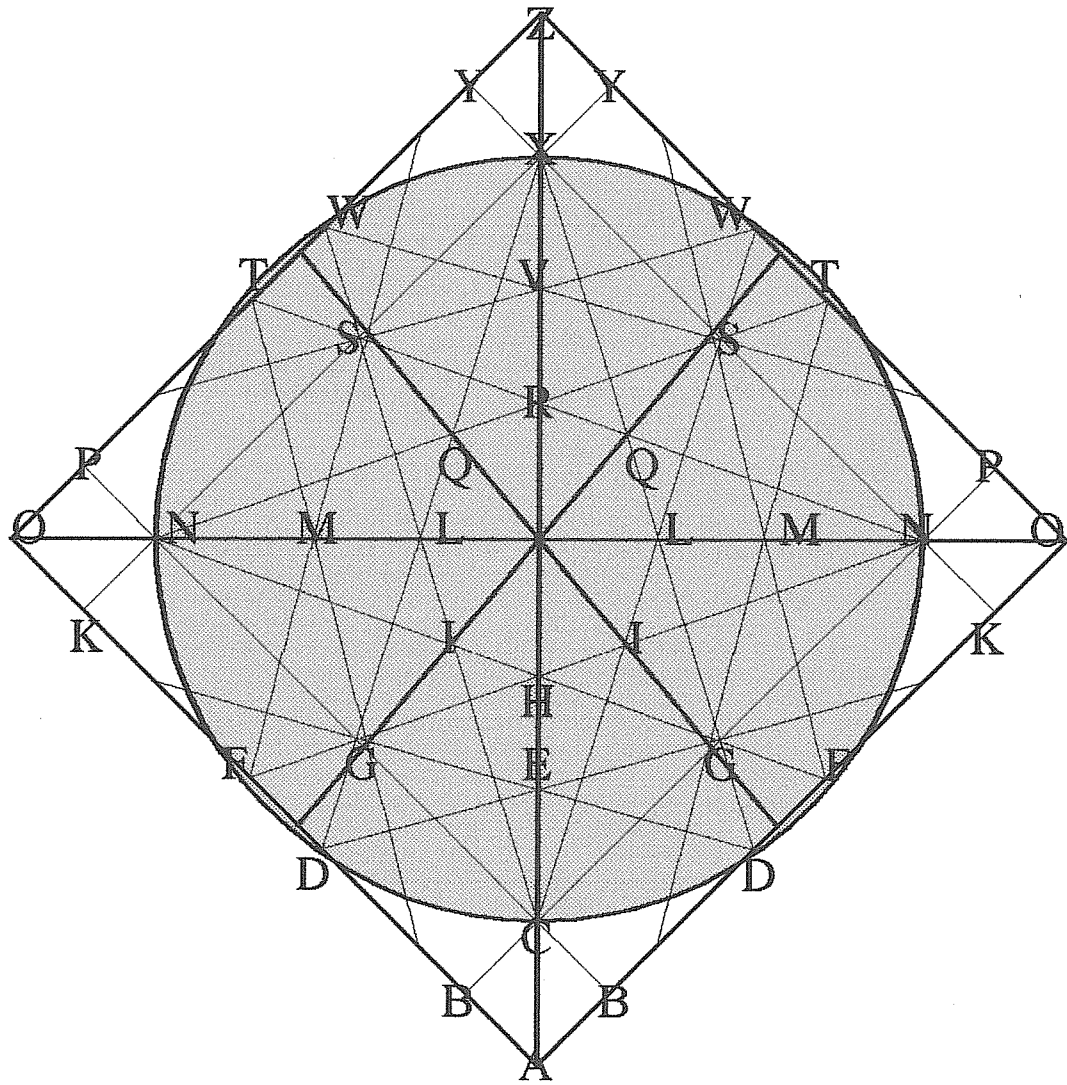


GERARD THIBAUT'S DIAGRAM OF THE ART OF FENCE

Based on the proportions of the human body



This diagram, taken from Gerard Thibault's *L'Academie de L'Espee* (1628), defines the footwork used in fencing in the round in what may have been the first Hermetic martial art. The diagram was drawn on the ground of the practice area, using a rapier itself as a compass, and the fencers took up their position on opposite corners of the square -- for example, A and Z. Movement in the bout went from point to point around the circle, and a false step left the fencer open to a lunge. Thibault, no armchair theoretician, was regarded as the best fencer of his age; he was also, in the best Renaissance tradition, a painter, architect and physician. He exemplified an age in which the Hermetic arts achieved perhaps their broadest development.