall slash an opponent's Bow upward and cut at his face before he recovers**

- 2.45v.2** ➤ If you are a strong man, then position yourself in the Change against your opponent's Bow, and forcefully slash his forward hanging Bow upwards with your short edge; thus you compel him to go up. [2.46r] As he goes up and still has his dusack in the air, then meanwhile quickly cut back down from above at his face or chest. Only one step is called for in this device, which you shall execute by

stepping out in a spring forward on your right foot.

**This device is also a counter for the Bow**

- 2.46r.1** ➤ Note when an opponent encounters you in the Bow, and position yourself in the Change on your left; step and thrust long up from below under his parrying toward his face or chest. As soon as your point has hit or has been set upon him, then quickly go up with your hilt in front of your head, and meanwhile keep your point on his body. He will ward this off or strike it out, so take heed as soon as he goes up for the stroke, and step to his left side, and strike beside his parrying in at his face.

**Counter**

- 2.46r.2** ➤ Now if an opponent thrusts under your parrying in at your face as I have just taught, then turn that thrust away. Thus you make your face open; as soon as he cuts at it, then go under his stroke to catch it between your hands near his hand, and jab your hilt in his face, as shown by the small figures on the left in the following Image B. [2.46v: *Image B*; 2.47r]

**Another from the Change**

- 2.47r.1** ➤ When you come near your opponent, then cut through before him from your right into the left Change, with such compartment as if you had lost control by cutting. As soon as he rushes at your opening from above, then quickly go up with your long edge outside against his right arm to parry. As soon as the dusacks knock against each other, then quickly turn your point up and thrust outside over his arm at his face, palm away from him. Pull quickly back up and let the blade snap around; strike him with your inside flat with hanging dusack outside on his elbow, palm toward him. Before this is fully completed, then step back and cut forth through his face. This is a fine deceitful device with which you make an opponent very open if you execute it quickly.

**Counter against the Change on the left**

- 2.47r.2** ➤ If your opponent also encounters you in the left Change, then go up from that posture into the right Steer. From there deliver a Low Cut through his left; next, step and cut from your right from above also through his left. And with this Low and High Cut step well out toward his left, with a double step; then cut long after with a Cross Stroke.

**Counter against the Change on the left**

- 2.47r.3** ➤ In the Onset, when you find an opponent in the Change, then as soon as you can reach him, cut from your left shoulder diagonally through his face, following the line H-D,<sup>91</sup> so that at the end of the cut you come beside your right with the point toward the ground. Then as he goes up, turn your dusack and cut through forcefully in a pulling motion from below through his arm under his dusack, so that

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<sup>91</sup> See *Image A*.



your dusack comes back to your left shoulder. From there deliver a Low Cut across through his face, so that at the end of the cut your weapon comes to your right shoulder for the stroke; cut long after from that shoulder with a Cross. [2.47v]

- 2.47v.1 ➤ Position yourself in the guard of the Boar; from there step and thrust forward at his face with extended arm; he must ward this off, and thus he will make his face open.

#### **Counter against the right Change**

- 2.47v.2 ➤ Go in his face with the Longpoint; as soon as he goes up, then deliver a Low Cut with your long edge from your left through his right; follow up with Middle Cuts.
- 2.47v.3 ➤ Note when you cut into the right Change, and your opponent pursues you, then strongly cut through with the long edge up against his cut. Let it go above around your head, and cut back from your right through his left from above, stepping around. However if you do not come through in cutting up, then turn your dusack on his for a thrust.

### [Chapter 16:]

#### Bastion [*Bastey*]

I believe the Bastion is so named by the combat masters of old because with it the lower part of the body serves the upper, just as the lower sections of a city wall are protected and shielded by a bastion. Position yourself for it thus: stand with your left foot forward; and lay your dusack extended far from you toward the ground, as with the Fool in the longsword, except that here you shall send your hilt further in front of your left foot, and your upper body leans well after it. Now as you conducted yourself with the Fool, fight the same way from this guard in the dusack, with setting off and slicing off.

The Bastion can also be done this way: stand as before, and set your dusack before your foot with the point toward the ground, so that your hilt stands upward. If an opponent cuts at you wherever he will, then step out from his cut, and cut over at the same time as him; or catch his cut on your long edge, and work to the nearest opening. For there are many fine devices to execute from it, and you will find them above and below in this book.

## [Chapter 17: Grappling]<sup>92</sup>

### A Device for Running In

- 2.47v.4** ➤ In the Onset, cut a high stroke from above at his head; if he parries the cut on his Bow, and goes up in the air, then go up with your hilt and drop your point over his parrying in at his face, just as I have taught above concerning the Waker; thus you force him [2.48r] to parry even higher. Meanwhile lower your body somewhat, along with a spring forward, and send your hindmost point, that is with your hilt, under his dusack in at his face. If he falls after it with his dusack, then thrust at him again with your tip outside over his right arm, as you can see in the small figures on the upper left in the previous Image O. Afterwards cut back away from him with the Cross.
- 2.48r.1** ➤ Or when an opponent will overrun you with high strokes, then while it is still up in the air, catch it from below on your Bow with a broad spring forward under his weapon. When it clashes or connects, then jab your hilt under his dusack at his face; then finish the device as before.

There are some who, once they have fully protected<sup>93</sup> their arms with all kinds of clumsy work, are accustomed to take their head between their arms and run right under the opponent's weapon. Since you must concern yourself with his falling in from above, and dare not make yourself open with any technique, you shall use three kinds of techniques against him:

- 2.48r.2** ➤ Firstly when he thus runs under your weapon, then at the same time go up with your arm also, and remain up with parrying; and while you both have your arms up, strike with the crooked edge in a flick at his face. Secondly if he wards this off, then send your point outside around his arm and strike with the crooked edge outside his right arm at his head, as shown by the small figures between the large ones in the previous Image G.
- 2.48r.3** ➤ *Item*, keep both hands high and hold your left over your head near his hilt; and meanwhile before he realises it, strike him quickly under his left arm behind at the nape of his neck. Concerning this see the small figures on the left in the same image [G].

Also when you come this near the opponent as I have just taught, then in cutting away before him, you must not cut through, unless you can escape his High Cut with a step out.

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<sup>92</sup> *Running head* 'Concerning the Change' *continues*.

<sup>93</sup> 1570: *vertarest (?)*; 1600: *verwaret*

- 2.48r.4** ➤ Now when you wish to cut away from him safely, then act as if you intended to cut in earnest before him through his opening; but don't do this, rather turn your cut in mid-flight to a parrying in the Longpoint, so that your long edge is turned against the incoming stroke that he will rapidly counter-cut at you. For as soon as he sees that you will cut through before him at his opening, then he will quickly counter-cut from above. [2.48v] You will catch his cut with this extended parrying, and as soon as it connects or knocks, then counter-cut, this time completing it, and withdraw with the Cross.
- 2.48v.1** ➤ Or when he comes near you, so that both of you stand with your arms up as I have just said, then jab at him with your tip in front on his chest, as shown by the figure in the previous image.<sup>94</sup> This is called the Stork's Beak, since you extend long from you with the thrust. If he parries your thrust, then cut long after.

However if you find your opponent stronger than you, then do not come too near to him, and do not let him run in on you. Also, if he cuts in, see that you catch his cut up in the air and go through quickly under his weapon, so that you may hold off and send away his cut with parrying. But if you can escape his cuts, which is better, and let him cut and miss, then you shall do it in such a way as I have already taught in the counter-cutting.

Next follows more material on running in. Concerning this, see these verses, which are also presented here from my epitome, thus:

Also when you come near the opponent,  
                   grip his right hand with your left.  
 Learn both grips, straight and reversed;  
                   be guarded with quick steps.  
 Quickly seize his unmentionables;  
                   turn your hand reversed on his chest.  
 If you wish further to avenge yourself on him,  
                   then you can break his arm.

In all running in, one should especially take heed of gripping, wrestling, breaking, and casting; and although this is diverse in form, yet they are embodied briefly in the above verses.

- 2.48v.2** ➤ Therefore firstly, as soon as you have come near your opponent or under his weapon, see that you grip

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<sup>94</sup> *It is unclear what image Meyer has in mind; the previous image is B, which has nothing resembling this technique.*

as quickly as possible with your left hand at his right weapon-arm, by his wrist close behind [2.49r] his hand; at once drive<sup>95</sup> it around, then jerk it toward you, depending on what opportunity you see.

And you shall know that gripping is carried out in two ways, as I have said, namely straight and reversed. There is no need to explain what straight gripping is; reversed grips are also of two types: firstly when you turn your thumb inward in gripping, secondly when you turn it outward in gripping. I will describe how to use these more fully later in the treatise on the dagger. Therefore I will here only relate a few devices pertinent to running in or casting.

### **The First**

- 2.49r.1** ➤ When an opponent will overreach you with high strokes, then parry his stroke with high parrying, and at the same time quickly grip under your parry with your reversed left hand strongly on his right. Twist it up from you; meanwhile step forth with your left foot behind his right, and push him from you with your hilt in front on his chest; thus he falls on his back.
- 2.49r.2** ➤ Or if an opponent overruns you, then parry high as before; at the same time as the parry, step between his legs with your right foot, and grip under his right arm outside around his back with your right hand with bent body; grip with your left hand underneath on his right knee; lift up at the same time and cast him.

However since I do not much approve of running in with the dusack, I will let it be here for now.

## [Conclusion]

And in conclusion, when you wish to fight with an opponent, then take heed if he lays on quickly with his devices, and sends his cuts wide around; if so, then arrange all your devices such that if he should stray too far, you will rush to the opening with countercutting while he is overextended into his cut. Yet do not be too eager, so that you do not lose any advantage.

Secondly if your opponent will not cut first, but busies himself to parry and counter-cut, then make use of deceiving: send your cuts to his parrying, pull it back before it is completed, and cut to another opening. Also you shall pay heed to his posture, and do not cut at his opening to hit, but to bring him out of his advantage, so that you can hit him that much more certainly with the second cut, depending on whether he strays high or low. Take a small example of this: [2.49v]

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<sup>95</sup> 1570: treib; 1600: reib ('twist')

- 2.49v.1** ➤ If he holds his weapon in the Bow too far to his left, then cut forcefully from your left across from below at his right arm. If he parries this with hanging dusack, then he makes his face open; therefore pull your hilt quickly back up toward your left and cut back from that side over his dusack at his face, as shown by the small figures in Image A.

Thus you can incite him from one place to another with your comportment, and cut at his opening deftly and quickly with advantage while he is still sweeping around. But if an opponent comes before you who takes heed of your pulling up, and cuts at your opening while you are pulling up for the stroke, you shall deceive him concerning his cuts thus:

- 2.49v.2** ➤ Gather as if you intended to cut, and note with diligence as soon as he will cut; then turn the gathered cut into a parrying and catch it. And as soon as his cut connects on your parrying, then you shall counter-cut, as you will find in plenty of diverse devices included in this book.

I have discussed this weapon so extensively because commonly youths are led to skill in it, and if something is not properly presented to them, it will hard to understand, particularly in this art; also some techniques cannot be intelligibly taught without repeating or including others. Therefore may the benevolent reader be pleased by my service in this matter.

THE END

## Part 3: Rapier

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MMA 53r image B has 'Oberhut' handwritten over fig A



## The Third Part of This Book<sup>96</sup>

### Chapter 1: Contents of this Treatise on Combat with the Rapier, and in What Order It Will Be Presented and Described

As regards rapier combat, which at the present time is a very necessary and useful practice, there is no doubt that it is a newly discovered practice with the Germans and brought to us from other people. For although the thrust was permitted by our forefathers in earnest cases against the common enemy, yet not only did they not permit it in sporting practice, but they would also in no way allow it for their sworn-in soldiers or others who had come into conflict with each other, except against the common enemy, a custom that should still be observed today by honorable soldiers and by civilian Germans. Therefore rapier combat would be superfluous, were it not that thrusting, as well as many other customs that were unknown to the Germans of olden times, take root with us through interaction with foreign peoples. And since such foreign customs increase with us from day to day in many places, it has now also become more necessary not only that such customs of alien and foreign nations should be familiar and known to us, but that we should practice and adapt ourselves to these customs no less than they, as much as should be useful for necessary defence, so that when needed, we can encounter them to protect ourselves that much more better and be able to triumph.

Therefore I will present and describe rapier combat in orderly fashion, as I have learnt it from these people and [2.50v: *Image (Classical figure in Change image)*; 2.51r] experienced it through daily practice, showing how a man shall conduct himself with this or similar weapons. Now to do this for the greater benefit of students, I will first explain one element after the other, each individually in this order:

- Namely first, since here the opponent is divided further and otherwise than previously, to show the use of this, along with the division of the weapon;
- Then to teach how one shall execute the postures, cuts, and thrusts, along with their particulars in the work;
- Next how one shall transform the cuts into thrusts, the thrusts into cuts;
- *Item*, to present the deceiving, correct stepping, and how one shall use all kinds of parrying, in orderly and comprehensible fashion.

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<sup>96</sup> *Running head*: The Third Part of this Book

And I will discuss and teach all this in the first part.

Then in the second part I will undertake to discuss the practice in itself, and how one shall execute the previously taught elements against the opponent:

- And at the start I shall begin with some necessary and useful instruction on how one shall slice off, set off, and deceitfully provoke the opponent, diagonally from one posture to the other, and also change off from one into the other;
- Next I will describe combat with the common Straight Parrying;
- And since with every single cut, thrust, or parrying, one falls, travels, or must stray into one of the postures, I will, under the rubric of the aforementioned parrying, show and teach how you can quickly recover from each of them when you have arrived in one of them in the midst of combat, and can encounter him so that you are not rushed upon;
- And next I will conclude the Straight Parrying by introducing many shrewd and advantageous instructions and devices;
- And lastly I will append some brief instruction how one shall at need use a secondary weapon, such as a dagger, cape, and so on.

Therefore I hope, when you shall take the weapon in hand and read with attention, [2.51v] that you will well understand everything I have described in this order, and be able to make use of it.

## Chapter 2: Concerning the Division of the Combattant and the Weapon and their Use

Although the division of the combattant has already been sufficiently discussed, such that anyone could easily manage with this weapon according to it, yet I have thought it necessary to offer fuller discussion of it, according to the particulars of the rapier, since this is different in use from the German weapons, so that you might learn to send the subsequent cuts against the opponent's body high or low with greater understanding and confidence. And the division works this way:

As before, the combattant is divided into left and right by a vertical line; however two more vertical lines are added to this one, slicing down through the right and left shoulder on the sides [*see Image A*].

Secondly he is also divided and distinguished into four parts by three downward sloping lines, such that the first line begins on his left shoulder right near the neck, runs over the upper part of his chest, and ends under his right arm; the second begins above his left hip, runs diagonally through his belly, and ends at the

beginning of his right thigh; and the third begins in the thick of his left thigh, and ends on the other side by his left knee. Now when you draw three more lines diagonally through the opponent opposite these from the other side in the same manner, then there will be three crosses as [2.52r] you will see it illustrated later [see 2. 58r; see also Image A].

Thirdly, three more lines are drawn in the same way across through the opponent, by which he is again divided into four parts.

These divisions I have taught serve you firstly and chiefly for this, that you can use them as a guide in moving your body in various ways as needed for the cuts you send in either toward his upper or lower body. For when you send in your cuts against his upper part, whether they take place from above, diagonally downward, across, or from below, you must remain upright and high with your body, so that, as far as your height allows, your shoulder stands level with the upper part at which you are cutting or thrusting.

This shall not take place with the other cuts that you send against his lower body, but the lower you cut, the more you shall lower your upper body, which must be achieved with stepping, as you will find it described later in more detail in the section on cuts. For if you bring your body down for the cuts that you intend to deliver against his upper body, then your stroke is shortened; likewise when you intend to cut below, and your body remains upright and high, then your cut is not only shortened, but you also make your upper body entirely open.

Now the weapon is here divided no differently than has taken place before with the longsword, namely into the same four divisions, according to which you can learn how to conduct yourself, depending on whether you are near or far from the opponent, and what sort of techniques you shall use with each part.

Thus when you are so near him that you can just reach the foible of his blade with your foible in the bind, then you may well execute sweeping [2.52v] cuts and thrusts against him, either with deceiving or else with other pulled cuts. For although he should crowd in at your opening when you come around with your weapon, yet he still cannot rush upon you, since you can be ready to crowd in with your incoming stroke as quickly as he can with his.

But when you have come so near one another that both blades bind in the middle, then you must not cut around, nor go away from his blade without particular opportunity, for as soon as you go away from his blade, he can rush upon you with chasing. But be mindful of the techniques that can be executed on his blade, and if he overcommits to a cut or else makes himself open, be sure to crowd after him.

But if you come even closer, having bound with the middle of your blade in the middle of his, then be quick with gripping, wrestling, and casting, for then you have no other choice, unless you step back from him.

## Chapter 3: Concerning the Guards and Postures with the Rapier

The main guards with the rapier are reckoned to be five, each of which can be executed straight in front of you and also to both sides. I will present and explain for you how they are named and shall be executed, in order as follows. [2.53r: *Image B*; 2.53v]

### **High Guard [*Oberhut*] and the Ox [*Ochs*]**

The High Guard on the sides is classified and executed in two forms, namely one for the thrust, the other for the cut. Position yourself for it thus: stand with your right foot forward, hold your hilt by your right side, extended forward, up, and out to the side, as shown by the large figure on the right in *Image B*, such that your point or tip stands against the opponent's face. This is also called the Ox, because in this guard you threaten a thrust from above with your weapon, for the Ox is essentially just the position for a thrust from above.

Now when you hold your weapon with the hilt as I have taught, with your arm extended up to the side, but you do not extend the blade forward toward the opponent, but away from the opponent behind you, then this is called the High Guard for the stroke, as the other is the High Guard for the thrust.

### **High Guard on the Left**

Stand with your right foot in front as before, hold your weapon with the hilt up by your left side, with your arm extended upward, so that the point again stands against the opponent's face; and thus you stand correctly in the High Guard of the Ox on the left. But if you thus hold your hilt up beside your left, and your arm extended as before, but you turn or reverse your blade so that the point extends up behind your left shoulder, then you stand in the High Guard for the stroke on your left side, as before on your right.

### **[Straight High Guard]**

The High Guard is also executed straight before your face with your arm extended up and forward, so that the point again extends up and forward, but this is not for a thrust, but only for a cut, although it can be transformed into a thrust.

Thus you have the High Guard on the right and left, for the thrust and cut, and also one straight out and

upward in front of you. [2.54r]

### **Low Guard [*Underhut*]**

The Low Guard likewise extends below in three directions, namely straight before you, and to both sides. Now the straight version is simply the end of a straight High Cut, as those to the sides are the end of the diagonal Wrath Cuts; for at the end of the High Cut you come with your weapon such that you extend your blade stretched out to the furthest with the point toward the ground against the opponent, and your hilt is also sunk toward the ground well in front of your bent knee, with extended arm and body leaning after it. It is seldom used as a guard or defence.

### **Low Guard on the Right**

In this guard position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, hold your weapon with your arm fully extended down beside you outside your right thigh; let the tip or point lie outward before you toward the ground, as can be seen in the large figure in Image D.

### **[Low Guard on the Left]**

As you now have learnt the Low Guard on the right, likewise understand the Low Guard on the left, except that you always set your right foot forward. Thus you stand as I have said concerning the Change in the treatise on the dusack, and you have done it correctly.

### **Irongate [*Eisenport*]**

For this, position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward as always, hold your weapon with your arm extended down and forward before your right knee, so that the point extends forward up against the opponent's face, as shown by the figure hereafter in Image C. It is called the Irongate, because in this posture you are not only well protected from your opponent's thrusts and cuts as behind an iron door, but also you can confidently crowd upon him from here with all kinds of devices, if you use the weapon and techniques correctly in this posture, each according to the situation. You can also hold your weapon this way, and pull it toward the right and left side, or send it to the side as well as straight before you. Thus you have the Irongate straight before you and to both sides. [2.54v]

### **Plow [*Pflug*]**

The Plow is essentially just a Low Thrust, but as a posture. Use it thus: stand with your right foot forward as before, hold your weapon down before your right knee with the quillons horizontal, such that in holding the weapon your thumb extends over the quillons onto the flat of the blade; this flat shall stand turned up toward you, the other one down away from you toward the ground. In this position, you shall stand with your feet wide apart and with your front knee flexed well forward, so that your body hangs well forward

over it after the weapon; also your tip shall be extended well forward toward the opponent's belly. This posture is also executed on both sides in the work, that is to the right and left, like the Irongate.

### **Longpoint [*Langort*]**

The Longpoint in the rapier is the end of all thrusts that take place long from you, for all thrusts that in hitting do not end in the Longpoint are too short, at least with flying thrusts. Now as regards the reversed thrusts or other shortened thrusts, they can in fact be executed in other ways than Longpoint, yet such that you can at once turn back from them into the Longpoint. This guard is also executed three ways, not sideways along the horizontal line, but along the vertical length of the opponent, that is, the first Longpoint extends toward his face, the second against his belt, the third at his belly or groin. For the Longpoint in general, position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward as always, hold your weapon with fully extended arm toward your opponent's face, such that your shoulder always stands at the same height as the point at which you have thrust. Now when you send your thrust at his face, then you do not have to step too broadly, but it is enough to step just far enough that your upper body hangs well over after the thrust, so that you do not come too low with your shoulder. However when you wish to thrust at the belt or lower, then you must step wide enough with your feet that your shoulder stands as low as the point to which you have thrust; but concerning this you will find fuller instruction later. [2.55r]

## **Chapter 4: Concerning the Classification of the Four Cuts, and How They Shall Be Carried Out and Executed, with Their Particulars, against the Opponent in the Work**

Since essentially there are no more than four chief cuts (as I have often said), and yet in this weapon as with the weapons that have already been discussed, many other cuts happen and are executed, I will classify for you these four cuts to both sides, and high and low as indicated by the lines, and teach you how they shall be executed variously toward the opponent's body, high and low, so that you can have a thorough instruction in all cuts.

And firstly, three types of cuts are executed and derived from the High Cut, among which the first is delivered straight from above down the middle vertical line toward the head, and is called the Scalp Cut or Brain Blow. The second, where you turn your hand as you cut down so that you hit with the short or rear edge, is called the Squinting Cut. And the third, executed by cutting down to the two side lines as described hereafter, is called the Suppressing Cut.

Now the second cut is delivered along the diagonal hanging lines in three different ways, high and low, among which the first and highest is called the Shoulder Cut and Defence Stroke, the second the Hip Cut,

the third the Thigh Cut.

Likewise the Middle or Horizontal Cut is also sent through at three points against the opponent's body, and is also named with three distinct names, namely the Neck, Belt, and Foot Cut.

Now the Low Cuts are delivered upward through the same lines [2.55v] through which the High Cuts are sent down from above, straight or diagonally, without any distinct names, except insofar as one speaks of Winging and Scalping (?).<sup>97</sup>

Thus you now understand that although these four cuts remain entirely consistent in their manner of cutting on your part, yet as they are cut in, they are distinguished with names based on the body parts or their effect, depending on whether you send them high or low against his body. Now I will present and explain for you all the cuts that are derived from them, in orderly fashion one after another, thus:

### **The First Scalp Cut [*Schedelhauw*] or High Cut [*Oberhauw*]**

What a High Cut is in essence you have already learnt sufficiently in the treatises on the longsword and dusack. I will therefore now only teach how it is to be used, and show for what occasion it is useful and serviceable.

- 2.55v.1** ➤ Thus in the Onset, if an opponent stands before you in the Irongate or Straight Parrying, then position yourself the same way. From there, raise your weapon straight up with extended arm, yet such that as you raise it, your weapon remains before your face. And note meanwhile on which side he is most open to you; cut to that side in the manner of a slice, straight from above near his blade, so that it seems as if you intended to cut in front on his point. Spring quickly to the other side, and pull your weapon back up for the stroke toward the side to which you have sprung, and quickly deliver a straight High Cut down through at the same side close to his blade, in the manner of a slice; in this cut you shall step wide with your feet, and have your forward knee well flexed forward, so that your upper body sinks well forward with the cut, and your weapon falls to the ground with the blade as horizontal as possible. Go quickly back up with your weapon into the Longpoint for parrying; with this, pull your forward foot back to you and come [2.56r] back upright with your body; and as you thus make yourself upright, drop the hilt of your weapon into the Irongate; thus you stand as at the beginning.

And so much for this cut in the Before. Now in the After, note this opportunity:

- 2.56r.1** ➤ In the Onset when you have both come into the aforementioned guard or parrying, and you realise that

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<sup>97</sup> *The Wing Cut does seem to be some form of Low Cut (see Glossary), but it is unclear what Meyer means by scheydlen (here rendered 'Scalping'; cf. Scalp Cut in the Glossary).*

your opponent is ready to cut first, then take heed when he cuts in, and pull your forward right foot back as far as the left, and at the same time as you pull back your forward foot, send your weapon extended up in the air before your face, and thus let him miss with his cut, falling before you toward the ground; or even if he should hit, he cannot reach more than your hilt. Now as soon as his cut has come past in front of your hilt, then cut down from above at his head in the manner of a slice, with a spring forward on your right foot; and this shall take place quickly, so that your cut hits before his cut has fully dropped to the ground. Then come back into the parrying as I have just taught.

### **Suppressing Cut [*Demffhauw*]**

Now as it occurs in combat that you sometimes cut before, and sometimes after, so it often happens that both of you cut at the same time. Therefore since the Suppressing Cut is derived from the High Cut for this purpose, I will present it to you in this way, namely thus:

- 2.56r.2** ➤ When you perceive that your opponent will cut at you from his right, whether it happens diagonally, across, or from below, then note just as he pulls up his weapon for the cut, and at the same time also pull your weapon upward; with this pulling upward, spring quickly [2.56v] out from his cut toward his left side, and as his cut flies in, send your High Cut against his right shoulder, so that your hilt somewhat precedes your blade in going down, and so that you step wide with your feet, so that your upper body sinks well after the cut, as I have also said above. Thus you will hit either on his right arm, or on his forte; with this cut you shall suppress his blade to the ground, and so weaken him that you can well give him a cut or thrust before he recovers. But if he should work back out from under your blade so quickly, and pursue you with cuts so rapidly, that you may not attack at his opening, then step quickly with a double step out to his right side, and pull by your left side back to a High Cut. As he cuts in, send it outside over his right arm at his left shoulder; thus you again hit down from above either on his right arm or on his blade as before.

The Suppressing Cut is also executed from the other side, in this way:

- 2.56v.1** ➤ Position yourself in front in the Irongate, and as he pulls up for the stroke, whether from the right or left side, then quickly raise your weapon, and cut at the same time as him onto the forte of his blade, yet such that as your cut goes down, your blade extends upward, and your hilt hangs down toward you.

Cut thus onto all cuts that he executes against you, both from the right and the left, with extended arm and body sunk downward, which you can do by stepping wide with your feet, until you feel that he is sufficiently weakened, so that you can attack at his opening before he comes up and recovers. In all this, note that the lower he sends his cuts at you, the lower you shall come with your upper body by stepping broadly, so that in the cut, your pommel drops well toward the ground, such that you hit all his cuts rightly



with your Irongate [2.57r], high or low always depending on how he sends his cuts.

Next comes the third, namely the Squinting Cut, which is a High Cut with reversed hand, thus:

### **Squinting Cut [*Schielhauw*]**

This is appropriate against those who remain with extended arm firmly in front of their face to parry, since you can use it to drive him up out of his parrying. Execute this cut thus:

- 2.57r.1** ➤ When you have pulled up your weapon with extended arm before you into the High Guard for the stroke, and he meanwhile sends a cut against your body, from whatever side it may be, then step to the other side away from his cut, and cut down from above onto the forte of his blade, yet such that as it goes down you turn your hand around, so that you hit his blade not with the long edge but somewhat with the short edge or flat. As soon as the weapons connect, if you have not hit him with the short-edge foible of your blade, then thrust on his blade in before you at his face. In this thrust inward, turn the long edge down, so that at the end of the thrust you stand in the Longpoint.

Now in the reversing of the cuts note this precept:

- 2.57r.2** ❖ If he cuts from his right at your left, and you will fall on it with a Squinting Cut, then reverse your cut outward in cutting, the short edge down from you. But if he sends his cut from his left at your right, then as you cut down, reverse your hand inward toward your body, the short edge down. And it doesn't matter whether you come on his blade with the flat or the short edge; but the closer both fortes come together, [2.57v] the more readily your foible will hit behind his.

### **Diagonal High Cut [*Oberhauw schlims*]**

This cut has two names in the rapier, namely the Wrath Cut and Defence Stroke. It is called the Wrath Cut when you deliver the cut at his body without hindrance in the Before. You will be able to gather from the following examples how you shall execute this cut usefully at his opening depending on how he holds his weapon, thus:

- 2.57v.1** ❖ If he holds his weapon low, then cut quickly and suddenly above his weapon diagonally through his face, and then quickly back from the other side opposite it. But if he holds his weapon high, then cut below his weapon, also diagonally through his body, and quickly as before; then cut from the other side opposite it.

And that is concerning the Wrath Cut. However, it is called the Defence Stroke when you send his cuts and thrusts away from you with this cut. For whatever cut or thrust he may deliver from above, this diagonal

High Cut takes it away, if you send it through his face and against his hand. Now if he cuts further down, that is at the middle of your body, then send your cut also down diagonally against his hand, so that you hit his blade. If he cuts yet further down, namely toward your lower legs, then cut with lowered body and hanging blade also against his lower legs; thus the blades in hitting together form a cross below, as can be seen in Image B.

From these two Wrath Cuts comes the Cross Cut, namely when you send two of them from both sides opposite one another, high or low, as the three crosses in the following image show [*see image on 58r*].

Lastly you shall also learn to deliver these two diagonal Wrath Cuts high or low from both sides through [2.58r] the three crosses, just as before from one side, with their steps, suitably and long from you, not with violence, but in the manner of a slice with drawn cuts.

- 2.58r.1 ❖ For the first and highest, conduct yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, but with your body upright, as I have said before; cut with extended arm from both sides diagonally through his shoulder. And in this cutting turn your right side well after the cut toward him.
- 2.58r.2 ❖ Now for the second middle cross, conduct yourself in this way: come again with your right foot forward, such that in stepping your feet are about one foot's length or more further apart than before; and bend your knee well forward, so that you are sunk somewhat down with your right shoulder from which you launch your cuts, and your shoulder stands at the same height as the intersection of the middle cross. Cut thus from both sides diagonally in combination through the middle of the opponent's body, as before you have cut through his upper body.
- 2.58r.3 ❖ Now for the lowest cross you must stand with your feet even further apart, and you shall also have your forward knee flexed further forward than before, so that you stand sunk downward with your upper body that much more than has taken place before; and as with the others, you come with your right shoulder to the height of the target. [2.58v] If your body will not allow you to do this, then you should not execute the lower Cross, for it is not for everyone, etc. For when you cut at his lower legs, and yet remain upright with your body, then he can rush immediately at your face with a straight thrust, although one can unexpectedly execute a Foot Cut at him on the side before he realises it.

You shall learn to cut each of the three crosses individually along with their steps forward and backward, so that you will be well trained at them ahead of time when you should have occasion to use them, yet such that in stepping you always keep your right foot in front. Also you can usefully exercise yourself further according to these three crosses, thus:

- 2.58v.1 ❖ Cut the first against the upper cross, through the same left diagonally hanging line; cut the second from your left against his right diagonally through the middle cross with a further step forward; cut the third back from your right against his left lower cross diagonally through his lower leg, with a further step forward on your forward foot. These three cuts shall be executed quickly with three steps forward on the forward foot. As you now have changed off from the upper to the lower, so you can also change off from one to the other from the lower to the upper line.

### **Hip Cut [*Hüffthauw*]**

- 2.58v.2 ➤ Do this thus: send a powerful High Cut against his head, but don't let it hit or connect, but as your cut goes down, turn the short edge outward from you against his left ear, and thus sink the point deep at his face; thus you not only compel him to parry, but you also gather for the following cut. [2.59r] When he goes up to parry, then at once pull your hilt around before your face, up toward your left, and when he has gone up, cut from your left outside his right arm, diagonally down from above at his right hip. This shall take place in a single step and pull, so that with the first pulled High Cut you raise your right foot, and you set it back down at the same time as the completion of the Hip Cut; thus you have executed it rightly.

This takes place to both sides. You can also execute this cut with a thrust, thus:

- 2.59r.1 ➤ Thrust out of the Irongate straight up at his face; as soon as he goes up with his hilt, then cut as before at his hip.

### **Round Stroke [*Rundstreich*]**

- 2.59r.2 ➤ Do it thus: if you stand in the Irongate, then pull your hilt up toward your left into the guard of the left Ox; from there draw a Middle Cut across against his right, right through against his face. Deliver the second cut in the same drawing motion from your right against his left, also right through his thigh or knee. These two cuts shall take place quickly in a single pulling motion, with a step forward, the first above through his right, the second below through his left, in a circle that runs through the opponent's face above and his thigh below. It is named the Round Stroke because of this circle that it makes in going around. [2.59v]

### **Double Round Stroke [*Doppel Rundstreich*]**

- 2.59v.1 ➤ For this, conduct yourself thus: cut the first across from your right at his face; yet do not let this hit, but as you cut in, pull your hilt between you and him toward your left into the same guard of the Ox, and turn your right side well toward your left after the hilt; but you shall not tarry in this place for even a moment, but as you pull upward, sink your head down, and cut the second around your head against his right side across to his middle or shoulder, yet such that this cut also does not come through but

only as far as his parrying (if he has turned it forth); and in this cut go up again with your hilt toward your right; let your blade go back around again and cut the third from your right across through his lower leg, actually completing it this time. Now for the stepping conduct yourself thus: for the first two Middle Cuts; advance your right foot only a little bit, but not hard upon the ground, rather gather your weight with this step so that you can advance with the same foot that much more readily for the third cut; for as soon as your foot touches the ground in the first step, you shall raise it up again, and shall set it forth with the third cut. You shall complete these three cuts quickly in a single pulling motion like the letter S, with two steps. And the last cut shall be delivered most strongly and right through; the other two shall not be cut through but rather only to the openings, and then pulled back from them; and all that in a single motion as I have said.

Now when you learn to do these two Round Strokes, namely the single and the double, rightly and well—since [2.60r] finesse and not force is the key to all drawn cuts—you will know how to execute many very fine and artful devices from them.

### **Neck Cut [*Halbhauw*]**

- 2.60r.1** ➤ Execute it in this way: hold your weapon on the right in the Low Guard or Irongate, and see whether he will lay on against you from his right. If he thrusts or cuts in at your left, then spring well to his left out from his thrust or cut, and as you spring, strike with the inside flat across down onto the forte of his blade. And when the flat of your blade connects on his, then spring at once further around toward his left side; once you have pressed his blade down with the flat, draw your sharp edge through his neck against his right.

As you now have executed it from this side, so you can also do it from the other side. You can also execute the cut freely without any preparation, after he has fallen or reached the furthest point of his cut, with a Middle Cut across against his neck, as you will have plenty of examples of it later in the devices.

### **Foot Cut [*Fußhauw*] and concerning the ‘Middle Cut’ [*Mittelhauw*]**

The ‘foot’ here refers to the entire lower leg from the knee to the sole of the foot, to which one can cut horizontally and diagonally. The horizontal cut is called a Middle Cut, whether it takes place high or low; the diagonal is the Wrath Cut. However you shall not cut to the lower leg, unless you have weakened him with suppressing (concerning which you have previously learnt), or [2.60v] taken his blade through another technique, or unless he is neglectful with long waiting, or else has gone too far upward.

### **Hand Cut [*Handthauw*]**

The Hand Cut can be executed in many ways, as you will well gather from the section on devices. But here note that whenever he cuts at your lower legs, he must stretch his hand well away from him; therefore you

can readily evade him with your lower leg, and at the same time cut at his hand, as shown by the two figures in Image B. In addition you can also cut to the hand whenever an opponent sweeps around too high or too wide. This Hand Cut is one of the chiefest in the rapier, for it puts a person on the defensive so that he has already half lost, if not entirely. Now as to what further pertains to the deceitful and reversed cuts, you will hear enough about it later in the second part in the section on devices.

### **Double Cut [*Doppelhauw*]**

- 2.60v.1** ➤ Do this thus: if an opponent cuts from his right against your left, then deliver a Horizontal or Low Cut against his cut, and catch his cut, the higher in the air the better. And note as soon as his cut clashes on your blade, and turn your short edge inward on his blade, and draw your long edge away from his blade rapidly through at his face. With this cut, pull your hilt upward, and let the blade run through under his right arm toward your left; with this, spring well out to his right side with leaning body, and cut with your long edge outside over his right arm [2.61r] at his head. These three cuts, if you do them correctly, are done swiftly in a single motion.

From this Double Cut one may easily gather how one shall double all other cuts.

Now as to what further pertains to the Foot Cuts, diagonal and horizontal, along with the blows, which like the cuts come in four kinds, namely High, Diagonal, Horizontal, and Low Blow, and can also be done with the inside and outside flat—since all this can be learned later in the section on devices, so that it would be needless to deal with them individually here, I will therefore now proceed to list and describe the thrusts, how many of them there are and how one shall execute them.

## Chapter 5: Concerning Thrusts

There are three chief thrusts, from which all the others arise and originate, namely the first from above, the second from below, each of which is done from both sides; the third goes from your middle straight in before you into the Longpoint. I will present something here about these three chief thrusts, as I have said, from which you will be sufficiently able to understand and learn all other thrusts. Now this is how you should execute the High Thrust, which shall be done from the right Ox against the opponent's face or chest:

- 2.61r.1** ➤ Position yourself in the High Guard of the right Ox, concerning which you have already been instructed. Raise your right foot for a step forward, and as you raise your foot, pull your hilt back behind over your right shoulder to gather for a forceful thrust. From there, thrust at his chest with a broad step forward on the foot you have raised; but just as this thrust shall hit, turn the long edge down toward your left in the manner of a slice, so that at the end of the thrust your front knee is flexed well

forward, and your upper body leans well over it forward toward the ground after the thrust; and so that after completing the thrust you bring your blade with extended arm long in front of your foot in slicing down toward the ground. From there, recover your foot and go with your long edge back up into the right Ox, just as you stood in the beginning. This goes on both sides. [2.61v: *Image A*; 2.62r]

### **Face Thrust [*Gesicht Stich*]**

Learn first to thrust this one from your left with your palm away from him, thus:

- 2.62r.1 ➤ Position yourself in the guard of the left Ox; if he thrusts in at your right, then spring well out from his thrust toward his right, and as he thrusts in, thrust at his face with extended arm from your left above his right arm.
- 2.62r.2 ➤ *Item*: position yourself in the guard of the right Ox, and note as soon as he thrusts in at you, and step with your left foot toward your left side out from his thrust, and follow quickly with your right foot out toward his right; and at the same time as this stepping let your blade run off toward your left, and snap around by that side into the guard of the left Ox. From there, thrust as before, as he is thrusting in, over his right arm at his face; thus you hit as can be seen in the small figures in *Image A* on the previous page, and you stand in the Longpoint. This must take place quickly as he is thrusting in.

### **Throat Thrust [*Gurgel Stich*]**

This thrust is carried out in many ways, one of which I will present thus:

- 2.62r.3 ➤ In the Onset, when you find your opponent in the Irongate, then threaten to thrust from the left High Guard of the Ox outside over his right arm at his face, stepping out, yet such that you keep your hilt high. If you see meanwhile that he goes up with his hilt toward his right intending to send away or parry your thrust, then let your point drop beside his right shoulder, and go through or change through with your point under his right arm. At once deliver a thrust, actually completing it this time, inside his right arm up from below at his throat, so that as you send in your thrust the long edge stands below, the short edge upward, and after completing the thrust you have your weapon up in the Longpoint. Thus it is correctly executed; it must be done swiftly and suddenly. [2.62v]

### **Heart Thrust [*Herz Stich*]**

The Heart Thrust can be done from above, from the middle, and from below in the work. Now among all of these, note here this way:

- 2.62v.1 ➤ If an opponent cuts from his right, then cut also from your right, across against his weapon; with this

cut, step with your right foot well through under his blade toward his right, so that you catch his stroke on the forte of your blade, the nearer to his hilt and the higher in the air the better. And when the blades clash together, then turn the point inward at the left side of his chest, yet such that your blade remains on his, so that the short edge is turned onto his long edge; and thrust in, remaining on his blade, as shown by the large figures in Image G. In all this, note diligently if he intends to go away from your blade; as soon as you feel this, then turn your long edge back against his blade; thus remain on his blade with the slice, and continue forward against his body and meanwhile try to set your weapon upon him according to your opportunity.

### **Groin Thrust [*Gemecht Stich*]**

- 2.62v.2** ➤ Do this thus: if an opponent cuts outside at your right thigh, knee, or lower leg, then catch his blade with a countercut from your left, stepping with your left foot well out toward his right. As soon as the blades connect, then step yet further to him with your right foot; meanwhile turn the point in and upward under his blade, and thrust at his groin.
- 2.62v.3** ➤ Or if he initially thrusts at you from below, then step out sideways with your left foot, again toward his right, and send out his incoming thrust from your left toward your right with hanging blade. And as soon as your blade clashes on his, at once step forward to him with your right foot, and thrust under his blade at his groin as before. [2.63r: *Image C*; 2.63v]

### **Reversed Thrust [*Verkehrter Stich*]**

Although this can be begun in many ways, yet it always is ended in one way. Execute it thus:

- 2.63v.1** ➤ If your opponent stands before you in Straight Parrying or Irongate, then thrust at his face out of the right Low Guard straight up inside his weapon close to his blade, and as you thrust in, turn your long edge up against his blade and toward your left. If he pushes or sends your blade out toward his [?read: your] right up or to the side, then let it snap around above back toward you, so strongly that your blade swings around down in by your left side and the point goes back up from below under his blade. Thrust thus with reversed hand beside his right arm under his blade, as you can see it in the small figures on the left in Image C. In this thrust, the point must be set upon him in the initial impetus of snapping around, otherwise the thrust is too weak. At once pull your weapon away to your left, and from there deliver a Defence Stroke through his right shoulder, face, or side, or let it snap around again, palm away from him, and thrust outside his right arm back at his face, so that as you thrust forth your palm stands above, and your short edge is turned against his weapon; in all this, lean your head well down toward your left out from his weapon. He must ward off and turn away this thrust; as soon as he does this, send the point around outside his arm, so that in going around you reverse your hand again as before, and thrust with reversed hand as before under his right arm at his body. Follow up with the

Defence Stroke as I have taught.

### **Double Thrust [*Doppel Stich*]**

- 2.63v.2 ➤ If an opponent encounters you in the Irongate straight before him, then thrust from the Low Guard from your right inside close to his weapon beside his hilt up at his face. Thus you compel him to go up with his hilt; as soon as you see that he goes up with his hilt to parry, then also lift up your hilt as you thrust in; transmute your Low Thrust into a high one, and thrust behind or beside his hilt from across at his body. [2.64r]

#### **Another**

- 2.64r.1 ➤ Or else thrust inside at his body; as soon as he intercepts the thrust with parrying, then turn the short edge in against his body, and let the blade run through under his arm toward your left side under his blade, and let it thus snap around by your left side in the air into the guard of the left Ox. From there thrust outside his right arm at his face, with a step out toward his right. These two thrusts shall run quickly one after the other.
- 2.64r.2 ➤ Or thrust outside over his right arm at his face; if he turns out your thrust toward his right side, then let your blade at once snap around to your left back into the guard of the left Ox; step meanwhile with your left foot well behind your right arm [*?read: foot*] to him toward his left side. Thrust thus from the left High Guard of the Ox inside his blade at his face, with a step forward on your right foot.

The thrusts can be doubled in many ways; you will hear more about it in the second part.

### **Deceitful Thrust [*Verfierte Stich*]**

- 2.64r.3 ➤ In the Onset, send a powerful thrust from the right High Guard of the Ox at his face; but as you thrust in, turn your thrust up from below with a broad step forward on your foot, and thrust under his hilt up at his belly. When you correctly reverse this High Thrust into a Low Thrust through the Rose, then it seems at first as if you were thrusting from above, then before he realises it, you have hit below.
- 2.64r.4 ➤ *Item:* if your opponent stands before you in the Irongate, then thrust inside his weapon up at his face without hitting, so that your blade snaps around again toward your right and into the right Ox. Act as if you intended to thrust at him outside over his right arm; but deceitfully change your thrust in the air, and thrust at him from above under his weapon inside at his face.

### **Flying Thrust [*Fliegender Stich*]**

This Flying Thrust is the most essential, and is very necessary for every combatant to know. Do it thus:



- 2.64r.5** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Low Guard on the right, so that you stand with your feet not too far apart, such [2.64v] that you may have a step forward for every thrust; also you shall keep the elbow joint of your right arm firm and as straight as possible in all thrusts. Then vigorously act as if you intended to thrust in, but although you appear to thrust your tip somewhat toward him, yet keep control of your weapon, so that you as soon as you see your opportunity (after you have deceived him somewhat with serious comportment), you thrust in a sudden flight against him when and where he least expects it, with a step forward, as quickly as if it had been shot from a crossbow. As quickly as you now have thrust in, equally quickly you shall pull your weapon back again into the same Side Guard; from there if he should thrust further, you shall slice off from both sides.
- 2.64v.1** ❖ And so that you shall be better trained at this thrust, choose a particular place at which you can thrust, and thrust in before you from the right Low Guard with a step forward, so that when the thrust hits you stand as shown by the figure in Image A. Then pull your weapon back into the previous position; along with this, move your foot back to its previous place. From there, again thrust rapidly at him with a step forward; pull your weapon and foot quickly back again from the thrust to its place, etc. Do this thrust one to six times.

But since this cannot be described so much as shown with the living body, you shall study it diligently with earnest practice and the fencing master's help.

## Chapter 6: A Good Lesson and Precept How One Shall Transform the Cuts into Thrusts, the Thrusts into Cuts

Now that I have briefly presented and taught the cuts and thrusts, I will next briefly show how one shall transmute the cuts into thrusts and the thrusts into cuts. For it is a particularly fine master technique to perform this transforming rightly, and execute it according to opportunity. And since this can be done in many and [2.65r] diverse ways, it would be quite pointless to recount them here at too much length. I will simply present and teach it through some examples from the four cuts, namely:

- 2.65r.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you can reach his foible with yours, then deliver a powerful High Cut diagonally at his left, and as your cut flies in, turn your hand such that the short edge is reversed inward at him; as you cut in, hold your hilt imperceptibly somewhat up in the air, until your blade has meanwhile shot in for the thrust; then thrust the other way fully at his chest with a broad step forward, in such a way as you have already been taught concerning the High Thrust.
- 2.65r.2** ➤ *Item:* deliver a Middle or Low Cut from your right against your opponent's left, and note diligently as

soon as he goes against it to parry, and your cut should just about hit, and before it hits, turn the cut quickly into a thrust. Now if your cut hits on his blade, whether it takes place with a High, Diagonal, Horizontal, or Low Cut, then just as the blades connect and clash together, turn the point inward against his body; thrust in on his blade, as I have taught concerning the Waker in the dusack.

And turn your thrusts into cuts in this way:

- 2.65r.3** ➤ Send a powerful High Thrust against your opponent's face, and halfway through, when you see that he goes up to parry, then just as your thrust should hit, rapidly pull your hilt a little bit up and cut through sideways beside or under his hilt.
- 2.65r.4** ➤ *Item:* send a thrust straight forward at his face; and just as it should hit, turn your hilt up toward your left, and let your blade go around your head. Cut outside diagonally through his right, either below or above. But if you are rushed upon with a cut, so that you must parry, then as soon as his cut hits on your blade, [2.65v] turn your blade inward on his with the tip at his body; thus you gather yourself to cut at will.

From these devices I have taught, you can sufficiently understand how the cuts are to be converted into thrusts, the thrusts into cuts, if you will diligently study it. Now from this arises the deceiving, as follows.

## Chapter 7: Concerning Deceiving

At this point I have sufficiently explained the cuts along with all their particulars. Now since I will frequently mention deception later in the devices, it has become necessary to say something about it, so that I should not be held back in writing during the section on devices.

Now there are two types of deceiving: the first is executed with the weapon, the second with body language. I consider it unnecessary to discuss deception with the weapon at length, since I have already spoken of it often in the two previous weapons: namely, deceiving is when I send in my stroke at an opening, and then see that he goes against it to parry it, so that this cut becomes useless to me, so I let it run past without hitting, and quickly pull it in the same motion to the nearest opening elsewhere.

Now for such deception you should be well instructed and trained in the four openings along with other divisions, so that as you cut in, you can masterfully, artfully, and imperceptibly draw back a cut that you send toward a high opening, and without interrupting its initial course on that side, can send it through underneath, or complete it to an opening. Take this example of it:

- 2.65v.1** ➤ Send [2.66r] a powerful Wrath Cut at his left; when or before that cut has run halfway, then while the blade is still in the air going in, turn the short edge in against him, so that it seems as if you intended to thrust at his face. With this transforming you gather yourself in the air for another cut, which you shall execute at once through his left, actually completing it this time, either below or above.

In sum, if you wish to hit the opponent above, then first glance or threaten below, or if you will hit him on the left, then threaten him first against his right, so that he must slip after with his weapon, and thus give you space on the other side, as will be taught more extensively in the devices.

Now this deceiving includes the other, which is executed with body language; from both of these techniques many and diverse wonderful devices are executed. And so that you can achieve a particular understanding of this deceiving with body language, I will explain it for you somewhat more fully through examples and so on. And since deceiving with body language, as with the weapon, is basically to threaten to execute one cut or technique, and to complete it in another way, you must here well observe and consider the provoking, taking, and hitting, concerning which you have already been instructed in the treatise on the dusack.

For all provocation with body language or otherwise will be chiefly intended to provoke him out of his advantage to cut or thrust; as soon as he cuts or thrusts, then secondly you hold off or forcefully take out the cut to which you incited him with your provocation, and so weaken him, that thirdly you can hit and reach him without harm before he recovers; then even if he recovers, you are ready to intercept him with defensive strokes as quickly as he can attack. Yet [2.66v] so that you may better understand this, I will present some examples for you, not that it must be exactly this way, but as an introduction into better devices, namely:

If you wish to deceive an enemy with body language, then you may make use of the following performances, thus:

- 2.66v.1** ➤ When you find an opponent in the Low Guard on the right, then position yourself in the Irongate, and act as if you intended to thrust earnestly at his face. For this, raise your right foot and stare hard at his face, and thus with your arm and hand vigorously pressed forward, and with sneering nose and upraised foot, send the point at his face, as if you intended earnestly to thrust. And as you thrust in, turn your long edge up toward your left; unnerve him thus with the thrust so that he precipitously goes up to parry it. Then let your thrust travel around your head as he goes up, and cut outside at his right thigh, with a broad step forward and your body leaning; be on guard quickly with Defence Strokes to protect you.

- 2.66v.2** ➤ *Item:* position yourself in the Irongate as before, and act as if you intended to cut at his lower leg, in this way: in the Onset, stare with earnestly open eyes hard at his forward foot; meanwhile raise your weapon and lean your body with upraised foot, as if you intended to cut at him below with a step forward; but when you set your foot back down in stepping forward, then thrust straight in at his face from the point to which you have lifted your weapon. In this thrust keep your face and body language focused on his foot; thus he will not perceive your thrust until it has taken place, for by raising your weapon for the cut, you gather for the thrust, and the step and thrust both finish at the same time.

And you shall use and learn all this against those who stand firmly in their parrying and will not work, to wait until you are fully extended with cutting or thrusting. You must thus incite and provoke him out of his [2.67r] advantage, since you cannot attack without some opportunity, for you must worry that he will overreach or catch you in your own device. Therefore you must see how you can bring him out of his advantage. So that you can better understand this, I will briefly repeat the provoking, taking, and hitting, which I have presented previously.

If you find your opponent in a guard or quarter in which he waits for your thrust or cut, then cut through to his nearest opening, not that you intend to hit him; also be sure that you are not too near him, and take heed that you do not overcommit to this cut, or let your weapon go too far out of your control, but keep control over your weapon without him realizing it, while you act as if you had overcommitted to your cut. At once as he rushes to the opening you have made with cutting or thrusting, then recover for the stroke, and cut out his incoming cut or thrust with your forte, or deliver a Suppressing Cut down onto it, depending on the situation; and that is called the Taker, since you forcefully take out his weapon, which he has not expected. As soon as you have thus taken his stroke or thrust, then rush to the nearest opening with cutting or thrusting; these counterstrokes are called the Hitter.

Thus you have provoking, taking, and hitting, which is to provoke the stroke, to parry or set off the stroke you have provoked, and at once to counter-cut back to the opening. And I do not mean that you should not hit with the Provoking Cut or also with the Taker if you can; it is so named only because the chief intention is either to provoke him out of his advantage or to take out and bear off his cut—whether you can also hit him with this doesn't matter. You can also well complete these three elements with a single kind of cut, as for example: [2.67v]

- 2.67v.1** ➤ Prepare yourself for the Wrath Cut, that is the Defence Stroke, and see whether he holds his weapon above or below the belt. If he holds his weapon above the belt, then cut the first under his weapon through the lower line from your right. Cut the second also from your right through one of the upper lines. Afterwards, cut the third through the upper or lower line, according to where you find him open.

Also this order is not always followed, since you can just as well provoke, then hit, and finally take. Now since generally experience must teach these techniques, which can be learned only through daily practice, I will just let it pass with this example, namely:

- 2.67v.2** ➤ If you find an opponent in one of the low postures, then in the Onset deliver a Middle Cut suddenly through his face from your right. With this cut you will cause him to go quickly upward, and thus he becomes open below; therefore cut the second quickly from your left through his lower leg before he realises it: that is the Hitter. After this he will be quick to rush upon you, therefore thirdly deliver a Defence Stroke from your right, so that you take out his incoming blade: that is the Taker. The two Middle Cuts shall take place quickly one after another, so that the second cut hits while he is still going up to parry the first, so that the third will be the Taker.

### **Concerning Parrying and how many forms of it are particularly used in the rapier compared to other weapons**

Seven types of parrying are found here, called setting off, slicing off, going through, suppressing, hanging, barring, and sending out or away with upright and with hanging [2.68r] blade.

#### **[Setting Off (*Absetzen*)]**

Setting off is when, from one of the four guards, you turn the long edge against his weapon, and turn into the Longpoint.

- 2.68r.1** ➤ Thus if you hold your weapon in the Low Guard on the right, and your opponent cuts or thrusts at you, then step out sideways from his weapon, and go forward with extended weapon up into the Longpoint, and catch his incoming thrust or cut on your long edge; and when you catch his cut, then meanwhile thrust in with the Longpoint. Do this from all four postures.

#### **Slicing Off [*Abschneiden*]**

- 2.68r.2** ➤ Do it thus: position yourself in the Low Guard on the right, and note as soon as your opponent pulls up his hand to cut or thrust at you; then raise your weapon at the same time, and extend your hand and weapon from your right against his left; as you extend, drop your hilt to the level of your knee, or even lower if possible, so that your blade stands with the point somewhat up and forward; catch his blade on your long edge, and send it in the manner of a slice down before you toward your left. This also takes place on both sides.

## Suppressing [*Dempffen*]

Suppressing is derived from the High Cut, for that is essentially what it is. All other cuts can be suppressed and countered with this High Cut in the following way:

- 2.68r.3** ➤ Position yourself in the Low Guard on the right; when he [2.68v] cuts at your left from his right from below or above, then note when he extends his arm for the stroke, and raise your weapon at the same time as him, yet such that as you raise it, your blade extends up away from you, and your hilt down toward you. With all this, step double out from his cut toward his left, and cut from above at his right following the vertical line, with the long edge and lowered hilt, along with a broad step forward on your right foot. Thus you hit on the forte of his blade, so that in this suppressing your upper body leans down after the cut well forward over your bent knee, and so that your hilt in going down somewhat precedes your blade toward the ground, with extended arm. However, if he withdraws his blade out from under yours and sends back another cut at your right, then rapidly spring double with both feet well toward his right, and cut again from above outside over his right arm, in the same way as before, yet such that the cut follows his left vertical line, as the previous one followed his right line; and thus you hit on his forte.

Thus you can suppress with the High Cut from all the postures, until you so weaken and tire his arm that you can easily attack at his body.

## Going Through [*Durchgehn*]

This is when you go through under his blade to the other side as he sends his blade in, and then send away his incoming stroke from the same side, toward the side where you first held your weapon.

- 2.68v.1** ➤ Thus if you hold your weapon in the Low Guard on the right, then note when he sends in his weapon for the thrust or cut, and [2.69r] rapidly send or transfer your blade through under his blade, hanging a bit toward the ground, toward your left side, and from there, slice off his incoming cut or thrust toward your right before he has fully completed it, so that with this slicing off you come back into the right Low Guard. And you can do this from all the postures on both sides.

## Hanging [*Verhengen*]

Hanging is the type of parrying where you send your hilt above your face with your arm extended forward and your blade hangs toward the ground, and you put off his thrusts or strokes with your flat to both sides. It is called Hanging, because in this parrying your blade hangs before your face to protect it. And although it also is executed from all the postures, yet it is chiefly and most comfortably executed from the postures on the right side, in this way:

- 2.69r.1** ➤ Position yourself in the Low Guard on the right; if your opponent thrusts or cuts at you, then step out toward his left with your left foot behind your right; follow quickly with your right toward him; at the same time go up with your hilt and send his blade away from your right toward your left on the flat of your hanging blade, as you can see in the two figures on the upper right in the following Image E. [2.69v: *Image E*; 2.70r]

### **Barring [*Sperren*]**

- 2.70r.1** ➤ Note if your opponent cuts outside at your right lower leg when you stand in the Irongate, then drop the point of your blade toward the ground, stretched straight out before your lower leg, and slip a bit sideways by stepping out from his cut toward his right, barring his blade so that he cannot come through.

Thus you can bar and hold off all cuts that he will cut through below. You will find barring described more fully in the treatise on the longsword.

### **Striking Out with Hanging Blade [*Außschlagen mit hangender Kling*]**

This striking out follows from the barring, thus:

- 2.70r.2** ➤ If an opponent cuts or thrusts straight to your lower body, then as he sends in his weapon, pull your right foot back to your rear foot, and at the same time lift up your weapon; thus cut out his blade down from above from your left toward your right, with extended weapon, yet such that the blade hangs somewhat downward.
- 2.70r.3** ➤ Or position yourself high in the Longpoint; if your opponent thrusts at you below, then let your blade sink somewhat down from your left toward your right, and cut out his blade away to the side with lowered weapon between you and him; pursue quickly with your devices. [2.70v]

### **Taking out with the Short Edge [*Außnemen mit halber Schneid*]**

- 2.70v.1** ➤ Position yourself in the Low Guard on the left, like the Change, so that the short edge stands toward your opponent. If your opponent thrusts toward your face, then take it out with the short edge strongly by slashing from your left up toward your right, so that your blade shoots back around above your head into the right Ox. From there, thrust at his chest; and with this thrust, turn the long edge down, and come back into the left Low Guard. From there, take out again as before.

As you now have learnt to take out upward with the short edge, so you can also strike out upward with the long edge and with the flat; and this can be done from both low postures.

You have previously heard at length in the treatises on the longsword and dusack whatever else is necessary concerning parrying.

**Chapter 8:**  
**This Chapter Discusses Changing [*Wechseln*], Chasing [*Nachreisen*],**  
**Remaining [*Bleiben*], Feeling [*Fühlen*], Pulling [*Zucken*], and Winding**  
**[*Winden*]**

[Changing]<sup>98</sup> is of two kinds, one that is executed ‘through,’ underneath his weapon, which is therefore called changing through, the other executed above, around your opponent’s blade from one side to the other, which is called changing around. Execute changing through thus:

- 2.70v.2** ➤ When you first send a cut at your opponent’s body, whether above or below, then note as you cut in whether he goes up against your cut to parry it. If you see this, then [2.71r] do not let your cut connect on his parrying, but pull and send your cut through under his blade, and thrust at him on the other side. Thus from whichever side you cut, always send or pull your cut through under his hilt or blade just when it should hit on his parrying, and work on his other side, either with thrusting, cutting, suppressing, or slicing off.

Secondly, execute changing through from your parrying thus:

- 2.71r.1** ➤ When he cuts at you from either side, then note diligently if he sends his cut too high, or against your blade, or else not enough toward your body. As soon as his cut flies in against your parrying, then slip a bit back with your forward foot toward your rear foot, and pull your blade through underneath his, toward the other side. Thus let his cut miss, and thrust at him to the same side from which he has sent in his cut, so quickly that your thrust hits before he has come up again from the fallen cut.

This changing through can be executed in many ways, as the devices will show.

Changing around requires no further explanation, since I have often discussed it previously.

Now execute chasing thus:

- ❖ If your opponent holds his weapon down to his right, then wait for him to go away from there, and when he sends his weapon away, thrust quickly in at the same place. Likewise note diligently when he

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<sup>98</sup> 1570: *Durchwechslen* (‘changing through’); *read*: *Wechslen*



holds his weapon to his left; when he takes it back from that side, then just as he goes away, thrust at him quickly and deftly at that side. Likewise when he goes up from below, then as he goes up, pursue him with a thrust from below. Thus also when he falls with his cutting, then pursue him quickly from above. And in this chasing, when you hit with [2.71v] your thrust, you should always be diligent to turn your long edge back against his incoming weapon, if he should happen to cut or thrust. For as soon as he becomes aware of your chasing, he will rush at once with his weapon back to yours, and with this he will rush to the opening you have made with this chasing and extending, and fall on it, which you can then turn, set off, slice off, and take with counterslicing.

- 2.71v.1** ➤ *Item:* if you bind his blade with yours, then note and feel as soon as he goes away with his blade from the bind to strike around, or to thrust to the other side, and as he goes away, follow him with a thrust straight at his body; and always turn your long edge against his blade both as you thrust in and as you go out. Thus ‘feeling’ is to test and discover how and when he will go away from your bind, so that you can at once pursue him confidently, as is also said in the section on the longsword.

Remaining and pulling you have also been taught previously in the section on the longsword.

Now although you have also been taught winding previously, yet here it is used otherwise, and that is as follows:

- 2.71v.2** ➤ Whenever you bind your opponent in the middle of his blade, then you shall not go out from there without particular opportunity, since he might rush upon you with chasing as I have taught before; but remain hard on his blade with the bind, and turn the short edge or the point in at his body, and set your weapon on him. If he parries that and pushes your blade out to the side, then quickly pull through beneath, and thrust on the other side with a back-step. However if you see that he does not send it out to the side, but as soon as he perceives your winding in, crowds straight before him with a thrust in at your body, then keep your point at his body, and turn your hilt and long edge down against his blade; thus turn out his point, and crowd further on him with a thrust, palm away from him, [2.72r] meanwhile stepping out.

I have written about all this only as a memorandum for you, on which you shall diligently reflect, so that later in the section on devices when one of them should be presented, you can understand and see it that much more quickly, and also may that much more quickly grasp the devices.

### **Concerning Stepping**

As regards stepping, it is not necessary to discuss it, since with each device in the following material on combat there will be individual discussion concerning the appropriate stepping.

*End of the first part of the rapier*

## The Second Part of Combat with the Rapier

At this point, one technique after another has been presented and explained such that anyone who will read it with diligent attention and reflection, and earnestly practice it, can well understand and learn it, if he has already had a teacher. Therefore since I now intend to describe the practice in itself, and how you shall carry it out against your opponent in the work, I will return to the postures, and since it is necessary and very useful, I will teach how to slice off, set off, and change off diagonally from one into another, as follows:

- 2.72r.1** ➤ Position yourself in the High Guard of the right Ox, and approach him with your body presented upright, such that your right foot always goes in front; provoke him thus to the work with lively or defiant [2.72v] comportment. If he meanwhile thrusts in at your body, then as he sends in his thrust, step with your right foot around to him toward his left, and at the same time turn your long edge down toward your left; and as you turn down, lean your body well forward after your weapon with flexed knee; and thus slice or send his blade down from you with your long edge. Thus after this slicing off, you come with your weapon and with lowered body down into the left Low Guard. From there, as soon as he thrusts or cuts back to the right opening you have presented, go rapidly with your hilt and long edge and upright body back up into the High Guard. And if you will, you may quickly counterthrust at his face from this High Guard with a broad step forward; but when you wish to do this, then as you thrust in and step forward, turn the long edge forcefully down with your body lowered after it. Then rapidly turn your weapon back beside your left for a stroke, and cut from there with extended arm diagonally against his right through his face, so that at the end of this cut you come into the Low Guard on your right. In this guard you again stand before him with your face open; therefore watch diligently for when he thrusts to this opening of yours, and step out with your left foot behind your right toward his left, and send your hilt and long edge with extended arm out of this Low Guard up toward your left into the same High Guard of the Ox. From there, when he thrusts further at you, rapidly turn the long edge back down toward your right; and in this turning, step well out from his thrust toward his right side; thus send his blade down with extended long edge, from the left Ox back toward your right Low Guard. And when you [2.73r] slice off his thrust as I have said, you shall extend after the cut well over your forward bent knee with lowered body; then when this has taken place, you stand back in the right Low Guard as at the beginning. If he should thrust at you further, then go in the same way with the long edge back up into the left High Guard. From there thrust quickly long before you at his face, with a spring out toward his right; in this thrust you shall again turn the long edge strongly down toward

your right, and with this slicing off you shall turn your blade beside your right for the stroke, so that afterwards you may have a swift cut for a Defence Stroke diagonally through his left shoulder. When you have completed that, then you will have your weapon on the left in the Low Guard; from there you can parry with the long edge back up into the right High Guard, and so on.

Thus you have now been taught to parry from the right High Guard and from the left Low Guard, down and up diagonally opposite one another, along the diagonal line, and then change around from the left Low Guard with a Defence Stroke through his right to the other side into the right Low Guard; then from that guard as from the other, to parry diagonally up and down, and change around again according to your opportunity with a Wrath Cut or Defence Stroke. In this way you can always parry, slice off, and send up from one guard into the other, down and up with the long edge, diagonally and horizontally opposite one another.

Further you can also set off from all four side postures into the Longpoint, with stepping out, as follows:

[2.73v]

- 2.73v.1** ➤ Position yourself as you have been taught in the High Guard of the right Ox, and approach him thus. If he thrusts forward at your face, then turn the long edge out of the High Guard against his blade, extending your arm into the Longpoint; and meanwhile as you thus set him off, then at the same time also step out sideways from his blade with your left foot behind your right, and thrust on his blade in before you at his face or chest.

As you now have set off downward from the High Guard, so you shall also set off upward from the right Low Guard, also into the Longpoint; and this shall be executed from both sides.

Now we continue with how you shall change off from one guard into another, thus:

### **Changing Off [*Abwechseln*]**

- 2.73v.2** ➤ When you come before your opponent, then position yourself in the Irongate or in the Straight Parrying, and from there send your weapon up into the right Ox. If he will not yet thrust, then go back down through the Stroke Line in the manner of a slice into the left Low Guard. If he still will not work, then go from there up into the left High Guard; from the High Guard go diagonally back down into the right Low Guard. In this changing off, always hold the tip before you; if he thrusts in the mean time, whenever he will, then slice it away from you with the long edge in the aforementioned manner through the Cross Line from one guard into another as you have already learned.

Thus you can step around and change off from one posture into another, presenting openings before him,

until you see your opportunity. And you have heard in the section on the dusack whatever else is necessary to know about the use of the postures. [2.74r]

### **How you shall fight and defend yourself from the Straight Parrying [*Gerade Versatzung*]**

Now I will deal with the common or Straight Parrying, and firstly teach you how you shall parry him and counterthrust or counter-cut against all four targets; then secondly how you shall protect yourself against deception; and thirdly how you can conduct yourself against him when he will neither cut nor thrust, and fight against him in the Before; and I will do this as clearly as possible as an introduction to the other devices.

#### **How you shall catch a cut he sends at you from his right, and quickly thrust straight at his left**

- 2.74r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Straight Parrying, as shown by the solitary middle figure in Image F; approach him thus with extended and firm parrying. If he cuts or thrusts from his right diagonally toward your left, then turn your long edge and hilt up against his incoming cut or thrust; and as you thus parry, step out sideways from his thrust or cut with your rear left foot behind your right toward your opponent's left; and with this stepping out that you have been taught, catch his blade upon your forte near your hilt. Just as the blades connect in the bind, then step with [2.74v: *Image F*; 2.75r] your right foot to him toward his left side, and at the same time as you step forth, thrust on his blade (or off of it straight in before you) at his face, into the high Longpoint. As soon as the thrust has hit or is completed, then turn your long edge back against his blade and pull back into the previous parrying; with this, protect yourself until you see your opportunity for another device.

#### **How you shall catch his thrusts and cuts from his left, and before he recovers, quickly counterthrust against his right**

- 2.75r.1** ➤ Now if he cuts or thrusts from the other side (that is from his left) at your right side, also diagonally from above, then again turn your long edge and hilt with extended arm against his incoming blade to parry or catch it; as you thus extend your hilt to parry against his weapon, then at the same time step out sideways from his blade with your left foot toward his right. Then as soon as his blade clashes on yours in this parrying, pull your hilt back out behind you above your right shoulder to gather for a powerful thrust; thrust straight at his face on his right side, with a step forward on your right foot, so that at the end of this thrust you again stand with your weapon extended in the high Longpoint. After this thrust, be diligent to turn away his cuts and thrusts from this parrying, until you have an opening. [2.75v]

**How you shall conduct yourself against an opponent who is overly aggressive against you with strokes**

- 2.75v.1 ➤ Now if an opponent will cut and thrust at you from both sides so quickly that you cannot come at him with any of these thrusts, then remain with straight arm strongly extended before you in parrying, and turn all his cuts and thrusts away from you to both sides. And meanwhile note diligently just when he has worn himself out (for he can not do this for long without losing the advantage), and turn your hilt up against one of his incoming cuts or thrusts that you deem opportune for it, and quickly cut diagonally through the same shoulder from which side he has sent in his cut or thrust, right through, so that your weapon shoots around to the other side back over for the High Thrust. That is, if you cut through his right shoulder, then let your blade run through back beside your right in the motion of this cut, and snap around into the right High Guard for the thrust; however if you countercut his cut through his left shoulder, then let your blade run through back by your left side, and snap around into the left High Guard for the thrust. When you have let your blade quickly snap around into one of the High Guards from this cut, you shall thrust from there rapidly and quickly, forcefully at his face or chest, and as you extend, you shall lean your upper body well over your forward bent knee after the thrust. When this cut and thrust take place quickly and strongly one after the other, you also make room for yourself for another opening. [2.76r]

**How you shall intercept and counterthrust from the Straight Parrying against an opponent who cuts at you from below**

- 2.76r.1 ➤ If he thrusts or cuts at you from below or across, whether from the right or left, from whichever side he thrusts or cuts, then step out from his incoming thrust or cut with your rear foot (that is with your left) toward the other side, and send it down away from you out sideways with extended long edge. Now as soon as your weapon connects on his in this parrying, then step to him with your right foot and thrust quickly off of his blade straight at his face, before he recovers. All this, that is the parrying, step, and thrust, shall take place together in the blink of an eye. This applies to the Low Cuts that he delivers against the middle of your body or higher.

**How you shall parry from above and thrust in under his weapon**

- 2.76r.2 ➤ *Item:* if he cuts or thrusts again from below or underneath your weapon at your body, then fall from the aforementioned parrying with your long edge down from above on his blade, so that your blade in the parrying hangs out to the side and downward, as this parrying is illustrated in Image C in the small figure on the far left; and at the same time as you parry, step out from his blade with a springing double step well toward his right side, [2.76v] and thrust quickly under his right arm at his body, as shown by the other figure facing the previous one. From this thrust, pull your weapon quickly toward your left shoulder and deliver a Defence Stroke diagonally through his right shoulder. Thus you come at the end of the cut into the right Low Guard, from which you should go quickly back up into the Straight

Parrying to protect yourself further.

- 2.76v.1** ➤ However if he sends his cut well down at your lower leg, then do not parry it, but pull back or evade his cut with your forward foot, as far as the rear one, and thrust directly at his face as he is cutting in, as you can see in the middle scene in Image F. For with all cuts that he delivers below your belt, he will make himself open above as he reaches out; therefore as he extends his hand and weapon, you can quite confidently thrust or cut at his face according to this precept.

**How you shall further conduct yourself when he has struck away or borne off your counterthrust**

You have just learned how you shall quickly counterthrust from the parrying with stepping out, but since he can take out and bear off this thrust of yours, then note secondly this precept: when you catch his thrust or cut on your parrying, and then thrust in at his face, and he quickly strikes you out, then note diligently from which side he strikes you out; step toward that side and [2.77r] in the very momentum he has given your blade by striking it out, let it snap around for the thrust, and thrust at him to the same side from which he has struck you out.

- 2.77r.1** ➤ So for example if he attacks from his right against your left, and you parry him with extended weapon from your right and step out toward his left (as I have taught), and you thrust from the parrying straight at his face, he must ward this off if he doesn't want to get hit, and strike out your blade toward his left. As soon as he does this, then step well out toward his right side, and meanwhile let your blade snap around into the right High Guard of the Ox, to which he has assisted you by striking you out; and then thrust in quickly and forcefully outside his right arm from this High Guard. As you now have carried this out against his right, so you can also do it from your left.

**How you shall change through and thrust to the other side against an opponent who strikes out your first thrust**

- 2.77r.2** ➤ Note when you send his cuts and thrusts away from you with extended blade, and will counterthrust, as I have just taught, and you meanwhile realise that he will parry, then see that you do not step too close to him, and note diligently when he goes up with his hilt to parry, and do not complete your thrust, which you shall have threatened with your compartment, but go through with your weapon under his while he has gone up, and thrust in at him to the other side forcefully with extended arm; along with [2.77v] this changing through and thrusting, you shall spring well out toward the side to which you have thrust off of his weapon.

**How you shall pull back the thrust as if you intended to thrust in elsewhere, and just as he will parry it, thrust back in where you had first threatened the thrust**

- 2.77v.1** ➤ Again when you observe or realise that he will parry the thrust you intend to execute from the initial parrying, then pull the thrust earnestly toward yourself as if you intended to go through underneath and

thrust on the other side; and as soon as you see that he goes there with his hilt to parry, then as he goes away, thrust quickly back where you originally intended to thrust. Concerning this you will find more in its place in the section on deceitful devices.

#### **How you shall counterthrust at the same time as he cuts**

- 2.77v.2 ➤ Note when you are in the Onset with the aforementioned parrying, and your opponent meets you in similar Straight Parrying, then approach close to him earnestly with strong parrying, so that you can reach and bind the middle of his blade with yours, as shown by the two upper figures in Image C. Then take heed diligently when he will go away with his weapon from yours, either to cut or thrust, and as he [2.78r] pulls his weapon around, thrust straight before you in at his face, chest, or belly. And so that he will be incited to go away and cut that much more readily, you may deceitfully present him an opening, albeit without actually losing your advantage. Concerning this there will be more later on.

#### **How you shall catch your opponent's cuts and thrusts, and counter-cut**

- 2.78r.1 ➤ Approach your opponent with this same Straight Parrying, and note from which side he will thrust or cut, from below or from above. Now if he sends his cuts and thrusts from above from his right against your left, then turn your long edge and hilt with extended weapon against his incoming blade, and as his blade is coming in, step out sideways at the same time with your right foot toward his right, so that as soon as your his blade falls or hits on yours, you can pull your weapon back around and quickly counter-cut in the same step, through his right side, through his body either high or low according to opportunity. At the end of this cut your weapon comes into the right Low Guard; from there go back up to parry.
- 2.78r.2 ➤ Do the same to him when he will cut from his left at your right, and parry this also with extended weapon on the forte of your blade, and as you extend your hilt to parry, step with your right foot toward his left. As soon as his blade clashes on yours, then let it go back around your head again, and thus with the aforementioned step, cut through his face against his left side from which he has sent in his weapon. [2.78v; *Image G*; 2.79r] Then quickly go from the Low Guard (into which you have come with this cut) back into the Straight Parrying.

#### **How you shall conduct yourself against the Low Cuts with counter-cutting**

- 2.79r.1 ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from below, against whatever side it takes place, then as he cuts in, step laterally out from his blade toward the other side; and as you spring out, fall with extended weapon down onto his blade, the nearer to his forte the better, so that you hold off his weapon below the level of your belt. Then before he brings his weapon up again, quickly cut through across at his neck or face.
- 2.79r.2 ➤ However if you cannot hold off his cut, but he breaks right through upwards against your parrying with

his Low Cut, then keep your weapon strongly extended before you down to the side in the parrying, so that he cannot harm you, and as he is going up with his weapon, cut across from below right through his face or chest, while he still has his arm in the air. These cuts must follow quickly after he breaks through upward, so that you hit him from below before he has completed his Low Cut, so strongly that at the end of this cut you have swung your weapon to your shoulder on the other side, such that your blade hangs down behind you at the end of the swing. From there quickly cut after with two diagonal Wrath Cuts through the upper Cross. [2.79v]

**Another, teaching how you shall chase with a thrust from below**

- 2.79v.1 ➤ Also you can pursue him with a thrust, thus: when you will parry his Low Cut as I have taught, and he breaks through against you with force, then note when he has broken through with his weapon against yours, and is still going upward, and turn your point out of the parrying toward his body, and before he has completed his Low Cut, thrust from below at his chest, into the middle Longpoint. Then take heed if he sends his blade back in, and turn the long edge out of the Longpoint against his blade to catch it with parrying. Then execute any previously-taught techniques depending on how you can gain your advantage.

**How you shall lay on against him from the parrying with two Middle Cuts and follow up with a thrust**

- 2.79v.2 ➤ Or when you thus have approached your opponent in the Straight Parrying, then remain with extended arm firm in the parrying and always turn the long edge against his incoming cuts or thrusts, whether he cuts from above, across, or from below; bear these off laterally out from you with your hilt. And look diligently for your opportunity when he least expects it, and pull around your head and deliver the first Middle Cut across from your right through his face, so that at the end of this cut you come into the Middle Guard on the left, which you see illustrated previously in the treatise on the dusack on pages 5 and 43 [2.80r] in Image C. From there, cut the second also powerfully across against his right through his face, so strongly through that your blade swings beside your right into the right High Guard of the Ox; and meanwhile as your blade thus goes around over your head, step with your left foot well out sideways toward his right; follow quickly with your right foot toward him, and with this step forward on your right foot, thrust from above forcefully at his face. When you thrust forth, flex your front knee well forward as you set down your foot, and lean your upper body well down and forward after the thrust. Now with this thrusting in, when you turn your long edge down strongly, then you come at the end of the thrust into the Low Guard on the left; from there rush quickly back into the Straight Parrying.

**How you shall suppress and counterattack in parrying**

- 2.80r.1 ➤ When you realise that your opponent will drive you back forcefully with violent cuts, then parry him



with extended parrying as I have already taught, one cut, two, three, or four, until you have an opportunity for the cut I am about to describe. As soon as you perceive it, and he pulls his weapon back toward himself from a cut he has executed, then as he pulls his weapon up for another cut, raise your weapon too, and meanwhile spring out sideways from his cut quickly toward his other side, somewhat further to him, and as he is cutting in, [2.80v] cut straight down from above between his head and his blade, as if you intended to cut off his weapon-arm at the shoulder; and as your cut goes down, let your hilt somewhat precede the blade toward the ground; and step wide with your feet, so that you can further sink your upper body down and forward after the cut over your forward bent knee. Now when you spring out from his incoming cut in this way, and as he cuts in, cut thus between his head and weapon straight down from above at his right shoulder, so that not only does your upper body sink well down and forward after this cut through wide stepping, but also as you send the cut down your hilt somewhat precedes the blade toward the ground, as I have said, yet with extended arm, then if you should happen to miss his right arm, you hit his blade on the forte near his hilt, and weaken him enough that you can well thrust or cut at his body before he recovers. However, if you cannot sufficiently weaken him with one, then suppress one or two of his cuts from both sides; when you do it rightly, he will be not be able to complete more than three cuts at you without being weakened. I have particularly described this device, with some repetition, not only because it is inherently a very good device, but also because it is inherently difficult, and it is hard to learn unless one shows it with the living body; and it must be executed in the work with particular adroitness. [2.81r]

### **How you shall protect yourself against deceit, and how you shall conduct yourself against deceitful cuts and thrusts**

Now that you have heard in very comprehensible and simple form how you shall catch your opponent's cuts, set them off, and quickly counterattack, it is now also necessary to know how you shall conduct yourself against those who pull their cuts, so that you are not deceived in this parrying. For if your opponent is somewhat experienced and trained, he will not always let the cuts hit, when he perceives your strong parrying, but he will pull them from you, change around, and cause you to miss. Therefore so that you are not deceived by this, but can anticipate it, I will explain it for you through the following precept.

Thus firstly note that in all parrying you should not go out more than a hand's-breadth to the side, up, or down from the Midpoint where you hold your parrying, but always keep your parrying and hilt within a good hand's-breadth or a foot in a circle around the Midpoint, Now since your body is not always sufficiently covered or protected with this parrying, you shall pull away or withdraw your upper body by stepping out or by leaning your head out from his cut away from his blade, such that you always send your hilt before you as a shield with extended arm. And if he cuts or thrusts in, send your long edge against it, and withdraw your head and face from his blade behind yours. However if he should thrust far down, then you shall not only go down with your weapon, [2.81v] but also sink your entire body with extended weapon, unless you have seen an opportunity to execute a device. Or if he does not thrust so far down at

you, then pull your lower body from him by evading, and meanwhile thrust straight in before you at his face.

This leads now to the second precept, which is this: in all parrying, send the point straight or toward his face, and if he cuts in, then turn the long edge against his cut, as I have already taught. And meanwhile note very diligently if he will pull his incoming cut or thrust back away. If so, then you shall not slip after it with your hilt, but only turn your long edge around, and follow with your steps, or step quickly toward the side from which he has pulled his cut away; and as he is pulling away or going around, thrust straight in before you at his face. Thus you do not quite parry, that is by going against it with your hilt, but as soon as you see that he will pull away, then you step to the other side, and merely turn the long edge around, and thrust at the same time straight in before you: thus you have parried. For whoever will deceive his opponent by pulling around or changing through, makes himself open or shortens his reach, unless he is very quick as he executes the deceiving with the appropriate body language; but against the inexperienced and untrained combatant this is certain to hit. Concerning this there will be more later.

Thus you have now heard firstly how you shall put off his cuts and thrusts, and counterattack; secondly how you shall prepare yourself against his deceiving, and counterthrust or crowd in at him as he changes around or through. Therefore I will now further [2.82r] teach how to conduct yourself with combat in the Before, and lay on against those who neither cut nor thrust, but only parry and wait for a chance to counterattack. But first it is necessary to present here a little device, which I will teach and briefly discuss first, thus:

#### **How you shall cause your opponent to miss with his violent cuts, and counterattack**

- 2.82r.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you have come to your opponent with Straight Parrying, then remain in the Straight Parrying with extended weapon firmly before you, and take heed when your opponent presses upon you violently with cuts and thrusts from both sides: turn his cuts and thrusts away from you, once or several times, with good extended parrying, until you perceive your opportunity, which is when he fights most earnestly and confidently with his cuts. Therefore note diligently when he sends you an appropriate cut for this, and evade with your forward right foot to the rear foot, and just as his cut should hit, pull your parrying from him up to you toward the side against which he sends his cut, so that he does not hit your parrying with his cut, but falls right through just in front of it; and before his cut has entirely come to the ground, cut quickly at his face, chest, or hand with a broad step forward on your right foot. This is a very good device that you shall make familiar to you through practice, and study with diligent observation. [2.82v]

**How and in what way you shall lay on and fight against an opponent who will neither cut nor thrust in the Before**

- 2.82v.1** ➤ In this laying on in the Before, you must take heed of the four openings, and diligently observe where he holds his weapon in the Onset; and I will lead you from one opening to another with examples as simply and clearly as possible. Thus in the first Onset, take heed if he holds his weapon before him up to his right side, and thrust under it inside at his belly, with your arm reaching and extended far. He must turn away, parry, and ward off this thrust, if he doesn't want to get hit. Therefore note diligently when he is falling down with his weapon to parry the thrust, and pull the thrust back away, and as he is falling down, go through with your blade under his, and as you go through, spring well toward his right out from his weapon; and before he recovers with his weapon, thrust quickly outside over his right arm at his face or chest, as shown by the two small figures on the left in Image F. As soon as you have hit with this thrust or completed it, then let your blade drop from there toward your left, pull your weapon with hanging blade toward your left shoulder, and deliver a Defence Stroke from there diagonally through his face. This pulling away, going through, and the thrust, along with the stepping and final Defence Stroke, shall be executed quickly one after another, and it will proceed well for you. [2.83r]

**Another**

- 2.83r.1** ➤ Or cut through with earnest compertment under his weapon against his body, and with this cut, step well with leaning body toward his right side after your cut, so that it seems as if you have overcommitted to the cut. He will certainly rush earnestly toward your opening; therefore note when he sends his weapon in, and again thrust outside over his right arm at his face with a step out as before.
- 2.83r.2** ➤ Also, after you have thus intentionally overextended into your cut, you can quickly cut away his incoming blade from you with a Defence Stroke from the left side, to which you have come with your cut, or else strike it out, and after striking it out, let your weapon go above in the air around your head, and thrust or cut back against his right side.

**How you shall encounter him when he holds his weapon too far down to the left side**

- 2.83r.3** ➤ As soon as you can reach him in the Onset, then thrust suddenly and quickly outside over his right arm at his face. And take heed as soon as he goes up to parry, and turn your hilt up toward your left; gather yourself thus for a cut, and while he has gone up with his weapon, rapidly cut through under it at his thigh with the second attack. Thus you come into the right Low Guard; from there, cut at once diagonally through his face, back again into the Low Guard on the left, and fight further. [2.83v]

**Another, teaching how you shall lay on against him when he holds his weapon too far to the side**

- 2.83v.1** ➤ Thus: if he holds his weapon too far to his left, then cut from outside over his right arm at his head, with a step out toward his right side, and as soon as he goes up after it to parry, then just as it should hit, pull your weapon back away from his arm, and go through with it under his weapon, and thrust

inside his weapon at his belly. When you have completed this thrust, then go quickly with extended weapon straight up into the High Guard for the stroke extended in front of you, so that when he will further thrust at you below, you can suppress it downward from above.

#### **How you shall act against someone who holds his weapon too far toward his right**

- 2.83v.2** ➤ Now if he holds his weapon too far to his right, as I have said, then note as soon as you can reach him, and rapidly thrust straight in front at his chest, before he realises it. If he wards this off or parries it, then turn your short edge down against his weapon; thus let your blade sink through under his toward your left, and afterwards cut quickly from your left against his right diagonally through his face, so that in this cutting through, your blade runs through back by your right side behind you, and shoots around again into the High Guard of the right Ox; with this snapping around, [2.84r] step well out toward his right side, and thrust from above against his face, turning strongly, so that with this thrust your weapon falls into the left Low Guard. From there execute the devices that you will find described later in the section on this guard.

#### **Another against someone who holds his weapon on his right side**

- 2.84r.1** ➤ In the Onset, send a powerful cut at his left, but on the way as you are cutting in, turn the short edge inward against him, so that it seems as if you were going to thrust from above; note as he goes up to parry, and just when this thrust should hit, let the blade hang well down toward the ground, and pull the hilt further up with your arm extended from you. Thus if he should meanwhile thrust in, send his blade out to the side with hanging, that is with hanging weapon; with this taking out, pull your hilt thus with hanging blade toward your left shoulder; also turn your right side well toward your left side after your weapon; and from there cut over his weapon against his right, diagonally through his face, with a double step out toward his left, so that at the end of the cut you come to your right in the Low Guard. From there thrust quickly straight in before you at his face into the Longpoint. If he attacks you further, then slice his blade away from you. [2.84v]

#### **With what devices you can lay on against him when he stands in Straight Parrying**

Now if he holds his weapon so strong and firmly before him in the Straight Parrying that you can break in on him neither to the left nor the right, then try these crafty devices, with which you entice him out of the posture or out of his advantage, so that you can come to his opening as he goes away. Now since the Craft is so diverse that it is impossible to present in a single form, I will offer some examples from which you can sufficiently deduce and learn how you shall act in any given situation.

#### **The First Example**

- 2.84v.1** ➤ Quickly lift your weapon, and act as if you intended to cut aggressively at his lower leg, and actually cut in a little way; with this cut, lean your body well forward after the step and cut, so that it seems as that you have made yourself quite open, but see that you do not lose control, but keep full command

over your weapon. And note diligently as you thus cut in, whether he will rush to your opening; if so, then pull your threatened cut back up against his incoming blade, and strike it out upwards to the side with this pulling upward, and thrust at his nearest opening before he recovers. For as soon as he extends his arm to thrust, he holds his blade that much weaker, so that it can be struck and taken out easily, and before he fully recovers, you can thrust to the opening. [2.85r]

**Another**

- 2.85r.1** ➤ Act earnestly as if you intended to cut at his lower legs as before, but as he rushes to the opening you have made, then spring quickly out sideways away from his thrust, and while he is extending his weapon, thrust across over it at his face, which you certainly can reach and hit, if he thrusts before you.

**How you shall take out his blade forcefully and counter-cut**

- 2.85r.2** ➤ Thrust over his blade straight in before you at his face; and in thrusting in, turn your hilt up toward your left, and turn your right side well after the hilt, and strike with the outside flat by your left side strongly up against his right, through his blade, so that you forcefully take it out up from below. Thus let your blade go above around your head toward your right, and cut the second also from your left, but diagonally from above, through his right with a broad step forward; this second cut must come so quickly that it hits before he has recovered from being struck out. Cut the third at once from your right through his left into the left Low Guard. From there thrust quickly straight in before you at his face into the Longpoint, springing out from his blade. Fight further from this as you will be taught concerning the Longpoint. [2.85v]

**Another**

- 2.85v.1** ➤ If your opponent meets you in this firm Straight Parrying, concerning which I have already taught, then approach him with the same parrying, and when you can reach the middle of his blade, then rapidly lift your weapon with extended arm up into the right High Guard for the stroke, and from there cut suddenly from above, diagonally through the middle of his blade, with a further step forward on your right foot, so strongly that your weapon comes with this cut into the Middle Guard on the left. From there, cut again quickly across against his right side through his face, and it doesn't matter whether you execute it with the long edge, short edge, or flat, yet such that your weapon in this strong flight shoots around beside your right above again into the High Guard for the thrust. From there thrust forcefully at his chest, turning strongly, so that as you thrust forth, your long edge comes downward through the turning, and falls into the left Low Guard. From there go quickly up into the High Guard of the right Ox, from which you shall execute the devices that will be described later in that section.

**Another**

- 2.85v.2** ➤ In the Onset, send your weapon also in the Straight Parrying, but high, and note as he holds his weapon thus extended in before him, and suddenly strike his blade out with hanging blade to the side, as shown

by the [2.86r] figure on the left in Image C; with this striking out, spring well out toward his right side, and let your blade snap around again from his blade toward your left into the guard of the left Ox beside you as before, but not so high; and thrust straight in before you at his face, palm away from him. This thrust and springing out must be executed quickly after striking him out, before he recovers with his weapon.

#### **Another**

- 2.86r.1** ➤ In the Onset as soon as you can reach your opponent, then suddenly strike out his weapon in a jerk to the side, but in striking him out see that you do not stray after his weapon, but keep full control over your weapon, and thrust rapidly straight in before you at his face, before he has recovered from being struck out. When you thus suddenly strike him out and follow up with a thrust, he will want to go up precipitously to parry; therefore as he goes up, see that you cut quickly at his forward lower leg.

#### **Another**

- 2.86r.2** ➤ Or if he will not let himself be driven or brought out of his advantage with any device, then cut through against him from both sides crosswise under his blade near his hilt; and note meanwhile when he goes out of the parrying to thrust, [2.86v] and cut his incoming blade out from you, and rush quickly to the opening. For by delivering some cuts through his parrying from both sides, you make him angry, so that he will be inclined to attack to the opening that you give him with this cutting through. Then as soon as he extends his weapon, he is already weaker in the parrying, so that you can easily strike out his blade and counterattack.

You can also send your weapon up into the High Guard and thus present your body open to him in front.

### **High Guard**

Now since throughout the fight you always come from one posture into another, I will, deal with one posture after the other, as I said initially, and teach you through examples how you may fight from them.

#### **The First Example how you shall thrust in at the same time as your opponent from the High Guard**

- 2.86v.1** ➤ In the Onset when you come before your opponent with the Straight Parrying, but he will not let himself be enticed or provoked out of his advantage with any device, then send your weapon up into the right High Guard of the Ox, and thus hold the point toward his face with your arm extended up and forward. Then as soon as he thrusts at you, evade with your left foot behind your right toward him, and step quickly with your right foot further toward him; and with this stepping turn your long edge against his incoming thrust, and thrust in at the same time as him; thus you parry and hit at the same time, as shown by the large figure on the left in Image F. You can also execute this device from all other guards, just as from this High Guard, namely that you evade his thrust, turning your long edge against his blade, to send it out to the side, while thrusting in at the same time as him. [2.87r: *Image B*; 2.87v]

### **Another how you shall slice his blade away from you and counterattack**

- 2.87v.1 ➤ When you have come up into the High Guard for the thrust, and your opponent thrusts or cuts in against you from his right, then double-step out from his thrust as before toward his left side, and quickly turn your long edge down out of the High Guard; and in this turning downward, cut right through against his blade in a single motion, extending your body after it, into the left Low Guard. From there, cut or thrust at his face before he jerks his blade out from under yours. This is also a good precept to follow from all postures, namely to cut his blade away from you diagonally downward from one side, and then rapidly cut the second from the other side at his body, either below or above his blade, depending on how quickly he has come back up.

### **How you shall take him out with hanging, and counterattack**

- 2.87v.2 ➤ When you hold your weapon in the High Guard for the Thrust, and your opponent thrusts in at you, then hold your hilt up before you, extended somewhat to the side, and let your blade and point hang down straight before you; thus turn your hilt toward your left with hanging blade while he thrusts in, as I have said; in this way send his blade out to the side. When you have thus struck out his blade with hanging blade, and stepped out, at once after striking him out you may let the blade go around your head, and deliver the second cut strongly through across from your right at his left, with a broad step forward on your right foot, straight from above with a drawn Suppressing Cut through his face; thus in cutting down, your hilt precedes the blade toward the ground, as shown by the large figure on the right [*?read: left*] in Image G. From there, thrust quickly at his face before he recovers from this suppressing. [2.88r]
- 2.88r.1 ➤ Or when you have thus struck him out with hanging blade, then let your blade again go around your head, having stepped out toward his left; with this, let the point shoot forth against your opponent's face into the guard of the left Ox; from there, thrust at his face along with the aforementioned stepping out. Then cut through diagonally from both sides crosswise against his hilt.
- 2.88r.2 ➤ Or after you have thus struck him out, then let your blade shoot around into the guard of the left Ox as before. Threaten to thrust at him, palm away from him; he will go up against this thrust to parry it; and as he goes upward, step with your right foot around to his right, and cut through at his right thigh. Cut the second quickly diagonally through his face from above, so that your weapon comes into the Low Guard on the left. From this Low Guard slash quickly with the short edge back up toward your right, let your blade go around your head, and cut against his right diagonally through his face.

### **A Good Device that can be executed with Hanging**

- 2.88r.3 ➤ In the Onset when you have come into the High Guard of the right Ox, and you see that your opponent thrusts in at you forcefully, then spring out sideways from his incoming thrust well toward his left, and

turn it out with hanging blade toward your left as before; and with this taking out, step with your left foot behind your right foot toward him; and rapidly follow forth with the right foot after the thrust, and with this, turn your back to him; thrust thus under your right arm with a reversed thrust from behind at his belly. Then turn your face quickly back toward him and cut with extended weapon in a wheel straight down from above through his face, with a step backward on your right foot. Then go back up with your hilt, and change your feet at the same time so that the right stands in front again. [2.88v]

### **Precept**

From this Ox, attack chiefly at his arm, for example when he attacks from below or straight in at you, then withdraw your body from him by slipping your front foot back to join your rear foot, and as he extends his arm, cut or thrust at that arm, hilt, or weapon-hand.

- 2.88v.1** ➤ *Item:* when you thus stand in the High Guard before your opponent, and he thrusts in at you from below or straight, then step with your left foot well out toward his right, and meanwhile turn the point of your blade out behind you for the stroke. Then cut out his incoming blade from your left toward your right with hanging blade, as shown by the large figure on the lower left in Image C. With this striking out, step with your right foot further toward his right. From this parrying, pull your weapon back away toward your left, around your head, and before he brings his weapon back up or into his control, cut above it from your right diagonally through his face or against his arm and weapon-hand; thus you come into the left Low Guard.

### **When he will neither cut nor thrust, how you shall thrust and miss before him, take him out, and counterthrust**

- 2.88v.2** ➤ *Item:* in the Onset come up into the High Guard; when you thus stand before him and he will not work, then step toward him with your left foot, and as you step forth, thrust from above outside your left foot past him without hitting, such that at the end of the thrust you come back into the guard of the left Ox. From there slash his incoming blade with the short edge down toward your right; and with this taking out, step with your right foot well toward his right around to him. Thrust at his face from above, turning strongly, with a broad step forward on your right foot, so that at the end of the thrust you come to the left in the Low Guard. [2.89r]
- 2.89r.1** ➤ *Item:* in the Onset when you thrust beside your forward left thigh past him without hitting, then you make your face entirely open; therefore he will certainly counterthrust quickly as you thrust past him. Therefore when you see his thrust, step out with your right foot to him toward his right side, and at the same time as him, thrust outside his right arm in at his face from the left Ox, into which you have come from thrusting past him; and note diligently that as you thrust in, you at once turn your long edge against his blade, and withdraw your head well to your left side away from his blade behind yours. Thus you will certainly hit, if he has thrust.



From this guard you can also suppress, go through, bar, and execute any similar techniques against him.

Do barring thus:

- 2.89r.2** ➤ When you thus stand in the guard of the Ox on the right, if your opponent cuts in at your lower leg, from whichever side it may be, then drop your point from the other side against his cut toward the ground with extended hanging arm; thus the blades make a cross, as you can see in Image B. Thus bar his cut so that he cannot come through with his cut, and at the same time step out sideways from his cut. And as soon as it clashes, quickly thrust on his weapon over or under his blade at his body. Quickly pull your weapon back and cut after with the Cross.

From this guard you naturally have the Wrath Cut; when you deliver it through his left, you come into the Low Guard on the left. Fight from there as follows.

### **[Low Guard on the Left]**

#### **How you shall take out and counterattack from the Low Guard on the left**

- 2.89r.3** ➤ When you have come into this guard, whether it should happen through slicing off or else through cutting, and he then thrusts in from above at your face, then strongly take out his incoming blade with your short edge by slashing up against his right and toward your right, with extended arm. With this slashing out, let your blade snap right around above your head into the guard of the right Ox. From there, thrust quickly at his face with a step forward on your right foot; and in this thrusting forth turn your long [2.89v] edge down, so that you turn out his thrust with yours, if he should also thrust during this.
- 2.89v.1** ➤ Or when you have thus taken out his thrust, then let your blade go around above your head after taking him out, and step meanwhile with your right foot well out toward his right; and with this, cut through outside at his right thigh, so that at the end of the cut your weapon comes into the right Low Guard. From there, again rapidly deliver a Wrath Cut diagonally strongly through at his left with extended blade; thus you come back into the Low Guard on the left.
- 2.89v.2** ➤ Or when you have thus taken him out, then again let it snap around above your head into the guard of the right Ox, and threaten to thrust at him from above. He will want to parry this, but as he goes up to bear off or parry this thrust, then do not let the thrust hit, but pull your blade back toward your left around your head, and cut through against his left at his forward thigh across from your right, with extended weapon and your body well lowered. Then cut the second from your left through his right,

down through the uppermost diagonal line, as a Defence Stroke, into the right Low Guard.

Thus you have learnt to counterattack in three ways after taking him out, namely with a high thrust, secondly with a cut, thirdly with a deceitful cut.

#### **How you shall take out from the Low Guard and counterattack from below**

- 2.89v.3** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the left Low Guard; as soon as he thrusts or cuts at your right, then at once step out sideways toward his right, and with this stepping out, turn your blade out behind you for the stroke; deliver a strong Suppressing Cut across on his blade from your left from above. And then before he brings his blade out from under yours, thrust up at his face, into the Longpoint. From there if he should thrust at you from below, then slice this off away from you down into the left Low Guard. [2.90r]
- 2.90r.1** ➤ *Item:* when you have thus suppressed his cut down from above and counterthrust, then note when he goes up and intends to parry your thrust, and send your tip around beside his right arm, and thrust in at him under his arm as he is going up.

#### **Another device directed at his right thigh**

- 2.90r.2** ➤ When you stand in the Low Guard on the left, and your opponent thrusts or cuts in from above, then turn your blade out behind you for the stroke, and cut with your long edge up from below against his blade. And as soon as the blades clash together, then turn your short edge inward against his blade, palm away from him; and while the blades are thus connecting, turn your pommel well up; thus you gather for a cut. Next, cut quickly off of his blade, outside at his forward thigh. Thus you have executed two cuts from one side, the first from below against his blade, and the second from above outside at his right thigh.

#### **Another how you shall go through from the left Low Guard**

- 2.90r.3** ➤ When you hold your weapon in the Low Guard on the left, then note when he thrusts in, and send your blade under his with the point near the ground, from your left through toward your right, so quickly that you can strike out his incoming blade from your right toward your left; and as you strike out his thrust, at the same time step well toward his left; and thrust inside at his chest, which will certainly succeed if he thrusts forth, and you execute this correctly against him. [2.90v]

#### **Another, how in slashing out upward and in going down, you shall cut through and thrust to the other side**

- 2.90v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the left Low Guard, and watch diligently for when he thrusts in at you, and take out his blade with your short edge with extended arm strongly up toward your right, so that you come up with your weapon into the High Guard for the Stroke. From there, cut quickly back

from above under his blade through at his belly, back into the left Low Guard, while he still has his weapon in the air to gather it again. From there, thrust quickly over his right arm at his face, with a spring out toward his right.

**How you shall respond to all his thrusts from the left Low Guard, whether they come from above or below**

All thrusts that your opponent sends at you from above or at your face, you shall strike out up from below following the diagonal line, and you can do this with the short or long edge, and also with the outside flat. Then as soon as you have taken him out, you may counterthrust or counter-cut to whichever side you wish, provided that you do this quickly, before he recovers.

Now if he thrusts from below, you shall strike him out diagonally down from above toward your right, also with the long edge, short edge, or flat. When you take these thrusts out from above or below, then at the same time you shall step well out from his weapon toward his right; thus the taking out will be that much stronger. Afterwards quickly counter-cut or counterthrust; and as soon as you have counterthrust or cut, at once you shall be back on his blade with a setting off, to protect yourself further if he falls upon you.

In this way you can now readily fight against him from this Low Guard, if you have cut into this position.

[2.91r]

**High Guard on the Left**

Now when you stand in the Low Guard on the left, raise your hilt up beside your head into the left High Guard, and fight from it as follows.

- 2.91r.1 ➤ Note when you stand before your opponent in the left High Guard and he thrusts at your face, then as he thrusts in, spring well out from his thrust toward his right side, and thrust at the same time as him outside over his right arm, in at his face; and in thrusting in, turn your long edge against his blade; thus you parry and hit simultaneously.
- 2.91r.2 ➤ Or set off his thrust with your long edge as you thus step out, and then quickly counterthrust.

**Two good thrusts to execute from both Oxes**

- 2.91r.3 ➤ When you hold your weapon in the left High Guard and he thrusts at your face, then thrust from this High Guard outside his weapon against his incoming blade at the same time as him forcefully in at his right arm; and as you thrust in, turn your hilt through under his blade up toward your right side, so that with this winding through, you turn out his blade and send it away toward your right side. Afterwards quickly thrust in at his chest inside his hilt as he is gathering his weapon; at the same time as this

thrust, turn your hilt and long edge back down toward your left side; thus you again send out his blade, in addition to hitting.

#### **Another**

- 2.91r.4** ➤ Now if your opponent will neither thrust nor cut at you, then execute this thrust against him: thrust first from the left High Guard earnestly outside his right arm; and as you thrust in, turn your hilt and blade through under his, up toward your right, and thrust quickly at his chest inside his hilt, while he has gone with it against your first thrust; he will have made his chest entirely open with his parrying.

You can also turn away all cuts and thrusts from this guard with the long edge into the Longpoint. [2.91v]

From this guard you can slice off, suppress, strike out up from below, bar, and any similar techniques, all of which you will find described more fully in the other postures; based on those descriptions, you can also learn to do it well in this guard with practice.

### **How you shall fight from the Low Guard on the Right, which is also called the Side Guard**

- 2.91v.1** ➤ Fight from it thus: when he thrusts at you when you have come into the Side Guard, then step with your left foot well behind your right toward him to his left side, and then step to him with your right; and as you step, thrust from the Low Guard straight at his face; and as you thus thrust in, turn the long edge and hilt against his blade, so that you turn away his blade with it, and as you parry, you simultaneously hit with the tip. As soon as you have completed the thrust, lift your blade with extended arm up toward your right, and cut quickly back down from above onto the middle of his blade, so that you strike out his blade strongly. And before he recovers and comes up, thrust rapidly straight back in before you at his face.

#### **How you shall slice off and counterattack from this guard**

- 2.91v.2** ➤ If your opponent thrusts or cuts at you from his right, then lift your weapon up toward your right as he thrusts in; meanwhile step forward with your right foot, and at the same time as this stepping forward, cut against his incoming blade diagonally from your right, strongly through; and in this cutting you shall send your hilt somewhat before the blade as it goes down, and lower your upper body well forward and down by stepping broadly. Thus send away his blade with this cut with extended [2.92r: *Image D*; 2.92v] arm down from you in the manner of a slice. Then quickly thrust up at his face before he brings his blade out from under yours, so that when the thrust hits, you stand up in the Longpoint. And if he meanwhile is ready in response to thrust in underneath your weapon at your belly, then hold your hand and hilt thus extended before your face, and meanwhile let the blade drop toward his right, and strike out his thrust to the side with hanging blade from your left toward your right, using the

inside flat; at the same time as this striking out, step well out toward his right with your left foot. Then pull your hilt up toward your left, and meanwhile step with your right foot further out sideways toward his right; then thrust or cut quickly from your left at his face or arm.

#### **How you shall go through with your blade under his**

- 2.92v.1** ➤ *Item:* note diligently when he thrusts in from above, and go through with your blade under his, and send his blade away by slicing off from your left toward your right (as you can see in the lower middle scene in Image D), and thrust quickly at his face.
- 2.92v.2** ➤ Or after you have gone through against him with your weapon, and have sliced off his weapon, then let your blade go out beside your right, and cut forward at his face with a great step out toward his right before he fully comes up.

#### **How you shall cut away all your opponent's cuts and thrusts from the Low Guard crosswise from both sides, and counterattack**

When you stand in the Low Guard on the right, then cut all of his cuts and thrusts away from you from both sides with Defence Strokes, that is with diagonal Wrath Cuts, through the diagonal line from both sides crosswise, [2.93r] strongly and in the manner of a slice, either high or low, with upright or lowered body, depending on whether he sends his cuts high or low, until you either make him tired and weaken him, or else have an opportunity to execute other devices.

And it doesn't matter from which side he first sends in his cut, since when he sends his cuts from his left against your right, then you shall go through below with your blade, and again cut against it from your left against his right, as I have just taught concerning going through; but if he cuts from his right, then lift your weapon and cut through against his blade from your right.

#### **Another how you shall strike his blade out upward and weaken him with a Middle Cut, suppress with a High Cut, and rapidly counterthrust**

- 2.93r.1** ➤ If an opponent encounters you in the Straight Parrying when you have come into the right Low Guard, then rapidly send your blade through with the point, that is the tip, down by the ground under his as far as the middle of his blade; in going through, turn the long edge up, so that the back of your hand stands toward you; cut through thus from below up against his blade. Next, draw your weapon around your head, and secondly deliver a Middle Cut from your right strongly across through his face, so that your weapon flies around your head back toward your left side. Then cut the third quickly down from above, drawing it straight through his face; with this cut you shall lower your upper body well down by stepping wide with your feet; also, in cutting down, let your hilt precede the blade toward the ground by a good bit, with extended arm, so that you can weaken his blade that much more and press it down. As soon as you have completed this cut, at once thrust straight in before you, whether he has brought

his weapon back out from under yours or not; and in thrusting in, turn the long edge against his blade; thus you will readily parry him. [2.93v]

#### **How you shall strike him out with hanging blade and counterthrust**

- 2.93v.1** ➤ Also you can use the end of the fifth device before this one in the Low Guard [*?i.e. Sequence 2.91v.2*] against the Straight Parrying, in this manner: raise your weapon up from the right Low Guard beside your right, and at the same time step out sideways with your left foot toward his right, and with this, strike his blade out with your inside flat from your left toward your right between you and him, so that in this striking out your blade hangs down, and your pommel stands upward. As soon as the striking out has taken place, then spring further around toward his right, and thrust quickly at his face before he recovers from being struck out.

#### **How you shall change around from one side to the other with the cuts**

- 2.93v.2** ➤ When you have come into the right Low Guard, and your opponent cuts or thrusts at you from above, then cut with the long edge diagonally up from below strongly against his incoming blade and right through toward your left shoulder, indeed so strongly that with the impetus, your weapon runs off toward your left around your head again. Then pull your hilt fully around your head, and cut the second also from your right diagonally from above through his left shoulder; with both these cuts you shall step wide with your feet, so that you can extend your upper body that much further after the cuts. Afterwards when you have come with the second cut to your left Low Guard, and he cuts or thrusts in at you again, then cut from this Low Guard just as before, from below toward your right, and against his right, against his incoming blade diagonally upward and strongly through, so that your blade runs off above beside your right. And pull your weapon from [2.94r] your right side fully around your head, and cut the second through his face, also from your left against his right, but diagonally from above, with your body hanging well after it; thus your weapon comes back to the right into the Low Guard.

#### **How you shall change through as you thrust in**

- 2.94r.1** ➤ When an opponent encounters you in the Irongate, then let yourself seem with earnest comportment and stepping as if you intended to thrust forth at his face; but as you act as if you were going to thrust, and partially thrust in, then take diligent heed whether he responds to your thrust, and intends to intercept it with a parry. If you see this as you are thrusting in, then send your thrust through under his blade at his right arm as he goes up against it. As soon as he sees you thrusting through, he will rapidly turn around his hilt and try to parry the thrust. Therefore although you act earnestly, yet you shall not be too hasty with your thrusting in, so that when you see his parrying, you will let your point drop somewhat beside his hilt, and can send it through underneath; then thrust quickly from inside at his belly. Then quickly raise your weapon up toward your right, and rapidly deliver a Cross Stroke through his face. All this shall be executed rapidly and quickly.

- 2.94r.2** ➤ Also you shall pay heed in this changing through that he does not thrust in unchecked straight before him at your face while you are going through, since that is the counter for this changing through. Therefore if you see this as you are changing through, then you shall quickly go up with your hilt with extended arm so that it goes in front of your face to put off his thrust, and counterthrust quickly back again; for it is impossible for him to recover from his precipitous rushing so swiftly. [2.94v]

**How you shall send away his blade with a counter-cut, and counterthrust**

- 2.94v.1** ➤ In the Onset, note when your opponent gathers his weapon for a cut or thrust; at the same time, raise your weapon diagonally up toward your right, and as he sends in his weapon, either for a cut or thrust, then strongly cut diagonally through against his blade, so that you forcefully strike out his blade to the side. At once before he brings his weapon back up again, thrust straight in before you at his face.

**How you shall strike out his cut, and cut through his lower leg**

- 2.94v.2** ➤ Do to him thus: as soon as he cuts or thrusts in at you, then cut out his blade forcefully, as I have just taught, so that with this cut you bring your weapon to your left side. When you have thus struck out his blade with strength, then he will slash back upward with his weapon for fear of the thrust; therefore while he is going up, cut across from your left right through his right leg, with your body well lowered after it. Do not let your weapon stray too far after the cut, so that you may have a powerful and swift Defence Stroke from your right at his left through his face.

**Another device how you shall pull your thrust from him and fight with hanging from the Low Guard**

- 2.94v.3** ➤ In the Onset as soon as you can reach him, then thrust suddenly from the Low Guard at his left; rapidly pull your weapon back away from the thrust, toward your right Low Guard. And as you pull away, [2.95r] he will swiftly counterthrust at you; therefore as you draw your hilt to you, turn it with extended arm up in the air until it is in front of your face; but let your blade hang down meanwhile; thus strike out his incoming thrust with hanging blade from your right toward your left; and in this striking out, spring well out toward his left side. And after striking him out, let your blade snap around by your left side into the left High Guard; from there, with this springing out, thrust quickly and strongly against his left at his face.
- 2.95r.1** ➤ Or after you have struck out his incoming blade with your hanging weapon and with your arm extended high toward your left, then pull your weapon fully around your head and cut from your right at his left across through his face, so that your weapon comes to your left in the Middle Guard; then quickly spring out toward his right side; and in this springing out, cut diagonally from your left against his right strongly through his face, so that your blade snaps back by your right side into the right High Guard of the Ox. Then spring further toward his right and thrust forcefully at his face.

## Here Follow Some Devices to Execute from the Plow

- 2.95r.2 ➤ In the Onset, come with your right foot forward, hold your weapon with horizontal quillons inside by your right thigh, so that your arm is extended downward and the point upward toward your opponent's face; approach him with your body leaning well down and forward after your weapon. If he thrusts meanwhile, either from above or straight at you, then keep your tip level against his body; and turn your hilt up from below toward your right, so that in this turning up, you strike out his incoming blade upward with the flat which previously stood down facing the ground; and with this turning out upward, let your point drop somewhat beside his hilt, and go through under his blade to the other side. Thrust quickly from across inside his hilt at his chest; and with this thrusting in, turn your hilt rapidly down; thus you come back into the left Plow in which you first approached him. [2.95v]

### A shrewd device from the Plow, changing through to both sides and thrusting inside at the chest

- 2.95v.1 ➤ In the Onset, hold your hilt outside by your right knee, in such a way as you previously have held your weapon inside your lower leg; approach him again with your tip turned upward. If he thrusts or cuts at your face or chest, then turn your hilt up toward your left, so that you turn away his incoming blade upward with your outside flat, as you have sent it away upward previously from the other side. And when you have parried his thrust or cut upward with your flat, then let your point go through under his blade to the other side. Thrust thus outside his blade at his right arm; with this thrusting in, again turn your hilt through from beneath up toward your right, and quickly thrust at him from across inside his hilt, at his chest as before; turn your hilt back down toward your left as before; then you come back into the left Plow.

Both of these devices shall be executed with quick agility of body in the work.

### Another device with setting off

- 2.95v.2 ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Plow, as I have taught; present your face to him with your body defiantly leaning well forward; and meanwhile note diligently as soon as he thrusts in, and turn your hilt up toward your left side, and set off his incoming thrust with it with the outside flat forcefully toward your left, such that in setting him off your point remains aimed at his left. As soon as the blades connect, then turn your hilt back around and thrust inside his hilt at his chest. As soon as the thrust has hit, then turn your hilt back down toward your left, so that if he thrusts in again, you will turn it away. This device goes on both sides. [2.96r: *Image G2*; 2.96v]

### Three thrusts, running one after another, with which you can practice to develop quickness

- 2.96v.1 ➤ Do them thus: position yourself in the Plow on the left, and take heed as soon as he sends his weapon into the Irongate or into Straight Parrying before him, and from the left Plow thrust the first straight up outside close to his weapon at his face. He will turn this thrust away toward his right, therefore in



thrusting in, as soon as you perceive his turning away, let it run off by his right side as you thrust in, and run through back toward your left, so that your blade snaps around beside your left into the High Guard; and as your blade snaps around, at the same time step well out to his left with a double step to the side; and with this stepping out, thrust the second from the left Ox inside his weapon at his chest. He will want to parry this thrust toward his left; therefore when you see this, then turn the short edge inward against his blade, and with this turning inwards, let it run through under his blade toward your left, and snap around again beside your left into the Ox again; in this running through and snapping around of your blade, spring well out toward his right side. Next, thrust thirdly from the left Ox outside his right arm at his face.

### **How in thrusting in you shall turn the High Thrust into a Low Thrust**

- 2.96v.2 ➤ When he holds his weapon before him in Straight Parrying, then thrust quickly and suddenly inside up at his face, so that in this thrusting in, your blade remains hard on [his]<sup>99</sup>, such that as you thrust in, you also press his blade out to the side. Thus he will go up in the air with his hilt; therefore as soon as you see this, then jerk your hilt rapidly up and let the point drop around beside his hilt, and thrust in from above under his weapon at his belly. [2.97r] But if he presses your blade out toward his left when you deliver the first thrust, then turn your hilt rapidly up and complete the thrust as before.

### **Concerning Running In**

- 2.97r.1 ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the right Plow; if he cuts at you from above, then as he cuts in, turn your hilt with extended arm up through between you and him, toward his right shoulder; thus your blade stands across before your face, and you catch his incoming cut on the flat of your blade; with this parrying, while you are still holding off his blade in the air with your parry, at the same time step through under his blade toward his right side with your head leaning, and turn your weapon out of the parrying into a thrust; thus you hit before he realises it, as shown by the figure on the left side of the scene in the middle left of Image G [*i.e.* G2]. You can protect yourself further by setting off, but when you execute this device with sharp blades, you will not need to set him off. From this device certain thrusts are derived for earnest combat, but since this does not pertain to common use, I have let it go with this, from which you can well learn something by diligent reflection.

### **How you can take his weapon**

- 2.97r.2 ➤ Position yourself in the Plow on the left; if he cuts or thrusts at you from above, then turn your hilt and blade up and catch his cut in the air with horizontal blade near his hilt, so that in this parrying your hilt extends horizontally toward his left and your blade toward his right; and when you thus go up to parry, spring with your left foot well under his stroke toward him. And while his blade still lies on yours after this stroke has hit, grip through with your left reversed hand under your blade onto his hilt. Turn it out

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<sup>99</sup> 1570: deinen ('yours'); read: seinen

of his hand toward his right by twisting around, as shown by the figure on the left in the uppermost scene in the previous Image G [*i.e.* G2]. If he will not let go promptly, then jab at one of his joints with your pommel. [2.97v]

**Another**

- 2.97v.1 ➤ If an opponent cuts at you from above, then again spring well under his stroke, and catch it near his hilt with your blade horizontal and turned upward from below as before. And as his stroke falls and clashes on your blade, grip through with your left hand under your [right] onto his pommel, and meanwhile turn your blade out over his, and press it down against him. Draw his pommel toward you thus with your left hand, and with your weapon press his blade away from you against his body, as is shown in the figure on the right in the scene on the upper right in Image G [*i.e.* G2]. You can thus take his weapon from him, and harm him with your weapon or his own according to your opportunity and desire.

**Another**

- 2.97v.2 ➤ Run under his High Cut and parry it as I have just taught, so that you again catch him on your blade, as you can see this parrying in the following Image I above on the right side; and as you parry, turn your left side toward him and grasp his arm by the wrist as shown by the figure that has parried as I have just taught. Hold it fast and turn it, wrenching down and around toward your left. Thus you can break his arm, or else he must bend deeply forward. If he does that, then catch with your pommel in the crook of his elbow; force with it to your right side; thus he falls forward on his face.
- 2.97v.3 ➤ If you are without a weapon, and an adversary overruns or attacks you with a sidearm, and you cannot in any way escape him unharmed, then lay your hands crosswise over one another, the right over the left, and see that you spring or evade out from his cut, so that he cuts and misses in front of you. And as his cut is still falling to the ground in this way, then spring rapidly to him so that you come under his weapon as he is drawing back up for another stroke, and rapidly grip his right arm between your hands, and quickly turn it down in a jerk around to your right side. Hold his hand with your left, and with your right reversed hand grip [2.98r: *Image I*; 2.98v] his hilt; turn it out and downward. Now if he is ready with his stroke meanwhile as you spring in, and cuts, then take heed against which side he sends it in; strike strongly with the same arm against his blade on the forte, or the nearer his hilt the better. And although he will somewhat harm you, yet it will not be as bad as otherwise, if you do not strike against it. Spring further in and do not let him come to any further stroke, but rapidly grasp his right arm with reversed hand; with whichever hand you thus grasp his arm, turn him around to that side, and with the other hand jerk his weapon. Concerning this see the two figures on the upper left in Image H.

## Summary

When find yourself in rapier combat or any other weapon, then approach him with extended, straight, and firm parrying, and take heed what he will execute against you and from which side he will cut or thrust in. From whichever side he sends in his cut, catch and parry his cut, and cut or thrust in at him to the same side from which he has sent in his cut, before he has entirely finished it, or at least before he has recovered from it again. Also on each side of him you have three routes through which you can send your cuts at him, one from above, the second from across, the third from below; and each of those will be parried or varied in three ways, high or low, as you have learnt in the first part.

But if he will not cut or thrust first, but encounters you in similar parrying, and waits for you to lay on, then you shall again take heed of the three routes to both sides, and note against which it will be best and safest for you to cut. Various craftiness is called for with this cutting in the Before, for you can easily see that since you can neither cut nor thrust without making yourself open, he will have positioned himself in this parrying so that when you sees you make yourself open by cutting, he can at once crowd in at your opening. Therefore if you will cut or thrust against him in the Before, then you must use the first cut more to provoke and goad him than to hit, so that when he cuts at the opening that you have offered with this cutting, you are positioned to [2.99r] strike and take it out; at once after you have weakened him and made him open, you will thirdly rush to the opening, actually completing the attack this time.

From this arise the three cuts that one shall truly consider a test of a master. These three cuts were greatly valued by the combat masters of old, since the five<sup>100</sup> arose from them. This is not to imply that no other cuts are worth reckoning, but rather that all cuts are divided into these three types, namely that some are used to provoke the opponent out of his advantage; others to parry and send away your opponent's cuts; and some are used to hit, chiefly to harm the body. And it doesn't matter if you use one or two or even more cuts for each one of them, or with what cuts this is executed.

Therefore I should also say something here about the qualities of people, who in this art of combat can naturally be divided into four categories, and thus four kinds of combatants are to be found based on diligent observation. Now so that you may have an introduction to reflect usefully about these, I will firstly enumerate them to you, and then offer a short lesson and precept how you shall conduct yourself against each of them.

And the first are those who, as soon as they can reach the opponent in the Onset, at once cut and thrust in with violence. The second are somewhat more moderate, and do not attack too crudely, but when an opponent has fully extended with a cut, fallen low with his weapon, or else has bungled in changing, they

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<sup>100</sup> *Meyer is here presumably alluding to the five Master Cuts as mentioned in the longsword, but these are not otherwise mentioned in the rapier. Also cf. the five cuts mentioned on 2.14r.*

chase and pursue rapidly toward the nearest offered opening. The third will only cut to the opening when they not only have it for certain, but have also taken heed whether they can also recover from the extension of the cut back into a secure parrying, or to the Defence Strokes; I also mostly hold with these, although it depends on what my opponent is like. Now the fourth position themselves in a guard and wait thus for their opponent's device; they must be either fools or especially sharp, for whoever will wait for another person's device must be very adept and also trained and experienced, or else he will not accomplish much.

Now as the first ones are violent and somewhat stupid, and as they say, cultivate frenzy; the second artful and sharp; the third judicious and deceitful; the fourth like fools; so you must assume and adopt all four of them, so that you can deceive the opponent sometimes with violence, sometimes with cunning, sometimes with judicious observation, or else use foolish comportment to incite him, deceive him, and [2.99v] thus not only betray him concerning his intended device, but also make yourself room and space for the opening, so that you can hit him that much more surely.

Now against the first combatants conduct yourself thus:

- 2.99v.1** ➤ When you observe that an opponent is inclined rush and crowd upon you in the Onset with hard cuts or thrusts, then parry his cut or thrust with extended arm on your long edge, near your hilt in the forte, and thus turn your hilt against all his incoming cuts and thrusts, yet such that in this parrying you do not go too far out to the side from the Longpoint away from your face, since the closer you keep your hilt in front of your face in turning him away, the better it is. And always withdraw your head and face from his blade behind yours. And as you thus hold off his cuts and thrusts, then note diligently if you can pull the parrying from him in the second, third, or fourth cut, with a back-step away, so that he misses with his cut or thrust; then swiftly counterthrust or cut, while he is still falling, or before he recovers.

For when someone thus violently storms in at you with cutting and thrusting, you shall always meet him in the Longpoint or Straight Parrying, and at first somewhat yield and give way to him, yet such that nonetheless you bear out and send away from you all cuts and thrusts. Then just when he becomes tired, careless, or overconfident, and you perceive your opportunity, pursue him quickly and judiciously. For the more you yield, the more violent he becomes, and the easier you can get your advantage over him—yet such that you yourself do not let yourself be forced out of your advantage with this. For anyone who cuts violently will be inclined to overcommit to his cut.

Now against those who will not attack so violently in the Before, but will take heed to attack close behind the opponent's Before, position yourself in the Onset in one of the guards; then change before him judiciously from one guard into another, and offer him one opening after the other, yet such that your point

always remains before him, as I have said concerning changing off. Then as soon as he thrusts or cuts at you during this, fall upon it with setting off or suppressing, and rush at once to the opening he has presented.

Against the third fighter practise thus:

- 2.99v.2** ➤ When you observe that your opponent will not cut first, nor rush to the opening before he has it for certain, then position yourself in the Onset in the Side Guard or in the Change. Remain a little while in it, as if you intended to wait for his devices; but then go back up from the lower guard, [2.100r] and act as if you intended to change into the High Guard; when you almost have come into the High Guard, then rapidly turn your weapon for the stroke; before he realises it, cut through rapidly to the nearest opening with extended arm, so that you make yourself open again. Without doubt he will quickly cut at this opening, since you have presented it to him thus with a sudden stroke. If he does this, then set him off, and work forth to the opening. If he does not cut, then deliver a strong thrust directly after your completed cut. This is a shrewd deceit, acting as if you intended first to go from one posture into another for a while before him, and partly doing this, but just when you have come with your weapon to the High Guard, and you meanwhile perceive your opportunity, then turning your weapon to a stroke before you have fully come into the posture.

As far as regards how to act against the fourth combatants, you will find that throughout in the previously taught devices.

Thus you shall pay heed to your opponent's custom, type and nature, in order to recognise his intent, so that you will know how to encounter each one according to opportunity. Lastly, you shall always keep the three cuts diligently in mind, so that you provoke with the one; take or parry with the second; and hit with the third.

### **Example**

Now when you thrust in at your opponent, and will be the first to lay on against him manfully, then you must cut at his opening, so that you do not put yourself in danger. Therefore since he is standing in his advantage, cut the first one diagonally, either through his weapon or body, so that you goad him with this cut, and provoke him to go out of his advantage. As soon as he goes up and thrusts in, then take away his incoming cut or thrust with your second cut; and thirdly cut or thrust at his body quickly before he has recovered from the stroke you have taken. And if you wish, or if you need to—since you must make yourself open with your earnest countercutting—then also deliver the two diagonal cuts through the Cross, to protect yourself further and recover again. [2.100v]

However if he cuts first, then take his incoming blade with the first, and if necessary, also his second with

your second; and when you feel he is sufficiently weakened, then secondly counter-cut or thrust at him quickly; then thirdly protect yourself, and recover with Defence Strokes.

And now I will let this suffice, and conclude with this following device:

- 2.100v.1** ➤ When you come before your opponent with your parrying sent forward, and he will not at once cut or thrust, cut the first diagonally through his right shoulder, keeping your right foot forward, so that you fall with this cut into the right Low Guard, and thus you make your upper body open. He will rush quickly to this opening; strongly strike out his incoming thrust from your right toward your left; and thirdly cut from your left across through his right, also a Middle Cut, through his face; it doesn't matter if it is done with the short edge or flat. With this Middle Cut let your blade go around your head, and cut the fourth again diagonally through his right shoulder; after this, quickly cut the fifth diagonally through his left shoulder; with this cut you come into the left Low Guard. From there, take him out forcefully and strongly with the short edge up through his right, let your rapier swing around over your head into the right High Guard, and thrust with determination from above at his face. [2.101r]

### **[Rapier and Dagger]**

Now that I have sufficiently taught how to wield a single weapon in one hand, I will also briefly show you how to use a secondary weapon in addition the sidearm. [*Rapier and dagger guard image; 2.101v*] First, hold your rapier in your right hand and your dagger in your left, and approach him thus with both arms extended from you, as the previous image shows. [*See image on 2.101r*]

Now when you go against your opponent in this parrying, then you have three types or principles of parrying you can execute. The first is to catch or hold off all your opponent's cuts and thrusts only with your dagger, whether it happens from below or from above, against the left or the right side, and as you parry, to thrust in with your weapon under or above your dagger, depending on how you have caught and sent away his weapon with your dagger.

The second is when you defend and protect each side with the corresponding weapon, and, as before, while you are protecting yourself with the one, you injure him with the other, and so you protect your right side with your weapon, the left side with your dagger.

The third is when you parry with both weapons at the same time, or use one to help the other.

I will cover these three parryings one after the other in order and discuss them very briefly with their examples and devices.

### **How you shall conduct yourself against an opponent who thrusts in from his right against your left from above**

- 2.101v.1** ➤ Now when you come before your opponent in the parrying that I have just taught, and hold both your weapons before you with your arms extended forward and somewhat down, if he cuts or thrusts in from above at your left, then parry him with your dagger, as is shown by the large figure on the right in the following image [H], and at the same time as you parry him, thrust underneath your dagger at his body.
- 2.101v.2** ➤ Or parry his high thrust or cut as before, and as you parry him, at the same time cut through quickly from your right across at his left to his lower legs, so that at the end of the cut you have your weapon under your left arm; then while you are still holding your dagger in the air, quickly cut diagonally from your left through his right side, high or low, depending on where he makes himself open. These two cuts shall be executed quickly one after another while you are still parrying. [2.102r: Image H; 2.102v]
- 2.102v.1** ➤ Or as you thus parry him, thrust through under your dagger, outside over his right arm at his face, palm away from him, as you can see in the figure in the upper right [*in Image H*]; turn your hilt well up under your left arm, so that you gather yourself for a stroke, and cut from your left at his forward leg.
- 2.102v.2** ➤ Or strike out his incoming thrust with your dagger sideways toward your left, and meanwhile thrust from above at his face. He will want to catch and parry this with his dagger, so pull your thrust around beside his dagger, and thrust from below at his belly as he is going up after it with his dagger.
- 2.102v.3** ➤ Or strike out his incoming thrust with your dagger from your left toward your right, and at the same time cut above your dagger diagonally through his right shoulder. And if he thrusts from below against your left, then turn his incoming thrust out with hanging dagger sideways toward your left, as shown by the figure on the lower right in the aforementioned image [H]; and meanwhile thrust or cut at his nearest opening.

### **The Other Parrying**

- 2.102v.4** ➤ Now if he cuts or thrusts at your other side, that is at your right, then parry it with your weapon, and meanwhile spring with your left foot to him, and as you are parrying, thrust with your dagger at his right arm.
- 2.102v.5** ➤ *Item:* use the blade of your weapon to parry the cut or thrust that he sends at your right; as soon as his blade connects on yours, then spring to him with your left foot, and at the same time fall on his blade with your dagger also, and use it to hold off his blade until you have injured him with your weapon above your left arm with a thrust, which must take place in the blink of an eye; or choose other cuts

and thrusts, of which you will find plenty of diverse examples in what I have already taught on rapier combat. As soon as you have injured him with your weapon, then step back again with your left foot, so that you stand with your right foot in front again, and can further protect yourself with both weapons as at the beginning.

- 2.102v.6** ➤ Now if he thrusts or cuts from below at your right, then parry this with hanging [2.103r] blade, and thrust quickly off of his blade at his face; and at the same time go after his blade with your dagger, with a step forward on your left foot. At once after delivering the thrust, pull your hilt up and at the same time keep your dagger before your face; then cut beside it up from below with the short edge, powerfully through his body, with a step forward on your right foot. And with this, pull your weapon toward your left around your head, and send a powerful cut at his left from above; and as this cut hits on his parrying, then pull your weapon to you, and go around beside his dagger with it, and thrust at his nearest opening; at the same time as you do this, send your dagger with extended arm before your face.

Now the fourth way to parry and fight takes place with both weapons together, namely that as he sends in his cut or thrust, you cross your weapons over one another, and catch his blade between both your blades. Then as soon as you have caught it, you keep the dagger on his weapon to hold it off, and with the other you rapidly thrust or cut to the opening, before he has lifted and taken away his blade from your dagger, which I will also relate to you briefly.

Now there are five kinds of counterthrusts, namely two from your right at his left, of which the one is executed from above, the other from below; the second two are executed and thrust at his right, the one above, the other below; the fifth is a thrust straight before you in at his chest or face; this sometimes will be sent in above, sometimes below your dagger, depending on how you must parry with your dagger.

Now as there are five thrusts, so you also have five countercuts, the first of which you direct toward the head, the second toward the neck and shoulder, the third to the hand, the fourth to the hip, and the fifth at the lower legs. This can be executed from above, diagonally, across, and from below, as I have already taught, and all of these to both sides.

Then when you can correctly execute all cuts and thrusts, and send your dagger judiciously to protect you, you shall then diligently pay heed to the Before and After, and also the word Instantly, through which the true and appointed time of each cut and thrust must be learnt, and when each of them should be executed and may be useful to perform. Now so that you can execute and learn it that much more readily in the work through diligent practice and investigation, I will offer you some examples in order, thus: [2.103v]



### Example

- 2.103v.1** ➤ In the Onset when you hold out both your weapons in the manner depicted previously, with your arms extended and somewhat down, then rapidly cut before he realises it with a spring forward on your right foot, straight down from above, in the manner of a slice that you draw through his face; meanwhile as you thus cut down, go up before your face with your dagger. With this cut you will provoke him so that he will certainly rush quickly to the opening, either by cutting or thrusting; therefore as soon as he thrusts or cuts in, go with your long edge and horizontal blade up outside your dagger, and with this going upward you shall strike out his incoming blade upward. Then just as his blade connects on yours, step with your left foot to him somewhat toward his right side, and with this, thrust quickly through under your dagger outside his right arm at his face; in this thrusting in, turn your hilt or long edge well up toward your left; and when he intends to put off and parry the thrust, cut at once outside at his forward right leg; and meanwhile guard yourself diligently with extended dagger. When your weapon has now come with this cut into the right Low Guard, then go quickly back up with horizontal weapon outside before your dagger, so that you have both your blades crosswise before your face with your arms extended; and as you thus go up with your blade out of the Low Guard, step back again with your left foot.

Now as I have taught you to deliver this High Cut in the Before to goad him, so you shall also learn to deliver the other three, namely the diagonal, horizontal, or the one from below, from your right against his left, high or low through against his body, at whatever part of the body you best to think to reach him. And as you deliver one of these cuts through against his body, at the same time go up with your dagger to protect yourself as before. As soon as you have cut through with one of the cuts against his left, then go again with your weapon outside your dagger to turn away his incoming blade upward as before, and at once execute the thrust along with the Foot Cut, and end it as before or according to opportunity. [2.104r]

### The Second

- 2.104r.1** ➤ When you come before your opponent in the aforementioned manner with both weapons, then rapidly let your dagger sink forward, and pull your weapon around your head; cut diagonally through his right shoulder over your arm; with this cut, step to him with your left foot; and with this, go quickly back up with your dagger horizontal, with your arm extended before your face; as you thus go up with your dagger, then thrust under it with your rapier earnestly and strongly at his belly. Now if you meanwhile see that he is going to put off and parry the thrust, then pull your weapon rapidly down toward your left side; strike him from the left side under your dagger with the flat of the blade strongly against his blade, so that you somewhat deaden it and strike it out. And rapidly thrust straight in before you at his nearest opening, while he is struggling to regain full control of his weapon, or to recover from being struck out.

### **The Third**

- 2.104r.2** ➤ In the Onset, if he thrusts in at you from his right underneath against your left, then parry his thrust down away from you with your dagger, and as you thus parry, thrust in from above at his face. And note diligently meanwhile, as soon as he goes up with his dagger against your thrust to parry it, then change through underneath with the point beside his left arm, and thrust between his weapons inside at his body. If he parries this again, then pull your rapier back away again, and thrust in at him from above between his arms. And with this thrust, break through down toward your left between his weapons; and as you thus wrench, then yield backward with your dagger, back by your left side, so that at the end of this wrenching you can come unhindered with your rapier to the left side. Slash from the left side with the short edge toward your right side and against his right, strongly through his two weapons, along with a step forward on your left foot; and send your dagger quickly after your rapier, also on the blade of his rapier, and hold it off until you can reach and rush upon him with a thrust above or below your dagger; [2.104v] for if you correctly execute the device, you will certainly find an opening, etc.

### **The Fourth**

- 2.104v.1** ➤ In the Onset, note if your opponent holds both his weapons in before him in strong parrying; then rapidly deliver an earnest High Cut at his left shoulder; he will go up against this cut with his dagger and parry it; therefore do not let your cut hit, but pull your weapon to you as it goes down, and as he thus goes up with his dagger to parry, thrust under it at his body.

### **The Fifth**

- 2.104v.2** ➤ In the Onset, hold your rapier on the right in the Low Guard, and your dagger in the left High Guard; as soon as he thrusts in at you, then go up with your rapier across into the Longpoint, and at the same time also turn your dagger hilt down, over your right arm, so that the point of your dagger stands out across toward his right shoulder; thus you have both your weapons crosswise over one another. Thus catch his incoming rapier blade between your weapons; with this, step out sideways with your left foot toward his right, and push his blade sideways out toward your right; as you are thus stepping out and pushing him out, thrust with your rapier inside on his blade in at his body. At once change through with your weapon under his toward your left side, and deliver a Defence Stroke under your arm through his right side; meanwhile guard your face with your dagger.

### **The Sixth**

- 2.104v.3** ➤ Position yourself in the Onset with your rapier in the left Low Guard, and hold your dagger also on your left side, behind you. If he thrusts in at your face, then go with your long edge and extended arm up against his blade; as soon as you have caught his blade, then go through with your dagger underneath both your weapons, and use it to wrench his blade from your right [2.105r] strongly toward your left, and when you have wrenched him, thrust from above at his face; yet do not complete it, but

pull it rapidly back to you, and then thrust quickly and strongly inside between his weapons at his body, actually completing it this time. With the pulling that you have been taught, you will deceive him about his parrying.

### **The Seventh**

- 2.105r.1** ➤ Again, when you come with your right foot forward, then position yourself with your rapier in the left Low Guard, and hold your dagger with extended arm before your face up in the Longpoint. If he cuts or thrusts at you, strike out his incoming thrust forcefully from your left up toward your right, and before he has recovered his weapon from being struck out, then secondly cut quickly under your dagger across through his lower leg, with a broad step forward on your right foot, with your body leaning after it and reaching far; meanwhile keep your dagger before your face to protect it; after the cut has taken place, you stand again as at the beginning. If he crowds upon you further with thrusting and cutting, then forcefully strike his blade out again with your rapier diagonally down from above against his right and toward your right—yet such that you keep your dagger in the parrying—so that your blade runs through back by your right out to the side, and snaps around into the right High Guard of the Ox. From there, thrust powerfully from above at his face; and as you thrust in, turn the long edge down, so that with this thrust your weapon comes back into the left Low Guard. From there, finally deliver a Defence Stroke through his right shoulder, with a back-step on your right foot.

### **The Eighth**

- 2.105r.2** ➤ When you thus have stepped back and delivered a Defence Stroke through his right shoulder, then you stand with your left foot forward, and you have your weapon in the Low Guard by your right side, the dagger before your face with extended arm. Now if he thrusts in again at your face, whether it happens against [2.105v] your right or left side, then turn the long edge of your dagger against his weapon, so that you catch his blade, or put it off from you without harm; at the same time as you parry with your dagger, go up with your weapon under his blade to help your dagger, so that you parry with both weapons at the same time. As soon as his blade clashes or connects on yours, then thrust under your dagger at his belly or to the nearest opening.
- 2.105v.1** ➤ Now if he thrusts at you below, and will parry with his dagger above, then fall with your dagger from above on the blade of his rapier, and at the same time cut with earnest face and comportment at his left ear; and just as the cut should hit, turn the short edge outward against him, such that you gather for another cut. With this, pull around before your face, and cut rapidly diagonally through from your left against his right shoulder underneath his dagger, while he has gone up with it.

Summary: as regards the dagger in conjunction with the rapier, I advise the German that he accustom himself to parry with both weapons together, and meanwhile take heed whether he can harm his opponent with the weapon or dagger, yet such that he does not bring his weapons too far from one another, to make

sure that he can always come to help the one with the other. For experience has shown that when a German has accustomed himself to parry only with the dagger, then it has sometimes led to harm in serious combat, since it is contrary to their character and nature—for in this case, the nearer one remains to nature with one's custom, the more one will accomplish.

### [Rapier and Cloak]

A cape or mantle is also sometimes used as a supplementary or emergency weapon. If you want to use it, you must first learn to wrap it correctly around your arm, so that you do not get hurt in the arm when you parry with the cape. And if you cannot correctly wrap it around your arm, then do not use it, so that you do not hinder yourself. Now if you wish to employ the cape usefully, then be diligent to catch all his cuts with your blade, and then catch his weapon with your cape; hold it off, until you have hurt or hit him with your weapon. All of this must take place nimbly and in a continuous motion. Take this example of it:

- 2.105v.2** ➤ When an opponent will rush upon you and attack with serious intent, then draw your weapon, and grip your cape [2.106r: *Rapier and cape image*; 2.106v] or mantle with your left hand by the collar or edging, inside by your left shoulder; pull it from your body, and wrap it around your arm. If he cuts or thrusts in at your face or body, catch his cut with your weapon with a spring forward under his weapon, and just as his blade connects on yours in the cut, then rush on his weapon with your left arm and cape. And you can also hold off his weapon with your cape by pursuing and remaining, until you have injured, hit, or overcome him at your will.

This is the best precept, that you catch his stroke with your weapon when an opponent cuts at you, and just as it connects, fall with your cape on his blade, to hold it off, and meanwhile see where you can rush upon him with cutting or thrusting.

Now if you are ready and confident with the wrapping around, then parry his cut with your cape, and cut at his nearest opening at the same time as you are parrying.

### Another

- 2.106v.1** ➤ When you have drawn your weapon, having been forced to it, then grasp your cape above by the collar, and hold it with your arm hanging down by your left side. Meanwhile note diligently as soon as he cuts in, and throw the cape from across around his incoming blade, and as soon as you have struck out his blade, then cut above it at his head, as the shown by the small figures on the right in the previous image [on 2.106r].

## **How You Shall Conduct Yourself with a Sidearm against a Partisan or Similar Weapon**

- 2.106v.2** ➤ Do to him thus: when you are rushed upon and overrun with a partisan, then after you have rapidly drawn your weapon, send it to the right into the Low Guard, so that you stand with your left foot forward. And take heed as soon as he strikes in at you from above, and spring well to him under his [2.107r] stroke; with this, turn your weapon upward and pull your head away from him with your body leaning sideways, under his staff; thus catch his blow on your flat hanging blade, as you can see in the figures on the left in the same image [on 2.106r]; and meanwhile grasp with your left hand under your weapon on his staff. Now if he pulls the staff up away from you, so that you cannot grasp it, then as he is pulling up, cut at his forward hand, and at the same time spring further in at him under his spear, with your parrying turned back up in the air again, while he strikes back in from above, so that you do not allow him any space to work—for the nearer you come under his staff, the less he can achieve.
- 2.107r.1** ➤ Now if you do not believe you can run under his first blow, then evade his first blow, and let it strike and miss. And when he pulls back up for the second stroke, see that you quickly come under his staff with a spring forward; as soon as you have run under him, then grasp his staff with your left hand as before, and attack to the opening with your weapon according to your opportunity.
- 2.107r.2** ➤ However if he sends in a thrust at you, then meet him with your weapon in the right Low Guard, and go up from it with your hilt with your arm extended forward, so that your blade hangs toward the ground; and strike out his thrust from your right toward your left with hanging blade; at the same time as this striking out, spring out from his thrust well toward his left side, so that you not only strike it out, but at the same time also spring out from it, in case the striking out is too weak by itself; and with this, again grasp his staff with your left hand as before. Now if he pulls the thrust away from you, so that you strike out in vain, and then thrusts quickly back, keep your hilt up in the hanging, and strike out his second incoming thrust again with hanging blade from your left toward your right; and as you strike him out, spring out from his thrust toward his right, just as you have previously sprung out toward his left. Thus you can meet all his pulled thrusts with hanging blade with your arm extended before you, and strike them out to both sides, until you rush upon his staff. [2.107v]

### **Another way to run under him**

- 2.107v.1** ➤ Hold your weapon in the right Low Guard as before, and note just as he strikes in from his right, and go through with your weapon under his staff toward your left side, and at the same time, step with your right foot between you and him through toward his right side; in this stepping through, rapidly cut from your left against his incoming staff, strongly against his forward hand. All this, namely the going through with the weapon and the stepping, must take place quickly with a spring; also you must rapidly

escape through under his stroke, leaning your head; thus the device proceeds well for you. Then crowd forcefully upon him, and do not let him come to any further completed stroke.

**Another in which you strike out his thrust**

- 2.107v.2** ➤ After you have drawn your weapon, send it into the right High Guard for the stroke. If he thrusts in at your lower body, pull your weapon around your head, and cut out his thrust strongly to the side from your left toward your right with hanging blade, and along with this, spring forcefully in toward his right. If he thrusts at your upper body, take that out and parry it as I have taught previously.

## Part 4: Dagger

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## Combat with the Dagger<sup>101</sup>

The fourth part of this book discusses combat with the dagger, from which one can learn how one shall use all kinds of similar short weapons, along with many fine wrestling techniques included with it

### Concerning the High Guard [*Oberhut*]

In the High Guard position yourself thus: hold your dagger up before your face, as the large figure on the right in this image [A] indicates.

- 3.1r.1** ➤ Approach him thus and keep your right foot forward. If your opponent thrusts at your left, then go with hanging dagger from your right against his dagger, and catch his hand with your dagger behind his hand at the wrist, so that in parrying him your pommel is up and your blade down. Now as soon as you hit his wrist with this parrying, at once go through under his arm with your dagger (yet such that in all this you keep your blade close to his arm), and over back around his hand; press your blade well against his arm to pinch him that much harder. Force his hand down toward your right side; then go up with your pommel inside on his right arm at his face or chin. Now if he goes up after your dagger, then pull it around your head, and thrust horizontally inside against his right arm right through to his face. And finally slash straight from above through his face, with a back-step on your left foot. [3.1v: *Image A*; 3.2r]
- 3.2r.1** ➤ If he thrusts from above at your left as before, then thrust across against his incoming arm, so that your dagger goes out over his arm; thus catch his arm on your wrist in the crook between your hand and dagger; with this thrust, turn your right side well around against his left, so that you can catch his hand that much harder between your wrist and dagger. Enclose his hand hard, and jerk it down away from you toward your right, so that you wrest his arm. When you have turned his arm downward, then pull your dagger quickly toward your left shoulder; from there, thrust through across at his face, over his right arm, before he brings it up from being wrenched down. Thrust the second quickly in front at his chest; meanwhile guard your face with your left hand.

Thus you have two parryings from your right against his left, namely:

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<sup>101</sup> *Running head*: The Fourth Part of this Book

With the first you catch his wrist on your hanging dagger, strongly away from you toward your left.

The second parrying is to catch his hand on your wrist under your dagger with a counterthrust, just as he is thrusting in.

As you now have executed this from your right, so you shall also perform it from your left against his right, if he thrusts outside at your right.

Otherwise when an opponent thrusts in at your left, then you shall thrust forcefully from across inside at his arm, to the tendon or the inner wrist near the base of the palm, strongly through, for that hinders him greatly. For the second thrust, slash strongly outside and above his right arm [3.2v] diagonally through at his face, so that if he has thrusted in, you take it out and force it downward. You can also overreach from this guard with high thrusts, if he thrusts at you from the right or left.

### **Low Guard with its Parrying [*Underhut*]**

In the Low Guard position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, and hold your dagger by your left thigh, so that the point stands toward your opponent's face.

- 3.2v.1 ➤ If your opponent thrusts in at you, then step out sideways toward his right, and thrust at him outside over his right arm; force it downward to you. Send your pommel back up at his chin as I have already taught; thrust quickly back through, slashing from above at his face.
- 3.2v.2 ➤ *Item*: if he thrusts from above, then go up with your dagger horizontal, and catch his hand behind his dagger by his wrist, and turn around him with your dagger from inside over his arm. Force it toward your left side; then quickly thrust through in front at his face.

### **Middle Guard [*Mittelhut*]**

This guard is when you hold your dagger to the side at the level of your belt, or else straight before you. But since you will parry from these just as from the others, I will wait to write at more length about it in the devices. [3.3r]

### **What the Chief Parryings Are**

With the dagger you have two parryings, the one executed with the dagger, concerning which I have already spoken, the second executed with the left hand, so that you can use it to hold off and catch his dagger hand. And you will be thoroughly instructed how to use each one in the following devices.

- 3.3r.1** ➤ *Item:* approach him thus with the High Guard, and hold your left hand before your chest; if your opponent thrusts at you from above, then catch his hand with your reversed hand, twist it away from you, and jab at him with the pommel below on his elbow-joint, as shown by the leftmost figure in Image B.
- 3.3r.2** ➤ Note in the Onset, if an opponent goes at you with a High Thrust, then go under his hand while it is still up in the air; thus hold his hand up with your left. Quickly grip through with your right hand and dagger under his right arm; come to help the left one with it, as you can see in the large figures in the same Image B; at the same time as you grip through, step with your right leg well behind his right thigh, and meanwhile slip your head through under his right arm. Cast him thus on his back, or break his arm.
- 3.3v.1** ➤ *Item:* in the Onset come into the Low Guard, and lay the dagger on your right arm; and note when he thrusts in from above, and go under his right arm with a spring forward under his dagger, and catch it on your horizontal dagger, near his wrist; at once seize him by the elbow with your left hand. Jerk it [3.3v: *Image B*; 3.4r] to you as you see in the small figures in Image B, and thrust at him wherever you will.

### **Cross Guard [*Kreutzhut*]**

In the Onset, hold your hands crosswise before you, the right over the left, so that your dagger lies on your right arm.

- 3.4r.1** ➤ If an opponent thrusts in from above, then spring under his thrust, and at the same time go up with both arms, and catch his arm behind his dagger between your hands on the blade of your dagger; and as his hand falls on yours, seize it with reversed left hand. Twist it rapidly and forcefully away from you, and at the same time as you twist out, thrust at him down from above, slashing through with your dagger, then afterwards across through his face and arm, after he has wrenched his hand from you.
- 3.4r.2** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent thrusts at you from above, then go under his arm with your dagger lying across on your arm; as you thus parry him, grasp his right hand quickly at the same time, and at the same time as you grasp him with your left hand, send your dagger back away from his arm, and send the pommel by your right side back from below, and use it to force strongly up through between his arms, and thrust short back down inside his arm at his chest.
- 3.4r.3** ➤ If an opponent thrusts at you from below, then fall on his arm with your dagger horizontal, and grasp it also with your left hand. And with this, send your pommel over his arm [3.4v] up at his face. And as he is going up after it to send it away, then thrust inside from across through at his face; afterwards fight

away from him with Cross Thrusts.

- 3.4v.1** ➤ Note when an opponent overruns you with a High Thrust, and parry him with your horizontal dagger lying along on your arm; and in this parrying you shall have your left hand crosswise on your right; and when he has thus thrust in, grasp his dagger from below with left reversed hand. Break it out of his grasp up toward his right shoulder; as you break it out, catch with your right hand well outside over his right arm, so that if he will not let go of his dagger, you can at once step with your right foot behind his right, and cast him away from you on his back.
- 3.4v.2** ➤ In the Onset, go under his high thrust with crossed hands, so that your right hand is above in the parrying, and with the parrying, grip strongly with your left reversed hand on his right. And thrust at him up from below under his armpit when you have gripped his right, or strongly across at his right ribs. Pull your dagger quickly back under your left arm toward that side; from there thrust upwards strongly through at his right arm. Then thrust away from him from your right across at his face and arm.
- 3.4v.3** ➤ If an opponent thrusts outside against your right at your head, then thrust at him outside over his right arm; pinch it between your wrist and dagger, and force it to the right side of your chest. Fall with your left hand on his elbow joint, and break his arm, as can be seen in Image C in the small figures on the upper right. [3.5r: *Image C*; 3.5v]

### **Casting**

- 3.5v.1** ➤ *Item*: if an opponent thrusts at you above, then thrust at him outside over his right arm as before. Jerk it toward you; step with your left behind his right, and grip with your left hand around behind onto his left shoulder and jerk him to your left side over your forward leg, as shown by the middle upper figures in the same image [C].

### **How You Shall Take an Opponent's Dagger**

- 3.5v.2** ➤ *Item*: if an opponent pulls a dagger on you, then grip his hand, not with reversed but with straight grip; now if he has thrust from above, and you have gripped his hand as I have said, then twist it in an arc down toward your right, and grip his blade with your right reversed hand; thus break it out of his hand.
- 3.5v.3** ➤ Now if he thrusts from below or straight in at your face, then grip his hand again as before, so that in gripping your little finger always stands toward his arm, your thumb toward his hand, and as before grip his dagger with right reversed hand, and break it out of his grasp, as shown by the leftmost small figure on the left in Image C.

- 3.5v.4 ➤ *Item:* if an opponent thrusts at you from above, then grip his right hand with your left reversed hand; twist it up away from you, and spring with your right behind his right, and send your palm and pommel straight in at his throat; cast him away from you over your right leg. [3.6r]

### Counter

- 3.6r.1 ➤ Pull your right hand toward you, and strike your left arm from outside over his right; with the stroke, swing yourself away from him around toward your right side.
- 3.6r.2 ➤ *Item:* stand with your left foot forward, and grasp your dagger in the middle by your right side, so that the pommel stands out over your hand. If he thrusts in at you, then parry the jab from your face with your left reversed hand; meanwhile step well to him with your right foot, so that you turn your right side well toward him under your arm; and meanwhile jab with the pommel from above outside over his right arm at his face. And note as soon as he will parry the jab, and send the point up from below inside strongly through between his arms at his chin. Afterwards thrust back from above through his face with a back-step; guard against his right hand with your left hand.
- 3.6r.3 ➤ *Item:* when you have caught his hand with your left hand, as I have taught, then approach him again with your right foot, and go through with your dagger under his and your arm, and wrench with your pommel outside over his right arm strongly down toward your right, so that in this wrenching downward you release his right hand with your left. Then quickly thrust straight in through his face with a back-step on your left foot. [3.6v]
- 3.6v.1 ➤ In the Onset, position yourself with your right foot forward, and grasp your dagger so that your blade extends from the little finger side of your hand, and thrust from your right from above through his face. As you thrust through, turn your dagger quickly by your right [*?read:* left] side back upward for a Low Thrust, and thrust the second powerfully up through at his arm, so that at the end of the thrust you come onto your right shoulder. From there, thrust at once strongly across at his face, also through. Thrust the fourth strongly from above back through his face; and go quickly with horizontal dagger up against his right arm to parry.

### Wrenching

- 3.6v.2 ➤ In the Onset, thrust straight in earnestly at his face, and when you see that he will counter the thrust, then just as the thrust should hit, go through under his right arm toward his right, and thrust at him outside over his right arm; and with this thrust, wrench through well down toward your right. And note diligently as soon as he jerks his arm out from under yours, and quickly pursue his right arm from below with your left hand, and while he is still going up, thrust under his right arm at his face.

- 3.6v.3** ➤ Further when you come so near your opponent that you can reach him with a step forward, then hold your dagger as before, so that you have the blade of your dagger lying on your arm. As soon as he thrusts at you from above, then go after it with your right arm and [3.7r] the dagger lying on it, strongly through from your left up against his right arm, and follow with your left hand after the right arm, also under his right arm, and thus hold his right arm up with your left hand. And while you hold off his arm with your left, thrust in front at his chest. From there go quickly back up with horizontal dagger against his right arm; as soon as you have caught it, then send the point from inside over his right arm; force it down, and hold it off with your left hand, and meanwhile seek his opening.
- 3.7r.1** ➤ Or go up again with your dagger horizontal and lying on your arm against his right arm as it falls in; and go right up through against his arm with yours; follow with your left also up under his right arm. Then as you hold off his right hand with your left hand, force with the pommel of your dagger by your right side up from below, right through between his arms, and thrust down from above at his face.
- 3.7r.2** ➤ Note when an opponent thrusts at you, whether it happens from above, across, or from below, and catch his hand behind his dagger, and jerk it rapidly upward, and go through with your head under his right arm; at the same time as you go through, step with your right foot behind his right, as shown by the large figure in Image D. Thus pull his hand hard to you over your shoulder, and lift his right leg upward with your [right]<sup>102</sup> hand along with your whole body; thus you can break his arm, or cast him, whichever you wish.
- 3.7r.3** ➤ Counter: when an opponent grasps you this way, then see that you \*overcome his back; concerning this there will be more later. [3.7v: *Image D*; 3.8r]
- 3.8r.1** ➤ Or if he thrusts at you from below, then again parry his thrust behind his dagger on his hand; as you thus parry with your dagger, grip his hand by the wrist with your left. Jerk it to your chest with both hands, and swing yourself quickly away from him to your right side; thus you break his arm.
- 3.8r.2** ➤ Likewise when you parry the thrust that your opponent has sent at you from below, and have gripped with both hands, then jerk his arm away from him, upward and to your right side, and break his arm over your left shoulder, as you can see in the small figures in the upper right corner in Image D. This can be countered in several ways.

### **Counter**

- 3.8r.3** ➤ And note here this counter: when an opponent thus seizes your hand, and intends to jerk upward on his shoulder with his body turned around, then take heed as he turns himself around, and turn and jerk

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<sup>102</sup> 1570: lincken ('left'). *But cf. the illustration.*

your elbow upward, and send it over his head around his neck, so that your right arm comes onto his right shoulder; and as you do this, grip with your left hand rapidly over his left shoulder in on his throat; with this, set your right foot on the back of his knee, and pull him onto his back. You can also end this counter with other techniques. [3.8v]

### Another

- 3.8v.1** ➤ If an opponent thrusts earnestly at you from above, then catch his arm behind his dagger between your hands, which shall be crossed over one another, the right over the left; and in the parrying, grip his wrist, or the arm near it, hard with your left reversed hand. Twist it up away from you; and with this, also step at the same time with your right foot behind his right leg, and fall with your right hand straight in on his throat. Cast him thus away from you on his back, as you can see on the right in Image D.
- 3.8v.2** ➤ If an opponent thrusts at you from below, and falls with his left hand at the same time on your chest or neck against your left side, then throw your left arm outside around his left, and grip his left hand with your right hand on your chest, and push strongly on your left side; thus you break his arm.
- 3.8v.3** ➤ *Item*: now if he seizes at the right side of your chest while thrusting below, then parry his thrust with your left hand, and as you parry, push his left hand from your chest with your right hand, such that your right thumb is underneath. And with this push, go at once with your arm under his neck, and use your left hand to grasp under his knee joint, as soon as you have parried, and cast him over your right knee.
- 3.8v.4** ➤ Stand with your left foot forward, and hold your left hand on your chest; if he thrusts at your throat, then parry his thrust strongly from your chest, on his wrist behind [3.9r] his dagger; and in the parrying, grasp his right hand with your left, and with your right hand reach through underneath behind his elbow around his right arm, and step in front of him with your right leg, and turn yourself around short to your right side, and cast him over your right leg.
- 3.9r.1** ➤ *Item*, another: if he thrusts at your neck, parry it as before, and in the parrying send your left hand outside and below around his right arm, so that your left hand comes back up from below onto your chest; and grasp under his elbow with your right hand, and lift up from below; thus you break his arm.
- 3.9r.2** ➤ *Item*, a device and counter: if you thrust at his neck, and he seeks to fall around your arm, as I have just written, then pull the thrust a little when he grasps you, and at once grip with your left hand over his left shoulder, and grasp the point of your dagger; thus you have caught his left arm; and cast him thus down before you with the dagger, or catch him by the throat.

- 3.9r.3** ➤ A counter against when he will grasp the dagger thus by the point: as soon as he goes over with his arm, then grasp his left elbow with your right hand, and push it strongly up from you; step behind him with a foot; thus he falls on his back.
- 3.9r.4** ➤ If you see that he will parry your Middle Thrust, then thrust no further than to his hand; with this, quickly go through below with reversed hand, such that your pommel goes first, and come to him with your right arm under his neck; and meanwhile step with your right leg behind [3.9v] his left leg, and grip inside his leg above the knee with your left hand, and cast him over your right leg.

**A counter against the deceit**

- 3.9v.1** ➤ A counter for this: if your opponent will thus deceive you, and comes with his arm thus in front of your neck, grip his right hand at once with your right hand, and grip his right elbow with your left hand, and press it from you, and take his balance; thus he falls on his nose.
- 3.9v.2** ➤ Stand with your left foot forward, and parry his High Thrust strongly from your chest with your reversed hand, and remain strong and high in the parrying, and at once grip through up from below with your right hand behind his right arm, and grasp onto your left hand with it; also with this, step quickly with your right foot well to his right side, so that his arm and elbow come onto your right shoulder. Press away from you; thus you break his arm. And note that when you thus have grasped through underneath onto your hand, and you press it down, you can also take his dagger from him with your left hand.
- 3.9v.3** ➤ *Item*, another: if he delivers a High Thrust at you, parry it strongly, and as soon as you have parried, then go right around over his arm, so that your left hand comes back onto your chest, and press your elbow to your chest.
- 3.9v.4** ➤ *Item*, another device: if he delivers a High Thrust, parry it strongly with your right [3.10r] hand; and with this parrying, grip his right hand with your right reversed hand. Jerk it around to you, and fall strongly over his right arm in the middle behind the elbow, and press away from you; thus you break his arm.

**A device in which you go through**

- 3.10r.1** ➤ *Item*: in the Onset, hold your dagger in the middle, and send a Middle Thrust through from your right under his arm; thus you come into the left Low Guard. If he counterthrusts, then take it out with the pommel, and thrust long after from your left over his right at his head or face.
- 3.10r.2** ➤ *Item*: whenever an opponent seizes or grasps your right arm, either with both hands or one, then strike



up from below strongly on his elbow joint, or fall on him outside over his arm with pushing or striking on his joint, or grapple him with wrestling.

### **How you shall hinder an opponent's thrust**

- 3.10r.3** ➤ When you have to deal with someone who has a dagger about which you are worried, then fall on his nearest hand with the same hand, that is with your right on his right, his left with your left; with whichever hand you grip him, jerk his hand toward it. If he then draws his dagger with the other hand, then grasp with your other hand outside over the same arm that you have pulled to you, and grasp the other arm by the bicep, as shown by the figure [3.10v] on the [left]<sup>103</sup> in Image D. Thus he cannot thrust at you, even if he has drawn his dagger with that hand; you can thus cast him, or undertake another counter.

In sum, grappling is extremely important with the dagger, and grips are executed not only with one hand but also with both hands. Now so that you can have an understanding of this, I will reiterate it for you through some examples.

### **The first grappling**

- 3.10v.1** ➤ In the Onset, if an opponent thrusts at you from above, then go up with your left reversed hand, and catch his right hand behind his dagger by the wrist. Twist it away from you, and step with your right foot well to him; at the same time as you thus step in, go through with your right arm under his, and lift upward; thus you break his arm. You can also execute upon him all sorts of techniques, either with the dagger or else with wrestling.

### **The second grappling**

- 3.10v.2** ➤ If an opponent thrusts from above, then again catch his right arm behind his dagger by his wrist, but not as before with reversed hand, rather straight with open hand, so that in grasping your thumb stands toward his hand, and your little finger toward his arm. When you have gripped him in this way, then you can swing his arm away from you and toward you. If you swing or twist him away from you, then you can execute the devices that [3.11r] are executed with reversed hand. Now if you twist it toward you on your left side, then as you jerk his hand around, turn it fully in front of your chest, and grip his dagger with your right hand, and jerk it out of his hand. Or when you thus have grasped his hand and turned it toward you, then turn yourself away from him to your right side, and thrust around at him behind in the occiput, or use any other comparable techniques.

### **The third grapple**

- 3.11r.1** ➤ This happens with both hands, so that when he thrusts in at you, you have your hands crosswise; thus

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<sup>103</sup> 1570: Rechten ('right'); read: Lincken

catch his hand between both your hands by the wrist. Jerk it to you to whichever side you will; afterward let one hand go free, yet such that you hold him fast with the other, and grip further elsewhere according to your opportunity.

- 3.11r.2** ➤ Note in the Onset, if he thrusts in from above, then send your left arm right under his arm; catch it, and wind your arm from inside to go around his arm from the outside, and turn yourself away from him to your right side. Thus you break his arm, as you can see in the uppermost figures on the left in Image F.

Now since I will write more fully about the dagger elsewhere, I will here leave it be, and only present a few precepts that are very useful in combat.<sup>104</sup>

### **The First Precept**

- 3.11r.3** ➤ Note in the Onset, when you have grasped your dagger such that the blade extends from the little finger side of your hand, if you then hold your dagger in whatever guard you will, either below or [3.11v: *Image F*; 3.12r] above, on the right or left, then take heed that you always thrust at him firstly over his arm, whether it be from inside or outside; and with this thrusting over, you will force his arm down; then quickly thrust to the opening, or jab with the pommel. In this way when you thrust at him outside over his right arm, and force it downward, as I have also said before, then go to him quickly with your pommel over his arm up at his face; if he wards this off and goes up, then go through under his right arm as he is going up, and thrust inside at his face or chest.
- 3.12r.1** ➤ Now if you thrust at him from inside over his right arm, then force it down toward you or your right side. Pull, and thrust through his face quickly from your left outside over his right before he has come back up with his arm. You shall also be diligent secondly to thrust at his hand and arm, either from below, across, or from above; then forcefully follow up with Cross Thrusts.

### **The Second Precept**

- 3.12r.2** ➤ The second precept involves going through, thus: position yourself in the High Guard, and remain strong in the parrying, with your arm extended up before your face. When he thrusts in at you, that is from above or diagonally at your face, then lean your head down and lower your body, and go through with your dagger under his arm while he is thrusting in; with this going through, step well out to the side, toward the side to which you have gone through, and thrust at his face over his arm as it is going down. [3.12v]
- 3.12v.1** ➤ Likewise you shall also change through with your thrusting, thus: thrust diagonally from above at his

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<sup>104</sup> *One of several places where Meyer appears to refer to an intended work never actually brought to press. See Introduction.*

face, and note as soon as he goes up against the thrust, and quickly go through underneath with your dagger; and while you change through below, at the same time also send your left hand before your face against his thrust; and attack him to the opening on the other side.

### **The Third Precept**

Further you shall also take heed that you fight from both sides forcefully, namely with left and right hand opposite one another and together. Thus if he thrusts at you from the left or right, from below or above, then go forcefully against it with your left hand, and either strike out his incoming arm, or catch it as you grasp forcefully with your left hand; at the same time also attack quickly to the opening, or come with your right arm and your dagger to help the left in grappling, so that you turn out his right arm that much more strongly, or can weaken it, and then can come more readily to his opening with your dagger.

Likewise when you parry with your dagger, whether you have it lying on your right arm or otherwise, then come rapidly with your left hand to help the right, so that both hands almost meet each other. And always one hand follows the other and comes to help it, so that you can execute all counters and wrestling that much more strongly and swiftly in the work.

### **The Fourth Precept**

- 3.12v.2** ➤ This is the deceiving; do it thus: grasp your dagger in the middle, and hold your left hand before your face to protect it. Threaten then to jab at his head from above with your pommel [3.13r] in a spring, and take heed as he goes up to counter it, then in this jab, pull the pommel right around your head, and thrust with the point across through at his face.
- 3.13r.1** ➤ *Item:* hold your dagger so that the blade extends from the thumb side of your hand; thrust in from above at his face, and as you thus thrust at his face, then parry him and guard yourself meanwhile with your left hand. If he meanwhile goes up against your thrust, then do not complete your thrust, but on the way as you are still thrusting in, turn your High Thrust into a Low Thrust, and send this thrust under his arm at his face, and thrust long in before you. Contrarily, threaten to thrust at him below; as soon as he goes against it, then pull the thrust and send it in elsewhere.

### **The Fifth Precept**

The fifth precept teaches you to counter all kinds of grapplings, which takes place in two ways: firstly with turning out, secondly with counter-grappling.

- 3.13r.2** ➤ Do the turning out thus: if an opponent has gripped your right hand with his left reversed hand, then quickly turn the pommel of your dagger through under his arm from outside, so that your pommel comes to stand inside on his arm or tendon; grip also with your closed left fist below on your right to help it. Wrench upward inside his arm with your pommel with the help of both your hands; at once

thrust a Middle and High Thrust in succession, or else seek the opening with other techniques.

- 3.13r.3** ➤ Now if he grasps your hand, but not with reversed hand, then pull it swiftly to you, and turn against his palm; if you are too weak, then come [3.13v] with your left hand again to help the right.
- 3.13v.1** ➤ For the second, if an opponent has gripped your right hand with his left reversed hand as I have just said, then grip with your left over his right on his arm; jerk it thus to you with both your hands; thus you take the impetus and balance away from him; you may then work further according to your desire.

In sum, always be diligent to grip the arm with which he has grasped you with your free one; jerk toward you to take away his balance and win your advantage.

### [Wrestling]

- 3.13v.2** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent grasps you by the arm with wrestling, then rapidly grasp his left hand with your left; jerk it toward you, and meanwhile throw your right arm from outside over his left, so that your elbow comes in front on his chest or chin, and step at once with your right foot behind his left foot, and cast him off his feet.
- 3.13v.3** ➤ *Item:* if he grapples you with wrestling, and does not hold you fast, then grasp his right hand with your right, and jerk it toward you; grasp his elbow with your left hand, and step with your left before his right; swing him over it, or break his arm; thus fall with your chest on his arm.
- 3.13v.4** ➤ *Item:* grasp his left hand with your left, and jerk it toward you, and throw your right arm from outside over his left, and grasp his right arm with your right hand, and step with your right foot before him, and swing him to your right side; thus he falls.
- 3.13v.5** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent grasps you by the arms, and you do the same to him, then release your right hand, and go through underneath, and strike from below on his right elbow joint, concerning which see the small [3.14r] figures in the middle at the top of Image A; and with this blow, break through up from below. After this striking upward, grasp him by the right elbow, and grip with your left hand on his arm under the elbow, and step with your right foot between his legs or behind them, and push him away from you.
- 3.14r.1** ➤ Now when an opponent goes around your body, either with his left or right hand, then strike outside on his elbow-joint with the same arm under which he has grasped, and turn away from him.
- 3.14r.2** ➤ *Item:* take heed whenever he holds his foot steady, and stamp on it.

- 3.14r.3** ➤ In all wrestling see that he does not jab at your groin; thus take heed as soon as he lifts his foot for a groin-jab, and strike it out with your knee against his; then approach him at once with a stamp or jab.
- 3.14r.4** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent has caught you or grips at you with open hands, then see that you rush upon one of his fingers. Break it upward; thus he must let go, or else you will get your advantage.
- 3.14r.5** ➤ *Item:* if you are wrestling with an opponent, each grasping the other, then see that both your arms come beneath; grasp him thus by the middle, and lift him from the ground; as you thus lift him, then strike him with a foot on his leg, and swing him to the other side; thus he falls.
- 3.14r.6** ➤ *Item:* if an opponent falls upon you around your body, and intends to lift and cast you, then set one knee hard between his legs; thus he cannot lift you. Meanwhile take heed as soon as he lifts you, and whatever side he will swing you on, then work towards the other.
- 3.14r.7** ➤ Note if an opponent falls below on your leg to cast you, as I have taught already, then fall with your body on his body, and catch around his neck with your left hand; press with it hard toward yourself, and with your right hand look out for your opportunity. [3.14v]
- 3.14v.1** ➤ Note when an opponent will grapple you in order to wrestle, then take heed with which arm he will first grasp you; grasp that arm strongly with your arm wound around; and with the other hand grip the bicep of the other arm, and push away from you with it, as can see in the figures on the upper right in Image F.
- 3.14v.2** ➤ Note when an opponent grasps you by the shoulders or arms, then strike up from below with both hands, and separate his arms; then fall quickly on his leg with bent body, and pull toward you; thus he falls.
- 3.14v.3** ➤ *Item:* note in whatever wrestling an opponent will grapple you, then as he grasps in, close your fists hard and place them on both sides of your chest, and jab around you with your elbows; thus you will swing yourself free; quickly grapple him according to your opportunity.
- 3.14v.4** ➤ Note as you rapidly grasp an opponent by the hand, and jerk him toward you, and send your other hand around his neck, so that your hand comes back on your chest, and seize your clothing; pin him hard to you; thus you have caught him, as you can see in the lower figures in the middle of Image F.
- If you grasp an opponent by his right hand, swing him up, and go through under his arm, and step with

your right foot between his legs, and grip with your right hand outside around his leg; pull his right arm well to you over your shoulder, and lift upward, and cast him at your pleasure. [3.15r: *Image* 'A2'<sup>105</sup>; 3.15v]

- 3.15v.1** ➤ In the Onset, grasp his right hand with your right, and jerk it toward you, and grasp rapidly with your left hand over your arm and his; thus grasp him by his left knee or hose; cast him to your left side, as you can see in the two figures on the left in Image [C].<sup>106</sup>

Now everything else shown in the images is inherently clear. Therefore since I will write more fully in another place, I will let it be here for now.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> *No letter designation in 1570; designated 'A' in 1600.*

<sup>106</sup> *1570: E*

<sup>107</sup> *One of several places where Meyer appears to refer to an intended work never actually brought to press. See Introduction.*

## Part 5: Staff Weapons

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[3.16r]

## The Fifth and Last Part of this Book, which briefly teaches and discusses combat with the quarterstaff, halberd, and pike

I have gathered these three weapons together in the images, since it makes sense to put the pike on top of the images, given its length and the images' perspective. Therefore since every image is marked with its own letter, as has been done in the previous treatises, the diligent reader shall not let this confuse him. And I will first cover the quarterstaff as a basis of all long weapons, and begin by relating how many guards there are, and then teach and describe how you shall execute them in the work.

[Quarterstaff]<sup>108</sup>

### Concerning the Postures or Guards

There are five chief postures, namely the High Guard extended straight up before you and on both sides; then the Low Guard, also on both sides; next you also have two Side Guards and one Middle Guard; and lastly the Rudder Guard. [3.16v]

#### High Guard [*Oberhut*]

In the High Guard position yourself thus: stand with your left foot forward, and hold your staff with the tail at your chest, so that the point stands straight up toward the sky. Now as you execute this straight before you, so you shall also do it on both sides. And although you shall always keep your left foot forward, yet you must not let your feet get too far apart, so that you can always have a step forward with the left foot.

#### Low Guard [*Underhut*]

Do it thus: stand with your left foot forward again, hold your staff with the butt on your flank, and with the tip extended before you on the ground. If you hold the butt on your right flank, then it doesn't matter whether you hold or send the tip extended to the left or right or straight before you: you can vary how you extend it, either according to how he attacks, or according to what techniques you intend to use.

#### Side Guard [*Nebenhut*] and Middle Guard [*Mittelhut*]

For this, position yourself thus: stand with your right foot forward, hold your staff with the midpart on your

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<sup>108</sup> *Running head*: Combat with the Quarterstaff

left hip, so that the butt extends toward the opponent, and the tip behind you; thus present your right side fully to him, as shown by the [3.17r: *Image A*; 3.17v] figure on the lower right in Image A.<sup>109</sup>

The Middle Guard is the Straight Parrying before the opponent, from which one mostly fights.

### **Rudder Guard [*Steürhut*]**

In this one, position yourself thus: stand with your left foot forward and hold your staff with the tip on the ground in front of your left foot, and the butt up before your face with your arms extended, as you can see in the other figure on the left in the same image [A].

You can also do this guard thus: stand with your right foot forward, and hold your staff behind you, again with the tip on the ground; thus you are positioned for the stroke.

### **Concerning Binding and the Parryings of the Staff, and their Classification**

The staff is also divided into four parts, just as I have taught before concerning other weapons; therefore you also have four binds. The first binding takes place on the foible of the staff; the second in front of his forward hand; the third in the middle of the staff; and the fourth is executed with the butt when you run in. You shall pay particular heed to this division and binding, since it can cause problems if you are not careful to execute the appropriate techniques in each part, namely with the first part and first binding, the blows and flying thrusts; in the second, the remaining, winding, and chasing; and in the last two, the running in and wrestling. [3.18r]

Now there are four chief parryings in the staff, as with the bindings: the first is executed with the foible of your staff from both sides; the second in front of your hand; the third in the middle; and the fourth with the butt. But since all this can be learned sufficiently in the section on devices, it is not necessary to discuss each one of them individually.

### **High Guard**

- 3.18r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the High Guard; as soon as he thrusts at your left side, step out from his thrust to your right side, and thrust in at the same time as him; and in this thrusting in, turn the long edge against his staff. Thus he fails with his thrust, and you hit with yours.

### **The second device from the High Guard**

- 3.18r.2** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the High Guard; if he thrusts in at your body, either below or above, then as he thrusts in at you to one side, step out from his thrust toward the other side, and at the same time as you step out, strike down from above at his forward hand. And note diligently as he pulls it

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<sup>109</sup> *But cf. 3.21r, where this figure is said to be in the Middle Guard.*

back, and thrust straight in before you at his face. [3.18v]

**Another in which you shall strike down from above through his staff, slash back up, and follow up by striking with one hand**

- 3.18v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the High Guard on the left, that is such that your staff stands up with the tip or foible over your left shoulder. Approach him thus with your left foot forward; if he thrusts at your chest or face, then spring well out from his thrust toward his right side, and strike down from above with your staff (which you shall hold fast in both hands) onto the middle of his staff, right through so that your staff comes with this stroke into the right Low Guard. From there, if he should thrust further to your face, slash back up with the short edge toward your left shoulder; at the same time as you thus slash up, give your staff a swing with your left hand; with this swing, release your left hand from the staff, and strike with one hand from your right horizontally against his temple. The High Blow and slashing shall take place quickly one after another. As soon as this blow hits, then recover your staff with your left hand, and jerk it into the Straight Parrying.

**Another**

- 3.18v.2** ➤ Note when you have thus struck from above through his staff, and then slashed back up from below, and come back up with your left hand and the foible [3.19r] of your staff, then at once turn up your right hand with the butt, and at the same time let your tip and left hand sink back down out by your left side; and with this, turn the foible of your staff back up from below toward his right; all this must take place in a continuous motion. At once thrust straight at his face with a step out, but take heed that in thrusting in you not only turn your right hand back down to your chest, but also thrust it right in from your chest and inside on your left arm as you thrust forward at him.

Thus you have learnt from the High Guard firstly to step out and thrust at the same time as him; secondly to strike out his staff down from above, and counterthrust; thirdly to break through down from above against his staff, and slash up from below; and lastly to execute a deceitful thrust.

**How you shall thrust in from the Low Guard at the same time as him**

- 3.19r.1** ➤ Note in the Onset when you hold your right hand and butt on your right flank, and have your tip lying forward toward the ground out to your right side, with your body hanging well forward after it; then take heed as soon as he thrusts at your face, and step out with your right foot toward your right side, and then step with your left foot toward his left to him; thus as he sends in his thrust, thrust over his left arm at his face; also with this, as you thus [3.19v] thrust in at the same time as him, you shall lower your head well out of the way of his incoming thrust behind your staff toward your right side; thus you are much better parried.

### **Another how you shall strike out his thrust, and counterthrust**

- 3.19v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Low Guard as before, with your knee flexed well forward, so that your upper body is well lowered after the staff; and note as soon as he thrusts in, and strike out his staff from your right toward your left in a jerk, yet such that in striking him out, you do not strike further with your staff than into the Straight Parrying; and before he recovers from his thrust, then thrust at his face with a spring out.

### **Another**

- 3.19v.2** ➤ Note in the Onset when you have fallen into the left Low Guard, and he strikes in with one hand from above at your head, then go up with both arms; as you go up, spring well in under his stroke; thus parry his blow between your hands on your staff. As soon as the blow knocks on your staff, and is still in contact, then pull the butt to you with your right hand; and with this, let the tip drop; send it under his staff between his hands at his body, and thrust forth under his staff [3.20r] between his hands at his chest; and as you thrust in, turn your butt and right hand back down against your chest, so that you can send the thrust in with that hand from your chest and the inside of your right [*read*: left] arm. After the thrust is complete, you shall quickly be back on his staff with the bind, so that you can better protect yourself against his counterattacking.

### **How you shall slip out from his thrust from the left Low Guard and thrust in at the same time as him**

- 3.20r.1** ➤ In the Onset, stand with your left foot forward, hold your butt and right hand on your right flank, and let the tip of your staff lie extended before you on the ground toward your left, somewhat out to the side. And note as soon as your opponent thrusts in at you, and step out sideways with your right foot behind your left, somewhat toward his right side; and just as you set down your right foot in stepping behind yourself, then quickly step toward him with your left foot also toward his right side, and thrust over his right arm at his face as he is thrusting in.

### **How you shall strike out his thrust from the left Low Guard and counterthrust**

- 3.20r.2** ➤ Or when you stand in this way in the [left]<sup>110</sup> Low Guard, then as he is thrusting in, step out from his thrust toward his right side as before, and with this, strike his [3.20v] staff away from your left toward your right; then before he recovers, swiftly thrust at his face as before.

### **How you shall take him out upward with the long edge from your left, and thrust through the Rose back up from below from your right at his face**

- 3.20v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Low Guard on the left as before; if he thrusts in at you, then go up with both arms, and strike out his thrust with the foible of your staff up from your left toward your right with the long edge, so that in striking him out your staff comes right up through; then turn your

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<sup>110</sup> 1570: Rechten ('right'); *read*: Lincken

staff back by your right side up from below, and thrust from that side back up at his face.

### **How you shall jerk out his staff and counterthrust**

- 3.20v.2** ➤ Note in the Onset when you come into one of the Low Guards, and he will not work or thrust, then act as if you intended first to see what devices you might execute; and as soon as he extends his staff from him, then jerk it out in a sudden jerk or blow, and as he is still faltering with his staff from the intercepted thrust, thrust quickly at his face. In [3.21r] striking him out, you shall diligently see that you do not stray too far to the side with your staff after striking him out (as I have also previously taught), but strike his staff out with a jerk as I have taught, so that you are quickly back straight before his face with your staff; and thus you complete the thrust before he recovers.

### **How You Shall Fight from the Middle Guard**

- 3.21r.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Middle Guard, as shown by the large figure on the right in the previous Image A<sup>111</sup>; and take heed as soon as you can reach him, and cast your staff across through his face with your right hand; with this cast, give your staff a strong swing with your left hand, and with this, release it from the staff, so that in this cast, your staff can fly that much faster through his face and around your head. Now as your staff flies through his face and around your head, step forth to him with your left foot, and as your staff is still flying around in the air, recover your staff with your left hand, and strike him secondly from your left at his right through his face, also against his staff, through wherever he sends it before him; this blow shall be executed with both hands, so that at the end of the blow you come into the right Low Guard. Now as your staff falls with this blow into the Low Guard, if he should quickly thrust in at your face (which becomes open as you come to the full extent of the fall), then rapidly step with your right foot to your right side, and thrust in at the same time as him also at his face, yet such that as you thrust in, [3.21v] you turn the long edge and the tail of your staff against his, and pull your head well out of the way of his thrust behind your staff; thus you are parried.
- 3.21v.1** ➤ Or after you thus have fallen with this blow into the right Low Guard, and he thrusts at the opening you have presented, then slash his incoming staff up toward your left shoulder with your short edge; with this slashing, send your staff above around your head, and strike him from your right outside over his left arm; you shall also send this blow around with both hands. Meanwhile take heed if he tries to thrust at your face as you send this blow around; as soon as he does this, then in going around, send the butt lower around before your face, and let the blow fly that much swifter. Now if he parries the blow with hanging staff, then note when your staff knocks or falls on his, and at once turn the butt upward, and thrust over or under his staff at his body.

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<sup>111</sup> *But cf 3.17v, where this figure is said to be in the Side Guard.*

**Another in which you shall reverse yourself before him or make yourself open, take him out, and counterstrike**

- 3.21v.2** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself as before in the Middle Guard on the left side, and step at once with your left foot behind your right to him, so that in this turning around, you turn your back to him. Now as you turn around before him, if he should swiftly thrust in at your face, intending to rush upon it, then as you step behind yourself, quickly raise your hands to extend the tail of your staff upwards to his left, so that the foible hangs toward the ground, [3.22r: *Image B*; 3.22v] and as you turn around, strike out his incoming thrust sideways with hanging staff from your right toward your left, and let it go fully around your head with a swing. And as you go around with your staff, give it a strong swing with your left hand, then release your left hand, and strike a strong swift stroke at his left ear with one hand. This is a shrewd device, which goes well in the first Onset, since by turning around you provoke him to thrust; then if he thrusts, you take his staff out as you turn around, and certainly hit him if he has thrust in earnest.

I wanted to present first the devices from the side postures that I have just taught, so that when you come into one of them at the furthest point of striking, thrusting, or parrying, you will better know how to recover again; also you will better know how to conduct yourself in the subsequent devices, since with these long weapons as with the previous weapons, you always come in the course of combat from one posture into another, and you must not then spend a lot of time in them reflecting on what to do, but push onward with the next techniques that arise.

**[Straight Parrying]**

Now in the Straight Parrying, as I have named it here, position yourself in the Onset as shown by the two figures in the previous image [B].<sup>112</sup>

**The first device in the furthestmost bind**

- 3.22v.1** ➤ When you bind him with the foible of your staff on the foible of his, then push it out to the side with a sudden strong jerk, yet such that you do not stray with yours after pushing him out, but quickly thrust off of his staff in before you at his face, rapidly before he has recovered from being pushed out. [3.23r]

**Another how you shall go through after jerking him out and thrust on the other side**

- 3.23r.1** ➤ Now when you jerk him out, and you see that he comes back so quickly with his staff that you cannot rush upon him with the thrust I have taught, then do to him thus: jerk his staff to one side as before, and look as if you intended to thrust as before, but as soon as he rushes back in with his staff against

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<sup>112</sup> Note however that these two figures are not in quite the same position: the one on the left appears to be in the equivalent of Longpoint, the other, with his staff angling upwards, in the equivalent of Straight Parrying with other weapons.

yours, intending to parry your thrust, then as he is slipping in, go through under his staff, and thrust on the other side rapidly and forcefully at his face with a spring out. This is a shrewd going through, when you jerk out an opponent's staff suddenly, then quickly go through underneath, and thrust in on the other side.

**Another how you shall jerk out his staff and strike at his forward leg**

- 3.23r.2** ➤ In the Onset, bind him from your left side with your foible on his foible, and push it out with a sudden jerk toward his left, and pull your staff quickly back again toward your left around your head; with this, release your left hand from the staff, and strike with one hand from your right strongly across through his lower leg, with a broad step forward on your right foot. Then recover your staff with your left hand while it is still going through in the stroke, and at once strike the second with both hands from your left diagonally [3.23v] through at his right shoulder, so that at the end of the blow you come into the right Low Guard; from there, thrust at his face as I have already described.
- 3.23v.1** ➤ Or when you thus strike through across at his forward leg, then see that in striking through, you recover your staff with your left hand on your left side; as soon as you have recovered it, then pull the butt to your right onto your chest, and with your left hand go well in with your arm extended on the staff. Now as you thus pull your hands away from one another on the staff, then turn your staff against his, and strike it out as he is thrusting in, so that you catch your staff back in the Straight Parrying forcefully and strongly with your left arm extended; and at once counterthrust quickly straight in before you at his face.

**A device how you shall execute the Brain Blow**

- 3.23v.2** ➤ Do it thus: in the Onset, bind him with the foible of your staff on his foible; then act as if you were looking earnestly to see where or how you might thrust at his face. As soon as he sees this, then he will diligently watch for your going away, so that as soon as you go away, he can quickly counterthrust; therefore when you earnestly act as if you intended to thrust, then rapidly jerk up the butt, and with your left hand swing the staff back toward your left around your head, and strike thus with one hand unexpectedly straight from above at his head. And even if he should thrust in the mean time, this will not work for him, since you will be too swift for him with the stroke on his head. This and similar [3.24r] devices depend heavily on craft, namely when you rush upon your opponent with sudden quickness when he least expects it.

**Another with the Ladle Stroke (?)**

- 3.24r.1** ➤ Note when you have bound your opponent as I have taught, then covertly reverse your right hand on your staff, and meanwhile deceive him with body language, so that he does not observe your intent. Then when he least expects it, rapidly step to him with your right foot, and with this, strike a powerful and swift stroke straight from above at his head, palm away from him, so that you stand with your



upper body well lowered after the blow. Then go quickly back up with your staff, and at the same time step back again with your right foot, and recover your staff with your left hand, so that you can reestablish a strong parrying.

To facilitate the previous Brain Blow or this Ladle Stroke, you can first make yourself room by jerking out his staff, or else hindering him with other devices, so that you rush to him with the Scooper Blow before he comes back up.

#### **How you shall strike around from his staff and shoot over**

- 3.24r.2** ➤ Next, in the Onset when you can reach the foible of his staff with your foible, and he is hard on your staff, then take heed as soon as he will push you out to the side forcefully; quickly pull your staff around [3.24v: *Image C*; 3.25r] your head with both hands as he pushes it out, and strike at his head outside over his left arm with a step out. As soon as this blow hits, then rapidly shoot your staff over his, near his hands, as you can see it hereafter in *Image G*. When you have thus secured and barred his staff, then you may go in at him and thrust with the butt, or strike in front at his face with your foible. Now if he goes up with his point, and works out from under your staff, then pursue him from below, either with thrusting, winding, or pushing.

#### **How you shall go through against him**

- 3.25r.1** ➤ Note if your opponent is hard on your staff with his bind, and pushes you from him, then go through underneath, and thrust on the other side. Or as he pushes out your staff with his hard bind, then again go through underneath close to his staff while he is pushing, and jerk it out with an aggressive blow from the other side, and quickly follow up with a thrust, before he recovers.

#### **Another**

- 3.25r.2** ➤ If an opponent binds hard on your staff, then hold hard against him with your bind; if he pushes back against yours, then rapidly go through underneath, and act as if you intended to thrust; but don't do this, rather pull back through underneath, and thrust at him to the side against which you first bound him. [3.25v]

#### **How you shall learn to feel in the binds**

- 3.25v.1** ➤ Note this diligently, when you have bound an opponent from your left side, then diligently watch and feel for the moment he goes away from your bind to go through underneath or to work in some other way, then just as he goes away, thrust straight before you in at his face.

#### **Another one that is the counter for the previous**

- 3.25v.2** ➤ When you see in the bind that your opponent watches for your going away, and will thrust to your opening as you go away, then act as though you genuinely intended to go away from his staff and

thrust, and when you think he is poised to counterthrust, then send your staff precipitously out to the side away from his, as if you intended to thrust as I have said. But don't do this, rather as he rushes in with his thrust, then strike it out to the side, and at once thrust in, and actually complete it this time. For when he rushes in precipitously, you can easily take out his staff, and readily rush upon him before he recovers.

Thus you shall observe and take heed what your opponent will execute against you, so that you will catch him in his own devices, as in the device I have just described against an opponent who is inclined to counterthrust at once. Therefore you must make yourself open before him judiciously and carefully, and act as if you had made yourself open accidentally and unwittingly, or had unintentionally fallen too far with your weapon after your eager thrust, so that he will be incited to thrust more readily and eagerly. With this thrusting or striking he will make himself so open that he [3.26r] can scarcely come back up and recover before you have rushed upon him. But I will explain this more fully through examples in the section on the halberd.

#### **A deceitful device**

- 3.26r.1** ➤ In the Onset when you have bound with your opponent, and neither will go away from the other's staff, then thrust with earnest comportment at his forward lower leg. With this you will open your face, to which he will quickly thrust in. As soon as he thrusts in, then step out sideways with your forward foot; follow with your right foot, and thrust from below at his face over his staff as it flies in for the thrust; and also with this, pull your head well away from his thrust behind your staff. Thus you hit him in the face as he is thrusting in.
- 3.26r.2** ➤ Or when you thrust or strike at his lower leg, and he meanwhile thrusts at your face, then strike out his incoming thrust, and spring out sideways from his thrust at the same time as you strike him out, and quickly counterthrust.

#### **How you shall thrust with one hand outside over his left arm at his face, wind through with the butt, and strike to his right shoulder**

- 3.26r.3** ➤ If you have bound an opponent in front from your left against his right, and he stands still and will not work, then step with your rear right foot to your right side, and with this, also go through underneath with your tip close to his staff. And thrust quickly and suddenly from your right over his left arm at his face; [3.26v] and as you thrust in, release your left hand from the staff, and follow well after the thrust with your right side, so that you reach that much further in from across. With this thrusting, turn your right hand and the tail of your staff up toward your left, and with this, pull your staff around your head; and in this pulling around, spring quickly to your left side; and strike diagonally at his right shoulder. This blow and thrust shall be executed quickly one after another in combination. Spring back at once, so that you may recover your staff securely with your left hand.

**Another in which you shall wind through with the thrust**

- 3.26v.1 ➤ Do to him thus: in the Onset, if you find him in the Straight Parrying, then thrust straight from your right toward his left hand which he has forward on his staff; and at first, act as if you intended to thrust at his face. Now when your tip comes near his hand, then go through under his staff, and with this, step with your left foot well out toward his right side; in this stepping out, take your head well out of the way, and in thrusting through, turn your tip outside over his right arm at his face; and as you thrust in, turn your right palm well upward on the inside of your left arm; thus the thrust in goes that much deeper.

**An artful and shrewd thrust to use against someone who will not work but lies firm in the parrying**

- 3.26v.2 ➤ In the Onset note when you find your opponent in the Straight Parrying; then position yourself the same way, and act as if you intended first to see what [3.27r] you might execute; meanwhile however, when he least expects it, step with your right foot rapidly out toward his left side, and thrust straight to his chest over his left hand, which he has forward on his staff, but such that you do not connect on his staff with yours; in this thrust, send your right hand well against your left arm, and let it go in on that arm; also turn your left palm around upward; thus the thrust goes that much deeper, and you hit as shown by the figure on the left in Image E.<sup>113</sup>

**Another in which you shall deliver a thrust upwards through his face**

- 3.27r.1 ➤ If your opponent crowds upon you in the bind, then keep your staff also hard on his; as soon as you two have come close, so that the staves connect together in the beginning of the second part, then remain hard on his staff with the bind, and thrust the butt away from you with your right hand, so that your tip extends on his staff toward his right shoulder; with this, also step with your right foot well out toward his left side, and thrust at his right shoulder with your staff, yet such that you remain hard on his with it; and in thrusting in, turn your right hand and butt back toward you around against your chest, so that your finger stands on your chest and the palm above; when you thus thrust in at his right shoulder while you remain with your staff hard on his, and in thrusting in, turn the butt back to you, then your thrust goes upward, and you hit him in his face. And this must be executed very quickly and forcefully in the work. [3.27v] With this thrust, send your staff up with both hands, and strike quickly back down from above at his face; and in this blow, spring with your right foot around toward his left side.

**Another how you shall thrust before him close to his staff without hitting, and shall follow up by striking long**

- 3.27v.1 ➤ In the Onset do not come too near your opponent, and if he will not work, then thrust in at his right side close to his staff; as soon as he wards off the thrust, and sends it away to his right, then let your

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<sup>113</sup> Meyer appears to be referring to the halberdier in the left foreground.

staff run off beside his right, and pull it around your head with your right hand, and strike a swift stroke at his left ear with one hand.

#### **A good stroke in which you turn around**

- 3.27v.2** ➤ Do it thus: in the Onset, as soon as you can reach the foible of his staff with your foible, then hold your tip straight before his face, and with this, turn yourself well to your right side, so that you turn your back to him; and as you turn your back to him, at the same time also step to him with your right foot behind your left; with this step, turn yourself fully around to your right side, and strike around with one hand, that is with your right, backwards straight from above at his head. This blow proceeds very well when you do it rightly, since even if he thrusts in as you turn yourself around for the blow, yet he cannot reach you, since you have bound him on his tip; [3.28r: *Image D*; 3.28v] or even if he should reach you, he merely connects with your back, while you hit him certainly when he thrusts in; also the stroke runs so swiftly that he cannot manage a thrust before it happens. In this turning around, you may also send in the blow across from the middle.

#### **Another with a Middle Blow**

- 3.28v.1** ➤ Thus: in the Onset when you can reach his staff in front with your foible, then pull your staff precipitously around your head, and strike with one hand across from your right at his left ear; with this stroke, step with your right foot well toward his left side, and as the stroke hits, then grip with your left hand close in front of your right back on the staff, and pull your staff back to your chest with your right hand; and as you thus pull your staff to you, then send your left hand far in before you in on the staff, such that your arm lies extended on your staff, and you have your left hand on the staff like a shield before your face.

#### **Pulling the thrusts**

- 3.28v.2** ➤ When you have bound your opponent in front, or stand before him in the parrying, and he will not work, then thrust earnestly at his face with a broad step forward on your left foot, and meanwhile note diligently if he is ready to put off and parry your thrust; if so, then do not complete it, but pull it rapidly back to [3.29r] you through your left hand, so that you have your left hand fully extended before your face; at the same time as you pull your staff back to you, then act earnestly as if you intended to go through underneath and thrust on the other side; with this pulling and compartment you must lift your forward foot and set it back down masterfully, so that it really seems as if you were already thrusting in on the other side; but as he goes out to the side against your thrust, to send it away, then just thrust straight before you back in at the same spot from which you pulled in the first place. All this shall go quickly and be completed earnestly with all its particulars.
- 3.29r.1** ➤ Now if he should work before you and thrust in at you, then set off his thrust with a jerk of your staff,

and after setting him off or parrying, quickly deliver a thrust, but on the way as you thrust in at him, then pull it back again, as if you again intended to thrust through underneath. Thus he will rapidly go to intercept it; and as he slips to the other side intending to parry, then thrust straight in before you again at the place from which you have pulled.

With these pulled thrusts you can also counter all postures. For example:

- 3.29r.2** ➤ If you find your opponent in the Low Guard on the left, then thrust straight at his face, and take heed as he goes up with his staff to strike out your thrust, and pull it somewhat back to you without completing it, and quickly go through underneath, and thrust on his left side over his left arm at his face as he is going up. Now if he goes after your staff, then go back through underneath, and so on until you perceive your opportunity to rush to an opening. [3.29v]

#### **Winding**

- 3.29v.1** ➤ If your opponent binds from his left against your right hard on your staff, and crowds hard in at you with Straight Parrying, so that you cannot yield from his staff to begin any device, then remain with the bind close before his hand on the staff, and crowd against his face with the tip, so that he is compelled to go up; as soon as he goes somewhat up in the air with his staff, then keep your tip on his staff, and quickly wind your butt from your right against his left over on top of his staff; press it down, and strike him on the head with your foible, so that your left hand comes over your right, as shown by the middle figures in the previous Image D.

#### **Another**

- 3.29v.2** ➤ In the Onset, bind him from your right side against his left hard on his staff, and again work at his face with the foible, so that he is compelled to send his staff somewhat up in the air. As soon as he goes up, then bend downward, and spring in to him under his staff with your right foot, and meanwhile keep your foible hard on his staff, and go through under his staff with the tail as you spring forward, and use it to wind over his staff on his right side; thus the tip comes after; strike him on the head with it. Or press downward with the butt when you have wound over, and wrench with it; thrust the tip at his face. [3.30r] Now if he presses upward so strongly that you cannot force his staff down with the butt, then wind the foible up from below beside his right arm at his face, while you must go up with the butt, having been forced to it, since he forces upward. Now if he should try to go up with his butt and wind over above you while you wind your butt over his staff, then rapidly wind your foible from your left against his right over his right arm and over and around his head, and catch him around the neck with your staff; use it to jerk toward you to your left side.
- 3.30r.1** ➤ Or bind him from your right against his left, and keep your foible hard on his staff, and wind the butt in

from beneath between his hand and staff, with a step forward on your right foot; wrench upward with it, as shown by the middle figures in the following Image F; then work further according to your opportunity.

- 3.30r.2** ➤ *Item:* bind him from your left against his right, close before his hand on his staff. Keep your tip hard on his staff, and wind the butt over his staff and over his right shoulder around his neck, with a spring forward on your right foot; meanwhile step with your right foot behind his left; cast him over your right leg, as you can see in the previous Image C.

#### **A taking of the staff**

- 3.30r.3** ➤ It often happens that both staves are bound together in the middle; now when this happens to you, then remain with your staff on his; release your left hand, [3.30v] reverse it, use it to grip both staves, and then go through with the butt under his. Jerk with your right hand up toward yourself; thus he must let go of it, or fall, if you step behind him with your right foot.<sup>114</sup>

#### **Driving**

- 3.30v.1** ➤ Execute this thus: when you have your right foot forward in the Onset, and still have your left hand forward on the staff, then raise your staff with both hands up toward your left shoulder; strike thus at his right with a step forward on your left foot, from above on his staff at his fingers, strongly through into the right Low Guard, with your body hanging well after it. At once slash strongly back up through his staff into the left High Guard again. If he should thrust at you at any point during this, you can take it out with this striking down from above and slashing up from below. And do this one stroke, three, four, or five, strongly from [above and] below in combination, until you see your opportunity to thrust.

#### **A device with driving**

- 3.30v.2** ➤ In the Onset as soon as you can reach your opponent, at once drive diagonally from above and below strongly in combination, as I have just taught. Now when you have driven against him for one to four strokes, then finally act earnestly as if you intended to strike at his right shoulder again, and more strongly than before; but in striking down, briskly and quickly send your staff through underneath close to his staff, and as you go through, step well out toward his left side; when you have gone through, thrust from the other side over his left arm at his face. [3.31r]

In all combat take diligent heed that you do not let yourself in any way be goaded or deceived, and that you do not idly deliver your thrust in the Before without particular opportunity. And if you find your opponent in a guard where he offers you an opening, then you shall not boldly thrust at it, but see if you can goad him with pulled thrusts, and then change through. Now if he adopts a posture and carries it in too long, then you

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<sup>114</sup> *A technique with many parallels in the German longsword tradition; cf. Longsword Sequence 1.41r.5.*

can well rush upon him suddenly, when he least expects it. Now if you have bound him, and cannot well thrust at him in the Before, because it will make you open, then deliver a thrust close to his staff, and as you are thrusting in, feel whether he will take out or strike out your thrust. As soon as you sense this, then go through underneath with your thrust, and help his staff go fully toward the side to which he has struck you out; or thrust in at him on the other side as he is striking you out. Now if you find that he will thrust at the same time as you, then do not be too hasty with your thrust, but hold it covertly or unobservedly, until he has committed to his thrust; and as he thrusts in, then send his staff out as you thrust in; then complete the thrust you have begun. Thus you shall not be too hasty in any device, but observe what he intends to execute against you, so that you can encounter him more appropriately.

#### **Another one in which you go through**

- 3.31r.1** ➤ Drive through his staff as before, once, twice, and when he least expects it, then precipitously fall through under his staff, and then wrench his staff rapidly from your right down toward your left, and with this, let your staff go around your head, and strike long after with one hand.

Now before I finish with this weapon, I will first cover the others, since these three weapons are executed from a single basis. [3.31v: *Image E*; 3.32r]

## Concerning the Halberd<sup>115</sup>

Although it is not my intent here to describe every single cut and thrust individually, I still thought it best to begin by presenting these six cuts with the halberd, since they are not only useful for the practice through which one can develop agility of body, but are also necessary for everyone who wishes to prepare himself for earnest defence with such weapons.<sup>116</sup> Therefore you should learn and manfully drive and cut them before everything else, as follows.

#### **Cross Cut from above with the halberd**

- 3.32r.1** ❖ In the Onset, if you have your left hand forward on the staff, then come with your left foot also forward, and cut the first from above with extended arm from your left against his right diagonally through his face, and back through by your right side again, so that your blade shoots forth by your right side back up above and forward, such that the point of your halberd stands toward your opponent's face, just as you have learnt previously concerning the Ox. From there, slash diagonally

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<sup>115</sup> *Running head*: Combat with the Halberd

<sup>116</sup> *It is not clear what six cuts Meyer means; on 3.33r he says he has described four cuts, which would appear to be the case. He may here be allowing for the possibility of beginning the Cross Cuts from the right, or beginning the driving from below.*

down toward your left with your hook, so that the blade of your halberd runs by your left side back through again, and fully past, so that your halberd comes to the left in the High Guard for the same cut as before. And thus cut back from above from your left diagonally through at his face as before; and drive through further as I have just taught, one blow to a few, back and forth, at your opponent's face following the diagonal Cross.

### **Cross Cut from below**

- 3.32r.2** ❖ Come again with your left foot forward, and hold your halberd in the High Guard on the left as before; from there cut with the edge of your blade from below by your left side against his right, diagonally upward through his face; with this Low Cut, go up in the air with both arms, so that at the end of the cut [3.32v] you hold your halberd with both hands on the right up beside your head, and the point again extends toward your opponent's face; with this, turn yourself well to your right side, so that you half turn your back to him. And at once slash by your right side from below diagonally upward against his left through his face, so that at the end of the slashing your halberd extends behind your left shoulder; thus you stand as if gathered for a High Cut. From there, turn the edge of your blade back down beside or behind your left, and cut through again by your left side diagonally up from below against his right at his face; and with this Low Cut turn yourself again well toward your right side, so that you can slash back as before with the hook of your halberd by your right side up from below against his left through his face.

### **Driving diagonally through the opponent**

- 3.32v.1** ❖ Stand with your left foot forward as always, and hold your halberd in the right High Guard, in such a way as shown by the rightmost little figure on the upper right [*in Image G (?)*]; from there, slash with your hook against his left at his face, down through toward your left, so that your halberd extends behind you toward the ground. From there, at once cut back from your left with the edge of your blade against his right diagonally through his face, back into the previous right High Guard; from there slash with the hook back down toward your left. And in this way continue to drive with your halberd over your forward thigh diagonally from above and below strongly through his face, one time to a few, until you perceive your opportunity, as you will learn in the devices.

### **Another driving**

- 3.32v.2** ❖ In the Onset, cut with the blade from your left against his right diagonally from above through his face, so that you come with this cut into the right Low Guard. From there, slash quickly back against his left diagonally up through his face, back into the left High Guard. In this way you shall [3.33r] break through swiftly and strongly from below and above opposite one another, so that you can put off all his thrusts with it; and meanwhile look diligently for your opportunity to rush to an opening.

You should always be able to execute these four driving cuts in combination, namely the first two through



the Cross, and the two others diagonally opposite one another, and to change them off into one another. Further drivings will follow from this.

Now I will present some devices illustrating how to fight with this and similar weapons, one after another in order as follows.

#### **The first device with the High Cut**

- 3.33r.1** ➤ In the Onset, when you have come before your opponent in the Straight Parrying or Field Guard, near enough to him that both blades can bind or connect, then rapidly lift your halberd along with your left foot, which shall then stand in front, and suddenly and quickly cut strongly through against his right, close to his halberd down from above against his hands; and with this cutting down, change through under his halberd, and thrust at once on the other side, that is against his left side at his face.

#### **The second device with the High Cut teaches how to pull your halberd around your head toward your left, cut through against his left, and then thrust against his right at his face**

- 3.33r.2** ➤ If you have your left hand forward on the staff of your halberd, then note as soon as you can reach his blade with yours, and rapidly lift your halberd with both hands, and cut outside down from above against his left arm, which he has forward on his staff, strongly through, with a step forward on your left foot, so that at the end of the cut you stand with your upper body lowered well after the cut by stepping broadly. He will rapidly counterthrust after you cut through, so note diligently to step out with your right foot behind your left as he thrusts in, and as you thus step out, strike [3.33v: *Image H*; 3.34r] out his incoming halberd with your blade. For since he makes himself very weak with his hasty counterthrust, you can easily strike out his halberd, and so weaken him that you can well and confidently thrust at his opening before he recovers.

#### **Another with this High Cut**

- 3.34r.1** ➤ Note when you thus approach him in the Straight Parrying, and he will not work, then rapidly lift your halberd as before, and act as if you intended to cut back outside at his left arm. However you shall not let this blow hit, but as he goes away with his halberd to parry the blow, then go through under his halberd, and thrust on the other side at his face, with a step out toward the same side. In this thrusting in, since you make yourself somewhat weak and open, he will quickly rush to you with a thrust; as you thrust in, watch diligently for his thrust, and go over his staff with your blade as he is thrusting in. Thus as he thrusts in, wrench his staff to you with the hook of your blade; thus you use it to grapple his hook, and take his halberd. As soon as you have somewhat wrenched his halberd, then rapidly thrust straight back in before you at his face.

#### **Precept**

Whenever you thus cut through down from above beside his halberd toward his arm or hand, whether this

takes place to goad or entice him out of his advantage, or to hit his hand or arm, then when you fall through with your halberd under his, note diligently whether he will counterthrust at you. As soon as he does this, then go quickly back up with horizontal blade, and strike out his incoming thrust up from below, and counterthrust at him quickly and powerfully before he recovers.

### **With the Low Cut**

- 3.34r.2** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the long Straight Parrying; from there, lift your halberd up into the High Guard, and as you lift your halberd, at the same time reverse your left hand [3.34v] on the staff, so that you hold it as shown by the figure on the right in Image H; and cut by your left side from below against his right, diagonally up through with the blade, into the High Guard; if he thrusts during this, then wrench him up with the Low Cut. Then slash back down with the blade diagonally toward your left, and let it go around your head; cut in with one hand straight and long from above. This device will proceed very well for you if you execute it swiftly.

### **Another**

- 3.34v.1** ➤ Bind from your left against his right with your blade on his, and jerk it out from you by pushing suddenly. Pull quickly back toward your left around your head; in pulling around, give your staff a swing with your left hand, and then release it, and cut with one hand from your right across from below against his left at his head. At once extend your right palm back away from you, and recover your halberd, as it is still going up from below. Then cut quickly down from above at his head with both hands, with a step out; with this cut you shall suppress his halberd downward if he should meanwhile thrust in; and then counterthrust quickly.

### **A device with the Middle Cut**

- 3.34v.2** ➤ In the Onset when you come before your opponent, then lift your halberd into the High Guard, as shown by the figure on the left in Image G; and from there, cut with both hands across against his right strongly through at his face and halberd. Then rapidly turn your blade up, and at once slash back from your right against his left, also across, and strongly through at his face and halberd. With this, pull your halberd toward your left around your head with both hands, and cut through down from above at his forward left arm and at his face. Finally follow up with a thrust straight at his face. With these two horizontal Middle Cuts you wrench his halberd from one side to the other, and so \*constrain him that he must worry how he will maintain control over his halberd; therefore you can well rush on him with the High Cut while he struggles to retain control. [3.35r]

### **Wrenching**

- 3.35r.1** ➤ Note as soon as an opponent has bound with his blade on yours, then send your blade onto his staff somewhat over his blade, so that you come in with your blade over his, and wind over his staff with it. With this, wrench quickly and strongly down toward you, and thus jerk his weapon by the foible; then

quickly thrust on his halberd up at his face. If he goes up rapidly to send away the thrust, then quickly change through underneath as he is going up, and thrust in at him on the other side, with a step out. This goes to both sides.

**How you shall conduct yourself with changing through and wrenching against an opponent who counterthrusts quickly**

- 3.35r.2** ➤ If you have bound your opponent from your left side, then change through against him with careless and negligent comportment, so that he will be readily incited to thrust; as soon as he thrusts in while you are changing through, then wind over his staff with your blade, and again wrench toward yourself toward your left, as you previously have wrenched toward your right.
- 3.35r.3** ➤ *Item:* thrust in on one side, but judiciously, and note diligently if he will thrust in at the same time as you while you are thrusting in. As soon as you perceive this, at once wind over his staff with your blade, and as he thrusts in, wrench down toward yourself with your blade. Thrust quickly at his face before he recovers; thus you will wrench his halberd and hit.
- 3.35r.4** ➤ Or when are thrusting in, if you feel that he will thrust in at the same time as you, then hold back your thrust very subtly and covertly, and with this, step well out sideways toward him, and at the same time rapidly press his staff down away from you. With this pressing down, slide your halberd in on his, and out over his shoulder, catching him around the neck with your blade. Wrench him toward you with your blade, as you can see in the middle figures in Image I.
- 3.35r.5** ➤ Further note when you have bound an opponent with your blade, and he will not work, then go rapidly and suddenly away from his blade, and step out somewhat to the side against which you have bound. [3.35v: *Image I*; 3.36r] With this, thrust quickly at his face; and as you thrust in, take heed whether he will parry and strike out your thrust. If he does this, then let your blade drop; use it to grapple him by the forward leg as he is striking you out, and jerk it toward you, as you can see in Image K.
- 3.36r.1** ➤ If you stand before an opponent in the middle of the work, then act as if you were thrusting in earnestly, and with this, make your face open, albeit judiciously, so that he will be incited to thrust. Then as soon as he thrusts in, grapple his blade with yours, and wrench down toward you as he is thrusting in. Thus you take his halberd as before; concerning this see Image D.

**How you shall set your halberd in front on his neck**

- 3.36r.2** ➤ Position yourself with your halberd in the Straight Parrying, and take diligent heed as soon as he thrusts in at your right at your face, and meanwhile step out quickly toward his right, and go onto his neck with your blade horizontal, as you can see previously in Image A. Crowd forcefully to him thus; and in crowding in, let your staff go somewhat out behind you through your hands, so that you come

nearer to him, and stamp on his forward leg; thus he will fall.

- 3.36r.3** ➤ Or when an opponent thrusts in at your right at your face as before, then again spring to him toward his right as he is thrusting in, and at the same time, wind your blade or your whole halberd over his from above, as shown by the two figures on the upper right in Image F; then work at his face at your will. Counter: as soon as an opponent winds over you in this way or similarly, then run in on him with your butt.
- 3.36r.4** ➤ In the Onset, see that you catch his halberd behind his blade with your horizontal blade, or grapple it in the bind as illustrated hereafter in Image M; and do not let him come away from it, but send his halberd upward with it. And watch diligently for when he goes up away, and thrust straight in before you at his chest as he is going away, or to his face, one of which you will surely have. If an opponent has seized your halberd in this way, and waits for you to go away, then jerk your halberd away upward, and as he thrusts in, turn the butt [3.36v: *Image F*; 3.37r] up and drop the front of your halberd; thus strike out his incoming thrust with hanging halberd, as shown previously by the figure on the right in Image B [*?read: E*]. At once rapidly counterthrust to his nearest opening.
- 3.37r.1** ➤ If an opponent sends your halberd too high upward as I have just taught, then remain or press hard on his blade, and meanwhile run in on him with the butt; wind it over or under his staff between his arms or around his neck; step behind him to cast him.
- 3.37r.2** ➤ When you stand with your left foot forward and your halberd in Straight Parrying, before an opponent who will not work, then rapidly raise your rear hand, and let your forward hand and blade drop toward your left, and pull it thus toward your left around your head with both hands; as you thus pull around your head, at the same time step with your left foot well out toward his right, and with this, cut powerfully through his face from your left against his right. Now as you cut in, note if he has gone up to parry; as soon as you see this, then go quickly up with your rear right hand, and let your halberd drop somewhat in front; thus change around down beside his right arm, and thrust in front at his chest while he still has both hands up, as shown by the small middle figures in Image K.
- 3.37r.3** ➤ *Item*: again cut a high Round Stroke from your left with a step out toward his right; as he goes up to parry it, then pull your halberd back toward your left; then cut from your left across through his lower leg, and quickly turn to the other side, slashing back against his halberd.
- 3.37r.4** ➤ Also you shall particularly note, whenever you execute a Round Stroke, if he thrusts at you as you are pulling your halberd around, as soon as he thrusts in, then cut him with the Round Cut from above onto his halberd close behind his blade, and see that you step well out toward his right with this cut. As

soon as you hit his halberd, then force down to you toward your left side; thus you take his halberd.

- 3.37r.5** ➤ *Item:* thrust earnestly against his right at his face, and in thrusting in let your tip drop as he bears off and parries the thrust. With this, pull your halberd toward your left around your head with both hands, and cut with both hands straight from above at his head with a step forward on your left foot. With this cut you will suppress his halberd to the ground if he thrusts in; at once rush straight in before you with the thrust. [3.37v: *Image G*; 3.38r]

#### **Some counters against the postures, or how you shall lay on against him**

- 3.38r.1** ➤ If an opponent encounters you in the High Guard, and is eager to suppress your thrust, then act as if you intended to thrust earnestly at his face, so that you incite him to come down. And as you thrust in, watch diligently for when he falls down with the High Cut, and meanwhile step quickly out sideways; with this, pull your halberd out from under his, and fall with it onto his from above. Wrench it down toward you with your blade; at once thrust away from the wrenching at his face, actually completing it this time.
- 3.38r.2** ➤ Or threaten to thrust at his face, and as he falls down with his halberd, then pull your halberd as you spring out sideways, and thrust over his halberd at his face.
- 3.38r.3** ➤ If you find an opponent in the Low Guard, then fall suddenly with your halberd onto his, close behind his blade, as illustrated in Image G [*?read: C*]. Hold him off until you perceive your opportunity to work.
- 3.38r.4** ➤ Or thrust earnestly at his face; thus he will precipitously go up, intending to strike out your thrust; therefore do not let it connect, but pull, and change through underneath as he is going up, and thrust in at him on the other side. You can also strike him out from the other side, and then follow up with a thrust, actually completing it this time.
- 3.38r.5** ➤ If you find an opponent in the Side Guard, then drive him up with a thrust that you pull; as soon as he goes up, then change through quickly, and grapple his hook from the other side with yours, and wrench toward you, and see where else you can rush upon him with thrusting.
- 3.38r.6** ➤ If you find your opponent in the Straight Parrying, then bind him with your blade on his, and when he is most earnestly watching for you to go away, then rapidly lift your butt, and drop your blade beside his; thus you incite him to counterthrust without delay, since this will make you open. As soon as he thrusts in, you have two good devices you can execute against him. The first is this: when you thus let your halberd drop in front, and have lifted the butt, then as he is thrusting in, step well out sideways with your right foot toward his left, and turn the butt back down to you against your flank; and in this

turning downward, thrust at the same time as him against his left at his face; as you thrust in, lean your head well to your right side behind your halberd staff so that [3.38v] you pull your face away from him, which he will certainly think to hit.

- 3.38v.1** ➤ For the second, when you have let your halberd drop before him, then go through with hanging blade under his halberd toward your left. As soon as he thrusts in, then again turn the butt down to you, and with this, strike out his halberd from your left side; at once before he recovers, you shall hit him with a thrust.

#### **A Wrath Cut**

- 3.38v.2** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Field Guard, that is in Straight Parrying, yet such that you let the butt go somewhat through out behind you. As soon as your opponent thrusts in at you, then take his thrust out toward your left, and with this, let your halberd go toward your left around your head; and in pulling around, release your forward left hand, and grip with it behind your right hand on the butt of your halberd; thus cut with your blade with both hands against his left at his head.
- 3.38v.3** ➤ If an opponent cuts or strikes at you from above in any way, then reverse your forward left hand on the staff; go up in the air with both hands, and with this, spring well to him under his stroke. Catch it between your hands; wind in at him underneath or above, and set your weapon upon him.
- 3.38v.4** ➤ Or cut across from below against his attack; if he changes through, then chase him.

Now I will proceed to the pike and briefly discuss it; finally I will conclude with some general instruction regarding these three weapons.

## Combat with the Pike<sup>117</sup>

As regards the pike, first you have the guards, of which there are six, that is: the High Guard for the blow, Middle Guard, and the Fool, then the High Guard on your left shoulder for the thrust; *item*, the Low Guard on your forward knee; and the Suppressing Guard. Then to describe everything in sequential order, next follow the three chief thrusts, that is the High at the face, the Low at the groin, the third at the chest; in these three all the others are embodied and conceived. Then lastly there are the devices from the postures, along with the counters that arise from them. [3.39r]

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<sup>117</sup> *Running head:* Combat with the Pike

### **High Guard [*Oberhut*]**

For this, position yourself thus: stand with your left foot forward, and hold the butt of your pike on your right flank with your right hand, and with your left send it in before you with the foible up.

### **Middle Guard [*Mittlehut*] or Straight Parrying [*Gerade Versatzung*]**

When you hold the butt on your right flank as I have just taught, and drop the tip of your pike far enough that it stands in your opponent's face, then it is called the Middle Guard or Straight Parrying, between the High and Low. When you then let the butt go out further behind you, so that you hold your pike in the middle in the same manner, with the tip at his face, then this is called the Field Guard, because the pike is generally held this way as a defence in the field.

### **Side Guard [*Nebenhut*] and Change [*Wechsel*]**

Hold your pike with the butt on your right flank as I have said above concerning the High Guard, and let the foible lie extended on the ground straight before you, yet holding it fast with both hands such that whenever it is necessary you can swing it up at your will for a thrust using its impetus. When you hold your pike with the butt in your right hand on your right flank, and your left hand extended on the pike and with the foible on the ground, to whichever side you move the foible, either to the right or the left, it is called the Side Guard.

The Change is when you change off from one side to the other, since no posture in which one stands still can properly be called the Change.

### **High Guard for the Thrust [*Oberhut zum Stoß*]**

In the Onset when you come with your left foot forward, and you have your pike lying before your left hand on your left shoulder, as shown in the figure on the upper right in Image C, then you have done it correctly. You can fight from it as you will be taught later. [3.39v: *Image K*; 3.40r]

### **Low Guard [*Underhut*]**

For this, position yourself thus: stand again with your left foot forward, and hold your pike with your left hand on your forward knee, so that the point stands up against the opponent's face, as shown by the large figure at the beginning of this book under the main title [*see title page (Frontmatter 1r)*].

### **Suppressing Guard [*Dempffhut*]**

When you stand with your left foot forward, and your pike is set with the butt inside your right thigh, and your left hand extended to grip as far up the pikestaff as you can, so that you send and hold your pike firmly in front of you in a broad stance, as shown on the left in Image I, then you have done it correctly. From this posture you can suppress his staff downward and hold it off at your will; therefore this guard is

called the Suppressing Guard.

### **Concerning thrusts, and how you shall carry them out fluidly in the work**

Now since there will be plenty about all kinds of thrusts in the devices, I will only show you how the High and Low Thrust are to be executed in the work, thus:

- 3.40r.1** ➤ Hold your pike in the High Guard on your left shoulder, as I have taught; give your pike a covert swing forward, and meanwhile step forward with your left foot; with this step forward, thrust before you in at his face while your pike is flying upward in this swing, so that at the end of the thrust both your arms are extended to the furthest; then as your pike drops back to the ground, you shall step yet further forth with your left foot, and pull your pike back to you with both hands before it has entirely fallen to the ground, lowering your upper body after the pike; and with this, let it sink into the Low Guard upon the knee (which will be flexed well forward), such that the tip stands at your opponent's face. [3.40v]

#### **Thrust from below**

- 3.40v.1** ➤ When you have your pike in the Low Guard, then give it a swing forward again, and with this swing, thrust up forward at his face with both hands. As soon as your arms are stretched to the furthest in thrusting at his face, then pull it back again onto your left shoulder into the High Guard with your body upright, before he manages to suppress its impetus.

When you can correctly execute these two thrusts together with the Flying Thrust, then all the others will be that much easier for you to execute. Now I will further undertake to teach the devices from one posture after another. And since it will be more appropriate to discuss the first High Guard later in the counters for the postures, I will begin with the second High Guard. Fight from it thus:

### **Fighting from the High Guard**

As regards the devices and combat with the pike, I will first advise and remind you to pay diligent heed to the distinction between thrusting in the Before and in the After; and I will show and teach you how to execute every technique in three ways, where it should be necessary.<sup>118</sup>

- 3.40v.2** ➤ And firstly when you stand in the High Guard with your left foot forward such that you have your pike lying on your right shoulder, and your opponent thrusts in at your left, then spring well out from his thrust with your right foot toward his left; thrust in at the same time as him; and in thrusting in, release your left hand from the pike, and with this, turn your right side well after your thrust. When you have thus quickly sprung out, and turned your right hand up toward your left in thrusting in, and have well

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<sup>118</sup> Presumably a reference to the *Before, After, and Instantly*.



extended your right arm, then he will miss and you will hit. After you have thrust, then at once jerk the butt back up to you with your right hand; and as you jerk your pike to you, step back again with your right foot, and at the same time recover your pike with your left hand; turn your right hand down forcefully; thus your pike will swing back up again in front, and you will bring it back into your control. [3.41r]

#### **A good device from this High Guard**

- 3.41r.1** ➤ Now if he will not thrust or work first, then lift your left foot, and act as if you intended to thrust at him forcefully from above; but don't do this, rather step forward to him with your left upraised foot, and in setting it back down, thrust from your shoulder at his face; but don't let this thrust go forth as I have said, instead as you step forward and set down your foot, swing the tail of your pike down onto your forward left knee in the Low Guard. Then watch, since he will certainly counterthrust at once—for if you have correctly sent your thrust with earnest compoirtment, it will really seem as if you had lost control of your weapon by thrusting; therefore he will be incited to rush in with his thrust, and will himself lose control through thrusting. As soon as he sends in his thrust, take it out with a side blow, yet such that you do not stray too far with it, and thrust from your thigh straight in before you at his face.

#### **Fighting from the Low Guard**

- 3.41r.2** ➤ Position yourself in the Low Guard such that you have your pike lying on your forward knee, with the tip standing toward your opponent's face, concerning which you have been taught above. And when he thrusts in, take diligent heed to which side he thrusts, and bear off his incoming thrust by turning, and at the same time step out to the other side with your rear foot, and thrust in at the same time as him.

#### **Working in the Before**

- 3.41r.3** ➤ Now if he will not thrust first, but waits for your attack, then bind him in the middle of his staff, and feel if you can jerk him out with a rapid and sudden pushing to one side; after pushing him out, let your pike quickly shoot forth at his face.
- 3.41r.4** ➤ Or when you have thus bound him, then change through judiciously once or twice under his pike to both sides. The first stage of this is to note meanwhile diligently on which side he will stray too far after your changing through, so that you can meanwhile quickly rush to his opening with thrusting. The second is this: when an opponent thus changes through against you, then watch diligently to see if he [3.41v] goes too far down or to one side with his pike in changing through, which can easily take place; then as he is changing through, thrust judiciously and quickly at his face. The third is this: when you see that he waits in ambush for your changing through, then change through against him first, and watch diligently for his thrusting in, as you are changing through before him. As soon as his thrust flies in, then strike it out with a side blow, and quickly counterthrust.

- 3.41v.2** ➤ If you see that an opponent intends to use this changing through to incite you to thrust so that he can foil you, then act as if you did not realise this, and thrust in at him earnestly but judiciously, such that you do not lose control of your pike. And when he goes to strike it out, then change through below with your thrust; thus he not only strikes out in vain, but strays with his staff too far to one side, so that he opens the other side; therefore when you have changed through, thrust in at him on the other side as he goes to strike you out.

### **Middle Guard**

- 3.41v.3** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself in the Middle Guard; against whichever side he then thrusts in at you, then step to the other side, and thrust at the same time as him; but in thrusting in, turn your long edge against his staff, so that you send his thrust away from you more surely with it.
- 3.41v.4** ➤ Now if he will thrust in at your lower body, then lift the tail of your pike, and with this, drop the foible, and strike his incoming thrust between you and him out to the side with hanging staff; then turn the staff back up and quickly thrust at his opening.
- 3.41v.5** ➤ Now if your opponent meets you in a similar guard, then bind him with earnest comportment, and before he knows it, violently push his staff out to the side, and while he tries to bar and hold against your pressing out, then rapidly go through under his pike, and thrust in on the other side with a step out.

### **Suppressing Guard**

- 3.41v.6** ➤ Note when you have come in the Onset into the Suppressing Guard, as shown by the aforementioned figure on the left in Image I; hold your pike firmly, so that he cannot [3.42r: *Image M*; 3.42v] easily strike or jerk it out. And if he thrusts in at you, whether against the right or left side, then step out sideways from his thrust, and thrust in at the same time as him; or set off his incoming staff, and again thrust in at him with a step out; or suppress his staff down from above as it flies in for the thrust, and thrust quickly at his face before he recovers. Now if you feel that he goes up with his pike so quickly that you cannot rush upon him with the thrust, then change through under his pike as he is going upward, and thrust in on the other side.
- 3.42v.1** ➤ Now if he will not thrust first, but positions himself likewise in strong parrying, then bind him hard in the middle of his staff, and press it down from you hard. If he holds hard against it and presses up, then go through underneath rapidly and quickly, and fall on him from the other side against his pike. Again press forcefully down from you; and do this on both sides until you weaken him, such that he can no longer hold his pike in his control; then thrust at his nearest opening while he is faltering with his pike.

- 3.42v.2** ➤ Contrarily when an opponent lies hard on your pike in this way, and will thus press you out down to the side, then act as if you intended to hold and press hard against it, but when he least expects it, rapidly change through under his pike, and fall back on it from the other side, and press it to the same side against which he had intended to press yours out; thus you compel him down, so that he can hardly recover again unharmed or without injury.

If your opponent will go through under your pike because you are pressing him out, then as he is changing through, always fall on him from the other side with the bind hard on his pike, and that to both sides, further and further over the middle of his staff, so that he can have no effect or come through to no place, until you see your opportunity to thrust.

### **Side Guard**

- 3.42v.3** ➤ In the Onset, hold your pike with the tip somewhat out to the side on the ground, as shown by the figure on the upper left in Image C. As soon as your opponent thrusts in at you, then quickly step [3.43r] well out from his thrust toward his left side, and with this, swing your pike from the ground; thrust in at the same time as him, or take out his incoming thrust upward with the short edge, and counterthrust quickly.
- 3.43r.1** ➤ Now if he will not thrust at you first, but holds his pike straight in before him, then rapidly lift your pike and strike out his pike strongly with a side blow; at once quickly follow up with a thrust. If he holds hard against it, then quickly go through underneath after this blow, and thrust on the other side with a great step out.
- 3.43r.2** ➤ If an opponent will strike out your pike as I have just taught, then change through underneath as he is striking in, and thrust in at him on the other side as his pike is falling down.
- 3.43r.3** ➤ Stand again with your left foot forward, hold your pike with the butt on your right flank, and with the tip extended on the ground toward your left side; when you stand before your opponent in this guard and he thrusts in at you, then step well out from his thrust with your left foot toward your left side; with this, swing your pike, and thrust in over his pike at the same time as him, as you step out and he is thrusting in; or strike his staff out with yours. Then counterthrust rapidly and quickly.

## The Second Part concerning the Pike

### Counters for the postures in the pike, along with other shrewd devices

- 3.43r.4** ➤ In the Onset, if you find your opponent in the Suppressing Guard, then send your pike into the High Guard for the Stroke, and at once strike through down from above against his forward hand. With this blow you will incite him to counterthrust quickly; therefore slash your pike strongly back upward with a swing; strike his thrust out with it, and swiftly counterthrust. [3.43v]

#### How you shall strike down on his pike, change through, and thrust in on the other side

- 3.43v.1** ➤ Or bind him with a similar guard from your left side on his staff, and strike through down on his staff against his fingers; but in the blow, change through under his pike, and quickly thrust in on the other side with a step out.
- 3.43v.2** ➤ Now against those who do not counterthrust at once, use this device: after you have bound him as I have just taught, then strike as before down on his staff at his fingers, and with this, go through underneath against him; threaten with earnest comportment to thrust at him on the other side; and as he goes against your thrust to parry it, then rapidly change back through, so that he vainly strays with his parrying, and thrust in at him to the same side on which you executed the blow, with a step out.

#### Another

- 3.43v.3** ➤ *Item*: change through again with the aforementioned blow, and strike from the other side powerfully across against his pike, and while he is still faltering, then thrust at his opening. Or if he holds hard against you, then change through, and thrust on the other side.
- 3.43v.4** ➤ Now if you hold your pike in the High Guard for the Stroke, and he thrusts in at you, then to whichever side he thrusts in, step to the other, and strike down from above on his pike. In this blow, as soon as your tip has come to the level of his face, then thrust the pike in before you, turning the blow into a thrust.

#### Winding Through

- 3.43v.5** ➤ When your opponent encounters you in the Straight Parrying or else in a guard in which he holds his pike straight in before him, bind him from your left against his right. Then provoke him with comportment, pushing, and threatening in all kinds of ways, until he thrusts, and when he thrusts, go through with the tail of your pike under his toward your right, and wind it up toward your right, so that you bear off his pike with this winding upward toward your left; concerning this see the figure on the upper left in Image D. Then set your pike inside upon his chest. [3.44r: *Image L*; 3.44v]

### **Precept**

Whenever you have used the foible of your pike to bind over the middle of an opponent who can be readily and easily incited to thrust, then you can use your tail to wind through against him to whichever side you wish, with a back-step, and in winding through and stepping out, go up with it, so that you not only put aside his pike toward the side from which you have wound through, but also gather yourself to set on and thrust at your will. A particular judiciousness is required for this winding through, so that you can be sure of the feeling.

### **A counter**

- 3.44v.1 ➤ If an opponent encounters you in the High Guard for the Thrust, such that he has his pike lying on his left shoulder, then position yourself in the Change on the left, that is in the left Low Guard. From there, strike strongly against his pike with yours; thus you take it from his shoulder; then before he has recovered from the blow, thrust to the nearest opening.
- 3.44v.2 ➤ Contrarily, when an opponent will strike out your pike from your left shoulder, then as he strikes in, change through under his pike, so that he misses with the blow, and thrust at his opening while he is straying with his weapon.
- 3.44v.3 ➤ If you wish to strike out an opponent's pike as I have taught above, and you see that he will change through against you, then act as if you did not notice this, and strike with earnest comportment against his pike; but in this blow keep full control over your pike, so that just as he goes through, you are ready to thrust with a step out; or else you can take him out from the other side with this blow, and at once counterthrust (the first attack you actually complete).

### **Another counter**

- 3.44v.4 ➤ If you find your opponent in one of the Side Guards, then act as if you were going to thrust earnestly at the opening; as he goes up to encounter your thrust, then pull it back to you, and change through under his pike; thrust in on the other side. [3.45r]

### **Chasing**

- 3.45r.1 ➤ When an opponent stands before you in one of the Low Guards, and will then go up into the High Guard, then take heed as he is swinging up, and counterthrust against him; thus you hit him as illustrated by the upper figures in Image A.

In all binding you shall heed this counterthrusting, so that as soon as he goes away and is in the middle of going away, you can counterthrust.

### **Precept**

- 3.45r.2** ➤ Concerning the loss of control with a thrust note this precept: when you have lost control of your weapon with an eager thrust, in whatever way it may take place, then spring back with your forward foot, and pull the butt upward, as you can see in the figure on the upper right in the previous Image H; thus put aside all his counterthrusts. And meanwhile recover your staff with your left hand; swing it back into your control, into whatever guard the situation calls for. Practice will make this clearer to you.

### **Another good device with which you can provoke him out of his advantage**

- 3.45r.3** ➤ Hold your pike in the Low Guard on your forward thigh, and give it a swing with energetic impetus; now as the foible of your pike swings up, thrust at the same time upward at his face with extended arms. When your pike is in the outermost point of its flight, he will rapidly counterthrust, once he has escaped your thrust; therefore pull your hands higher over your head, and drop the tip of your pike; thus strike out his incoming thrust with hanging pike to the side as shown by the figure on the upper right in Image M; rapidly swing your pike to counterthrust before he recovers.

### **Another**

- 3.45r.4** ➤ *Item:* hold your pike in the High Guard, and when he thrusts in, drop the foible to strike him out again, and finish as before. From this device many other devices can be learned, yet they require a strong man. [3.45v]

### **How you shall swing your pike with one hand and jab in**

- 3.45v.1** ➤ In the Onset, position yourself before your opponent with your pike as shown by the little figure on the upper left in Image L. As soon as he thrusts in, swing your pike around from your right toward your left before your face, as you can see in the same figure's comportment, such that in this swing you strike out his pike with the tail of your pike, or evade his pike by stepping out; at the same time also step to him with your left foot behind your right, so that you turn your back toward him; and thus in the force and impetus of the initial swing, thrust beside your right backwards up at his face; with this thrust, also step with your right foot behind to him. As soon as the thrust is finished, and as your pike is falling forward to the ground, then keep your right foot in place, and take a broad step away from him with your left, lowering your upper body well away from your opponent forward over your left knee, which shall be flexed well forward; and with this, pull your butt to you with your right hand, until it is close beside your left foot, on the ground, and wait for him to thrust in. As soon as he thrusts in, swing your pike powerfully again with one hand from your left up toward your right; with this swing, spring well out toward his right with your left foot; thrust thus with one hand from above at his face while your pike is still flying in the air through the force of the swing. And note that in all this you shall hold your pike by the butt such that the little finger side of your hand is toward the staff, and the thumb and index finger is toward the butt.

### Another jab with one hand

- 3.45v.2 ➤ Position yourself before your opponent as shown by the figure on the upper right in Image B, and shove your pike away from you in a jerk with one hand, and jerk it rapidly by the butt toward your left back up to you, so that it lifts and swings itself up in front with this jerking; in this swinging upward, step well to your right side toward him, and again thrust at him with one hand. [3.46r]

### Running In

Running in with the pike is of two types: one takes place with the butt, the other with the tip. Do the one with the tip thus:

- 3.46r.1 ➤ Bind hard from your left against his right on his pikestaff; note as he thrusts in, and step with your right foot toward his left with your head leaning well forward out from his thrust, and at the same time wind through under his pike toward your right with your tail; and in winding through, quickly send the tail of your pike also up toward your right, so that you put aside his thrust toward your left side; meanwhile go through with your head between your arms toward your right, and at the same time release your right hand from the [butt]<sup>119</sup>, and grip back on the pike in front of your left hand with a quick spring forward toward his left side, so that the butt goes out over your left shoulder; thus you parry and hit as illustrated in the figure on the upper left in Image E.

### Another

- 3.46r.2 ➤ *Item*: set the butt of your pike on your left hip, and see that you give him cause to thrust in at your left side. As soon as he thrusts in, release your right hand from the butt, and let the butt shoot through beside your left back behind you; and spring well in at the same time with your right foot toward his left side, and meanwhile grip with your right hand in before your left, back on your pike, and run in again as shown by the same figures.

Execute the second running in, with the butt, against those who send their pike up in front in combat; for when each of you has bound the other, and, remaining in the bind, have come up in the air with your pikes, then you can run in on him with the butt according to your opportunity and will.

In conclusion, you shall know that in none of these weapons, whether in the staff, halberd, or pike, should you lightly come out of your advantage, nor shall you allow yourself to be provoked out of it, unless you [3.46v] not only can get him for certain, but have also diligently reflected whether you can bring your weapon back from the executed thrust into your control without harm, and can in timely fashion spring out and parry his counterrushing, if your thrust should fail. Now if you find your opponent in his advantage in a

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<sup>119</sup> 1570: vordern ort ('tip'); *read*: hindern ort

posture, then do not thrust to his opening without particular opportunity, but see how you can provoke and incite him out of his advantage with knocking, jerking, changing through, and pushing, and sometimes with pulled thrusts; and as soon as he goes up or away, or begins to work, then lay on and begin your device. Also you shall diligently observe and feel in all bindings whether he is hard or soft in opposing you; *item*, whether he is quick or slow to counterthrust; also in thrusting in you shall be so judicious and prudent, that if you feel in the middle of thrust that he will quickly thrust after or at the same time as you, then you shall not complete that thrust, but turn out of it into a parry, and at once counterthrust, actually completing it this time. Thus in all devices you shall make yourself well trained and quick-thinking.

### **A brief lesson in how to use your pike in earnest cases on the field and wield it according to your advantage**

The pike requires a strong, earnest and cautious man who knows how to control his pike judiciously, and to set his thrust upon his opponent certainly, and who can act at the right time in the work. For it can easily happen that with a failed thrust you can fall and come into irretrievable harm, particularly since the length of the pike gives it an exaggerated weight. Therefore you shall be diligent to observe a correct distinction between thrusting in the Before and in the After. I will give you a brief lesson and precept concerning this through the following examples, for experience sufficiently attests how readily one can lose control of the weapon by thrusting, if he attacks at the wrong time and without discipline.

- 3.46v.1** ➤ And firstly, if your opponent encounters you with a similar weapon, that is with a similar pike, then take heed whether he is hasty and wrathful with his attack, so that he rushes first to thrust; then act earnestly as if you intended to steal his initial thrust, and get in first, so that you prompt him to rush even more with his initial thrust; but you shall not thrust first, although you act as if you were going to do so, but strike [3.47r] his thrust to one side with a jerk, and set your weapon upon him in the face.
- 3.47r.1** ➤ Now if he is so strong with his pike, that you cannot make enough room to hit him by striking him out the first time, then do to him thus: after you have struck out his first thrust, and he quickly recovers, then as he is gathering his pike, strike against it from the other side. When you correctly execute these two strikings out, then there will certainly be enough space for you to thrust at his face in the blink of an eye before he fully recovers; for when someone thrusts thus eagerly and wrathfully, it is easy to take and strike out his pike.

### **Another device**

- 3.47r.2** ➤ In the Onset, hold your pike with the pikehead well down, extending somewhat toward your left side, so that your entire face is open. This will incite him to rush to it with a thrust; as soon as he thrusts in, then go up with both hands, and use your long edge to strike out his incoming thrust from your left up from below toward your right; with this striking out, spring well out with your left foot toward his right and to him, and thrust quickly in the blink of an eye over his pikestaff in his face, before he has



recovered from being struck out.

Now when your opponent is also prudent and will not thrust first, it will not behoove you also to stand in this way, but you must thrust first; so do to him thus:

- 3.47r.3** ➤ In the Onset, after you have given your pike a swing, then send in a powerful thrust with grim comportment beside his pike at his right; but in this thrusting in, maintain control over your pike, and if you cannot hit him in this thrust, let the pikehead drop somewhat out to the side, as if you had failed unwillingly through some hindrance; but by letting your pike go somewhat out to the side, you shall gather for a powerful striking out, and as he thrusts in, spring with your left foot well toward his right to him, and with this, strike out his pike powerfully up from your left toward your right as you step forward, and meanwhile go up with both hands, and thrust over his pike in his face.

All this applies when you have your left hand forward on the pike. Now when you hold the other one forward, then you must send and execute the thrust and the device against his left, just as you previously have executed it against his right. Also you shall here note that it does not take so long in practice as it does to teach, but it must all [3.47v] take place and be executed in the blink of an eye.

Now what is further necessary concerning these devices, I will present and teach at length in another place, and also concerning unmatched weapons.

*[1570 edition has corrections here—omitted in the translation]*

End of this Book

Printed at Strassburg by Thiebolt Berger at the Winemarket at the sign of the Grapes