

Destreza Translation and Research Project

The following document is a translation of a portion of Francisco Antonio de Ettenhard's *Compendio de los fundamentos de la verdadera destreza y filosofía de las armas* (Madrid, 1675). The original text in Spanish is from Spain's Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid.

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Translator's Note

The page numbers of the original Spanish text are bolded and marked in brackets within the translation.

Illustration Note

The illustrations have been redrawn by Puck Curtis.

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COMPENDIUM OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE TRUE ART AND PHILOSOPHY OF ARMS.

TRUTH

BREVITY

Dedicated
to the Catholic, Sacred,
and Royal Majesty of the
King, Our Lord
Don Carlos II.
Monarch of Spain
and the Indies.

SCIENCE

ART

By Don Francisco Antonio de Ettenhard,
Knight of the Order of Calatrava.

With Privilege.
In Madrid: By Antonio de Zafra.
Year of 1675

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Illustrations by Puck Curtis

First Treatise Concerning the Geometric Principles Necessary in the Art to Understand the Illustrations and Comprehend the Terms

The first thing that is mentioned in Geometry is the Point, because all the rest depend on it. Euclid defines it, saying: A Point is that which has no parts. But for us to understand more clearly, I say: That the **[page 2]** Point is the thinnest mark that one can make writing with a quill on paper, and the letter (A) marks it in the first Illustration.

The Point is followed by the Line, which only has length (which is the same as distance); and thus we should think of a very thin line composed of fine points. There are three types of Lines: some are called Straight, others Curved, and others Mixed. The Straight Line is the brief extension from one point to another. It is Regular because it always extends in the same way, and it is identified in the following Illustration by the letter (B). The Curved Line is the one that is arced in its path, so that it does not fall evenly between two Points, and it is shown with the letter (C). The Mixed Line is composed of the Straight and the Curved, and in the following Illustration it is indicated with the letter (D). Like the Curved Line, the Mixed could be Regular or irregular.

Angles are formed with Lines **[page 3]** when two Lines intersect at a Point. Note that if the Angle is composed of Straight Lines, it is called Rectilinear (E) for this reason, if of Curved Lines, Curvilinear (F), and if of one Straight and one Curved Line, Mixed (G). In the following Illustration the letters mark them.

There are three types of Angles which are: Right, Obtuse and Acute. The Right Angle is that which includes (in the space between the two Lines) a quarter part of the circumference, that one could make placing the compass in the point of the intersection (H). The Obtuse Angle is the one that includes more than a quarter (Y), and the Acute Angle includes less (J).

The Obtuse and Acute Angles do not have determined Points for which reason they can be more or less Obtuse or more or less Acute. And thus, to be able to give them values and graduations, it is necessary to have an Illustration, that makes it easy **[page 4]** to understand. Thus, it will be, a circle, which should be divided in three hundred and sixty equal parts that we will call degrees; and one will recognize that since the Right Angle does not include more than a quarter part of the circle, it is necessary that the Angle be precisely ninety degrees ; because if it passes the ninety by one degree, it will change from being a Right to an Obtuse Angle due to including more than the quarter part. Note that as the number of degrees is increased the Angle is as well. Also, accept as fact that if it lowers one degree below ninety, it will become an Acute Angle, with the same note that as the Degrees decrease, the magnitude of the Angle will be equally reduced. It is understood that with this proof measure and values can be given to the Angles, seeing the portion of the circle that they include and recognizing the degrees that they include in their magnitude. In the first Illustration it is marked with the letter (Z).

[page 5] The surface is composed of Lines. It has longitude and latitude, which are the same as length and width. There are three classes: Plane, Concave and Convex. The Plane surface is like a smooth board, the Concave like the inside of the Sword guard, and the Convex like the outside of the sword guard.

The planar figure is nothing but a closed surface, which if composed of Straight Lines, requires at least three because with fewer it cannot be formed, and for this reason the Triangle is the smallest figure that consists of three Lines ending in three Points from whose intersection are formed three Angles. However, if it is formed with a Curved Line, a figure can be made with only one which is called a Circle (L). The Point that is in the middle is the Center, and the Line the circumference. A figure can also be made with two Lines, but one would have to be Straight and the other Curved. They would form a half circle or a greater or lesser portion of it (M).

[page 6] There are many types of Triangle, and so that this information is not ignored, I will illustrate them and give each its proper name.

If the Triangle consists of three Straight lines that are equal, their sides will also be equal and all three Angles will be Acute. It is called Equilateral, and it is labeled by the letter (N).

If the Triangle has one Right Angle and two Acute and the sides are all unequal, it is called a Scalene Orthogonal (O).

If the Triangle has two equal sides and one unequal, it is an Isosceles, and the letter (P) indicates it.

If it has one Obtuse and two Acute Angles, it is an Obtuse Triangle, and it is shown by the (Q).

If all the sides are unequal, it is called Scalene and is marked by the letter (R).

The figure that follows the Triangle is the **[page 7]** quadrilateral that is composed of four Lines ending in four Points and forming four Angles. It is either perfect or imperfect. The perfect has four equal Lines that form Right Angles (S).

If two Lines are long and two short and if the Angles are also Right, it is called a Rectangle (T).

If the Quadrilateral has two Obtuse and two Acute Angles, it will be a Rhombus (V).

If the Rectangle has the same types of angles, it is called a Rhomboid (X).

The planar figures are followed by solids. They have three measurements: Longitude, Latitude, and Depth, which are the same as length, width and height. As the planar figure is formed by lines, the solid is composed of surfaces, and so that this information is not overlooked, it will be demonstrated with the figure that will most easily make it understandable. This will be the Hexahedron that is composed of **[page 8]** six Quadrilaterals and has six faces, as is shown in the following figure, marked with the letter (K).

Now having the knowledge of these terms, which are the four parts that form the body of Geometry, and knowing that the Line is composed of Points, the Angle of lines,

the surface of Angles, and the solid of surfaces, I will try to list the names of the Straight Lines with which we should divide the planar figures, and thus, if a Quadrilateral is divided by a Straight Line that crosses from one Angle to another, it is called a Diagonal (A).

If a Circle is divided in two equal Points with a Straight Line that passes through the Center to touch the Extremities of the Circumference, it will be called the Diameter (B).

If a Circle is divided in two unequal parts, it will be due to the Line not passing through the Center, and it is called a **[page 9]** Chord (or Semi-Diameter). The larger part is called the greater segment, and the smaller the lesser segment (C).

When a Straight Line falls vertically directly over another one, it is called Perpendicular (D), and the Line that receives it the Base (E).

There are other Straight Lines that are called Parallel, which are the ones that are equidistant from each other, so that even if they extend infinitely, they will never cross (F). Others are called convergent because they tilt more to one side than the other, and in a long or short space, they converge at a Point and form an angle (G).

All that has been defined and illustrated are the basic Geometric principles, knowledge of which is as necessary and essential to the person who would teach the true Art as to the one who would learn it because without them the one who would explain cannot teach the terms of this Science with reason and clarity. And not being thus, neither can the one who would be taught learn with pleasure nor **[page 10]** know perfectly. For this reason, it was necessary to give this brief overview that although it is only about the basics, it is enough to hope to achieve the intention of defining and showing the propositions of the true Art with some precision, and to begin it, it will be good to establish the Swordsman in the safest position and stance which is the Right Angle, according to its definition, which is formed in the way that is proposed later.

