

On Cut-Fencing

An English translation of the second part of

Johann Andreas Schmidt's

Leib-beschirmende und Feinden Trotz-bietende Fecht-Kunst (1713)
(Body-protecting and Enemies-defying Art of Fencing)

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About this document

What follows is an English translation of the second part of Johann Andreas Schmidt's treatise "Leib-beschirmende und Feinden Trotz-bietende Fecht-kunst, as it was published in Nürnberg in 1713. This treatise was republished several times, under different titles, up to at least 1780. The translation is based on a transcription of the scans made available by the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt [here](#).

Acknowledgements

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Other Part

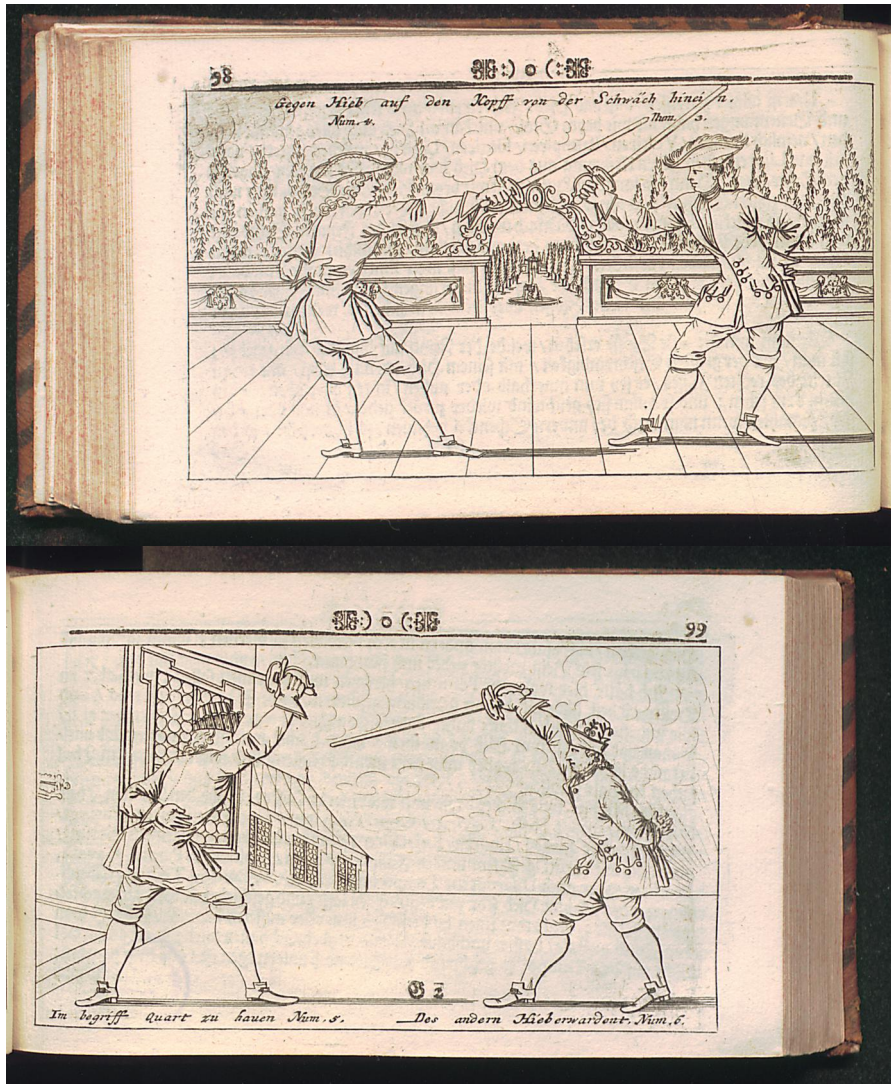
Here it will be required, to present some *Lessons* on the cut, of which you can see the movements in the following *figures*.

First:

In cut-fencing you must pay careful attention to the *Measure*, the *Tempo*, and the *Resolution*. The movements and *Motions* should not be too great, especially with the arm, as you do not want to be hit, as can be seen in *No. 1*. Also, you do not place the feet as far from each other as a thrust-fencer does, and when you make a cut, you must step out, as in thrusting, as *No. 2* shows.



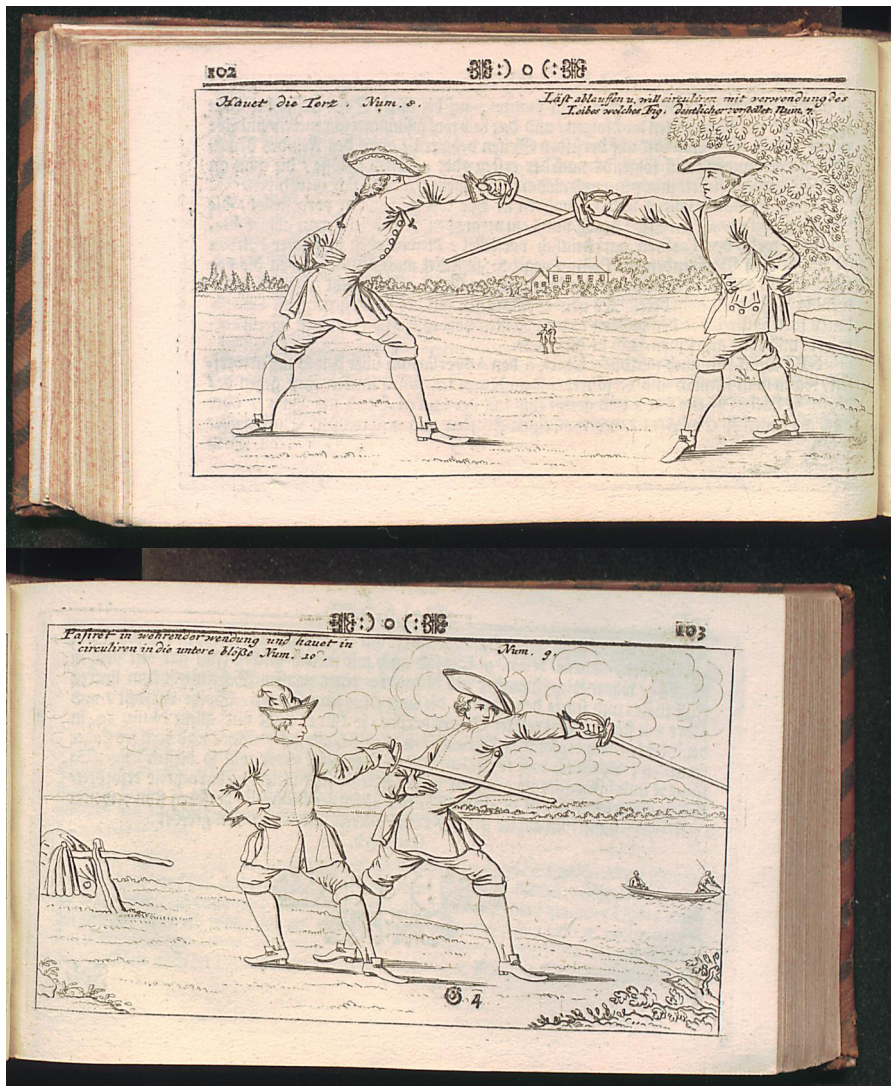
And you should know, that cut-fencing has its own certain *Terminos* and names, as with the thrust. And in cut-fencing, you can also do all these things, such as *Passiren*, *Voltiren*, *Rumpiren*, *Fintiren*, *Ligiren*. And the latter, the *Ligiren*, originates from the cut, due to the strong engagement of the weak. Then, in cut-fencing, as in thrust-fencing, as long as the weak still stands aimed at you, you cannot fight safely. Because of that, they who want to fight with happiness must try to cut away the enemy's weak, before they make another cut at, as *No. 3* is doing here against *No. 4*. If you then want to *Fintiren*, then you must let your blade go to the left or the right over [your]¹ head, from the foremost joint of the hand, without giving an opening over the arm, which *No. 5* does. Now, with the greatest quickness, with a step forward of the right foot, your cut must speed there where you see the first opening, that the enemy gives at the *Fintiren*, be it on the inside or the outside, below or above, as can be seen in *No. 6*. And you will speedily retreat again in your previous guard. When a cut is made at the other's thigh, he who has made the cut is in danger of being hit on the head, as the adversary pulls back his leg and cuts after.



I could repeat and name all *Terminos* here, but in the Third Part it has already been described what they are called, and how you use them and to what end, so I have skipped them here. However, what follows are those that you need before the others in cut-fencing, as I did not want to leave those unnamed here. You can leaf back, to find them in the Third Part. They are:

The *Measure*; of what is named so, and how many there are is told in the Third Part. *Stringiren*; what is named so. *Caviren*, *Contra caviren*, *Fintiren*, *Pariren*, *Passiren*, *Battiren*, oder cutting, *Ligiren*, *Retrahiren*, or retreating with a jump, or also by setting the left foot back. *Rumpiren*, *Voltiren*, *Parata-Cavata*, *Pressiren*, oder auch *Disarmiren*, *Tempo* and *Resolution*, *Contra-Tempo*, *Circuliren*, which can be used well in cutting, and this happens in the following way. You make a half cut in- or outside the sword, so that tempt the enemy to cut after. As soon as he cuts after, you pay attention to the *Tempo*. While his cut is still on its way to go to you, you must, in that *Tempo*, place your left foot on the left side outside the line, and follow with the right, and pull your body together well, and for *Defense* hold your own blade on the same side as the enemy's after-cut is coming from. Then following, you cut to the first or next opening that you see on the opponent, and then retreat with a jump.

I have shown the *Passiren* and *Circuliren* in only a few illustrations, to avoid verbosity because of space limitations. Here, though, one can see *Figure No. 7*, that quite clearly shows the *Passiren*, as *No. 8* has given the performer of the *Passade a Tempo* to make a *Passade*. *No. 9* also shows the previous *Lesson* that can be seen in *No. 8*, as to show this *Lesson* well, 4 *Figures* are necessarily required. It is however *No. 10* who, on the previously given *Tempo*, *passes* forward to the left past the other's right side, and who has *formed* a circle and in that way makes his cut to the side.



PS. With this Lesson, you can also throw the adversary over his head, namely when you act as follows. When No. 10 sets his left foot against the left side of No. 9, and grabs him with the left hand by his hair, or by his left arm, and makes a strong and fast strike or push against his right hand, then he can throw him over his leg, as can be seen at No. 10. But No. 9 can also make good use of his left foot, if, faster than No. 10, he makes a large step with the left foot, and puts this in the same line that his Sword-tip points. And if he goes forward with the arm of his right side, then he can not only cut No. 10 in the neck, but in all haste he can also *form* a fast and ready guard. But I cannot advise this to anyone who is not well-based and informed in this exercise, as this Lesson requires a lot of skill. He who wants to perform this, must be provided with many Lessons. With this, now then enough has been said of *Passiren* and *Circuliren*.

Now follows how you will gracefully cut the *Terz* over the arm, and how the movement, that is shown in the Figure, can be presented.

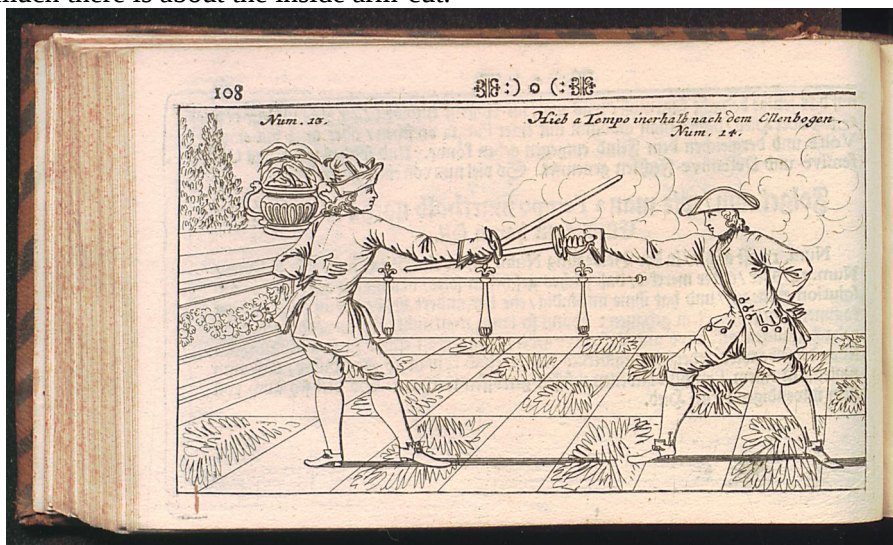
When you want to cut the *Terz*, place your body in a straight line, as No. 11 and 12 show. You want to let your blade run off to your left side, and cut him who is indicated with No. 7 from the outside with the *Terz*. No. 7 however notes this, and is planning to make a *Passade*. This can be seen at No. 7, which has been mentioned before, though only now you find the movements described.

PS. Who now dares to make such a *Passade*, must always be prepared for the *counter* of the other, that he can meet. As for example: He has cut at me to my head, be it with the *Terz* or the *Quart* and similar, and in such a *Tempo* I want to run in below him, and make a *Passade* at him. So the adversary can not only slice or cut me with the *Quart* from the inside but also the *Quart* from the outside, while I am making my *Passade*. Therefore you must always be aware of what openings you give in your assault, either on the thrust or the cut, so that you can go oppose the enemy with a *Parata*, or also with

a *Volta* and similar. And such is named the *Offensive-* and *Defensive-* Fencing. So much now about a good *Terz*.



Now follows, how you will cut in *Tempo* at the other's elbow from the inside. Here, No. 13 is in the movement of cutting No. 14 in the flank from the inside. But No. 14, who has noted that this would happen, has met him with a quick *Resolution*, and has cut him on his arm from the inside, before the other has reach the body of No. 14. Then, as long as you do not always fight *offensive* and *defensive*, when you have an *intention*, as explained in the previous section, you will always fight unhappily, and it will happen, that you will both be hit at the same time in one *Tempo*. This is how much there is about the inside arm-cut.

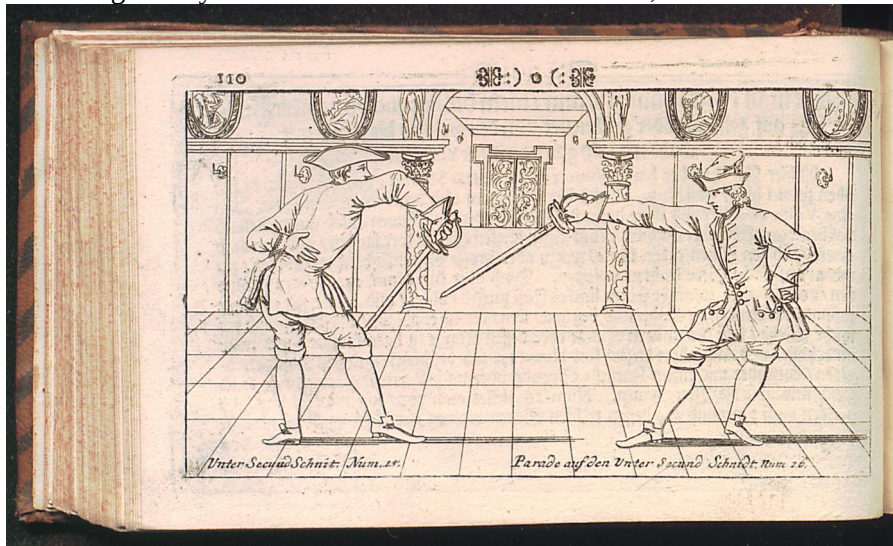


How you must *Parry*, when you are cut or struck at with the *Secund* from below, which the Figure shows very clearly.

Here No. 15 strikes or cuts the under-*Secund*, though he gives too much opening from above, so that No. 16 can cut him over his arm with the *Quart*, or can make a *Volta* and then cut him in the face or on the head. And then he can also, after the cut or slice is completed, walk forth along his left side, and also give him a cut from behind. It requires great skill to lightly make a *Volta* against such a cut, though. However, No. 15 can make a *counter-Volta*, as follows. If he swings back his left foot, and lifts his blade together with his arm up high, and encounters him as when he wants to let it run off, namely in such a way, that the other's blade comes to lie over his, but on the inside, and in this way No. 15 can protect himself and *change* his guard, either with a jump backwards, or after [*trans*]porting the blade, and immediately cut the *Quart* from the inside. No. 16 also shows how you must *parry* such

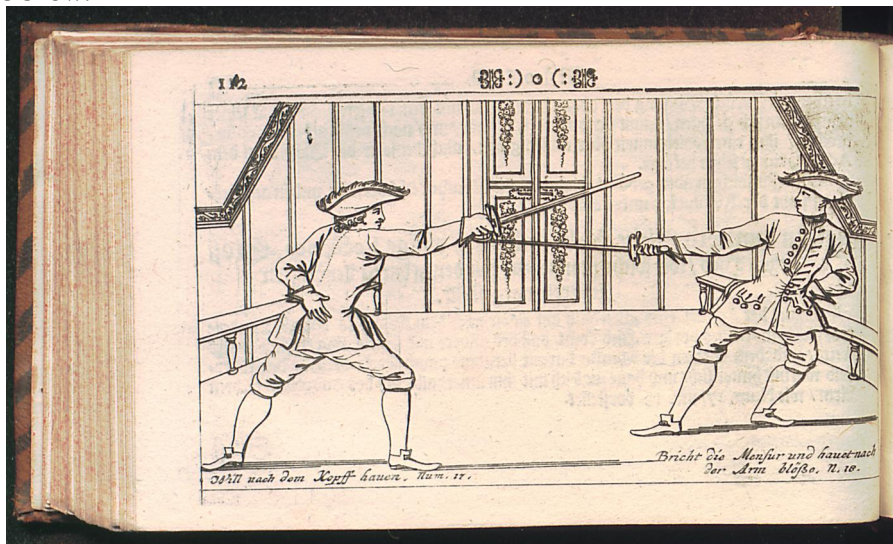
a cut [the *Secund* from below], namely away to your right side. You could also break the *Measure* by bending the upper body backwards, together with the right arm, with your blade pulled to you, so that the other misses his cut. And after the breaking of the *Measure* is completed, you can cut him on the inside or the outside, depending on what openings the adversary shows you.

PS. This requires though that you understand and mind the *Measure*, *Resolution* and *Tempo* well.



Now follow several cuts and also some *Lessons*, thrust against cut, how to make such, presented in the required Figures.

If the adversary cuts at your head on the inside, pay attention well, and, when the cut comes, step back with your left foot, and take the *Measure* away from him. In this, you must also lower your upper-body well backwards, and cut at the same time with him on the inside to the adversary's right arm, as No. 17 and 18 show.



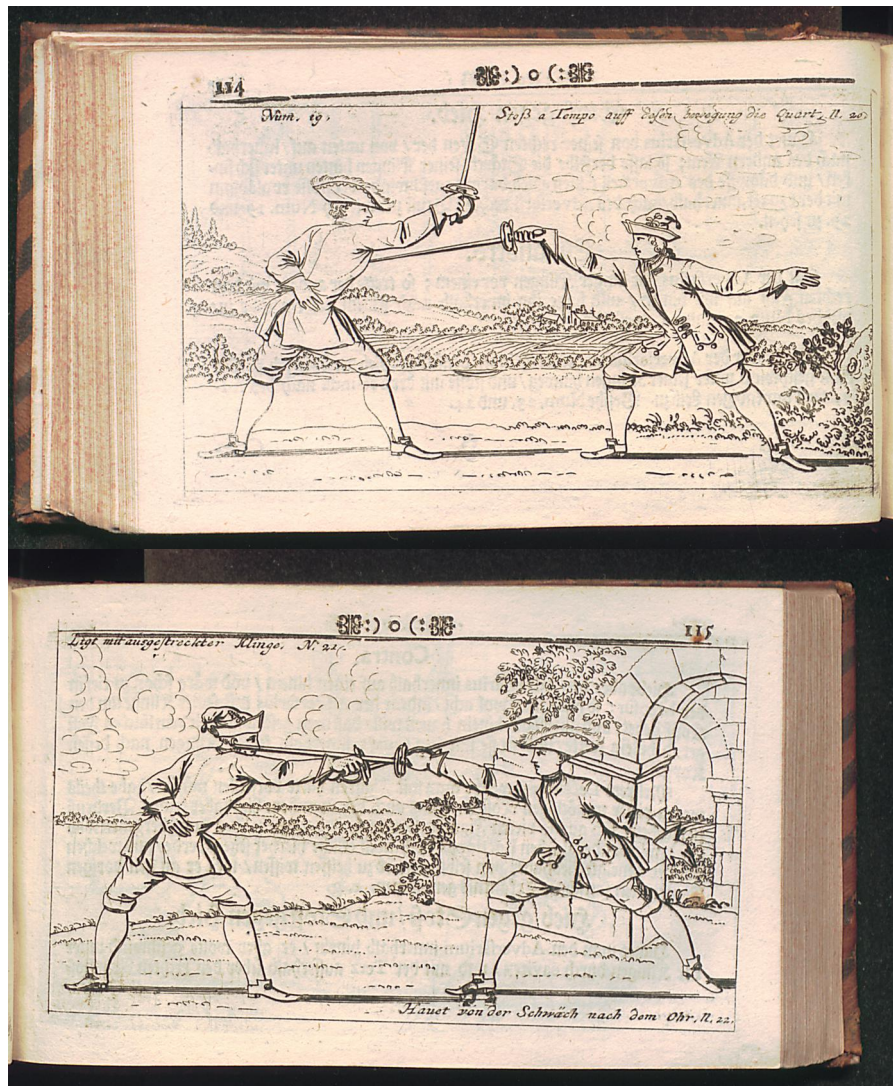
Thrust against cut.

If the adversary cuts from his right side from below, on the inside to your arm, then lower and pull back the strong of your blade to you², and deaden the adversary's cut with that. Then quickly thrust with the *Quart* on the inside, to the adversary's right breast, as No. 19 and 20 show.

Another.

If the adversary stands with the blade elongated in front of him, then step in at him with your right foot, and cut him on the inside to his right ear, as No. 21 and 22 show³.

However, when the adversary displaces the same cut with his blade, then quickly you *pass* away below his blade – and thrust with the *Secunda* to the adversary's body on the inside. See No. 23 and 24.



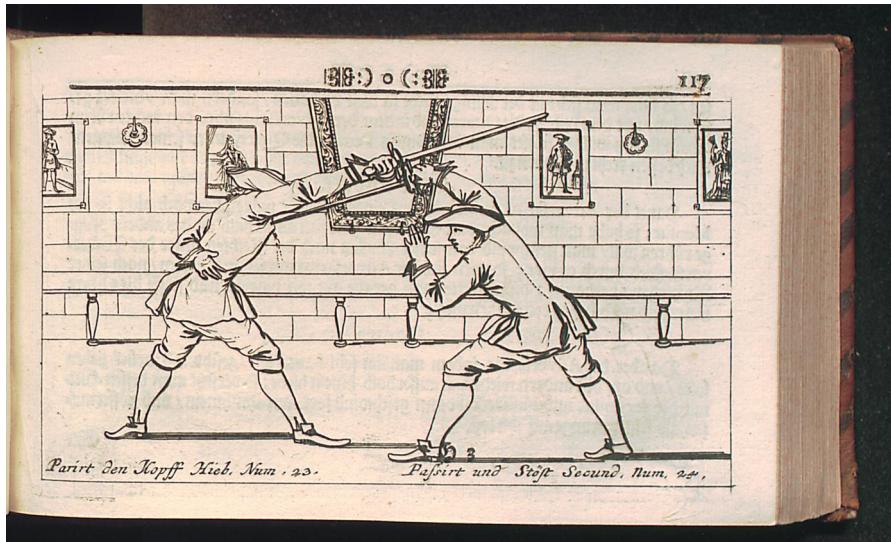
Counter.

When the adversary cuts at you on the inside, and if he is already too deep in the Measure, then take heed, when the adversary goes with his blade around his head, and wants to cut in from the inside, that quickly you step straight in with the left foot, and thrust at his head on the inside of his Blade with the Quart.

Several *Lessons*, which should have been demonstrated with figures have, partly because of many unnecessary costs, partly also not to annoy many enthusiasts, to find so many figures missing, been avoided and skipped. Though some of these lessons have been placed here anyway, with which the so-inclined enthusiast know how to help themselves, as he has taken full knowledge of the previous figures.

Cut against thrust, and thrust against cut.

If you cut at the adversary on the inside, but he wants to quickly make a *Cavade* under your blade, and thrust with the *Terz* on the outside over your right arm, then you must not cut through too wide with your blade, but you must quickly make a *Volta* with your body, in the *Quart*, and while your adversary wants to thrust over your right arm, you thrust him in the same *Tempo* in the *Quart*, below his blade, to his right side.



Another.

If the adversary cuts at you on the outside, but he is not yet in *Measure*, then take heed, that, when his cut almost wants to touch on your blade on the outside, you quickly make a *Cavade* from your left to the right side underneath the opponent's cut. In that way the adversary will cut wide with his blade to his right side. Then step straight in at him, and thrust the *Quart* on the inside to his right breast.

Counter.

If, however, the adversary while you are making him miss his cut, quickly retreats, and again cuts at you on the outside, then you displace this cut with the *Secunda*, and the *pass* forth quickly in at him, and thrust at him on the outside of his blade.

Another.

If the adversary cuts at you on the inside, then make a *Cavade* under his cut, when his blade almost touches yours on the inside, and step well in at the adversary with the right foot. Then *parry* him his blade with the half edge, away to your right side, and then cut with the whole edge, on the outside to the adversary's left cheek.

Counter.

If, however, the adversary while you were making a *Cavade* under his blade, and cut to his left cheek, parried the blade to his right side, then quickly step back again with the right foot, and cut him on the outside to his right thigh.

End of the Other Part.

¹ From the German text it is not clear which head is meant.

² This section is problematic. The most literal translation might be "then let the strong of your blade sink back below yourself"

³ Whereas the text tells you to cut on the inside, the picture seems to show a cut from the outside.