

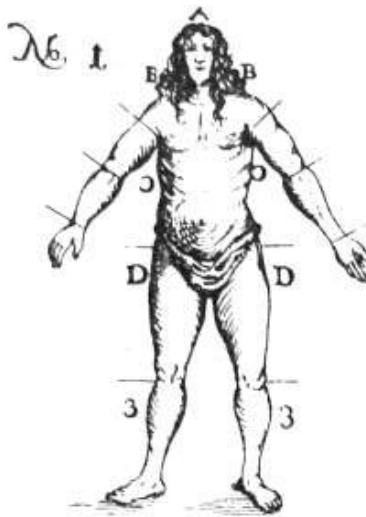
# *Vollstandiges Ring-Buch*

**Johann Georg Pascha**  
Written 1659

**Translation by Eli Steenput and commentary by Keith P. Myers**

## *To the gentle reader*

Wrestling (Ringen) is a useful exercitium, and well-known history shows that it was practiced by our forefathers not only for fun but also in earnest, because it not only improves the condition of the whole body, but so also a weaker person can, by knowledge of this science, and fully trained therein, defend himself against a stronger one, and resist him. As high as it was esteemed by our forefathers, so little is it known in our time, and these days everyone relies on their size and strength, yet they feel in danger when confronted by a smaller man trained in wrestling. These circumstances have prompted me to bring some things to light in this print and coppers. Do not hesitate, lovers of wrestling, to willingly accept this little work by me, which I place in God's care.



*First it is necessary to know, that the human arm can be divided in three parts, the Strong, the Half Strong, and the Weak, as shown on fig. 1*

*The head has two parts, the Strong and the Weak. On top of the head (A) is the Weak, and below (B) the strong*

*Body and feet have three parts, the Strong, Half-Strong and Weak, marked C, D and E in fig. 1*

*When you try to break free from a hold, you must usually apply the Half-Strong of your arm to the Weak of your Adversarii*

Commentary:

Pascha divides the human body into three parts: the Strong, the Half-Strong and the Weak. He organizes it in the following fashion:

1. **Head:** *Top/Crown* = Weak; *Below the Crown* = Strong
2. **Arms:** *Upper Arm* = Strong; *Forearms* = Half-Strong; *Wrists/Hands* = Weak
3. **Torso & Legs:** *Trunk* = Strong; *Upper Legs/Thighs* = Half-Strong; *Lower Legs & Feet* = Weak

The general principle involved states that when you attempt to break free from a hold, you will usually apply the Half-Strong (typically forearm) of your body against the Weak (typically wrist and hand) of the opponent. Not much elaboration beyond that. But one could take that general principle and find multiple applications.



*When Adversarius grasps your right arm, you free it outwards, as in No. 2*

*When Adversarius grasps your right arm, you free it inwards*

Commentary: Forearm Smash

Swing your arm up either from the inside outward or the outside inward to smash your forearm across his wrist/forearm and release his grip (your left arm to his right arm or vice versa). This is also applicable to No. 3.

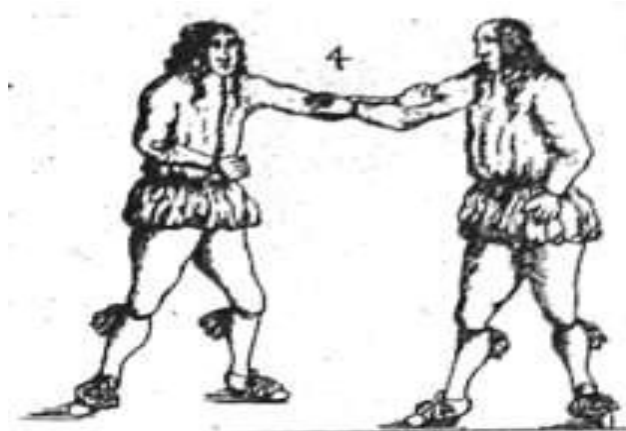


*When Adversarius grasps your left arm, you free it outwards, as in No.3*

*When Adversarius grasps your left arm, you free it inwards*

*Commentary: Forearm Smash*

Same as number 2.

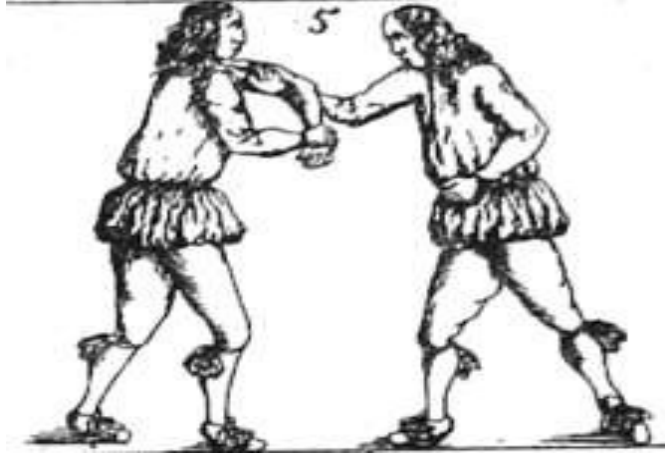


*When Adversarius grasps your right arm, so strike Adversarium strongly on his ar-join as in No.4*

*Do the same when Adversarius grasps your left arm*

*Commentary: Elbow Bend*

Swing your arm up from the inside outward to strike into the bend of his elbow with your forearm and force his arm to bend and weaken his grip. I would follow this with scooping his elbow down and inward to turn his body and off-balance him. You could even reach under and grab your own wrist for added leverage...kind of the mirror image of the next technique.

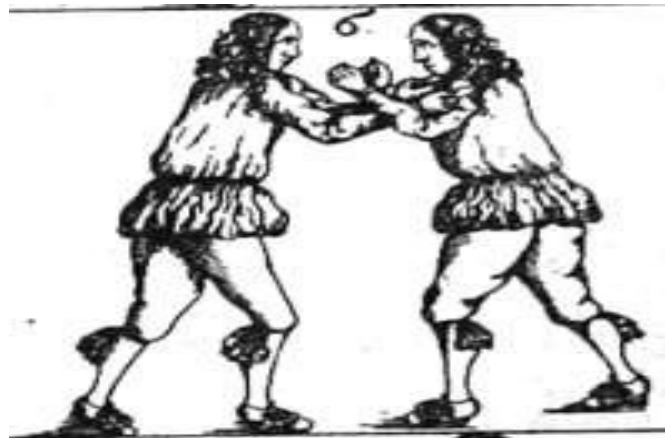


*When Adversarius grasps with his right hand the strong of your left arm, grab with both hands over his weak and push down as in No. 5*

*Do the same when he grasps with his left hand the strong of your right arm*

*Commentary: Arm Pull*

Swing your arm up from the outside and over his wrist/forearm; grab your own wrist/forearm with your hand and pull downward to lever against his arm and break his grip.



*When Adversarius grasps both of your arms, free yourself outwards as in No. 6*

*When Adversarius grasps both of your arms, free yourself inwards*

*Commentary: Double Forearm Smash*

Same or similar to the Arm Pull above, applied to both sides at once either inward or outward.



*When Adversarius grasps both of your arms, strike him with both hands on his elbows as in No. 7*

*Commentary: Double Elbow Bend*

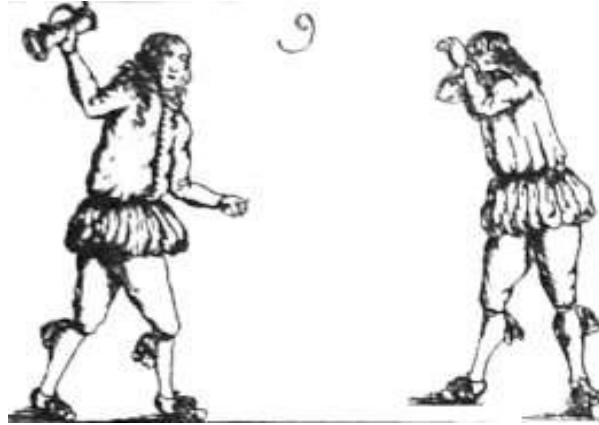
Same or similar as the double forearm smash, applied to both sides at once. If you scoop both of his elbows inward and towards you as a follow-up, you can pull him right into a head butt.



*When you can get your fingers between those of the Adversarii, so press his hands back, then he must sink to his knee, which No. 8 shows, or turn his fingers outwards, so will he sprain them*

*Commentary: Finger Lock*

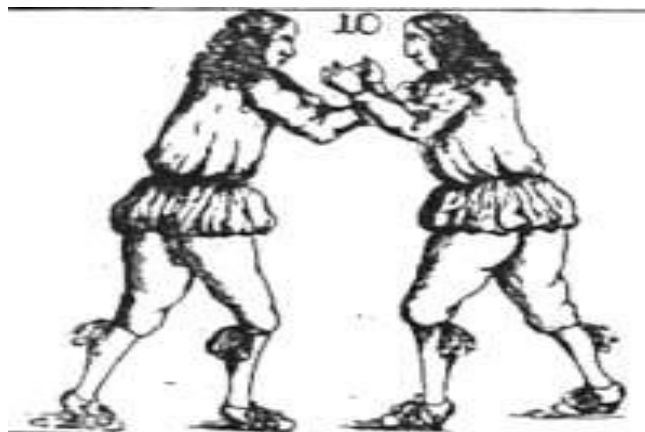
This is actually described as a follow-up after you have freed yourself from a grab but it will work equally well against someone sticking their finger in your face or jabbing you in the chest. Get your fingers between those of the opponent and press them back to take him to his knees, or turn them outward to sprain them. As a follow-up after breaking a two-handed grab or hold, try to apply it to both of his hands at the same time.



*When Adversarius wants to throw a jar or such at you, advance towards him with your arms crosswise, covering your head, as in No. 9*

*Commentary: Duck and Cover*

Here is a good common-sense defense for you. You are in a local tavern and one of the rowdy's takes offense at something you have said and decides to toss his tankard of ale at you. Move in while shielding your head and face with your arms.



*When Adversarius grasps you crosswise, you free yourself outwards, as in No. 10*

*When Adversarius grasps you crosswise, you free yourself inwards*

*Commentary: Double Forearm Smash*

If your opponent has grabbed your shirt you may free yourself by striking from the outside inwards against his forearm/wrist using your forearm. The text also states that you can apply this from the inside outwards, but this seems to be a poor choice to me.

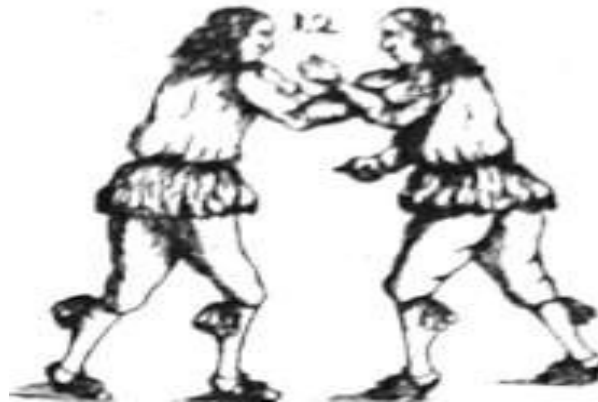


*When Adversarius grasps you with both hands in the strong of your arms, so place your right on your hip, and strike with your right elbow his hands away, as shown in No. 11*

*Or strike his hands away with your left elbow*

*Commentary: Elbow Deflection*

Place your hand on your hip, pivot inward and strike from the outside inward against his forearm with your elbow. (As in the picture, if he grasps you with his right hand use your left and vice-versa)

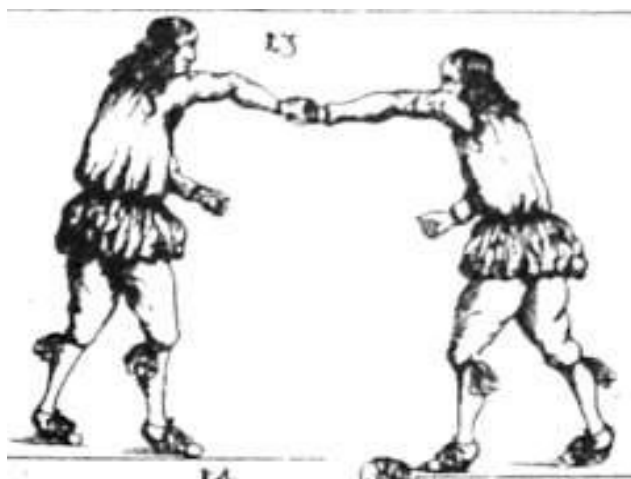


*Or when Adversarius grasps you in this way, so strike with your right arm over both his arms, so he must let go, as shown in No. 12*

*Or with your left arm over both his arms*

*Commentary: Forearm Smash*

Same as number 2 and 3, applied from the outside inside and vice-versa against one of his forearms/wrist using your forearm

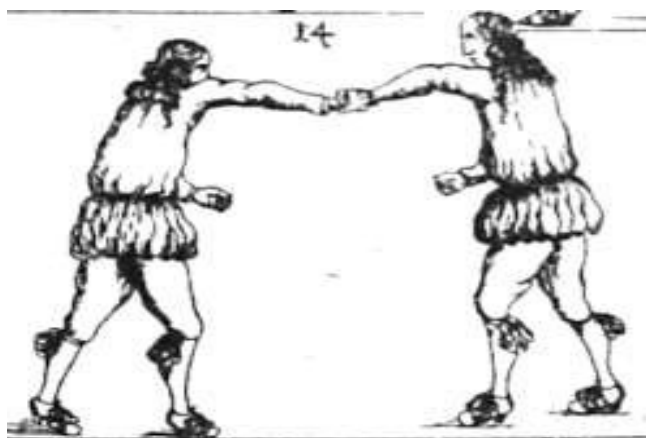


*When Adversarius has taken your right hand at the weak, free yourself outwards, as in No. 13*

*The same inwards*

*Commentary: Outward and Inward Release*

Turn your elbow up and your palm out to rotate your arm and break his leverage; pull outward to free yourself from his grip. For the inward release you may drop your elbow and turn your palm inward; step either into him or straight back as you bend your elbow and pull inward to free yourself from his grip.

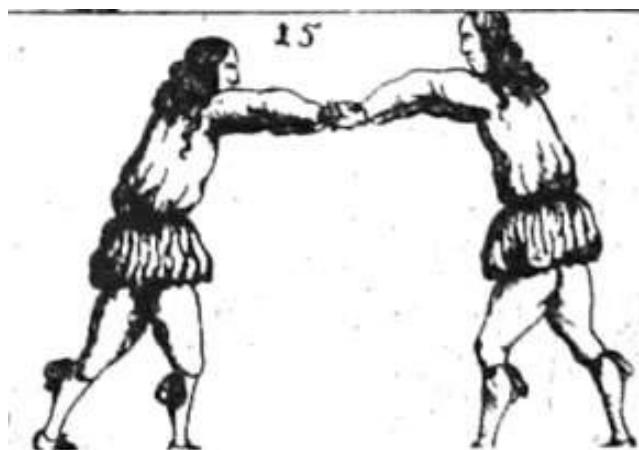


*When Adversarius has taken your left hand at the weak, free yourself outwards, as in No. 14*

*The same inwards*

*Commentary:*

Same as number 13.



*When Adversarius has taken both your hands at the weak, so free yourself with both hands outwards, as in No. 15*

*The same inwards*

*Commentary: Double Outward Release*

Same or similar as the outward release, when both wrists are grabbed from above you may use the outward release with both arms at the same time to free yourself. Same can be done with the inward release but I don't think I would try this one. Maybe Pascha was just trying to cover all the bases here.

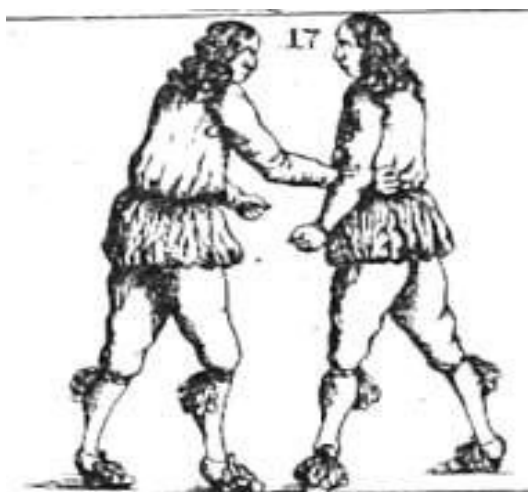


*When Adversarius has taken hold of your right flank, so free yourself outwards, as in No. 16*

*The same inwards*

*Commentary: Downward Forearm Smash*

Circle your arm either inward or outward from above his in order to strike against his wrist/forearm with the portion of your forearm closest to the elbow. The outward smash ends up knocking his arm away, while the inward version ends up being more of an elbow wrench.



*When Adversarius has taken hold of your left flank, so free yourself outwards, as in No. 17*

*The same inwards*

Commentary:

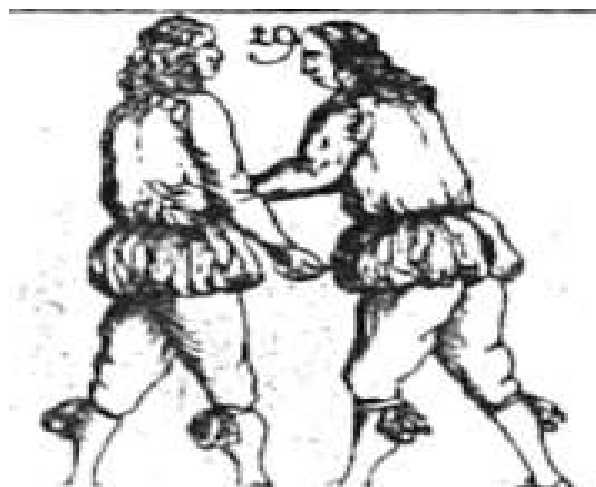
Same as number 16.



*When Adversarius has taken hold of both your sides with both hand, so free yourself inwards with both hands, as in No. 18*

Commentary: Downward Forearm Smash

Same or similar to number 16 and 17, this time when your adversary double grabs your waist/flanks you may use the double forearm smash with either both hands at once or with either arm alone to free yourself.

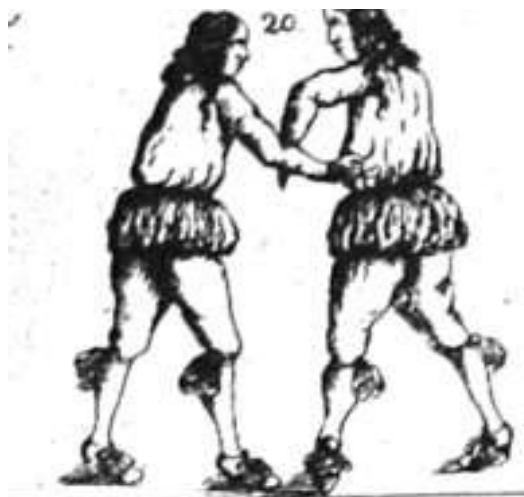


*When Adversarius has taken hold of both your sides with both hands, so free yourself with your right hand [in this and some of the following it seems that the arm is used rather than the hand mentioned in the text] in Adversarii weak, as in No. 19*

*The same with your left hand outwards*

Commentary:

Same as number 18.

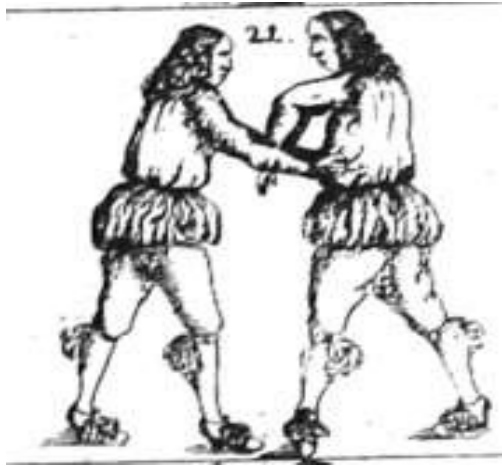


*When Adversarius has taken hold of your left side with his right hand, so strike him with your left hand on his right elbow, as in No. 20*

*When Adversarius has taken hold of your right side with his left hand, so strike him with your right hand on his left elbow*

Commentary: Chop to Elbow

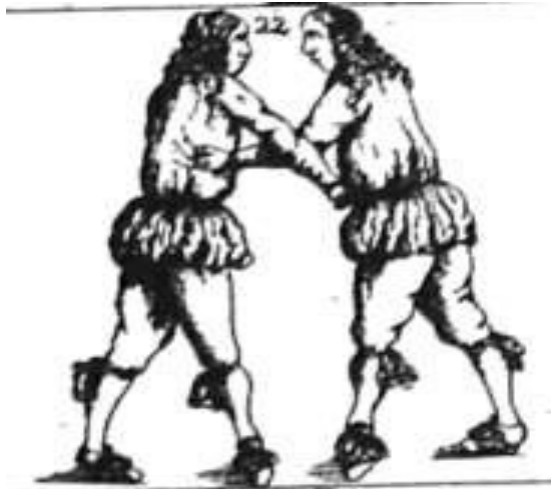
With your same-side arm strike down and outward with your hand/forearm into the inside of his elbow to bend his arm and destroy his leverage and break his grip.



*When Adversarius has taken hold of both your sides, so strike with both hands to both his elbows, as in No. 21*

*Commentary: Double Chop to Elbows*

As in No. 20 but with both arms at once.

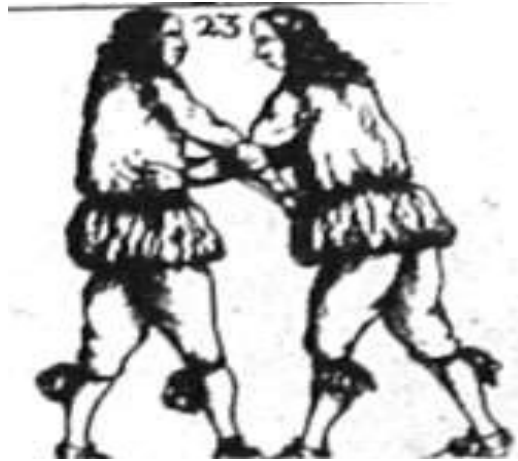


*When Adversarius has taken hold of your right side with his left hand, so strike him with your right hand [arm according to the figure] on his left elbow, as in No. 22*

*You do the same for the other hand*

*Commentary: Elbow Wrench*

With your same-side arm strike from the outside inward with your forearm across his elbow to wrench his joint and break his balance.

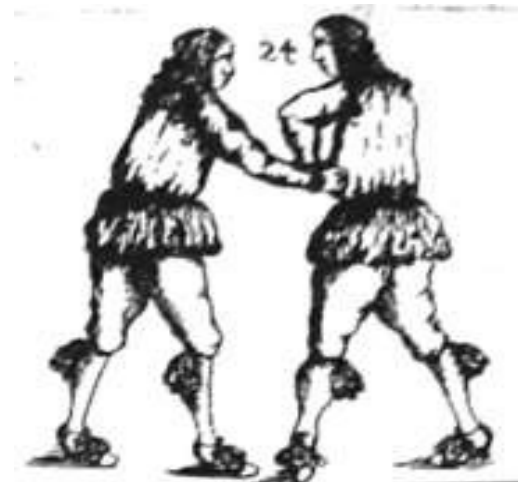


*When Adversarius has taken hold of both your sides with both hands, so strike with your right hand to his left elbow, as in No. 23*

*You can do the same with your left hand to his right elbow*

*Commentary: Elbow Wrench*

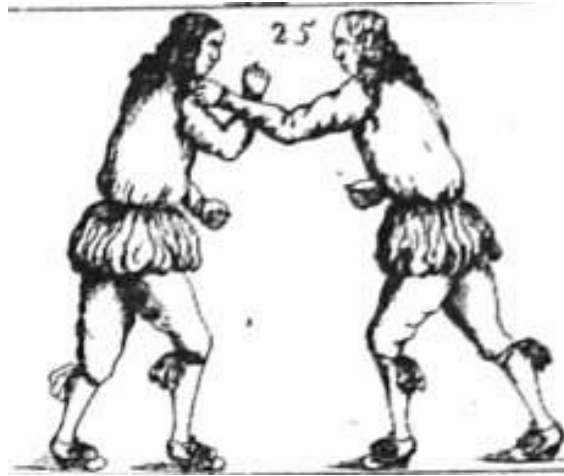
Same or similar to No. 21, with either both arms at once or with either arm alone.



*Strike with both hands inwards to his weak as in No. 24*

*Commentary:*

Keith's commentary here seems a bit odd, it is clear in both the picture and the translation where the strike must be placed which is at the weak (wrist/hand). He does go on to clarify how he feels the strike is closer to the weak at the end of his commentary.

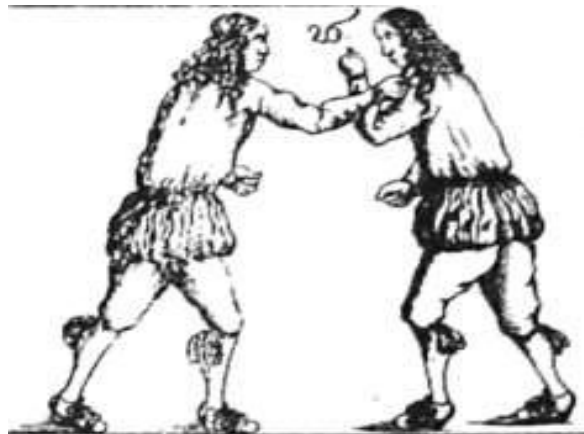


*When Adversarius has grabbed your throat with his right hand, so free yourself outwards with your right hand, as in No. 25*

*Or inwards with the right hand*

*Commentary: Forearm Smash*

Swing your arm from either the inside outward or outside inward to strike against his forearm with yours and break his grip (your right arm to his left arm or vice versa).

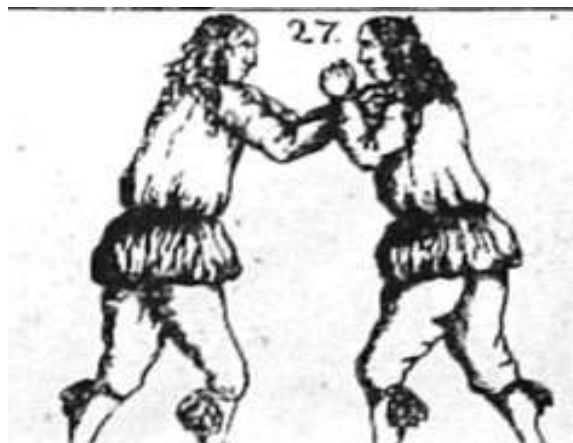


*When Adversarius has grabbed your throat with his left hand, so free yourself outwards with the left hand, as in No. 26*

*Or with the left hand inwards*

*Commentary: Forearm Smash*

Same or similar to No. 25.

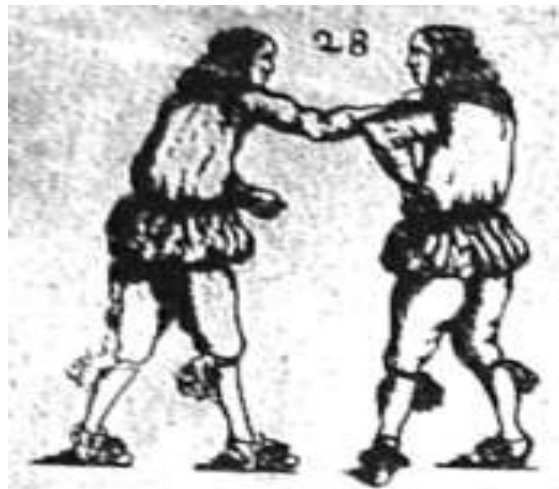


*When Adversarius has grabbed your throat with both hands, so free yourself outwards with both your hands, as in No. 27*

*The same inwards*

*Commentary: Double Forearm Smash*

Same or similar to both No. 25 and 26 but with both arms at the same time.



*When Adversarius has grabbed your throat with his right hand, so place your left hand on your hip, and strike with your left elbow his right arm loose, as in No. 28*

*You can do the same with your right elbow, if he grabs your throat with the left hand*

*Commentary: Elbow Deflection*

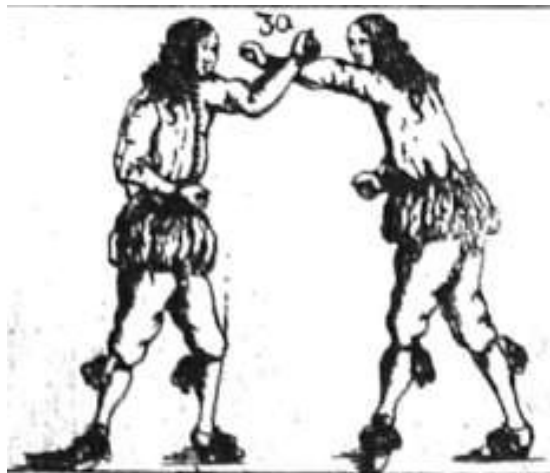
Place your hand on your hip; pivot inward and strike against his forearm with your elbow (your right to his left and vice versa).



*When Adversarius has grabbed your sides with both hands, so bear down with both elbows between his arms on his weak, and so free yourself, as in No. 29*

*Commentary: Double Elbow Strike*

Strike downward against each of his wrists from the inside and then bear downward and outward to break his grip.



*Make a Parade with the right arm high, as in No. 30*

*The same with the left arm high*

*Commentary: Outward Rising Forearm Parry/ Outward Horizontal Forearm Parry*

Here Keith explains two ways to perform these parries:

*Outward Rising Forearm Parry* – moving from your inside outward (right to left with the left arm); contacting with the outside surface of the arm; elbow down; like the stereotypical Karate block.

*Outward Horizontal Forearm Parry* – also moving from the inside outward, but on a more horizontal line that sweeps across with the elbow pointed outward.



*Make the Parade with the right arm low, as in No. 31*

*The same with the left arm low*

*Commentary: Outward Dropping Forearm Parry/ Scooping Parry*

*Outward Dropping Forearm Parry* – dropping and moving from the inside outward to block on the low line with the outside surface of the forearm. Again, rather like a stereotypical Karate block.

*Scooping Parry* – moving from the inside outward but contacting with the surface of your forearm just above the wrist to catch and scoop; your elbow points forward and up.



*Strike with the edge of your flat hand to Adversarius nose, as in No. 32, also the same way to his mouth [Maul] or throat [Gurgel]*

*Commentary: Chopping Strike*

The illustration makes this look like a finger job, but the text states that you “hit with the blade/edge of the hand”. Strike outward to the nose, mouth or throat on a horizontal or diagonal line.



*Pull Adversarium head back by the hair with your right hand [in the drawing this seems to be the left hand], and strike him with your closed fist upwards on the chin, as in No. 33*

*Commentary: Hair Pull and Uppercut*

Grab a handful of his hair from behind and yank his head back as you strike upward to his chin with your fist.



*When Adversarium has enclosed you with his arms [a bear hug from the front], push both your thumbs in his mouth between his cheeks and teeth, and tear his mouth, as in No. 34 [the drawing shows this with one hand – try it on yourself to feel if it works]*

*Commentary: Fish-hook*

Shown as a counter to the bear-hug. Stick your thumbs into his cheeks on both sides and rip outwards.

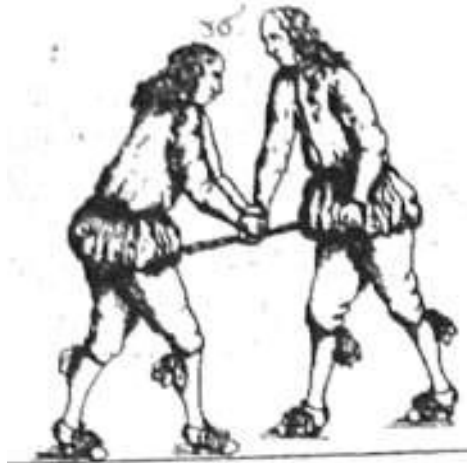


*Strike Adversarium with your right elbow in the face, as in No. 35, so also to the ribs*

*Or with your left elbow*

*Commentary: Elbow Strike*

This is another one that is open to interpretation. The text simple says strike with your elbow to his face or ribs. The illustration shows the aggressor with his elbow in his opponents face and his hand close to his chest. How did he get there? Based on the position of his hand at a level slightly lower than his shoulder, my interpretation is that his strike has traveled on a horizontal plane to its target. This could have gone either from the inside outward or the outside inward. He could also have done a forward strike simply by putting his elbow up as he stepped in.



*When Adversarium is holding something in his fist, grab his hand with both your hands, pull down strongly, and headbutt him in the face [at least thats what I think the obscure phrase means - the goat bit him in the veins of the head?], as in No. 36*

*Commentary: Double Downward Grab*

This one is also in Talhoffer. It is used against any kind of thrusting attack to your abdomen or rising attack from below your waist. Grab downward onto his wrist/forearm from above with both your hands; pull down and headbutt him. You may have to hike your body back depending on the depth of his thrust.



*Grab Adversario with your left or right hand by the throat and strongly push it, as in No. 37*

*Commentary: Throat Grab*

Grab him by the throat with either hand and strongly push it. Shown with arm extended. Not described as a choke, but could be used that way depending on the strength of your grip.

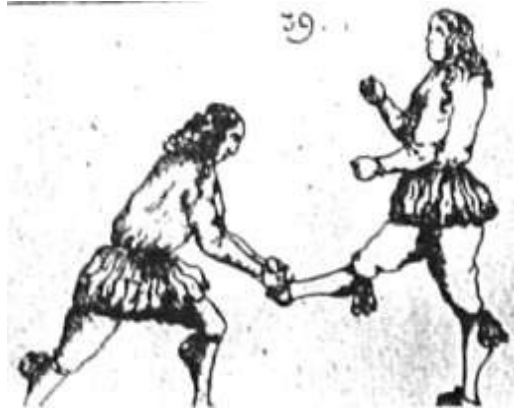


*Kick Adversarium with your right foot to his right knee, breaking it, as shown in No. 38*

*Or with your left foot to his left knee*

*Commentary: Front Kick*

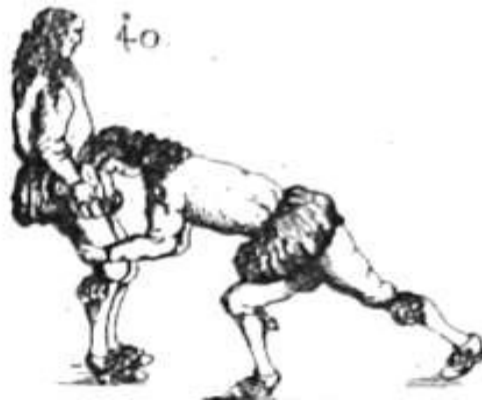
Hard to say whether this is means as an actual kick, or more as a strong push with your leg. Eli translates it as “kick”, so I’ll take his word for it. Either way, it is applied to the front of the opponent’s knee/upper shin with the intention of hyper extending/breaking his knee. In the illustration the aggressor appears to be contacting with the heel of his foot just behind the arch. In my opinion I think that this was probably meant more as a “leg push” than a kick because it is clearly meant to hyper extend the knee, which a sharp kick would not necessarily do without lots of forward pressure and it shows contact with the heel rather than the point of the shoe.



*When Adversarius wants to break your knee in this way, so draw back your foot, grab his foot with both hands, and throw him, as shown in No. 39*

*Commentary: Counter to the Front Kick*

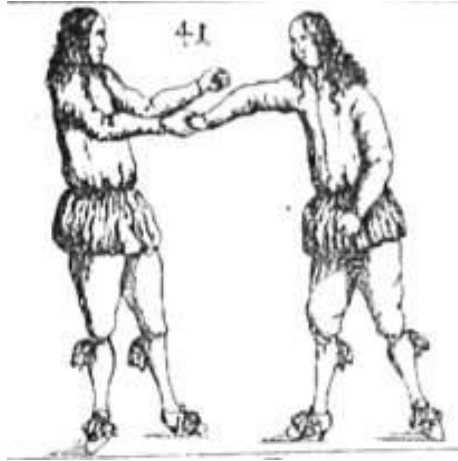
Move your leg backwards to avoid his attack; catch/grab his foot with both your hands and throw him. Exactly how you are to throw him is not stated. It could be straight backwards simply by lifting his leg and moving in or it could be to one side or the other by grabbing his heel and twisting as you pivot your body.



*When Adversarius grabs your coat from the front, so free yourself with your elbows, grab both his legs, place your head against his body and throw him backwards, as in No. 40*

*Commentary: Double-leg take down with Head Ram*

This is described as a follow-up after freeing yourself from a double waist or lapel grab with the double elbow strike (No.29) as well as an independent attack upon the opponent. It could follow almost any of the release/escapes covered previously. Grab both of his legs just above the backs of his knees; surge forward to ram the top of your head into his abdomen as you lift his legs to throw him over onto his back.



*Take Adversarius by his right hand with your right hand, twist it inwards, and with your left hand strike his arm in two, as in No. 41*

*So also with the other hand*

*Commentary: Inward Wrist Lock and Elbow Wrench*

Grab the opponent's hand (your right to his right or vice versa); twist/rotate it so that he is palm outward; strike against his extended arm with your other arm to hyper extend his elbow. This could flow into a straight arm bar or a downward arm bar, neither of which Pacha covers.



*When Adversarius thus breaks your right arm [I assume the author means “wants to break your right arm”], free yourself by striking his face with your right elbow, as in No. 42*

*So also with the left elbow*

*Commentary: Counter Elbow Wrench:*

Bend your elbow and step in quickly to drive the point of your elbow into his face.

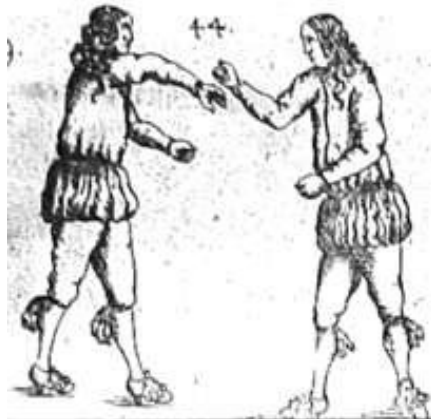


*Grab with your right hand Adversarii right hand, pull it towards you, and break his arm with your left hand, as shown in No. 43 [here the arm seems to be twisted in the opposite direction, compared to the previous technique, and the elbow is struck from below]*

*So also with the other hand*

*Commentary: Upward Elbow Wrench*

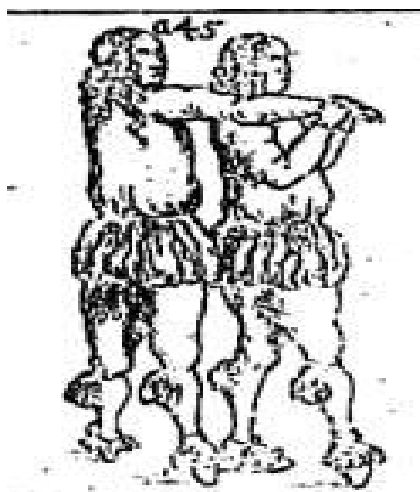
Grab his hand (right to right or vice versa); pull sharply to off-balance him as you strike upward with your other forearm to hyperextend his elbow. This is also a good counter to a handshake that is just a bit too forceful for comfort.



*The Contra, turn your arm and free it as No. 44 shows, or strike the Adversario with your elbow on the face*

*Commentary: Counter to the Upward Elbow Wrench*

Same or similar to No. 42. That's all the text says, and the picture is not very clear either. You could interpret it as a simple yanking upward quickly to free yourself from his grab, but that does not involve turning your arm. Another interpretation is that you have turned your arm elbow upward to avoid being hyper extended and yanked down and inward to free yourself from his grab.



*Grip Adversarii right arm with both hands, bring the same on your right shoulder, and break it as in No. 45A*

*Commentary: Over-the-shoulder Armbar*

Grab his arm near the wrist with both of your hands; pivot 180 degrees and place his elbow across the top of your shoulder; press upward with your body as you pull down on his arm to hyper extend/break his elbow. In the illustration the aggressor has the opponent's right arm across his own right shoulder so that he is standing directly in front of the opponent. An alternative is to pivot so that his right arm is across your left shoulder and you are standing slightly off to one side.



*The Contra, turn the arm, grab his left foot with your left han, and throw him over your right leg, as in No. 45B [a very similar counter is given in Flos Duellatorum by Fiore Dei Liberi, 1410]*

*Commentary: Counter to the OTS Armbar #1 – Rear Leg Takedown*

This one has to be the poorest illustration in Paschen's whole manual. He has executed the technique so that he is standing directly in front of you. From what I surmise, quickly bend your elbow and turn your arm to avoid hyper extension; grab his same side ankle/foot with your other arm; pivot as you lift his leg and pull with your grabbed arm so that he is forced backwards over your leg that is on the same side as the arm he grabbed.



*Grip Adversarii left arm with both hands, bring the same on your left shoulder, and break it*

*The Contra, as before*

*Or turn the arm and place the knee on the back of Adversarii knee, pull him down on his back,  
as in No. 46 [the drawing doesn't show the knee part]*

*Commentary: Counter to the OTS Armbar #2 – Pull Down*

If he has executed the technique so that he is standing directly in front of you as before, quickly bend your arm so that your hand is against his chest to avoid hyper extension.; step backwards and pull him off balance to the rear. The illustration is that simple, the text includes instruction to place your knee in the opponent's back for extra leverage as you pull him over onto his back.

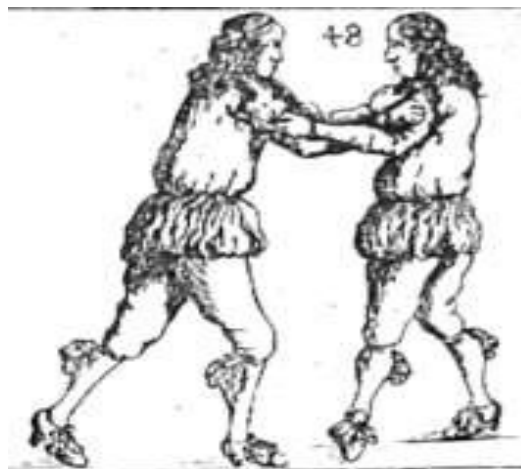


*When Adversarius grasps you with both hands at the strong of your arms, break the grip of his left hand outwards, and at the same time throw your right arm around his body under his arm, jump with your right hip in front of his body, as in No. 47, and throw him [looks like a o-goshi hip throw]*

*The same over your left hip*

*Commentary: Hip Throw*

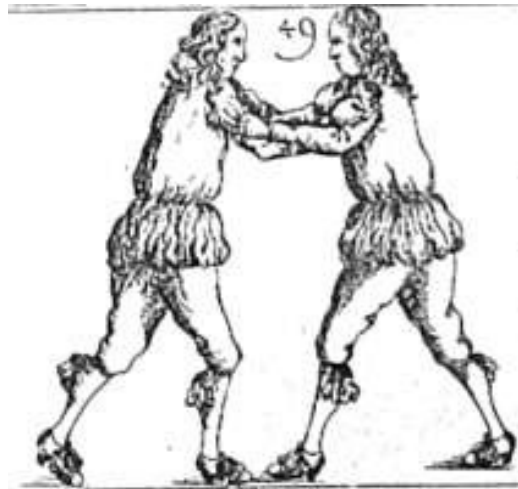
This one is pretty standard. It is described as a follow-up after freeing yourself from a double arm grab, but could follow many of the releases/escapes previously described. It would also make another good counter to the OTS arm bar. It is illustrated with the opponent in the face-forward position, but can be applied with him in the face-backwards position as well. Throw your arm around his body under his arm; pivot 180 degrees and place your hip against his body; toss him onto the ground in front of you.



*Grab Adversarium inwards, and push him, as in No. 48*

*Commentary: The Basic Double Arm Tie-up or Clinch*

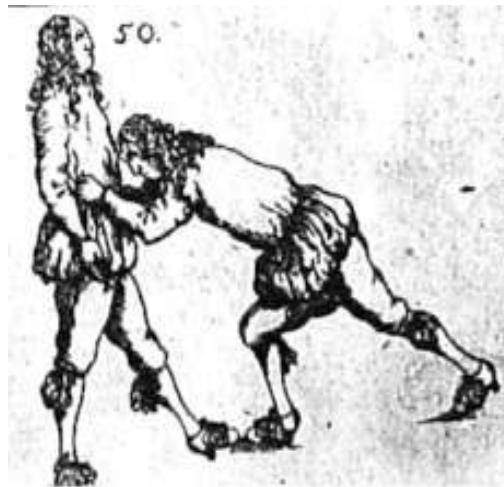
You have grabbed both of the opponent's upper arms from the inside and he has grabbed both of yours from the outside or vice versa. Alternatively you could each grab one on the inside and one on the outside, though this is not illustrated. From here you would each try to off-balance the other by pushing and pulling back and forth to gain advantage. This forms the core of a good training drill by using this back and forth play to set up any of the throws, take downs, arm locks, etc. being described.



*The Contra, place your feet and push back, as in No. 49*

Commentary: The Basic Double Arm Tie-up or Clinch

Same as number 48.



*Place your head against Adversarii body, as in No. 50, and run him over*

Commentary: Head Ram

Bend over and rush forward to strike him in the abdomen with the top of your head. In the illustration the aggressor appears to be grabbing the opponent at the waist on both sides as he does the ram.



*The Contra, push his head down, and grab him by the back of his pants, so he falls on his head, as in No. 51*

*Commentary: Counter to the Head Ram #1*

As he comes in, push his head downward; grab him by the back of the pants and pull so that he falls forward onto his head. Also counters the Double-leg Takedown ( number 40) and the Double-leg Throw (number 53).



*Or strike his face with your knee as in No. 52*

*Commentary: Counter to Head Ram #2*

Lift your leg quickly to strike him in the face with the top of your knee as he comes in. Also counters the Double-leg Takedown and the Double-leg Throw.



*Insert your head between Adversarii legs, and throw him over you, as in No. 53*

*The Contra, grab the back of his pants, so he falls on his face, as shown in No. 51*

*Commentary: Double Leg Throw*

Insert your head between the opponent's legs as you grab around both of his upper legs/thighs; stand upright and lift him up to throw him over you onto the ground behind you.



*Place your head against Adversarii body, grab behind his knees with both hands, as in No. 54, and throw him behind you*

*The Contra as in No. 52*

*Commentary: Double-leg Takedown with Head Ram*

Same as number 40.

# **ENDE**

## **Remarks:**

**The literature presented here is a testament to the German martial arts heritage. It is my hope it will enlighten all readers about Ringen and in turn help dispel prevalent popular belief regarding the lack of or absence of any viable self-defense system western martial arts has to offer.**

**The interpretations/comments of Keith Myers, which can be immensely useful in my opinion, are strictly his own views on the methods within Pascha's fechtbuch.**

**May those who practice Ringen apply it for gentlemanly deeds and, if necessity dictates, use the knowledge for ones own defense or defense of others.**

**- Tyrone Artur Budzin**

## **Credit for source and illustrations:**

### **The ARMA Group**

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