

# 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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## Special Thanks

A Fulbright Fellowship and a grant from the Program for Cultural Cooperation Between Spain's Ministries and U.S. Universities that funded my research into Spanish historical swordplay made this work possible, and I hope that this translation will contribute in some measure back to the western martial arts community and further acquaint the English-speaking world with this tradition. I would also like to thank my husband Puck Curtis for his continued support and his critical eye as well as the many people who have contributed to my research, including Dr. Adrienne Martín, Dr. J. Ignacio Díez Fernández, Dr. Manuel Valle, Eric Myers, Alberto Bomprezi, and other members of the Asociación Española de Esgrima Antigua.

## 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.

## Contact Information

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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

# Second Treatise Concerning the Declaration of the Fundamental and Universal Principles of This Science

## Chapter I.

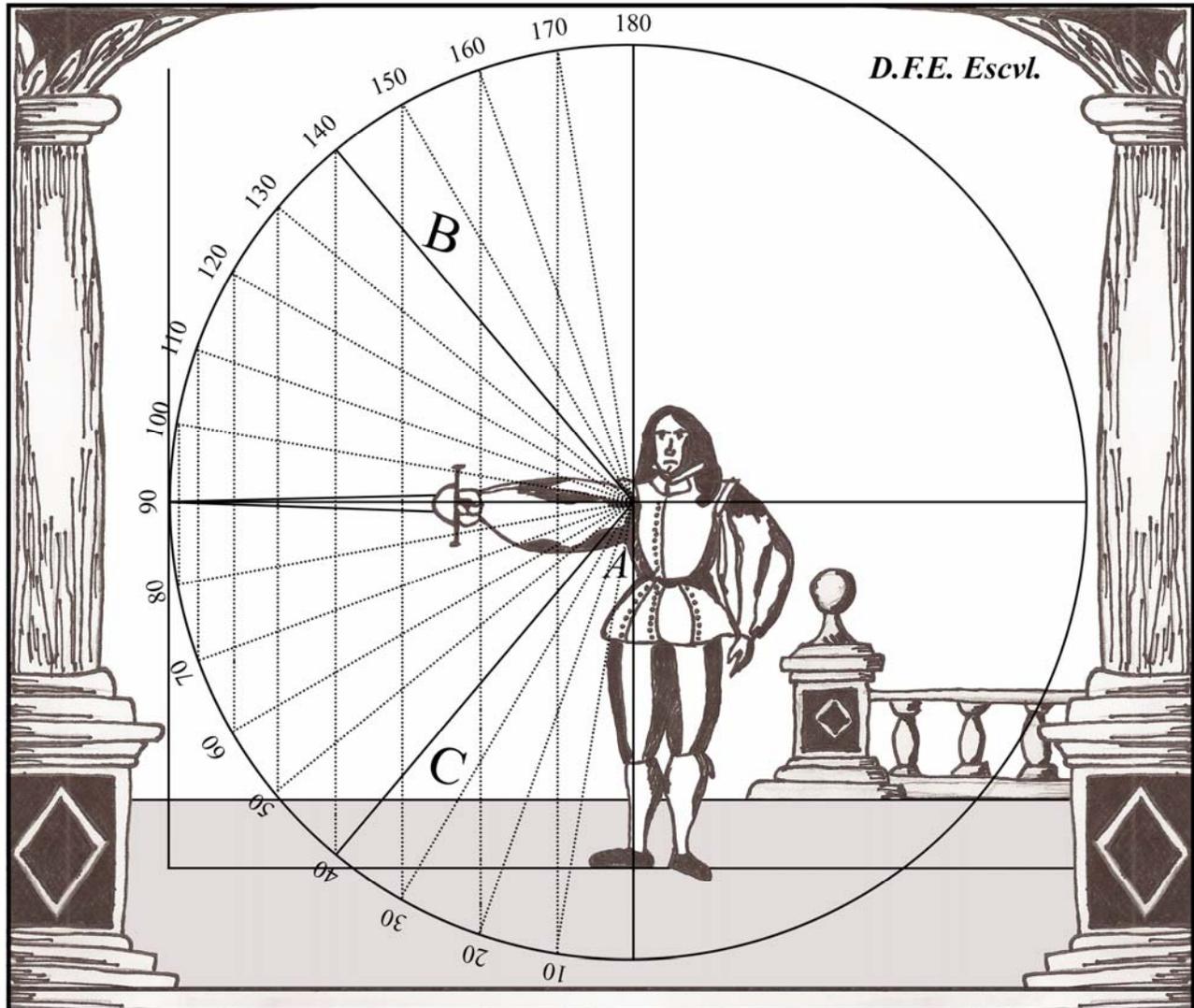
### Concerning How to Conceive of the Skilled Swordsman in the Formation of the Right, Obtuse and Acute Angles.

The first thing that should be discussed is the way to form the Angles, with the application of the Geometric measurements. Beginning this topic, I say: That the Swordsman forms the Right Angle when he stands with the body straight and perpendicular; rests naturally over both **[page 14]** feet, leaving a half foot distance between one heel and the other; and then holds out the arm and Sword orthogonal and straight, as it originates from the body, so that the tip rises to ninety degrees. This is the appropriate amount for the Right Angle because it should include in its magnitude a quarter part of the circumference, with the point of intersection being under the arm where it joins with the flank, as indicated by the letter (A). This is the position and stance that should always be observed because it is the one of greatest reach and defense and is the center of all the others.

The Obtuse Angle has greater magnitude than the Right Angle because it includes more than a quarter of the circle. Its value will be defined as the number of degrees in the angle. It does not reach as far as the Right Angle; note that the more Obtuse it is, the smaller its reach. The Swordsman forms this angle, when he raises the sword to occupy **[page 15]** Line (B), and it will have a value of one hundred and forty degrees, which are the degrees that it includes in the angle.

The Acute Angle has less magnitude than the Right Angle, and because it does not cover a quarter part of the Circumference, it also has less reach. Its value is defined by the number of degrees in the angle. The Swordsman forms it when he lowers the Sword to occupy Line (C), and it is counted as forty degrees, which are the degrees that correspond to it. In the following Illustration it is shown with perfect clarity.

**[page 16 blank]**



II.  
How the Right, Obtuse and Acute Angles Are Formed.

[page 18 blank]

[page 19] Since the Swordsman has been established in the most perfect stance, which is in the Right Angle (and is the position that should always be observed), it will be beneficial that I show us the other positions where he can come into stance with his opponent. However, as a movement is necessary to move the Sword from its starting point and place it elsewhere and since we still lack information about movement and its types, it will be best to first define what it is, how many types there are, and to what position one goes with each one. Also, so that this knowledge can be understood more easily, it will be helpful to provide an illustration. From this image, it will be known that the Skilled Swordsman can position himself in only six places, which are the General Lines, and that wherever he is he must be in one of the six, with a different movement necessary for the Sword to move to each one, and thus it is proven.