

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.1 tuta porta de fero , pulsativa¹ (full iron gate)



Synopsis: This third plate begins Fiore's dissertation on the twelve guards for the longsword with the depictions of 12 masters in a sequence of illustrations on 3 plates illustrating the various *poste* or guards. Central to his descriptions of the twelve *poste*, he writes the following four line introduction to these plates highlighted in the top of the illustration on the right. He writes:

*Poste e guardiè chiamare per nome si façemo
E'una simille cum l'altra contrazie noy semo
E'segondo che noy stavemo e semo posté
De far l'una contra l'altra façemo le mostre*

**For simplicity we are named posts and guards
And we are similar with one's other counters
And according to how we are and our poste
To show how simple to use one counter to the other.**



It is surmised that the pairings of the guards as illustrated imply that the guards were illustrated with their most appropriate counter guard. In other words, when two fighters face each other and one assumes the guard stance on the left, the appropriate "counter" guard would be the one illustrated to its right. This is somewhat supported by the interpretation of the introductory paragraph where it implies that the guards are indeed different from each other and mentions the counter stance within the same context. This is further supported by the last statement where he mentions that he will demonstrate how to use one guard opposite to its counterpart. However, one can also surmise that each guard is the next logical sequence of guards if one transitions from one guard to the next.

Fiore now begins his presentation of each guard accompanied with a couplet revealing the intentions of the master in the illustration. The first *posta* illustrated on the top left of this plate is the *tuta porta de fero* which is described as the "ground floor" or foundational guard and continues by indicating the guard is an effective parry against cuts and thrusts.

*Tuta porta de fero son la piana terena
Che tagli e punte sempre si refrena*

**The full iron gate is the ground floor
You can always parry cuts and thrusts.**

Notice that the left hand grips the pommel from above in a somewhat relaxed manner, which is a good position to move directly into the "*posta de dona soprana*" in the next image by simply raising the hands from the lowered position up and over the right shoulder. This supports the premise in which the sequence of the guards can move from one guard to another smoothly and effectively. The second verse makes reference to point or tip "*punte*" or thrusts, and therefore, as Fiore indicates that one can always "parry cuts and thrusts".

Application: This guard is deployed similarly as illustrated, whereby the sword is angled towards the earth and outwards towards the wielder's right similar to one holding a hockey stick outwards to the player's right side and downward towards the ice (ground). The deployment of a counter from this *posta* would involve a number of attributes, which involve time of the body, foot and hand (see [footnote](#) below). The manner of deployment would be exactly the same whether the inbound blow is a thrust or cut. The stepping forward and aside (traverse) while raising the sword and twisting the body provides the necessary power to either parry aside a thrust or blow in which the deployment would conclude by acquiring the *posta de dona soprana*. Secondly, from the *posta de dona soprana*, one could strike the inbound blow or thrust downwards to the ground and acquire the *porta de fero* again with similar footwork and body movements engaged during its deployment.

example applications

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	mezza porta di ferro (Half Iron Gate)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	denti di cinghiale (Guard of the Boar's Tooth)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 2) Twisted Cut and Low Guard
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	The Low Ward
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	(13.3) Of the Defense of the Low Ward at Two Hand Sword

Footnotes

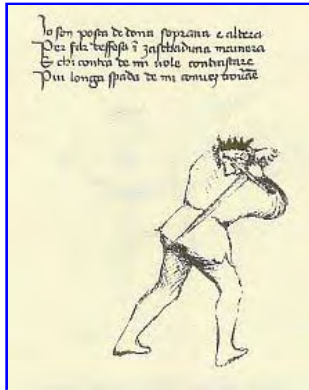
1. *pulsativa* refers to where one must deliver a counter attack (cut or thrust) as a cover in order to survive an attack concurrently while taking a step. This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.2 *posta de dona* , *pulsativa*¹ (guard of the woman)



*Io son posta de dona soprana e altera
Per far deffesa in zaschaduna mainera
E chi contra de mi uole contrastare
Piu longa spada de mi conuen trouare*

**I am the supreme and proud guard of the woman
For I can make a defense for every strike
And that counter of mine will contrast yours
You should find a much longer sword than mine.**

Synopsis: Fiore writes high praise for the *posta de dona* as being the "supreme" guard which implies that this guard is an extremely effective guard from which to counter any of the blows potentially received. Another suggestion is that the guard is positioned on the right shoulder, which during that period, the "right" took a higher precedence than the "left" and therefore, may be referenced as such (i.e. *posta de dona distreza* or guard of the woman on the right). He writes that this guard can defend against any strike delivered and that the only possible way to defeat a blow from the *posta de dona* is for the *zugadore* to attack with a longer sword! This suggests that the deployment of a blow from this guard will result in the sword not only defending its wielder but also positions the sword offensively against the *zugadore* upon its completion. What may be derived from this blow is achieving a relatively offensive *posta* such as the *posta*



breve or the *posta longa* at the conclusion of the placing the wielder in a highly effective offensive position which effectively places the *zugadore* at extreme disadvantage.

Application: Referring to Fiore's introduction, it further supports the notion of transitioning from one *posta* to the next *posta* because of the natural and flowing ease with which to move from the previous *tuta porta de fero* to this *posta de dona*. The manner to transition from the *porta de fero* to the *posta de dona* is a simple matter of shifting one's weight to the rear foot (the right foot) while retaining the left foot oriented towards the *zugadore* while raising the sword from the lower right up and continuing to position the grip over the right shoulder until the blade is somewhat parallel to the wielder's back. On the other token, transitioning from the *posta de dona* to the *porta de fero* is the reverse, shifting the weight from the rear right foot to a more equal distribution across both feet and dropping the sword as depicted in the *porta de fero*.

Secondly, a strike from the *posta de dona* can also terminate in a thrust rather than a cutting strike. The manner to deploy a thrust would require the wielder to deliver a downward strike against an inbound strike to achieve the *posta breve* without having to move ones feet but with a *volta stabile*² or simply turning on the feet without moving their positioning, and achieving the *posta breve* against the inbound strike and then taking a step forward to deliver the thrust. This movement would require approximately "time-and-a-half" to deliver both a defense and offense.

Although the plate illustrates the *posta de dona* with the back facing the previous *posta*, from a practical perspective, one would never expose one's back to a potential attack, and certainly, Fiore is not depicting the master exposing his back to the *zugadore* as this would be inconsistent with all other plates in the treatise, and therefore, the illustration's orientation was simply to adequately exhibit the proper positioning of the sword behind the back which would've been extremely difficult to communicate if illustrated in any other orientation.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 31) From the bind...

Footnotes

- ¹ *pulsativa* refers to where one must deliver a counter attack (cut or thrust) as a cover in order to survive an attack concurrently while taking a step. This info was derived from the Getty's version of Liberi's treatise.
- ² *volta stabile* refers to turning on one's feet without moving their position with respect to the *zugadore*.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

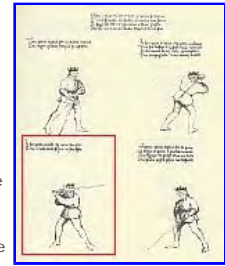
4.1.3 posta de finestra , instabile¹ (guard of the window)



*Io son posta reale de uera finestra
E de tuta l'arte sempre io son presta*

**I am the royal guard of the true window
And of all the art I am always the quickest**

Synopsis: The description of "window" or *finestra* suggests that the wielder is peering through a window under its "sash", represented by the blade of the sword held just above the eyes across the forehead. Given this, it can be deduced that the blade is not actually pointed in the direction of the opponent, but rather somewhat off-line in order to give the appearance of peering through a window. The reference to "true" is not clear within the context of this guard given he uses the same description with a later [guard of the window](#). Other possible translation context could include "real" or "pure" which could possibly be used as the descriptive term as well, however, it doesn't actually clarify the purpose of using such a descriptive term. Another possibility is that it is simply held over the right shoulder, considering the culture that the right was "good" and the left was "bad" in that period. In the second line of the verse, Fiore hints as to the effectiveness of such a guard in terms of both coverage and attacking. Given such a guard, it is implied that its deployment is quick and effective against all of the other guards he described in the treatise.



Application: The *posta de finestra* or guard of the window has occasionally been referred to as the **"holy shit guard"**. The reason for this less than elegant name for this guard was reasoned that the position of the sword was almost horizontal to the ground, and the tip pointed either to the left or right of the opponent somewhat off-line, and that this guard can be deployed quickly as a result of being surprised and achieving this guard position as a reactionary movement and often was preceded with a verbalized **"holy sh..."** when deployed. Also, the orientation of the torso with respect to the opponent is such that the chest remains someone perpendicular to the opponent's centre line. Further study indicates that the point is indeed oriented towards the opponent somewhat off-line and that the foot placement is such that the opponent views the "edge" of the body with the left foot forward and oriented towards the *zugadore*. A far more effective deterrent to the opponent when the sword is pointed towards his/her face. Upon further examination of the illustration, realizing that if the body was positioned broadside to the opponent, and the sword when raised was in front of the eyes, the individual would be blinded by the blade. Therefore, the second interpretation is deemed incorrect, and through practical experience in training and combat, the original interpretation is the more viable one.

The orientation of the body and placement of the sword, along with the reference to *instabile* provides additional clues that confirms the orientation of the body and sword and that in order to deploy either a cut or thrust, a passing step is required for an effective delivery.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta di donna (guard of the woman - variation)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta stanca di vera finestra (the tired guard of the true window)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 10) Open Guard and Spring
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 12) Open Guard and Offensive leg
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 13) Upper Guards
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 18) Downward centre cut and block

Footnotes

1. *instabile* refers to delivering a blow (thrust or cut) while one takes a full step (a passing step) to reach the target. This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.4 meçana porta de fero, stabile¹ (half iron gate)



*Meçana porta de fero son la forte
Per dare cum punte e fendenti la morte
E per lungeça de spada che io me sento
Del stretto zogho sempre me deffendo*

**I am the strong middle iron gate
For inflicting with a thrust and a deadly cleave
And for me I feel that the sword length
Of close play I will always defend myself**

Synopsis: It is evident that Fiore suggests this guard was a position of strength with a duel capability of both defense and offensive and indicating that this *posta* permits both cutting or cleaving strikes or thrusts. What is clear from the text is that the strike can be deployed without the need to move the feet. It suggests that this is more of a defensive position, and without the need to move the position of the feet (*stabile*), when whatever blow is delivered by the *zugadore*, it is met with frightening power in the form of either a cut (cleave) or thrust. Given the stationary footwork, the orientation of the body would not change and the movement of the sword would remain in the "middle" during the "beat" and the following *fendente*. Fiore mentions *streto zogho* in his text which further supports the notion that the footwork would remain stationary while deploying the "beat" and return with a strike when in close quarters or "close play" (*streto zogho*). Secondly, given the relatively close proximity to the opponent, it is implied that this guard can effectively defend oneself as described above, or possibly deliver a thrust in relatively close range.



Application: The key point suggested by Liberi is that the *meçana porta de fero* or middle iron gate can deploy very strong parries against thrusts by quickly beating away the inbound thrust (time of the hand) and delivering a thrust in return (exchange of points). The successful deployment of this guard and the follow-on parry and thrust or strike requires mastery of both distance and timing which exemplifies *Silver's* combative principle of true time, specifically, *time of the hand*. All this of course while the feet remain stationary. Liberi suggests that this guard is best deployed in relative close quarters implying that the sword will remain an effective weapon in close range given the footwork. The guard is deployed with the right foot forward and the right calf relatively vertically oriented, while the left foot trails behind resting on the ground on the ball of the foot only. This offers a degree of readiness should action be required in which movement of the feet is necessary. While maintaining the distance during the deployment of the beat and strike, the master would return to the middle iron gate thus ensuring he has adequate defenses in place at the conclusion of the strike.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	Mezza porta di ferro (Guard of the Middle Iron Door - armoured)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	Denti di cinghiale (Guard of Boar's Tooth)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 2) Twisted Cut and Low Guard
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 16) Guard of the Iron Door (Low guard)
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	The Low Ward
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	(13.3) Of the Defense of the Low Ward at Two Hand Sword

Footnotes

1. *stabile* refers to delivering a blow (thrust or cut) while one maintains present foot placement. This info was derived from the *Getty's* version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

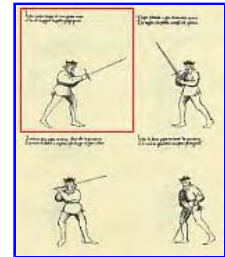
4.1.5 *posta longa* , *instabile*¹ (the long guard)



*Io son posta longa cum mia spada curta
Che cum ingegno la golla spresso furta*

**I am the long guard with my short sword
That with cunning I stealthily despise the throat**

Synopsis: Fiore speaks of a "short" sword when it is clear that he is not using a short sword, but a longsword, and the reference to "stealth" suggests a degree of deception on the part of the master towards the *zugadore*. The first line of the couplet points out a long guard but describes it in the context of a shortended sword, perhaps implying by the orientation of the point towards the *zugadore*'s head, the *zugadore* cannot truly see the true length of the sword and therefore, the sword is disguised in this manner. The second line describes a talent or skill or cunning whereby one can deploy the long guard to evade a parry and deliver a cut or thrust to the demise of the *zugadore* who was unsuccessful in parrying the long guard.



Application: The long guard is an extremely effective guard for the purpose of confusing or intimidating or deceiving the *zugadore* with the offensive point of the sword which is oriented towards the *zugadore*'s face. The deception involved with this guard encompasses a pair of dimensions, the first deception is given the orientation of the sword, the wielder projects the image that the longsword is actually shorter than its true length. The second dimension is given the point work involved is evading parrying by the opponent whereby the wielder can then quickly return with a cut or thrust against the *zugadore*'s throat. Distance may be compromised on the part of the *zugadore* when misinterpreting the guard and closing in on the wielder only to find himself/herself facing a thrust with a "longsword". In the second case, escaping the parrying or clearing aside by the opponent against the long guard can result in receiving a wound given the *zugadore* has just "spent" the parry and the long guard is able to reposition with a quick cut. Fiore describes the deployment of the long guard in terms of *instabile* meaning, the thrust or cut is deployed concurrently with a passing step. Care must be taken to not fully extend one's arms when deploying the long guard otherwise the wielder is "spent" and will be unable to deploy a thrust or cut as described earlier.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta frontale o corona (frontal guard of the crown)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 1) High Guards
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	The High Ward
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	(13.2) Of the Defense of the High Ward at Two Hand Sword

Footnotes

1. *instabile* in which to deliver a successful blow (thrust or cut), one must take a full step (a passing step). This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.6 posta frontalle o corona , instabile¹ (frontal guard of the crown)



*Posta frontalle e son chiamata corona
De tagli e de punte a nesun non perdona*

**This is called the frontal guard of the crown
To no one do we apologize for the cut and the thrust**

Synopsis: The head, in particular, the forehead was often referred to the "crown" similar to its use in the following phrase "*The old lady crowned the wicked guy with her umbrella.*" The *posta frontalle* is an effective defensive posture to defend against strikes to the head or neck area. A successful deployment of this guard can result in a very effective and immediate offensive maneuver including a very quick reponse in the form of a strike or thrust, hence, Fiore's stating that there is no need to "apologize" for the cut or the thrust.

Practical Application: The deployment of this guard is highly effective against any strike or thrust thrown by the *zugadore* provided the deployment is subtle and conservative. The structure of the posture is such that the sword is approximately 45° or more from the horizontal, and the hilt is either to the right or to the left of the line of attack, such that the sword is not only pointing upwards, but is angled slightly towards the left or right depending upon the engagement. The middle of the sword should be essentially on the line of attack. Delivering this guard with wild movements to the right or left will in fact, create an

opening which the *zugadore* can exploit resulting in incurring injury or worse. In particular with receiving thrusts, the range of movement of the hilt in centimetres can be counted on one hand. The movements, ever so slight is enough to redirect the inbound thrust in combination with a slight traverse step off-line while keeping in contact with the inbound thrust will provide an opportunity to immediately return with the wielder's own thrust to the *zugadore*. Although Fiore doesn't delve into these concepts in detail in this plate, it is implied given the far more details offered in the Getty's version of the treatise.



example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	Posta breve (Short Guard)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 3) Guard of the Wrath - Middle Guard

Footnotes

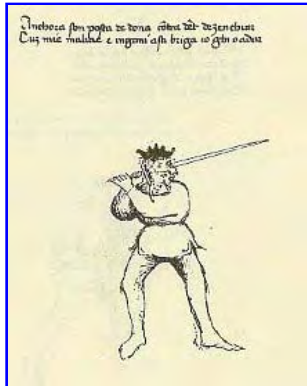
1. *instabile* in which to delivery a successful blow (thrust or cut), one must take a full step (a passing step). This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.7 *posta de dona la sinistra* , *pulsativa*¹ (guard of the woman on the left)

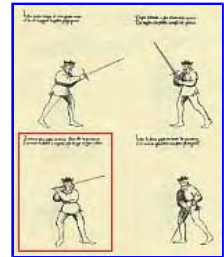


*Anchora son posta de dona contra dent de zenchiar
Cum mie malicie e ingani asa' briga io ghi ò a dar*

**I am the guard of the woman and also counter to the boar's tooth
With my malice and cunning I and sword will start a brawl**

Synopsis: Fiore clearly indicates that the *posta de dona* is counter to the *dent de zenchiar* and is the only case in which he explicitly states that the pair of guards represents counters to the other. The phrase of course is re-ordered slightly in order to achieve a rhyming couplet hence, introduces possible interpretation errors, however, the translation of the first line of the couplet is considered fairly accurate. The second line of the couplet implies that the guard of the woman is a good position from which to deliver strikes to the *zugadore*, and that it may be an advantage in a "brawl" in which repeated strikes and defense would be required.

Practical Application: This *posta* is one of the most versatile guards, able to defend against cuts and thrusts, and which can also deliver cuts and thrusts. It is also the most natural position to take when wielding the sword, and therefore, the quickest guard to return to and then to release another strike. The *posta de dona* also is able to deliver the most powerful strikes, but can also deliver unexpected results such as the "villain strike" described earlier in this treatise.



example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta reale di vera finestra (royal guard of the true window)

Footnotes

1. *pulsativa* refers to where one must deliver a counter attack (cut or thrust) as a cover in order to survive an attack concurrently while taking a step. This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.8 *posta de dent de zenchiar, stabile*¹ (guard of the boar's tooth)



*Io son la forte posta de dent de zenchiar
Cum tute le guardie me son uso de prouar*

**I am the strong guard of the tooth of the boar
With my experience I can fashion all of the guards**

Synopsis: The first line of the couplet indicates that the *posta de dent de zenchiar* is a "strong" guard, however, it may not actually refer to the "power" of the guard but rather its extreme flexibility in morphing into any other guard with ease and efficiency, as implied by the second line of the couplet, thus making it a very "strong" guard. It is clear that regardless of whether this guard is highly flexible or not, one does require experience and skill to be able to deploy this guard effectively.

Practical Application: This guard appears to be a variation of the guard of the iron gate, except for the fact that the point in this guard is directed more downwards, making the sword overall more vertical to the ground and aligned with the line of attack between the wielder and the *zugadore*. To add, the pommel is closer to the body, appearing to rest against the hip bone. With little effort on the part of the wielder, an upward thrust is entirely within the realms of possibilities, provided the distance is right. Should the wielder receive a thrust from the *zugadore*, using the boar's tooth, one can essentially deploy an "exchange of points" resulting in an effective deflection of the inbound thrust while positioning to deliver a thrust in return in single time. This

guard can also be the source of a strike to the inbound strike and creating the opportunity to reposition with a strike to the *zugadore* in approximately time-and-a-half. As Fiore indicated in the couplet, this guard can easily morph into any one of the other guards presented in this section, making this a very flexible guard, and a source for conveying "misinformation" to the *zugadore* allowing some time to deploy a more effective offensive strategy during the engagement.



example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	tutta porta di ferro (full iron gate)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	meçana porta de fero (half iron gate)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 2) Twisted Cut and Low Guard
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	The Low Ward
Giacomo di Grassi	1594	(13.3) Of the Defense of the Low Ward at Two Hand Sword

Footnotes

1. **stabile** refers to posta that can be deployed (thrusts or cuts) simply through the extension of the hands and arms keeping footwork stationary. This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 *spada longa* - longsword

4.1 *poste* (guards)

4.1.9 *posta breve, stabile*¹ (short guard)



*Io son posta breve e de spada lungeça
Spresso meto punta e in lei torno in freça*

**I am the short guard and of the longest sword
Is the fury of darting my point and quickly returning to it**

Synopsis: The couplet is written to imply that the sword has taken on qualities beyond its physical form, in that it can become a much longer sword with the *posta breve*. The second line of the couplet suggests that the *posta breve* can deliver a thrusting strike, like a "snake bite" and quickly return to its former position, without the need to move one's feet. The Getty's treatises assigns the term *stabile* which supports the notion of being able to deliver fast thrusts and return to the *posta breve* quickly without the need to move the feet.

Practical Application: The *posta breve* is perhaps the most common guard displayed by fighters, which suggests a very natural guard position. The structure of this guard is such that the blade is aligned to the line of attack between the wielder and the *zugadore* and the hilt is low and close to the wielder's belly. This structure creates a very strong defensive shield, which can be used to quickly deflect an inbound thrust returning with its own thrust to the *zugadore* entirely operating on the time of the hands. The point of the sword is oriented towards the face of the *zugadore* increasing its intimidation and therefore, offering greater opportunities to strike. This guard is able to be acquired with either the right foot forward or the left foot forward.



example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta frontale o corona (frontal guard of the crown)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 3) Guard of the Wrath - Middle Guard

Footnotes

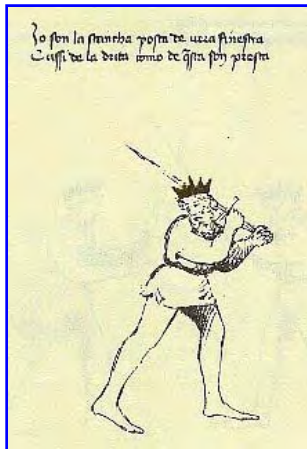
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Fiore dei Liberi: *Flos Duellatorum*, 1410 (Pisani-Dossi, F. Novati, Bergamo, 1902)

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.10 *posta stancha de vera finestra, instabile*¹ (the left guard of the true window)



*Io son la stancha posta de uera finestra
Cussi de la drita como de questa son presta*

**I am the left guard of the true window
Like the one on the right how quick this one is**

Synopsis: Fiore makes a reference to the "right handed one" meaning the *posta reale di vera finestra* or "royal guard of the true window" in that this guard is very similar to the afore mentioned guard, except that the blade is now behind the head instead of the front of the head. Fiore refers to the guards of window as "true" or *uera* in both cases (right and left guards), however, the intent of the reference to "true" is unclear.

Practical Application: This guard is inconsistent with the Getty's version, in that it doesn't appear the Getty's version. The guard is depicted unlike to the earlier guard *posta reale de vera finestra* whereby the sword is positioned behind the head as opposed in front of the "crown" of the head. This guard looks far more similar to the guard of the woman on the left. However, the manner of deploying strikes from this guard position would be very similar to its counterpart guard, guard of the window right.



example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta reale di vera finestra (royal guard of the true window)
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 10) Open Guard and Spring
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 12) Open Guard and Offensive leg
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 13) Upper Guards
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 18) Downward centre cut and block

Footnotes

1. *instabile* in which to delivery a successful blow (thrust or cut), one must take a full step (a passing step). This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.11 *posta de coda lunga e distesa* , *stabile*¹ (guard of long and extended tail)



*Posta de coda lunga son in terra destesa
Denançi e dedredo sempre io faço offesa
E se passo innançi e entro in lo fendent
E' uegno al streto zogho sença faliment*

**I am the guard of the long tail extended to the earth
I can always be offensive forwards and backwards
And if I step forward and within it I throw a cut
And when we're in close play I feel infalible**

Synopsis: A guard position that presents to the adversary, a completely unguarded body and therefore an extremely provocative position. This position is considered as one of two things, firstly, a ploy to provoke an attack by the opponent, given the completely undefended body presented to the opponent, and secondly, a rather pensive approach, in which by positioning the blade behind, one would effectively conceal the weapon from the opponent, and by removing the weapon from your current visual field, enables you to "study" the opponent in great detail. Given the structure of this guard, the opponent would certainly be distracted by this guard, providing the opportunity for a few moments to study and gauge the opponent's prowess and mental state with which to plan your next move.



Practical Application: In the AEMMA longsword training program, this guard is simply called the "**guard of the tail**" or simply the "**tail guard**". It is often employed during fechten (unstructured fighting, both **au pleasaunce** and **o 'otrance** forms of fechten). From our perspective, a very useful guard to "break" the concentration or intent of the opponent during these engagements. Of course, the other method is to simply lower your weapon and walk around the opponent, thus distracting his intent as well.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Hans Talhoffer	1467	(tafel 25) "Hat" (rear) Guard

Footnotes

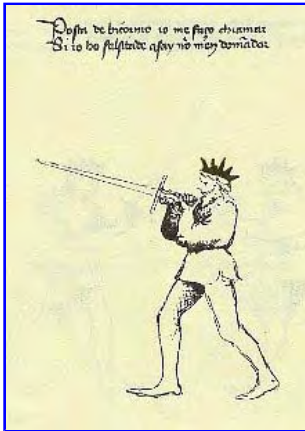
1. *stabile* refers to posta that can be deployed (thrusts or cuts) simply through the extension of the hands and arms keeping footwork stationary. This info was derived from the **Getty's** version of Liberi's treatise.

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

4 spada longa - longsword

4.1 poste (guards)

4.1.12 *posta de bicornio* , *instabile*¹ (guard of the two horns)



*Posta de bicornio io me faço chiamar
Si io ho falsitade asay non men domandar*

**I am simply called the guard of the two horns
Your false request to me will not spoil what I have**

Synopsis: The first line of the couplet clearly names this guard as a "two horned guard", and is illustrated as positioning the sword in-line with the line of attack between the wielder (the master) and his *zugadore* with the sword raised to the top of the wielder's chest. The second line of the couplet proved extremely challenging, as Fiore did tend to re-arrange the text to improve the "rhyming" of the couplets. The second line appears to indicate that should the *zugadore* attempt to feint with the wielder, the feint will not spoil the original intent or plan held by the wielder. It suggests that the master is able to detect a feint and not fall prey to such a trick and remain focused on his original intent.



Practical Application: In practice, this particular guard is found to be quite effective against either thrusts or cuts. The grip as illustrated appears odd, but it can be easily achieved by beginning with the short guard and rolling up the sword to the position as illustrated. This position will provide instantaneous opportunities to deploy a frontal guard on either side against a downward cut ending in a thrust to the *zugadore* or to achieve a guard of the window against the same cut or thrust from above, resulting in a thrust to the *zugadore*. The text suggests that this guard position may invoke some action on the part of the *zugadore* believing that the two horned guard would not be effective against anything thrown, resulting in the possible early demise of the *zugadore*.

example applications/similarities

Author	Year	Reference Page
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta breve (short guard)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta frontale o corona (frontal guard of the crown)
Fiore de' Liberi	1410	posta de finestra (guard of the window)

Footnotes

1. *instabile* in which to delivery a successful blow (thrust or cut), one must take a full step (a passing step). This info was derived from the Getty's version of Liberi's treatise.