

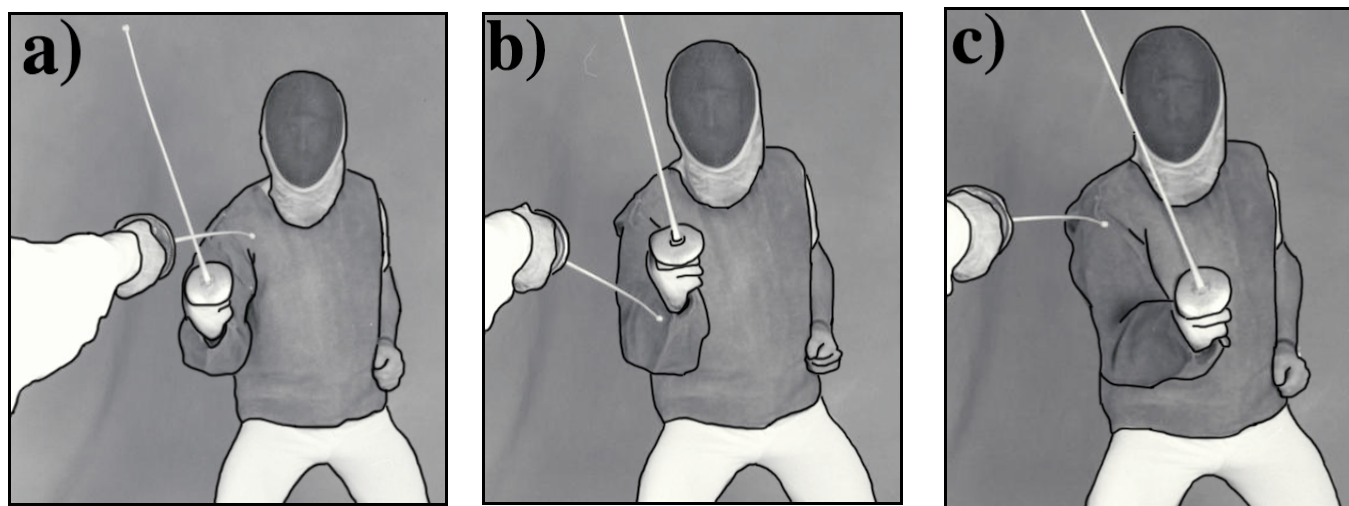
## CHAPTER VII

### DISENGAGES

The disengage is the name given to the action in which an attacking line is changed by virtue of momentarily dipping the tip, allowing the opponent's blade to pass over it in the high lines and under it in the low lines. The implication is that the defender is attempting a parry.

It must be noted that there is a type of disengage in which it is the attacker who changes lines (if, for example, the opponent comes on guard in a faulty position with the outside line partly open). But in the main, the disengage is used to avoid a parry--no parry, no need for a disengage.

What that means is that it is the defender (not the attacker) who actually changes the line in the execution of a disengage in an attack or riposte. The attacker simply makes enough of a threat to generate a parry, and then, using the fingers, drops the tip below the guard (in a high line attack) and allows the defender to pass by before raising the tip again (again, with the fingers). The action should be taken with the attacker's tip very close to the defender's guard, and be made as small as possible. A simple vertical flip of the blade, timed to miss the opponent's parry, is sufficient.



**Illustration 55:** The sequence of the disengage: a) extension to draw the parry; b) dipping the tip to avoid the parry, and c) re-establishment of the line immediately prior to the attack

The ability to initiate the disengage at any point during an extension or even lunge is why it is so very necessary to control the weapon by the fingers, and not to try to put both weapon control and extension control in the arm muscles at the same time. The fact that the hand is executing a disengage should not alter the timing of the attack at all.

As noted, the move is usually executed to avoid a parry\*; so the attacker must first create a situation which causes the defender to parry. This is the effect created by the accelerating extension in combination with footwork.