



El maestro de esgrima

Arturo Pérez-Reverte

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Novela de aventuras pero también policiaca, de traiciones y maniobras políticas en el Madrid galdosiano de 1868. El maestro de esgrima es la historia de un mundo de tahúres y mercachifles mantenido a distancia por un florete honorable. Pero es, sobre todo, una inquietante parábola sobre el poder del dinero, la ambición política y la extinción de los valores de honradez y fidelidad en este siglo XX que agoniza.

El maestro de esgrima Details

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From Reader Review El maestro de esgrima for online ebook

Elizabeth (Alaska) says

So in this book I was presented with two subjects in which I was either woefully ignorant or totally clueless: the art of fencing and an 1868 Spanish overthrow of Queen Isabell II. I think my understanding would have been enhanced had I known more about fencing, so I was surprised to find myself deciding it didn't matter. While I understood some of the fencing terms generally, mostly I came to see the discipline required to excel and that it has a long tradition. This is overlaid upon the coming chaos of a revolution.

The above makes this sound boring, boring, boring, and it was just the opposite. Yes, the initial 75 or so pages left me wondering if fencing was going to be the sum total of the novel. I did not just hope that there would be more, but there was enough foreshadowing that I felt confident there would, indeed, be more. In what period of history might we find this to be untrue?

Do you know what the problem is? We find ourselves in the last of the three generations history chooses to repeat every now and then. The first generation needs a god, and so they invent one. The second erects temples to that god and tries to imitate him. And the third uses the marble from those temples to build brothels in which to worship their own greed, lust and dishonesty. And that is why gods and heroes are always, inevitably, succeeded by mediocrity, cowards, and imbeciles.

This is a very plot driven novel. As plot is not one of my primary reasons to read, I might find myself dismissing this as fluff. It is anything but. Prose is an important element to me and which I mention in nearly every review and in this it is good - not beautiful which would detract from the novel in this case, but good. True, I was reading a translation, but I think a translator rarely makes a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Surprisingly in a plot-driven novel was the very good characterization of the title character. The novel is told in third-person limited and so we come to know him intimately.

As a thriller, I must withhold a 5-star rating because I want to save those for what I think of as more literary. That is my bias, and perhaps one day I'll be sorry for having it. Still, this is a solid 4-stars. I'm glad not only to have read it, but also that I have 2 other books by this author awaiting my attention.

Paul Gaya Ochieng Simeon Juma says

A fairly good book. The story developed slowly but eventually picked up. The book tells the story of a fencing master Don Jamie, one of the few, living in the civil war period. He is approached by a young seniorita, with in depth knowledge on the art of fencing.

He reluctantly accepts her as her student. Soon after, another client of his is murdered. The Marquis, Don Luis, who dies just after becoming intimate with the seniorita. Other murders follow soon.

Who is killing all these people? This is what this book is about.

Nickolas the Kid says

Μαδρ?τη 1868. Η Ισπαν?α βρ?σκεται κ?τω απ? τα δ?καια της βασ?λισσας Ισαβ?λλας Β' εν? παρ?ληλα ο Χουαν Πριμ οργαν?νει την εξ?γερση τους Ισπανικ? λαο? εν?ντια στην μοναρχ?α μ?σα σε μια κοχλ?ζουσα ατμ?σφαιρα , η οπο?α προμην?ει μεγ?λες αλλαγ?ς σε ?λα τα επ?πεδα.

Βασικ?ς πρωταγωνιστ?ς του βιβλ?ου, ?νας ηλικιωμ?νος δ?σκαλος ξιφασκ?ας, ο Χ?ιμε Ασταρλ?α. Δ?σκαλος και βαθ?ς γ?στης μιας αριστοκρατικ?ς τ?χνης η οπο?α φθ?νει με την π?ροδο των χρ?νων και ξεθωρι?ζει ?πως οι παλι?ς αξ?ες του κ?σμου του οπο?ου γ?ριζε... Ο Χ?ιμε παρατηρε? τις αλλαγ?ς γ?ρω του αλλ? προσπαθε? να με?νει αποστασιοποιημ?νος και ουδ?τερος. Μοναδικ?ς του σκοπ?ς πια στην δ?ση της ζω?ς του ε?ναι να ολοκληρ?σει την συγγραφ? μιας μεθ?δου διδασκαλ?ας της τ?χνης του ξ?φους παρακαταθ?κη για ?λους τους νεαρο?ς και επ?δοξους ξιφομ?χους και λ?τρεις των παραδ?σεων.

Ο δ?σκαλος ?μως θα δεχτε? μια μ?ρα την επ?σκεψη μιας μυστηρι?δους γυνα?κας η οπο?α θα απαιτ?σει να μ?θει μια μοναδικ? τεχνικ? , την οπο?α γνωρ?ζει μ?νο ο Χ?ιμε και μ?νο αυτ?ς μπορε? να την διδ?σκει. Ο γ?ρο-δ?σκαλος λοιπ?ν χωρ?ς να το καταλ?βει, θα μπλεχτε? σε ?να παιχν?δι συνωμοσιολογ?ας, σκι?ν και ερωτικ?ς αποπλ?νησης, το οπο?ο θα καταλ?βει π?σο σοβαρ? και επικ?νδυνο ε?ναι μ?λις η αστυνομ?α ανακαλ?ψει ?ναν απ? τους καλ?τερους του μαθητ?ς νεκρ? στο αρχοντικ? του....

Ο Ρεβ?ρτε για ακ?μα μια φορ? μπλ?κει ιστορικ? γεγον?τα με μυθοπλασ?α. Η λ?ση του μυστηρ?ου δεν ε?ναι τ?σο αναπ?ντεχη, ?μως οι κιν?σεις του Δασκ?λου θυμ?ζουν αγ?να ξιφασκ?ας, ουσιαστικ? την τακτικ? της τελευτα?ας κρ?σιμης μ?χη που θα δ?σει στην ζω? του... Για ακ?μη μια φορ? το μεγ?λο πλεον?κτημα του βιβλ?ου ε?ναι η γραφ? του Ρεβ?ρτε. Μεστ?, ουσι?δης και ακριβ?ς μας μεταφ?ρει στην Ισπαν?α του 19ου αι?να και μας παρουσι?ζει με ?ναν ?κρως γοητευτικ? τρ?πο την Τ?χνη του Μονομαχε?ν και την ερωτικ? σχ?ση δασκ?λου μαθητ?!. Απολαυστικ? αν?γνωσμα!

5/5...

ΥΓ: Υπ?ρχει και η σχετικ? Ισπανικ? ταιν?α του 1992 «El maestro de esgrima», αλλ? ε?ναι αρκετ? μ?τρια, με μια αρκετ? ?μως επιτυχημ?νη πρωταγων?στρια στον ρ?λο της μυστηρι?δους και γοητευτικ?ς ξιφομ?χου...

Και ο σ?νδεσμος ΕΔΩ

Emily Selleck says

There are a couple of reasons this isn't getting one star. The first is the writing. I will admit that there were moments that the writing in this book was beautiful and I have to give the author credit where credit is due. The other is my understanding that a lot of my dissatisfaction with the story has to do with the fact that I am not a Spanish native. It is my understanding that this book was written by a native of Spain and translated (quite well, I might add) into English. So the references to Spanish historical events and people that I didn't understand and therefore found distracting, are probably common knowledge to many Spanish citizens and added to the story for them rather than detracted.

But then we come to the story itself. I didn't have a problem with the main character, the fencing master. He was, quite frankly, the only interesting, multilayered character in the whole book. I found the other

characters (especially the "femme fatale") to be one dimensional and unbelievable, when I could keep the characters straight that is. The plot was flat and predictable. (view spoiler) The glimpses into the maestro's past were far more interesting to me than the action happening in "the present" and honestly THAT'S the book I'd like to read :P

Overall, this book was a chore to get through, but I powered through it because it was short and occasionally had glimmers of hope in the pretty prose and the main character, but these were well overshadowed by the many problems with the plot and other characters. Take from that, what you will :)

Jokoloyo says

This book is my first read of Arturo Pérez-Reverte. I got this book from a second hand book and read it without much expectation. I was delighted that I find a good book without influenced by any review, or opinion of other people. I saw movie Scaramouche (1952), and how the protagonist defeated the antagonist by seeking fencing lessons from more senior fencing master. On this book, the main character is a senior fencing master, so seeing the story from a master of fencing POV is interesting.

I was considering to rate this book between 3 or 4 star. I pick 3 star due to my personal taste:

1. The setting of the novel was at the dusk time of fencing as way for honor bound fighting, or self defence. This kind of setting usually makes me uncomfortably nervous due to my experience reading wuxia with the similar era. In wuxia fiction at the dusk of martial arts era, the martial arts hopelessly lost against guns and other new war technologies. This novel had similar spirit, the fencing pictured as an obsolete battle technique.
2. There was a scene when protagonist and his friends had a gathering. I saw the scene as a potential for a good teamwork sub-plot. But then, the story development went less than my expectation(view spoiler).

Tim says

I originally discovered Arturo Perez-Reverte through Johnny Depp's film The Ninth Gate (based on Perez-Reverte's book The Club Dumas). I was quickly enamored with his writing, which is fluid, descriptive, and intrinsically character based. My only complaint with The Club Dumas was the ending. I felt that Perez-Reverte had failed to give enough attention to completing his antiquarian book thriller, leaving the reader wanting for a better conclusion.

When I picked up The Fencing Master, I expected a repeat of The Club Dumas — fantastic style with a disappointing finish. To my surprise, Perez-Reverte pulled together a much more satisfying story with a conclusion that was far tidier than the previous novel.

Set against the backdrop of the 1868 Spanish Revolution, Perez-Reverte gives us an extremely sympathetic main character in Don Jaime Astarloa, an aging fencing master who is witnessing the demise of not only his profession but his code of ethics as well. It's the internal machinations of Don Jaime that drive the novel and gives this story a convincing tone.

Like The Club Dumas, The Fencing Master is well written, leisurely paced, and thick with vivid descriptions. As in the former novel, Perez-Reverte makes use of a fairly obscure profession to draw the

reader into a realistic, yet commonly unknown world.

There are times, however, when Perez-Reverte seems to spend too much space on secondary characters. Don Jaime's set of café companions, for example, add little value to the overall story. Even though one of these characters plays prominently later in the story, the numerous scenes with this handful of eccentrics merely drag the plot unnecessarily.

Nonetheless, this one minor complaint is nothing compared to the loosely pulled together ending of The Club Dumas, giving The Fencing Master a far more entertaining aftertaste. Even though I enjoyed the previous novel (and the movie it spawned), if asked, I'd have to recommend The Fencing Master to anyone interested in Perez-Reverte's work.

Bryan Frink says

"The Fencing Master" by Arturo Perez-Reverte is a throwback to another time... in fact, even within the 1868 time setting of the story, the protagonist (a fencing master, go figure) is a throwback to another time, an era of pure honor and purer scruples. Of course, such an era has never existed, but within any moment there exist those Quixotic souls who live as if one might transcend the hungry groveling of politics, economics and sexuality.

Such behavior may be fantasy, but in my opinion so are most poetic and religious concepts. Does this worry me? Not terribly. Anyone who has loved "Don Quixote," "The Lord of the Rings," "The Old Man and the Sea," (and so many more) will understand what I'm trying to describe: Only by keeping alive the illusions of perfection, trust, sacrifice and love -- only by deluding ourselves just a bit -- can we face the random Darwinian cruelties of existence.

And in that sense, "The Fencing Master" is an existential story. One may not be able to effect change or impose codes of behavior upon the evolving whims and demands of human society, but one can choose to uphold those tenets in spite of the futility.

I'm not certain what impresses me more about "The Fencing Master:" that the book is so good, or that Sr. Perez wrote it at age thirty-seven. Precocious fellow.

(Hats off to Margaret Jull Costa for this exquisite translation from the original Spanish.)

FerroN says

Adela de Otero irrompe nella vita tranquilla di Jaime Astarloa, maestro di scherma, come il sorgere di una sfolgorante giornata estiva in pieno autunno. Avviato con i suoi cinquantasei anni alla soglia del crepuscolo della vita, dopo molte resistenze il famoso maestro cede, accettando di dare lezioni alla ragazza. Ma alla prima lezione, al solo sfiorarsi dei fioretti Astarloa capisce di avere a che fare con tutt'altro che una neofita; oltre ad essere una donna (e il suo primo allievo di sesso femminile), Adela si dimostra un'eccellente schermitrice, migliore anche di quasi tutti i maschi che praticano quest'arte in Madrid. Il perché della richiesta di lezioni è chiarito fin da subito: in cambio di un compenso esorbitante, la bella e misteriosa Adela vuole essere messa a conoscenza del segreto di una stoccata vincente, potenzialmente letale in un eventuale

duello, conosciuta da meno di una decina di schermidori.

Astarloa è infastidito dal fascino della ragazza; solo il concreto timore di rendersi ridicolo lo trattiene dal seguire i suoi impulsi naturali. Mentre anche le perplessità e il mistero che circondano Adela e la sua sconosciuta origine vengono forzatamente ignorati, un avvenimento banale, apparentemente insignificante, incrina il monotono e incolore succedersi degli eventi. Ma tra lezioni di scherma – descritte con molti termini tecnici –, accese e inconcludenti dispute politiche tra repubblicani e monarchici e tra rivoluzionari e realisti al Café Progreso, si arriva senza sussulti a metà libro; soltanto da qui in avanti la storia diventa interessante.

Miguel Poveda says

La novela con la que saltó Pérez-Reverte al mundo de la literatura dice mucho sobre su carrera como escritor: buena documentación, personajes excesivamente arquetípicos y una trama mediocre. En "El maestro de esgrima", el MacGuffin es el tema de la esgrima pero lo que le interesa contar al autor son los movimientos políticos que hubo relacionados con la Revolución de 1868 y terminaron con el exilio y abdicación de Isabel II, con lo que nos encontramos con que las referencias a la esgrima son relativamente simples (lo digo yo que soy tirador) porque prácticamente sólo usan como posiciones la tercera y la cuarta (nada de sexta u octava, las posiciones que más se usan desde siempre y que siguen vigentes en la actualidad) y porque la idea de la estocada definitiva que busca el protagonista es una pampirolada (como lo es la denominada "de los doscientos escudos"). Se habla más de política que de esgrima, y es ahí donde se ve lo bien que se documenta este hombre (ahí y en el uso del vocabulario), aunque es una pena que no le sirva para hilar una historia decente. La trama es, en el mejor de los casos, previsible, principalmente porque el lector sabe lo que va a pasar en todo momento, como si tuviera la sensación de haber visto o leído ya esta historia. ¿Por qué ocurre esto? Porque los personajes son calcados a los de otras mil narraciones: el protagonista quijotesco y obsesionado con el honor y demás paparruchas revertianas (el maestro de esgrima es el primero de los Alatristes de Pérez-Reverte, un hombre que vive en una época que le ha sobrepasado porque sus creencias están anticuadas), una "femme fatale" que es tan guapa como mala (tipo Milady De Winter, que se me viene a la cabeza ahora, aunque luego hubo una Angélica de Alquézar...De los libros de Alatriste), un "bon vivant" que sólo vive para las mujeres y el juego (habrá miles como él, imaginen el que quieran)...Lo único que salva al libro de la mediocridad absoluta es la fantástica documentación (aunque no pasaría nada por encontrar algún García, González o Fernández entre los múltiples personajes que aparecen, porque todos tienen apellidos no excesivamente comunes), y que se lee fácil, porque el resto es de lo más prescindible.

Linda says

Don Jaime Astarloa has two convictions. The first one is to be a man of honor. The second is the belief that fencing is the ultimate art.

"The pistol is not a weapon, it is an impertinence. If two men are to kill each other, they should do so face-to-face, not from a distance, like vile highwaymen."

Many people would describe Don Jaime as pompous with his old-fashioned beliefs. I think it only contributes to the feeling of a living character. Not everyone can be modern and interested in politic and gossip, even though it is Madrid, 1868, a time of turmoil. Some people are no doubt like Don Jaime, only

interested in preserving certain values.

"I have spent my whole life trying to preserve a certain idea of myself, and that is all. You have to cling to a set of values that do not depreciate with time. Everything else is the fashion of the moment, fleeting, mutable. In a word, nonsense."

When Don Jaime, unwillingly, becomes involved in a complicated mystery and realizes someone is after him, he doesn't have a clue what's going on. It is when a woman comes into his life that everything changes. The fact that he doesn't teach women is according to custom of the time, a view he eventually realizes can be changed, as other men have. Soon, he loses himself. The picture of anguish produced by his feelings for Donna Adela de Otero is beautifully painted by Pérez-Reverte:

"He smiled, thinking about himself, about his own image, about his now declining powers, about his spirit, which, though old and tired, in some way was rebelling against the indolence imposed on it by the slow degeneration of his physical organism. And in that feeling overwhelming him, tempting him with its sweet danger, he recognized the feeble swan song proffered, as a pathetic, last-ditch rebellion, by his still-proud spirit."

Things start to happen around him and he, usually detached from the world and living only for fencing, is suddenly struggling with a feeling of foreboding, of something he should know but doesn't and therefore could be dangerous. He refuses to give in to fear and challenges the danger. He whistles proudly while making coffee to be able to stay awake and wait for the coming strike of the unknown enemy. He even looks up a few lines of a book he has underlined some years earlier. With some irony he leaves it open as "the perfect epitaph":

"Any moral character is closely bound up with scenes of autumn: those leaves that fall like our years, those flowers that fade like our hours, those clouds that flee like our illusions, that light that grows ever feebler like our intelligence, that sun that grows colder like our loves, those rivers that freeze over like our life, all weave secret bounds with our fate..."

En garde!

This isn't just a mystery. It's about a man that finally gets to put his long time art into real practice. His life is on the line and with a determined gaze and mocking sneer he undertakes the challenge. The whole mystery is like a duel with an enemy, and in the end, what could be better than the story getting summarized by a concrete one?

Spoilers!

Don Jaime thinks that a duel is an honorable way to die, but not in his own house, with a button on the tip of his foil, and with a woman as an opponent. That, he refuses! And what's more, he's not ready to die, because he's not yet discovered the perfect thrust. Perhaps he finds it in the end.

Gaetano says

Il maestro di scherma è il primo libro che leggo di Arturo Pérez-Reverte.

Sullo sfondo di una Spagna agitata da congiure e intrighi, l'autore ci racconta una storia tinta di giallo e di sangue, di velata seduzione e di passioni; la lettura è scorrevole, la trama, non impeccabile, presenta una dose di suspense minima ma apprezzabile e riserva comunque qualche sorpresa nel finale. I protagonisti sono ben delineati e spiccano per il carattere forte e d'altri tempi!

Un libro piacevole, da consigliare agli amanti del genere cappa e spada.

Come dice il maestro Jaime Astarloa:

“A Voi” !

Sauron says

Adela de Otero está a la altura de Irene Adler y de Milady de Winter. Es más, yo diría que las supera, porque no duda en hacer las cosas por si misma, a parte de manipular a los demás

Jorge says

Arturo Pérez-Reverte es uno de mis escritores favoritos y quizás uno de los mejores escritores españoles vivos.

De formación periodista, pero con vocación de historiador y novelista, Pérez-Reverte tiene una facilidad envidiable para trasladarnos a la España del siglo XVII (el capitán Alatriste), la rebelión española contra Napoleón (*Un día de cólera*) o en el Madrid de mediados del siglo XIX, que es donde está ambientado *El maestro de esgrima*. Si bien su capacidad para evocar lugares, ambientes, sonidos y hasta olores no está tan desarrollada en esta novela como lo está en la serie del capitán Alatriste (recordemos que *El maestro de esgrima* es su segunda novela), la historia es tan envolvente y los personajes tan carismáticos que no podemos menos que caér rendidos ante ellos.

Jaime Astarloa es un maestro de esgrima (por supuesto) ya en los primeros años de la vejez. Pero no es la decadencia física lo que más lo atormenta, sino el saberse un personaje fuera de sitio: en 1868, la esgrima había dejado de ser un arte de combate y se había convertido en un pasatiempo o un deporte, reemplazada por las mucho más eficientes y (como lo destaca un personaje) "democráticas" armas de fuego. ¿Por qué democráticas? Porque la esgrima es un arte de élite, complejo, difícil y para el cual se necesitan años de práctica para convertirse en un luchador consumado; las armas de fuego, en cambio, hacen iguales a los hombres, porque hasta el más debilucho de los pusilánimes se convierte en un adversario de temer cuando tiene un revólver en la mano.

La contraparte de Astarloa está en la misteriosa Adela de Otero, una joven y atractiva esgrimista de ojos violeta que remueve el amargo y solitario corazón de Astarloa y lo arrastra a una sórdida historia de engaños, asesinatos y conspiraciones.

Astarloa recuerda mucho al capitán Alatriste, quizás por ese aire de decadencia, ese honor extraño y ese aferrarse a costumbres e ideas que a veces no sólo son de otro tiempo, sino de otro planeta. En un momento, uno de los personajes se sorprende de que Astarloa no se deje llevar por la "ocupación nacional" del español: el chismorreo y el debate político. A Astarloa el mundo, los gobiernos, las conspiraciones, los escándalos y

todo lo que signifique vida social fuera de su reducido círculo de conocidos le resbala como si estuviese aceitado. Por eso parece un personaje atemporal, extraño, con dificultades para adaptarse a la vida de un mundo que le es ajeno, pero que, en su área de conocimiento -la esgrima- no es sólo ducho, sino el auténtico maestro, ese para el cual el mundo se detiene cuando debe investigar una nueva movida de esgrima, cuando intenta descubrir "el Grial" de la esgrima: una estocada perfecta, imparable, que, además, sospecha que no existe.

No tengo mucho más que decir que no sean adjetivos, así es que prefiero detenerme aquí.

Liz says

Don Jaime Astarloa is the one of the last of a noble, dying breed. As a master of the art of fencing, he lives his life by the rules of the blade, a code of conduct that centers around honorable swordsmanship and fair play. With modern weapons like the pistol gaining popularity, there is little interest in fencing, but Don Jaime is able to eke out a meager living teaching his art to the sons of the aristocracy. It is 1866, and Madrid is facing a storm of political upheaval as Queen Isabella II's opponents prepare for a revolution. In the midst of these uncertain circumstances, a mysterious woman seeks out Don Jaime. Her name is Adela de Otero, and she desires to learn the art of the unstoppable thrust, an arcane swordplay technique known only to Don Jaime. It is his policy never to teach fencing to women, but when she offers him double his usual fee, it is an offer he can't refuse. Don Jaime soon learns that, in addition to being exquisitely beautiful, Adela de Otero is also a talented swordswoman, and a formidable opponent. She possesses a dangerous sort of attraction, and she soon begins to awaken in Don Jaime feelings that he thought he had long left behind in his old age. Before he knows it, he finds himself in over his head, unwittingly embroiled in a political intrigue with potentially dire consequences.

After reading and thoroughly enjoying *The Flanders Panel*, I was expecting a lot from this book, and ended up feeling kind of let down. Don't get me wrong, I did enjoy it, it just didn't live up to my full expectations. I really liked Don Jaime's character, as well as the femme fatale Adela de Otero. However, I felt that the plot was rather weak. The Big Important Political Secret ended up being sort of anticlimactic, and while the final battle between Don Jaime and the villain was exciting, it felt like the climax of the story was rather rushed. All in all, I think that probably sums up the major problem with the book...all of it feels like the author was in a hurry to get it over and done with. A lot of potentially interesting details and back story are glossed over without much explanation, and that frustrated me.

Kelly says

This one is quite simple and straight forward. I might recommend it for a young adult who likes adventure stories. I just felt like it gave into stereotypes and predictability a little too much. Perez-Reverte has something of an obsession with the Dark Lady character out to destroy the man in love with her. Nowhere is that more prominent than in this novel. Usually it's woven in enough that it doesn't bother me, but having read his other ones and then read this one? It just made me roll my eyes a little. Come on, Arturo, you're better at putting together plot threads than this.

However: The mystery is good, the suspense is there, the dark writing is spooky and appropriate. It's a very

quick, fun, easy read. And I still liked it, I would just read all the other ones by him first because they're that much better.

Labijose says

“El maestro de esgrima” es la segunda novela publicada de Pérez-Reverte, allá por 1988. Anterior a “La tabla de Flandes”, que es la que realmente le brindó el éxito comercial. Y también llevada al cine. Narrada con una prosa exquisita, su interés quizás radique más en la descripción del Madrid de los años de Isabel II, justo antes de “La Gloriosa Revolución”, en el personaje central de Jaime Astarloa, verdadero antecedente de su celebérrimo “Alatriste”, y a las tertulias a las que asiste, aunque sea como invitado de piedra. Porque la trama en sí misma no es de lo mejor del autor, que a veces abruma con sus descripciones de la técnica del florete. Pero se lee con interés, y mantiene el suficiente nivel de suspense como para permanecer enganchado hasta la última página. Se nota que el autor conoce y admira a Pérez Galdós, en el que sin duda se habrá inspirado.

MTK says

Σταμ?τα να διαβ?ζεις αυτ? την κριτικ? και π?γαινε να διαβ?σεις αυτ? το βιβλ?ο. ΤΩΡΑ.

icaro says

Caro Arturo, questo tuo libro mi era rimasto indietro della felice stagione in cui ti amai. E' un onesto libro di avventure che però non fa di te il più grande scrittore vivente di Spagna (ma il più bello, sì), che un tempo pensavo tu fossi, e che tu ancora credi di essere .

Nella tua adorabile sbruffonaggine (personale e scrittoria) mi ricordi un altro antico amore: Alexandre Dumas. E dunque va bene. Ci vediamo sul prossimo Alatriste (se smetterai di inseguire il tuo libro 'definitivo').

Ps. Ascolta una fedele lettrice: la tua misura non deve superare le 300 pagine; solo lì puoi dare il meglio di te

Caro says

¿Que les digo? Cada vez que uno vuelve a leer un libro lo encuentra diferente a la primera vez y al mismo tiempo es igual. Ahora entiendo de forma diferente la trama, pero me sigue gustando igual que siempre.

Leí este libro hace años, nuevamente, para una clase y aunque no me acuerdo de absolutamente todos los detalles del libro, recuerdo muy bien la línea principal de la historia y sobre todo, recuerdo lo que me hizo sentir y por eso está entre mis favoritos. Fue el primer libro que leí de Arturo Pérez-Reverte

Es una novela de intrigas, habla un poco sobre los valores perdidos (en este caso, la esgrima y el honor) pero principalmente es una novela de misterio (y un poco histórica) en la que termina involucrado un maestro de esgrima (de ahí el título) que aparte del problema que se le presenta, persigue la estocada perfecta.

La novela es muy descriptiva en cuanto a los personajes, los escenarios y sobre todo en la parte histórica por lo que llega a resultar un poquitín pesado a veces pero salvo por ese detalle me parece que es una novela emocionante y atrapante.

Estoy deseando releerla. Espero hacerlo pronto

Terry says

This is my favourite of Perez-Reverte's books that I've read thus far. The stoic fencing maestro Jaime Astarloa is living out his remaining days of quiet desperation with a philosophical stiff upper lip as he watches the way of life he has devoted himself to fade into unlamented obscurity. Don Jaime spends his days teaching bratty aristocrats the art of the sword, an art they appear to no longer need or care about, and marking time with his few acquaintances in the Cafe Progresso; a sad group of older men watching their decline in disbelief, each a victim of their own inability to make anything meaningful of their lives.

Into this quiet decline comes the unexpected appearance of a beautiful and mysterious woman, Adela de Otero, a veritable whirlwind of transformation whose request to learn from him the deadly "two hundred escudo thrust" plunges the hapless fencing master into a world of danger and intrigue quite at variance with his expectations for his sunset years, though not, perhaps, wholly against his secret wishes.

The political turmoil and colour of 19th century Madrid is brought to vivid life by Perez-Reverte and Don Jaime's position as a virtual outsider within his own society make him an excellent viewpoint character for the reader. The poignant decline of Don Jaime, along with his perseverance despite the obstacles put before him, make him sympathetic despite his relatively cool nature. I really enjoyed reading this book and come back to it often to simply soak in the atmosphere so effectively created by Perez-Reverte.

April 2012 re-read: Still love it. Don Jaime is a great character and Adela de Otero is almost worthy to be classed with Milady de Winter. Awesome sense of time and place as well and all wrapped up in a fairly unconventional swashbuckler.

Also posted at [Shelf Inflicted](#)
