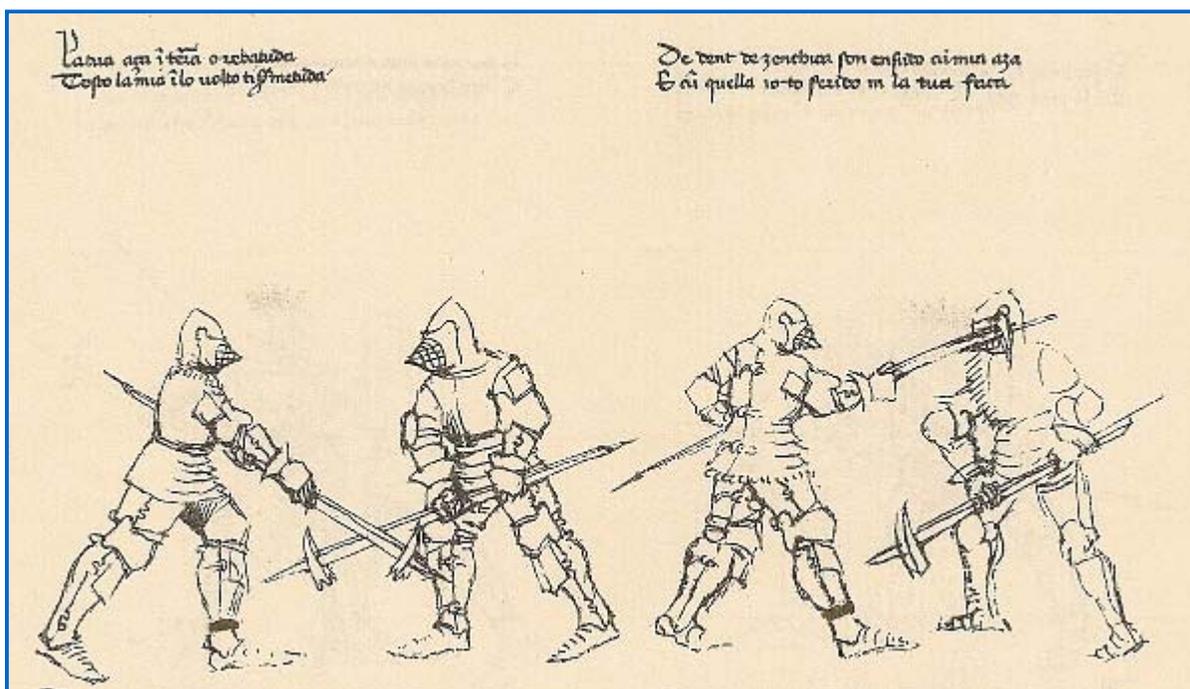


Fiore dei Liberi: *Flos Duellatorum*, 1410 (Pisani-Dossi, F. Novati, Bergamo, 1902)

6 *azza in arme* - armoured poleaxe

6.1 *gioco arme cum azza* (armoured plays with poleaxe)

6.1.1 *gioco de dent de zenchiar* (tooth of the boar play)



*La tua aça in tero ò rebatuda  
Tosto la mia in lo uolto ti serà metuda*

**I parry your poleaxe to the ground  
Mine immediately will turn to be in your face.**

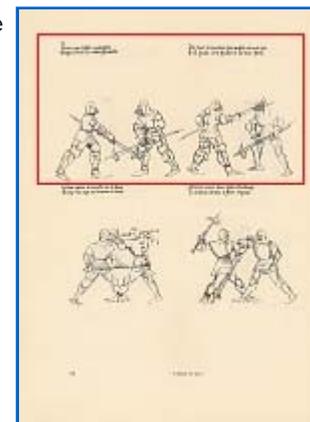
*De dent de zenchiar son ensudo cum mia aza  
E cum quella io t'ò ferido in la tua faça.*

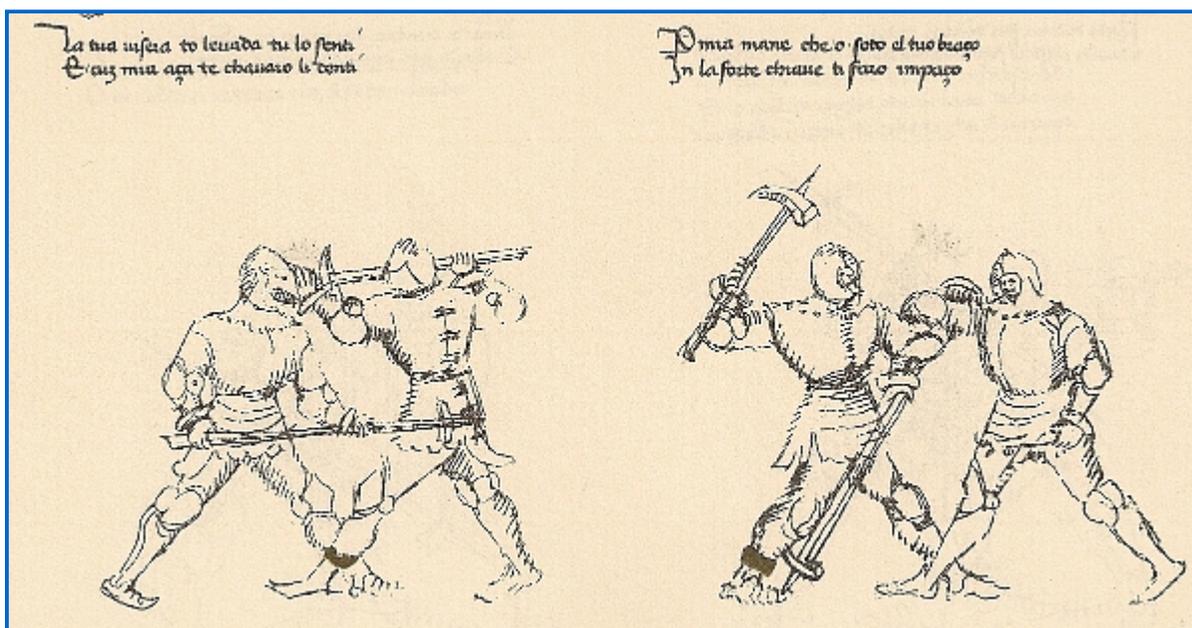
**From the tooth of the boar I raise my poleaxe  
And with this I strike in your face.**

**Synopsis:** Fiore doesn't reveal the starting guard of the scholar on the left, but the line in the first couplet implies that in order to parry an inbound strike, some momentum is required by the scholar, and therefore most probably started in the guard of the woman. There would be required some force in order to parry the inbound strike to the ground. The second couplet is self explanatory, as the scholar strikes from the boar's tooth, the *zugadore's* face.

**Practical Application:** Assuming that the left scholar had originated with the guard of the woman, he is able to swing while remaining "*stabile*", parries the inbound strike or thrust and re-directs it to the ground. This would be difficult if there were not any momentum in the poleaxe acquired with a goodly sized swing from the shoulder. The parry has caused the *zugadore's* poleaxe to veer off towards his right, thus creating an opening. The scholar steps forward and raises the poleaxe from the boar's tooth guard and strikes the *zugadore* in the face. Notice that the axehead was rotated in order to re-orient the hammer portion of the axehead towards the face.

The success of this movement relies on the timing of the passing step. At the moment of contact in the parry, the step forward has not yet been taken. Meanwhile, the *zugadore* is "spent" providing a target and an opportunity. The delivery of the strike to the face is accomplished by taking a passing step towards the *zugadore*.



Fiore dei Liberi: *Flos Duellatorum*, 1410 (Pisani-Dossi, F. Novati, Bergamo, 1902)6 *azza in arme* - armoured poleaxe6.1 *gioco arme cum azza* (armoured plays with poleaxe)6.1.2 *ehaurarò li denti e farò impaço* (breaking teeth and causing damage)

*La tua visera t'ò leuada, tu lo senti  
E cum mia aça te chaurarò li denti.*

You will feel your visor being raised  
And with my poleaxe I'll break your teeth.

*Per mia mane che ò sotto el tuo braço  
In la forte chiaue ti farò impaço.*

Because my hand which I put under your arm  
In a strong key I cause you damage.

**Synopsis:** In contrast to the previous pair of plays, these plays depict *gioco stretto* plays or "close quarters plays". The first couplet clearly indicates the intentions of the scholar, having successfully closed in being able to raise the visor and strike him in the teeth with the poleaxe. The second couplet describes another close play, leveraging an upper key applied to the combatant's right arm. The second line indicates that damage to the combatant will result of this hold, either to the combatant's arm and/or shoulder, or from being struck by the raised poleaxe in the scholar's right hand.

**Practical Application:** The first play depicts the scholar, having been able to step to the outside of the *zugadore* and strike his face. The *zugadore* is depicted with his left leg forward, which implies that the initiation was taken by the scholar and not by the *zugadore*. The scholar must have been previously in a *dent de zenchar* with right leg forward, and parried aside the *zugadore's* poleaxe while stepping in with his left foot to the *zugadore's* outside. At this stage, the *zugadore's* poleaxe is no longer a threat, and the scholar is able to raise the visor and plunge his poleaxe into the *zugadore's* face, resulting in serious dental work.

The second play depicts the scenario in which the *zugadore* steps forward to deliver a strike, and is parried aside by the scholar. The scholar's left leg is forward, meaning that the parry was done *stabile*. It is quite possible to execute this manoeuvre from the *posta di donna* and strike down the inbound thrust or strike, and then be able to manoeuvre close enough to deploy an upper key from the outside of the *zugadore's* poleaxe. If the *zugadore* puts up a fight, the free hand of the scholar, wielding the poleaxe will provide enough incentive to carry out the original intent.

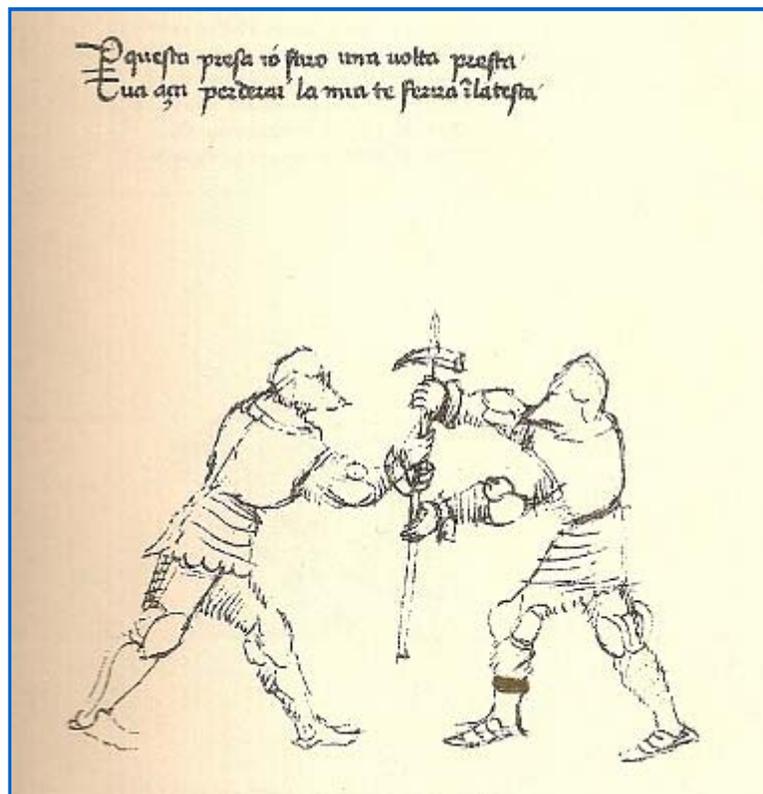


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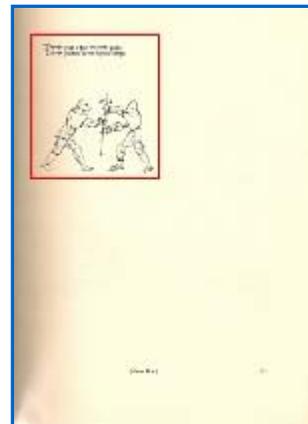
6.1.3 *questa presa io farò* (making this hold)



*Per questa presa io farò una uolta presta,  
Tua açà perderai, la mia te ferirà in la testa.*

Because of this hold I make you turn your hold,  
You'll lose your poleaxe, and mine hurt you on your head.

**Synopsis:** This last play of armoured poleaxe depicts the scholar wrenching the poleaxe from the grip of the *zugadore*. There is no clue as to what happened to the scholar's poleaxe, but it can be surmised that the scholar may have dropped it in order to make the grip as depicted. The second line of the couplet does indicate that the scholar was successful and was able to deliver a strike with the *zugadore's* own poleaxe.



**Practical Application:** Often when the plays take the combatants to *gioco stretto*, it takes a certain presence of mind while under duress to acknowledge that carrying a weapon, in this case, a poleaxe may not be in the best interest of the combatant, and at that moment, releases his grip on his own poleaxe. Based on the couplet describing the illustration, this may have been the case leading up to this close play. The scholar is now able to focus his attention on his wide grip on the *zugadore's* poleaxe, and wrench it from his hands by turning the weapon, probably towards the right as interpreted from the illustration. The most significant attribute of the *zugadore* for this to work, is that he continues to hold onto the poleaxe with his "monkey grip" in which he holds onto the poleaxe with all his might so that he does not lose what he perceives as his main advantage over the scholar. Should the *zugadore* simply release the poleaxe and then "jump" onto the scholar, close-quarters grappling would ensue.