

"La academia de esgrima"; [Internet page]; translation from the Spanish text by Leonardo Bacarreza, Ph.D.; at <https://sites.google.com/site/iespalomahistoria/la-academia-de-esgrima-de-afrodisio-aparicio>; accessed 2016-08-28.

A Duel Between Angel Lancho and Afrodisio Aparicio

On May 13, 1905, at the Quinta de Noguera, near the present-day Manuel Becerra square, in Madrid, the two fencing masters and their seconds. The duel resembled a chivalric novel: rivalry, gentlemen dueling in secret (duels were forbidden) and "a highborn lady who bribed the groundskeeper to witness the encounter behind a window," recalls Rafael. The weapon of choice for the duel to first blood was the epee, which was Lancho's specialty. "My father had the right to choose because he had been the victim, but it was gentlemanly and gave the election to his opponent, Afrodisio". The latter didn't want to diminish himself, and chose the weapon at which his opponent was more skilled.

Lancho, elegant and orthodox. Aparicio, athletic and spectacular. The judge interrupts them in the third assault: there has been a hit on Angel's shoulder, but with the flat section of the weapon, and then one hit with the point--which does not draw blood--in Afrodisio's forearm. The duel can continue. Fourth assault. Another touch with the tip on Afrodisio's forearm. The doctors confer. The witnesses debate. The seconds conclude. The duel is finished, and Lancho is victorious because he has injured his opponent twice. The newspapers of the time quote portions the act of the duel, in which the courage and skill of the two adversaries is highlighted.

"They shook hands, like the gentlemen they were were, but they did not make amends. They would do so later, and they became close friends." In addition, Afrodisio adopted the Spanish school defended by his opponent. "I came to love him as a father," says Rafael. Lancho became ill and died during the Civil War, while he was a refugee in the Embassy of Cuba. While he was there, his family was welcomed by Afrodisio's in a house they owned in the Basque Country. "Not a day went by that I did not see him and run towards him to give him a kiss."