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**Recruitment, Recompense and Masculinity  
The Military Man in French and British Fiction 1740-1789**

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**Recruitment, Recompense and Masculinity:  
The Military Man in French and British Fiction  
1740-1789**

Thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Karen Elizabeth Lacey

## ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at the conception and representation of military men in British and French literature 1740-1789 as the military man moved from non-national 'archetype' (warrior, knight, noble) toward nationalised professional (officer, soldier, sailor). The dates that frame the corpus contain the last two European wars before the French Revolution: the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) and the Seven Years War (1756-1763). In literature, the ancient concepts of heroism and glory had to contend with newer models of merit and virtue. Drawn together by warfare, this transformation also united British and French culture via two factors that lay outside the limits of national identity: shared origins in the dynastic realm and the public's growing taste for narratives with contemporary settings and moral themes. The methodologies employed permit an examination of the cultural and historical dimension of identity construction: Judith Butler demonstrates how gender 'styles' are brought into being through performative acts, giving them coherence through repetition; styles of masculinity were re-imagined in eighteenth-century literature. Benedict Anderson's explanation for the rise of nationalism reveals a process begun in the late eighteenth-century, displacing ancient and deeply held relationships. Five thematic chapters treat: the sword as 'signifier' for an ancient and founding masculinity and its relation to honour culture; young military men advancing merit and subalternism as alternatives to hierarchical models; the veteran, created by society and functioning as the ideological 'other' to the new civilian; the mercenary soldier and the moral significance of markets in men; and finally, the *justicier*, an eighteenth-century literary figure who combines a new model of chivalry with military authority to pursue 'poetic justice.' It is my contention that in this period, with the 'nobleman' long gone, the military man, not a 'civilian' and no longer associated with the 'aristocrat', became a separate class of man.

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## Introduction

In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) Adam Smith wrote on the relationship between societies in their “different periods of improvement” and the kind of military man demanded by the ‘improvements’. The contemporary soldiery, he wrote, had been changed by the much greater emphasis on “regularity, order, and prompt obedience” engendered by the invention of firearms. “Before the invention of firearms, that army was superior in which the soldiers had, each individually, the greatest skill and dexterity in the use of their arms. [...] in modern war the habit of ready and instant obedience is of much greater consequence than a considerable superiority in the management of arms.”<sup>1</sup> Regularity, order, and obedience could only be achieved through routine training and systematisation, progressing towards a new professionalisation. Smith describes a shift away from the glory of the individual warrior toward the power of a unified and un-individuated body of troops. He attributes these changes to improvements in technology, an important factor, but the nature of the changes he describes are fundamental and have ramifications for society and culture. Indeed, the military man has long been one of the archetypal figures of literature. This study considers representations of the military man in British and French fiction as he evolves from embodying a non-national archetype (warrior, knight, noble) to becoming a member of a nationalised profession (officer, soldier, sailor) in the decades leading to the emergence of the popular mass army. It will demonstrate the manner in which different societal forces and institutions form different masculinities, and therefore, different military men, as reflected in the dominant literary genres of the period.

The military man bears the inscription of the forces that shaped him because his is a masculinity demonstrated through compulsory, prescribed action. Writing in 1757 Jean-Jacques Rousseau lamented the constitution of contemporary men generally: “Si l’on compare la force des hommes anciens à celle des hommes d’aujourd’hui, on n’y trouve aucune espèce d’égalité.” Turning his lens to the military man he wrote, “qu’on trouve à

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations Books IV-V* (London: Penguin, 1999), pp. 287, 289.

présent un seul homme de guerre capable d'en faire autant [que les anciens]. Nous sommes déçus en tout.”<sup>2</sup> Rousseau reflects a sense of loss at a perceived degeneration in the quality of men and uses the representation of the military man, no longer capable of performing military valour like the ancients, to illustrate his thesis. He was not the only one to turn to the figure of the military man to express a society whose military institutions were at the crossroads of two overlapping political systems which were simultaneously antagonistic and complementary: the dynastic realm and the nation. Both have relevance for the way the changing function of the military man was understood, valued and represented.

## Methodology

This dissertation focuses on the representation of the British and French military man in imaginative prose literature. It asks questions such as: why does fictional narrative in the eighteenth century frequently include military characters? What function does this military character play? How do these characters reflect more general changes in the function and understanding of the military in the period? My analysis of representations of military men moves away from ‘types’ largely inherited from theatre, towards a broader range of contemporary images.<sup>3</sup> Karen Harvey contends that “there is a need for more attention to be paid to status, sorts, and class in the history of masculinity.”<sup>4</sup> Equally, she argues for more work to be done on the relationship between war and masculinity in the eighteenth century, particularly in order to problematize the received narrative within the history of masculinities of the “shift from the seventeenth-century man of honour to the eighteenth-century man of refinement,” which she maintains has been overstated. This

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<sup>2</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Lettre à d'Alembert* (Paris : Éditions Flammarion, 2003), pp. 156-57.

<sup>3</sup> See David McNeil, *The Grotesque Depiction of War and the Military in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Press, 1990). McNeil provides a useful genealogy of certain literary military ‘types’ inherited by mid-eighteenth-century writers. He cites the evolution of Plautus’s (254-184 B.C.) *Miles Gloriosus* (“The Swaggering Soldier”), the braggart whose grandiose rhetoric is unsupported by actual military experience: p. 106. Shakespeare’s Falstaff is the progenitor for Farquhar’s Sergeant Kite and Captain Plume in *The Recruiting Officer* (1706), employing dubious recruiting practices. Shadwell’s Mizzen and Flip from his 1710 play *The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, the Humours of the Navy* are antecedents to, respectively, Smollett’s fop, Captain Whiffle in *Roderick Random* (1748) and his gruff old commodore Trunnian in *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751): pp. 36-37. McNeil adds that “Seamen represent a separate subgroup insofar as their peculiar roughness and ignorance of social refinements were standard jokes”: p. 149. In heroic tragedy, “love and war were linked in a formulaic manner, and the extremities of this formula lent themselves to ridicule.” The formula was the depiction of young men torn between “amorous and pugnacious passion”: p. 41. These inherited types emerge largely from theatre and represent class extremes as well as the extremes of comedy or tragedy.

<sup>4</sup> Karen Harvey, ‘The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800’, *Journal of British Studies*, Cambridge University Press, 44, 2 (2005), p. 307.

dissertation lends further support to Harvey's argument by revealing the still powerful role of honour as an important element of eighteenth-century masculinity both in Britain and in France. It does so by considering a literary corpus that, for the most part, places the military man in a contemporary setting marked by the last two European wars before the French Revolution: the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years War (1756-1763). Though the dates of the wars span the years 1740 to 1763, the study concludes at 1789 because, as I will argue, the questions raised by these wars had an afterlife that endured and developed till the French Revolution, and in some cases, beyond.

The lesson of history teaches that the social and cultural reverberations of wars can be slowly unfolding and of long duration. The evolving representation of the military man in British and French literature is a subject that presents ideological similarities while also calling attention to national differences. In a recent study of cultural transfer between eighteenth-century France and Britain, Ann Thomson and Simon Burrows maintain that "the question of relations between Britain and France in the long eighteenth century is currently arousing renewed interest among Enlightenment scholars. [...] The history of France or Britain [...] cannot be understood without taking into account the neighbour across the Channel."<sup>5</sup> Edmond Dziembowski argues that "a comparative study of British and French history reveals striking ideological and political convergences as the English model, which fascinated not only literary circles but also the French government, became ever more influential."<sup>6</sup> This influence would magnify after the Seven Years War because of the enormous victory for Britain and demoralising loss for France. As Linda Colley notes, Britain and France had each formed their national self-image in opposition to their cross-channel 'other' largely by means of military performance on the European and world stage, accompanied by the gradual move toward patriotic nationalism.

Britain and France, simply put, were ancient rivals, a relation created by their parallel ambitions and status. Among rivals, a grudging respect is acknowledgement of their 'other' as a *worthy* rival. British military officer James Wolfe, veteran of the War of the Austrian Succession and eventual hero of the Seven Years War, went to Paris between the two wars, in 1752, to study the French language, horsemanship, fencing and dancing. As Stephen Brumwell observes, Wolfe's written observations about the French during this visit reflect "the ambivalence with which Englishmen of his class viewed their old enemies.

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<sup>5</sup> Ann Thomson, Simon Burrows, introduction, *Cultural Transfers: France and Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century*, eds. Ann Thomson, Simon Burrows, Edmond Dziembowski (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Edmond Dziembowski, 'The English Political Model in Eighteenth-Century France', *Historical Research*, 74, 184 (2001), p. 152.

Whilst scoffing at the foppish superficiality of the French, they nonetheless acknowledged the superior sophistication of their culture—and flocked to Paris in hopes that some of that polish would rub off on them.”<sup>7</sup> Britain and France can be likened to two men of honour who make fitting duelling opponents, an analogy which will have significance in this dissertation.

While old notions of honour were still very much integral to representations of military figures in the literature and culture of this period, they were increasingly coming under pressure from a new model of nationalism. As Benedict Anderson has argued, this emergent nationalism engendered the need for new genres to better reflect the individual’s new relation to time and place; in particular the newspaper and the novel. Previously the high genres—the heroic forms and history paintings—were the established genres for depicting military valour; they, and history, had been the gatekeepers to glory. However, heroic depictions came increasingly under pressure from two new elements: the modern battlefield and the new demand for moral instruction; both of which problematized the idea of the heroic. In his article ‘Modern Warfare in Early-Eighteenth Century Poetry,’ John Richardson demonstrates that as early as the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), established high genres were no longer able to represent modern warfare. Although poets continued to use heroic forms to represent the face of modern battle, Richardson argues “the two aims proved incompatible [...] evidence exists that contemporaries felt the same.”<sup>8</sup> Writers had to confront the presence of firearms and gunpowder on the battlefield, greatly restricting the scope for glorifying the military hero. Fiction also encountered competition from increasingly detailed newspaper accounts; Marlborough’s victory at Blenheim got “blanket media coverage,” giving both writers and readers access to technological and tactical particulars that had come straight from the front line.<sup>9</sup> Richardson argues that attempts at heroic poetry diminished after this period and writers of the mid-century looked for new forms for representing warfare: “the history of eighteenth-century literature is not just a history of the temporary dominance of satire, the (possible) rise of the novel, and the emergence of the Romantic, but also one of the decline of the heroic.”<sup>10</sup>

From the mid-century, British and French literature was also marked by an increasing demand for moral themes as well as characters with a developed sense of inner

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen Brumwell, *Paths of Glory, The Life and Death of General James Wolfe* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> John Richardson, ‘Modern Warfare in Early-Eighteenth-Century Poetry’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 45, 3 (2005), p. 557.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 562.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 557.

subjectivity and contemporary contexts that represented a broad range of class positions. This trend was most fully revealed in the rise of sentimental fiction, a popular new genre in both nations. In France, sentimental fiction accompanied the cultural movement known as '*anglomanie*.' What started in the 1730s and 40s as an admiration for British culture became more trenchant after the Seven Years War when the British model seemed to offer an attractive option for solving France's woes. Sentimental fiction, Josephine Grieder explains, emphasized "*sensibilité* and benevolence as natural, individual—not socially determined—characteristics; and they hail the British as the chief exemplars of these virtues."<sup>11</sup> This fiction brought with it a new type of protagonist: the "heroes and heroines of sentimental fiction are sensible, [...] conferred as it is by nature, *sensibilité* is a mark of moral superiority."<sup>12</sup> The turn to sentimental fiction, a genre that is important to this study, gave the public moral instruction while marking the decline of the traditionally heroic. United by moral themes and sensibility, sentimental fiction in Britain and France nonetheless retained its national characteristics because love of one's homeland became a prerequisite that was wrapped up in the democratic virtues it espoused. Throughout this study the emergence of new moral contexts that resulted from political and social shifts will be seen to influence literature as writers adapted genres to contemporary subject matter.

### **Critical Context: Judith Butler and Benedict Anderson**

In addition to thinking about status, sorts and class, it is necessary to think about how 'military-ness' can be represented. Judith Butler's central tenet is that "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced [...] gender is always a doing."<sup>13</sup> Referring to 'styles' of performing gender, she explains that "styles have a history, and those histories condition and limit the possibilities."<sup>14</sup> Different styles of masculinity attain power and coherence through repetition over time: their performance must be continually repeated to retain vigour and coherence. Gill Jagger explains that within Butler's theories "the political possibilities and agency stem from the inherent repeatability of these signifying practices and the possibility of resignification."<sup>15</sup> This is especially important for the

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<sup>11</sup> Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France 1740-1789, Fact, Fiction, and Political Discourse* (Genève & Paris: Librairie Droz, 1985), p. x.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>13</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York & London: Routledge, 2007), p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>15</sup> Gill Jagger, *Judith Butler: Sexual Politics, Social Change and the Power of the Performative* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 20.

changing landscape of the eighteenth century in which, as I show, the ability to ‘perform’ and ‘repeat’ the ‘signifying practices’ associated with the military identity were considerably stretched. To what extent could the identity of the military man be changed while maintaining its coherence? I consider the continuing attraction of honour culture and its importance for the representation of the military man in chapter one where I trace the ritualistic demands of honour via its fetish object: the sword. The duel was a compulsive form of behaviour, situated at the intersection of what Butler describes as “norms that are entrenched versus norms that are vulnerable to resignification.”<sup>16</sup> A stylized and violent performance, the origins of the duel can be traced to the chivalric tradition. Attempts to keep honour culture and the duel alive revealed a belief in an originating, foundational masculinity that needed to be incessantly copied and repeated. However, if, as Butler notes, there is no original, foundational gender, then the ‘original’ is revealed to be a copy, and an inevitably failed one, an ideal that no one can embody.”<sup>17</sup> Attempts to copy an originating style of masculinity can thus be seen as a type of compensation, one that engenders anxiety, loss, social segregation or death to those who either cannot or will not meet its demands.

Simultaneously, traditional conceptions of military masculinity were being confronted with factors that made attempts to perform it increasingly difficult. These included changes in military technology and practice, as well as the categories of honour, glory and nobility which became increasingly problematic due to their association with inherited privilege and violence. Opposing honour-based culture was the emerging conception of the ‘man of merit’, a subject of the second chapter of this dissertation. How can merit be iterated or recognised by others? What could it look like? Judith Butler argues that [in terms of gender identity] “it is clear that coherence is desired, wished for, idealized.”<sup>18</sup> Some of the military figures in this study lack coherence because their authors were attempting to ‘resignify’ them. The incoherence is in itself instructive—what signs were writers attempting to impart with meaning? Attempts at resignification lead to other narratives in which the performance of masculinity remains ‘traditional’ but its context is not, complicating attempts to ‘read’ the performance. The extent to which eighteenth-century authors conceived of military masculinity as an essentialist, innate, ‘original’ masculinity is a question posed by certain military characters analysed in this dissertation. In the new moral contexts found in eighteenth-century literature, another question posed is whether the possession of an innate warrior masculinity is a benefit or a

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<sup>16</sup> Sarah Salih, ed. with Judith Butler, *The Judith Butler Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Butler, *Op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

detriment to society? Equally, does the conception of an essentialist sword-wielding masculinity serve as a benefit or a detriment to the individual man himself? As Butler forcefully pronounces, “gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences.”<sup>19</sup> It is not difficult to see how the performance of gender can have punitive consequences for the military man.

As alluded to above, this study has also been influenced by Benedict Anderson’s account of the rise of nationalism and its relation to culture. Alok Yadav explains that Anderson has been popular with literary scholars because he offers the “new theorization of the cultural dimension of nationalism.”<sup>20</sup> According to this view, culture is not merely a product of society; it is a performer, contributing to national identity and subject formation, a process whose origins cannot be located. As Todd Reeser argues, “the nation creates masculinity at the same time as masculinity creates the nation.”<sup>21</sup> Because Anderson locates the beginnings of the shift toward nationalism in the late eighteenth century, he takes the reader back, articulating the nature of the ancient and deeply-held relationships that pre-existed the modern state, relationships that are imperative to understanding the place of the warrior. The developing ‘imagined community’ of the nation engendered a new relation to warfare, culminating in the increased scale of warfare seen in the French Revolutionary Wars. Mary Favret describes Napoleon as the “general willing to sacrifice the lives of a million men.”<sup>22</sup> But it is my contention that numbers of dead soldiers on the battlefield do not disclose the entire substance of warfare in a particular time and place. There are certain basic questions that can be applied to warfare in any country and any century, these include the factors that cause a man to be recruited and the kind of compensation he expects in return. This study will attempt to reclaim the specificity of the last two European wars before the French Revolution by revealing the identity of the military men in the literature that memorialised them.

### **The Dynastic Realm as a Political System**

Understanding the dynastic realm reminds us that this emergent nationalism articulated in part a class struggle against deeply ingrained power structures. In this study I will refer

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>20</sup> Alok Yadav, ‘Nationalism and Eighteenth-Century British Literature’, *Literature Compass* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Todd W. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 178.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 40.

to a tension between high and low genres in the eighteenth century; high genres were *about* members of the dynastic realm, either explicitly in heroic fiction or chivalric romance, or allegorically in neo-classicism. Low genres such as the picaresque represented a wider range of class positions, but only in a humorous context. The dynastic realm was composed of the ancient nobility of Europe, families united by centuries of inter-marriage and whose power was cemented through war and land ownership; at the upper echelons, they ruled Europe. Marie Antoinette was the daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor, Francis I (Duke of Lorraine), and Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, a couple whose struggle for power had provoked the War of the Austrian Succession. George II was born in Germany and was simultaneously King of Great Britain and Elector of Hanover. Benedict Anderson explains that “these days it is perhaps difficult to put oneself empathetically into a world in which the dynastic realm appeared for most men as the only imaginable ‘political’ system” [because] it “lies transverse to all modern conceptions of political life.”<sup>23</sup> In the dynastic realm, monarchies were organized around centres, “borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another.”<sup>24</sup> This is in contrast to modern societies, which are constructed within sovereign states, sovereignty demarcating borders and uniting everything contained within them. Throughout the eighteenth century, borders were gradually hardening; nonetheless dynastic relationships continued to have an impact on the nature of warfare.

Carl Schmitt gives a compelling illustration of warfare in early modern Europe, describing what he calls ‘war in form.’ By no means bloodless, war in form was ‘bracketed’ or limited, not threatening the civilian population and observing rules of conduct. Bracketed war was permitted by the development of a new spatial order that Schmitt calls *jus publicum Europaeum* (European public law) which emerged as the *respublica Christiana* declined and the European sovereign state increased its dominance and enjoyed the freedoms and land-appropriations offered by the New World.<sup>25</sup> For Schmitt, the foremost distinction between different types of war is the context in which the enemy is viewed by his adversary, a theory that is crucial to my study of the military man because of its class and moral implications. Schmitt employs the terms *justus hostis* and *justa causa* to illustrate his argument. *Justa causa belli* describes a war whose cause is thought to be ‘just,’ and the enemy, therefore, is deemed to be ‘unjust,’ a moral distinction which paves the way to the kind of unlimited war found in religious and creedal wars. David Antaki

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<sup>23</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (New York: Telos Press, 2006), p. 142.

explains that “prior to the rise of the state, religious wars had torn apart the continent of Europe.”<sup>26</sup> Wars of *justa causa belli* are fought with ‘enmity’, meaning that there is no friendship, no legal community, no hospitality, no treaties or conventions between combatants. In contrast, a *justus hostis* is a ‘just enemy,’ and is the term Schmitt uses to describe military opponents who view one another as sovereigns and equals.<sup>27</sup> Schmitt makes an analogy between the European ‘war in form’ and the duel, an institution which was felt by its participants, who were co-equals, to provide justice.<sup>28</sup> Mutual recognition as co-equals was established by the fact that “European sovereigns remained personally a close-knit family, through consanguinity and succession.”<sup>29</sup> Schmitt argues that the status of European monarchs served to lend their states an increasingly powerful sovereign identity, bringing an eventual fixing of territorial divisions, a (necessary) precursor to national identity. The centrality of relationships whose origins are found in the dynastic realm is articulated by Voltaire in the ‘Discours Préliminaire’ to his *Poème de Fontenoy* (1745), in which he can be seen as describing a ‘war in form’ between *justus hostis*:

Les Peuples de l’Europe ont des principes d’humanité qui ne se trouvent point dans les autres parties du Monde ; ils sont plus liés entr’eux, ils ont des Loix qui leur sont communes ; toutes les Maisons des Souverains sont alliées ; leurs Sujets voyagent continuellement, & entretiennent une liaison réciproque. Les Européens chrétiens sont ce qu’étaient les Grecs ; ils se font la guerre entr’eux ; mais ils conservent dans ces dissensions, d’ordinaire, tant de bienséance & de politesse, que souvent un Français, un Anglais, un Allemand qui se rencontrent, paraissent être nés dans la même Ville.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the similarities that Voltaire identifies between the English, French and German nations, patriotism increasingly became a central motivation for the military man to serve ‘king and nation’. To be sure, patriotism has a long history. André Corvisier traces the role of patriotism as motivation for military service starting with its earliest origins, where recompense for military engagement was understood as a direct, personal relationship: “c’est l’attachement à la patrie, ce terme était pris dans le sens primitive, la terre des pères.”<sup>31</sup> This feeling, he explains, extends easily and organically to include the protection of close neighbours who were in solidarity. But the effect of perpetual warfare and the growth of the powerful state extended this patriotism to the nation-state: “les

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<sup>26</sup> Mark Antaki, ‘Carl Schmitt’s Nomos of the Earth’, *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, 42, 2 (2004), p. 327.

<sup>27</sup> Schmitt argues that in the early modern era “all these egoistic power structures existed side-by-side in the same space of one European order wherein they mutually recognized each other as sovereigns”: Schmitt, *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>28</sup> In bracketed war, Schmitt argues, “men of honour have found a satisfactory means of dealing with a matter of honour in a prescribed form and before impartial witnesses”: *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>30</sup> Voltaire, *Le Poème de Fontenoy* (Lyon: 1745), pp. 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> André Corvisier, *Armées et Sociétés en Europe de 1494 à 1789* (Vendôme : Presses Universitaires de France, 1976), p. 32.

guerres et la xénophobie ont contribué à étendre la notion de la patrie aux Etats qui se constituaient et à faire naître l'idée nationale dont le roi était le symbole. Cependant le roi absorba-t-il jamais complètement l'idée de nation ?”<sup>32</sup> Corvisier contends that it was never possible for the king to fully embody all that was meant by ‘the idea of nation;’ increasingly seen less as a figurehead and more as a mere man, he was a symbol that lacked the all-embracing abstraction that patriotism would come to offer.

The people’s relation to the king can be seen from considering two key battles from the War of the Austrian succession: The Battle of Dettingen, a British (and allied) victory over France (1743), and its counterpart, the Battle of Fontenoy, a victory for France over Britain (1745). The former was graced by George II, the last British monarch to take personal command of his troops. The latter was presided over by Louis XV, who had no previous battle experience and was the last *ancien régime* monarch to ‘wear arms’ on a field of battle. These events had an immediate impact manifested in many cultural forms, leading to, as Jeremy Black has noted, Napoleon’s observation that Louis’ presence at Fontenoy prolonged the *ancien régime* monarchy by thirty years.<sup>33</sup> In these battles, the honour of the sovereign nation was represented in the person of the sovereign himself, his presence lent symbolic value to the battles, which, in turn, imparted on the sovereign qualities only acquirable through the demonstration of military valour. The second chapter of this thesis considers two novels of the period, both of which contain responses to the kings’ presence at Dettingen and Fontenoy. The relationship between the monarch and the public could be considered as a form of patriotism capable of inspiring military sacrifice.

The nobility’s claim to an idealised and ancient form of military masculinity is a subject represented by the vast concept of chivalry. Chivalry had been undermined by the publication and success of Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615), what Foucault calls “the first modern work of literature.”<sup>34</sup> Foucault argues that “all those written texts, all those extravagant romances are, quite literally, unparalleled: no one in the world ever did resemble them.”<sup>35</sup> I argue that it is necessary to separate the *idea* of chivalry from the chivalric romance—the latter *might* have been discredited by Cervantes, but the former lingered on in the *imaginaire* of the ancient nobility and in contemporary assessments of masculinity. Eighteenth-century responses to chivalry tended to take two routes, both of

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> Jeremy Black, *Britain as a Military Power 1688-1815* (London & Philadelphia: University College London Press, 1999), p. 68.

<sup>34</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London & New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

which have significance for this dissertation: the first was found in attempts to locate what was real and good and recoverable in chivalry; the second was to dismiss chivalry out of hand as pure fantasy and irreparably associated with a corrupt social class. The first of these techniques is employed in the highly influential *Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie: considérée comme un établissement politique et militaire* (1751) by Jean-Baptiste de La Curne de Sainte-Palaye.<sup>36</sup> St. Palaye, Lionel Gossman argues, assessed chivalry as a political and military institution, allowing him to present “what chivalry in its perfect form was intended to be” while side-stepping the messy business of why so few men had lived up to its ideals.<sup>37</sup> The contrasting tendency is represented by the views of the *philosophes*, dedicated to opposing not only the tyranny of absolutist rule but also the influence of the Catholic Church. In his article on the *philosophes* and their relationship to medievalism John Frederick Logan explains: “Torn between the fear of social and intellectual chaos and the fear of authoritarian orders and systems, they condemned the medieval period for both its anarchy and its despotisms.”<sup>38</sup> Attempts by eighteenth-century writers and philosophers to locate the place of chivalry in contemporary Britain and France served to expose the political and class fault lines that it represented, revealing the distance between an idealised ancient nobility and the modern aristocracy.

### **From Dynastic toward National Imperatives**

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Christopher Duffy explains, militaries across Europe began to experience significant change: “beneath their show of convention and formality, the leading armies of the eighteenth century experienced tensions that resulted from the end of a medieval military order.”<sup>39</sup> The demands of empire, new weapons technology and a rising middle class placed pressure on the European military class to professionalise; it is a story of resistance, with the aristocracy highly reluctant to give up

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<sup>36</sup> See Lionel Gossman, *Medievalism and the Ideologies of the Enlightenment, the World and Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968). First published in 1751 and appearing in English translation in 1784, St. Palaye’s work was the source for Richard Hurd’s 1762 *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*. Lionel Gossman calls Sainte-Palaye “the foremost medievalist in eighteenth-century France”: p. 3. The *Mémoires* “had an immediate and enormous success, not only in France, but in England, in Germany, and as far afield as Poland. For over a century they remained the principal source from which writers and historians took their information and in some cases their ideas about chivalry”: p. 23. “The account of chivalry in Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall* is entirely based on the *Mémoires*, as is that provided by Robertson in the influential *View of the Progress of Society in Europe from the Subversion of the Roman Empire to the Sixteenth Century*”: p. 329.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

<sup>38</sup> John Frederick Logan, ‘The French Philosophes and their Enlightening Medieval Past’, *The Rice University Studies*, 58, 4 (1972), p. 91.

<sup>39</sup> Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason* (London & New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 314.

its inherited role. Penelope J. Corfield describes the “distinctly ambivalent attitude towards recruitment” within the eighteenth-century British military, where “there were recurrent tensions between the claims of aristocratic status and an emergent professional ethos.”<sup>40</sup> This situation is echoed in the French military: “The officer corps of absolutist France was dominated by the nobility,” asserts Rafe Blaufarb, “this was apparent in both its social composition, estimated at 95 percent noble in 1788, and the distinctive understanding of service that infused the military and justified the nobility’s privileged position within it.” Attempts at professionalism also had to contend with the Purchase System, the centuries-old arrangement by which the officer class purchased their commissions, thereby excluding the middle classes and sometimes even poor nobles.<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, the ordinary sailor and soldier, or the impoverished subaltern officers from both branches of the military not only faced uncertain career prospects and poor pay, but led lives of hardship and risked early deaths through disease in parts of the world that the nobility steadfastly avoided. Adam Smith binds the rise of European civilisation to the absolute *necessity* of having a standing army, arguing that “it is only by means of a standing army, [...], that the civilisation of any country can be perpetuated, or even preserved for any considerable time.”<sup>42</sup> When one European nation adopted a standing army, “it became necessary that all its neighbours should follow the example.”<sup>43</sup> This new exigency brings about much greater expense for the sovereign who must maintain the army in times of war and in times of peace. Smith has depicted the anonymous forces of history at work, demanding that states carve out a portion of their citizens and designate them military professionals while others remain civilians, a practice that has an impact on every individual in a society.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 189.

<sup>41</sup> See Anthony Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army, 1660-1871* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1980). The Purchase System was what Anthony Bruce calls a “transitional form of military organisation, between the feudal armies of the past and the national armies of more recent times.” It existed in varying degrees in many European nations. The attachment to Purchase was founded on a belief that an army officer corps comprised of landowners would be more likely to support the status quo. Since wealth and land ownership were largely synonymous, “a disproportionate number of officers would be drawn from the landed classes in general and the aristocracy in particular.” In Britain and France, this meant that army officers, civil servants and political leaders were all from the same social class and strongly committed to maintaining the existing order: pp. 171 & 67.

<sup>42</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations Books IV-V* (London: Penguin, 1999), pp. 284-85.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 293-94.

<sup>44</sup> These ‘anonymous’ forces are described by John Brewer in *The Sinews of Power* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989) and by Rafe Blaufarb in *The French Army 1750-1820, Careers, Talent, Merit* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2002). Both describe the process whereby military administration began to come under centralised, state control. Brewer describes “the

In this dissertation I locate a turn toward the theme of professionalism, with the appearance of fictional military men who deem the status of professional recognition to be recompense worthy of their service, a status which proves to be difficult or impossible to attain because of aristocratic prerogatives. Works published in the years encompassing the War of the Austrian Succession form the basis of the second chapter of this study and reflect the conflict between meritocracy and aristocratic hegemony. They include a satirical chivalric romance by Prévost, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Malte, ou, Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur de \*\*\** (1741); a picaresque novel featuring a series of plebeian young men, *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (1745-46) by Claude Godard d'Aucourt ; and two English novels, *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) by Tobias Smollett ; and *Amelia* (1751) by Henry Fielding. As well as illustrating the hardships suffered by the common soldier and sailor, certain of the works present young 'men of merit' attempting to use the vehicle of professionalism to elevate the status of the subaltern officer. Elsewhere, ordinary soldiers in the French army will ask, if real honours and distinctions are out of their reach due to class strictures, why glory cannot form their recompense. The (corrupt) aristocratic officer has the power to suppress the rise of the man of merit, but in literature writers can position the subaltern as the *moral* victor in the eyes of the reader. Forming a stark opposition to the man of merit, the aristocratic military man is given centre stage in the outright vilification of chivalry found in Prévost's novel in which the protagonist uses professional service in the eighteenth-century Order of Malta not as a platform for chivalric deeds, but instead as an opportunity for self-gratification and violence. These representations each question traditional concepts of heroism.

Taken as a whole these novels pose the question: outside of the aristocracy, what factors would compel a man to step forward for service in a national army? Adam Smith argues that for the ordinary soldier and sailor the majority of his payment is to be found in his imagination, a circumstance accounted for by man's natural tendency to over-value the chance of gain and to undervalue the chance of risk, especially in youth. About the common soldier he concludes that "romantic hopes make the whole price of their blood."<sup>45</sup> Certainly, recruitment in eighteenth-century armies was not always voluntary, as revealed

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growing powers of central government in a period more famous for its praise of liberty," a process that lead to "the emergence of the fiscal-military state": p. xi & xx; Blaufarb enumerates the centralising reforms whose goal was improved military performance, but whose methods were confused by the fracture in the officer class itself: poor provincial nobles with a long military heritage versus wealthy, courtly aristocrats with venal commissions and little military experience, tensions which persisted until the revolution, when the former sided with bourgeois civilians: pp. 12-45.

<sup>45</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations, Books I-III* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 202.

by the *Encyclopédie* entry for 'Levée des troupes' which allocates several paragraphs to abuses committed by those entrusted with recruitment; motivated by financial gain they use "toutes sortes d'excès, de faussetés, de manœuvres criminelles" to trap men into military service.<sup>46</sup> Samuel Johnson's dictionary calls a 'pressman' "one who forces another into service" and a 'pressgang' was "a crew that strolls about the streets to force men into naval service."<sup>47</sup> In Britain or France, there was little recourse if a man had been recruited by compulsion or artifice, except the possibility of escape.<sup>48</sup>

Most recruitment, however, was done by voluntary engagement. André Corvisier explains that in the eighteenth century, military 'obligations' continued to break down along class lines in a continuation of Europe's feudal heritage : "le devoir militaire des nobles était en principe individuel, celui des autres, assez souvent collectif."<sup>49</sup> For those outside the nobility, Corvisier enumerates the "facteurs négatifs" which would compel a man to enlist: escape from the constraints of family or community; escape from the drudgery of work; escape from the law; or escape from the physical misery of starvation or the moral misery of isolation. Turning to positive factors, Corvisier cites that of *exemple*. The primary example was that of the military as a family vocation. But example could also come from "le spectacle d'une revue, une conversation entendue, des lectures pendant l'enfance."<sup>50</sup> It is not difficult to see that these sorts of negative and positive factors could present dramatic interest, and indeed these kinds of 'back stories' for military men feature in all the works studied in this dissertation.<sup>51</sup>

Corvisier maintains that the effect of patriotism on recruitment in the eighteenth century is difficult to quantify, except for, importantly, a reduction in men joining foreign armies as mercenaries. The use of mercenary soldiers, a common practice in European armies for centuries, reveals a time of heterogeneity, when wearing the same uniform and speaking the same language were not essential. Its practice depicts the porous borders signalled by Benedict Anderson: Hessians and Pandours were famous mercenary troops named for their home regions, rather than their states. This practice begins to come under scrutiny from the mid eighteenth century, a subject explored in the fourth chapter of this

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<sup>46</sup> Durival, 'levée des troupes', *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, eds. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project (Spring 2013 Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedia.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>47</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language* (Dublin, 1768).

<sup>48</sup> See Nicholas Rogers, *The Press Gang: Naval Impressment and its Opponents in Great Britain* (London: Continuum, 2007).

<sup>49</sup> Corvisier, *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

dissertation, in which I take Jean-Jacques Rousseau's celebrated novel of sensibility, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), as a platform for uncovering all that is contained in the concept of the *mercenaire*. In particular, I consider how as borders hardened and national sovereignties became more sharply delineated, the use of the mercenary soldier became morally suspect, especially as the discourse of civic virtue developed.

The themes of civic virtue, stoicism and selfless professional duty are the focus of the third chapter of this dissertation which present military veterans who have devoted their lives to national military service without having achieved lasting honours, distinctions or wealth. Again, this subject is set within a moral context, asking questions about the place of the aged, permanently maimed and vulnerable veteran in contemporary society. The key texts for this chapter are Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759-1767), Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Humphry Clinker* (1771), and Jean-François Marmontel's *Bélisaire* (1767), all published in the years encompassing the Seven Years War. Themes raised in these works can be unlocked through considering the concept of 'recompense'. The recruitment of these military men occurred long ago, what compensation have they received for their suffering—both personally and from their state? In each case, the men's rewards are revealed to be independent of accolades or remuneration from the state. Rather, their recompense comes from within, through feelings of civic virtue or professional duty, as well as through the affective bonds formed within their personal community. This shift reflects historian Anthony Fletcher's distinction between the word 'manhood' and the word 'masculinity': whereas manhood, founded in honour, was realised through public reputation, masculinity, whose first appearance he dates to 1748, was "an internalized identity—an interiority of the mind and emotion—as opposed to a sense of role-playing."<sup>52</sup> These two poles—one based in selflessness and the other based in glory—reflect oppositions arising throughout this study. The ability of long-serving, long-suffering military men to find private recompense through professional duty to the state raises questions about the state's correct use of such men—a moral question, and one that is treated in these narratives.

The selflessness of the military man is further explored in works studied in the fifth chapter of this dissertation in which I locate efforts to recover what was worthwhile in chivalry. In the new moral context offered by the sentimental novel and moral tale, I consider a figure I name the 'justicier,' a character that blends the admirable elements of

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<sup>52</sup> Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 322-23.

chivalry—the pursuit of justice, the righting of wrongs, the rescue of the distressed—with new elements such as sensibility and association with a national military. The key text for this chapter is Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady* (1747-48) with avatars of Richardson’s model found in works by Baculard d’Arnaud and Rousseau, and ironic models represented in Sade and Laclos. Most often an older unmarried man with extent military experience and no descendants, the *justicier* combines finely balanced attributes which permit him to perform a role in two distinct spheres: dispensing punishment against the aristocratic libertine in a ‘moral and just’ use of violence and morally shaming the bourgeois family that put a daughter’s happiness below its social aspirations. He represents a new knight-errantry and the entry of a military man within the space of eighteenth-century domestic tragedy.

Finally, it is important to underscore the schism represented by the two wars that form the parameters of this study. Where the War of the Austrian Succession had largely pointed backward toward the dynastic realm, the Seven Years War, pointed forward toward a world in transition; it was, as Carol Watts notes, a *global* war giving rise to the British Empire and opening the door to colonial wars.<sup>53</sup> And, it was a humiliating defeat for the French. It also signalled the end of the French king’s ability to embody ‘the idea of nation,’ a shift marked by the Battle of Rossbach (1757), a spectacular loss for the French and their Austrian allies, which led to public vilification of Louis XV.<sup>54</sup> Colin Jones emphasizes that “Rossbach was immediately perceived in France as a most terrible humiliation.”<sup>55</sup> In charge of French demolition was Frederick II of Prussia (now a British ally), the military genius who was to transform European warfare.<sup>56</sup> The hangover from the Seven Years War was experienced by each nation, loser and victor. After the war Edmond Dziembowski finds an upsurge in the frequency of the words *patrie* and *patriotism* in French literature, as well as an interest in “les vertus publiques des Anciens et [...] le patriotisme des Britanniques.”<sup>57</sup> To the French, whose own conception of patriotism was aligned with honour, British patriotism was synonymous with British

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<sup>53</sup> “It was a global war, if the word ‘global’ is not quite to be understood in its modern, instrumentally exhaustive, sense”: Carol Watts, *The Cultural Work of Empire, The Seven Years’ War and the Imagining of the Shandean State* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> After the defeat at Rossbach, Louis XV was “la cible de chansons, d’épigrammes ou de placards qui font fi de tout respect envers sa personne” : Edmond Dziembowski, *Gabriel-François Coyer, Jacob Nicolas Moreau, Écrits sur le patriotisme, l’esprit public et la propagande au milieu du XVIIIe siècle* (La Rochelle : Rumeur des Ages, 1997), p. 28.

<sup>55</sup> It is after this defeat that Madame de Pompadour is reported to have famously said, “Après nous, le Déluge”: Colin Jones, *The Great Nation, France from Louis XV to Napoleon 1715-99* (London: Allen Lane, 2002), p. 236.

<sup>56</sup> “With far fewer troops at his disposal Frederick had out-generaled and out-manoeuvred the flower of Austro-French chivalry”: *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>57</sup> Dziembowski, *Op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

liberty, an attractive model. But in post-war Britain, the populace had to adjust its understanding of the nation as it became a greatly enlarged empire.<sup>58</sup> Before the war, Linda Colley explains, Britain had been “popularly perceived as a trading empire, as the beneficent creation of a liberty-loving and commercial people,” but now it had become clear that “Britain’s empire no longer pivoted so much on commerce but was sustained by force of arms like earlier empires.”<sup>59</sup> In 1760, at the height of British military success, Samuel Johnson brought the lofty subject of British liberty down to earth by reminding readers of the overarching role of class position in the military service of any nation. Some would argue, wrote Johnson, that “every Englishman fights better than the subjects of absolute governments because he has more to defend. But what has the English more than the French soldier? Liberty is, to the lowest rank of every nation, little more than the choice of working or starving.”<sup>60</sup>

### Chapter Presentation

To sum up, the first chapter traces the deeply ingrained significance of honour culture to the military man by charting the role of the sword in creating an ancient and idealised form of masculinity traditionally glorified by literature. Developments that can be traced through studying this fetish object reveal changes to man himself as he moved from a hero who could wield a sword in single combat to a professional able to maintain his position in a line, besieged by gunfire. The second chapter considers young men who, as fictional characters, are new to literature because of their class position or their pointed lack of heroic qualities. Exploring novels written in a ten year period that encapsulated the War of the Austrian Succession, this chapter will study protagonists who set off from home in order to embark on ‘careers’ in the contemporary military in narratives that reveal an interest in the concept of ‘merit’ and the ‘subaltern’ in a class-based society. In parallel, this chapter will examine a young aristocrat who represents the peculiar face of

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<sup>58</sup> In *Nobility Reimagined, The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005), historian Jay M. Smith offers an essential study on nobility and patriotism in eighteenth-century France. He examines attempts to recontextualise or redefine terms such as nobility, glory and honour—words increasingly tarnished by association with class privilege and military failure. Smith demonstrates that patriotism was a concept that *seemed* to offer a substitute acceptable to a wide spectrum of society, contextualising patriotism as the honour of the nation or ‘spiritual nobility of the nation’. In reality, this movement would eventually call into sharp focus the inequality of the people in an absolute monarchy.

<sup>59</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 103

<sup>60</sup> Samuel Johnson, ‘The Bravery of the *English* Common Soldiers’, *Selected Essays* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 536.

eighteenth-century chivalry as he makes a career out of a noble calling in the contemporary Order of Malta. Chapter three of this study moves to the years surrounding the Seven Years War when the impact of warfare was reflected on a new scale. It considers how age, time, hardship and neglect by the state have transformed the traditional image of the military veteran, the image of male suffering and selflessness, as he is juxtaposed against a civilian population who have not experienced war. Two poles are put in opposition in these works and in this chapter: empires, which represent corrupting luxury and loss of identity; and republics, which are exemplified by unifying (though exigent) civic virtue. The first produces the professional soldier; the latter brings forth the citizen soldier. In chapter four, Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* facilitates a study of the *mercenaire* both as a concept and as a type of military man who was integral to eighteenth-century European armies. For Rousseau, the need to have a metier and to accept payment for services was a symbol of society's corruption, creating chains of obligation and revealing the inequality between individuals. Rousseau's preoccupation with the mercenary reflects a more general trend. As the century progressed and nationalism gained an ascendancy over the dynastic realm this ancient practice fell into increasing disfavour: a nation of citizens has no place for the buying or selling of mercenaries. The fifth and final chapter of this dissertation will look at a military man whose field of action is the domestic sphere, a figure I call the *justicier*. Now a member of a national army, he represents a new knight-errantry uniting particular ideologies of military and moral honour, combining sensibility and chivalry. He is positioned as the mirror opposite of the aristocratic libertine; whereas the libertine represents sexual conquest and emotional impotence, the *justicier* represents chastity and the courage required to be *sensible*. This figure raises questions about the nature of private justice versus public justice in narratives in which the distribution of rewards and punishments was integral to the moral purpose.

## Chapter One: The Sword and the Signification of an Idealised Masculinity

Or, l'*aristocrate*, c'est le noble déchu, le guerrier qui a troqué l'armure pour les dentelles. Sa supériorité fondée à l'origine sur le risque de son *existence*, devient une suprématie, à laquelle il a droit *par essence*. Cette 'réification' se manifeste précisément par la matérialisation du *pouvoir en argent*, car l'argent apparaît comme le substitut concret du courage dans la justification et le maintien d'une hiérarchie.<sup>61</sup>

### Introduction

If there is a sense in which the word 'professional' speaks of a 'job' that can be performed by anyone who presents himself and receives sufficient and proper training, this is precisely the opposite of the ideology of elite noble military families for whom military valour was literally in their blood. Men in Britain and France who could trace ennoblement to heroic military deeds were proud of the ancient nature of their genealogy and the perception of their families' role in establishing the nation. This class of man was united in the European dynastic realm through adherence to what I will call 'honour culture,' the compulsion to sustain the role of the nobility through adherence to its codes. Honour culture held a grip on eighteenth-century European society and was exemplified by the point of honour/*point d'honneur*, a subject that will be defined and explored in this chapter. This idealised honour-based masculinity had a cost: it obliged adherents to participate in duels or lose their honour, an obligation that was most severe for the eighteenth-century military men of both nations. This chapter considers the role of honour culture through the study of its fetish object the sword, permitting an analysis of the manner in which an ancient, idealised and sword-wielding masculinity came to have lasting dominance. Meanwhile, on the battlefields of eighteenth-century Europe, the military man was being transformed into the breed of man able to fire a musket and hold his position in a rank without flinching. The evolutions described in this chapter expose tensions between social classes, but also within the elite military man himself: he is in the process of losing the ability to realise the form of masculinity that defined him.

This chapter will attempt to separate out the military man from the 'man of honour' generally, both of whom were obliged to duel. There is a sense, however, in which the difficulty in completely unravelling these two strands is evidence of how strongly military values still resonated in 'civilian' culture. Lawrence Stone reminds us that in their ancient

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<sup>61</sup> Serge Doubrovsky, *Corneille et la dialectique du héros* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1963), p. 78.

origins the nobility, with their skilled use of arms and individual loyalties, made for a violent society.<sup>62</sup> A dense layer of warrior elites was a benefit to a king in the formative days of feudal France and Britain, but as royal power laid down wider and deeper roots these nobles became a nuisance and a threat. For them to cling to honour as a source of meaning was, in a sense, a rejection of institutionalisation, an unwillingness to come under the jurisdiction of civil laws. It was a means of staying in the dynastic realm where their primary interest could remain maintenance of family honour. André Corvisier explains that the predominant role of arms in civil society began to diminish with the rise of trade and economic interests in the late seventeenth century, but its significance lingered long after its role had diminished. The idealised, ancient form of military masculinity also gripped the *imaginaire* of the rising middle classes as well as the newer entity, the 'aristocrat', described in the above citation by Serge Doubrovsky. Eighteenth-century literature manifests evidence of the manner in which the changing role of arms in society engendered class adjustments and frictions as writers imagined new ways for men to perform masculinity without a sword.

A passage from Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste et son maître* (1772) will help to set the stage for the themes addressed in this chapter and throughout this study. In an intercalated episode, the manservant Jacques tells the story of his previous master, a military captain. His captain and another officer, also an army captain, were in the same regiment. They were the same age, and equals in birth, service and merit, only differing in that one was rich and the other was not. Jacques explains that the two men were so similar that this ought to have engendered either sympathy or antipathy; in the case of these two men, it engendered *both*: "il y avait des jours où ils étaient les meilleurs amis du monde, et d'autres où ils étaient ennemis mortels."<sup>63</sup> On the days that they fell afoul of one another, "ils mettaient l'épée à la main et se battaient" (p. 95). When one or the other was wounded, the victor would run to the side of the injured comrade in desperation and tears and remain at his bedside throughout the convalescence only for the cycle to re-commence. Jacques reports that all of their comrades tried to dissuade them from continuing this practice, but ultimately "on n'y trouva de remède qu'à les séparer" (p. 95). The minister of war intervened by placing them in two separate regiments, but "à peine furent-ils séparés qu'ils sentirent le besoin qu'ils avaient l'un de l'autre" (p. 96). The men scheme to see one

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<sup>62</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 96-134.

<sup>63</sup> Diderot, *Jacques le Fataliste et son maître*, ed. Yvon Belaval (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1973), p. 95. Although published in 1796 (posthumously), Belaval puts the year of writing at 1772: "On ne sait pas au juste à quelles dates Diderot a écrit *Jacques le Fataliste* [mais] tout ramenait à l'année 1772 comme date de naissance la plus probable": p. 7.

another again; fearing that this will be the last time they will be able to meet they agree to fight “à toute outrance” (p. 97). Launched into this battle, the men are discovered by a group of officers and the men are definitively separated, causing Jacques’ captain to die of melancholy. The other captain had already announced that he would die if they were separated: “Est-ce que tu crois, mon ami, que si je te tue, je te survivrai” (p. 98)?

Jacques attempts an explanation for the ‘folie’ of these two military men: “Celui de nos deux officiers fut pendant plusieurs siècles celui de toute l’Europe ; on l’appelait l’esprit de chevalerie” (p. 103). He explains that the men represent a form of masculinity that comes from the distant past:

Eh bien ! nos deux officiers n’étaient que deux paladins, nés de nos jours, avec les mœurs des anciens. Chaque vertu et chaque vice se montre et passe de mode. La force du corps eut son temps, l’adresse aux exercices eut le sien. La bravoure est tantôt plus, tantôt moins considérée ; plus elle est commune, moins on en est vain, moins on en fait l’éloge. Suivez les inclinations des hommes, et vous en remarquerez qui semblent être venus au monde trop tard : ils sont d’un autre siècle (p. 104).

Evoking chivalry, the men represent a ‘style of masculinity’ which is outmoded. In addition, to employ Judith Butler’s terminology, theirs is a masculinity that must be *performed*. They bring their masculinity into being through performative acts which they are, therefore, compelled to repeat in order to maintain their identity. Todd Reeser argues that the “concept of repetition is central to this way of understanding gender: masculinity comes to have meaning and to be perceived as coherent because it is repeated in many instances in ways that are perceived as coherent.”<sup>64</sup> We see in this passage, however, that Diderot positions this style of masculinity as incoherent. Its incoherence serves as a sign of its obsolescence. Furthermore, Butler says that these performative acts “cannot be taken as fabrication of the performer’s ‘will’ or ‘choice,’” in fact, in these two military officers we see that the compulsion to repeat the performance of their masculinity is distressingly beyond their control.<sup>65</sup> When Jacques warns his captain that the continuance of the cycle of violence might lead to his comrade’s death, he reports, “à ces mots, il se mettait à pleurer et se couvrait les yeux de ses mains; il courait dans son appartement comme un fou” (p. 95). These two men *need* one another in order to repeat the performance of the kind of masculinity that defines them, and they cannot perform it alone. They require an ‘other’ of equal fighting ability without which the performance would be ignoble or absurd. The performative nature of their masculinity, like a theatrical performance, requires outer

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<sup>64</sup> Todd W. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 82.

<sup>65</sup> Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 234.

trappings. The men wear their military uniforms and, crucially, they wear swords. Not only do they wear swords but they are skilled handlers of this symbolic weapon. The knowledge of skilled sword fare had significant implications; not only an indicator of class position and profession, it was a sign of physical and moral attributes: youth, strength, agility and courage. By its very nature skill in sword fare *must* be performed; ability one can neither gain nor demonstrate without continual practice. Once obtained, the skill placed one in a community that rested outside civil and even military institutions. This was the very problem that anti-duelling campaigners recognised: civil laws were powerless to stop the practice because the loss of honour that ensued from refusing a challenge was worse than death.

The literature that comprises this study uncovers an array of class positions that are finer and more varied than simply Second versus Third Estate in France or gentry, middling class and lower orders in Britain. Within class positions there were divisions. Historian Jay M. Smith explains that in France “divisions indeed existed within the nobility. [...] robe versus sword, court versus country, rich versus poor,” these divisions “precluded united thought and action by the order as a whole.”<sup>66</sup> Evolving nuances in class position can also be seen in Britain and are traceable through knowledge of sword fare. In Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*, Robert Lovelace is a member of the ancient nobility and highly skilled in the use of the sword while *nouveau riche* James Harlowe is angry and violent but unskilled in sword fare. Colonel Morden, implied to be from the ancient nobility and with actual military ties, is more skilled in sword fare than both men. When Lovelace and Colonel Morden are choosing weapons for their duel, Morden chooses the sword and says to Lovelace, that it was “a gentleman’s weapon; and he who understood it not, wanted a qualification that he ought to suffer for not having.”<sup>67</sup> In Richardson’s *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), men who are disguised as military men are revealed to be imposters through their poor, buffoonish sword skills. Decoding the significance of these subtle class distinctions and their role as markers of masculinity in imaginative literature will be a recurring theme in this study. Sword skill is one of the codes.

Tensions centred on demonstrable skill in martial arts reveal a process which R.W. Connell calls the “splitting of gentry masculinity.”<sup>68</sup> Connell uses the term ‘gentry

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<sup>66</sup> Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined, The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 3.

<sup>67</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 1485.

<sup>68</sup> R.W. Connell, ‘The History of Masculinity’, *The Masculinity Studies Reader*, ed. Rachel Adams and David Savran, (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 246-261: “The history of European/American masculinity over the last two hundred years can broadly be understood as the

masculinity' to describe the hegemonic form of masculinity that had been fully consolidated in the mid to late seventeenth century, contending that "the masculinity of the gentry was emphatic and violent."<sup>69</sup> Marked by land ownership, Connell is not speaking of nationalities but rather of a masculinity that resided in the European dynastic realm through a "kinship" that expressed itself via intermarriages between elite families. It was a power base that was integrated with the running of the state, supplying its leaders and providing army and naval officers and personally undertaking the recruitment of the soldiery. A shift in this power base was brought about, in part, through a rationalization in warfare, a growth in bureaucracy, a loss of financial and political power among the gentry, and a new valorisation of expertise and technological knowledge. The fragmentation of gentry masculinity into subordinate varieties commenced in the eighteenth century however evidence of the resilience of the older model was specifically evinced in the duel which Connell describes as representing "the intersection between this direct involvement in [state] violence and the ethic of family honour."<sup>70</sup>

In his memoirs, set during the reign of Louis XVI, the military man Louis Philippe Comte de Ségur writes about his first duel. The circumstances that provoke it are petty—Ségur inadvertently moved a hat that was saving a place at the theatre. The owner of the hat, another military man, would not accept Ségur's apology. He demands satisfaction and demands it instantly. As they leave the theatre, his challenger has some doubts and seems to demur. Ségur replies to him: "the wine is drawn, and we must drink it."<sup>71</sup> They commence a duel with swords and the challenger is wounded: "he was covered in blood, and sad reflections occurred to my mind respecting the cruelty of our prejudices."<sup>72</sup> The whole affair had taken ten minutes. Ségur describes an atmosphere amongst the military officers in which duelling thrived, where "young noblemen [were] accustomed from their infancy to consider themselves on a par with each other."<sup>73</sup> He ascribes some violence to class friction—tensions between the courtly nobility and the country nobility; between the country nobility and the (civilian) middle classes in garrison towns. He wrote: "For the last few years the spirit of equality, introduced by the increase of knowledge, had begun to spread throughout the nation. In several cities, such as Toulouse, Lyon, Besançon, and Strasbourg, the bravery of many young students had in many duels compelled noblemen

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splitting of gentry masculinity, its gradual displacement by new hegemonic forms, and the emergence of an array of subordinated and marginalized masculinities": p. 249.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Louis Philippe, Comte de Ségur, *Memoirs of Louis Philippe Comte de Ségur* (London : The Folio Society, 1960), p. 43.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

to admit that the sword may restore the balance, when honour claims it and justice refuses to acknowledge its existence.”<sup>74</sup> For Ségur, class differences were smoothed over by skilled swordsmanship. Ultimately, however, he is equivocal about the duel, acknowledging its ‘gothic’ roots but admitting its private benefit: “little pains were taken to conceal a duel, and mine which made a great noise at Lille, so far from drawing down any disgrace upon me, brought me into greater vogue and contributed to increase my success at court and in town.”<sup>75</sup> It is clear that demonstrable skill in swordsmanship was a further mark of distinction even within the elites themselves.

The following three sections of this chapter will reveal how an ancient masculinity became recognisable and idealised through signifying practices, and how attempts were made to resignify those practices. The first section will analyze the factors that contributed to the sword’s special status among weapons, helping to create a type of man. These factors, in turn, were appropriated by the ideology of honour culture, the subject of the second section, which will consider the demands of the point of honour and the corresponding anti-duelling movement. The third section will examine the literature presenting new moral contexts in which the man of honour could perform a style of masculinity that upheld his class distinction with non-lethal violence.

### **The Signification of the Sword**

When surveying the earliest representations of the sword in literature, it is clear that as an object it already possessed a surfeit of meaning beyond its role as a personal weapon. Though it is difficult to locate a *moment* at which the sword took on its symbolic weight, it is possible to look at the qualities that helped shape its resonance. These reasons were physical and material in origins. Fundamentally, the sword must always have been equated with the nobility because it has always been an expensive object. Its creation required costly metals and the specialist skill of a swordsmith. To become an expert swordsman required years of serious dedication, the kind of time that in most societies only the elite warrior or the nobility possessed. Tobias Capwell asserts that “the sword and the ability to use it were inseparable, both also strong indication of rank.”<sup>76</sup> Historian J. K. Anderson describes the development of *monomachia* (single combat) and *hoplomachia* (fencing) in ancient Greece, explaining that “this training was not for the general mass of

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>76</sup> Tobias Capwell, *The Noble Art of the Sword, Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe 1520-1630* (London: The Wallace Collection, 2012), p. 17.

citizens. [it was offered] to rich young men who had leisure to perfect themselves in the arts of political and military leadership and money to pay handsomely for instruction.”<sup>77</sup> This is a relationship that would be replicated throughout the centuries. In Europe, sword fare was integral to the culture of chivalry, an institution created by and for the nobility. The ancient nobility in France are called the *noblesse d’épée*, the very name of their class announcing that their rank was earned in single combat with a sword.

Anderson reminds us of another obvious but essential point: “It must in fact have been for close fighting that the sword was designed.”<sup>78</sup> Fighting with swords necessitates direct engagement with the enemy, in proximity to his sword, demanding quick response to the thrusts of the enemy’s blade and the requisite to plunge a blade into another man’s body; these are not factors associated with weapons used at a distance. The Spartans famously had short swords to increase proximity and hence their reputation for valour: “Indeed when some Athenian made a joke about how short Laconian swords were, [...] King Agis retorted: ‘All the same, we certainly reach the enemy with our daggers’.”<sup>79</sup> Single combat is an aesthetic spectacle. The participants have bodies honed by the years of training required to master this skill. Swordsmanship has artistic appeal, sometimes more akin to ballet than to violent combat in its choreography and grace. Ideally, the two swordsmen are of equal skill permitting an extended sequence, offering both the participants and the spectators a real battle rather than an assassination. These aesthetic qualities, often glorified in literature, were a potent force that continued to manifest power on the eighteenth-century *imaginaire*. The spectacle could be altered by the pairing of unequal combatants, becoming grotesque or comic, or indicating stark differences in class position; all of these are factors that writers could employ in depictions of single combat.

Early literary works contribute to the symbolism of the sword through an over-representation and valorisation of single combat within the larger spectacle of warfare. In reality, in the past just as today, the bulk of fighting in battles is conducted at long-range. In the *Iliad*, however, the masses of archers and slingers are anonymous, while the figures readers remember are those who undertook single combat. The focus in literature is on battle between two named individuals. Narratives featuring the sword in the hands of great military leaders dominate biblical history, classical antiquity, and the chivalric tradition. Here are the origins of what could almost be called a ‘family tree’ of swords; such

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<sup>77</sup> J.K. Anderson, ‘Hoplite Weapons and Offensive Arms’, *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* ed. Victor Hanson (London; New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 29.

<sup>78</sup> Anderson, *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>79</sup> Plutarch, *On Sparta* (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 24.

is the intertextuality across genres, generations, fact and fiction. Historians study the *Iliad* for its depiction of weapons and battles; equally, military objects named in the *Iliad* appear in other literary works.<sup>80</sup> Historians continue to debate whether King Arthur is based on historical reality, testimony to the desire to prove him to be ‘real’.<sup>81</sup> Arthur is famously associated with a sword that bears a name, *Excalibur*. Other name-bearing swords serve to further blur the borders of fiction and history. In the eleventh-century epic poem *Song of Roland*, the eponymous hero receives his sword *Durandel* from Charlemagne, who had received it (we are told) from an angel.<sup>82</sup> In life and legend, Charlemagne possessed a famous sword which he named *Joyeuse*, an object now displayed in the Louvre.<sup>83</sup> In 1701, when Louis XIV wore *Joyeuse* in the celebrated portrait by Rigaud, Louis was gleaning the aura of Charlemagne’s masculinity through the medium of his sword, the fetish object representing the proven military valour of an ideal ancient king who had been glorified in literature.<sup>84</sup>

The conception of the nobility’s possession of an innate, idealised sword-wielding masculinity is a tendency promulgated in early literature. It is an ideology demonstrated in the story of Percival in Chretien de Troyes’ twelfth-century *Conte de Graal*, in which Percival’s martial superiority is shown to be a natural result of his noble blood. In order to prevent Percival from following in the path of his ancestors, who were all knights, his mother sequestered him in a remote forest and told him nothing of his illustrious lineage. One day while alone in the woods Percival encounters a group of knights and is enthralled,

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<sup>80</sup> For example, when Hector and Ajax reach a draw after an epic duel the two men acknowledged one another’s military valour by an exchange of gifts—a sword from Hector and a belt from Ajax. The belt is what Achilles used to string together Hector’s heels in order to drag his body from behind a chariot. In Sophocles’ play *Ajax*, (a translation by Thomas Francklin is staged in London in 1759), Hector’s sword is what Ajax will use to kill himself when he loses a competition with Ulysses over the right to possess Achilles’ armour. In Ariosto’s epic poem, *Orlando Furioso* (1532), the historical figure Roland, paladin to Charlemagne, King of the Franks, is represented as possessing the sword of Hector.

<sup>81</sup> “The past century, or so, has witnessed a considerable, and on occasion quite vehement, debate concerning whether or not King Arthur actually existed”: N.J. Higham, *King Arthur, Myth-Making and History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> “O, Durendal, how fair and sacred you are! In the golden hilt are many relics”: *The Song of Roland*, trans. Glyn Burgess (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 103.

<sup>83</sup> “L’épée que conserve le musée du Louvre est, depuis le XIIIe siècle, considérée comme l’épée de Charlemagne, Joyeuse, que célèbrent les chansons de geste. Mais elle n’est pas homogène. [Dating techniques have shown that not all the parts of the sword are from the same time period.]”: Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Regalia, Les Instruments du Sacre des Rois de France* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1987), p. 66.

<sup>84</sup> “And [Charles] girt about him his sword Joyeuse, which had no peer and whose colour changes thirty times a day”: *The Song of Roland*, p. 108; “le Louis XIV de Rigaud, en costume de cour et portant des bas et des souliers blancs sous son grand manteau fleurdelisé, est bien muni de l’épée du sacre, Joyeuse”: *Ibid.*, p. 12.

instinctively recognising his kin, he cries out to them “vous êtes plus beau que Dieu.”<sup>85</sup> He convinces the knights to take him to the court of King Arthur where the moment he is put on a horse and given weapons, he knows how to use them expertly, “car tout cela lui venait de sa nature et son cœur.” His expert ability in the martial arts is shown to be irrepressible due to a noble ancestry which would not be denied. For Percival, the continual performance of chivalric masculinity would be simple since opportunities presented themselves at every turn, opportunities which both offered a service to others *and* reinforced his private honour.



Hyacinthe Rigaud, *Louis XIV*, 1701, detail showing *Joyeuse*.

Despite the continuing ideological and cultural significance of the sword, by the eighteenth century the demise of the sword on the battlefield was nearly complete. According to the *Encyclopédie* entry for ‘armes’, the first mention of ‘pistolet’ on the battlefield comes from the end of the reign of Louis XIII (1601-1643). The entry continues : “les armes de l’infanterie, sont le fusil, la bayonette & l’épée. Cette dernière arme est entièrement inutile aujourd’hui.”<sup>86</sup> In his military manual *Reveries on the Art of*

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<sup>85</sup> Chrétien de Troyes, ‘Le Conte du Graal,’ *Romans de la Table Ronde* (Paris : Librairie Générale Française, 2002), p. 562.

<sup>86</sup> Anonymous, ‘armes’, *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, eds. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D’Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project (Spring 2011 Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedia.uchicago.edu/>.

*War*, Maurice de Saxe wrote of the advantages of arming troops with a musket with fixed bayonet over that of men armed with swords. To make his argument, he simply cites an anecdote concerning Charles XII, King of Sweden (1682-1718). Saxe wrote that Charles was enamoured of the idea of having his troops engage in battle with sword in hand, actually *leading* the charge with their swords. Charles had made his army aware of his strong desire.

Accordingly, in a battle against the Russians, at the moment it was about to begin he hastened to his regiment of infantry, and made a spirited harangue, dismounted, posted himself in the front of the colours, and led them on to the charge himself. But as soon as they came within about thirty paces of the enemy, his whole regiment fired in spite of his orders and his presence. And although he routed the Russians and obtained a complete victory, he was so piqued that he passed through the ranks, remounted his horse, and rode off without speaking a single word.<sup>87</sup>

The only explanation for Charles XII's preoccupation with the sword could have been the power of culture to act on his conception of warfare: he wanted to create and witness an aesthetic spectacle. In reality, it would have been pure suicide for his troops to have fulfilled his whim against an army firing at them with muskets, a grotesque spectacle.

On the eighteenth-century battlefield, when troops were finally face to face—too close for taking the time to reload muskets—the bayonet was the weapon of second resort. To be a warrior has always entailed the use of or the confrontation with the best possible weapon technology available at any given time. The sword was now not only impractical, but it was actually in the way. When equipping the cavalry Saxe advised, “the swords should be slung the same as the carbines because in that position they will be less inconvenient and more ornamental.”<sup>88</sup> If it is merely ornamental, why carry one at all? Here, even in a work of military strategy, we see a reluctance to completely dispense with the sword even though it has lost all utility and become an encumbrance. It is difficult to dispense with the object that permits a man to perform the style of masculinity that is recognised with personal honour.

The civilian man of honour could also invest in the potentialities that this object could help him realise. Samuel Johnson's biographer James Boswell provides the example of the civilian man with military ancestry. In 1762, Boswell had recently arrived in London from Scotland. V.G. Kiernan describes Boswell as “acutely conscious of his old blood and

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<sup>87</sup> Maurice de Saxe, *Reveries on the Art of War* (Mineola: Dover, 2007), pp. 43-45.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

feudal ancestry, and their claims on him.”<sup>89</sup> Trying to live up to his ancestry was not easy: “my business was to make as much show as I could with my small allowance.”<sup>90</sup> He decides that he wants a sword: “On Tuesday I wanted a silver-hilted sword, but upon examining my pockets as I walked up the Strand, I found that I had left the most of my guineas at home.” Without money, Boswell will require credit, the point on which this story turns. He enters “the shop of Mr. Jefferys, sword-cutter to his Majesty, looked at a number of his swords, and at last picked out a very handsome one at five guineas.” What transpired next was an exchange based on whether Mr. Jefferys believed Boswell was truly a gentleman (or *not*). Mr. Jefferys assessed Boswell visually and at first declines to give him credit, but upon Boswell’s gracious reaction, Jefferys changes his mind. “‘Come, Sir,’ cried he, ‘I will trust you’. ‘Sir,’ said I, ‘if you had not trusted me, I should not have bought it from you’.” Boswell proceeded to choose a belt and put on the sword, he re-entered the streets of London a new man: “This I think was a good adventure and much to my honour.”<sup>91</sup> Boswell had survived a challenge to his honour: this is how a gentleman obtained a sword in the eighteenth century marketplace, an exchange which gave Boswell an ideologically charged object to display as he walked the streets of London.

### **The Ideology of Honour**

On the battlefield the sword had moved from the role of essential weapon to that of sentimental encumbrance, while never losing its status as symbol of an ancient, idealised masculinity. In civil society, however, the actual use of the sword would linger in disputes centred on private honour. This represents the distinction between the use of violence in public causes or private causes. What James Boswell hoped to achieve by means of the sword hanging from his belt was the maintenance of private and family honour, a position he would have felt justified to display because of his feudal ancestry and his fascination with the military. It also represented alignment with a class position and maintenance of its prerogatives. For the eighteenth-century man of honour, with the battlefield now dominated by guns and tactics, and knight-errantry out of fashion, the duel became the only way to perform this style of masculinity and to maintain private or family honour. In V. G. Kiernan’s account, the duel originated and spread out through feudal Europe and

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<sup>89</sup> V. G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History, Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 178.

<sup>90</sup> James Boswell, *Boswell’s London Journal 1762-1763* (London: Heinemann, 1950), p. 58.

<sup>91</sup> Boswell, *Op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

“from this arose a protracted ascendancy of aristocratic classes, military by vocation or at least never forgetful of a sword-bearing ancestry.”<sup>92</sup>

Donna Andrew’s essay on the history of the opposition to duelling in eighteenth-century England explains the distinction between duels that took place before the Renaissance and those that took place after its advent: the former she calls ‘judicial duels,’ the latter she calls ‘duels of honour’: “Like the judicial duel, the introduction of the modern duel served to limit violence and regulate its expression. Unlike the judicial duel, however, the duel of honour was always legally condemned and therefore had to be carried on in a secretive and private manner.”<sup>93</sup> The question was why this practice should still persist in more enlightened times, when there existed civil channels for the pursuit of justice. The answer lay in the ideology of the point of honour, an ideology which maintained a stranglehold on military officers and other men of honour, leaving them little room for manoeuvre in how they expressed their masculinity, condemning them to suffering, violence, even death.

In the eighteenth century, the ideology that demanded the maintenance of private honour through the performance of violence was under attack. Anti-duelling literature proliferated the eighteenth century and writers like Richardson and Rousseau, among others, gave a prominent place to anti-duelling messages in their celebrated novels. This literature explored the distinction between violence used for private and public causes, tending to glorify the Greeks and Romans who did not duel for motives of private honour. Thirty years before Jacques-Louis David’s celebrated 1784 painting *The Oath of the Horatii*, Samuel Richardson included the story of the Horatii and Curiatii in *Sir Charles Grandison* as an example of a morally acceptable ‘duel’ because the dispute was a matter of collective rather than personal interest given that the combatants represented their regional armies. The battle between the Horatii and Curiatii clearly bore no resemblance to an eighteenth-century duel. This technique was also employed by Patrick Delany (1686-1768), a Trinity-educated Irish theologian and intimate friend of Jonathan Swift. In an anti-duelling essay, Delany used the single combat between David and Goliath as an example of humane and lawful duelling when it plainly diverged from eighteenth-century duelling in almost every sense. Delany’s emphasis was on the *selflessness* of the combatants, even Goliath. They were individuals who sacrificed themselves in order to spare their armies “and whose

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<sup>92</sup> Kiernan, *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>93</sup> Donna T. Andrew, ‘The Code of Honour and Its Critics: The Opposition to Duelling in England, 1700-1850’, *Social History*, 5, 3 (1980), p. 410.

lives were devoted to the service of the public, in arms.”<sup>94</sup> By designating this style of individuated combat as morally justifiable and re-naming it as a duel, Richardson and Delany were attempting a resignification of the acceptable parameters of a duel; paramount was eliminating its use in private causes.

In *Lettre à d’Alembert sur les spectacles* (1757) Rousseau took up the subject of the seemingly immutable nature of the point of honour. The failure of Louis XIV’s edict against duelling, Rousseau argued, was the supreme example of the force of public opinion: even the Sun King could not undermine the power of *le point d’honneur*. What is the point of honour? The term itself has a sound that seems to indicate fixed principles, a specific code, but in fact the point of honour is a highly subjective concept. The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1762) gives the following definition: “Ce en quoi on fait consister l’honneur.” The point of honour is whatever an individual decides that it is. The same dictionary gives examples of the term being used in sentences that only serve to further highlight its subjectivity: “Il s’est fait sur cela un point d’honneur”; “Il est trop délicat sur le point d’honneur.”<sup>95</sup> The entry for the *Encyclopédie* says, “Il serait difficile de le peindre, car les règles & les maximes qui le constituent sont variables” but adds that the point of honour is most marked in the military man who represents “le point d’honneur par excellence.”<sup>96</sup>

William Gilpin, in an anti-duelling essay, staged his argument within an imagined conversation between three gentlemen, one of whom is a Colonel. Gilpin (1724-1804), an Anglican cleric and son of a military Captain, wrote on moral subjects as well as writing on art and aesthetics, developing a theory of the *picturesque*.<sup>97</sup> In the imagined conversation, the two civilians ask the military man to define the point of honour; the Colonel says: “We soldiers don’t deal much in logic [...] In short, the point of honour is to be felt rather than explained; like an innate sense, or taste, it is above definition.”<sup>98</sup> Here, Gilpin imparts the subjectivity of the point of honour with an aesthetic dimension: it is a sense that cannot be described in words. Subjectivity is the very thing that makes the point of honour a subject of satire. This is exemplified by Colonel Bath in Henry Fielding’s *Amelia* (1751). On the one

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<sup>94</sup> Patrick Delany, ‘Sermon X The great Folly, Iniquity, Absurdity, and crying Guilt of Duelling’, *Sixteen Discourses upon Doctrines and Duties* (London: John & James Rivington, 1754), p. 253.

<sup>95</sup> *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1762), University of Chicago: ARTFL Project (Winter Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>96</sup> *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D’Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Projet (Winter Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>97</sup> Zoë Kinsley, “William Gilpin”. *The Literary Encyclopedia*. First published 03 February 2005 [<http://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=1754>, accessed 30 October 2013.]

<sup>98</sup> William Gilpin, ‘A Dialogue on Duelling’, *Dialogues on various subjects* (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1807), p. 231.

hand the narrator announces: “Colonel Bath, who, with all the other principles of honour and humanity made no more of cutting the throat of a man upon any of his punctilio’s than a butcher doth of killing sheep.”<sup>99</sup> On the other hand, Bath is found wearing “a woman’s bed-gown, and a very dirty flannel nightcap” whilst nursing his convalescing sister, to whom he is devoted (p. 123). In Colonel Bath, the point of honour is a kind of sensibility *avant la lettre*—a hyper-sensitivity to perceived signs of disrespect. The demands imposed on Bath to perform the style of masculinity of his class result in his death: he is killed in a duel at the novel’s end. Colonel Bath represents the irreconcilable split between the violent public man and the tender private man; an incoherence that causes him to suffer. If he had ignored the demands imposed by his class and his profession, his public and private selves could have been united in a tender man.

The point of honour does include elements that are not subjective but are ‘codified’ by uniform observance, the ideology taking on ‘form.’ First and fundamentally, as has been revealed, the point of honour is a code that applies to one class only—the aristocracy. The ‘innate sense’ of the point of honour is only innate to them. It was a code that engendered internecine violence that was theoretically for the greater good of that group. The continued violence and purging functioned as a reaffirmation of a code that set the aristocracy apart from other classes. For them, honour had to be *seen* to be more important than life, in fact they could not live without honour. This is where the point of honour and the military man intersect because the officer class was composed almost exclusively of the aristocracy. In eighteenth-century debates on the duel some argued that striving for honour produced the best soldiers because it was a “passion even stronger than fear.”<sup>100</sup> V. G. Kiernan explains the exigency of the point of honour on the military officer: “two officers who quarrelled had to fight, whether they wanted to or not, because otherwise the regiment was dishonoured.”<sup>101</sup>

In his anti-duelling essay, Gilpin attempted to undermine the point of honour by exploiting this class bias; the character of Mr. Willis, says to the Colonel:

What all know your rank and file of the point of honour? No more than they do of transubstantiation. And yet we allow them to be brave fellows, and full of military spirit. Nay, what is more, our yeoman and peasantry, who make up the body of our gallant troops know as little of the point of honour, as the several corps, into which they enlist. If, then, the mass of an army can maintain its military spirit without this point of honour, whatever it is, I hold it to be equally nugatory among their leaders.

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<sup>99</sup> Henry Fielding, *Amelia* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 521.

<sup>100</sup> Donna T. Andrew, ‘The Code of Honour and Its Critics: The Opposition to Duelling in England, 1700-1850,’ *Social History*, 5, 3 (1980), p. 414.

<sup>101</sup> Kiernan, *Op. cit.*, p. 159.

I beg your pardon, (replied the Colonel;) the troops are animated with it as strongly in their way as their leaders. They do not indeed maintain it with sword, and pistol; but they discover it as effectually with their cudgel sticks and fists.

Well, then, Colonel, (said Mr. Willis) [...] Keep your swords in their scabbards, and, if the law makes no objection, you have my free leave to silence an impudent fellow by giving him a bloody nose.<sup>102</sup>

The colonel, however, says that the army is “upheld by the point of honour. Take away that vital spring, and the whole will languish.” This statement accurately reflects the deeply ingrained fear that a mass de-masculinisation would result from the abandonment of the point of honour.

The second fixed factor attached to the point of honour was that it had conventions. Once it was decided that a duel must take place, there were rules and procedures. Form dictated that duels were conducted privately—outside of civil law—another mark of the exceptionality of the aristocracy. Delany declared: “Well, but a man of honour scorns to go to law for abuse, whilst he wears a sword to right himself!”<sup>103</sup> The duel must be deemed to be ‘fair’ in order for the surviving party to reap the honour that came from being the victor and for the deceased to be seen to have died ‘with honour.’ Fairness also served to keep most duellists from incurring legal punishments: “When a duel had been properly fought, juries refused to find the duellists or their seconds guilty of murder.”<sup>104</sup>

The third and final fixed quality of the point of honour is one that is probably the hardest for us to understand today. Disputes over the point of honour demanded payment in blood. ‘Satisfaction’ was achieved through the literal spilling of human blood. As Julie acknowledges in Rousseau’s *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, “je sais qu’il faut du sang à l’honneur outragé.”<sup>105</sup> Clarissa says to Colonel Morden, “seek not then, I beseech you sir, to aggravate my fault by a pursuit of blood.”<sup>106</sup> The word ‘blood’ is both metaphorical and literal in these examples: blood was the price for the cohesion of this gentleman’s club. “It was to [the social hierarchy] and its permanence, that the duellist [...] dedicated his blood.”<sup>107</sup> Anti-duelling campaigners argued that satisfaction could be found in the court of law, perhaps in monetary payments to the wronged party. In 1732, Mandeville asked whether injured honour could “not be satisfied with [...] other Sacrifices besides Human

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<sup>102</sup> Gilpin, *Op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>103</sup> Delany, *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

<sup>104</sup> Andrew, *Op. cit.*, p. 412.

<sup>105</sup> Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (Paris: Flammarion, 1967), p. 108.

<sup>106</sup> Richardson, *Op. cit.*, p. 1444.

<sup>107</sup> Kiernan, *Op. cit.*, p. 163.

Blood.”<sup>108</sup> Payment in blood continued to be the required form of satisfaction for at least another hundred years after Mandeville’s plea.

It is this very concept that Sade takes to its grotesque extreme in his novella *Ernestine* from his collection *Les Crimes de l’amour*, published in 1799 but written before the Revolution.<sup>109</sup> Set in Sweden, a powerful aristocrat named Oxtiern is guilty of terrible crimes against the military man Colonel Sanders and his family. Pointedly, Oxtiern’s crimes are taken up by the law—he is arrested and prosecuted through civil channels: “le process s’instruit avec la plus grande rigueur...l’intégrité la plus entière y préside” (p. 282).<sup>110</sup> Oxtiern is found guilty and sentenced to lifetime confinement in a prison located in a deep underground mine. Years pass and Oxtiern has been completely reformed but Colonel Sanders remains unhappy because the justice accorded has not met the demands of the point of honour. The king accedes to Sanders’ wishes and Oxtiern is released in order that the military man can have ‘satisfaction’: “les mânes de ma fille exigent du sang” (p. 286). The duel is quickly arranged, witnesses are in place and both men are armed with swords, but no sooner does the duel begin than Oxtiern goes on bended knee, turns his sword around, placing the point against his bare chest and holding the Colonel’s hand on the hilt. He argues that he does not merit the honour of fighting the Colonel and urges him to plunge the sword into his heart. Sanders, astonished, urges him to defend himself, saying: “Comte, il faut du sang...il en faut, il en faut, vous dis-je” (p. 287). Oxtiern will not relent and the Colonel, horrified, tries to disengage himself from the sword saying: “Ce n’est point ainsi qu’il faut que je me comporte, c’est par les loix de l’honneur que je veux vous punir” (p. 287). Oxtiern proceeds to throw himself on the sword and blood flows from his ‘entrails,’ but he survives. Upset, the colonel says: “votre sang coule, je suis satisfait...que le ciel achève votre correction, je ne veux pas vous servir de bourreau” (p. 287). Sade explores the discrepancy between private and public justice. The military man can feel no satisfaction from the public justice—it bears no relation to the code by which he lives. There must be blood. But equally he can achieve no justice from the reformed aristocrat who refuses to follow the form prescribed by his class. For satisfaction to be achieved, both parties must play their part *comme il faut*. Oxtiern instead adopts the position of a martyr, which would make Sanders an executioner—a role he refuses to

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<sup>108</sup> Bernard Mandeville, *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour, and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (London: J. Brotherton, 1732), p. 65.

<sup>109</sup> “Les nouvelles qui composent *Les Crimes de l’amour* ont été rédigées à la Bastille à la veille de la Révolution, puis remaniées à l’extrême fin du siècle pour le recueil qui paraît en l’an VIII et relève directement du genre illustré par *Les Épreuves du sentiment*” : Michel Delon, *Op. cit.*, p. 15

<sup>110</sup> Sade, ‘Ernestine,’ *Les Crimes de l’amour*, ed. Michel Delon (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1987), pp. 213-289.

adopt. The spilt blood purges Oxtiern but for Sanders the spectacle is macabre. How can the military man Sanders find justice? After many years, he is seen to achieve *moral* satisfaction through the generous and virtuous public life lived by the reformed Oxtiern.

Rousseau understood that the point of honour was an ideology based in admiration of military values. In *Lettre à d'Alembert* he prescribed a formula that he believed might change the public's opinion on duelling. To replace the existing tribunal, he proposed a new institution which would be called a *Court of Honour* whose judges would all be venerable military veterans. The existing tribunal could only condemn duels and issue punishments, leaving the man of honour with two unacceptable choices: censure or ignominy. The new court proposed by Rousseau would have the power to *sanction* duels thereby moving private disputes into the public sphere. The second difference would be that *all* classes could go before the court of honour. He wrote: "nul homme ne pouvant vivre civilement sans honneur, tous les états où l'on porte une épée, depuis le prince jusqu'au soldat, et tous les états même où l'on n'en porte point, doivent ressortir à cette cour d'honneur" (p. 123). He divided men into the class who wear swords and the class who do not. For the former, the court would make judgements on their conduct and their actions; for the latter, the court would oversee "leurs discours et leurs maxims" (p. 123). He believed that to restrict the court's jurisdiction to the nobility and military was like 'cutting the weed but leaving the root' because "si le point d'honneur fait agir la noblesse, il fait parler le peuple; les uns ne se battent que parce que les autres les jugent" (p. 123). Ingeniously, Rousseau's plan inverted the very elements that sustained the point of honour in order to remove its appeal to the elites: make the point of honour applicable to all classes, expose duels in the public arena, give them official sanction, force the 'gentry masculinity' to come under civil law. Ultimately, however, after having constructed his lofty plan Rousseau proceeded to summarily discard it: "une pareille institution est entièrement contraire à l'esprit de la monarchie" (p. 125). The articulation of what a contemporary thinker imagined was possible (or not) in attempts to restrict honour culture reveals the extent and nature of its hold. Rousseau was forced to admit the impotence of civil law in the face of honour culture: even the law cannot force a person to dishonour themselves.

### **Resignifying the Practice of Gentry Masculinity**

Samuel Richardson's 1753 novel *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* reads like a handbook of masculinity with the eponymous hero addressing the moral ramifications of

almost every decision a man from the nobility could face pertaining subjects such as marriage, religion, profession, household management and even fashion. The novel was translated into French by Prévost and published in 1755-56.<sup>111</sup> Why is an examination of the character Sir Charles Grandison who is not *strictly speaking* a military man included in this chapter? In his third and final novel, Samuel Richardson addressed the brutal demands of honour culture through the invention of a figure whose mission, in the narrative, is the resignification of the gender practices of gentry masculinity in contemporary society.

Explaining the novel's genesis (in the third person voice of 'the editor'), Richardson explains that his circle of friends asked him to "produce into public View the Character and Actions of a Man of True Honour" (vol. I, p. 4). Like Richardson's previous novels, *Grandison* was "not published for the Sake of Entertainment only," but rather with the nobler goal of offering instruction and example (vol. I, p. 4). With these ends in mind, he established a set of parameters: middling class Richardson gave his novel a contemporary setting and made his hero a member of the ancient nobility, testimony to his awareness of the hegemonic power of gentry masculinity to set an example. This decision demanded that Richardson directly confront three subjects: military service among members of the ancient nobility, honour culture and the compulsion to duel.

Richardson selectively deleted, subverted and inverted the characteristics that comprise Grandison's gentry masculinity, carving out a new type of man. Sir Charles Grandison is of noble blood: "the ancient families, on both sides, from which I was descended" (vol. II, p. 117); he has landed wealth; he has natural abilities in the martial arts that were honed by years of training (again, the prerogative of the wealthy): "I had not passed my twelfth year, when [my father] gave me a master to teach me, what is called, the science of defence. I was fond of the practice, and soon obtained such a skill in the weapons, as pleased both my Father and Master" (vol. I, pp. 260-61). Grandison has innate military valour and, to top it off, he is young and handsome: "Sir Charles Grandison is indeed a fine figure. He is in the bloom of youth. I don't know that I have ever seen an handsomer or genteeler man" (vol. I, p. 138). For an author such as Richardson, compelled to provide example by showing behaviour in action, Grandison's superiority had to be *demonstrable*—he had to retain a performable masculinity. To refer again to Doubrovsky, Richardson wanted Grandison to retain a superiority that was rooted in a risk to his

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<sup>111</sup> Translated into French by Prévost and published as *Nouvelles lettres angloises, ou Histoire du chevalier Grandisson, par l'auteur de Pamela et de Clarisse*, Amsterdam, (1755-56).

existence. How could Richardson achieve this while still bringing Grandison in line with middling class and Christian morality and not subjecting him to charges of effeminacy? In this novel, these tensions are manifested through Grandison's relationship with his sword.

Grandison was destined to be a military officer and had been prepared for this role in his youth: "My Father once had a view, at the persuasion of my Mother's Brother, who was a general of note and interest in the Imperial service, and who was very fond of a military life, and of me, to make a soldier of me, tho' an only son; and I wanted not, when a boy, a turn that way" (p. 262). He makes "one campaign as a volunteer" during the War of the Austrian Succession: "I was then in the midst of marching armies, and could not tell how to abate the ardour those martial movements had raised in my breast. But, unless my country were to be unjustly invaded by a foreign enemy, I think I would not, on any consideration, be drawn into the field again" (vol. I, p. 263). His rupture with the military is explained by the death of his beloved mother from shock when his father is seriously injured in a duel. Grandison says:

The disgust I had conceived, on the above occasion, against duelling, and the consideration of the absurd alternative which the gentlemen of our army are under, either to accept a challenge, contrary to laws divine and human, or to be broke, if they do not (though a soldier is the least master of himself, or of his own life, of any man in the community) made me think the English service, tho' that of my country, the least eligible of all services (vol. I, p. 262).

Acknowledgement that a military officer is more obliged than any class of man to engage in a duel if challenged, Richardson must have Grandison break his ties with the military. In the 'Concluding Note by the Editor,' Richardson reminds the readers that military law as well as civil law forbade duelling. He inserts Article XX of the Articles of War in order to demonstrate his point. The Article, in addition to prohibiting duelling among military men states: "Nor shall any officer or soldier upbraid another for refusing a challenge" (vol III, p. 465). In practice, as Richardson realized, laws (whether civil or military), were effectively powerless to end a practice that existed on another plane—in honour culture—an indictment of military culture.

After having severed Grandison's ties to the military, Richardson proceeds to have him subvert honour culture. Grandison becomes a sort of prophet against duelling, a Christian 'hero'. Grandison makes a dramatic entrance to the novel with the rescue of Harriet Byron, abducted by the aristocrat Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. Harriet is a member of the country gentry, recently arrived in London. She is attractive, intelligent and possessed of strong morals, and most important in a letter-novel, she likes to write. After Harriet's rescue, Sir Hargrave and his circle of aristocratic male friends insist on 'satisfaction' from

Grandison for his “unprovoked knight-errantry” (vol. I, p. 197). Grandison refuses to comply. This leaves Hargrave unable to perform the style of masculinity demanded by his class, a situation which he finds intolerable. Hargrave’s friend Bagenhall explains, “Sir Charles, Sir Hargrave has some hardships in this case. You will not give him the satisfaction of a Gentleman: And, according to the Laws of Honour, a man is not intitled to be *treated* as a Gentleman, who denies one.” Grandison replies “Of whose making, Mr. Bagenhall, are the Laws of Honour you mention? I own no Laws, but the Laws of God and my Country” (vol. I, p. 242). Richardson is underscoring the subjective nature of the point of honour, valorising instead codified religious and civil precepts which appear to remove the element of subjectivity. Grandison adds “I live not to the world: I live to myself; to the monitor within me” (vol. I, p. 206). He singles himself out as a private man, accountable to himself (and God) but not to his class.

Harriet, the object of Grandison’s knight-errantry, doubles Grandison’s re-writing of honour. She argues, “Murderous, vile word honour! What, at this rate, is honour! The very opposite to duty, goodness, piety, religion; and to every thing that is or ought to be sacred among men” (vol I, p. 197). She explains that Grandison “is govern’d by another set of principles, than those of false honour; and shews that he regards first his duty, and then what is called honour” (vol. I, p. 209). After her rescue she has a dream about Grandison: “then comes my rescuer, my deliverer. And he is sometimes a mighty prince and I am a damsel in distress. The milk-white palfrey once came in. All the Marvelous takes place; and lions and tigers are slain, and armies routed, by the puissance of his single arm” (vol. I, p. 285). Harriet positions Grandison within the chivalric tradition where violence was legitimized when performed in service for others and ‘military’ skill was not the reserve of national armies.<sup>112</sup>

Richardson severs Grandison’s ties to the military and subverts his relation to the ideology of honour culture, but he does allow Grandison to adhere to certain *conventions* of his class, partly in order that Grandison not appear too out of step with society or even outlandish. Surprisingly perhaps, he permits Grandison to wear a sword. Sir Charles says “I was dressed,” which contemporary readers understood. Modern editions add an explanatory note telling the reader that ‘dressed’ indicates that Sir Charles was wearing a sword (vol II, p. 67). Grandison does not want to break with the visible signs of his class position, explaining to Harriet: “In the article of personal appearance, I think that propriety and degree should be consulted, as well as fortune. [...] In my own dress, I am generally a conformist to the fashion. Singularity is usually the indication of something

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<sup>112</sup> A subject explored further in the final chapter of this study, an examination of the *justicier*.

wrong in judgment” (vol. III, p. 124). Richardson was unable to have Grandison give up his sword altogether. Instead, he represented Grandison with a *different* relationship to his sword. He continued to wear it but took pains to avoid drawing it out, rendering it almost purely symbolic.

Grandison refers to danger as “an unavoidable evil” and thus something that a man must be prepared for (vol. I, p. 257). He expresses the requirement to wear a weapon as a real need, and one that is especially important for a man of his class, since “as the custom was so general, that a young man of spirit and fortune, at one time or another, could hardly expect to escape a provocation of this sort” (vol. I, p. 262). Grandison undertakes to become master of a different weapon: the staff. He argues that the staff is a weapon that will “enable [him] to avoid drawing my sword, and to empower [him], if called to the occasion, to give, and not to take, a life.” The staff is synonymous with the French weapon ‘la canne de combat.’ In his book on gentlemen’s arms, Bonnel writes of the ‘canne’: “Son origine est des plus aristocratiques; elle remonte très haut” and he notes that all of its movements are a double to those of the sword.<sup>113</sup> In terms of class and skill, it is a logical alternative to the sword except that it will not (necessarily) draw blood.

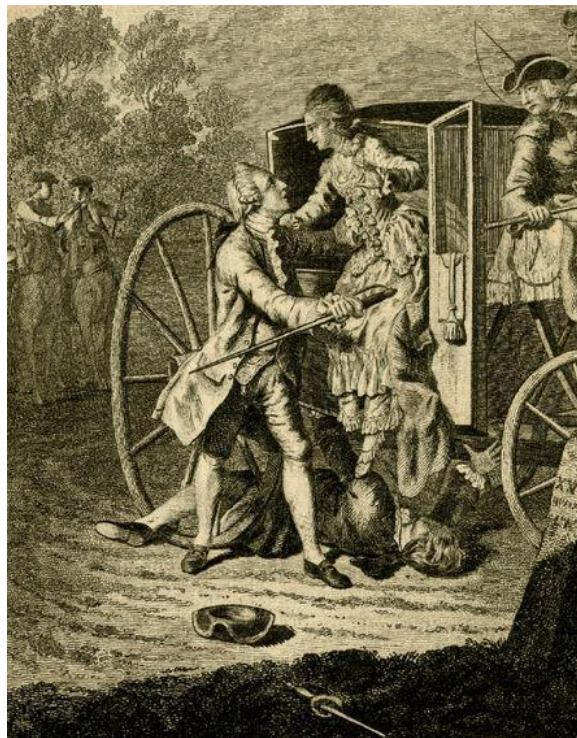
Richardson lets Grandison wear a sword but he subverts the conventions of the duel through the representation of number of set-piece encounters throughout the novel in what can be called ‘anti-duels’; these are violent encounters between Grandison and members of the aristocracy that do not quite adhere to point of honour because Grandison is not playing by the rules. The first encounter, his rescue of Harriet from Hargrave, is of such importance that it will be recited twice—from Grandison’s point of view, then from Harriet’s. It will have ramifications that will echo throughout the entire seven-volume novel. The exact details of the encounter matter because they are minutely scrutinised within the narrative:

‘Sir Hargrave drew his sword, which he had held between his knees in the scabbard. [...] Sir Hargrave made a pass at me. [...] I was aware of his thrust, and put it by; but his sword a little raked my shoulder. My sword was in my hand; but undrawn. [...] I seized him by the collar before he could recover himself from the pass he had made at me; and with a jerk, and a kind of twist, laid him under the hind-wheel of the chariot. I wrench’d his sword from him, and snapp’d it, and flung the two pieces over my head. [...] Sir Hargrave’s mouth and face were very bloody. I believe I might have hurt him with the pommel of my sword. [...] I had not drawn my sword: I hope I never shall be provoked to do it in a private quarrel. I should not, however, have scrupled to draw it, on such an occasion as this, had there been an absolute necessity for it. (vol. I, pp. 140-142)

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<sup>113</sup> B. Bonnel, *Traité de l’art des armes ou Les principes de l’escrime suivi des premiers principes de la boxe française et de la canne* (Paris : Editions Delarue, 1890), p. 149.

Grandison takes pride in having accomplished Harriet's rescue without ever drawing his sword from its scabbard. We learn later, however, that Hargrave has lost his front teeth in the encounter, knocked out by the pommel of Grandison's sword—the source of the spilt blood. For a young man of Hargrave's social position the loss of his front teeth is a maiming of the highest order—it is an unmaning that has taken him out of eligibility for a marriage to an equal. He must wear a handkerchief to cover his mouth. If he had been wounded, he might have made a full recovery; from this incident he will never recover. He demands satisfaction from Grandison: "I demand from you the satisfaction due to a gentleman" and has every reason to expect that Grandison, a member of his own class, will comply (vol. I, p. 207).



Isaac Taylor, *Sir Charles Grandison rescues Miss Byron*, 1778 edition of *Sir Charles Grandison*

Grandison refuses the duel. He adds that since his comings and goings are public knowledge, he is aware that he might be challenged directly, but he has a policy: "My sword is a sword of defence, not of offence. A pistol I only carry on the road, to terrify robbers: And I have found a less dangerous weapon sometimes sufficient to repel a sudden insult" (vol. I, p. 208). This 'less dangerous weapon' is a reference to the cane. Hargrave

refuses to accept Grandison's refusal, a circumstance which Grandison decides to employ for exemplary purposes:

Something must be done by a man who refuses a challenge, to let a challenger see (such is the world, such is the custom) that he has *better* motives than fear, for his refusal. I will put Sir Hargrave's Honour to the fullest test. [...] Sir Hargrave, I see, will not be satisfied unless something extraordinary be done (vol. I, p. 243).

The 'something extraordinary' he proposes will serve to demonstrate his new-model courage and prove that his rejection of the duel is not based on cowardice. The question becomes whether a man like Hargrave can survive the loss of performable masculinity when "such is the world, such is the custom" (vol. I, p. 243).

The scene that ensues consciously evokes the New Testament and Christ with his disciples. In the book of Matthew, as Christ prepares his disciples to go into the world, he uses the metaphor of the sword to show that his religious teachings would cause a rupture with custom, with public opinion: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword."<sup>114</sup> The rupture with custom and public opinion will demand courage from those willing to break away from tradition. Like Christ, Grandison enters into an extended conversation with a group of men on the subject of breaking with convention. Present are Hargrave and three of his friends, all aristocrats and libertines, but Mr. Bagenhall is a Roman Catholic, Mr. Merceda is Jewish and Mr. Jordan is unspecified, assumedly protestant. Mr Jordan expresses their predicament as 'men of honour': "We all acknowledge duelling to be criminal: But no one has the courage to break through a bad custom" (vol. I, p. 256). Grandison is there to model the new behaviour for them.

Throughout the conversation, Hargrave is relentless in his desire to obtain satisfaction, to force Grandison to perform his role. Hargrave greets him at the door with pistols: "If you are a *man*, Sir Charles Grandison, take your choice of one of these pistols", Grandison replies: "As I AM a *man*, Sir Hargrave, I will *not*" (vol. I, p. 250). In a moment of drama, Grandison takes the two loaded pistols and fires them out the open window in order to prevent Hargrave from taking rash measures. Hargrave's friends are quickly won over by Grandison's coolness and his steady message: I will not fight. I will not apologise. A man is a man of honour only if he *lives* honourably. Merceda says: "He has won me to his side. By the great God of Heaven, I had rather have Sir Charles Grandison for my friend than the greatest Prince on earth" (vol. I, p. 252)! Still Hargrave will not relent. He urges Grandison to walk with him to the bottom of the garden. Grandison places his sword on the table as he accepts. Hargrave insists that he put it on again. Once in the garden,

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<sup>114</sup> Matthew 10: 34-38.

Hargrave draws his sword and the men enact a pantomime of a duel, Grandison seeming to put a spell on Hargrave:

Sir Charles then calmly stepping towards him, put down Sir Hargrave's sword with his hand, and put his left-arm under Sir Hargrave's sword-arm. Sir Hargrave lifted up the other arm passionately: But Sir Charles, who was on his guard, immediately laid hold of the other arm, and seemed to say something mildly to him; and letting go his left-hand, led him towards the house; his drawn sword still in his hand (vol. I, p. 253).

When they re-enter the house, Hargrave throws his sword to the floor. He finally relents. Again Richardson has represented an alternative duel—a model that requires perhaps more courage and skill than an actual duel.

Grandison's exceptionality is continually highlighted. Hargrave's friends wish to know if Grandison has ever been afraid and if he has ever drawn in a duel. He demonstrates that it is possible to avoid a duel even in Italy, the home of the duel of honour, where, Grandison tells them, he was extremely provoked, having been boxed on the ear.

*Mr. Mer.* And *did* you draw, Sir?

*Mr. Bag.* To be sure, you *then* drew?

*Mr. Jor.* Pray, Sir Charles, let us know. You could not *help* drawing? This was a provocation that would justify a Saint.

*Sir Ch.* He had forgot, in that passionate moment, that *he* was a gentleman. I did not remember that *I* was one. But I had no occasion to draw.

*Sir Har.* What a plague—You did not cane him?

*Sir Ch.* He got well after a fortnight's lying-by.

*Sir Har.* Damnation! (vol. I, p. 259)

This is another attempt by Richardson to propagandise for the use of the cane as a gentleman's weapon. Grandison's challenger had been injured badly enough to require two weeks bed rest, but he was still alive and Grandison's honour was intact. When Grandison leaves Hargrave's home the men are full of admiration and praise; "Yet his maxims, they said, were confoundedly strange; impracticable for such sorry dogs as them (that was their phrase) to practise" (vol. I, p. 268). Finally, Grandison's exceptionality proves to be *too* exceptional. Only one of these men—Jordan—turns over a new leaf, but

to do so he must shun his circle of friends. The other three men are dead by the end of the novel. Hargrave dies of malaise, unable to adjust to Grandison's domination, unable to perform the only masculinity that gave his life coherence.

Richardson's focus was to model the new man, the "Character and Actions of a Man of True Honour" (vol. I, p. 4). In order to achieve this while also making his masculinity performative, Richardson made Grandison, like Christ, beyond emulation. He addressed this problem in the "Concluding Note by the Editor" in which he attempts to dispel some of the early criticism that was levelled against Grandison. One critic stated, "Sir Charles's Strength and Skill in the Management of Weapons, excluded from the Benefit of his Example all of those who were defective in either" (vol III, p. 464). Richardson rejects this arguing that Grandison "performs no one action which it is not in the power of any man in his situation *to* perform" (vol. III, p. 464), a disingenuous position to adopt with Grandison having had one-to-one martial arts instruction from the age of twelve. Another critic did not believe that a man such as Grandison could extricate himself from challenges and still retain his honour. Richardson counters that the problem is with the conception of honour itself which was "evidently an absurd and mischievous one, and yet multitudes are at a loss to get over it" (vol. III, p. 464). He states his belief that it will be by the example of people who consistently decline challenges through principle—but not through fear—that a change will gradually take hold. He imagines some future point in which, "vulgar notions will insensibly wear out; and more ground be gained by degrees, than could have been attempted with hope of success, at once; till at length all may come to stand on the firm footing of reason and religion" (vol. III, pp. 464-65). Both Rousseau and Richardson hoped for a change in public opinion while realising that public opinion moved of its own accord.

In a contemporary and increasingly domestic setting, it was not realistic that Grandison should be presented with continual opportunities to perform his masculinity (to exert his superiority) though risks to his existence. A sub-theme emerges that will exempt Grandison from physical (and moral) threat: the gradual retreat into private life. This message becomes amplified in volume III when Grandison and Harriet prepare to marry and set up their home at Grandison's country estate. Grandison tells Harriet:

My chief glory will be, to behave commendably in the private life. I wish not to be a public man; and it must be a very particular call, for the Service of my King and Country united, that shall draw me into public notice (vol. III, p. 99).

Richardson achieves the domestication of a man from the ancient nobility, he is now a civilian. Freed from the burden of a public performative masculinity, ensconced in his home, Grandison's sword will be a relic of a kind of man who no longer exists.

## Conclusion

Anti-duelling feeling manifested itself in the literature of mid to late eighteenth-century Britain and France, even in literary works by landmark writers such as Rousseau and Richardson. Despite this (largely middle class) force, duelling did not die in the eighteenth century and the duel and the point of honour would go on to transfer their association from the sword to the pistol. Historian Stephen Banks writes:

Until the 1760s pistols were not commonly used in British duels [...]. A period of transition followed in the 1770s, during which time swords were still deployed, but as secondary weapons. [...] After 1780, however, swords were rarely deployed.<sup>115</sup>

For centuries intrinsically tied to the sword, disputing the point of honour was not *dependant* on the sword. Banks points out that the move to pistols was 'democratising' because firearms did not require years of expensive, specialist training to master. Despite this, he argues, there was no taint of dishonour attached to their use. Some duellists even wrote that the pistol removed the embarrassment that came from sword fights of mixed ability. Duelling in Britain would end in the mid-nineteenth century and in France it would persist until the early twentieth century, describing its demise Stephen Banks explains: "In general terms it remains correct to say that whereas the English duel remained extremely dangerous right up until the moment that it disappeared, the French [...] duels continued but grew ever safer."<sup>116</sup> The French duel even became an object of parody, so loathe were the combatants to actually draw blood.

The transfer from sword to pistols was not, I argue, a direct substitute. Importantly, duelling pistols were not worn on the body. Men would cease to walk the streets armed with an ancient symbol of masculine honour. Richardson was prescient in his propagandization of the staff; the gentleman's walking stick was coming into vogue and could equally be used as a weapon of self-defence. A Lieutenant Colonel Baron de Beaufain wrote a self-defence manual in 1835 in which he asserted: "Prolix as my directions, in reference to so homely and so common a weapon, may have appeared to you, I can assure you that *your life may depend upon the toughness of your stick.*"<sup>117</sup> The concept of the 'democratising' powers of pistols indicates another way in which the transfer from sword to firearms was not an equal exchange. If pistols are a weapon that any man can use, this

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<sup>115</sup> Stephen Banks, *A Polite Exchange of Bullets: The Duel and the English Gentleman 1750-1850* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), p. 126.

<sup>116</sup> Stephen Banks, *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>117</sup> Charles Random de Bérenger, Baron de Beaufain, *Helps and Hints and how to protect life and property. With instructions in rifle and pistol shooting, etc.* (London: 1835), p. 118.

runs counter to gentry masculinity whose elite status had been defined by the use of a weapon requiring skill acquired over years of dedicated practice. The sword was now left with no practical purpose—an anachronistic encumbrance on the battlefield and a duelling weapon that proved too demanding in comparison to its modern competitor. The sword was left to become pure symbol. What would it symbolise?

The power of this object to contain a symbolism beyond its actual use as a military weapon is the subject of a chapter in Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768). The chapter is called 'The Sword' and the English narrator witnesses a spectacle in Brittany. The Marquis d'E\*\*\*\* is the head of an aristocratic family of ancient origin who have fallen into dissolution and financial hardship. The Marquis wanted to show the world "some little fragments of what his ancestors had been—[before] their indiscretions had put it out of their power."<sup>118</sup> The Marquis first tried to re-establish the family's position through military service: "He had tried his sword" (p. 68). This sword, the family sword, likely earned the family its nobility, but military service opens no path for him because he has no fortune with which to mount a regiment. Ultimately, he explains, "there was no resource but commerce" (p. 68).

Commerce is a path normally forbidden to the aristocracy, and indeed the narrator says that in any other region of France, this would have brought dishonour. In Brittany, however, the narrator says there is provision for this. On the date that the states are assembled at the court in Rennes, the Marquis arrives with his two sons. "Having pleaded the right of an ancient law of the duchy, which, though seldom claimed, he said, was no less in force; he took his sword from his side—Here, said he, take it; and be trusty guardians of it, till better times put me in condition to reclaim it" (p. 68). The president presides as the sword is deposited in the archives. Through this ceremony, the 'nobility' of the family d'E\*\*\*\* is contained within the sword, which is then encased in an archive; nobility safeguarded against the taint of commerce.

Twenty years later the Marquis and his family return from Martinico, wealthy again through "successful application to business" and some unexpected family bequests. The Marquis has "returned home to reclaim his nobility and to support it" (p. 68). The whole family enters the court at Rennes.

His sword was given him, and the moment he got it into his hand he drew it almost out of the scabbard—'twas the shining face of a friend he had once given up—he looked attentively along it, beginning at the hilt, as if to see whether it was the

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<sup>118</sup> Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey and Other Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 67-68.

same—when observing a little rust which it had contracted near the point, he brought it near his eye, and bending his head down over it, I think I saw a tear fall upon the place: I could not be deceived by what followed. ‘I shall find’, said he, ‘some other way to get it off’ (pp. 68-69).

The Marquis is reunited with his family’s ‘nobility’ but it is marred through neglect. What ‘other way’ is there to remove the rust? The Marquis is unable to resolve the discrepancy between an ancient conception of nobility and his eighteenth-century status as an ‘aristocrat’ with no channel for reinvigorating his nobility, no vehicle with which to perform the style of masculinity that had defined his class. The Marquis’ sons now have the financial means to mount regiments and serve their country with glory, but they have spent their formative years as colonial businessmen. What is reified in this sword is an ancient form of masculinity which is ceasing to be performable.

In the eighteenth century it became difficult to represent the sword as anything but symbol or sign. There developed an inverse relationship: the more useless the sword became as an actual object, the greater the symbolism attached to the object. Equally, the location of the symbolism would be sought in ancient history, before the Renaissance, to a time when its use was associated with selfless causes. If ‘the sword’ was the signifier, the signified became an ancient conception of masculine and military nobility that had nothing to do with material wealth. Judith Butler contends that “gender is always a doing.” For the nobleman, the ‘doing’ of gender had once been performed, as Doubrovsky describes, in reaction to risks to his physical existence, a performance that earned his class’s hegemonic status. The duel permitted this practice to continue in a ritualistic fashion. Apart from the duel, how could the upper classes prove *in action* that their prerogatives were still justifiable? This is a question that will be raised by the representations of aristocratic military officers that appear throughout this dissertation; they are positioned in literature which announces the increasing influence of middle class morality with the rise of sensibility and the concomitant redirection of male violence. In contrast to physical superiority, sensibility offered the “new mark of moral superiority.”<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France, 1740-1789: fact, fiction and political discourse* (Geneva: Droz, 1985), p. 67

## Chapter Two: The Young Men in a Military Profession

J'ai toujours ouï dire que rien n'était si difficile que le choix d'un état ; je l'éprouvai alors, un jeune homme flotte longtemps avant que se décider.<sup>120</sup>

### Introduction

This is a chapter in which considerations of class intersect with the dynastic realm. While class concerns might seem remote in an epoch in which states would wage war over disputes within the Holy Roman Empire, the novels that form the basis of this chapter, all published during or shortly after the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), display an awareness that can be called 'class consciousness'; their young protagonists recognize their position within the social hierarchy, a status used pointedly for purposes of social critique. The citation above, from the 'bon bourgeois' narrator of Claude Godard d'Aucourt's novel *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes*, reflects the apparent freedom of a young man to choose his path in life rather than accept his lot or birthright. The choice of 'un état' is illusory, however, if the choice itself is impossible to attain. The works studied in this chapter use contemporary military service to present men who are not only young, but new to literature, hybrids mixing class awareness with military aspirations.

The anonymously authored novel *The Life and Memoirs of Mr. Ephraim Tristram Bates, Commonly Called Corporal Bates, a Broken-hearted Soldier* appeared eight years after the end of the War of the Austrian Succession but was set in the years preceding that war. Displaying what Carol Watts describes as "an acute feeling of class inequality," the novel is bluntly moralising and didactic and will help to set out the elements that comprise this chapter: male youth, articulation of class position, family versus individual aspirations, and the world of work as a vehicle for aspirations.<sup>121</sup> The novel is a posthumous account of a soldier unable to rise to the rank of officer because he has no fortune with which to buy a commission. Indeed, he makes it a principle that he would rise by merit alone: "I will rise

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<sup>120</sup> Claude Godard d'Aucourt, *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (Lausanne : Marc-Michel Bousquet & Comp, 1745), p. 7.

<sup>121</sup> Carol Watts, *The Cultural Work of Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p. 2007), p. 70. Watts notes that the novel appeared three years before Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, some arguing that the former was an influence on Sterne's novel: "the number of coincidences make it seem likely": Ibid.

by Merit, says Bates, yet; and have a Contempt for all Purchasers, but those who purchase by spilling their Blood for their Country, or good Behaviour in private Life at home.”<sup>122</sup> Bates, an only son, is more-or-less middling class: a mother of high birth but with no fortune and a father of low birth but who had wealth. His family oppose his military aspirations (preferring him to become a vicar or scholar) and his wealthy godparents refuse to buy him a commission. Military service is the only vehicle through which Bates believes he can realize his self-conception; and because of his education, upbringing, and self-esteem, this must be a place in the officer class. He allows himself to be recruited as an ordinary soldier believing this will be a temporary state of affairs, announcing to his family “it was high Time to have a Gentleman and a Soldier in the Family” (p. 29). Bates’ superior officer, known simply as ‘the Colonel,’ calls Bates “my all-worthy Capt. Merit” and declares “in any Country but this, that [Bates] stood fair to be a great Officer” (pp. 120-21). Captain is the rank of an officer, a status that Bates never attains before his premature death of heartbreak after failure to be selected for a regiment to serve in the war that has just broken out. Having spent his entire life preparing for the role of officer through self-imposed training, study and hardship, the novel seeks to demonstrate that merit goes unrecognised in a class-based society.

*Ephraim Tristram Bates* introduces two terms that are of importance to this chapter: merit and the subaltern. Merit was deployed in opposition to terms of hierarchy such as glory and honour. Honouring creates distinctions traditionally bestowed on men of the upper classes whereas merit offers the promise of equality of opportunity. A meritocracy exists where each individual can manifest their ability through achievement. Since merit is necessarily an attainable quality, it generates competition: so many young men of merit in contention in the venue in which their merit might find recognition: the work place. In *Ephraim Tristram Bates*, merit is demonstrated through Bates’ devotion to his chosen profession, in contrast to the indifference and venality of the aristocracy who have a stranglehold on the officer class. In the military, a subaltern officer is a commissioned officer below the rank of captain, such as a lieutenant. Subaltern officers would have achieved this rank by merit (and never advanced further) or used the small amount of money they had to buy this rank (and again, never advanced further). As a corporal, Bates does not even achieve this rank, though he becomes the target of suspicious subaltern officers because of his evident merit, testimony to the competition for these coveted places.

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<sup>122</sup> Anonymous, *The Life and Memoirs of Mr. Ephraim Tristram Bates, a Broken-hearted Soldier* (London: J. Warcus, 1759), p. 122.

In addition to *Emphraim Tristram Bates*, the word subaltern will appear in three of the four works that are the focus of this chapter. The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1762) includes a definition of *subalterne*:

Qui est subordonné à quelqu'un, qui est sous quelqu'un. En termes de guerre, on appelle *Officier subalterne*, un officier qui est sous un autre Officier, comme un Lieutenant sous un Capitaine.<sup>123</sup>

The word subaltern is now frequently associated with post-colonial theory and refers to a shift toward re-writing national histories 'from below,' giving voice to the subaltern: the oppressed subject of empire. Post-colonial theory appropriated the word from Antonio Gramsci, who had in turn borrowed it from the military hierarchy. In his *Prison Notebooks* (written between 1929 and 1935) Gramsci uses subaltern to articulate an identity located within class struggle. Describing the subaltern as a non-hegemonic class, he writes that their "history is intertwined with that of civil society, and thereby with the history of States and groups of States."<sup>124</sup> Delineating, for example, the position of the 'urban intellectual,' he explains "their function can be compared to that of subaltern officers in the army. They have no autonomous initiative in elaborating plans for construction."<sup>125</sup> Gramsci describes a class that keeps the wheels of civil society turning but which will never have real power unless it unifies and relinquishes the goal of attaining hegemonic status within the ruling class. The question he poses is whether, as a class, they possess consciousness of their subalternity. In this chapter, the ubiquity of merit serves instead to create competition among members of the subaltern class, preventing political unity.

The conflict between the drive for a more meritocratic society and the resistance of the old elite is demonstrated by the creation of two institutions that neatly bookend the period under discussion: the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich in 1741 and the *École royale militaire* in Paris in 1751. Both institutions were created to promote greater professionalisation, but both were accessible only to the aristocracy. These conflicts are reflected in the works that form the basis of this chapter: *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Malte, ou, Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur de \*\*\** (1741)<sup>126</sup> by Prévost ; *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (1745-46) by Claude Godard d'Aucourt ;

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<sup>123</sup> *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française, 4th (1762)*, University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project (Spring 2013 Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedia.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>124</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), p. 202.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>126</sup> Abbé Prévost, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Malte, ou, Histoire de la jeunesse du commandeur de \*\*\** (Paris : Éditions Flammarion, 2005).

*The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748)<sup>127</sup> by Tobias Smollett ; and *Amelia* (1751)<sup>128</sup> by Henry Fielding.

Two concepts help to demonstrate how the man of merit attempts to make a career in the military: recruitment and recompense. Recruitment asks who can be recruited, how, and for what role. Recompense asks what reward could compensate a man for his (voluntary) recruitment. The officer, by and large a member of the aristocracy, was not recruited; he was born into the privileges of the officer class. The ordinary sailor or soldier lived an acknowledged life of hardship that few would willingly choose. As described in the introduction to this study, André Corvisier cites the ‘facteurs négatifs’ that induce young men to join the military as an ordinary sailor or soldier. This is a point echoed by M.S Anderson who explains that “voluntary or quasi-voluntary recruiting drew only on the poorest, the most marginal, the least economically valuable elements in society,” a situation which suited the state who was “only too glad to see such undesirables removed from civilian life and sent to fight for a society to which they could make no other positive contribution.”<sup>129</sup> The great military leader, Maurice de Saxe (1696-1750) was unhappy with this class schism in the military and its impact not only on military performance, but on the quality of men generally. Writing about the composition of the army in his posthumously published memoirs *Mes Rêveries*, he complained:

Quel spectacle nous présentent aujourd’hui les nations? On voit quelques hommes riches, oisifs & voluptueux qui font leur bonheur aux dépens d’une multitude qui flatte leurs passions & qui ne peuvent subsister qu’en leur préparant sans cesse de nouvelles voluptés. Cet assemblage d’hommes oppresseurs & opprimés forme ce qu’on appelle la Société, & cette Société rassemble ce qu’elle a de plus vile & de plus méprisable & en fait ses Soldats. Ce n’est pas avec de pareils mœurs ni avec de pareils bras que les Romains ont vaincus l’univers.<sup>130</sup>

The status of the ordinary sailor or soldier is too abject to inflate with a great deal of professional status and the elite officer class disdains professionalisation, a usurpation of its birthright, but the subaltern represents an attempt to squeeze a new class stratum based on merit between that of the lowly soldier or sailor and the military elite. Demonstrable merit can bring recognition through the appropriation of professionalism—its language, its specialisms, its devotion to duty. Professional status can offer the abstract recompense of what could be called ‘personal pride’. Recognition of merit is a relational act, demanding that it be recognised by others and, subsequently, esteemed and

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<sup>127</sup> Tobias Smollett, *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (London: Penguin, 1995).

<sup>128</sup> Henry Fielding, *Amelia* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987).

<sup>129</sup> M.S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 33.

<sup>130</sup> Maurice comte de Saxe, *Les Rêveries, ou, Mémoires sur l’art de la guerre* (A La Haye : Chez Pierre Gosse, 1756), p. 8.

compensated. The struggle to rise by merit took place in a world in which the elite classes were the gatekeepers to actual rewards and hegemonic status. Historian Ian Roy points out that the belief in aristocratic superiority in military leadership “would resound, like the echo of a remote past, long after the physical presence of most members of the aristocracy was no longer actually required on the battlefield, and the task of command in war had passed to those better qualified by training and merit than by birth alone.”<sup>131</sup>

In addition to professional status, the question of whether patriotism can serve as motivation to the non-elite military man is posed by the novels that form the focus of this chapter. As noted in the introduction to this study, two battles of the War of the Austrian Succession became celebrated, a phenomenon explained by the presence of the kings on the battlefield at the Battle of Dettingen (1743) and the Battle of Fontenoy (1745). What this presence meant to military men is explored in Godard d’Aucourt’s *Académie militaire* and Smollett’s *Roderick Random*. In the former, published on the heels of Fontenoy, the narrator, an ordinary French soldier and participant in the battle, recounts the inspirational force provided by Louis’ presence: “Que sa vûe nous inspira de Courage, que sa noble fermeté nous donna d’espérance ! J’ai recueilli les voix de toute l’Armée, il n’était pas un soldat qui n’estimait heureux de répandre son sang pour un si grand Roi.”<sup>132</sup> Here, ordinary soldiers are willing to spill their blood not specifically for *la Patrie*, but for their king, the talismanic presence representing the ‘idea of nation’. The contrast can be found in *Roderick Random* at Dettingen in a conversation between the British hero, Rory (serving with the French army), and an ordinary French soldier. Professing to fight for the ‘glory of the prince’ was to profess oneself, Rory argues, a “desperate slave, who voluntarily underwent the utmost wretchedness and peril.”<sup>133</sup> The French soldier urges Rory to “correct the rebellious principles [he] had imbibed among the English, who, for their insolence to their kings were notorious all over the world.”<sup>134</sup> Smollett, although acknowledging George’s presence at the head of the army and his ‘royal clemency’, uses Dettingen less as a platform for the glorification of the British king, than as a vehicle for the scrutiny of French subjection, portraying the French soldiers as victims of their blind idolatry.

To understand how considerations of class intersect with the dynastic realm is to attempt to understand why men would risk their lives for causes which are overtly devoid

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<sup>131</sup> Ian Roy, ‘The Profession of Arms’, *The Professions in Early Modern England*, ed. Wilfrid Prest (Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd., 1987), p. 184.

<sup>132</sup> Claude Godard d’Aucourt, *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>133</sup> Smollett, *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

of any consideration for their ordinary lives. M.S. Anderson maintains that the War of the Austrian Succession was “the last great Anglo-French struggle, at least before the French Revolution, in which colonial rivalries were clearly subordinate to events in Europe.”<sup>135</sup> The “events in Europe” concerned the Holy Roman Empire and ancient alliances between illustrious and powerful families.<sup>136</sup> For one dynasty, the Habsburgs, “government was a family business.”<sup>137</sup> But the Hohenzollern family was likewise amassing the power to create an increasingly strong Prussia. One of its members, young Frederick II of Prussia, emerged onto the European stage in this war. He was son of the ‘soldier king’ Frederick William I, a brutal man who terrorised the son who disappointed him. At age eighteen Frederick had suffered the trauma of witnessing the execution of his friend (and possible lover) Hans Hermann von Katte, who had tried to help him escape his father. Notably, the soldier king, who had built up a large and well-disciplined army, had never *started* a war and through rigid economic controls had left behind a financial stockpile. The patriarch died in May of 1740 and in a gesture of filial defiance, the son invaded Silesia (the richest province of the Habsburg Empire) and started spending the stockpile in December of that very year. The son of the soldier king had tried to escape his birthright, but eventually not only submitted to his fate, he became one of history’s most celebrated military leaders.

The causes disputed in these wars seem very remote from the everyday lives of the soldiers who fought them, a dimension given attention in the novels that form the focus of this chapter. This is exemplified in *Ephraim Tristram Bates* which performs one final sleight of hand, illustrating the personal dimension to a soldier’s expected rewards. While appearing through the course of the novel to be celibate, we learn after his death that Bates had a wife and twin sons who he kept lodged separately, providing for them through work as a maths tutor. The marriage was to be kept secret until he attained his commission because of “the received Opinion that a Soldier should never marry” (p. 231). The ultimate recompense desired by the man of merit is that of romantic love, family, hearth and home, a reward not traditionally allowed the lower ranking soldier or sailor. Historians Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack explain that in the eighteenth century “soldiers were expected to remain bachelors throughout their careers;” they could have

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<sup>135</sup> M.S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 3.

<sup>136</sup> In October, 1740 Charles VI, Holy Roman Emperor and head of the Habsburg dynasty died leaving no male heir. Anticipating this problem, he devised the solution of the Pragmatic Sanction of 1713—a decree allowing for a daughter to rule the Archduchy of Austria even though Salic law prohibited female succession. Charles obtained the agreement of the European powers to this arrangement. Upon his death twenty seven years later, France, Prussia, Bavaria and Saxony reneged on their promises and contested the claims of his daughter Maria Theresa to rule Austrian lands. Less than two months after Charles’ death Frederick II invaded the affluent territory of Silesia, a Habsburg territory, with his well-trained army and conquered it in a matter of six weeks.

<sup>137</sup> Wilson, *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

sweethearts, but marriage was frowned upon.<sup>138</sup> Linch and McCormack highlight the conflict that this posed for the soldier:

This was a period when full masculinity was founded upon being a father, husband, and householder, and furthermore when political citizenship came to be associated with the attainment of this domestic masculinity (p. 155).

The work of the soldier imposed a demand which no longer seemed reasonable, actually blocking his access to full participation in society and even full masculinity. The novels studied in this chapter will test the proposition of how far it is possible to advance in society in a profession; they will also test whether a 'job' is capable of providing an individual with identity. The young men take pride in saying "I am an officer," partly because they achieve this not just against the oppression from above, but also because of the enormous competition from within their own class position.

### **The Creation of Hybrid Genres**

Hybrid themes demanded hybrid genres. The subject of young men testing the limits of professionalism in works that were published in the period surrounding the War of the Austrian Succession brings together works that are generically disparate. Prévost, Godard d'Aucourt, Smollett and Fielding were attempting social critique in the nascent genre of the eighteenth-century novel as it sought its place in the eighteenth-century push-pull between high and low genres, between moral exemplarity and entertainment. These authors were testing the limits of genre. Writing of the reader response to Prévost's *Histoire de la jeunesse du Commandeur de \*\*\**, Shelly Charles explains that "le lecteur se trouve devant des narrateurs qui ne sollicitent plus son empathie et le laissent souvent perplexe devant un projet d'écriture qui a perdu ses prétentions morales."<sup>139</sup> Michael Irwin argues that Fielding's *Amelia* was "trying about a century too soon, to write a realistic, socially-reformative novel, [therefore, Fielding] was not only straining the formal literary machine beyond its powers: he was ensuring incomprehension and commercial failure."<sup>140</sup> *Roderick Random* and *L'Académie militaire* were not unsuccessful, in part

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<sup>138</sup> Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack, 'Defining Soldiers: Britain's Military, c. 1740-1815,' *War in History* 20 (2013), p. 154. There were soldiers with wives who came with their husbands on campaign (a practice alluded to in *Roderick Random*, *L'Académie militaire*, *Amelia* and *Tristram Shandy*), but for wives who stayed at home "there was no formal means of financial support": p. 154.

<sup>139</sup> Shelly Charles, review of *Les Expériences romanesques de Prévost après 1740* by Erik Leborgne and Jean-Paul Sermain in *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, 105e Année, No. 2, Avril-Juin 2005, Presses Universitaires de France, pp. 440-442.

<sup>140</sup> Michael Irwin, *Henry Fielding: the Tentative Realist* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 114, p. 134.

perhaps because both employed elements of picaresque, a genre associated with satire. The theme of youth demands the consideration of the picaresque, the chivalric romance, and the incipient *Bildungsroman*, genres centred on youth. To the extent that the novels in this chapter engage with a nascent ‘realism’—which they do—they use specifically contemporary military service as the means by which the young men engage with possibilities.

Prévost’s *La Jeunesse du Commandeur de \*\*\** is a true generic oddity or hybrid. The ‘hero’, a chevalier in the Order of Malta, writes from the vantage point of an older man, having attained the rank of Commandeur. Never named, he describes the events he narrates as “les aventures de ma jeunesse.” Adventures and membership in a chivalric order lead to comparisons with the chivalric romance, in which a young hero found the truest and noblest expression of his innate qualities through martial valour in service to others. But Prévost’s novel was part of a trilogy that represented a sea-change in the author’s career, what Laurence Viglieno describes as the “refus du romanesque.”<sup>141</sup> Shelly Charles, who explains that Prévost had demonstrated a fledgling realism in his 1731 masterpiece *Manon Lescaut*, contends that a mirroring took place between this 1740-41 trilogy and his works from the previous decade, a “mise en parallèle.”<sup>142</sup> Where *Manon Lescaut*’s chevalier des Grieux was a chevalier de Malte who does not formalize his ties, the chevalier of *La Jeunesse* seals his ties to the Order at the outset. Prévost’s new style engenders a kind of realism that is disconcerting, the sort of ‘adventures’ (in other words, violence) which a reader was accustomed to absorbing with a heavy dose of glorification, are delivered raw. One way in which Prévost will achieve this unsettling ‘realism’ is through the use of the Order of Malta as it existed in the eighteenth century as it attempted to position itself as a modern profession.

Smollett’s *Roderick Random* is another novel that has been labelled picaresque, but David Blewitt argues that *Roderick Random* differs from the picaresque in its tone, “which has none of the cheerful cynicism of the continental models that permits the hero his detached and ironic attitude to the world—the lack of moral commitment that is the essence of his freedom.”<sup>143</sup> The picaresque genre traditionally features a young ‘hero’ cast out into the world, trying out identities, surviving by his wits. The word ‘realism’ has been applied to the means by which the picaresque depicts a variety of social classes, subjects

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<sup>141</sup> Laurence Viglieno, ‘Montcal, Le Refus du Romanesque, ou L’Anti-Cédipe’, *Les Expériences romanesques de Prévost après 1740*, eds. Erik Leborgne and Jean-Paul Sermain (Louvain & Paris : Éditions Peeters, 2003), pp. 33-51.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> David Blewitt, ed., *Roderick Random* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. xiii.

thought too 'low' for the romance. In the traditional picaresque, this is not psychological realism and little character development is in evidence; the hero recounts his adventures in a first person narration with a display of insouciance untroubled by morality. A model is offered by Alain René Lesage's decidedly picaresque *Gil Blas*, published between 1715 and 1735, which Smollett translated and published in the same year as *Roderick Random*.<sup>144</sup> The 'picaro' (rogue)—the hero of the Spanish and French tradition is of low birth whereas Smollett tells us that he gives to his hero "the advantages of birth and education."<sup>145</sup> In Smollett's novel, the hero moralizes throughout the novel and indeed, the scenes that replicate his personal experiences as a naval surgeon at the Battle of Cartagena appear to be a platform for the venting of moral outrage.

Claude Godard d'Aucourt's *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes*, the most picaresque of the novels in this chapter, shares certain traits of the genre, but not all. Importantly, instead of moving from job to job, after the hero decides on a career in the military, he applies himself assiduously. The 'hero,' Claude Pichon, describes his class position and that of all his milieu as bourgeois: "nous sommes nés dans un Rang qui semble condamné à l'obscurité; il faut devenir tout-à-fait scélérat, & brûler des Temples pour laisser un nom fameux ; étranges extrémités ! Quel sort plus triste que celui d'un honnête & simple Bourgeois" (p. 2). Pichon is the son of a Parisian shopkeeper, his comrades are sons of a lawyer, a city merchant, a decorative painter. In the poem Pichon writes to celebrate the French victory at the Battle of Fontenoy (a satirical re-writing of Voltaire's ode to the same battle), the brave soldiers are, to name a few, the son of a master tailor, the son of a *fleuriste de Provins*, the son of a cognac merchant. Godard D'Aucourt has employed a narrow and distinct reading of 'bourgeois' as a class position, as notes historian André Corvisier:

Il est à noter que ces héros, appartiennent à une petite bourgeoisie ou à une élite populaire urbaine, curieusement assez proche de ce que sera la 'Sans-culotterie' décrite par Albert Soboul. Qu'on en juge. Ce sont les mêmes milieux sociaux que les académiciens, artisanat, marchandise, petits emplois de robe courte, basoche, [...] Aucun paysan, aucun journalier ou gagne-denier n'apparaissent dans la liste. Tous sont citadins, plus de la moitié sont parisiens. Ils ne sont pas issus des milieux les plus frustes.<sup>146</sup>

In other words, it is not perfectly obvious that these young men should have sought their fortunes as ordinary soldiers in the army when they could have followed in the footsteps

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<sup>144</sup> Smollett also published a translation of *Don Quixote* in 1755. *Roderick Random* was translated into French in 1761.

<sup>145</sup> Tobias Smollett, Preface, *Roderick Random* (London: J. Osborn, 1748), p. viii.

<sup>146</sup> André Corvisier, 'Les 'héros subalternes' dans la littérature du milieu du XVIIIe siècle et la réhabilitation du militaire', *Revue du Nord* 66 (1984), p. 837

of their productive fathers. Now fallen into obscurity, in its day the novel was significant enough to bring about multiple re-prints and to be the source of a successful stage adaptation. Corvisier credits the courtier Godard d'Aucourt with having put the expression 'subaltern heroes' into common parlance in the mid-eighteenth century, making us wonder if this suggested some moral commitment on the part of its supremely well-connected aristocratic author.<sup>147</sup>

A consideration of the elements that comprise the *Bildungsroman* will help to inform the study of the generic shifts in both Fielding's *Amelia* and Smollett's *Roderick Random*, as well as revealing national differences and early changes to man's relationship to the world of work. In his classic study of the *Bildungsroman*, Franco Moretti identifies a schism between the "classical *Bildungsroman*" and the "English *Bildungsroman*." In continental Europe's classical *Bildungsroman*, announced by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (1795-96), the young 'hero' attempts to negotiate the dilemma created by "modern bourgeois civilization: the conflict between the ideal of *self-determination* and the equally imperious demands of *socialization*."<sup>148</sup> These two oppositions create the formula that mark out the genre: "the classical *Bildungsroman* plot posits 'happiness' as the highest value, but only to the detriment and eventual annulment of 'freedom'."<sup>149</sup> The renunciation of freedom is always demonstrated through marriage.

The British novel took a different course from its continental counterparts because it had not directly experienced the French Revolution and its own seventeenth-century "bourgeois revolution" led to a culture of stability and conformity.<sup>150</sup> British society was at once more traditional and socially codified *and* heavily invested in the symbolic legitimacy of the law and the concomitant interest in the display of justice, which is, in theory, blind to class status. These factors led to narratives in which an injustice forces a young person into a journey of exile or flight. This mobility was not so much the opportunity for trying on new identities as it was a journey that was always meant to come full circle with the 'hero' being recognised for who he truly was all along, at which point the legal system will provide him (through discovered identities or the revelation of suppressed wills) with an inheritance. Moretti names this the "recognition-inheritance pattern" and argues that though "virtually non-existent in European narrative," it is "the most typical form of the

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<sup>147</sup> "Claude Godard d'Aucourt est vraisemblablement l'inventeur de l'expression [les héros subalternes]. Au moins, c'est lui qui l'a popularisé": *Ibid.*, p. 828.

<sup>148</sup> Franco Moretti, *The Way of the World, The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (London: Verso, 1987), p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

English happy end.”<sup>151</sup> The effect this pattern has on representation is, as Moretti points out, to dilute the hero’s bourgeois characteristics (or heighten his aristocratic qualities) so that he will be seen to correspond to the role which always awaited him. In addition, the ventures which he attempts on his journey must not succeed too well, since these ‘identities’ were never meant for him. The recognition-inheritance pattern will manifest itself in both *Roderick Random* and *Amelia*, though neither is a typical English *Bildungsroman*; *Roderick Random* is too trenchant and *Amelia* is too avant-garde. Fielding based *Amelia* on the *Aeneid*, even copying the *Aeneid*’s twelve-book structure, using the influence of the Epic to tell a very modern story of a young man from the middling class. Peter Sabor explains that Fielding’s *Amelia*, his last and most serious novel, is noted for its experimental qualities both in its initial reception and today.<sup>152</sup>

Moretti’s analysis of the emergence of the *Bildungsroman* identifies a correlation between society and culture and will return us to the theme of this chapter: young men stepping forward for military service in the mid-eighteenth century and the recompense they hoped to receive. Moretti contends that fundamental changes within society changed the relationship of a man to the world he lived in and demanded the birth of a new genre to express the change. Among these changes was the disintegration of “status society” (akin to Connell’s description of the ‘splitting of gentry masculinity’ defined in chapter one of this study); large numbers of people abandoning the country for the city; and vast and rapid changes to the world of work.<sup>153</sup> The new social and geographic mobility meant the negation of “the slow and unpredictable progress toward one’s father’s work” and created new possibilities.<sup>154</sup> New genres had to determine what symbolic value they would accord the place of work in everyday life.

Surprisingly perhaps, given its link to the normalization of bourgeois values, the “*Bildungsroman* conspicuously places the process of formation-socialization outside the world of work.”<sup>155</sup> Moretti posits some suppositions as to why this should be: the novel likes to finish with an integrated happy closure whereas capitalism is always in movement, changing and growing; the novel likes to achieve wholeness and belonging but the professional world demands a fragmentation of the individual. The new world of work

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<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.* p. 205.

<sup>152</sup> Peter Sabor, ‘Amelia’, *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, ed. Claude Rawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Sabor explains: “Amelia has been the subject, in recent decades, of many incisive articles and chapters in books’ its experimental qualities make it attractive to critics of both the development of the eighteenth-century novel and the trajectory of Fielding’s career”: p. 106. *Amelia* was translated into French in 1762.

<sup>153</sup> Moretti, *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

became compartmentalized, impersonal and divorced from tangible purpose, not a source for personal meaning, a situation that Adam Smith recognised in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) when he spoke of the “mental mutilation” engendered by the division of labour.<sup>156</sup> Wilfred Prest writes that “what the professions were at given points in time is at least as interesting and important as what they were becoming. What the professions were includes the sum total of their social relations and roles—their impact upon society as well as the reverse.”<sup>157</sup> The novels in this chapter will employ hybrid genres to construct narratives centred on young men in contemporary military settings; a hierarchical and dangerous world of work .

**‘Do you think it is possible to provide for all men of merit?’<sup>158</sup>**

A joint analysis of Smollett’s *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) and Fielding’s *Amelia* (1751) will look at the place of merit in a world dominated by the upper classes. Smollett and Fielding resolutely refuse to impart what could be called ‘heroic’ qualities on their young protagonists. In *Roderick Random*, the eponymous hero has a surname suggestive of the ironic detachment and lack of subjectivity of the picaresque, but known throughout the novel as ‘Rory,’ he reveals subjectivity through his response to events, demonstrating moral judgement and commitment. Smollett wrote in the preface, “I have attempted to represent modest merit struggling with every difficulty to which a friendless orphan is exposed, from his own want of experience, as well as from the selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind.”<sup>159</sup> *Amelia*’s narrative centres on the young adulthood of William Booth from the point of view of a moralising and omniscient narrator. These novels are pleas for social justice in fiction, envisaging new hierarchies based on merit.

The young men come from outside the aristocracy, but neither come from the lower orders. Rather, both emerge as vaguely middling class but with claims to status through certain family connections and through education. Like Bates, Rory is the outcome of a ‘mixed marriage,’ son of a high born father (who is disinherited and disappears) and a low born mother who is beloved, but dies after childbirth. Rory is the grandson of an eminent but harsh Scottish judge who places him in a school where he remains until his

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<sup>156</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations Books IV-V* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 374.

<sup>157</sup> Wilfred Prest, *The Professions in Early Modern England* (Beckenham, Kent: Crook Helm Ltd, 1987), p. 19.

<sup>158</sup> Fielding, *Op. cit.*, p. 467.

<sup>159</sup> Tobias Smollett, *Roderick Random* (London: 1748), p. viii.

late teens, educated but cruelly treated. In his preface, Smollett argues a reason for making Rory Scottish was that he “could at a small expence bestow on him such education as [he] thought the dignity of his birth and character required, which could not possibly be obtained in England, by such slender means as the nature of [his] plan would afford.”<sup>160</sup> Fielding’s William Booth is also from an indistinct, vaguely middling class position. Booth’s father had “designed his son for the army” (p. 329). He not only designed his son for the army, but he designed him to be an officer. Booth’s father also educated his son. He “did not think it necessary to breed [his son] up a blockhead. He did not perhaps imagine that a competent share of Latin and Greek would make his son either a pedant or a coward” (p. 329). Without financial resources or family influence, Booth’s father, who makes no direct appearance in the novel and whose profession we never learn, left everything to the power of merit, a flimsy basis indeed in the mid-eighteenth century. Both Smollett and Fielding deemed it essential to grant education to their young men in order to construct estimable men of merit. For that matter, they are better educated than their aristocratic counterparts.

The two novels differ in the attribution of motivation for the young men’s service. Booth’s father ‘designed’ his son for the military, but Booth was a *willing* subject. Moreover, his status as a military man is seen to bestow him with sexual allure. Booth achieved the status of subaltern officer, but had no funds with which to buy further commissions until he meets Amelia, member of the country gentry. Uniquely, the novel begins with Booth already married to Amelia, but the reader is given backward glimpses of their courtship and Booth’s desirability to other women, a status that continues after he is married. Fielding invokes the language of chivalry when Amelia’s rival, Miss Mathews, describes her first sight of Booth:

When you first marched into our town, you had then the colours in your hand, as you passed under the window where I stood, my glove by accident dropt into the street; you stoopt, took up my glove, and putting it upon the spike belonging to your colours, lifted it up to the window. Upon this, a young lady, who stood by, said, ‘So, miss, the young officer hath accepted your challenge.’ I blush’d then, and I blush now, when I confess to you, I thought you the prettiest young fellow I had ever seen (p. 147).

Even though only a subaltern officer, his good looks, enhanced by the uniform and the pageantry make him a romantic figure. The dashing young subaltern officer was a danger to young women, charming but penniless, and in need of a fortune with which to buy commissions and live comfortably. Dr. Harrison, the vicar to Amelia’s Wiltshire village and an advisor to her mother, disapproves of Booth: “it is the opinion which, I believe, most of

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid*, p. x.

you young gentlemen, of the Order of the Rag deserve" (p. 69). 'Order of the Rag' is a term invented by Fielding, an ironic reference to the ideals of chivalry and the encroachment of young men into territory that was the preserve of the nobility. Booth is aware of the class discrepancy when he declares his love to Amelia, despairing, "you know my situation in life, and you know your own: I have nothing more than the poor provision of an ensign's commission to depend on... Can I bear to think of entailing beggary on the posterity of my Amelia" (pp. 65-66)? Dr. Harrison, persuaded by the sincerity of Booth's concern for Amelia, convinces Mrs. Harris to allow the marriage and to buy Booth's advancement in the army. Booth's status as a dashing subaltern officer has permitted him to marry above his class position.

Smollett's Rory, whose foremost goal was to obtain financial independence, never dreamt of a military career. In the first instance, he hoped to raise himself through further education: "it would be a thousand pities to baulk my genius, which would certainly, one day, make my fortune, provided it received due cultivation" (p. 23). When he is offered the chance to join his maternal uncle Thomas Bowling in the navy Rory thinks, "though this proposal did not at all suit my inclination, I was afraid of discovering my aversion to it, lest I should disoblige the only friend I had in the world; and he was so much a seaman, that he never dreamt I could have any objection to his design" (p. 23). Bowling, a career-long naval lieutenant is persuaded to pay for Rory's university education, but fate forces Rory to withdraw from study and rely entirely upon his wits. After working as a surgeon's apprentice for a Dr. Crab, he is urged by the doctor to try his fate in London: "You may easily get on board of a king's ship in quality of a surgeon's mate, where you will certainly see a great deal of practice, and stand a good chance of getting prize-money" (pp. 37-38). The financial reward offered by bounty, not patriotism, is his incentive to recruitment. In addition, for a man of Rory's birth and education, the position of surgeon's mate also offers the appeal of a certain professional status.

Rory has now decided to embark on this career, but so have hundreds of other young men of merit. It is November of 1739 when Rory arrives in London and war had just broken out, suggesting that prospects would be good. The recruitment section that follows could be called Kafkaesque for the manner in which Smollett depicts the 'Navy-Office' as an institution that is not concerned with military success, but rather with the appearance of going through the motions: information is limited, delivered on a 'need to know' basis, and frequently imparted by a kind stranger rather than a member of the ministry. The institution is permitted to behave so obstructively because of the sheer numbers of young men presenting themselves: it is a market with a class-specific surplus. Whereas shortfalls

in ordinary sailors brought about impressment, the middle classes were queuing up to be let into the Navy, but only in a *professional* capacity, jumping through any bureaucratic hoop and paying bribes on the promise of perhaps 'rising' through merit. How can one distinguish one man of merit from another? The recruitment section makes reference to "a swarm of Scotch surgeons" (p. 80); "crowds of young fellows [...]; many of whom made no better appearance than myself" (p. 83). Rory enters into conversation with a stranger who had already passed his exams, but who "constantly attended at the Navy-Office, in hope of a warrant, having been assured from the beginning [...] that he should be put into the first vacancy; notwithstanding which promise, he had the mortification to see six or seven appointed in the same station almost every week" (p. 85). When Rory attends the examinations at the Surgeon's-hall he finds another "crowd of young fellows" (p. 91). He passes his exams and receives his qualification but learns from other candidates that each has "provided a purse" to pave the way toward receiving a commission; Rory has nothing with which to pay a bribe. His effort and expense bring him no closer to obtaining a position. He laments, "I saw no resource but the army or navy, between which I hesitated so long, that I found myself reduced to a starving condition" (p. 143), by which he means an *ordinary* soldier or sailor, a fate brought about by the negative factors he had been struggling vainly to avoid.

The status Booth achieved through marriage is rescinded when Amelia is disinherited because of her scheming sister's machinations. Booth must now rely on his military career to support his wife and growing family. Furthermore, Fielding populated his novel with military men in a period in which there was little war. *Amelia* is set in the 1730s, before the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession. The wartime experiences of Captain Booth are presented in flashback and take place at the Siege of Gibraltar, part of the Anglo-Spanish War of 1727-29. The recitation of Booth's action in Gibraltar only covers a handful of pages and is written in decidedly non-heroic terms: Booth is wounded twice in circumstances that are banal. The war ends and Booth returns to London, a city flooded with idle military men, putting a focus on the subject of the maintenance of a standing army in peacetime. Dr. Harrison goes to speak to an influential nobleman in order to beseech his help in finding a new regiment for Booth, telling him of the captain's great merit. The nobleman scoffs and replies,

'My dear, dear sir, what is the merit of a subaltern officer?'

'Surely, my lord,' cries the doctor, 'it is the merit which should recommend him to the post of a subaltern officer. And it is merit which will hereafter qualify him to serve his country in a higher capacity. And I do assure you of this young man, that

he hath not only a good heart, but a good head too. And I have been told by those who are judges, that he is for his age an excellent officer’.

‘Very probably!’ cries my lord—‘And there are abundance with the same merit, and the same qualifications, who want a morsel of bread for themselves and their families.’

‘It is an infamous scandal on the nation,’ cries the doctor, ‘and I am heartily sorry it can be said even with a colour of truth.’

‘How can it be otherwise?’ says the peer. ‘Do you think it is possible to provide for all men of merit (p. 467)?’

There are, simply put, too many men of merit, ‘merit’ being a supremely attainable goal. Fielding focuses attention on those subaltern officers who, like Booth, do not have private fortunes or connections. One evening Booth is invited to a London tavern to enjoy the company of men with whom he formerly served, all of them are subaltern officers described as having a “broken military constitution” (184). The narrator suggests that the situation of these men could be greatly alleviated by a small increase in public spending. He adds:

They [the public] would not have equal reason to complain at contributing to the maintenance of a set of brave fellows, who, at the hazard of their health, their limbs and their lives, have maintained the safety and honour of their country; as when they find themselves taxed to the support of a set of drones, who have not the least merit or claim to their favour (p. 184).

This complaint centres on the conception that this class of men, unlike the gentry, are men of merit who deserve to live in a manner that befits their real contributions. Unlike his comrades, Booth is married with children, a status frowned upon by the military establishment. When Booth’s friend Serjeant Atkinson marries a vulnerable widow, a Colonel James is provoked to respond: “There is nothing so silly as for subaltern officers of the army to marry, unless where they meet with women of very great fortunes indeed. What can be the event of their marrying otherwise, but entailing misery and beggary on their wives and their posterity” (p. 344)? It is the same Colonel James who provides the countering example. At Gibraltar he is Captain James, on a par with Booth. After the war he makes an advantageous but unhappy marriage to a wealthy woman, the sister of a Colonel Bath. Captain James is soon transformed into Colonel James, given command of a regiment and, like Colonel Bath, made Member of Parliament. The narrator opines that fortune only explained their advancements since neither was notable through performance and “if merit in the service was a sufficient recommendation, Booth, who had been twice wounded in the siege, seemed to have the fairest pretensions; but he remained a poor half-pay lieutenant” (p. 163). It is the injustice that the narrator decries; even when the

performance of the superior officers and the subaltern officers is equal, the difference in recompense is vast. Fielding posits “twice wounded” as proof of Booth’s military merit, a low benchmark for military capability; even while pursuing a political objective, Fielding resolutely refuses to impart heroic qualities on Booth.

In *Roderick Random*, Rory’s opportunity to prove his merit will happen on a naval ship, but ironically, not via the Navy-Office. In despair and wandering forlornly around Tower Hill he is press-ganged: “I was disarmed, taken prisoner, and carried on board a pressing tender, where, after being pinioned like a malefactor, I was thrust down into the hold, among a parcel of miserable wretches, the sight of whom well nigh distracted me” (p. 144). Over the course of fourteen chapters, Smollett depicts a microcosm in which individuals matter a great deal. Individual members of the officer corps exert a power that far outweighs their numerical proportion on board the ship. Individual kindnesses between the members of the lower orders inject doses of humanity. Smollett represents a range of military men who can generally be categorized as morally good (kind, generous, hardworking) or morally bad (cruel, selfish, unprofessional). This schism breaks down along class lines with those in power exercising arbitrary tyranny over their innocent subordinates. At every level of authority, from the captain upward to his superiors in London, the common sailor is treated with an abuse or indifference that is systematic; more men die from the carelessness of the British military establishment than through the efforts of the enemy. This is typified by Smollett’s description of the unnecessarily paltry water provision given to each man. After a small military victory, the men were rewarded with fresh water, prompting Rory to remark bitterly that the withholding of water “[must] have been enjoined by way of penance on the ship’s company for their sins; or rather with a view to mortify them into a contempt of life, that they might thereby become more resolute and regardless of danger” (pp. 188-89). Rory is put into a setting in which merit is revealed through adherence to professional duties despite great adversity and resistance from superior officers.

A further dimension to the resistance posed by the military establishment is typified by the arbitrary nature to the comings and goings of the superior officers. The brief appearance of generous Dr. Atkins allows Rory to finally take a post assisting in the surgery where his merit is recognised. Although “filled with astonishment and horror” (p. 148) at the sights and smells he encounters, his careful work is noticed by Atkins who helps Rory to attain the position of “surgeon’s third mate” and presents him with fine new clothes which enabled him “to support the rank to which he had raised me. I found my spirit revive with my good fortune’ and now I was an *officer*, resolved to maintain the

dignity of my station, against all opposition or affronts” (p. 159). The opposition and affronts come from within his ship. Rory’s first commander is cruel Captain Oakhum who is “a lord’s, or baron knight’s brother” (p. 145). Rory complains, “I could not help lamenting my own fate that had subjected me to such a commander” (p. 146). When kind Atkins is transferred, Rory is forced to prove his moral fortitude in a series of encounters with his successor, the brutal Doctor Mackshane whose first action is to “ban sickness” (p. 163) on the ship, forcing men to be dragged out of their sick beds and put to work, most of them proceeding to die: “it would be tedious and disagreeable to describe the fate of every miserable object that suffered by the inhumanity and ignorance of the captain and surgeon, who so wantonly sacrificed the lives of their fellow-creatures” (p. 163). Whereas one of Rory’s colleagues jumps overboard to escape the misery, Rory develops firmness: “I resolved to submit patiently to my fate, and contrive to make myself as easy as the nature of the case would allow” (p. 166). Making himself ‘easy’ is done by applying himself with assiduity and propensity to his work, demonstrating ‘modest merit’.

Smollett’s first-hand experiences lend an authenticity to his descriptions and, accordingly, the bulk of the descriptions pertain to the horrors of the ship’s surgery. The battle takes place above and the injured, dying or dead bodies are transported below—gory evidence of what is ensuing out of sight. Rory is joined by his colleague, surgeon’s first mate Mr. Morgan, a proud and stubborn Welshman who is scrupulously conscientious and ethical in his professional role. The role of the battle scenes is to expose the behaviour of men in the heat of war, the revelation of their true natures. Mackshane, normally a tyrant and a bully, refuses to go onto the deck to attend to the wounded, “fear rendering [him] obstinate” (p. 184). Meanwhile Rory says, “Morgan and I were busy putting our instruments and dressings in order” (p. 184). When the battle is fully underway, Mackshane, the chaplain and the purser throw themselves to the floor and do not move. Rory reports: “our patients had increased to such a number, that we did not know which to begin with, and the first mate [Morgan] plainly told the surgeon, that if he did not get up immediately, and perform his duty, he would complain of his behaviour to the admiral, and make application for his warrant” (p. 186). This threat jolts him to action, but not before consuming large quantities of rum for inspiration. When Mackshane finally sets to work “arms and legs were hewed down without mercy” (p. 186). Rory and Morgan have not been heroes, they have performed their duties admirably in the midst of the horror of war and the “opposition and affronts” of their superior officers. At the end of his naval service, Rory says, “I began to look upon myself as a gentleman of some consequence, and felt my pride dilate apace” because he could return to Britain “in a creditable way” (p. 209).

Rory moved himself into the officer class, but to the reader his status as a subaltern permits him to avoid the taint of the aristocratic officer, so vilified within the novel.

The aristocracy and those in positions of power are also denounced in *Amelia*. Booth receives multiple promises of help to obtain a military position but these prove empty in a system which is corrupt. When Booth makes the acquaintance of a man employed in the War Office who promises to have a word with the minister, he learns that the man has made a sideline in taking bribes in exchange for influence. Another man, Lord Ellison, who warns Booth that getting a regiment at home will be difficult, advises “in the West Indies perhaps, or in some regiment abroad it may be more easy” (p. 193). Even these promises, it transpires, were made because of Ellison’s hopes of seducing Amelia. With misplaced trust, the couple “began to lay down schemes of living when Booth should have his commission of captain, and after the exactest computation concluded that with economy, they should be able to save, at least, fifty pounds a year out of their income, in order to pay their debts” (p. 201). *Amelia* is notable for its attention to household budgeting and the need to provide daily sustenance to a family; if Booth cannot find a regiment there are real consequences: the growing family cannot feed themselves.

Booth’s dilemma was specifically that of the subaltern officer—unable to rise by merit, unable to buy another commission—a situation further aggravated by marriage. The ranks of men who “grow grey” as a lieutenant or captain are bachelors, while the wealthy, inexperienced junior officer who is advanced over them is able to marry and support a family. The subaltern’s condition is made worse by the onset of peacetime; he is put in the uncomfortable situation of wishing for war. Expressed bluntly in *Ephraim Tristram Bates*, the hero languishes, longing for war: “the Peace would last for ever, At least for our ever, that is, our Lives” (pp. 157-58). Not only does peacetime bring a loss of income, the middling class man loses the platform on which to prove his merit. At their lowest ebb, Booth says to Amelia, “How then shall we live” (p. 538)? Amelia suggests they should bow to fate and become labourers: “Why should I complain of my hard fate, while so many, who are much poorer than I, enjoy theirs. Am I of a superior rank of being to the wife of the honest labourer” (p. 539)? The Booths are rescued from this fate by the news that Amelia has, after all, inherited her mother’s fortune. Booth need nevermore concern himself with taking up a profession. The novel presents the happy ending of the English *Bildungsroman*: the Booths move to Amelia’s childhood home in Wiltshire, raise six children and live in undisturbed domestic bliss.

Circumstances next reduce Rory to joining the French army as a common foot soldier where he witnesses the horror of land war. Shocked by the appearance of the soldiers, he announces, "I had never before seen such a parcel of scare-crows" (p. 245). In an attempt to console Rory for the suffering he endures on a long march, one of the soldiers reminds him of the honour of serving the glory of Louis XV. Aghast, Rory explains that military service is only comprehensible in three scenarios: through compulsion (impressment); through defence of an 'injured country' (which would constitute patriotism employed correctly); or through refuge from a "greater evil" (poverty and hunger). Rory does not allow the French soldier to position fighting for the 'glory of the prince' as patriotism. While with the French army, Rory is reduced to a state of utter wretchedness: thin, hungry, dressed in rags. French military service does not even rescue a man from hunger. Finally, however, Rory is liberated from the merry-go-round of professions by the unexpected reappearance of his father, now rich from enterprise in the colonies. Rory marries Narcissa, the object of his desire, long out of his reach due to the discrepancy in their class positions. He informs her that "fortune hath at length recompensed me for all my sufferings, and enabled me to do justice to my love" (p. 422). Moretti's recognition-inheritance pattern manifests itself in the novel's happy ending: marriage and a retreat to comfortable domesticity.

Both Smollett and Fielding were willing to let their heroes descend quite far to demonstrate the neglect of merit in society. The anonymous author of *Ephraim Tristram Bates* was willing to kill his hero to demonstrate the same point. The status the young men attempted to achieve is shown to be unobtainable through military service in the mid-eighteenth century. Whereas society neglects the men, Smollett and Fielding have the power to reward them. Instead of recompensing them with regular, well-paid employment, they reward them with domestic happiness and complete financial independence. The authors could be said to have over-rewarded merit in an effort to dispense a kind of 'justice' that would counterbalance the rewards of the aristocracy who are over-recompensed in the officer class, if not everywhere. At the outset, the men's attempt to succeed by merit was designed to fail in order that the reader could behold the author bestow the reward.

**'Nous vînmes à parler de la gloire'<sup>161</sup>**

*Académie militaire* is a novel about genres; its subject matter is which genre and which class of man have ownership of the most aristocratic of qualities: glory. Glory is the mark which leads to immortality. The novel's central conceit is that it is the actual written record of the glorious deeds of the 'subaltern heroes'. *L'Académie militaire* is not an academy for military training but rather an academy modelled on the *Académie française*; it will be a new institution that records the glorious exploits of the soldiers of the French army as they participate in the War of Austrian Succession. All of the members of the Academy belong to one highly specific class, the particular conception of 'bourgeois' employed by Godard d'Aucourt and described by Corvisier as "une petite bourgeoisie ou une élite populaire urbaine."<sup>162</sup> The focus on one class permitted Godard d'Aucourt to sidestep direct disparagement of aristocratic characters. Among the few aristocratic characters that make an appearance in the novel are Maurice de Saxe and Louis XV, not men the courtier Godard d'Aucourt would wish to denigrate. The use of one particular class of men permits the examination of the intrinsic qualities of a very specific stratum of society, young men not normally seen in fiction.

Godard d'Aucourt gives particular importance to the act of recruitment, detailing the events that led to each member of the Academy stepping forward to join the French army in the capacity of ordinary soldier. This amounts to eight recruitment stories: the six recruitments of the original members of the group and the stories of two replacements. They give themselves names based on their native provinces; the central character and narrator, Claude Pichon names himself 'Parisien'. Each young man faces circumstances that cause them to sign their life over to their king; none of them dreamt of being a soldier. Like Frederick II, the young men have problematic relationships with their loveless fathers. Young Picard is the son of a lawyer who wants him to enter the church to rid himself of the expense of a son. Picard "écouta peu les sages avis de Monsieur son père" (p. 29), and decides it is more glorious to "porter les armes pour le service de son Prince, que de s'enterrer tout vif dans un Cloître" (p. 33). Champenois also had a disinterested father:

Mon père, qui était d'avis qu'il vaut mieux penser à soi qu'à ses héritiers, me laissa en mourant, pour tout bien, la liberté d'en gagner comme je pourrais [...] Sans talents pour me tirer d'affaire dans le monde, n'ayant pour tout revenu qu'une taille avantageuse ; après m'être donné cent fois au Diable, je me donnai au Roi (p. 85).

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<sup>161</sup> Godard d'Aucourt, *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>162</sup> Corvisier, *Op. cit.*, p. 837.

Blanchart is the son of a harsh Paris merchant: “il n’est que trop de ces pères impérieux dont l’aveugle & barbare fermeté fait le malheur de leurs enfants” (p. 161). Le Breton had turned to a life of crime to support the youthful pleasures that his miserly father would not subsidize, escaping into the army to avoid the law: “les mauvais pères font les mauvais enfants” (p. 353). Parisien is the son of a self-made man who had entered commerce with nothing but his “esprit” and “une heureuse témérité” (p. 3). His death leaves his son with a small inheritance which is soon squandered.

Parisien dreams of glory and fortune but fortune eludes those without connections and money to invest. He cites the two paths to glory: “les Belles-Lettres & la Guerre” (p. 6). In two weeks he manages to get a play written and produced but it meets with derision from his booing audience. “Je résolu donc d’embrasser la profession des Armes, c’était-là ma vraie vocation & l’état auquel le Ciel me destinait” (p. 8). The young men have fathers who are successful in their vocations but who have little interest in their sons, a feeling that is reciprocated. They choose military service as a means of escape from fathers, from situations, from being bourgeois. But what then? These are not young men content to become the “parcel of scarecrows” described in *Roderick Random*. They possess the “esprit” and the “heureuse témérité” of their fathers, even if they choose a different path. The awareness of their class and feelings of worth lead them to want more than a soldier’s lot. Notably, Godard d’Aucourt portrays this kind of young man as recruitable.

When Parisien arrives at his regiment he announces “mon premier soin fut de me choisir des amis, & d’entrer dans une chambrée de gens d’esprit, [...] j’eus le bonheur de tomber avec d’honnêtes garçons” (p. 12). They are a ‘type’ who recognise one another becoming a “petite société” within the military camp. While getting to know one another over a few drinks, their conversation turns to the subject of glory. Picard, the best educated, calls glory a goddess who “ne daigne pas jeter les yeux sur nous” (p. 13). She is too busy immortalising the aristocratic officers to notice them. This contention recalls verses from Voltaire’s *Poëme de Fontenoy*, a work that is referenced in *L’Académie militaire*. Voltaire asks the goddesses *Gloire* and *Vertu* to help him immortalise Louis in the wake of the victory at Fontenoy:

O vous, Gloire, Vertu, Déesses de mon Roi,  
 Redoutable Bellone & Minerve chérie,  
 Passion des grands cœurs, amours de la Patrie,  
 Pour couronner Louis prêtez-moi vos lauriers,  
 Enflâmez mon esprit du feu de nos Guerriers ;  
 Peignez de leurs exploits une éternelle image.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Voltaire, *Le Poëme de Fontenoy* (Lyon: 1745), p. 13.

In his poem, Voltaire mentions by name the king, Maurice de Saxe, the duc de Noailles, and a dozen or so elite officers, including “le brave Cumberland,” the enemy general and son of King George II. They possess names and titles that give them a platform for the recognition of glory. As if responding to these verses, Picard argues:

Ce n'est pas que je prétende ôter à nos Officiers l'honneur qui leur est dû, je sais qu'on les voit souvent prodiguer leur vie, & marcher les premiers à travers les périls où ils nous conduisent ; mais si la gloire est la récompense de leur valeur, pourquoi le même prix n'est-il pas le fruit de la nôtre? nos jours ne nous sont-ils pas aussi chers que les leurs (p. 14)?

He continues by advancing the proposition that ordinary soldiers have “plus de mérite qu'eux” (p. 14) because they are inspired by courage alone with no real hope of acquiring a brilliant promotion or renown. Picard has turned to the subject of recompense.

Acknowledging that it is impossible for an ordinary soldier to earn concrete recompense in the form of a commission or wealth, are soldiers permitted to dream that they might earn glory, an abstract but highly valuable recompense. The young men hold a conviction that they will demonstrate glory on the battlefield, prompting them to found the *Académie militaire* in order that their deeds may be immortalised. Earning glory as an ordinary soldier is a radical ambition in mid-eighteenth-century Europe. The extent to which this ambition reads ironically depends on how incongruous the reader finds the relationship of class and glory to be.

The men call themselves ‘subaltern heroes’ and convince themselves that they will earn glory in war in an attempt to imbue their status as ordinary soldiers with meaning, not wanting to admit to their role as cogs in the machine. This is also a question of motivation. Carl von Clausewitz, addressing this subject, wrote “truth alone is but a weak motive of action with men [...] the man receives the strongest impulse to action through feelings.”<sup>164</sup> He names “the soul’s thirst for honour and renown” as “among the noblest feelings which belong to human nature, and in war they are the vivifying principle which gives the enormous body a spirit.”<sup>165</sup> In German, he explains, these feelings have names, *Ehrgeiz* (greed of honour) and *Ruhmsucht* (hankering after glory).<sup>166</sup> In *Académie militaire*, Parisien addresses the subject of motivation :

Tout Français est né vaillant & courageux, mais il n’y a que des bêtes féroces qui puissent se battre les uns contre les autres pour le seul plaisir de se battre ;

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<sup>164</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), pp. 58-59.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

comment un homme raisonnable, confondu dans la multitude sans espérance d'en sortir jamais, peut-il de gayeté de cœur exposer sa vie ? Il n'y a que la gloire dont tout cœur Français est amoureux, qui puisse nous porter à des prodiges (p. 83).

Parisien posits glory as offering up the enticement of lifting a man out of the masses and giving him the recompense of immortality.

Clausewitz believes truth offers poor motivation, but the truth, as he explains, is that “the soldier is levied, clothed, armed, exercised, he sleeps, eats, drinks, and marches, all *merely to fight at the right time and place*”(author’s emphasis).<sup>167</sup> In *Académie militaire*, the men are depicted as Clausewitz described: they sleep in tents, dig ditches, experience hunger, fight. Battle after battle, the novel demonstrates the men adapting fluidly to situations. Godard d’Aucourt presents battles that take the form of historically accurate sieges throughout Flanders. Corvisier believes he used newspaper accounts to provide verisimilitude.<sup>168</sup> The novel is set in a two year period in which the French army went from victory to victory (1744 and 1745), in an age in which wars were fought during the campaign season, from the spring till the autumn, when the troops then disbanded and went home for the winter, resuming action in the spring. Parisien would walk from Paris to Lille, joining his regiment and travelling together by foot to Flanders. This pattern allows him to write; during the campaign season he explains “j’ai combattu pour la gloire”; in winter “je vais écrire pour elle” (p. 1). Toward the end of his second campaign Parisien, describing the monotony of siege warfare, writes: “on s’accoûtume à tout” (p. 379). Though the young men refer to themselves as the ‘héros subalternes,’ to be heroic does not mean superhuman, it means doing one’s best. The qualities they possess mean that their best is very useful, though of the *académiciens*, only Parisien rises to the status of subaltern officer, promoted to ‘Cornette’ at the end of his first campaign season:

Il est bon que l’on sache que je suis maintenant un guerrier fait & non plus comme l’année précédente une jeune morveux, à minois délicat, à peine capable de porter un fusil & de manier un sabre ; mon teint bazané couleur des héros me donne un air redoutable, [...] je suis un peu diminué d’embonpoint ; mais ce que je perds sur l’épaisseur , je le regagne sur la taille, j’ai au moins acquis un pouce de plus en hauteur ; il faut convenir qu’une Campagne fait bien un homme : la belle chose que le service (p. 131).

He likes the changes that have taken place to his body and his bearing since becoming a soldier, he feels more manly, another more immediate recompense.

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>168</sup> “L’auteur prétend s’être trouvé sur le champ de bataille, ce qui est très douteux. Il tire en réalité ses renseignements de la lecture de la *Gazette* des 22 et surtout 29 mai 1745”; Corvisier, *Op. cit.*, p. 833.

The Battle of Fontenoy forms the centrepiece of the novel. It was the great victory for the French that forms a counterpoint to the Battle of Dettingen in *Roderick Random*. The star of this scene could only be Louis XV. The battle and what it symbolised to the French are too important for the courtier Godard d'Aucourt to treat it in any manner than that of glorification. His depiction of Louis as leading the battle and making military decisions are patently false but became part of the mythology of the time. Voltaire's *Poème de Fontenoy*, composed in complete seriousness, surpasses the excesses of Godard d'Aucourt. About his own performance Parisien merely writes: "Qu'on sache donc que j'eus ma bonne part comme un autre au succès de ce grand jour" (p. 176). All of the men perform their duty, though one of the *académiciens*, Champenois, is killed, "immolé à la gloire" (p. 194), Godard d'Aucourt borrowing from the language of Corneille. In an ironic re-writing of Voltaire's poem, Parisien uses Voltaire's language and structure, keeping a heroic tone but changing the class milieu:

Fils de la liberté la valeur les conduit,  
 Ils volent au combat, la victoire les suit.  
 O Mars ! qui l'aurait cru qu'une troupe nouvelle  
 Fit voir à son berceau tant d'ardeur, tant de zèle,  
 Tous enfants des plaisirs, élevés dans Paris,  
 Au milieu des Caffés, & des Jeux & des Ris,  
 Ils partent, les voilà, Régiment intrépide ;  
 Que les Français sont grands quand leur Maître les guide (p. 206) !

This passage emphasizes the youth and energy of a particular class of men. Godard d'Aucourt suggests something inherent within them or their upbringing on the streets of Paris that makes them successful on the battlefield. Indeed, Parisien is sent home to recruit more men: "mon Capitaine, informé que j'étais faufile parmi tout ce qu'il y avait de batteurs de Pavé & de Libertins à Paris, jetta les yeux sur moi pour aller chercher des Successeurs à nos illustres Camarades" (p. 104). To varying degrees fatherless, Louis is portrayed as their leader. These young men are positioned as a rich and ready resource if given sufficient motivation.

Clausewitz allows that "each station, from the lowest upwards" is capable of demonstrating genius in war, but as for renown he admits that "history and the judgement of posterity only confer, in general, on those minds which have shone in the highest rank."<sup>169</sup> The novel ends with the central character's imminent return to Paris where he faces an uncertain economic future in a Paris full of young men looking for opportunity amid the pitfalls. His only concrete asset is his written account of the 'subaltern heroes'

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<sup>169</sup> Clausewitz, *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

and their exploits in Flanders. The presentation of the novel as the actual published account of a French soldier is meant to suggest that he did successfully navigate that landscape.<sup>170</sup> His publisher argues that writers and publishers are the gatekeepers to renown through military glory, only they make “les grands Hommes [...] la porte que je garde est celle de l’immortalité” (p. 235). Parisien’s recompense is the ‘gloire’ he accrues not as a soldier but as a writer.

### **‘Les aventures de ma jeunesse’<sup>171</sup>**

Prévost composed his novel *La jeunesse du commandeur* in the very months that Frederick II invaded Silesia and Europe prepared for yet another war of succession.<sup>172</sup> While young men of merit were striving for recognition in national military service, Prévost’s ‘hero,’ known throughout simply as the ‘chevalier,’ engages in service for the Order of Malta, a military organisation composed exclusively of the ancient nobility.<sup>173</sup> Prévost’s chevalier chooses the Order of Malta as a profession for reasons devoid of economic exigency or romantic disappointment, seemingly drawn to reasons that come from within his *imaginaire*, explaining: “j’avais pris ce gout dans la lecture ” (p. 44). Prévost reprises territory explored by Cervantes through the construction of a character that goes into the world to pursue chivalric adventures, a role-playing inspired by literature. Prévost’s treatment differs to Cervantes’ in two ways: first, the backdrop to Prévost’s novel is the actual world of eighteenth-century chivalry pursuing truly violent ‘adventures’; second, within that world, Prévost’s ‘hero’ pursues objectives which are entirely self-interested. Not only is the possibility of heroism completely circumvented, but the scope for humour or pathos found in *Don Quixote* is negated by cynicism.

Prévost’s novel purports to be the present-day memoirs of the now older protagonist (only the title tells us that he is now a ‘commandeur’). The narrator positions

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<sup>170</sup> In fact, in the 1777 edition of the novel, Godard d’Aucourt is more-or-less named as the author (his other, openly published works are cited) and a preface tells us that previous editions had indeed convinced the public of its authenticity.

<sup>171</sup> Prévost, *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>172</sup> Prévost roots the novel in sufficient historical detail that Jean-Paul Schneider has been able to demonstrate its setting during the War of the Polish Succession (1734-36). Jean-Paul Schneider, ‘Batailles, saisons, amours: le sentiment du temps perdu dans les *Mémoires de Malte*’, *Cahiers Prévost d’Exiles, II* (Grenoble : Université Stendhal, 1985), pp. 91-130.

<sup>173</sup> This is a status attested to in 1739 by a member of the Order of Malta: “ je puis établir comme une vérité constante, que de tous les Ordres de Chevaleries qu’il y a aujourd’hui en Europe, le plus illustre est celui des Chevaliers de Malte” : *Reflexions Politiques sur L’Etat et les Devoirs des Chevaliers de Malthe* Par M. le Chevalier Luc de Boyer d’Argens (La Haye : Chez Pierre Paupie, 1739), p. 5.

his writings in an ambiguous light; citing the numerous eighteenth-century “*mémoires et d’aventures*” that are published with the aim of giving pleasure or self-glorification, his memoirs, by contrast, are written “dans des vues fort différentes”: “je les laisse à distinguer au lecteur” (p. 43). The powerful moral context of the novel operates at several levels: within the narrative, the moral code is exclusively aristocratic, and subsequently, egocentric and reputation-based. The second level of the moral context results from Prévost placing the reader in the uncomfortable position of witness and moral judge to activities which are evidently cruel, violent and duplicitous, and which are undertaken with impunity and even approbation. Finally, the first person narration gives the reader access to the inner thoughts of a dissolute ‘chevalier’ carrying out exploits for a chivalric order, access readers were not granted in the chivalric romance.

The Order of Malta was a seven-hundred year old chivalric order whose vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience were joined by a fourth vow after the first Crusades: to bear arms in defence of their religion. By the eighteenth century, however, the Order of Malta was far from upholding these strictures and had become a lucrative business rather than a religious vocation. A chevalier had to obtain four ‘caravans’ to merit receipt of a ‘commanderie’.<sup>174</sup> ‘Caravans’ were military victories obtained in violent sea skirmishes with Turkish galleys and Barbary pirates, after which a percentage of the bounty seized was given to the Order and the captives were often sold as slaves. All of these activities are accurately represented in Prévost’s novel. In literature, affiliation with the Order served as shorthand indicating a young man’s status as a second son or a member of the impoverished nobility.<sup>175</sup> Diverging from other novels whose protagonists have ties to the Order, Prévost’s chevalier departs for Malta in the opening pages. Equally, his extreme wealth sets him apart ; he refers to himself as “peut-être le seul chevalier de mon ordre qui avec une fortune considérable et tous les avantages qui peuvent ouvrir dans le monde une carrière brillante” (p. 43).

For a young Parisian nobleman, what could chivalry represent? Lionel Gossman, in his account of the turn to medievalism in the eighteenth century, describes the aristocrat of the period as “more and more cut off socially and intellectually from the ‘feudal’ basis of

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<sup>174</sup> *Commanderies* were the various outposts set up throughout Europe for the collection of rents and for recruitment. A man would be elevated to ‘commandeur’ after he had achieved four ‘caravanes’ and if a *commanderie* were vacant.

<sup>175</sup> In addition to the chevalier Des Grieux in Prévost’s earlier *Manon Lescaut* (1731), other examples of characters with affiliation to the Order of Malta are the chevalier Déterville in Françoise de Graffigny’s *Lettres d’une Péruvienne* (1747), and chevalier Danceny in *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782).

his existence.”<sup>176</sup> The chevalier’s penchant for his profession, he claims, came from book reading, but other than a wish to leave Paris it is unclear what this eighteen-year-old sought in a chivalric order. Acutely aware of his membership in an illustrious family, in Paris his scope for action would have been restricted by the confines of codified aristocratic society. Once in Malta, what the chevalier finds is utter freedom. Indeed, the eighteenth-century Knight of Malta, Luc Boyer d’Argens argues that freedom is a benefit that sets that order apart from other chivalric orders: “il faut donc convenir que ce qui relève les dignités de l’Ordre de Malthe au-dessus des autres, c’est qu’elles rendent libres, souverains & indépendants ; au lieu que les autres assujettissent.”<sup>177</sup> With the combination of great wealth and total liberty, Prévost’s chevalier declares : “Il ne me manquait rien pour la satisfaction de tous mes désirs” (p. 100).

To explore the limits of this freedom, Prévost constructs an opposition that will form the dramatic tension of the novel. He introduces the Spanish nobleman Dom Perés, a figure lifted out of the seventeenth-century heroic drama, a genre that was also subject to satire for its excesses. Like Corneille’s Don Rodrigue and Dryden’s Almanzor, nothing is more important to Dom Perés than aristocratic glory: “le gout du plaisir ne tenait que le second rang dans son cœur après la gloire et l’amitié” (p. 85). En route to fight in a European war, Dom Perés is shipwrecked and the chevalier, spotting him, jumps into turbulent seas to attempt a rescue. Instead, he is nearly drowned and both men are pulled to safety by two nameless sailors— Prévost already subverting any appearance of heroism. Because of the ‘rescue,’ Perés dedicates himself to working tirelessly for the chevalier’s ‘gloire,’ swearing “un éternel attachment,” which will have the effect of greatly circumscribing the chevalier’s liberty (p. 83). United by membership in noble European families, both men have a highly developed sense of their aristocratic status, but they diverge on how it should be expressed: through violence or through libertinism, two styles of masculinity based in physical role-playing.

Perés’ compulsive guarding of the chevalier’s honour causes conflict when the latter develops a passion for a young woman: “cette passion, que je ne connaissais que depuis un instant, me faisait déjà sentir que je n’avais point d’autre bonheur à désirer” (p. 79). What at first seems like the formulaic opposition of passion versus honour will instead be revealed as the descent into libertinism. In Corneille’s *Le Cid*, the positioning of a conflict between love and honour is made possible because the hero, Rodrigue, adhered to a strict code of honour and because the object of his affection, Chimène, is a noble. In *La*

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<sup>176</sup> Gossman, *Op. cit.*, pp. 289 & 386.

<sup>177</sup> Boyer d’Argens, *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

*Jeunesse du commandeur*, Helena is the illegitimate daughter of a courtesan and the chevalier's first person narration articulates an innate aversion to someone from outside his class: "tout l'amour dont je brûlais ne pouvait me faire oublier ce que je me devais à moi-même et à l'honneur de ma maison" (p. 107). He cruelly leads Helena to believe he wants marriage while telling the reader that she is easily deceived: "je trompais Helena ; et sa simplicité devait encore être extrême, pour se laisser persuader par de si faibles raisonnements" (p. 109). He develops what he calls a "philosophie voluptueuse" whose "principes" he has adopted (p. 124). Though he speaks of his feelings for Helena as 'amour', in the same breath he will argue that he hopes to convince Helena that a "commerce libre" is preferable to the "chaînes" that he has no wish to wear (p. 108). Perés is dismayed by the chevalier's actions, telling him: "je condamnerais votre passion" (p. 96), but unable to break the liaison, he works to balance the chevalier's romantic exploits with 'heroic' services to the Order, the hypocrisy of which undermines the honour of the men and the institution.

The pair undertake numerous attacks on Turkish and North African targets. The exploits generate 'gloire' and 'honneur' in the eyes of the Order, but in the eyes of the reader Prévost deprives them of these qualities. On an expedition and with Perés in charge, they encounter a Turkish vessel. The chevalier recounts that "Perés nous donna des exemples que le plus lâche de notre troupe aurait eu honte de ne pas suivre; et pour ne rien déguiser, nous trouvâmes si peu de défense dans nos ennemis que notre victoire fut sans honneur" (p. 76). The possibility of the action seeming 'heroic', set up in the first sentence, is totally undercut by the sardonic assessment that follows. When Helena's mother complains to the Grand Master about the seduction of her daughter by the chevalier, Perés comes up with a plan to repair his honour. They will go to sea and seek a ship to fight. It is winter, the time when ships bring pilgrims (men, women and children) returning from Mecca back to Egypt, providing easy targets:

Aux armes, s'écria-t-il, à l'honneur, à la victoire; et me voyant lever la tête avec surprise, il me dit en peu de mots qu'étant perdu de réputation à Malte si je n'y rentrais point par quelque action éclatante, il m'offrait une voie présente pour réparer toutes mes faiblesses. Oui, lui dis-je en courant aux armes, c'est sur les Turcs que je vais me venger des trahisons de l'amour (p. 128).

The plan works: "cette expédition produisait l'effet que Perés en avait attendu. Elle me fit recevoir à Malte comme un homme qui s'était déjà distingué par plus d'une action de fermeté" (p. 142). On another occasion, after yet another attack, he declares: "nous quittâmes Malte avec l'applaudissement du grand maître" (p. 255). The reader has nowhere to turn for moral firm-footing; neither the chevalier, Perés, nor the Order find

these actions to be problematic. In practical terms, little separated the activities of the Order from piracy. The chevalier, at one point, even collaborates with a pirate in order to accomplish a plan. Assessing the pirate as “un des plus braves hommes du monde” (p. 228), he will later have him killed, arguing, “Lirno toujours rappelé à ses anciens principes ne connaissait rien de si doux que la rapine et l’enlèvement” (p. 275). This can only be read ironically since their ‘principes’ are identical. Even the possibility of these actions being underpinned by religious devotion is explicitly negated. Prévost’s chevalier expresses no Christian faith and religious fervour forms no part of his exploits. When he formalises his vows to the Order, he devotes one oblique sentence to the ceremony: “Il vint; je n’ose décider si ce fut trop tôt ou trop tard, et c’est le mystère de ma vie le plus obscur et le plus funeste” (p. 144). The reader is far from witnessing the spiritual words of a knight making lasting vows to a brotherhood and to God.

Prévost conceives of a device for ending the cycle of violence as well as for proving that the chevalier’s ‘amour’ is merely sexual appetite. Amplifying the cruelty found within the novel, Helena contracts small pox leaving her face heavily scarred. The chevalier’s passion dies instantly: “je ne pus résister au dégoût que je ressentis de ce spectacle” (p. 233). Amazing even himself with his sudden aversion, he quickly turns his efforts to ridding himself of Helena ‘honourably,’ proclaiming, “je ne me sentais coupable de rien” (p. 237). After enduring painful surgery in an attempt to repair her face, Helena resignedly retreats to a convent, a move funded by the chevalier. Even this gesture receives the approval of the Order: “je l’exécuter avec assez de noblesse pour m’attirer les applaudissements du public” (p. 286). Perés, free of the burden of protecting the chevalier’s honour, returns to Spain and dies after having his heart broken by an unfaithful woman. Free of all obligations, the chevalier professes to have a renewed desire to re-engage with his profession. Because of his honourable reputation, this desire is duly rewarded by the Order : “le souvenir de mes services me fit choisir par le grand maître pour ambassadeur de la religion à la cour de \*\*\* C’était m’ouvrir une nouvelle carrière” (p. 283). With the continual mutual approbation, Prévost’s satire could not have gone further in its damnation of both an ancient chivalric order and the type of men it represents.

If the events of the novel had unfolded in Paris, the scope for the men’s latent violence would have been curtailed through positioning in a codified society situated within the limits of European public law. In the freedom permitted by the ‘lawless’ territory of the Mediterranean, the men use violence to uphold a European aristocratic conception of honour, but are permitted to release an unrestrained and innate savagery against an enemy they view with inhumanity. Walter Scott underscores the opportunistic

side of this freedom in his *Essay on Chivalry* (1818). He argues that enlightenment brought an end to chivalrous principles since they were “inapplicable to the modern state of the world,” attracting men of “licentious, fierce and subtle” natures who, hiding under the cloak of chivalry, could gain approbation for the “unceremonious gratification of their lust or their vengeance.”<sup>178</sup> Prévost’s novel evokes the specificity of the decades studied in this dissertation by revealing a form of ancient military service that co-existed with national militaries. As late as 1739, Luc Boyer d’Argens attempted to position ‘caravans’ as professional services rendered to all the nations of Europe, arguing “[the European states] doivent regarder les vaisseaux de Malthe comme des escadres employées perpétuellement à purger la Méditerranée des Corsaires dont elle est si infectée.”<sup>179</sup> Military service for the Order of Malta would still be a professional option for young nobles until 1798 when Napoleon ejected them from the island. It is only with hindsight that it is evident that religious military orders were in their death throes.

## Conclusion

In the introduction, I argued that the novels studied in this chapter present men not normally seen in literature: men of merit, subaltern heroes and an aristocrat revealing his inner void in a contemporary chivalric order. The authors all use military service to explore an early form of class consciousness. The explanation for the use of military service is twofold: first, military service is an encroachment into territory monopolised by the ancient nobility permitting an examination of these long-held and unjust prerogatives; second, the military already possessed the concept of the ‘subaltern’, a tiny opening between Saxe’s conception of the “oppressor and the oppressed.” The authors saw subalterneity as a status capable of aggrandizement.

To encroach upon the territory dominated by the ancient nobility is to raise the question of genre. The lingering effect of the excesses (and ultimate disappointment) of chivalry hangs over the novels in this chapter. As Lionel Gossman argued, the nobility could read chivalric romances as the stories of their ancestors. Prévost’s chevalier, for whom ‘service’ for the Order is simply a platform for self-gratification, demonstrates the alienation of a class that no longer resembles its mythologised form, even asking himself, “quelle ressource contre une inconstance si peu volontaire” (p. 234)? Fielding devised the expression ‘Order of the Rag’ to describe young men with the appearance of young knights

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<sup>178</sup> Scott, ‘Essay on Chivalry’, *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>179</sup> Boyer d’Argens, *Op. cit.*, p. 107.

but not the ready cash with which to buy a commission. Godard d'Aucourt's Parisien tells the reader that he is recording the "origines de ma noblesse," amusing because the gateway to noblesse through military glory is now firmly closed. Noble titles are now bought not earned. A young man writes to Parisien to inform him that he does not want to be a member of the *Académie militaire* because it could block the path to his future ennoblement. He believes his family will be ennobled "après avoir traversé les finances avec honneur" and that renown achieved as a subaltern would pose an obstacle: his family "ne pourront jamais faire remonter leur origine plus loin que moi" (p. 67). For this man, future invisibility is the acceptable price of his family's potential ennoblement. History determined who received glory and history was not interested in the subaltern.

Smollett, in his preface to *Roderick Random*, makes the link between history and chivalry and the prerogatives of the aristocracy. In "the dark ages of the World, when a man had rendered himself famous for wisdom or valour, his family and adherents availed themselves of his superior qualities, magnified his virtues, [...] his exploits were handed down to posterity with a thousand exaggerations." This 'history' became the basis of the chivalric romance, the authors of which "filled their performances with the most monstrous hyperboles."<sup>180</sup> It was finally the appearance of Cervantes who "reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view," a generic shift that would lead to the birth of the picaresque.<sup>181</sup> Smollett would fill his version of the picaresque with realism and moral outrage, setting 'modest merit' out into the world. The reluctance to impart heroic qualities on the young men in these novels represents a determination to break from the hyperbole of the romance writer. An eighteenth-century tool that the writers did not hesitate to employ was moral judgement, the apportionment of punishments and rewards.

It is no exaggeration to state that nearly all the aristocratic characters in all of these novels are treated with moral disapprobation, many of them pointedly punished by the authors. Godard d'Aucourt skirts this issue by placing just a handful of carefully selected aristocrats in his work. In lieu of professional status or glory, the authors bestow full, and hence domestic, masculinity bringing *happiness*, a reward positioned more overtly in the English novels. Dr. Harrison says it plainly:

Domestic happiness is the end of almost all our pursuits, and the common reward of all our pains. When men find themselves for ever barred from this delightful

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<sup>180</sup> Tobias Smollett, Preface to *Roderick Random* (London: J. Osborn, 1748), p. vii.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

fruition, they are lost to all industry, and grow careless of all their worldly affairs. Thus they become bad subjects, bad relations, bad friends and bad men (p. 419).

Booth and Rory are rescued by the sudden and unexpected acquisition of wealth through inheritance and reunion, the inheritance-recognition and marriage pattern cited by Moretti. They need nevermore concern themselves with taking up a 'profession'. For the Booths: "Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives" (p. 545). Rory, who marries and settles in his Scottish homestead, says: "If there be such a thing as true happiness on earth, I enjoy it" (p. 432). Even Parisien is offered a version of full, domestic masculinity; marrying a young woman named Javotte, a "bonne ouvrière en linge" with her own source of income, he returns home to write and to "faire des hommes au Roy" (p. 413), suggesting that providing sons to fight for the king is a role he is willing to perform.

The chevalier, whose success in his profession does not represent success in life, had a brief interlude of domestic happiness when secreted away with Helena, hidden even from Perés. He finds pleasure in the simple life: "Qu'avais-je à désirer dans le reste du monde, lorsque je trouvais dans l'étendue de ma maison ce qui suffisait pour me rendre heureux" (p. 116)? He takes to wearing women's clothing in order not to be detected by spies who seek him, his inability to reconcile passion and honour provoking a gender crisis. But Perés does find him and the chevalier's shame is profound: "je repris les habits de mon sexe" (p. 119). Perés, the chevalier's seventeenth-century super-ego, served as a block to full liberty. Of all the male characters in these works, only one is permitted to make a career in the military *and* to have domestic happiness: *Amelia's* Serjeant Atkinson. He marries a widow from the middling class, has two boys and attains the rank of captain and regular employment. The characteristics described in Atkinson—"plain, honest, modest, involuntary, delicate, heroic passion"—suggest the turn toward the new code of behaviour that would be applied to men as well as women: sensibility. Equally, however, Fielding bestows Atkinson with a quality associated with chivalry: physical beauty. The narrator states, "So great is the advantage of beauty in men as well as women, and so sure is that quality in either sex of procuring some regard from the beholder" (p. 196). Melding aspects of sensibility and chivalry, Atkinson's moral superiority and his physical beauty functioned as a class leveller, paving the way for his rise out of the 'lower orders'.

The novels studied in this chapter manifest a preoccupation with the sheer numbers of young men in cities. In *Roderick Random* and *Amelia*, London is teeming with endless numbers of young men from the middling class who attempt to pursue leads with the military administration, government ministers, military officers or other men of influence, trying to find positions as low ranking officers in regiments or on ships,

sometimes paying bribes. In *Académie militaire* there are crowds of young bourgeois men on the streets of Paris with pride and a certain education, whose energy needs harnessing but who do not want to be yoked to a desk or shop counter like their domineering fathers. In these novels, questions about class justice are not and cannot be resolved but their nascent class consciousness reveals an early attempt to take on this subject. Only the aristocratic chevalier finds lasting 'success' in his profession, but he earns the moral censure of the reader. For the subaltern officers and subaltern heroes, making a regular profession in the military proves too difficult for men who want to marry and have children. Military capability is not the problem; in no sense is the work of the military man portrayed as requiring more than 'merit'—which as we have seen is plentiful. Before giving up their military careers, Booth, Rory and Parisien had obtained some pleasure from saying, "I am an officer," a status corresponding to the manner in which they viewed themselves. In terms of a profession, however, the 'Profession of Arms' obstructed the path of entry to those outside the upper classes.

### Chapter Three: The Military Veteran: the Selfless Professional in an Empire

It is not easy, Trim, for one, bred up as thou and I have been to arms, who seldom looks further forward than to the end of his musket, or backwards beyond his knapsack.<sup>182</sup>

#### Introduction

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as André Corvisier explains, there was no formal distinction between ‘civilian’ and ‘military,’ and a man returning from war would not have felt like such a distinct category in that more violent world.<sup>183</sup> Before the establishment of the professional army, the returning military man could reprise the trade he had performed before the war. The establishment of a professional army served to increase the distinction between a civilian and a military man, creating the veteran who is dependent on the state for his well-being and who attempts to integrate within a civilian society in which he has no civilian profession. Adam Smith explained that in a civilised state, “it is the wisdom of the state only which can render the trade of a soldier a particular trade separate and distinct from all others” because military service can only be funded through taxation, it does not generate its own income except through plunder (p. 284).<sup>184</sup> In this relationship—professional and civilian—the more civilian the society becomes the more ‘other’ the veteran appears. In contrast, the civilian male population moved steadily away from the original and ‘ideal’ warrior masculinity, leading to concerns of effeminacy and the quality of the body politic. The new male civilian is, arguably, the ‘other’ to an idealised masculinity whose traces can be found in the veteran. These are concerns reflected in the writings of Adam Smith and Montesquieu, as will be argued, as well as in the novels examined in this chapter. In literature, the veteran becomes the dangerous other, the noble other, the sentimental other, the sage, his distinction making him useful for deployment for ideological ends.

When the Seven Years War ended the numbers of military veterans returning home to Britain and France were consequential. British war veterans returned to a nation

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<sup>182</sup> Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 511.

<sup>183</sup> “It would be impossible to apply our present distinction between civilians and soldiers to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In this sense these terms do not appear until the end of the eighteenth century”: André Corvisier, *Armies and Societies in Europe* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 11.

<sup>184</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations Books IV-V* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 284.

giddy with the successes it had achieved, laying the groundwork for the British Empire and humiliating its age-old rival, France. Linda Colley describes the Seven Years War as “the most dramatically successful war the British ever fought. [...] they assumed for themselves the reputation of being the most aggressive, the most affluent and the most swiftly expanding power in the world.”<sup>185</sup> There was, however, a backlash to this success, with the recognition that sustaining Britain’s commercial interests in its new empire would come at a high price, both financial and social. In the waning years of the now more-unpopular-than-ever Louis XV, French war veterans returned to a country that had lost its self-confidence and lost its way. Historian Jay Smith explains:

France’s demoralizing loss to the English and the Prussians in the Seven Years War led to a collective soul-searching the likes of which the French had never experienced. Within a few short years, France had seen its standing in the world dramatically reduced. Its large overseas empire had nearly vanished, the British had emerged as the most imposing imperial power in Europe, and tiny Prussia, under the dynamic leadership of Frederick the Great had inflicted a series of humiliating defeats on the largest and proudest army on the continent.<sup>186</sup>

In terms of a fictional response to victory and defeat, one might logically expect the military veterans depicted in these years to reflect the fortunes of their respective nations. What is perhaps surprising, therefore, is the nature of the representations of the fictional veterans that form the subject of this chapter: Captain Toby Shandy in Laurence Sterne’s *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759-1767)<sup>187</sup>; Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago from Tobias Smollett’s *The Adventures of Humphry Clinker* (1771)<sup>188</sup>; and General Flavius Belisarius in Jean- François Marmontel’s *Bélisaire* (1767)<sup>189</sup>.

The word ‘veteran’ is not mentioned at all in *Tristram Shandy*; it is mentioned once in *Bélisaire*, but not in reference to the hero. The word is employed multiple times in *Humphry Clinker*, including a designation of Lieutenant Lismahago, but it is also subverted by use in alternate expressions (‘veteran statesman’; ‘veteran pimp’; ‘veteran in gallantry’). I use the word veteran to designate the long-serving military man. In Samuel Johnson’s 1768 dictionary, the word veteran is defined simply: “An old soldier; a man long practiced,” and “Long practised in war, long experienced.”<sup>190</sup> The word appears in the *Encyclopédie*

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<sup>185</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 102.

<sup>186</sup> Jay. M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined, The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 143.

<sup>187</sup> The first two volumes appeared in 1759, the seven subsequent volumes appeared between 1761 and 1767.

<sup>188</sup> Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (London: Penguin, 2008).

<sup>189</sup> Jean-François Marmontel, *Bélisaire* (Paris : Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1994).

<sup>190</sup> Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London: W. Peacock & Sons, 1803).

where its definition makes a connection between the sense of the word in antiquity and its contemporary sense:

Vétéran: soldat qui avait fini son temps de service: ce temps marqué par les lois romaines, était depuis dix-sept ans jusqu'à quarante six... [...] Les récompenses des vétérans étaient peu de chose dans les premiers temps de la république romaine : ce n'était que quelques arpents de terre dans un pays étranger [...]. On donne encore aujourd'hui en France le nom de vétérans aux officiers qui ont rempli un poste pendant vingt ans & qui jouissent des honneurs & des privilèges attachés à leur charge, même après qu'ils s'en sont démis.<sup>191</sup>

This definition refers to length of service, to recompense for service and to the class position of the veteran, subjects treated in the novels under discussion, as well in the wider political world of the eighteenth century. The definition also uses antiquity as a referent, a persistent compulsion in these decades whose resonance will be examined in this chapter.

Representations of veterans returning home to empires beg a political question: how do authors contextualise the relationship between the men and the state for which they served and suffered? Not only do the veterans in these narratives not receive any lasting honours or rewards, each is rendered vulnerable through neglect by the state, and in the case of Belisarius, through state persecution. The evolving meanings of patriotism have a correspondence to the military veteran's relationship to the state. J.H. Shennan locates the contradiction emerging in the discourse of patriotism taking place in Europe from the mid-eighteenth century to the Revolution. Patriotism could evoke the state's role as defender of the liberty of its citizens. But to preserve the liberty of the people, it was necessary for the state to be powerful. Shennan contends that "already it is possible to perceive the emergence of a basic contradiction between the idea of patriotism as the affirmation of the people's liberty and the idea of the state as both the object and the arbiter of that patriotic spirit."<sup>192</sup> Within these parameters, patriotism is *either* a civic virtue that belongs to all citizens *or* it is an ideology owned and defined by the state. Nowhere do these oppositions have more consequence than in warfare. A powerful state can raise a standing army and command the tax dollars to sustain it. By contrast, powerful citizens can ensure the defence of their state, but this is subject to their status as equals united by the love of their homeland.

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<sup>191</sup> Jaucourt/Diderot3, 'vétérans', *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D'Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Projet (Winter Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>192</sup> J. H. Shennan, 'The Rise of Patriotism in Eighteenth-Century Europe', *History of European Ideas*, 13, 6 (1991), p. 694.

In the case of Belisarius and Lismahago, the stoicism with which they respond to the treatment meted by the state becomes a tool for establishing the men's authority to speak on the very oppositions articulated by Shennan. Reflected in the men's discourse is the anxiety caused by empire (both loss and gain), bringing with it a reciprocal critique of empire. The natural counterpoint to empire was the republic, an idealised time pre-dating an age of conquest. The word 'republic' in the eighteenth century served as a placeholder for civic virtue, equality or simply 'not a monarchy'. Colin Jones, discussing the role of republican discourse in the decades before the Revolution argues that its strength emanated from this relative autonomy: "if the republican discourse thus offered no political blueprint, it still developed enormous influence as an idiom of criticism antagonistic to modern monarchies based on bureaucracies, standing armies, high finance and commercial engagement."<sup>193</sup> A key marker of civic virtue was the duty of every citizen to perform military service. As the Roman Republic became an empire, its sprawling territories led to the need for larger, professional armies, increasingly disparate and poorly motivated, reflecting a society which had become heterogeneous, disconnected and finally dissipated. A message derived from comparing republic with empire is that a state's choice to have a professional army or a citizen militia has consequences. One of these, the subject of this chapter, is not simply that the professional army creates the veteran and the civilian, but also that this choice influences what *kind* of veteran and what *kind* of civilian populates society.

The nature of Toby Shandy's relationship to the state is more difficult to assess in a novel whose politics are not explicit. This has had the result, as Tom Keymer contends, that "scholars have had very little to say about the political dimension" of Sterne's fiction.<sup>194</sup> John Richardson, however, notes a recent turn to attempts to situate Sterne's fictions within a specific cultural, social and political milieu. Richardson himself takes up this subject, describing the role of patriotism in *Tristram Shandy*, a subject arising partly from the fact that Sterne dedicated the first two volumes of the novel to William Pitt, the British Prime Minister who led the nation victoriously through the Seven Years War and known in these years "simply as *the patriot*."<sup>195</sup> Richardson argues that the novel's patriotism is found in its 'Shandeism' which he describes as a "political position" in which British liberty is best expressed through the depiction of English national character. Sterne "offers a portrait of a certain kind of Englishness and prompts patriotic responses in the

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<sup>193</sup> Colin Jones, *The Great Nation, France from Louis XV to Napoleon 1715-99* (London: Allen Lane, 2002), p. 221.

<sup>194</sup> Thomas Keymer, *Sterne, the Moderns and the Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 186.

<sup>195</sup> John Richardson, 'Sterne's Patriotic Shandeism', *Essays in Criticism*, 58, 1 (2008), p. 22.

reader, though patriotic in a very unusual way.”<sup>196</sup> This response, he argues is elicited through the novel’s sentimental qualities: British liberty smiles on the eccentricity of the Shandy family, creating a fellow-feeling which elicits sympathetic laughter and tears. Also remarking on the novel’s patriotic dimension, Carol Watts calls Toby a patriot of “the Old Stamp,” like Pitt, reflecting public-spiritedness and energy.<sup>197</sup> Watts argues that alignment with that brand of patriot ideology also positions the sentimental hero Toby as an apologist for Pitt’s imperial ambitions and the sacrifices required to pursue them.<sup>198</sup>

I attempt to situate Toby’s patriotism through an understanding of his status as a military professional—a product of a standing army serving a powerful state. The creation of professional armies necessitates that a portion of the citizenry comes forward and choose this role. They undergo processes which turn them into professionals and in the practice of this trade men encounter situations which no civilian will ever face. In empire building the military man might be asked to kill people who pose no actual danger to his homeland, an ability that is contextualised as ‘professional’: this is a man who will obey orders because it is his professional duty. This kind of person, transformed by the state into someone who can kill in these circumstances, is not the same as a citizen soldier returning home with his compatriots after having defended the borders of his homeland. Toby’s apparent love for his profession is not expressed overtly as patriotism, but rather as *availability*; more than simply willing to be recruited, Toby is desperate for the military life. Toby and Trim manifest an uncontrollable compulsion to repeat the signifying practices of military professionalism long after they have been removed from the battlefield. This is both humorous and poignant, exploring the territory of loss of identity and physical suffering, but it is also puts the spotlight on the state that made them professionals. In the oppositions described by Shennan, in a state powerful enough to gain an empire, patriotic ideology is increasingly decided *by* that state. It is a political position to suggest that there are men such as Toby, who love their profession and suffer from *not* being allowed to perform this role.

The veterans in this study are not only long-serving, they are also, to varying degrees, injured. Laurence Sterne used the word ‘disabled’ to describe Corporal Trim’s predicament: “the poor fellow had been disabled for the service” (p. 84). Historian David A. Gerber demonstrates that the veteran, and moreover, the disabled veteran has become a more distinct category since the normalization of the professional army. In his study of the

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<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>197</sup> Carol Watts, *The Cultural Work of Empire, The Seven Years’ War and the Imagining of the Shandean State* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 83.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

place of the injured war veteran throughout Western culture, he explains that although veterans appear continuously “if mostly in muted forms, from ancient texts to the present,” our current awareness of the disabled veteran is a result of the growing numbers of military mobilizations over the last two hundred years especially, and as a result of the “greater normalization of his existence.”<sup>199</sup> Gerber makes a distinction between how the veteran is treated in life and how he is treated in culture, arguing that how the veteran is represented in culture is connected to “how societies and political systems have defined his place.”<sup>200</sup> In reality, Gerber notes that, “societies have long been haunted by fears of the violent potential of veterans with unpredictable mental states,” resulting in the two earliest institutions dedicated to veterans, Hôtel des Invalides (1633) in Paris and Chelsea Hospital (1685) in London, which Gerber maintains “were founded in part to remove from the streets just such men, who, by the definitions of their time, were considered unstable.”<sup>201</sup> In culture the veteran might be valorised as the warrior, “a symbol of masculine honour,” but equally, he might be employed to engender pity and fear, “common emotions associated with our response to disability, [which] serve to subvert honour and infantilize and feminize the male.”<sup>202</sup> Gerber makes the point that pity results from public perception that veterans are innocent sufferers, “men injured through no fault of their own, and made thus to experience pain, a loss of autonomy, and exile from the community of the able-bodied.”<sup>203</sup> The reactions that Gerber lists are relational. They exist between the veteran and the civilian, who will never undertake military service. The veteran’s place, as Gerber argues, is defined by society and political systems, but culture can reveal what this place is as his social distinction is deployed for ideological ends.

The subject of empire and the lingering after effects of victory and defeat posed the question of how genres would adapt to reflect a new horizon. The three works examined in this study were problematic for contemporaries to define generically and each chose for subject matter the military veteran. *Bélisaire* and *Humphry Clinker* are works which are seen to have been the culmination of their authors’ philosophical views. In 1765, after a serious illness from which he thought that he would not recover, Marmontel was inspired to write something of lasting importance, something specifically like Fénelon’s *Télémaque*, something that would “laisser de moi traces d’homme.”<sup>204</sup> Robert Grandroute observes

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<sup>199</sup> David A. Gerber, *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), p. 3.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>204</sup> Jean-François Marmontel, *Mémoires*, Édition critique par John Renwick (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2008), p. 500.

that *Bélisaire* has been called a ‘conte’ but also a ‘roman’, but always with a qualifier— ‘moral’, ‘politique’, or ‘philosophique’ and was always acknowledged as ‘pédagogique.’ He argues that, “*Bélisaire* tend à apparaître comme une sorte de résumé, de ‘digest’ de la philosophie du siècle.”<sup>205</sup> Eusèbe Salverte, scrutinising what he saw as a discordant relationship between genre and subject matter wrote, “*Bélisaire* contient trop de morale et de politique pour un roman, et trop de roman pour un livre de morale et de politique.”<sup>206</sup> Katherine Astbury calls *Bélisaire* “an extended moral tale” and argues that “it is perhaps not surprising that *Bélisaire* was the last moral tale Marmontel wrote for twenty-five years since it contains in detail all of his social, moral and religious ideas.”<sup>207</sup> With his *Humphry Clinker*, Smollett employed a hybrid genre to take on serious subjects; Wolfgang Iser calls the novel a fusion of travel narrative, epistolary novel and the picaresque.<sup>208</sup> Smollett was also influenced by *Télémaque*, having translated it in the years before the writing of *Humphry Clinker*.<sup>209</sup> Leslie A. Chilton argues that *Humphry Clinker*, “directly recalls *Télémaque*,” adding that Fénelon’s novel “mirrored a number of the moral and political beliefs [Smollett] held throughout his writing career: the corrupting influence of luxury, the necessity for virtuous rulers and ministers, and the need to curb imperial ambitions and unnecessary warfare.”<sup>210</sup> The veterans contained within these two novels are deployed for openly ideological purposes.

‘Modern’ was and is the key word used to describe Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*. The problem of attempting to interpret the work lay in the very problem of identifying its genre. Tom Keymer explains:

Sterne’s contemporaries sought to get to grips with his elusive masterpiece by assigning it, or by locating it in serious or satirical relation, to a particular tradition or genre. Many saw *Tristram Shandy* as supremely modern and of its moment, and read the narrative as a playful or parodic exercise in the ascendant genre of the day, the novel itself.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Robert Grandroute, Introduction, *Bélisaire* by Jean-François Marmontel (Paris: Société des Textes Moderns Français, 1994), pp. LIII-LIV.

<sup>206</sup> Eusèbe Salverte, *Tableau Littéraire de la France au dix-huitième siècle* (Paris : H. Nicolle, 1809), p. 211.

<sup>207</sup> Katherine Astbury, *The Moral tale in France and Germany 1750-1789* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2002), p. 105 & p. 17.

<sup>208</sup> Wolfgang Iser, ‘The Generic Control of the Aesthetic Response: An Examination of Smollett’s *Humphry Clinker*’, *The Southern Humanities Review* 3 (1969), p. 253.

<sup>209</sup> Smollett’s translation was published in 1776, but Leslie A. Chilton notes that it was largely written before the writing of *Humphry Clinker* (1771): Leslie A. Chilton, introduction to *The Adventures of Telemachus, the son of Ulysses*, trans. Tobias Smollett (Athens & London: University of Georgia Press, 1997), p. xxiv.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

<sup>211</sup> Thomas Keymer, *Laurence Sterne’s Tristram Shandy: A Casebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 4.

The novel is narrated entirely by Tristram, an extremely subjective and oblique perspective. Iser writes that in *Tristram Shandy*, “an omniscient narrator is out of the question, for this would be in direct conflict with the unfathomableness of subjectivity.”<sup>212</sup> Though Toby Shandy’s experience is narrated by his nephew, Iser points out that from the fifth volume (of nine volumes) Tristram “virtually ceases to be the subject of the narrative. It is now Toby with his imaginary military campaigns and his unsuccessful love affair who emerges as the ‘hero’ of Tristram’s Life.”<sup>213</sup> Rene Bosch contends that, “the development of Toby in the course of *Tristram Shandy*, from a vulgarly comic minor character to an important, and in Max Byrd’s term ‘inflatable’ figure, has given present-day critics the impression that Sterne gradually began to see his work as a novel in the modern sense of the word.”<sup>214</sup> Ian Campbell Ross attests, “it is important to stress that *Tristram Shandy*, for all Sterne’s delight in bawdy, is at heart a genuinely moral work. At times it was recognised as such in Sterne’s own day.”<sup>215</sup> ‘Moral’ is a slippery term; ‘morality’ too can be deployed for ideological purpose but is more difficult to unpick than straightforward political or philosophical themes, especially true of Sterne’s novel. Yet the deployment of a military veteran as a sentimental hero during wartime creates charged meanings. Eugene Hnatko, analysing the ‘failure’ of eighteenth-century tragedy, argues that moral instruction was “what the age saw as the purpose of all writing.”<sup>216</sup> Is all moral content instructive? With the high genres out of step with this new imperative the question became who would be a ‘hero’ in the time of empire building, how they would be represented and how would genres balance the demand for moral instruction with the lingering hold of classicism’s preference for timeless themes.

### **The Military ‘Back Story’**

In literature, the creation of the military veteran as ideological ‘other’ is dependent on two factors: first, the establishment of a ‘back story’ for the military man; second, the production of an audience to react to the veteran. The back story creates a contrast between what this military man was and what he is now. It also establishes that the veteran possessed an originating masculinity that was performative (courage, strength,

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<sup>212</sup> Wolfgang Iser, *Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 56.

<sup>213</sup> Iser, *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>214</sup> Rene Bosch, trans. Piet Verhoeff, *Labyrinth of digressions: Tristram Shandy as perceived and influenced by Sterne’s Early Imitators*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), p. 148.

<sup>215</sup> Laurence Sterne, ed. Ian Campbell Ross, *Tristram Shandy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. x.

<sup>216</sup> Eugene Hnatko, ‘The Failure of Eighteenth-Century Tragedy’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 11, 3 (1971), p. 468.

military skill, duty). Age, time, hardship and mistreatment transform the military man into the military veteran who now demonstrates a differently performative masculinity through wisdom, stoicism and suffering. Whatever changes were wrought on this military man, they never completely negate his originating masculinity; the contrast only serves to add pathos and moral context to the narratives.



Abraham Bosse, after Luciano Borzone, *Belisarius receiving alms*, 1620-1630

*Bélisaire* is set in the declining years of the Roman Empire, an allegory for France in the aftermath of the Seven Years War. Marmontel had been captivated by an engraving inspired by a painting of Belisarius and chose to adapt this figure for his novel. General Flavius Belisarius was a historical figure, a great military leader who would end up at the mercy of a corrupt empire in fatal decline. Belisarius would be, in fact, the *last* Roman general under what was still known as the Roman Empire though based in Byzantium. This figure has provided a back story to art and theatre for centuries, functioning as a palimpsest, a character that could be reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form. The fact that Belisarius is a historical figure complicates the maleability of his back story but it was Marmontel's treatment of this military leader that created a new interest in his legend in the eighteenth century. Bosse's engraving captures the moment of confrontation in which the blinded and begging military hero is recognised by anguished citizens, the figure on the left probably also a soldier. This powerfully built and middle-aged Belisarius still bears the stamp of the military man, only disabled by the blinding. In the theatre, none of the representations of Belisarius were concerned with a sustained

look at the aftermath of his return home and his treatment at the hands of the state, the point at which Marmontel began.

Historian Ian Hughes explains that despite Belisarius's military genius, "his story is now relatively little known, especially when compared to the giants of the ancient world such as Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great and Hannibal."<sup>217</sup> He was the military leader who attempted to restore the western empire and imperial rule to Emperor Justinian, which Hughes explains, "gives us the paradox of a Roman emperor trying to capture Rome. Although the undertaking is usually seen as a failure, Africa, Italy and a large part of Spain were retaken."<sup>218</sup> That the historical figure General Flavius Belisarius was, after a long and glorious military career, imprisoned for a period of time is fact. Belisarius was accompanied for the greater part of his life by Procopius of Caesarea, a Byzantine scholar trained in the law who would come to function as Belisarius's aide-de-camp and secretary.<sup>219</sup> Edward Gibbon used Procopius as a source for *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776) and determined that Belisarius was indeed treated unjustly: "after forty years' service the emperor had prejudged his guilt; and injustice was sanctified by the presence and authority of the patriarch." He recounts the story of the 'disgrace' of Belisarius, his subsequent pardon and the restoration of his honours, and his death eight months later: "Such is the simple and genuine narrative of the fall of Belisarius and the ingratitude of Justinian."<sup>220</sup> About the legend of Belisarius's mutilation he says: "That he was deprived of his eyes, and reduced by envy to beg his bread, 'Give a penny to Belisarius the general!' is a fiction of later times, which has obtained credit, or rather favour, as a strange example of the vicissitudes of fortune."<sup>221</sup> In historical treatments, Belisarius is a great military hero featured in lengthy passages describing his many military campaigns. Historical accounts also inform readers that Belisarius had a wife, Antonina. This is echoed by Gibbon and corroborated by modern historians. Adrien Richer explained that this was no ordinary wife:

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<sup>217</sup> Ian Hughes, *Belisarius, The Last Roman General* (Barnsley, Yorkshire: Pen & Sword, 2009), p. xi.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Procopius wrote three historical accounts of the period: *The Wars of Justinian*, *The Buildings of Justinian* and the notorious *Secret History*.

<sup>220</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV (London: 1776-1778), p. 336.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid. Two biographies of Belisarius appeared before Marmontel's novel: John Oldmixon, *The Life and History of Belisarius who Conquer'd Africa and Italy, with an Account of his Disgrace, The Ingratitude of the Romans and a Parallel between him and a Modern Heroe* (London: Printed for A. Baldwin, at the Oxford Arms in Warwick Lane, 1713); Adrien Richer, *Des Hommes Illustres Comparés les uns avec les autres à commencer depuis la chute de l'Empire Romain, jusqu'à nos jours, Tome Second* (Paris : Libraire Prault fils et Libraire Pissot, 1756), translated into English as *The Life of Belisarius, Translated from the French with some Explanatory Notes and Observations* (London: J. Hinton, 1759).

Ce vainqueur de l'Orient & de l'Occident; ce héros, l'unique espoir des Romains, l'appui du trône de Justinien, la terreur des rois, était le mari d'une prostituée, qui le déshonorait par ses débauches. [...] Bélisaire ferma long-temps les yeux sur les débauches de sa femme : il la surprit même dans le crime, & ne lui en marqua aucun ressentiment. Enfin, il sut que sa trop grande facilité le couvrait de ridicule.<sup>222</sup>

Gibbon contends that “the fame, and even the virtue, of Belisarius were polluted by the lust and cruelty of his wife; and that the hero deserved an appellation which may not drop from the pen of the decent historian,” and, he continues “the unconquerable patience and loyalty of Belisarius appear either *below* or *above* the character of a MAN.”<sup>223</sup> So, according to Richer and Gibbon the glorious General Belisarius was a cuckold. All the historians ascribe Belisarius’s disgrace to a corrupt and jealous court. They credit, albeit reluctantly, Antonina for the rescinding of the disgrace because of her close ties to Justinian’s debauched wife Theodora who used her influence to have him released. These sexual and courtly machinations probably account for the suitability of the Belisarius story as a subject of seventeenth-century tragedy.

In the theatre, plays featuring Belisarius appeared at regular intervals: Desfontaines (1641), Rotrou (1643), La Calprenède (1659), Chationnière (1678), and William Philips (1724). By the 1730s, when Carlo Goldoni saw a Belisarius play performed in Naples, he found it “detestable”: “Justinian was imbecile, Theodore a courtesan, and Belisarius a long-winded divine. He appeared on stage deprived of his eyes; Harlequin was his guide, and drove him along with a cudgel. Everyone was shocked, and no one more so than myself.”<sup>224</sup> Goldoni’s shock indicates knowledge of the prescribed elements of the Belisarius legend and displeasure in their manipulation for comic effect. When he complains about the piece he is advised to write his own and in 1734 his *Belisario* debuted in Venice to great success. In these theatrical representations, Belisarius is a young, glorious and unmarried romantic hero, an aristocrat whose military credentials served more as class markers than historical verisimilitude. He is blinded in all but one of the plays (the Desfontaines) but the motive for this ungrateful treatment was courtly intrigue and sexual jealousy. The longer-term aftermath of his treatment was not a concern and the curtain fell directly after the mutilation. Rotrou, excusing himself for taking liberties with the facts of Belisarius’s life proposed a brazen argument in the dedication to his *Bélisaire*: Belisarius, after having been badly treated during his life

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<sup>222</sup> Richer, *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>223</sup> Gibbon, *Op. cit.*, p. 363.

<sup>224</sup> Carlo Goldoni, *Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni*, trans. John Black (Boston: J.R. Osgood & Co., 1877), p. 140.

should not have expected to see his history nor his representation any more privileged in death. In other words, he was ready-made as a victim, ripe for literary manipulation.



Gravelot, frontispiece to Marmontel's *Bélisaire*, 1767

Where did Marmontel position himself in relation to history and tragedy? In the preface he explained that although aware that the legend of Belisarius blind and begging was popular opinion rather than history, this opinion had so taken hold that it was impossible to think of Belisarius any other way. But in all other matters he claims to have faithfully followed the history of Procopius. Marmontel greatly emphasises Belisarius's age, enfeebling him and thereby exaggerating the cruelty of the blinding. This effect was supported by Gravelot's illustrations, which portray a frail and elderly man as well as the child Marmontel devised to act as Belisarius's guide, a vulnerable youth guiding the once powerful military hero. Marmontel's Belisarius is married to the scandalous Antonina, but she turns penitent after seeing her husband's victimization and she dies shortly after their reunion, freeing Belisarius to become a de-sexualised sage. In Marmontel's hands we have a variant of 'virtue in distress', a central feature of his popular sentimental tales (his *Contes moraux*), themselves influenced by the works of Samuel Richardson. In *Clarissa*, the persecution of virtue, as well as the letter-format of Richardson's novel, permitted the

revelation of an intense and minutely-detailed subjective depiction of suffering. Belisarius, by contrast, reveals little subjectivity. Despite the fact that (or because) he is an actual historical figure, he is still in some senses part of the classical (neo-classical) universal. This status, in turn, could assist Marmontel in his attempt to create literature that might compete with the high genres and leave a lasting legacy.

For *Lismahago* and *Toby Shandy*, a back story had to be invented. Smollett employs up-to-the-minute details in his construction of Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago, who makes a tragi-comic entrance at the mid-point of the novel. The novel centres on Matt Bramble, member of the Welsh squirearchy, his spinster sister Tabby, nephew Jerry, niece Lydia, and various comical characters who travel around Britain. Lismahago encounters the Bramble party in Durham while on the way to his native Scotland after thirty years of military service in the colonies, most recently in America fighting in the Seven Years War. In appearance, he is far from being a young, handsome military hero. Aged and battle-scarred, the sight of the severe wounds to his scalp causes the ladies in the Bramble party to scream when he is briefly parted with his wig. He describes it as “an honest scar received in the service of my country” (p. 211). Lismahago is the totemic symbol of the survival of the horrors of colonial war. His proximity to the dangerous and exotic inhabitants of the New World gives him an air of masculine danger.

In the colonies, Lismahago and his comrade Ensign Murphy escaped French captivity and went into the wild woods hoping to find an English settlement but were instead captured by the Miami Indians. After the pair endured torture at the hands of the entire tribe, Murphy was killed and eaten. Lismahago, meanwhile, was forcibly married to one of the Miami women—Squinkinacoosta. Lismahago found happiness with his wife, they had a son together, he was elected sachem and acknowledged first warrior of the tribe, and he was given an Indian name, “but all these advantages and honours he was obliged to resign” when he was forcibly exchanged for the release of an Indian prisoner. With evident irony, Smollett makes it clear that Lismahago admires the Miamis, easily reconciling the violence with which he and Ensign Murphy were first met. It was the custom of the tribe, no more or less remarkable than the actions taken by Europeans in the name of professional duty. Jerry describes his Aunt Tabby’s attraction to Lismahago: “she seemed to be taken with the same charms that captivated the heart of Desdemona, who loved the Moor for the dangers he had past” (p. 216). Like Belisarius, Lismahago was a survivor of a lengthy and difficult military career. Now quixotic in appearance, his meagreness and scars are symbols of a lifetime of hardship in foreign lands and duty to a state that is indifferent to his fate.

For Sterne's *Uncle Toby*, his military back story remains resolutely in the present. The groin wound Toby received at the Siege of Namur (1695) in the Nine Years War refuses to heal. This wound brought a sudden and unhappy end to Toby's actual military career. Toby's back story is also one of celibacy/asexuality, a status that only becomes a concern when he leaves the military. Always-already 'emasculated,' Sterne severed the stereotypical link between masculine heterosexual virility and military aptitude. David Gerber writes that war and disability can create a "crisis of gender" for the returning military man and indeed Toby's crisis of gender is not a crisis until he returns to the civilian world. The groin wound that will not heal comes to symbolize a past which can never be reconciled; it is constantly in the present and making demands on the injured man and those around him, a reminder of an absence.

### **The Establishment of an Audience**

The second factor necessary for deploying the military veteran for ideological purposes is the production of an audience whose purpose will be to react to the veteran. The transformation of the military man into a physically vulnerable figure creates pathos and entitles the men to occupy a position of experience and moral integrity, they are established as figures that other characters listen to (and so ought the reader). The re-integration to 'home' is where the men find their audience. What Elizabeth Harries says of *Tristram Shandy* could be applied to all three novels: "Though women are usually in the wings, they are often dismissed, deplored, or even excoriated by the male figures who continue to talk endlessly centre stage. As one feminist critic has put it, 'the narrative spotlight comes to rest most often and most continually upon men alone, talking'."<sup>225</sup>

Marmontel's *Belisarius* was a military hero with thirty years of loyal service to the Emperor Justinian. He did not retire from service; upon return to the court during peace time he became the victim of scheming courtiers, jealous of his success. Having languished in captivity for a year without being charged, it is finally the general's 'vieux soldats' who rise up in large numbers and demand his release, compelling Justinian to accede to their demands. Justinian, afraid of these crowds of soldiers and *Belisarius's* hold over them, releases him "hors d'état de les commander" (p. 46): he is blinded. *Belisarius* is the only veteran to be overtly 'disabled' by his own state. His didactic role emerges in the relationship he forms with a young, aristocratic military officer named Tibère (Tiberius),

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<sup>225</sup> Elizabeth W. Harries, 'Words, sex, and gender in Sterne's novels', *The Cambridge Companion to Laurence Sterne*, ed. Thomas Keymer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 115.

who is stunned by the treatment meted out to Belisarius by the state, and who sees the general as someone who could teach him a great deal. The relationship between Belisarius and Tiberius echoes the master/pupil relationship of Fénelon's Mentor and Telemachus. Tiberius becomes Belisarius's companion and they are joined by Justinian himself, in disguise. The first response to Belisarius from Tiberius and his friends is stunned compassion, a model of response that will be echoed throughout the novel:

Qu'on s'imagine, au nom de Bélisaire, au nom de ce héros tant de fois vainqueur dans les trios parties du monde, quels furent l'étonnement et la confusion de ces jeunes gens. L'immobilité, le silence exprimèrent d'abord le respect dont ils étaient frappés ; et oubliant que Bélisaire était aveugle, aucun d'eux n'osait lever les yeux sur lui. O grand homme ! lui dit enfin Tibère, que la fortune est injuste et cruelle ! vous, à qui l'Empire a dû pendant trente ans sa gloire et ses prospérités, c'est vous qu'on a traîné dans les fers, qu'on a privé de la lumière (p. 15) !

Belisarius may have little interiority, but he is eloquent. He talks and talks. Tiberius says of Belisarius that he wants to "puiser dans son âme, comme à la source de la sagesse, de la gloire et de la vertu." Belisarius replies, "Venez me voir: je serai bien aise de converser avec vous" (p. 55).

Smollett's Lieutenant Lismahago is the only veteran to have retired voluntarily after thirty years of service: "At the peace, he had sold out upon half pay, and was returned to Britain, with a view to pass the rest of his life in his own county, where he hoped to find some retreat where his slender finances would afford him a decent subsistence" (p. 215). Lismahago spent his military career unable to rise higher than the rank of lieutenant because he could not afford to buy a preferment. His hopes rest entirely on his native Scotland. Conversations between Lismahago and the two men, Matt Bramble and his nephew Jerry, form much of Lismahago's representation. Matt and Jerry are Oxford-educated but, in Matt's words, "raised to nothing," meaning they have no need to take up a profession because their lives are embedded in the squirearchy. The two develop a grudging respect for this didactic military man, but their first response to him is compassion:

There is no hold by which an Englishman is sooner taken than that of compassion—We were immediately interested in behalf of this veteran—Even Tabby's heart was melted; but our pity was warmed with indignation, when we learned, that in the course of two sanguinary wars, he had been wounded, maimed, mutilated, taken and enslaved, without ever having attained a higher rank than that of lieutenant—My uncle's eyes gleamed, and his nether lip quivered, while he exclaimed, 'I vow to God, sir, your case is a reproach to the service—The injustice you have met is so flagrant'—'I must crave your pardon, sir (cried the other, interrupting him), I complain of no injustice' (p. 211).

Matt Bramble writes of meeting “an old weather-beaten Scotch lieutenant called Lismahago” and continues: “His manner is as harsh as his countenance; but his peculiar turn of thinking, and his pack of knowledge made up of the remnants of rarities, rendered his conversation desirable, in spite of his pedantry and ungracious address” (p. 226).

In Sterne’s novel, Toby Shandy and his comrade Corporal Trim do not retire from military service, both are seriously injured in battle, rendering them of no further use to the army. Tristram explains that “the wound rendering [Toby] unfit for the service, it was thought expedient he should return to England, in order, if possible, to be set to rights” (p. 68). The bond joining Toby and Trim remains intact in the domestic world of the Shandy family in which there is a catalogue of male eccentricities against which the sentimental potential of their military relationship can be explored. The reader is continually told that Toby is not eloquent, but this is deceptive in a novel in which sentiment is a co-existing language and where actions also articulate meaning. Tristram attributes a didactic quality to Toby’s unintentional lessons. After witnessing Toby perform an act of kindness Tristram reports, “I was but ten years old when this happened [...] the lesson of universal good-will then taught and imprinted by my uncle Toby, has never since been worn out of my mind” (p. 100). All three veterans are established as characters that possess an attentive audience within the novel.

### **Republican Virtue and National Masculinity**

Belisarius and Lismahago, both products of societies that have made them veterans will articulate the manner in which the military and society are inseparable. Lismahago ruefully appraises an empire on the ascendancy of its power. Belisarius examines society from the vantage point of an empire in decline. Both utilise the idealised model of the republic in order to ask questions about empire; Belisarius does so openly and Lismahago obliquely. Indeed, Belisarius delivers a manifesto laying out the steps that would transform the empire back into a virtuous republic. This section will focus on the manner in which the lofty ideals of the republic are used to underscore the relation between military and civilian masculinities. The two veterans will show how it is possible that they might not have been ‘othered’ and how the civilian man could retain his martial spirit. The subject of the relation of the military man to the state was taken up by both Adam Smith and Montesquieu and will help to set out the terms employed by Belisarius and Lismahago.

Adam Smith provided an explanation for what he saw as the necessity a civilized society was under to possess a professional army, a necessity wrought by changes to economic and social structures. In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), Smith states that “the first duty of the sovereign, that of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies, can be performed only by means of a military force” (p. 279). He guides the reader through the “different periods of improvement,” demonstrating historical periods in which society was structured such that “every man was a warrior,” including the citizen armies of the Roman republic to which all men of military age served without pay for a period of time (pp. 279-82). Moving to the early modern era, a “more advanced society,” the same factors that brought about the division of labour served to render it “altogether impossible” that men could be both soldiers *and* perform a separate occupation (p. 282). Both skilled labour and the military profession now demanded time and mastery of skill to attain their possible “degree of perfection” (p. 285). Smith considers that the civilised state has two options: to raise a militia or a standing army. The maintenance of a militia requires that a state “enforce the practice of military exercises” and “oblige” a portion of the citizenry to join military service to their normal trade or profession. With a standing army, the state employs and maintains “a certain number of citizens in the constant practice of military exercises, [and renders] the trade of a soldier a particular trade, separate and distinct from all others” (p. 286). Smith articulates the nature of the difference as an essential contrast in the relationship between the man and his profession:

In a militia, the character of the labourer, artificer, or tradesman, predominates over that of the soldier; in a standing army, that of the soldier predominates over every other character: and in this distinction seems to consist the essential difference between those two different species of military force (p. 287).

This difference has strong ramifications when the soldier is at home, a subject that Smith does not address. Ultimately, it is not so much that Smith endorses a standing army as that he thinks that militias are not capable of withstanding attacks from professional armies. This is a contentious point and one that Marmontel and Smollett counter with criticisms of standing armies. Smith himself acknowledges the drawbacks of professional armies: they require funding through taxation, they make for powerful kings, and, they are not necessarily invincible. He admits that the “fall of the western empire” (“the third great revolution in the affairs of mankind”) was “brought about by the irresistible superiority which the militia of a nation of shepherds has over that of a civilised nation” (p. 293). The aftermath of this fall is the backdrop of *Bélisaire*, with Justinian and Belisarius contextualising how to go forward with what remains of the empire.

In his explanation for the fall of the Roman Empire, Smith blames a change that occurred to the nature of the entire populace: "The civil came to predominate over the military character" (p. 292). This is a subject that causes Smith some concern because of its implications for contemporary British society. Smith argued that even with a standing army "the security of every society must always depend upon the martial spirit of the great body of the people" (p. 373). Explaining that the "Greek and Roman republics maintained the martial spirit of their respective citizens" through military exercises, he argued that the modern state can and should intervene to prevent the populace from losing their martial spirit and succumbing to cowardice. Contending that cowardice is a dangerous form of 'mental mutilation' in a society he wrote, "a coward, a man incapable either of defending or of revenging himself, evidently wants one of the most essential parts of the character of a man" (p. 374). Smith reluctantly concedes, however, that such a scheme is unlikely to succeed because the institutions of ancient Greece and Rome were more effectual through an influence that was more 'universal' than that of contemporary institutions. Smith's concern over the effect of a standing army is a concern with a change to the entire populace and it is a concern about effeminacy. The citizen soldier gained his identity through his trade and his citizenship, but retained a martial spirit; the professional soldier, by contrast, is a distinct category of man separate to all others and is made responsible for representing the nation's martial spirit on the battlefield.

Where Smith had made a distinction between types of armies accompanying the progression of uncivilised to civilised society, Montesquieu makes the distinction between a soldier in a republic and a soldier in a monarchy and their respective relation to the state. In *De l'Esprit des lois* (1748), Montesquieu gave a specific interpretation of republican military service: "on ne prend les armes, dans la république, qu'en qualité de défenseur des lois et de la patrie ; c'est parce que l'on est citoyen, qu'on se fait, pour un temps, soldat."<sup>226</sup> One is a citizen and, therefore, a soldier, but not in offense. Comparing a republic with a monarchy, he asks whether it is possible to be both a civilian and a military man in those societies:

Mettra-t-on sur une même tête les emplois civils et militaires ? Il faut les unir dans la république, et les séparer dans la monarchie. Dans la république, il serait bien dangereux de faire, de la profession des armes, un état particulier, distingué de celui qui a les fonctions civiles, et dans les monarchies, il n'y aurait pas moins de péril à donner les deux fonctions à la même personne (p. 196).

On what basis does he make this distinction? Montesquieu signals the motivation of the two different types of men. The citizen soldier of the republic picks up his arms in defence

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<sup>226</sup> Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des lois* (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1979), p. 196.

of his homeland and then returns to his trade: at all times he is a citizen. To make a distinction between 'citizen' and 'soldier' would undermine the virtue of the self-sacrificing citizen soldier by disrupting his proper relationship to the state. In a monarchy, argues Montesquieu, the motivation of the professional soldier is glory, honour or fortune; he works for the king rather than the state. With such motivation, he cannot be trusted in civil roles where he would be prone to corruption: "on doit bien se garder de donner les emplois civils à des hommes pareils" (p. 196). Montesquieu opposes republican self-sacrifice and monarchical self-interest.

Smith idealised the Roman republic because of the quality of its citizens *in toto*—physically healthy, morally uncorrupted, martial spirit intact and effeminacy kept at bay. Even though arguing for the necessity of the professional army, Smith put the onus on the state to keep the divide between the military man and the civilian as narrow as possible; it was essential, he argued, that the civilian man must try to retain his martial characteristics. Montesquieu idealised the Roman republic on the basis of the moral quality of the connection between the citizen and his state where there was no divide between the military man and the citizen, thereby nullifying the concept of civilian and blurring any boundaries between 'veteran' and the rest of society. The ideal of both Smith and Montesquieu is to keep the distinctions between the people and the defenders of the state as narrow as possible so that the body politic is uncorrupted. They point to the way that the veteran would not be made into the distinct and separate category that he occupies in contemporary society.

Belisarius and Lismahago will explore the elements of these paradigms. From his vantage point as veteran, Belisarius tells his two pupils Tiberius and Justinian that the empire was too big, too heterogeneous and plagued by corruption. Naming three signs that the empire was approaching its decline: "les lois étaient en oubli, les finances au pillage, la discipline militaire à l'abandon," foregrounding the position that the relationship between the military and society are inseparable (p. 11). The opening paragraphs of the novel portray an empire in peacetime, deluged with thousands of inactive troops who were useless to the state, a financial burden, and decadent through boredom. Belisarius is given refuge by a group of young military officers who, dissolute, enter into a drunken conversation on the ills of the state, turning to the subject of how their military talents and services have been overlooked. This prompts Belisarius to argue that true military virtue is demonstrated through the expectation of no recompense from the state or sovereign, especially true for young nobles, "estimez-vous assez peu ce noble dévouement pour exiger qu'on vous le paie" (p. 14)? He faults them for expecting either honours or financial

recompense, arguing, “Il faut se donner ou se vendre; il n’y a point de milieu. L’un est un acte de liberté, l’autre un acte de servitude” (p. 14). Recompense is received through the preservation of their homeland and the rewards of citizenship. These young aristocrats will be contrasted three chapters later with the story of an aging peasant whose two sons served honourably in the military, one losing his life in defensive warfare that saved their village from the Huns. The peasant’s remaining son, finished with his military service, returned to his village to help cultivate the land and raise his family, manifesting the way in which he has been triply useful to *la patrie* whereas the young nobles have not proved their utility in any way.

The story of the virtuous and useful peasants serves to announce two further subjects: a condemnation of luxury and a critique of offensive war engendered by ambition. Belisarius longs for a return to the antique frugality and the selflessness of “les mœurs héroïques” (p. 148). To return the empire to civic virtue, he argues that it is necessary to root out luxury in order to bring about a “révolution dans les mœurs” (p. 141). In the military, Belisarius contends, luxury is “funeste,” making men soft and lethargic. Equally, the class distinctions signalled by luxury in the army cause dissention among the troops where the esteem attached to riches leads to a contempt for virtue. Belisarius banished luxury from his armies by banishing it first from his own tent and those of all the officers: “Quand la loi est égale et nécessaire, personne ne s’en plaint” (p. 143). He blames wars of conquest on ambitious men whose passion for war is prompted by a desire for personal glory, citing the example of Alexander whose invasions took him to the ends of the earth only for him to return “ennuyé de l’univers et de soi-même” (p. 75). A good prince should, rather, make it his glory to achieve public happiness. Furthermore, wars of conquest have created an empire that is too big and lacking in national character. The *patrie*, he despairs, no longer has a single name; Belisarius reminisces for the days when an army commander could say to his men, ‘remember that you are Romans’. Attributing the woes of the state to this disparity, he makes a link between lack of national identity and military weakness, asking, “ici quel est le berceau, quelle est l’école des guerriers” (p. 108)? Like Montesquieu, Belisarius wants a soldier to have a moral connection with his homeland.

Belisarius will combine his theories on the military and the state into one master plan which he reveals to Justinian near the end of the novel. He declares:

J’oserai proposer le vaste plan que je médite, et qui rendrait cet Empire plus puissant qu’il ne fut jamais.

Quel est-il donc ce plan ? demanda l’Empereur.

Je demanderais qu'on rendît tout cet Empire militaire : en sorte que tout homme libre serait soldat, mais seulement pour la défense du pays (p. 166).

This army general wants to dismantle the standing army and return to the citizen soldier in order to recreate a moral relationship to the state, “dans mon plan, la patrie n’est plus un nom vague, une chimère pour le soldat; c’est un objet présent et cher ” (p. 167). When not defending his country, the citizen soldier would devote his life to agriculture. Imagining men working in the fields, nothing makes Belisarius happier than the “tableau de cette jeunesse laborieuse et guerrière,” their occupation preserving them from the vices caused by boredom. They are hardened by the daily routine of toil and they are “utile à l’ombre de la paix, et toute prête à courir aux armes au premier signal de la guerre” (p. 168). There would be no distinction between the soldier and the citizen. An armed populace are a double-guarantor of their own freedom—protected from attacks from enemies beyond their borders and protected from the tyranny of a cruel leader. But this plan also compels them to *be* citizens, no small obligation.

Countering Adam Smith, Marmontel set out a thesis that led incrementally and logically to the necessity of eliminating the professional army and wars of ambition in order to create virtuous, powerful and, he argued, happy citizens. Smollett will also develop Lismahago’s theories as a thesis. Lismahago “undertook to prove that poverty was a blessing to a nation” and that, moreover, “commerce would, sooner or later, prove the ruin of every nation” (p. 224, 228). His thesis takes two paths: firstly, a valorisation of antique virtue (and consequent condemnation of luxury); secondly, commerce was detrimental to the Scottish people who were simultaneously corrupted by luxury and exploited to attain it. Lismahago declares to Matt Bramble “those who reproach a nation for its poverty, when it is not owing to the profligacy or vice of the people, deserve no answer,” adding that he recalled a time when poverty was not a source of shame, but rather a symbol of public virtue, a sign of incorruptibility. He cites the valour and virtue of the Spartans and the celebrated leaders of the Roman republic, Fabricius, Cincinnatus, and Regulus who “were poorer than the poorest freeholder in Scotland” (p. 306). As with Belisarius, the subjects he addresses form a critique of empire building and necessitate a subsequent turn toward the antique values of the idealised republic in order to provide the countering example.

Lismahago articulates a distrust of standing armies because of their role in augmenting the power of the king: “With a parliament [...] dependent upon the crown, devoted to the prince, and supported by a standing army, garbled and modelled for the purpose, any king of England may, and probably some ambitious sovereign will, totally

overthrow all the bulwarks of the constitution” (p. 229). According to Adam Smith, “men of republican principles have been jealous of a standing army as dangerous to liberty” (p. 295), a point echoed by Sarah Percy, who explains that:

The British dislike of standing armies had its roots in the English Civil War, during which the crown had controlled the army; this legacy meant that royal control of standing armies was associated with the denial of civil liberties. A strong norm against standing armies resulted, which associated standing armies with loss of freedom. The Bill of Rights, created after the Glorious Revolution, stated ‘that the raising or keeping of a standing army within the kingdom in the time of peace, unless it be with the consent of Parliament, is against the law’.”<sup>227</sup>

The wars taking place in the colonies were undertaken in part to maintain trading supremacy and access to new products that Lismahago would label ‘luxuries,’ items which the Scottish people had lived happily without.<sup>228</sup> Originally trained as a lawyer, he is positioned as a character suitably educated and articulate to take aim at the Acts of Union, maintaining that the “Scots were losers by the union” with England.<sup>229</sup> Just as Smith was worried about the quality of the populace as a whole, Lismahago worries about the degeneration of the Scots who are being simultaneously infected with the debilitating disease of luxury *and* being deprived of large numbers of men to fight in colonial wars. In an echo of Belisarius’s assessment that the Roman Empire was no longer one state and therefore weakened, Lismahago argues that with the Union, the Scots “lost the independency of their state, the greatest prop of national spirit” (p. 308). Lismahago is not against commerce because it leads to war, he is against commerce because it leads to corruption, lack of independence and the erosion of virtue. Luxury is anathema to civic virtue. Wars of ambition are merely symptoms of this corruption.

Coming to his largest accusation, Lismahago argues that the main resource the English had acquired by the Acts of Union was the Scottish people themselves:

They got an accession of above a million of useful subjects, constituting a never-failing nursery of seamen, soldiers, labourers, and mechanics; a most valuable acquisition to a trading country, exposed to foreign wars, and obliged to maintain a number of settlements in all the four quarters of the globe. In the course of the seven years, during the last war, Scotland furnished the English army and navy with seventy thousand men, over and above those who migrated to their colonies, or mingled with them at home in the civil departments of life. This was a very considerable and seasonable supply to a nation, whose people had been for many

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<sup>227</sup> Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries, The History of a Norm in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 150.

<sup>228</sup> For a full study on Smollett’s thoughts on luxury see John Sekora’s *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

<sup>229</sup> By the Acts of the Union, the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland were joined in a single kingdom called Great Britain in 1706 and 1707.

years decreasing in number, and whose lands and manufactures were actually suffering for want of hands (p. 309).

In the relationship between England and Scotland, it would be convenient to consider the Scots to be naturally warlike and therefore particularly suited to recruitment. Lismahago dispels this notion directly: the Brambles attempt to gain the approbation of the contentious Scotsman through flattery, with Tabby Bramble declaring that “all the world allows that the Scots behaved gloriously in fighting and conquering the savages of America” (p. 227). Lismahago tells her that she has been misinformed and that the Scots performed no more or less well than any other corps. He continues: “Those who affected to extol the Scots for superior [military] merit were no friends to that nation” (p. 227). His reluctance to allow the Scots to be singled out for their military valour is recognition that this kind of “praise” is a double-edged sword, allowing for the creation of a market in men that the Scots could not control.

Belisarius argued from the vantage point of a society already corrupted by personal interest and luxury, in need of a “révolution dans les mœurs” (p. 141). Lismahago saw his homeland in the process of infection, but was incapable of stopping it. States who dismantle professional armies and engage only in wars of defence (Belisarius) or who cling to independence and to antique virtue (Lismahago) will not engage in colonial wars and thus would not create veterans as a distinct category of man or would not create such great numbers of veterans. Belisarius argues provocatively that the empire would be more powerful than ever with a citizen army. Lismahago, while lamenting Scotland’s losses, does not see the cycle of luxury/war/taxation/luxury ending till it burns itself out, like Alexander and his conquests.

### **The Dislocated Professional**

The preceding sections articulated the nature of the differences between the citizen soldier and the professional soldier and the society to which he belongs. Montesquieu believed that professional soldiers are too dangerous to be entrusted with civil employments outside of war because their motives for taking up such employment are self-interested. What if the question of motivation is even more ‘suspect’ than love of glory, honour or fortune? What if a man is seen to love the trade of war itself? What becomes of that man when war is over? *Tristram Shandy* presents a military man who was displaced from his profession through injury and given shelter in a family home. Without his profession Toby Shandy is dislocated from the direct source of his identity but he will

continue to repeat the signifying practices of the professional military man in order to maintain the identity which gave his life coherence. He does so with the aid of Corporal Trim, echoing the two French military officers in the first chapter of this study whose style of masculinity could only be brought into being through performative acts and, therefore, had to be repeated. Judith Butler describes this repetition as beyond the performer's control, which is the case with both the two French officers and Toby and Trim. Equally, the *inability* to repeat signifying practices is distressing to the performers.

Toby was a military man by vocation, not drafted and not a member of the ancient nobility, he *wanted* to be a military professional. His vocation manifested itself as an innate disposition toward a military career. Sterne employs the dialectic of nature versus nurture to such labyrinthine effect that even Toby does not know the precise source of this vocation, but he asks, "if, when I was a school-boy, I could not hear a drum beat, but my heart beat with it—was it my fault?—Did I plant the propensity there?—did I sound the alarm within, or Nature" (p. 415)? Toby is asking whether or not he had any choice in the decision to become a military man. His brother Walter, "who have sucked the same breasts with me" (p. 414), became a merchant and family man. In childhood Toby read 'chap books' that told stories of heroic warriors, he shed tears over the treatment of Hector in the *Iliad* and was subjected to corporal punishment for calling Helen of Troy a 'bitch,' such was his absorption. Reaching adulthood he says, "My blood flew out into the camp, and my heart panted for war" (p. 415). He declares, "I was born to nothing...but my commission" (p. 250). He was born to *leave* home and national military service provided the vehicle for expressing this urge, offering him access to the 'theatre of war'.

Also posed as a convoluted question of nature versus nurture is what Tristram will refer to as his uncle's 'modesty,' a reference to Toby's asexuality or complete disinterest in women. Toby's modesty pre-dates his war wound. His brother Walter declares "to think, of a man living to your age, brother, and knowing so little about women!—I know nothing at all about them, —replied my uncle Toby" (p. 90). The subject of Toby's sexuality only becomes a subject when he is made part of the civilian world where his wound becomes the focus of queries about his masculinity. Sterne's creation of a military man without an overt heterosexuality can be seen to reveal an ultra-professionalism that excludes all other considerations. Toby's relationship with Trim, however, is as close as any marriage, and its origins reveal the necessity of their pairing:

As [Trim] was well beloved in the regiment, and a handy fellow into the bargain, my uncle Toby took him for his servant, and of excellent use was he, attending my uncle Toby in the camp and in his quarters as valet, groom, barber, cook, sempster,

and nurse: and indeed, from first to last, waited upon him and served him with great fidelity and affection. My uncle Toby loved the man in return, and what attached him more to him still, was the similitude of their knowledge (p. 84).

The men became 'professional' through the adoption of unquestioning performance of duty in the face of hardships, a world dominated by stoicism and brotherhood rather than military glory. Toby notes the distinction between them and civilians: "it is not easy, Trim, for one, bred up as thou and I have been to arms, who seldom looks further forward than to the end of his musket, or backwards beyond his knapsack" (p. 511). The pair forge a mode of existence based on their mutual comprehension of the codes of military life and they *need* one another in order to repeat this practice, especially when removed to a civilian setting.

Vividly portraying the physical suffering of the seriously wounded military veteran, with Toby confined to his bed for four years and suffering "unspeakable miseries" (p. 68), Sterne also establishes that Toby's suffering is only partly physical. Indeed, as the years pass Toby reaches the limit of what medicine can offer and his psychological suffering compels him to comprehend the circumstances that led to his wound. With Trim's help he acquires maps and a library of military books and studies them religiously: "All this succeeded to his wishes, and not only freed him from a world of sad explanations, but, in the end, it prov'd the happy means, as you will read, of procuring my uncle Toby his HOBBY-HORSE" (p. 75). What had started as therapy becomes transformed into the means for Toby and Trim to recover their 'careers' as soldiers. Trim formulates the plan that they should take Toby's new hobby to a larger scale by relocating to Toby's country-house (adjacent to Walter's home) with its bowling green. This permits the men to follow in 'real time' the actual exploits of Marlborough's army in the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714). Avidly following the battle reports featured in newspapers, they build towns, fortifications, lay sieges, conduct battles, in correspondence with journalistic details. Toby and Trim are fantasy soldiers in Marlborough's army, no longer veterans. This was not to everyone's pleasure, with Tristram reporting, "My father had no great esteem for my uncle Toby's hobby-horse" (p. 189). Walter's displeasure was brought about by the amount of money Toby spent on the project, by a discomfort engendered by the pleasure the men took from war, and by bewilderment at the spectacle of two middle-aged men importing military practices into a domestic setting.

An example of how the men's compulsion is beyond their control is seen in their relationship to the weapons of war. In one instance the demand for metal for their weaponry endangers the Shandy family. The pilferage of the lead weights from the

windows of Walter's home brings about Tristram's circumcision when a window drops. The demand occasioned by their desire to perfect their weaponry was a demand beyond their power to deny, a significant metaphor for the arms industry. The extent of their dedication and the pleasure they take in their work is further illustrated when the men recreate a significant battle of the War of the Spanish Succession, the Siege of Lille (1708). This is the culmination of all of their efforts, Tristram explaining:

As this was the most memorable attack in the whole war,— the most gallant and obstinate on both sides, —and I must add the most bloody too, for it cost the allies themselves that morning above eleven hundred men, —my uncle Toby prepared himself for it with a more than ordinary solemnity (p. 406).

The men are unsatisfied with their weaponry since they are unable to create the impression of sustained gun and cannon fire because their model cannons cannot fire gun powder. Tristram notes that, “so full were the papers from the beginning to the end of the siege, of the incessant firings kept up by the besiegers, —and so heated was my uncle Toby's imagination with the accounts of them” (p. 404). Trim sets to work on creating a means by which smoke from a pipe is funnelled through tubes to feed the six cannons, billowing a blanket of smoke—i.e. cannonfire—at the besieged town. The powerful effect this capacity has on the two men, again, is beyond their control. Tristram says of Trim, “His first intention [...] was no more than giving the enemy a single puff or two;—but the pleasure of the *puffs*, as well as the *puffing*, had insensibly got hold of the corporal, and drawn him on from puff to puff, into the very height of the attack, by the time uncle Toby joined him.” The new weapon produces a similar effect on Toby, “there's no trusting a man's self with such a thing in such a corner” (p. 410). Sterne constructed an ingenious metaphor for what happens to ‘ordinary, decent’ men when given access to new military technology. Overcome by a performance that reveals their potential for violence, the scene gives a frightening glimpse of Toby and Trim as military professionals at work, ‘professionalism’ serving to negate consciousness of the eleven hundred men that had died in the battle they were recreating.

Ironically perhaps, Toby and Trim view the life of the soldier as a life of liberty despite the deprivations, discipline and hierarchical structure. Free to pursue their love of military minutiae and free of women. When the Peace of Utrecht brought the War of the Spanish Succession to an end, like Marlborough's soldiers, Toby and Trim are ‘free’ to turn to domestic considerations. The full duration of the war elapsed since Toby's acquaintance with the highly “concupiscible” Widow Wadman. With the Peace finally achieved, Mrs. Wadman found the moment that she had patiently awaited and “formed a new attack in a moment” (p. 523). Toby, unarmed, succumbs and declares his love and Walter's wife

voices her approval: “Every body, said my mother, says you are in love, brother Toby—and we hope it is true” (p. 531). The humour in these scenes turns on the fact that Toby must now attempt to perform the masculinity of a civilian, the masculinity that the women around him desire. His efforts see him joining a child-like (mock) chivalry with a military precision. The question of Toby’s masculinity is suddenly magnified by this new demand for Toby to perform romance in the civilian world. Mrs. Wadman wants not just a husband, but a sexually functioning husband. When Toby is finally made aware of the real reason for her extreme concern over his wound, there is a sense of relief from the men, the charade can cease and military order can be restored. The men muse on the pleasures of freedom and Trim makes a flourish with his stick to non-verbally spell out the joy of liberty. Tristram responds, “a thousand of my father’s most subtle syllogisms could not have said more for celibacy” (p. 550). Sexual love, procreation and creature comforts are not only unimportant to Toby and Trim, they are actually undesirable for the manner in which they impede the men’s freedom to enact the identity that gives their life its coherence.

Toby and Trim are openly unhappy by the cessation of war brought by the Peace of Utrecht, unable to fill their days. This prompts Walter to sarcastic criticism: “by God’s blessing we shall have another war break out again some of these days; and when it does, —the belligerent powers, if they would hang themselves, cannot keep us out of play” (p. 413). Toby, offended at the accusation of warmongering, delivers ‘an apologetical oration,’ in defence of his reasons for wishing for war. The speech, which has no traceable lines of logical argument, meets with Walter’s approbation (casting further aspersions on Walter’s reputation as a philosopher). Toby argues, “I am not insensible, brother Shandy, that when a man, whose profession is arms, wishes, as I have done, for war, —it has an ill aspect to the world;...he stands in an uneasy posture in vindicating himself from *private views* in doing it ”(p. 414).

Toby attributes the motivation of the soldier to “public spirit” and “a thirst for glory,” the very two poles that Montesquieu put in opposition when describing republican and monarchical motivations for soldiering. Are they compatible? Toby clearly has no thirst for glory, but he does have a love for the art of war itself. Acknowledging the “miseries of war,” Toby calls the soldier “the instrument who works them” (p. 416), suggesting a passive role when he and Trim so actively engage in their profession. He asks ultimately, “For what is war? what is it, but the getting together of quiet and harmless people, with their swords in their hands, to keep the ambitious and the turbulent within bounds”(p. 416)? Toby views himself as quiet and harmless, but the reader witnessed the transformation of “quiet and harmless people” into men of war in the re-creation of the

Siege of Lille. The passive role adopted in Toby's speech also implies his ready disposition to be employed by the state. Carol Watts argues that "Toby's willingness to be an unquestioning instrument of greater forces, to relinquish ownership of his labour-power, marks him as a victim of, and apologist for, an abstract economic logic."<sup>230</sup> In other words, he is a very useful man to an empire in the ascendancy—he is *literally* selfless.

The question is how the state will make use of such a man, and what happens to him when he ceases to be useful. The sentimental potential of this figure is made possible by his absorption into a domestic environment that shields him and tolerates his compulsion. Outside of this environment, how would his compulsion be manifested? John Richardson argues that the reader's sentimental response to the eccentricities of Sterne's characters induces a variety of patriotism. Does affection for Toby serve to normalise the masculinity of the selfless professional sacrificing himself to the imperatives of his state? Sterne plays out the full sentimental potential in the relationship through Tristram's vivid imagining of Trim at Toby's funeral, the final performance of their military imbibed relationship. This scenario provides definitive evidence that Toby's identity as military professional is *permanent*—to the grave. As a veteran of a professional army, he is unable to reintegrate into civilian society; rather, civilian society must accommodate him and his desire to repeat the signifying practices that define his existence.

## Conclusion

Is there any figure whose very masculinity has been more subject to manipulation than that of General Flavius Belisarius? At varying times a romantic hero, a cuckold, a great warrior, an old man, a victim. That he was an actual historical figure makes this tendency even more curious. It was *because* Belisarius was not a Caesar, Alexander or Hannibal that he was unable to stem the corruption of the empire or even protect himself from his own state. Belisarius was, like Toby and Trim, a military professional who steadfastly and unquestioningly served his state. Through Marmontel's treatment, argues art historian Albert Boime, "Belisarius is transformed from a competent general to a cult hero of the *philosophes*."<sup>231</sup> Marmontel's novel inspired multiple painted renditions in France and Britain. Boime cites the influence on Jacques-Louis David's choice of the subject for a painting in 1781, explaining that the theme was part of David's "well-calculated plans for

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<sup>230</sup> Watts, *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>231</sup> Albert Boime, 'Marmontel's *Belisaire* and the Pre-Revolutionary Progressivism of David', *Art History*, 3, 1 (1980), p. 83.

success.”<sup>232</sup> Indeed, this was the painting that gained him admittance to the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts. David adopted in entirety the elements employed by Marmontel: age, blinding, a child guide, pity, stunned shock from a younger military man, though David’s Belisarius retains a physical power that Gravelot’s did not. Boime argues that for both David and Marmontel, the choice of Belisarius marked both progressivism and opportunism: progressive politically, but riding the wave of a subject matter that found approbation from the *philosophes* and the political elite. This is a story of subject matter finding the appropriate genre for its time and place.



Jacques-Louis David, *Bélisaire demandant l'aumône*, 1781

The characters Belisarius and Lismahago were created to deliver moral and political messages. In order to do so, their authors emphasised their length of service, their intelligence and their moral integrity as well as their age and suffering. The authors also emphasised the poor treatment they received from the states to which they had devoted their lives. Matt Bramble cries out to Lismahago, “you have spent the best part of your life, your youth, your blood, and your constitution, amidst the dangers, the difficulties, the horrors and hardships of a war, for the consideration of three or four shillings a-day (p. 211).” In the Seven Years War there were two notorious cases of brutal treatment of long-serving and decorated military officers. Both were taken up by Voltaire. The first was made famous in *Candide* (1759) which portrays the hero and his travelling partner Martin

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<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

as they come upon the execution of the English Admiral John Byng on 14 March 1757. Byng, age fifty-three, began service at the age of thirteen. He was court-martialed, convicted and sentenced to death for “not having done his utmost” to defeat the French in the Battle of Minorca (1756). King George II did not exercise his royal prerogative of mercy even though many intervened on Byng’s behalf, including Samuel Johnson and even the Duc de Richelieu. When Candide asks, “Et pourquoi tuer cet amiral?,” Martin famously replies, “dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un amiral pour encourager les autres.”<sup>233</sup> Byng was the first and last British admiral ever to be executed.

In France, Thomas Arthur, Comte de Lally, Baron de Tollendal, a French general of Irish Jacobite descent, was prosecuted for failing to keep the Indian territory of Pondicherry in French hands at the Battle of Wandiwah (1761). He had had a long and distinguished career and Louis XV personally made him a brigadier in the field after the great victory at the Battle of Fontenoy in the War of Austrian Succession. The same king did not intervene to prevent Lally’s execution; in 1766, aged sixty-four, he was gagged, handcuffed and beheaded. Seven years later Lally’s son urged Voltaire to help clear his father’s name. Voltaire took up the cause and wrote *The Historical Fragments of the History of India and of General Lally* (1773) setting out the case for Lally’s innocence. On 26 May 1778, Louis XVI publicly pardoned Lally and Voltaire died four days later.<sup>234</sup> The stories of Byng and Lally and their respective treatment at the hands of kings, cannot but recall Edward Gibbon’s description of the story of Belisarius as “a strange example of the vicissitudes of fortune.” In reality too, then, the actions of long-serving military men were manipulated for strategic purpose; the fact that they have been carved out of society as a distinct category of man is what permits this treatment.

My contention has been that war does not cause the suffering of the military veteran, rather a society’s choice to create military professionals as a distinct category is what causes their suffering. This choice and its consequences have been articulated by the fictional veterans that comprised this chapter: culture reveals the place of the veteran in society. The reverence for the romanticized idea of the republic in the post-Seven Years War period manifested an anxiety not just about empire, but also a concern about the citizen generally. Where a republic is seen to focus on the quality of each individual citizen, the empire manifests a demand for large and steady numbers of military men and for

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<sup>233</sup> Voltaire, *Candide* (Paris: Éditions Flammarion, 2007), pp. 114-115.

<sup>234</sup> “Voltaire was deeply moved by the news of this breakthrough, which reached him as he was dying in Paris. On 26 May 1778 he wrote young Lally-Tollendal a touching letter: ‘The dying man has been revived by learning this great news; he embraces M. de Lally very tenderly, he sees that the king is the defender of justice; he will die content’. It was the last letter he wrote.”: Ian Davidson, *Voltaire: A Life* (London: Profile Books, 2010), p. 437-38.

specialization ('division of labour')—a concern for the parts instead of the whole. Lismahago and Belisarius speak of empire's demand for a 'nursery' and a 'berceau' of military men. Adam Smith was writing of his own statesmen when he said "they will find some advantage in employing the blood and treasure of their fellow-citizens to found and maintain an empire" (pp. 197-98), a concern about where the process would end. The need for steady numbers of men to supply the armies of empire then raises the question, as Montesquieu argued, of motivation. This subject is circuitously addressed through the question of Toby Shandy's motivation to take up arms as a profession. It is convenient for a state to have a contingent of men who are deemed to be naturally warlike or who freely put themselves forward for service. Toby's story demonstrates that the military man comes home and asks questions about what it means to be a 'professional'.

By the end of the Seven Years War, it would be harder to make a case for the link between commerce and peace. Linda Colley asserts that in Britain, the post-war "euphoria soon soured."<sup>235</sup> This was partially due to "the predictable social strain of absorbing more than 200,000 demobilised men, most of them poor, some of them mutilated all of them trained to violence." Some of the discontent was due to the financial impact of the war. But, she argues, most of the discontent was due to the magnitude of the change: "The success had been too great, the territory won was at once too vast and too alien."<sup>236</sup> France's poor performance in the Seven Years War and the loss of many of its colonial possessions provoked a backward-looking tendency among military reformers explains historian Jay Smith: "resistance to the enervating effects of corruption, the emulation of Roman patriots, the formation of citizen soldiers, the unifying demands of patriotism—saturated the reformist literature devoted to military problems in the decades after the Seven Years War."<sup>237</sup> Empire—whether expanding or contracting—brought with it a sense of loss and nostalgia, sentiments the veteran was thought justified to articulate.

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<sup>235</sup> Colley, *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> Smith, *Op. cit.*, p. 196.

## Chapter Four: The Mercenary in a Nation of Citizens

Je pense que chacun doit sa vie et son sang à la patrie ; qu'il n'est pas permis de s'aliéner à des princes auxquels on ne doit rien, moins encore de se vendre, et de faire du plus noble métier du monde celui d'un vil mercenaire.<sup>238</sup>

### Introduction

In a *Tatler* essay from 1709 Joseph Addison wrote: "I am at this present writing [...] from the top of the highest mountain in Switzerland, where I am now shivering among the eternal frosts and snows. I can scarce forbear dating it in December, though they call it the first of August at the bottom of the mountain."<sup>239</sup> He tells his readers about the unique relationship between the Swiss and mercenary service:

The inhabitants of the country are as great curiosities as the country itself: they generally hire themselves out in their youth, and if they are musquet-proof till about fifty, they bring home the money they have got, and the limbs they have left, to pass the rest of their time among their native mountains. One of the gentlemen of the place, who is come off with the loss of an eye only, told me by way of boast, that there were now seven wooden legs in his family: and that for these four generations, there had not been one in his line that carried a whole body with him to the grave.<sup>240</sup>

Addison describes a situation which he finds odd but which the Swiss not only find normal, but indeed find admirable. A half-century later, Jean-Jacques Rousseau chose to set his landmark novel *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) in contemporary, rural Switzerland, an environment that enabled him to confront the Swiss mercenary tradition and to criticize generally the concept of relationships that are *mercenaire*. Rousseau found the idea of needing a *métier* and accepting payment for services to be ignoble, evidence of the corruption of society. To him, payment between individuals changes the nature of their relationship, emphasising their inequality and creating chains of obligation.

Rousseau's preoccupation with the mercenary would be revealed as prescient in a confrontation that brought hundreds of years of Swiss mercenary service to a profound and violent culmination. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, 1792, with Louis XVI and his family living sequestered in the Tuileries Palace, armed civilians made their way to the palace to lay

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<sup>238</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, ed. Michel Launay (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1967), p. 68.

<sup>239</sup> Joseph Addison, *The Tatler: By the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.* (Glasgow: printed for Robert Urie, 1754), p. 27.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

siege. The king's elite French Guards had already mutinied on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1789 when they took the side of the French people, unwilling to fire on their fellow citizens. The Tuileries was guarded only by troops of Swiss guards. The royal family managed to escape and take refuge in the *Assemblée nationale*. Drastically outnumbered, the Swiss Guards, depicted in their red coats in Jean Duplessis-Bertaux's 1793 painting, were massacred by the armed civilians. Historian John McCormack explains, "The Swiss Guard Regiment that had served France for nearly two hundred years [...] was exterminated."<sup>241</sup> News of these events caused "suffering and revulsion" throughout Switzerland and all remaining Swiss regiments in France were called home temporarily. Thirty years before this denouement Rousseau already understood that a nation of citizens, and especially a republic, had no place for the buying or selling of mercenaries, a topic discussed in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, the subject of this chapter.



Jean-Duplessis-Bertaux, *Prise du palais des Tuileries*, 1793

It might seem anomalous to study *La Nouvelle Héloïse* as a source of information for changes in military practice but Rousseau's engagement with the subject of the *mercenaire*—in both its literal and metaphorical sense—is evidence that military practice is not and cannot be separated from society and culture. The appearance of *La Nouvelle*

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<sup>241</sup> John McCormack, *One Million Mercenaries, Swiss Soldiers in the Armies of the World* (London: Leo Cooper, 1993), pp. 159-60. "There is some doubt about the exact numbers killed, but the monument overlooking Lucerne specifies that 760 were killed on 10 August, 2 and 3 September, and that 350 survived.": *Ibid.*

*Héloïse* in 1761 signalled the beginning of the genre of sentimental fiction in France.<sup>242</sup> This was a genre that was highly influenced by the English novel, and especially by the novels of Samuel Richardson. Rousseau's novel was a monumental success. Historian Robert Darnton explains that it "was perhaps the biggest best-seller of the century" and notes that there were "probably more [editions in print] than for any other novel in the previous history of publishing."<sup>243</sup> It was a novel that would "revolutionize the relation between reader and text, and open the way to romanticism. [...] Many readers believed and wanted to believe in the authenticity of the letters."<sup>244</sup> *La Nouvelle Héloïse* is a novel of *sensibility*, the phenomenon that swept British and French literature, culture and manners from the mid- to late-eighteenth century. Darnton reminds us of the novel's impact on the genre:

The flood of tears unloosed by *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in 1761 should not be considered as just another wave of preromantic sentimentality. It was a response to a new rhetorical situation. Reader and writer communed across the printed page, each of them assuming the ideal form envisioned in the text.<sup>245</sup>

In addition, it must not be forgotten that Rousseau the political philosopher was also found within the pages of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Bernard Guyon points out that among authorities on Rousseau as '*penseur*,' "tous ont constaté, au terme d'une longue fréquentation de tous ses ouvrages, que c'était celui où le philosophe s'était le plus totalement et le plus délicatement exprimé."<sup>246</sup>

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* provides a useful framework for considering how a novel of sensibility can inform the turn away from mercenarism in the second half of the eighteenth century. Anderson writes that in older political imaginings, before communities were imagined as nations, "borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another."<sup>247</sup> The inhabitants of these communities were "subjects, not citizens."<sup>248</sup> This centuries-old orientation was in the midst of its evolution as Rousseau wrote *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Anderson names four qualities that he believes demonstrate the turn toward nationalism: nations would be

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<sup>242</sup> "It is generally accepted that the appearance of Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in 1761 signals the beginning of the genre of sentimental fiction in France": Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France 1740-1789 Fact, Fiction, and Political Discourse* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1985), p. 67.

<sup>243</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (London: Allen Lane, 1984), p. 242.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 232 and 233.

<sup>245</sup> Darnton, *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

<sup>246</sup> Bernard Guyon, Introduction, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau Œuvres complètes II* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1964), p. xx.

<sup>247</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), p. 19.

<sup>248</sup> Anderson, *Ibid.*

*imagined, limited, sovereign* and conceived of as a *community*. These factors would have important ramifications for mercenary military service. A sovereign nation would cease to sell its men into military service for other sovereign nations and would discontinue buying foreign soldiers to fulfil the duties of its citizens. Anderson designates the novel and the newspaper as two forms that arose in the eighteenth century with the “technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the *kind* of imagined community” that was emerging.<sup>249</sup> In the small exclusive world of the *âmes sensibles* of Rousseau’s novel, every word and every action is scrutinised for its moral implications upon the group, Rousseau’s own imagined community. Certain male constituents of his imagined community have contact with the outside world through the undertaking of military service for a nation that is not their own; the women have no experience of life beyond their community except via the men and the imprint they manifest.

Examples of mercenary soldiers in fiction in the years before *La Nouvelle Héloïse* were common. In Tobias Smollett’s *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) national boundaries were highly blurry. The Scottish Roderick does service as a common foot soldier in the French army, his uncle Thomas Bowling joins the French navy. Roderick encounters two mercenaries during his travels, both of whom are Irish and highly skilled in the use of arms. One, serving in the French army, teaches Roderick how to use the sword: “an Irish drummer, [...] gave me to understand, that he was master of his sword, and would in a very short time instruct me so thoroughly in that noble science.”<sup>250</sup> The other Irish mercenary, named as Rourk Oregon, had few prospects in his native country and had “served in the German army as a volunteer against the Turks; [and] that for his behaviour at the siege of Belgrade, he had been honoured with an ensign’s commission, and afterwards promoted to the rank of lieutenant.”<sup>251</sup> Ireland, like Switzerland, had developed a steady trade in men.

Mercenary soldiers pervade the entirety of Claude Godard d’Aucourt’s *L’Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (1745-46). With their famous names, their costumes, their styles of fighting, their reputations, they are objects of curiosity, even respect, rather than derision. The narrator, Parisien, encounters some Pandours while fighting in the Flanders campaign of the War of the Austrian Succession. Pandours were Croatian mercenary troops in service to Austria and notorious for their ferocity. Parisien declares, “Je fus charmé de trouver l’occasion de connaître ces Messieurs, dont on dit tant de belles

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<sup>249</sup> Anderson, *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>250</sup> Tobias Smollett, *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 249.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid*, p. 292.

choses; j'étais d'autant plus curieux de les voir, que je n'en avais encore jamais vû."<sup>252</sup> The *Encyclopédie* described the Pandours as “des slavons qui habitent les bords de la Drave & de la Save [the rivers Drava and Sava]; ils ont un habit long; ils portent plusieurs pistolets à la ceinture, un sabre & un poignard.”<sup>253</sup> They are distinguishable by their region (not nationality) and their dress, which includes specific weaponry. In a scene that takes place in a military hospital in Lille after the Battle of Fontenoy, Parisien describes the men seeking treatment. They comprise a mix of national and mercenary troops: “un triple rang de Français, d'Anglais, d'Hollandais, d'Autrichiens, d'Hanovriens, d'Insurgens, d'Hessois, de Tolpachs, de Pandoures & de Molachs, [...] tous confondus pêle-mêle.”<sup>254</sup> This presentation is without moral judgement; the existence of mercenary soldiers was a natural and accepted part of warfare. Embracing cosmopolitanism, the lack of uniformity offered a source of interest and pleasure. Outside of fiction, Maurice de Saxe (1696-1750) was Saxon but as member of the dynastic realm and through his military genius ended up earning the elite position of *Maréchal général* of France, head of the entire French army. Officer or ordinary foot soldier, the concept that military service should be restricted solely to one's state was not evident in these novels and was not articulated at the time of the War of the Austrian Succession. Mercenary service was a norm.

The *Encyclopédie* article for ‘mercenaire’, published in 1765, is striking for the manner in which it reveals a world that is beginning to turn against the mercenary.<sup>255</sup> The article, by an unknown author, commences with one simple definition—“tout homme dont on paye le travail”—but then proceeds to give a moral assessment. It proclaims that in those who participate in mercenary service, “il signifie un caractère inspiré par un intérêt sordide.” The article notes that the trade is a relatively new phenomenon in France, nonexistent until François I (1515-1547), but that, “depuis un siècle les troupes mercenaires ont été augmentées à un excès dont l'histoire ne donne pas d'idée.” The article recognises the corrupting influence of mercenarism on “the people and princes” because it is what permits the European powers to enter into wars of ambition with the knowledge that they can simply purchase the necessary military power. Judith Shklar contends that, “Rousseau's admiration for the physical and ethical life of the ancient soldier did not extend to the obvious ends of classical military policy: territorial expansion

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<sup>252</sup> Claude Godard d'Aucourt, *L'Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (Lausanne : Marc-Michel Bousquet & Comp, 1745), p. 93.

<sup>253</sup> Unknown, ‘Pandours’, *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D'Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Projet (Winter Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>254</sup> Godard d'Aucourt, *Op. cit.*, pp. 195-96.

<sup>255</sup> *Encyclopédie, Op cit.*

and conquest. Indeed he rejected them completely.” She continues, “He hated mercenaries, not because they were impolitic, but because they served no moral ends.”<sup>256</sup> Moral ends can only be manifested in one way: a citizen selflessly undertaking military service for his own *patrie*.

Rousseau was writing in the decades that witnessed the shift away from ‘porous borders’ and toward the newer imaginings, providing a key moment to document three significant masculinities located in his novel. Karen Harvey suggests that scholars “think about flashpoints in the history of masculinity.”<sup>257</sup> Arguing that writers have tended to overstate the case for “a modernizing sea change” in the move from the seventeenth-century man of honour toward the polite man of the eighteenth century, she believes that the eighteenth century manifested cyclical patterns that also comprised continuity as well as older models of masculinity.<sup>258</sup> She concludes “there is a need for more attention to be paid to status, sorts, and class in the history of masculinity, in part in order that comparisons over time be possible.”<sup>259</sup> These considerations on the overlapping nature of models of masculinity and their relation to time are highly pertinent to this chapter. Rousseau’s engagement with the subject of mercenary service across the novel is presented through the construction of male characters who represent different ages, different class origins, different relationships to their communities, and, in sum, three different masculinities. An examination of three distinct masculinities permits the elucidation of a range of cultural, historical and moral considerations.

Political and cultural theorist Penny A. Weiss suggests that “using gender as a way into Rousseau’s thought can bring to light priorities often otherwise overlooked or under emphasized.”<sup>260</sup> This is certainly the case with the *mercenaire*, which this chapter will analyse in two stages. The first section will give a brief examination of the history of mercenary service in Europe and then turn to Rousseau’s contemporary Switzerland and its centuries-long market in men.<sup>261</sup> The next section will examine how the male

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<sup>256</sup> Judith N. Shklar, ‘Rousseau’s Two Models: Sparta and the Age of Gold’, *Political Science Quarterly*, 81, 1 (1966), p. 35.

<sup>257</sup> Karen Harvey, ‘The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800’ in *Journal of British Studies*, Cambridge University Press, 44, 2 (2005), p. 311.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

<sup>260</sup> Penny A. Weiss, *Gendered Community, Rousseau, Sex and Politics* (New York & London: New York University Press, 1993), p. 4.

<sup>261</sup> Thomas Maissen reminds us that Machiavelli also used Sparta and the Swiss Confederation to demonstrate successful models of governments that were uncorrupted and ready to defend themselves: Thomas Maissen, ‘Why Did the Swiss Miss the Machiavellian Moment?’, *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 2, no. 1 (December 15, 2010), pp. 106-120: <http://rofl.stanford.edu/node/74>.

characters in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* embody issues raised by mercenary service. These will be centred on their relation to time—men who represent the past, present and future. Josephine Grieder argues that the sentimental novel brought moral concern to the foreground and this process was “abetted by those who, like Rousseau, contrasted man as he had been with what he was and might be.”<sup>262</sup> In fiction, it is possible not only to construct previous or existing forms of masculinity but to create ones purely speculative. What were the parameters within which Rousseau could formulate a speculative masculinity? His preoccupation with Plutarch, and especially Sparta, provides another useful element for understanding Rousseau’s masculine constructions. Martha Walling Howard, citing the enduring influence of Plutarch on Rousseau as well as many Enlightenment thinkers, explains that the “apotheosis of Plutarch occurred [in the second half of the century when] the classic influence was in general fading. Plutarch was in fact a Greek, but not a classicist.”<sup>263</sup> Above all, Plutarch was a moralist whose influence on Rousseau’s masculine constructions function as a reminder that he was also posing the question of what type of man makes a good citizen.<sup>264</sup>

### **The Creation of Markets in Men**

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse* Rousseau confronts Switzerland’s mercenary legacy directly. The Baron d’Etange, is the father of the perfect and exquisitely *sensible* Julie, the heart of the novel and of her circle. Julie says she understands matters that concern questions of honour and violence because her family “est pleine de militaires.”<sup>265</sup> Her father spent his entire career as a mercenary officer in service to the French king. It was in mercenary service that the Baron met the Russian nobleman and émigré Wolmar who also served the French king. For men of their class, operating in the dynastic realm, like the

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<sup>262</sup> Grieder, *Op. cit.*, p. 148

<sup>263</sup> Martha Walling Howard, *The Influence of Plutarch in the Major European Literatures of the Eighteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), p. 25.

<sup>264</sup> Rousseau read the *Vies Parallèles*, 16<sup>th</sup> century translation by Amyot. “Plutarch especially became my favourite author. The pleasure I took in reading him over and over again cured me a little of my taste for romance, and I soon preferred Agesilaus, Brutus and Aristides to Orontates, Artamenes, and Juba. This interesting reading, and the conversations between my father and myself to which it gave rise, formed in me the free and republican spirit, the proud and indomitable character unable to endure slavery or servitude, which has tormented me throughout my life in situations the least fitted to afford it scope”: *The Confessions* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1959), p. 7; “Les allusions à Plutarque dans l’œuvre de Rousseau sont innombrables. C’est par le truchement de Fabricius que l’auteur futur du *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* s’exprime spontanément sur le chemin de Vincennes en octobre 1749. Plutarque est aussi un des livres de chevet de Saint-Preux. Dans un recueil de citations fait par Rousseau et conservé à Neuchâtel, on en compte fifty-six de Plutarque”: *Œuvres complètes I, Les Confessions* (Paris : Editions Gallimard, 1959), p. 1238.

<sup>265</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

aforementioned Maurice de Saxe, considerations of nationality were of secondary importance. Wolmar saves the Baron's life in battle engendering a close friendship between the two men that prompts the Baron to offer Wolmar his daughter's hand in marriage. It is from this promise forged on a foreign battlefield that the central dilemma of the novel would unfold: to marry for love or for duty. Julie had already pledged her love to her young tutor Saint-Preux while her father was away at war. Saint-Preux, too, is offered a position in the mercenary forces serving the King of Sardinia. He refuses on moral grounds saying, "Je pense que chacun doit sa vie et son sang à la patrie ; qu'il n'est pas permis de s'aliéner à des princes auxquels on ne doit rien, moins encore de se vendre, et de faire du plus noble métier du monde celui d'un vil mercenaire" (p. 68).<sup>266</sup> He explains that he learned these maxims from his father who was against military service for foreign princes, but who had served heroically at the Battle of Wilmerghen, a civil conflict, even capturing the enemy flag from under the opposing general.<sup>267</sup> As he wrote this Rousseau could not have known that shortly after the French Revolution the use of mercenary soldiers would largely dry up, evidence of fixing of sovereignties and national identity.

The seeds of change that led to the end of the use of mercenaries were sown in the Enlightenment. In *Mercenaries, The History of a Norm in International Relations*, Sarah Percy argues that "Jean-Jacques Rousseau is at the centre of the Enlightenment view of war, representing the shift from cosmopolitanism to patriotism, civic virtue, and republicanism."<sup>268</sup> Percy presents a normative account of the late eighteenth-century move away from the use of mercenary forces. She contends that although mercenaries were a commonly accepted part of warfare for many centuries, few studies account for its demise after the French Revolution. This is hard to explain given the magnitude of the change:

The years following the French Revolution led to a remarkable change in the conduct of European warfare. For the first time in at least several hundred years, states began to fight wars using their own citizens exclusively, and foreigners disappeared from the armies of Europe. The significance of this shift is clear. The stage was set for the nationalist wars of the nineteenth century and the bloody struggles of the twentieth; even today, despite monumental changes in technology

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<sup>266</sup> Lord Bomston reminds Saint-Preux of these words when Saint-Preux is suicidal. He says, "Où est ce vertueux patriote qui refuse de vendre son sang à un prince étranger parce qu'il ne doit le verser que pour son pays, et qui veut maintenant le répandre en désespéré contre l'expresse défense des lois ?" : p. 289.

<sup>267</sup> The Battle of Wilmerghen (1712) was a Swiss conflict between Catholics and Protestants. The Protestants were victorious in this battle.

<sup>268</sup> Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries, The History of a Norm in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 129.

and the nature of war, states still fight wars with armies composed of their citizens.<sup>269</sup>

She argues that in explaining the shift away from use of mercenaries toward the new norm of the citizen army the factors involved were *moral* factors. The very transformation in the relationship between citizen and state was as much moral as it was theoretical or practical. The reason a citizen army seemed preferable was partly that it was “understood to be morally superior to an army containing foreigners.”<sup>270</sup> A strong citizen army reflected back its glory onto the state from which it hailed, therefore, possession of a citizen army became an important element in the normative construction of state identity: “‘good’ states, as well as successful states, fought using their own people.”<sup>271</sup> Benedict Anderson attests: “No more arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist than cenotaphs and tombs of Unknown Soldiers. [...] This is why so many different nations have such tombs without feeling any need to specify the nationality of their absent occupants.”<sup>272</sup> They are, simply, ‘citizen’.

The first two states to adopt citizen armies were America and France, both republics forged from revolution. Percy argues that republican ideology had an inherent preference for citizen armies. Accordingly, fighting for the republic was not merely the duty of the citizen, but a necessity to secure his own freedom. “This profound belief in the morality and necessity of citizen soldiers is wholly incompatible with the use of foreign mercenaries, who would prevent citizens from fulfilling the duty that would bring them freedom and secure the republic.”<sup>273</sup> This aligns with Rousseau’s view: to create a virtuous citizen it is first necessary to make them love their homeland. The use of mercenaries disrupts this relationship.

Switzerland was unique among European nations. It had no national army; it had not fought an offensive war since 1515 and, according to Janice E. Thomson, “Switzerland is the only European state that has never employed mercenaries.”<sup>274</sup> Despite these factors it had developed a large, prestigious trade in mercenary soldiers.<sup>275</sup> This distinction

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<sup>269</sup> Percy, *Op.cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>272</sup> He adds that these have “no true precedents in earlier times”: Anderson, *Op.cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>273</sup> Percy, *Op.cit.*, p. 124

<sup>274</sup> Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns: state-building and extraterritorial violence in early modern Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 30.

<sup>275</sup> All in all “three centuries of war are calculated to have involved some two million Swiss soldiers—and unprecedented drain of national strength in mercenary service”: Georg Thürer, *Free and Swiss* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1970), p. 72. What it cost Switzerland in men, it was recompensed economically; mercenarism “earned the country considerable revenues—quite apart from the sums paid directly to the cantons by foreign governments in exchange for recruiting rights

originated partly in the composition of its citizens themselves: they were mountain men. Amongst a herder society in mountainous terrain, the Swiss developed a style of foot soldier who came to master the long pike; in formation the “Swiss pike square” could be employed against and defeat even cavalry. They became celebrated for their military skill, strength and discipline and went on to become a desirable commodity. In the seventeenth century, the Maréchal Schomberg maintained, “A body of Swiss in the French army is like the bones in the human body.”<sup>276</sup> Wilhelm Oechsli observes that the reputation of the Swiss soldier also helped to spare Switzerland from any foreign attack “since it was generally believed that in their own mountains, such soldiers would prove invincible.”<sup>277</sup> The Swiss mercenaries were also unique in the relationship established with the French nation. John McCormack explains, “All other foreign troops had become simply regiments of the French army with a history of recruiting from particular countries. The Swiss, however, retained their unique position as Swiss citizens licensed by the cantons and allied with France but serving under the command structure of the French army.”<sup>278</sup> Among mercenary forces themselves there were hierarchies and the Swiss were the elite.

Within Swiss mercenary service there existed stark class distinctions. The officer caste enjoyed great prestige, wealth and power as a result of their service. They formed a group of leading families known as the Patriciate: “The Patriciate was strongly influenced by the culture and autocratic political structure of the state in which they mainly pursued their military careers, the France of the *Ancien Régime*.”<sup>279</sup> Among the foot soldiers, by contrast, poverty and lack of opportunity were important factors in recruitment. The trade had originated in the sixteenth century when Switzerland had become an overpopulated but still underdeveloped country. W. L. Martin explains that emigration became a social necessity, but that in that time period, “the only emigration possible was military emigration,” especially in the rural areas where “mercenary service was the only means of livelihood of a large section of the population.”<sup>280</sup> McCormack notes that in the eighteenth century an increase in colonial emigration and a growing textiles industry began to reduce numbers of mercenary soldiers but “military service clearly remained an important element in the economic life of the community. [...] In many families, and not

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and the enormous profits made by recruiting agents and officers commanding a regiment. Switzerland itself enjoyed a long period of peace which allowed the country to leap ahead materially”: W. L. Martin, *Switzerland from Roman Times to the Present* (London: Elek, 1971), p. 7.

<sup>276</sup> McCormack, *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>277</sup> Wilhelm Oechsli, *History of Switzerland* (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), p. 237.

<sup>278</sup> McCormack, *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>280</sup> Martin, *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

just of the officer caste, one generation after another automatically followed into the regiment.”<sup>281</sup>

In the years leading up to the French Revolution, the Swiss people were generally proud of this tradition and the recognition that Swiss soldiers were in demand for their courage, discipline and fighting skills. But rumblings of discontent were starting to emerge. The advent of open opposition to the mercenary system led by writers such as Rousseau and religious leaders meant that the Swiss cantons began to meet difficulty in supplying their contracted quotas of mercenaries. There occurred notable occasions when Swiss soldiers faced Swiss soldiers in battle, fighting alongside opposing armies, a situation which caused great upset at home. There was an increasing chagrin that native sons could not be put to more useful employment at home and “there was also a belief that the simple healthy lifestyle of the Swiss was being corrupted by soldiers returning from France.”<sup>282</sup> Thomas Maissen explains that beginning in the early eighteenth century the simple and rural Alpine citizen became a new and positive model of Swiss identity in contrast to the corrupt French ‘other’:

The Swiss shepherds were welcome in the political language of the early Enlightenment that criticized France on two levels: for its luxurious culture that expanded the effeminate manners of the court and for its aggressive, absolutist politics that created ‘despotism’ at home and abroad.<sup>283</sup>

*Ancien Régime* France did not possess the classical virtue that Rousseau so admired, but in imaginative literature, in Switzerland, perhaps it was possible for Rousseau to bring to life classical and rustic *mœurs* in a contemporary setting.

### **Man of the Past: “Les affronts à l’honneur ne se réparent point”<sup>284</sup>**

The Baron d’Etange was created as an anachronism, and a dangerous one at that. In the appendice to the novel, Rousseau summarised him as “un vieux gentilhomme entêté de sa noblesse, sacrifiant tout à l’opinion” (p. 572). Sacrificing *all*. He is aged, said to be sixty years old at the beginning of the novel, and the variety of man he represents is an aging model. In a continuation of the themes of the previous chapter, the Baron is another veteran returning home after many years away in military service. He is the embodiment of a type of nobility that is implicitly linked with military service, from a tradition in which

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<sup>281</sup> McCormack, *Op.cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>283</sup> Maissen, *Op. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>284</sup> Corneille, *Le Cid* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), p. 113.

each generation reaffirms its claim to nobility through the performance of acts of individual glory on the battlefield. Because the Baron is Swiss, this took the form of mercenary service for the French nation. For his daughter Julie, this is a norm. She writes:

Mon père, qui a passé sa vie en France, ne parle qu'avec transport de ce bon et aimable peuple. S'il y a versé son sang au service du prince, le prince ne l'a point dans sa retraite, et l'honore encore de ses bienfaits; ainsi je me regarde comme intéressée à la gloire d'un pays où mon père a trouvé la sienne (pp. 184-85).

This reaffirmation of individual glory and family honour is only obtainable through military service. My discussion on the veteran focussed on the conception that different kinds of veterans are created by different kinds of military service; what kind of veteran is created by mercenary service? In the case of the Baron, Rousseau could also be said to invert the question, asking what kind of man makes a 'successful' mercenary officer. The Baron's military service is tainted by its association with material gain and the use of violence for causes that are not related to his duties as a citizen. The previous chapter also demonstrated the idea that a veteran cannot be turned into a civilian. In the Baron, Rousseau creates a masculinity that permits the study of violence within the family when a man who has spent his life in service to the French king attempts to take on the mantle of husband and father.

The Baron lives by a code of family honour best exemplified by seventeenth-century literature. In Corneille's *Le Cid*, Chimène, the daughter of a military man says, "Les affronts à l'honneur ne se réparent point."<sup>285</sup> This is a conception of masculinity in which honour must be guarded at all costs because once it is lost, it is gone forever; it is more precious than life itself. Chimène accepts her part in this social code and Julie, too, understands this concept well. When her father was a young man, he killed a friend in a duel. She writes, "l'insensé point d'honneur les y contraignit" (pp. 106-107). In this rationalisation, Julie explains that her father was forced to duel by the code of honour; he was doubly obliged because of his class position and his status as a military officer. As with Chimène, these same considerations influence the selection of a husband: it is a family, not an individual, code of honour. It is inconceivable to the Baron that the *petit bourgeois* Saint-Preux could become a member of his family. Julie acknowledges that her father would even kill her rather than permitting such a marriage: "Je savais que mon père me donnerait la mort ou mon amant" (p. 253). Robin Headlam Wells points out that "a heroic culture does not promote social cohesion" because it obliges "warrior-aristocrats to assert

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<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

their superiority over lower orders in the relentless competition for *laus* and *gloria*.”<sup>286</sup> In fact, the Baron never once utters the word virtue. He does not suppress his anger or violent reactions, but he saw no reason to. Plutarch says of the relentlessly patrician and class conscious Coriolanus, “He had always given free rein to the impulses of pride and aggression in his nature, as if there was some inherent grandeur and nobility in these qualities, and had never allowed himself to be ruled by reason and discipline.”<sup>287</sup> But Plutarch points out,

We must remember that the Romans of those days prized above all else the kind of virtue which finds its expression in warlike and military achievements. [...] there is only one word in the Latin vocabulary which signifies virtue, and its meaning is *manly valour*: thus the Romans made courage stand for virtue in all its aspects, although it only denotes one of them.<sup>288</sup>

The Baron embodies all of these pre-Enlightenment conceptions of honour and nobility which were attempting to maintain their stranglehold on eighteenth-century ideas of progress. To this extent, the Baron might be Swiss, but he functions as a representative of *Ancien Régime* France.

Julie tells Saint-Preux to prepare for the return of her father, “un vieux gentilhomme brusque, mais plein d’honneur,” who is retiring after thirty years of military service (p. 33). While the Baron was away at war, his home was the domain of women. The military career positioned the violent patriarch away from the family home for many years. His wife and daughter became accustomed to their liberty and the Baron became accustomed to his. The Baron explains, “Moi-même, après avoir vécu presque indépendant dans les liens du mariage, je sens que j’ai besoin de redevenir époux et père, et je vais me retirer dans le sein de ma famille ” (p. 369). His desire to ‘re-become’ a husband and father is a desire to re-become a civilian, an ambition that might not be realisable. Plutarch says of Agesilaus that, “Unlike most commanders, he came back from abroad the same man as he had gone out. He had not become enchanted with foreign customs, nor was he restive and dissatisfied with things at home, but had just as much respect and regard for them as did men who had yet to cross the Eurotas for the first time.”<sup>289</sup> The Baron, however, is highly dissatisfied with things at home.

The tutor, Saint-Preux and his pupil, Julie, had enjoyed more-or-less free access to one another while her father was away at war. The Baron is surprised to find this man in

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<sup>286</sup> Robin Headlam Wells, ‘“Manhood and Chevalrie” Coriolanus, Prince Henry, and the Chivalric Revival’, *The Review of English Studies*, 51 (2000), p. 410.

<sup>287</sup> Plutarch, *Makers of Rome* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1965), p. 28.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

his home and makes inquiries. Julie tells Saint-Preux, “Dès qu’il a su que vous n’étiez pas noble, il a demandé ce qu’on vous donnait par mois” (p. 42). When the Baron hears that Saint-Preux has repeatedly declined payment, Julie reports to Saint-Preux, “cet air de fierté n’a fait qu’exciter la sienne, et le moyen de supporter l’idée d’être redevable à un roturier” (p. 42)? The Baron decides that Saint-Preux must either accept a salary or be dismissed, despite his merit. Saint-Preux understands the important significance of this demand: “Que serai-je réellement à votre père en recevant de lui le salaire des leçons que je vous aurai données, et lui vendant une partie de mon temps, c’est-à-dire de ma personne ? Un *mercenaire*, un homme à ses gages, une espèce de valet” (p. 50). To accept payment would be to place his relationship with Julie, which had blossomed in a space outside of convention in which they were equals in *sensibilité*, and place it in a framework proscribed by the rules of professional conduct, where he was a paid employee of her father and she the charge with whom he was entrusted. He would be “un séducteur domestique” rather than a possible husband for Julie. In reality, because of his class position, the Baron never perceived of Saint-Preux as a man in that sense.

Julie is informed that she is to marry her father’s best friend Wolmar. Wolmar is a Russian aristocrat who met the Baron in military service as an officer with the French army. When Wolmar saves the Baron’s life in battle, the Baron promises him his daughter’s hand in marriage—this is a debt of honour between two officers, a promise of the highest order. The Baron tells her, “M. de Wolmar est un homme d’une grande naissance distingué par toutes les qualités qui peuvent la soutenir, qui jouit de la considération publique et qui la mérite” (p. 257). Julie vigorously attempts to refuse her father’s wishes and when the Baron suspects that Julie and Saint-Preux have been carrying on a secret romantic relationship, he is outraged, confronting his wife and daughter: “mon père entra dans la chambre de ma mère, les yeux étincelants, le visage enflammé, dans un état” (p. 118). When Julie attempts to articulate a defense he throws himself at her, “se livrant à son transport avec une violence [...], il me maltraîta sans ménagement, quoique ma mère se fût jetée entre deux, m’eût couverte de son corps, et eût reçu quelques-uns des coups qui m’étaient portés” (p. 118). This disturbing scene is made more disturbing by Julie’s reaction to her father’s repentant overtures in the aftermath of the attack: she does not merely accept the apology (which is never uttered) but forgives all of his future violence. Later, resting in her bedroom, recovering from her injuries, he pays her a visit. Returning to his severe manner he informs her bluntly that he will never accept Saint-Preux as a member of their family and even blames the young man for his own violence: “je le hais [...] pour les excès qu’il m’a fait commettre, et ne lui pardonnerai jamais ma

brutalité” (p. 120). The women have no choice but to comply, to submit to further violence, or to take drastic action, but *their* conception of virtue compels them to conform to *his* conception of honour. The Baron closes the subject definitively: “l’honneur a parlé, et, dans le sang dont tu sors, c’est toujours lui qui décide” (p. 257). This form of family honour originated in a class whose prerogatives were earned and maintained through military service.

The only character in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* to problematise directly the morality of the Baron’s prejudices is the Englishman, Lord Bomston, also a member of the ancient nobility and also demonstrating military valour, but in service to his own nation. The inclusion of English characters in French sentimental fiction was a commonplace in the second half of the eighteenth century. The benevolent, *sensible* and patriotic Englishman could be the ‘other’ in an examination of French social ills. Rousseau’s Bomston has the courage to propose that the Baron consider Saint-Preux as a husband for Julie. What starts as a conversation between two ‘men of honour’ becomes heated to the point of potential violence with the Baron contemptuously rejecting Bomston’s proposition: “Quoi! Milord...un homme d’honneur comme vous peut-il seulement penser que le dernier rejeton d’une famille illustre aille éteindre ou dégrader son nom dans celui d’un quidam sans asile et réduit à vivre d’aumônes” (p. 113) ? They enter into a debate on the legitimacy of the privileges of the ancient nobility. Bomston points out that the Baron’s prejudice makes no sense when one considers that every great lineage needs its founding ancestor and that in any case, the founding ancestors of the ancient nobility obtained their privileges through violence. These ennobling deeds were performed in the distant past, when considering the present he asks, “De quoi s’honore donc cette noblesse dont vous êtes si fier? Que fait-elle pour la gloire de la patrie ou le bonheur du genre humain” (p. 114) ? Bomston goes so far as to question the honour of the mercenary nature of the Baron’s military service:

Laissons, si vous voulez, l’origine à part, et pesons le mérite et les services. Vous avez porté les armes chez un prince étranger, son père [Saint-Preux’s father] les a portées gratuitement pour la patrie. Si vous avez bien servi, vous avez été bien payé ; et quelque honneur que vous ayez acquis à la guerre, cent roturiers en ont acquis encore plus que vous (p. 114).

About Bomston’s important role in the narrative, Mira Morgenstern writes “although Julie has a very confused notion of where her interests lie, Lord Edouard Bomston is keenly aware of the moral and psychological forces that are at play. [...] For a structure to be morally acceptable, it must value the happiness of its constituent members even above its

collective honor.”<sup>290</sup> Historian Jay M. Smith describes what he calls “the eighteenth century’s long conversation about honor.”<sup>291</sup> He deduces two opposing conceptions of nobility that emerge from this conversation. In one, nobility remains “a social category formally distinct from, and necessarily elevated above, the mass of the citizenry.”<sup>292</sup> Smith says this view was “articulated most often by individuals from older noble families with military backgrounds” who felt a special link to nobility through generations of selfless service.<sup>293</sup> This, in turn, led to an increasing obsession with genealogy and ‘proving’ one’s nobility through blood-ties to an ancient ancestor.<sup>294</sup> In the opposing conception of nobility to emerge, nobility was seen as “a moral category that symbolized civic excellence,” in other words, a status that “remained open to all citizens who possessed the requisite virtue and demonstrated the proper patriotic spirit” regardless of class. This conflict is articulated by Lord Bomston and the Baron, who prefers a son-in-law who is Russian but noble to a native of his own country who has merit, but is not noble. The Baron and Wolmar share membership in the dynastic realm.

The Baron d’Etange came home from thirty years of military service only to wage war in his home, unable to cope, his wife dies of chagrin. Julie’s cousin Claire lays the blame at his feet: “S’il faut attribuer sa perte au chagrin, [...] c’est à son époux seul qu’il faut s’en prendre” (p. 237). Claire reports that he had been unfaithful throughout their marriage and treated his wife with a “rudesse inflexible” (p. 237). In his battle with Julie, he is victorious in the short term. Julie makes what she calls a “sacrifice héroïque” and marries Wolmar. For ten years she performs her duties as a wife and mother with the utmost energy, devotion and virtue. But with Saint-Preux about to move into her home to be a tutor for her sons, she reaches the end of her strength. She dies in a manner that suggests that she welcomes death. In a deathbed letter to Saint-Preux in which she admits that she never stopped loving him she writes, “ce n’est que mourir une fois de plus” (p. 565). The Baron suffers from this loss, Claire reports that “[il] se consume insensiblement” (p. 567). In the novel, it was necessary for Julie to die in order to demonstrate that violence and the conception of honour that supports it cannot be victorious in the long term. Bomston announces the new moral position: “il est du devoir de l’homme de

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<sup>290</sup> Mira Morgenstern, ‘Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life’, *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 119-20.

<sup>291</sup> Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined, The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 5.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>294</sup> Lord Bomston reminds the Baron that his *patrie*, Switzerland, was liberated through the courage of non-nobles, as seen in the story of William Tell: p. 114.

s'opposer à la violence" (p. 135). Social structures founded on class distinctions maintained through violence do not lead to happiness and are, therefore, unstable.

### **Men of the Present : "Le villageois dans un état libre"<sup>295</sup>**

The men who represent Rousseau's contemporary Switzerland are the young *paysans* who live in the villages surrounding Clarens, the estate brought to perfection by Julie and Wolmar after their marriage. Judith Shklar observes that Rousseau had two favourite utopian models, the Spartan city and the happy family in a quiet village.<sup>296</sup> The subject of this section will be an extended passage from the *Cinquième partie* of the novel which examines the relationship between these two models. In *La Nouvelle Héloïse* the lure of mercenary service threatens the happiness of the Swiss village and prevents it from becoming idyllic. This is not the only section of the novel that integrates the inhabitants of the villages surrounding Clarens into the systems put in place by Julie and Wolmar, but this passage directly engages with the subject of *métiers* for villagers, allowing Rousseau to address the subject of mercenary service among *paysans*. The correlation between the Swiss villages surrounding Clarens and Sparta is found in the prioritisation of happiness, independence and stability as primary goals for their citizens by those who oversaw them—Julie and Wolmar at Clarens and Lycurgus at Sparta.<sup>297</sup> In order to achieve these goals, it was essential to produce—and then *protect*—certain types of men.

Happiness, independence and stability are the primary goals, the attainment of 'equality,' however, is a murky subject. Even in Sparta where Lycurgus took extreme measures to make all the citizens of Sparta 'equal' it was the enslavement of the Helots, charged with all agricultural duties, that permitted Sparta to devote itself to the creation of an all-military society.<sup>298</sup> Plutarch acknowledged this disparity when he argued "there is nothing to match either the freedom of the free man at Sparta or the slavery of the slave."<sup>299</sup> When Saint-Preux describes the many systems put in place by Julie and Wolmar

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<sup>295</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, ed. Michel Launay (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1967), p. 405.

<sup>296</sup> Shklar, *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>297</sup> Plutarch says of Lycurgus: "His view was that happiness in the life of a whole city, as in that of one individual, derives from its own merits and from its internal concord: it was to this end that all his arrangements and his structures were combined, so that Spartans should be free and self-sufficient, and should have the good sense to continue thus for a very long time": Plutarch, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>298</sup> The systems that had been put in place by Lycurgus made the citizens of Sparta equal in three ways: through the land redistributions Lycurgus had enacted, through the austerity they all shared and through the entirely militarised nature of their daily life.

<sup>299</sup> Plutarch, *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

at Clarens, we learn that these extend to include the villages surrounding their estate. Recognising that from the cradle, every person is raised into a particular condition largely determined by their social class Julie tells Saint-Preux that there is no point in aspiring to a form of employment that is outside one's condition because everything will conspire against that change: "S'il existait une société où les emplois et les rangs fussent exactement mesurés sur les talents et le mérite personnel, chacun pourrait aspirer à la place qu'il saurait le mieux remplir ; mais il faut se conduire par des règles plus sûres" (p. 406). Julie is not a revolutionary; for her the surest rule is to maintain the status quo while attempting to foster and shelter happiness. This status quoism has led some critics to label the class structure at Clarens 'feudal', and indeed Julie is posited as a benevolent monarch, according and refusing demands from her subjects as her sensibility and virtue dictate.<sup>300</sup> But Julie works toward goals within the actual social structures of her world, striving to fortify the young men of these villages against the temptations of the outside world:

La grande maxime de Mme de Wolmar est donc de ne point favoriser les changements de condition, mais de contribuer à rendre heureux chacun dans la sienne, et surtout d'empêcher que la plus heureuse de toutes, qui est celle du villageois dans un état libre, ne se dépeuple en faveur des autres (p. 405).

Julie's maxim states that the happiest condition is that of the villager because he is independent, but crucially, he might not comprehend the high value of his independence. Julie's duty is to ensure that the villager *knows* that his is the happiest state so that he will not fall under the spell of the military recruiter: "Le paisible habitant des champs n'a besoin pour sentir son bonheur que de le connaître" (p. 404). Julie's (and Rousseau's) approach to the villager is to treat him as a 'type' rather than as an individual, and to consider his function in society: "Cet état est le seul nécessaire et le plus utile" (p. 404). This is the single type of masculinity that Julie wants to see populate the environs of Clarens.

Rousseau makes the connection between this man—le paisible habitant des champs— and the wider world:

C'est en lui que consiste la véritable prospérité d'un pays, la force et la grandeur qu'un peuple tire de lui-même, qui ne dépend en rien des autres nations, qui ne contraint jamais d'attaquer pour se soutenir, et donne les plus sûrs moyens de se défendre (p. 404).

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<sup>300</sup> "La critique n'a pas manqué de signaler le contraste entre l'idéal démocratique du *Contrat social* et la structure encore féodale de la communauté du Clarens": Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau, La Transparence et l'obstacle* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1971), p. 123.

This type of masculinity acquires force when it is duplicated and then united in one body. This degree of unity was a Rousseauian ideal and would have accounted in part for his attraction to Sparta, “cette Sparte que je n’aurai jamais assez citée pour l’exemple que nous devrions en tirer.”<sup>301</sup> Casting an eye on Sparta will demonstrate how the formation of a type of man can have the unintended consequence of creating a desirable ‘brand.’ Under Lycurgus, there was only one kind of masculinity possible, a man who embodied discipline, strength and selflessness. In combination these men formed one invincible body. Jaucourt noted in the *Encyclopédie* that “chez les Spartiates, les lois & les mœurs intimement unies dans le cœur des citoyens n’y faisaient, pour ainsi dire, qu’un même corps.”<sup>302</sup>

In Sparta men had only one ‘career’ option—that of a military man. They were forbidden to engage in commerce or manual crafts and, as noted, agricultural work was the domain of the Helots. To achieve the maximum level of fitness and discipline, controls were imposed from before birth (through selective breeding) to ensure that boys were strong and hearty. Children were raised by the entire community with close scrutiny, criticism and correction forming a daily part of the development from boy to man. This training extended into adulthood where time was devoted to communal concerns and outside of warfare “all their time was taken up by choral dances, festivals, feasts, hunting expeditions, physical exercise and conversation.”<sup>303</sup> Plutarch wrote that “for them uniquely among mankind war represented a respite from their military training.”<sup>304</sup> Importantly, in order to maintain this level of regulation Lycurgus had to maintain closed borders. Spartans were forbidden to leave the city and travel freely except when on campaign and foreigners were not permitted in; if any were detected, they were expelled: “Thus it was the need to protect the city from being invaded by harmful practices which concerned him more than any physical infection.”<sup>305</sup> This control, inevitably, proved impossible to maintain; this failure would be revealed through the introduction of mercenary service and its effects.

Lycurgus’s systems meant that Sparta, ideally, would neither *need* nor *provide* mercenaries. Sparta would not need mercenaries because it was a military state. It would never provide mercenaries to foreign states both because its commerce with the outside world generally would be very limited and because Sparta would not require (or even

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<sup>301</sup> Rousseau, *Lettre à d’Alembert* (Paris : Éditions Flammarion, 2003), p. 190.

<sup>302</sup> *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D’Alembert. University of Chicago : ARTFL Encyclopédie Projet (Spring 2010 Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

<sup>303</sup> Plutarch, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

desire) the income provided by mercenary services. But warfare itself put the Spartans in contact with the outside world, and returning soldiers brought home bounty. Plutarch repeats the message that inequality and the corrupting influence of luxury were difficult to keep out of a society, but once in, had the power to bring down everything that had been built. Richard J. A. Talbert notes that two signs of the deterioration of Sparta's distinctive features were revealed in its declining population and the increasing inequality of land distribution. He contends, "The latter trend may have been exacerbated by large land purchases on the part of those Spartiates who resorted to the common expedient of undertaking mercenary service abroad, and were successful enough to make their fortunes."<sup>306</sup> Talbert explains that the labour of the Helots had allowed Sparta "to devote itself exclusively to non-productive pursuits," but I argue that this is not true—Sparta produced men.<sup>307</sup> This kind of man became a valuable commodity:

What the Spartans instilled in others was not just prompt obedience but a positive desire to come under their command and submit to them. It was not ships or money or hoplites that these other Greeks would ask Sparta to send them, but just a single Spartiate commander. Once they obtained him they would treat him with respect and awe.<sup>308</sup>

Finally, his very desirability made him susceptible to the lure of money. Under the leadership of Agesilaus, the tide turned: "[he] gave the well-to-do the alternative of furnishing a horse and rider if they did not wish to serve themselves. Many opted for this alternative."<sup>309</sup> The re-introduction of class distinctions within Sparta meant that multiple masculinities were now possible. A man could now openly reveal a lack of aptitude or a distaste for military activity and fulfill his duty to the state through payment, an option that was only open to the wealthy. Mercenary service was the very symbol of the bodily and moral corruption of Sparta.

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, just as Sparta was all military, in Rousseau's view Switzerland's rural villages should be entirely agricultural. This formula would render them free, stable and happy. But, as discussed in the first section of this chapter, in Rousseau's lifetime large numbers of young men were recruited from Swiss villages to undertake mercenary service. The class distinction within Swiss mercenary service is one which Rousseau addresses directly in the novel. In the passage on *métiers* Saint-Preux describes how the temptations of the outside world attract the rural populace. The young people of both sexes long to leave their rural villages :

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<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxi.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxv

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Les filles aspirent à la parure bourgeoise; les garçons s'engagent dans un service étranger; ils croient valoir mieux en rapportant dans leur village, au lieu de l'amour de la patrie et de la liberté, l'air à la fois rogue et rampant des soldats mercenaires, et le ridicule mépris de leur ancien état (p. 404).

To combat this, Saint-Preux writes that the policy at Clarens is to teach them to "honorer leur condition naturelle en l'honorant soi-même" (p. 405). One technique is the regular attendance of Wolmar and the Baron "aux exercices, aux prix, aux revues du village et des environs" (p. 405). There is an emphasis on the military-like nature of these public gatherings and the essential distinction that Wolmar and the Baron were military *officers*, a rank that gave them special status in these communities. He writes, "Cette jeunesse déjà naturellement ardente et guerrière, voyant de vieux officiers se plaire à ses assemblées, s'en estime davantage, et prend plus de confiance en elle-même" (p. 405). The special attention from the two "vieux officiers" gives these young men the confidence to resist becoming mercenary *soldats*, it does not, however, cause the young men to attempt to emulate Wolmar and the Baron because, as they well know, their class position would prohibit them from becoming officers.

At issue is not only the prevention of the young men from selling themselves cheaply for causes that are not their own and thereby de-populating their village. There are two further subjects raised by this passage: one is the effect on the villages when the soldiers return from mercenary service; the other is a recognition that these are indeed *young* men and they have a need for a physical outlet for their energy. To highlight the first of these subjects, Rousseau profiles the *paysans* who did leave their villages. Their return from foreign service as mere 'soldats' harms their villages. They return having learned no useful skills and unable to integrate into village life for which they now have contempt. In Rousseau's description they are inferior in every way to the young men who stayed in the villages and learned to work the land. Serving merely as soldiers, they would have been little more than cannon fodder, badly paid and badly treated. The only thing they bring back with them is corrupted morals and their evident dissatisfaction with the virtues of rural life. They are contrasted with the youth of the village, now self-confident through the attention of Wolmar and the Baron:

On lui [la jeunesse] en donne encore plus [de confiance] en lui montrant des soldats retirés du service étranger en savoir moins qu'elle [la jeunesse] à tous égards ; car, quoi qu'on fasse, jamais cinq sous de paye et la peur des coups de canne ne produiront une émulation pareille à celle que donne à un homme libre et sous les armes la présence de ses parents, de ses voisins, de ses amis, de sa maîtresse, et la gloire de son pays (p. 405).

In their villages, surrounded by their family, their friends and the women they love, the peasants are free and their honest work contributes to 'la gloire' of their homeland.

Rousseau describes the "ardente and guerrière" nature of the young men. They possessed youth and natural aggression that required an outlet of expression. This is a recognition that these Swiss men were recruited for a reason; they *are* robust, strong and brave, inured to hardship. But Rousseau demonstrates that activities which channel this energy into communal pursuits that are healthy and competitive can build *esprit de corps* that benefit the village. In *Lettre à d'Alembert*, in which Rousseau argued that theatre would corrupt the citizens of Geneva, he prescribed a formula for its youth:

Que vos [citizens of Geneva] plaisirs ne soient efféminés ni *mercenaires*, que rien de ce qui sent la contrainte et l'intérêt ne les empoisonne...[...] Pourquoi ne ferions-nous pas, pour nous rendre dispos et robustes, ce que nous faisons pour nous exercer aux armes? La République a-t-elle moins besoin d'ouvriers que de soldats? Pourquoi, sur le modèle des prix militaires, ne fonderions-nous pas d'autres prix de gymnastique, pour la lutte, pour la course, pour le disque, pour divers exercices du corps?<sup>310</sup>

This concept mimics the festivals and exercises of Sparta. The young men benefit from the attention of the older men who are able to impose their authority on the youth and guide them. In Sparta, the older men took a hand in supervising the young men: "there was a sense in which everyone regarded himself as a father, tutor and commander of each boy."<sup>311</sup> If there was a sense in which the young men of Switzerland were a 'natural resource' that could be exploited for gain, Rousseau acknowledges their value, but argues the best use of this resource is as virtuous citizens for their homeland.

Part of Rousseau's fascination with Sparta was its unattainability. This was a sentiment shared by Jaucourt: "Mais ne nous ne flattons pas de voir Sparte renaître au sein du commerce & de l'amour de gain." It was Rousseau's ideal, but the end of Sparta was a historical rupture that could not be repaired—these kind of men could never be re-created. In *Lettre à d'Alembert*, Rousseau delivered a critique of eighteenth-century French military men that disparages their masculinity. He finds contemporary military men to be morally and physically degenerate, and therefore 'fallen,' a permanent state:

On ne conçoit plus les marches des armées grecques et romaines: le chemin, le travail, le fardeau du soldat romain fatiguent seulement à lire, et accablent l'imagination. [...] Souvent les généraux faisaient à pied les mêmes journées que

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<sup>310</sup> Rousseau, *Lettre à d'Alembert*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 182-83.

<sup>311</sup> Plutarch, *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

leurs troupes. [...] Qu'on trouve à présent un seul homme de guerre capable d'en faire autant. Nous sommes déçus en tout.<sup>312</sup>

Rousseau continued declaring that "dans une République, il faut des hommes."<sup>313</sup> The happy Swiss villager is a kind of man that it was feasible to create and protect. Through his physical vigour, simple honesty and membership in a community of equals, he would be not only more independent than his class superiors, but he would be 'a man.'

### **The Future Man: "Be a Man"**

To think of masculinities in temporal terms permits an examination of certain fictional masculinities as speculative or 'future' masculinities. There is a sense in which Rousseau's construction of the young man Saint-Preux is experimental, leading to inconsistencies and questions. The novel takes him from age twenty to age thirty at which point he seems unfinished. He is the only non-noble among the principal characters, he is the youngest man and he is Swiss. What separates him from the young Swiss *paysans*? Bomston gives the following description of Saint-Preux to the Baron: "Il est jeune, grand, bien fait, robuste, adroit; il a de l'éducation, du sens, des moeurs, du courage; il a l'esprit orné, l'âme saine" (p. 113). Like the *paysans* he is well-built, strong, and brave, but unlike them he has acquired sufficient education to set himself up as a tutor, a sort of 'philosophe'. The term 'philosophe' is alternately used a moniker of respect and derision throughout the novel. In *Émile*, Rousseau singles out two professions which should not need payment: the soldier and the teacher. "Il y a des métiers si nobles, qu'on ne peut les faire pour de l'argent sans se montrer indigne de les faire; tel est celui de l'homme de guerre; tel est celui de l'instituteur."<sup>314</sup> We have seen that Saint-Preux already took himself out of that marketplace by refusing to take the Baron's payment.

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau bestowed Saint-Preux with an element that did not feature prominently among the Swiss *paysans* nor in the classical civilization that he so admired: masculine sensibility. On at least seven occasions, commencing from the point of the novel at which Julie begins to comprehend that she cannot marry Saint-Preux, he is told to "be a man."<sup>315</sup> What he is really being told is to control or moderate his sensibility.

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<sup>312</sup> Rousseau, *Lettre à d'Alembert*, *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>314</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou de l'éducation*, ed. Michel Launay (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1966), p. 52.

<sup>315</sup> Julie : "...comment t'oses-tu dégrader au point de soupirer et gémir comme une femme ? [...] Rappelle donc ta fermeté, sache supporter l'infortune, et sois homme": p. 149; Claire: "Reprenez donc courage ; soyez homme": p. 231; Bomston: "Tu n'es pas un homme, tu n'es rien": p. 286;

Rousseau was experimenting with an element that operated like a free radical within the community. He tested both the strengths and the limitations of a man of sensibility and examined how these translated into this man's role as a member of a society. Sensibility and manliness are positioned as qualities that Saint-Preux attempts to balance. In the course of his development Saint-Preux is presented with a number of tests, one of which is service in the British navy. Even this military service, however, is not straightforward; there is a sense in which it too is speculative, experimental.

Sensibility and manliness are examined against the backdrop of the love story between Julie and the *suborneur* Saint-Preux. As has been shown, Julie is caught in a dilemma that is a hold-over from the seventeenth century. In that century's *Le Cid*, the noble Infante loves a man of inferior rank and accepts that she cannot marry him, saying she would rather spill her own blood than do anything unworthy of her rank while admitting that "dans les belles âmes le seule mérite a droit de produire des flammes."<sup>316</sup> For the Infante, herself one of the 'belles âmes', the 'mérite' of someone outside her rank has stirred an illicit passion. In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, however, sensibility is posed as a possible class-leveller. The 'suborneur' that the Infante loves is the brave military hero Rodrigue who came from "une maison si féconde en guerriers, qu'ils y prennent naissance au milieu des lauriers."<sup>317</sup> Saint-Preux is the *petit bourgeois* who is admitted into Julie's world because of his ennobling, violent and irresistible *sensibilité*. Josephine Grieder explains that the *sensible* heroes and heroines of sentimental fiction are, "tremblingly alive to the tiniest nuances of emotion, they revel in them even to the point of pain."<sup>318</sup> The significance of this factor is that the *sensibilité* of Julie and Saint-Preux is natural. Bomston describes them: "Ces deux belles âmes sortirent l'une pour l'autre des mains de la nature" (p. 134). The question posed in the novel is whether and how far nature can be controlled or suppressed.

Sensibility, especially in a man Rousseau tells us, has aspects that are undesirable. Saint-Preux's sensibility could make him self-absorbed and overly sensitive. Saint-Preux speaks of the pain that it causes him, making it difficult, he says, to even remember that he is a man :

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Bomston: "Sors de l'enfance, ami, réveille-toi...sois homme une fois avant la mort": p. 395; Bomston: "Vous ne méritez ni mon amitié ni mon estime...si j'avais pris pour mon laquais le quart des soins que j'ai pris pour vous, j'en aurais fait un homme ; mais vous n'êtes rien": p. 467; Julie : "ne cesserez-vous jamais d'être enfant?" : p. 523.

<sup>316</sup> Corneille, *Op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>318</sup> Grieder, *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

O Julie! Que c'est un fatal présent du ciel qu'une âme sensible! Celui qui l'a reçue doit s'attendre à n'avoir que peine et douleur sur la terre. [...] Il cherchera la félicité suprême sans se souvenir qu'il est homme : son cœur et sa raison seront incessamment en guerre, et des désirs sans bornes lui prépareront d'éternelles privations (pp. 53-4).

He acknowledges its effect on Julie: "Mais je le vois, tu me méprises comme un insensé... mes emportements t'effrayent, mon délire te fait pitié [...] Comment veux-tu qu'une âme sensible goûte modérément des biens infinis" (p. 63)? Operating outside the realm of reason, his *sensibilité* appears to be beyond his powers of self-control. Despite her love for him Julie finds Saint-Preux's lack of self-control to be effeminising. She says to him, "comment t'oses-tu dégrader au point de soupirer et gémir comme une femme ? [...] Rappelle donc ta fermeté, sache supporter l'infortune, et sois homme" (p. 149). After Julie has married Wolmar, Saint-Preux loses the will to live. He is delivered into the care of his friend Lord Bomston who, in his capacity as member of the British nobility presents a plan to Saint-Preux about which he cannot divulge any further information because it is a military secret:

Il se présente pour cette épreuve une occasion qui n'est pas à dédaigner; il est question d'une entreprise grande, belle, et telle que bien des âges n'en voient pas de semblables. [...] Vos fonctions seront honorables; elles n'exigeront, avec les talents que vous possédez, que du courage et de la santé. Vous y trouverez plus de péril que de gêne (pp. 291-92).

This in itself is a test, willingness to submit to the authority of a friend who has proposed a plan about which he knows nothing except that it is 'honourable,' large-scale and dangerous. Saint-Preux submits: "Faites, milord; ordonnez de moi; vous ne serez désavoué sur rien. En attendant que je mérite de vous servir, au moins que je vous obéisse" (p. 292). It transpires that Bomston has arranged for Saint-Preux to be installed as an officer aboard an English naval vessel. Both Saint-Preux and Bomston had openly criticised mercenary service but Saint-Preux is enlisted in military service for a country that is not his own. Certainly, this military service fulfills a narrative function: it absents him from the scene after Julie's marriage for sufficient time so that when he returns, her two sons have been born and the utopia established at Clarens is a 'fait accompli' at which he can marvel and detail. It also, however, bestows on him the status of having wartime experience like that of the other principal male characters, who are nobles. It is significant that Bomston has Saint-Preux given a specific professional designation: "J'aurais pu vous faire inscrire comme volontaire, mais, pour vous donner plus de considération dans l'équipage, j'y ai fait ajouter un titre, et vous êtes couché sur l'état en qualité d'ingénieur des troupes de débarquement" (p. 292). Having had no previous military experience, let alone naval experience, he now performs a role aboard a warship. He would inhabit a world

comprised entirely of men and give orders to British sailors. The ultimate test, however, is that posed by his sensibility; he writes, “le plus grand péril est au fond de mon coeur” (p. 293).

The military service in which Rousseau places Saint-Preux was based on a historical event which in its own way was also speculative and experimental. Rousseau places Saint-Preux on no-less-than English Commodore George Anson’s famous military ‘Voyage around the World.’<sup>319</sup> Rousseau makes Bomston and Anson close friends: “Vous savez qu’on vient d’armer à Plymouth une escadre de cinq vaisseaux de guerre [...] Celui qui doit la commander est M. George Anson, habile et vaillant officier, mon ancien ami” (p. 292). Was this a voyage of discovery or was it a military mission? It was *both*. There was a horrific loss of life on the cruise due mainly to disease. The mission was also notable for the violent capture of a Spanish galleon laden with treasure. This earned the captain and crew a veritable fortune in prize money. Saint-Preux notes all of these details in his factually accurate account.

Rousseau has his ‘philosophe’ give a portrait of a world coming under violent European domination, but he makes a sharp distinction between what he witnesses from other European powers and the behaviour he experiences with the British sailors. Saint-Preux gives witness, utilising the passive term ‘j’ai vu’ more than a dozen times. ‘Europe’ is disseminating greed, power and inhumanity throughout the world in its insatiable quest for iron, gold, diamonds and human capital, slaves: “Tel est le droit de la guerre parmi les peuples savants, humains et polis de l’Europe” (pp. 308-9). Not content just to take whatever they want, “l’avidité Européen” also spreads wanton cruelty. “On ne se borne pas à faire à son ennemi tout le mal dont on peut tirer du profit: mais on compte pour un profit tout le mal qu’on peut lui faire à pure perte” (p. 309). He describes the battle to capture the Spanish galleon, saying, “J’ai vu l’image de l’enfer” (p. 309). His account is as a passive witness to horror. In his summary, he has praise for Anson and his British companions, but he brings the focus back to back to the point of departure—Julie:

j’ai vu dans mes compagnons de voyage un peuple intrépide et fier, dont l’exemple et la liberté rétablissaient à mes yeux l’honneur de mon espèce, pour lequel la douleur et la mort ne sont rien, et qui ne craint au monde que la faim et l’ennui. J’ai vu dans leur chef capitaine, un soldat, un pilote, un sage, un grand homme, et pour

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<sup>319</sup> Anson was sent on a mission to undertake a military engagement with Spain’s Pacific fleet during the War of Jenkin’s Ear, a conflict between Britain and Spain that eventually became subsumed within the War of Austrian Succession. The squadron of eight ships set sail in September of 1740 from Plymouth and returned in June of 1744. During the course of the voyage Anson would cover the globe, stopping in ports in North and South America, Africa and even China. Only one ship returned—*The Centurion*—Anson’s (and Saint-Preux’s) ship.

dire encore plus peut-être, le digne ami d'Edouard Bomston ; mais ce que je n'ai point vu dans le monde entier, c'est quelqu'un qui ressemble à Claire d'Orbe, à Julie d'Etange, et qui puisse consoler de leur perte un cœur qui sut les aimer (p. 310).

What is the reader meant to make of this military service? Saint-Preux was a Swiss petit bourgeois in service for the English Navy. Is this mercenary service? Or was he English-by-proxy during this voyage because of his great admiration for the English and through his friendship with Lord Bomston? Rousseau problematizes this question when he has Saint-Preux address the question of the bounty captured by *The Centurion*: "J'ai reçu en rougissant ma part d'un immense butin; je l'ai reçu, mais en dépôt" (p. 309). What he means here by "in deposit" is unclear and is never mentioned again. The treasure, which was paraded through the streets of London at the journey's end made Anson an immensely wealthy man and was the object of litigation between the surviving sailors. Saint-Preux refused payment from Julie's father but accepted his share in bounty captured in warfare.

One of the questions being posed in this passage is how a man of sensibility fares in the uncompromising, brutal and all-male world of the navy for an extended time period. He says, "J'ai beaucoup souffert; j'ai vu souffrir davantage" (p. 307). There were aspects of his sensibility and heartbreak that served to preserve him from the degree of misery felt by his fellow sailors. He said they suffered more than him because they cared more about living. When they are stranded on a desert island with no immediate prospects of rescue he writes that he was the only one not terrified because, "ne suis-je pas désormais partout en exil" (p. 309)? It makes no difference where he is if he is expelled from Julie's world. In raging foreign oceans, he was able to use his imagination to transport himself to the peaceful shores of Lake Geneva. But when faced with the horrors of slavery, he has only one recourse: "J'ai détourné les yeux de dédain, d'horreur et de pitié ; [...] j'ai gemi d'être homme" (p. 309). Equally, this passage serves as site of contrast. As if to underscore why the *paysans* should stay at home, Saint-Preux gives witness to what was transpiring in the world "out there" beyond the isolation of rural Switzerland. In the same space of time in which Julie and Wolmar create their isolated utopia, conquest, greed and brutality were raging around the world. This is an example of the 'simultaneity' that Benedict Anderson describes as one of the defining aspects of the medium of the novel and its contribution to creating the 'imagined community.' Simultaneity is the modern sense of time that not only creates a link between events within the novel, but creates a "fixity that fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside."<sup>320</sup> Julie never left Switzerland; Saint-Preux

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<sup>320</sup> Anderson, *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

physically ventured into the world outside and returns, but emotionally he has stayed with Julie.

Once again Julie is faced with the 'coming home' of the man from military service and this brings with it the question of whether Saint-Preux has been changed by such a prolonged and arduous military engagement. He responds to a letter from Claire in which she asks about his 'guérison'; is he over his feelings for Julie? He replies that he does not know, it is for Julie and Claire to judge, even posing the questions "Reviens-je plus libre et plus sage que je ne suis parti? [...] Je veux être ce que je dois être: mais comment répondre de mon cœur" (p. 310)? He is invited by Wolmar to visit Clarens under condition that he has examined his heart and found nothing to worry Julie's tranquillity. Julie and Claire wonder what changes they will find. The appraisal they report is an assessment of his masculinity. Julie sees him first and writes to Claire: "je l'ai trouvé fort changé; et, ce qu'autrefois je n'aurais guère imaginé possible, à bien des égards il me paraît changé en mieux" (p. 319). The 'philosophe' they used to routinely mock for all his 'systèmes' appears to be gone as is his aspect "servile et basse dont tu [Claire] t'es plus d'une fois moquée avec raison" (p. 319). Now, he has the confidence of "un homme droit et sûr de lui-même" (p. 319). Julie finds that "l'usage du monde et l'expérience" has replaced all of his theories with real experience of the world and made him less "brillant" but more instructive. This perceived improvement extends to his physical appearance. Julie says:

Sa figure est changée aussi, et n'est pas moins bien; sa démarche est plus assurée; sa contenance est plus libre, son port est plus fier: il a rapporté de ses campagnes un certain air martial qui lui sied d'autant mieux, que son geste, vif et prompt quand il s'anime, est d'ailleurs plus grave et plus posé qu'autrefois. C'est un marin dont l'attitude est flegmatique et froide, et le parler bouillant et impétueux. A trente ans passés son visage est celui de l'homme dans sa perfection, et joint au feu de la jeunesse la majesté de l'âge mur (p. 319).

Claire, who sees him next, replies that she cannot improve upon Julie's assessment except to say, "ne trouves-tu pas que ses longues peines et l'habitude de les sentir ont rendu sa physionomie encore plus intéressante qu'elle n'était autrefois" (p. 327)? Both women find Saint-Preux improved because he is more *manly* as a result of the hardships he endured in military service. He is hardened and carries himself with a new military bearing that is proud and stoic. They find him more manly and, therefore, more sexually attractive. The manliness of the 'marin' is contrasted with the former frailties of the 'philosophe'.

But are these superficial changes and do they indicate a diminishment of or control over his *sensibilité*? That is what is required if Saint-Preux is to live at Clarens, which is Wolmar's intention. He wants Saint-Preux to become unpaid resident tutor to his sons:

"J'ai toujours vu que ma femme aurait une extrême répugnance à confier ses enfants à des mains mercenaires" (p. 381). This decision throws Julie into turmoil. She attempts to persuade Claire to marry Saint-Preux and says that if this plan does not suit her, then "à quelque prix que ce soit nous écartions de nous cet homme dangereux" (p. 480). Saint-Preux with his new physiognomy and new bearing but still unpredictable sensibility is an 'homme dangereux'. He is a potentially incendiary element in a carefully controlled society. Anne C. Vila describes the turmoil caused by the sensibility of Saint-Preux and Julie:

The natural sensibility of both Saint-Preux and Julie, his noble *âme soeur*, must be strictly controlled [...] Rousseau invokes a particular institution to exert that control; the institution he designates is, however, not birth class as in Prévost or Marivaux, but the *domestic* milieu—a milieu that must, like sensibility itself, be constantly regulated.<sup>321</sup>

Vila continues by pointing out that the burden of this regulation falls heavily on Julie: "Julie must consequently deal with her sentiments and sensations in a manner that is repeatedly described as more 'heroic', 'resistant', and 'firm' than that of Saint-Preux."<sup>322</sup> But what makes him dangerous? While Saint-Preux was away in the military, Julie had a premonition that he had died and made a crucial admission to Claire, "Ah! ma chère, quelle âme c'était que la sienne!...Comme il savait aimer" (p. 301) ! Having endured the physical violence of her father, it is Saint-Preux's ability to love that now poses a danger to Julie. She cannot remain heroic forever and so is released from the burden by her death.

As if to underscore that his creation Saint-Preux was an experimental and unfinished man, Rousseau does not give him a voice after Julie's death. The reader does not receive Saint-Preux's reaction to Julie's death. He receives letters from Julie, Wolmar and Claire urging him to come to Clarens, "venez" is what they all say to him. Wolmar writes : "Vous êtes nécessaire à tous" (p. 564). The novel ends with these plaintive invitations which receive no response. The unanswered question will forever be whether Saint-Preux is able to honour these requests. He has shown a willingness to follow orders and a capacity to endure hardship, but the reader never learns whether he is able to summon strength and "be a man" or whether he is disabled by his sensibility. Julie, with foreknowledge that Saint-Preux's suffering will be even more than that of her own husband and children writes to him in a deathbed letter: "le sentiment de votre affliction est la plus grande peine que j'emporte avec moi" (p. 565). Does this man have a place in

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<sup>321</sup> Anne C. Vila, 'Beyond Sympathy: Vapors, Melancholia, and the Pathologies of Sensibility in Tissot and Rousseau', *Yale French Studies*, 92 (1997), p. 97.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

an imagined community? Why is he is 'nécessaire' to the remaining 'belles-âmes'? Rousseau offers no answer to these questions.

## Conclusion

What can a novel of sensibility tell us about the use of mercenary soldiers? Josephine Grieder reminds us that the sentimental novel was a new genre. The appearance of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in 1761 was the first French example of a genre whose innovations had come from across the channel. Via the discourse of the sentimental novel "a new element invaded public discussion: moral concern."<sup>323</sup> Sarah Percy in her history of mercenary soldiers concluded that it was moral concerns that underpinned the move away from a form of warfare that had become commonplace, a possible explanation for the lack of satisfactory historical accounts of the subject. For Rousseau, the concept of the *mercenaire* generally provoked moral questions. It is clear that he saw the performance of all *métiers* as transactions which, like all transactions, had costs and rewards. His focus on the *mercenaire* was an attempt to question the nature of this transaction. For Saint-Preux, to accept payment would transform him from a man into an employee which, he says, was like selling his very 'personne'. The examination of Sparta and Switzerland reveals how the creation of specialist markets in men developed. Christopher Duffy explains that in its heyday there was a certain ethical logic to the use of a mercenary soldier: "a hired foreign soldier not only added to the strength of the state, but he freed a native subject for productive labour and he deprived the enemy of a potential recruit. Thus one man became the equivalent of three."<sup>324</sup> But this rationalisation comes from the *demand* side of the market. Rousseau's focus is on the *supply* side of the market.

It is possible to see the Baron d'Etange as a straw man, created only to be brushed aside; it would be incorrect to see him in this light. His form of masculinity was forged in the past but was still manifesting power; honour-based military culture continued to provide a source of both meaning and controversy till the Revolution and beyond. He represents the French nobility by association and indeed the elite Swiss mercenaries had a close and lengthy relationship with the French monarchy. The French military hierarchy of the *noblesse d'épée* made a last stand at maintaining its role, as demonstrated in the conflict between two reactions to the army's failures in the Seven Years War. One, was the

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<sup>323</sup> Grieder, *Op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>324</sup> Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age Reason* (London & N.Y.: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 32-33.

adoption of professionalising measures, the second was to *tighten* the ancient nobility's ties to the army culminating in the controversial Ségur regulation of 1781 which decreed that "only nobles with lineages stretching four generations or more could rise to the rank of superior officer."<sup>325</sup> Ironically, this regulation would impact upon literary history. Choderlos de Laclos was a military officer whose lineage only went back three generations, frustrated at his stagnant military career when the new regulation was announced, "it seems not entirely coincidental that Laclos put the finishing touches on his novel, and requested permission to have it published, in the months immediately following the Ségur announcement."<sup>326</sup> Even within the established violence-laden style of honour that permeated seventeenth-century literature, the Baron's attachment to mercenary service added a darkening distinction. The Baron earned honour that was 'always already' tainted by dint of the financial reward that bought his services. A man of his position would have seen his use of violence as renewing and maintaining his family's honour, a precious object. But he was unable to make a claim of *selflessness*, the mark of moral excellence that Lord Bomston could claim via his military service. His much-anticipated return home brought disappointment, heartbreak and violence.

Julie's role in supporting the code represented by her violent father represents the limits of virtue. 'Virtue' is not an entity in itself, it needs defining, it must attach itself to a code of ethics, a religion, membership in a family, citizenship. Jay Smith writes that in the ongoing re-evaluation of honour that was taking place across eighteenth-century France, 'virtue' could not be satisfactorily posited as a benign substitute for honour because "virtue carried its own hierarchical implications, and because no one associated it with a pure or absolute form of equality." He argues that this is why patriotism emerged as "the ideal vehicle for mediating and renegotiating the relationships between nobles and non-nobles in the imaginations of the eighteenth-century French."<sup>327</sup> Julie's maternalism toward the Swiss villagers and her passion for closed borders illustrates a kind of patriotism, but the attachment of her virtue to the maintenance of her father's honour demonstrates the drawbacks of virtue as model. Julie was member of a family that was 'pleine de militaires', she accepted that her father earned his glory in the French army. She was indoctrinated in this world view. In his history of the duel, V.G. Kiernan focuses on the extent to which the concept of honour obliged the nobility to participate in violence to uphold their status. He argues that the role of women in this system cannot be overlooked: "How the status of women, of the upper classes chiefly, affected the quality of European

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<sup>325</sup> Jay Smith, *Op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

militarism is a large subject. [...] Each sex, as well as class, views itself in the mirror of its opposite. As in more pacific walks of life, women could help to bring out the best or worst in a man.”<sup>328</sup> Kiernan argues that women from the upper classes did *not* articulate an argument against male violence. They had a respect for masculine courage and a tacit acceptance of the male violence that formed their membership in the nobility.

It is notable that Rousseau included the Baron in the passages devoted to the subject of keeping the young *paysans* at home, persuading them not to undertake mercenary service. Even the Baron was concerned with the supply side of this market in men, an acknowledgement that he understood the class discrepancy in military service. This echoes the opinion of Frederick the Great who, ironically, used large numbers of mercenary soldiers in his army but equally revealed a certain paternalism through his reluctance to sell Prussian soldiers. Sarah Percy argues that he spoke out against his citizens being part of mercenary trade in moral terms. Writing to Voltaire about the British purchase of Hessian soldiers to fight in America, Frederick criticized the decision making of the prince who transacted the deal:

If he had come out of my school...he would not have sold his subjects to the English, as one sells cattle to have their throats cut. This last act is no way compatible with the character of a prince who poses as the preceptor of monarchs. The pursuit of a sordid interest is the sole cause of this unworthy proceeding. I pity those poor Hessians who will terminate their careers unhappily and uselessly in America.<sup>329</sup>

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau acknowledged that mercenary service was a norm but challenged the assumptions on which it was based. The cantons received financial rewards for fulfilling their contracts to the French, but uncomfortable moral implications are raised when a country sells its own men. A moral analysis of the supply side of this transaction necessitates an examination of the effect of the *return* of the mercenary soldier to his village, bringing with him the corruption engendered by his exposure to the outside world. Janice E. Thomson explains that in the late eighteenth century, mercenary service ended because nations were no longer willing to supply their native sons for this work, demand was as high as ever, it was only the problem of supply that ended this practice.<sup>330</sup>

The entry for *mercenaire* in the *Encyclopédie* makes a final cogent point that would be illustrated in the early years of the Revolution: “Si le citoyen ne veut pas être opprimé, il faut qu’il soit toujours en état de défendre lui-même ses biens et sa liberté.” When a king

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<sup>328</sup> V. G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History, Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 13.

<sup>329</sup> Percy, *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>330</sup> Janice Thomson, *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns: state-building and extraterritorial violence in early modern Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 59.

can buy mercenaries to ensure his protection, his citizens are in danger. Percy says that this view was shared by Rousseau, for him “mercenaries pose a grave threat to the liberty of the people, because they do not have a proper relationship with the state; they submit to the orders of the state, rather than thinking of the needs of the polity itself.”<sup>331</sup> Rousseau was proved correct, but the power of the citizen army—men, women and children—were amply and brutally demonstrated when they massacred the Swiss Guards in 1792.

Finally, it is important to take a last glance at Saint-Preux, the experimental man. In *On War* Clausewitz wrote that “the moral forces are amongst the most important subjects in war.”<sup>332</sup> Saint-Preux’s masculine sensibility is posited as a *possible* powerful moral force but one that needs guidance. Katherine Astbury, writing on masculine representations in eighteenth-century French literature argues that “un champ de recherche plus riche s’ouvre si on étudie comment la sensibilité engendre une réévaluation du concept de l’héroïsme, qui est inséparable des notions de masculinité.”<sup>333</sup> Well, Saint-Preux’s military service cannot be described as heroic in the stereotypical sense—he did not defeat an entire army single-handedly. Yet, he endured four years of hardship, he performed his duties, he followed orders, he disgraced neither himself nor Bomston, and he acquired a new martial bearing that women find attractive. He even considers that his sensibility had inured him to suffering. Sensibility is the kind of moral force that might attach itself to the cause of patriotism, a discourse which finds backing in the sentimental novel with its insistence that “patriotism is a virtue as essential as *sensibilité* and benevolence.”<sup>334</sup> In a novel which was concerned with the costs of participation in a society, Rousseau marks out certain qualities which cannot be bought: sensibility and independence. Citizenship does have a price but it cannot be paid in money, only through participation. What form of participation citizens have with the state is directly related to the kind of relationship their military has with the state.

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<sup>331</sup> Percy, *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>332</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), p. 150.

<sup>333</sup> Katherine Astbury, ‘La représentation de l’homme dans les contes moraux des femmes écrivains 1750-1789’, *Le mâle en France 1715-1830, Représentations de la masculinité* (Bern : Peter Lang, 2004), p. 125.

<sup>334</sup> Grieder, *Op. cit.*, p. 127.

## Chapter Five: The *Justicier*: Dispensing Punishment and Shame in the Eighteenth-Century Domestic Tragedy

He will not go out of England till he has seen justice done you by *everybody*.<sup>335</sup>

### Introduction

This final chapter will depart from the previous four chapters by focusing on military men who fight for private causes. Other chapters have documented the obligation of military men to engage in private combat in order to maintain their personal honour. The men discussed in this chapter engage in personal combat in order to achieve *justice*. In the postscript to his highly influential epistolary novel *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady* (1747-48), Samuel Richardson delivered an essay on the subject of ‘poetical justice,’ which he was prompted to address by the many letters he had received from readers (mainly women) who desired a ‘happy’ ending for his heroine. Using examples from the Ancients and from British tragedy, Richardson elaborated a theory concerning the role that tragedy plays in culture, describing how virtue and vice (the virtuous and the vicious) are employed in narratives in order to produce an effect on their audience. Richardson hoped to achieve an effect that was both moral and lasting. He queried the beliefs that underlay the demands for poetical justice, accusing ‘modern criticism’ (for ‘modern’ read *secular*) of leading readers to expect an “equal distribution of rewards and punishments and an impartial execution of poetical justice” (p. 1495). He reminded his readers that “the history, or rather the dramatic narrative of *Clarissa*, is formed on [a] religious plan; and is therefore well justified in deferring to extricate suffering virtue till it meets with the completion of its reward” (p. 1495). Virtuous *Clarissa*, who “HEAVEN only could reward,” would not be released from her suffering until her “triumphant death” (p. 1498). Finally however, as if to dismiss the criticisms levelled against him definitively, Richardson wrote:

Yet the writer of the *History of Clarissa* is humbly of opinion that he might have been excused [of these accusations] since the notion of *poetical justice*, founded on the *modern rules*, has hardly ever been more strictly observed in works of this nature, than in the present performance [...] For, is not Mr. Lovelace, [...] is not this great, this wilful transgressor, condignly *punished* (p. 1498)?

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<sup>335</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 1313.

The question of poetical justice was important enough to elicit many letters from Richardson's readers and, in turn, to provoke Richardson to write a lengthy defence. This study turns its attention to the man charged with the dispensation of poetical justice in *Clarissa*: not coincidentally a military man.

From 1740 till the end of the eighteenth century the spectacular success of the novels of Samuel Richardson provided the basis for one of the most fruitful and enduring expressions of cross-channel cultural exchange. Richardson's three novels all elicited responses from the cream of Enlightenment France including Voltaire, Rousseau, Madame de Graffigny and Diderot.<sup>336</sup> The French translation of the novel by Abbé Prévost, celebrated author in his own right, appeared in 1751 under the title *Histoire de Clarisse Harlove* and would be the version from which most French readers absorbed the story of a virtuous young English woman trapped between an ambitious family and a brilliant and destructive libertine. How the elements that structure this novel led to the creation of a particular and idealised military character will be the subject of this chapter. In what manner and *why* was this figure 'military'? In addition to his military status, he is a man of sensibility, shedding tears with and for Clarissa, but he also demonstrates tentative signs of a resurgent chivalry.

Samuel Richardson popularised the theme of 'virtue in distress', first seen in *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), but especially and more darkly in *Clarissa*.<sup>337</sup> 'Virtue in distress' was nearly always represented by a female character, an embodiment of the highest morality, sensibility, accomplishment and beauty. Her distress is caused by a man who, tormented by her virtue, seeks to undermine it through a test.<sup>338</sup> In setting out to seduce Clarissa, Lovelace sets out to seduce her virtue, which, he says is untried and therefore perhaps not virtue at all but rather pride. Pierre Hartmann argues: "Lovelace ne

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<sup>336</sup> "Ce fut en Angleterre et dans toute l'Europe un déluge de larmes [...] Le succès des deux romans, suivis un peu plus tard par *Sir Charles Grandison*, marqua la sensibilité du temps et l'imaginaire romanesque": Michel Delon, Introduction, *Histoires anglaises* (Cadeilhan : Zulma, 1993), p. 7 ; "les romanciers anglais, Fielding, Sterne, mais d'abord et surtout Richardson précipitent l'évolution, commencée au début du XVIIIe siècle, du roman français vers le réalisme sérieux. Plus qu'aucun autre genre, le genre romanesque est international": Henri Coulet, *Le Roman jusqu'à la Révolution* (Paris : Armand Colin, 1967), p. 17 ; *Clarissa* "Immediately presented itself as one of the most international of literary texts with its prompt simultaneous translation into German and French" : Thomas Beebee, *Clarissa on the Continent, Translation and Seduction* (University Park and London : The Pennsylvania State University, 1990), p. viii.

<sup>337</sup> "la grande invention de Richardson et la raison de l'admiration que lui portent Diderot et Rousseau (et Sade encore, de façon perverse), sa cause efficiente, c'est la *séduction de la vertu*" : Pierre Hartmann, *Le contrat et la séduction* (Paris : Éditions Champion, 1998), p. 144.

<sup>338</sup> "One of the best-known representations of the literature of sensibility is the figure of "virtue in distress," the virtue a woman's, and her distress caused by a man": G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility, Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. xviii.

ressent pas seulement la vertu de Clarisse comme un affront ou un défi, mais encore comme une agression contre son être.”<sup>339</sup> Lovelace asks of Clarissa’s virtue, “Is virtue itself? [...] Is virtue to be established by common bruit only? Has her virtue ever been proved? Who has dared to try her virtue” (p. 427)? Virtue must be demonstrated through *action*, not only to be believed, but to provide an example to readers. This has a bearing on the representations of military men through the demands of character and gender constructions. The manner in which Richardson constructed his characters was highly specific and finely balanced because of his strong conviction to offer both minute psychology and moral instruction. His great admirer Denis Diderot admired the delicate management of characterization within *Clarissa*: “Qu’il fallait de génie pour introduire et pour garder quelque équilibre entre tant d’intérêts opposés!”<sup>340</sup> The central relationships in the novel pivot around letters exchanged between Clarissa and her confidante Anna Howe, and Lovelace and his confidante Belford. Anna is more forthright and acerbic than Clarissa; Belford, a member of Lovelace’s ‘society of rakes’, is a reformed rake by novel’s end. Both confidantes provide moral commentary but cannot, or, do not rescue Clarissa. Within these set of relationships, Richardson constructed a character charged with the dispensation of ‘poetical justice.’

I have named this figure the *justicier* because of the unique nature of his responsibilities in this novel and in other works of fiction that will comprise this chapter. The definition of the word *justicier* found in the 1762 edition of the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* is helpful for setting out the context of his role: “qui aime à rendre, à faire rendre justice. Il n’a guère d’usage au féminin. Il signifie encore, celui qui a droit de Justice en quelque lieu. *Il en est Seigneur Justicier, Haut justicier.*”<sup>341</sup> This is a man who likes to dispense justice or to ensure that it is executed. He has an authority that permits him to do so within particular parameters, or, because of his great zeal, he authorises himself to occupy this role. In the example cited, he is the property-owning Lord and therefore the *Haut justicier*. This is a reference to feudal organisation in which justice was not administered by state sponsored institutions but by members of the nobility or by those loyal to them, their knights. The *justicier* can act by implementing correction or by meting out punishment. The distinction between correction, which takes the form of moral shaming, and punishment, which is performed through violence, will be important in this chapter. In theory, in a state which has in place peace-keeping laws and correctional

<sup>339</sup> P. Hartmann, *Op. cit.*, p. 177.

<sup>340</sup> Denis Diderot, ‘Éloge de Richardson’, *Histoire de Clarisse Harlove Vol II*, ed. Shelly Charles (Paris : Éditions Desjonquères, 1999), p. 696.

<sup>341</sup> *Dictionnaire du l’Académie française* (1762), University of Chicago: ARTFL Project (Winter Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>.

institutions—police, courts, judges, prisons—there is no need for such a figure. Writing on the demise of chivalry, Walter Scott in his *Essay on Chivalry* (1814) linked the displacement of knight-errantry to the rise of the nation-state: “By degrees, as order became more generally established, and the law of each state began to be strong enough for the protection of the subject, the interference of these self-authorized and self-dependent champions; [...] became a nuisance rather than an assistance to civil society.”<sup>342</sup> The *justicier* figure is evoked in the idea of the self-authorized and self-dependent champion taking up the cause of a damsel in distress. The difference, however, is that the eighteenth-century model is linked to his national army but is seen to intervene in a setting in which the state cannot: the family home.

The figure Richardson constructs is the military man, Colonel Morden. Thomas Beebee refers to Morden as a “minor figure.”<sup>343</sup> Colonel Morden, who actively takes part in over three hundred pages of the novel, could only be dismissed as a minor figure in a work as long as the nearly 1,500-page *Clarissa*. The existence of a ‘Colonel Morden’, a man who may have the ability to save Clarissa, hangs over the entire novel. The first mention of Morden comes from Clarissa who hopes to escape an enforced marriage: “All my hope is to be able to weather this point till my cousin Morden comes from Florence” (p. 122). From this point there is a repeated litany of (no fewer than twenty five) “till Morden arrives.” This extended foreshadowing of his arrival adds great dramatic impact. Studies devoted solely to Colonel Morden are rare. In 1970 Robert Schmitz published an article in which he criticised Morden for his failure to save Clarissa from death or reconcile her to her family. Schmitz argues that Morden functions as a Grim Reaper figure, “necessarily present at the two most important deaths in the novel.”<sup>344</sup> That Morden is *necessarily* present at the two most important deaths in the novel serves to underscore the importance of this character.

In an article from 1999, Tiffany Potter argues that Morden is one of Lovelace’s fellow libertines. I believe this is a complete misreading of the novel. Potter attempts to stem advance criticism by stating that she is arguing the “effectual, rather than intended function of libertinism in the novel.”<sup>345</sup> Morden sends Clarissa a letter warning her about the dangers of libertines in which he clearly positions himself in the opposite camp. The

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<sup>342</sup> Sir Walter Scott, ‘An Essay on Chivalry’ in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott Vol. VI Chivalry, Romance, The Drama* (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1834), p. 87.

<sup>343</sup> Thomas O. Beebee, *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>344</sup> Robert M. Schmitz, “Death and Colonel Morden in *Clarissa*,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 69, 3 (1970): 346-53.

<sup>345</sup> Tiffany Potter, “A Certain Sign That He Is One of Us’: *Clarissa*’s Other Libertines,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 11, 5 (1999): 403-420.

letter arrives *after* she has been kidnapped by Lovelace—another of Morden’s ‘failures’—but it serves an important function in the novel: it opens Clarissa’s eyes to the scope of the danger she faces and it illustrates the range of tactics employed by libertines from the point of view of a man who understands that world but is not part of it. Without this intervention all of the reader’s knowledge of libertinism would emanate from the insiders Lovelace and Belford. Morden writes: “A libertine, my dear cousin, a plotting, an intriguing libertine, must be generally remorseless—*unjust* he must always be” (p. 563). The articles by Schmitz and Potter base their examinations of Morden on their perception of his ‘failures’. This point of view ignores that Richardson positions Clarissa’s death as the exemplary and “triumphant death” of a Christian heroine.<sup>346</sup> Equally, the failure of her intractable family to reconcile with Clarissa would serve as their eternal punishment and offer an example to readers. At Clarissa’s funeral, her father says to Morden, “of all our family you are the only one who have nothing to reproach yourself with” (p. 1395)! In this chapter I will argue that Morden is a figure who unites particular ideologies of military and moral honour.

*Clarissa* sparked a wave of French literary works that explored similar themes. Katherine Astbury describes the advent of the ‘conte moral’, the popular literary phenomenon that will form part of this chapter: “the moral tale format was a best-seller and one that dominated for the best part of half a century.”<sup>347</sup> This genre, mastered by Marmontel and Bachelard d’Arnaud, was indebted to Richardson:

Avant tout [le conte moral] est marquée par la sensibilité et l’influence de Richardson ainsi que celle de Rousseau est évidente. La sensibilité permit aux auteurs de s’éloigner de l’idée qu’il fallait être bien né pour avoir du mérite. Etre vertueux et sensible comptait beaucoup plus et les conteurs moraux assistaient à la création de nouvelles valeurs individuelles.<sup>348</sup>

Astbury establishes the interconnection of masculine sensibility and heroism in sentimental literature, arguing that studying these concepts in parallel is “inséparable des notions de masculinité.”<sup>349</sup> I will be arguing that a resurgence of chivalric ideals was also making an appearance in the moral tale under the guise of the military *justicier*, combining the strong feeling of sensibility with the call to action of the chivalric hero. The transposition of similar narratives and themes from Richardson to the moral tale

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<sup>346</sup> Richardson, *Op. cit.*, p. 1498.

<sup>347</sup> Katherine Astbury, *The Moral tale in France and Germany 1750-1789* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2002), p. 2.

<sup>348</sup> Katherine Astbury, ‘La représentation de l’homme dans les contes moraux des femmes écrivains 1750-1789,’ *Le mâle en France 1715-1830, Représentations de la masculinité* (Bern : Peter Lang, 2004), p. 125.

<sup>349</sup> Astbury, *Ibid.*

necessitated the same balance of character construction. This was a highly condensed transposition: from the more than one-thousand page *Clarissa* to the less than one-hundred page *Clary*, for example. This condensation is highly illustrative in itself, revealing what Baculard found essential to convey in order to please and instruct his reader and offering new insight into reading Richardson's novels.<sup>350</sup>

This transposition can also be seen in the title of Baculard's moral tale, *Julie*, a reflection of Astbury's assertion that the influence in France came not just from Richardson but also from Jean-Jacques Rousseau who offered the nation its first sentimental novel.<sup>351</sup> Rousseau was sensitive to accusations that his *Julie, ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse* betrayed the influence of Richardson's *Clarissa*. Writing after Richardson's death, he criticized the number of events and characters within *Clarissa* while adding, "Richardson a en effet le mérite de les avoir tous bien characterises." He finds the strength of his *Julie* to be in its limited number of characters and events : "la simplicité du sujet ajoute à la beauté de l'ouvrage, les Romans de Richardson, supérieurs en tant d'autres choses, ne sauraient sur cet article entre en parallèle avec le mien."<sup>352</sup> There are similarities between the two novels, and some of these are reflected again in the careful balance of character construction and interrelation: this includes the *justicier*. Joseph Texte in his 1895 scholarly study on Rousseau and cross-channel exchange maintains, "comme Clarisse trouve un protecteur en le colonel Morden, de même Julie et Saint-Preux ont un confident en milord Bomston. Comme Morden, Bomston est l'honneur personnifié; comme lui, il est fier et généreux."<sup>353</sup> These relationships merit a closer look, in particular the components that constitute this 'protector.'

Morden's characteristics and his function in the novel are examples of a type of military *justicier* that is repeated in key literary works from the appearance of *Clarissa* till century's end. I will be looking at not only *Clarissa* but also works by four other key writers of the time period: Rousseau's *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761); *Les Épreuves du sentiment* (1773) by Baculard d'Arnaud; *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782) by Laclos; and

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<sup>350</sup> Astbury reminds us to "consider the works of secondary writers (like Baculard d'Arnaud) who responded much more directly to the needs of their age and followed trends rather than setting them": Katherine Astbury, *Op. cit.* (2002), p. 96.

<sup>351</sup> "It is generally accepted that the appearance of Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* in 1761 signals the beginning of the genre of sentimental fiction in France": Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France 1740-1789, Fact, Fiction, and Political Discourse* (Genève & Paris: Librairie Droz, 1985), p. 67.

<sup>352</sup> Rousseau, *Les Confessions, Œuvres complètes I* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1959), pp. 546-47.

<sup>353</sup> Joseph Texte, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire : étude sur les relations littéraires de la France et de l'Angleterre au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris : Hachette, 1895), pp. 286-87.

*Les Crimes de l'amour* (1800)<sup>354</sup> by Sade.<sup>355</sup> The six volumes of *Les Épreuves du sentiment* consist of twenty-three moral tales, a number of which feature aristocratic seducers and military men. *Les Crimes de l'amour*, an openly published collection, is composed of five novellas, several of which feature *militaires*. The chevalier Danceny of *Les Liaisons dangereuses* must also be considered in this discussion as an ironic example of the *justicier*. Possessed of an affiliation with the Order of Malta, extreme youth and wavering morality, he is the character Laclos created to take on the brilliant libertine, Valmont. Sade is included in this study because he possessed a keen understanding that the constructions formulated by the moralist Richardson could be pushed to extremes for ironic or indeed immoral purposes. In his *Idées sur les romans* Sade praises the English author for his “vigoureux ouvrages” and asks if “l’immortel Richardson eût vertueusement fini par convertir Lovelace, et par lui faire paisiblement épouser Clarisse, eût-on versé à la lecture de ce roman, pris dans le sens contraire, les larmes délicieuses qu’il obtient de tous les êtres sensibles ?”<sup>356</sup> This is an acknowledgement that Clarissa is made to suffer a great deal and a question concerning the reader’s relationship to this suffering. Astbury argues that Sade “undermines the whole ethos of the moral tale and forces writers [as well as readers] to look beyond its schematised forms.”<sup>357</sup> All of these works, in addition to claims of moral utility, are influenced by Richardson’s *Clarissa*.

### **The Rank of the Military Man**

Examining the ways in which these men are ‘military men’ reveals the range of tools available for constructing a military figure in the mid to late eighteenth century in works that do not feature war. In *Clarissa*, Colonel Morden’s link to the military is most clearly manifested in the insistence on the title ‘Colonel’ throughout the novel. No specific engagement with military battles or duties is mentioned. The events of *Clarissa* are meant to have taken place within twenty years of its publication, and Morden is said to have been

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<sup>354</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, ed. Michel Launay (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1967) ; François-Thomas-Marie de Baculard d’Arnaud, *Les Épreuves du sentiment* (Maestricht : 1779) ; Laclos, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, ed. Joël Papadopoulos (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1972) ; Sade, *Les Crimes de l’amour*, ed. Michel Delon (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1987).

<sup>355</sup> “Les nouvelles qui composent *Les Crimes de l’amour* ont été rédigées à la Bastille à la veille de la Révolution, puis remaniées à l’extrême fin du siècle pour le recueil qui paraît en l’an VIII et relève directement du genre illustré par *Les Épreuves du sentiment*” : Michel Delon, *Op. cit.*, p. 15

<sup>356</sup> Sade, ‘Idée sur les romans’, *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>357</sup> Astbury, *Op. cit.* (2002), p. 179.

away from Britain for seven years, living in Florence.<sup>358</sup> These years comprised the War of the Austrian Succession, but again, no military responsibilities are enumerated. Richardson's insistence on the military title is significant in a time period in which this was not always the form, especially for a gentleman. It was very common in eighteenth-century Britain and France for actual military men of noble extraction not to use a military title, viz Louis, Comte de Ségur in France and Charles Lennox, third Duke of Richmond in Britain, both of whom had parallel military and political careers like Rousseau's Lord Bomston. Richardson makes it clear that the possession of a military title is a potent symbol of trustworthiness and respectability. He has Lovelace confer military titles on two men whom he hires to play roles in the deception of Clarissa. One young man named Newcomb he re-names 'Captain Mennell': "I have changed his name by virtue of my own single authority. [...] preferment I bestow, both military and civil" (p. 569). He rejected the use of 'Lieutenant' or 'Ensign' since these were not the titles of officers. Clarissa finds 'Captain Mennell' to be "a young officer of sense and politeness" (p. 568). Lovelace hires a Patrick M'Donald to play the role of 'Captain Tomlinson', and again Clarissa is made confident by a man in possession of an officer's rank and an assumed military bearing. Prévost maintained the insistence on the title 'Colonel' in his translation—the word and the rank being the same in French and English. Historian Anthony Bruce says that in the eighteenth century "the emphasis [was] on the holder of a commission as a gentleman first and an officer second."<sup>359</sup> This very duality and the ability to slide between gentleman and officer in varying proportions is what permitted this literary figure to inhabit the military role as well as navigating the dangerous world of the aristocrat.

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, by contrast, a novel which is thought to offer much less concrete detail than that of Richardson, Rousseau attaches specific military service to his *justicier*, the Englishman Lord Edouard Bomston.<sup>360</sup> In part five of the novel, Bomston participates in battles of the campaign in Flanders during the War of the Austrian Succession, at some point between the great British victory at Dettingen and the great French victory at Fontenoy. Specifying that Bomston was in real physical danger, Saint-Preux reports:

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<sup>358</sup> "The Story of PAMELA was supposed to have taken place within thirty years, that of CLARISSA within twenty, of their respective publications": Samuel Richardson, 'Letter to a Lady', *The History of Sir Charles Grandison, Vol. III* ed. Jocelyn Harris (London: Oxford University Press, p. 1972), p. 467.

<sup>359</sup> Anthony Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army 1660-1871* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1980), p. 76.

<sup>360</sup> In the fourth chapter of this study, on the *Mercenaire*, is the account of Bomston's friendship with real-life Admiral George Anson and his ability to place Saint-Preux on a British Naval vessel.

Mais je comprends ce qui prolonge votre séjour à l'armée, et j'en frémis. Julie n'en est pas moins inquiète : elle vous prie de nous donner plus souvent de vos nouvelles, et vous conjure de songer, en exposant votre personne, combien vous prodiguez le repos de vos amis (p. 443).

When he does not receive one of Saint-Preux's letters, sent to him "à l'armée," Bomston suggests that it must have been in the satchel of a courier who had been taken hostage. Equally, however, Bomston is shown to have responsibilities in London at the House of Lords. Colonel Morden and Lord Bomston are both older than the young men they take under their wing, Belford and Saint-Preux, but neither are they aged. They are still virile but have mastered the dangerous passions through the acquisition of worldly wisdom and self-control.

The *justicier* in Baculard's moral tale *Fanny* is an English officer in an English setting. He first announces his status not through a name or rank but through the revelation of bodily scars earned in battle, declaring, "quand je vous aurai dit mon nom, peut-être me rendrez-vous justice ; en attendant que vous le sçachiez ; voici ce que je puis vous apprendre : l'inconnu découvre son estomach, et montre une multitude de cicatrices" (p. 80). These battle scars say what name and rank cannot. He is later named as Sir Windham, "un officier de naissance, du mérite le plus distingué, et connu par sa bravoure; retiré du service, et couvert de blessures [...] ; ses jours étoient une longue suite d'actions vertueuses ; cinquante ans de probité et de bienfaisance" (pp. 86-87). An older man, he is from the rural-dwelling nobility, therefore an officer by birthright, but also, as is stressed, through merit.

In Sade's novella *Faxelange*, the *justicier*, Monsieur de Goé, is given an attachment to a specific cavalry brigade—the Dragoons—with whom he will appear *en masse* at the end of the narrative. He is described as an "officier de dragons, mais peu riche" (p. 54). Once again, 'peu riche' signifies that he is a member of the now impoverished ancient nobility. Sade himself was an officer with the Dragoons and served in the Seven Years War. Also poor is the chevalier Danceny, the pseudo-*justicier* of *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. Danceny's status as a *chevalier de Malte*, the aristocratic military and celibate religious order, implies that he is a second son and not entitled to his family's inheritance. He plies his trade in Paris as a music instructor with his ties to the Order sealed at the end of the novel when he departs for Malta. Laclos, an actual military officer who spent years in garrison duty, chose to affiliate none of the main players in his novel with the national military. All of these literary military men are united by their class position; they are not from the rank and file.

## Class Position and the New Knight-Errant

Having established the manner in which these men were designated as ‘military men’, this section turns to an examination of the qualities from which a writer could select when constructing a masculine military *ideal* in mid-eighteenth century Britain and France. What qualities were feasible and available for use in imaginative literature set in a contemporary context and meant to present plausible narratives? Richardson called *Clarissa* “a story designed to represent real life.”<sup>361</sup> Judith Butler uses the expression “styles of masculinity” to describe the historical and temporal nature of different forms of masculinity. Styles of masculinity can re-emerge, but never exactly the same as the originating model. The ‘knight,’ for example, is a style of masculinity; Todd Reeser explains that “the figure of the knight organizes a set of gendered characteristics for the middle ages, but how a knight is defined in one century is different in another.”<sup>362</sup> The construction of the *justicier* figure necessitated a balance of characteristics that would permit him to be ‘manly’ within a contemporary context, but would differentiate him from those against whom he was matched.

Clarissa’s persecutors were the libertine Lovelace *and* her grasping and heartless haute bourgeois father and brother. There had to be a clear distinction between the *justicier* and these men. Lovelace and his literary successors are distinguished from all other libertines who appeared before him. The Lovelacean libertine consecrated his talents to the conquest of a single woman worthy of resolute focus. The use of the libertine in sentimental fiction was a dramatic generic shift for subject matter which seemed more appropriate to its antecedent, the libertine novel (*le roman libertin*), a primarily French creation that was conceived of for (and largely by) the aristocratic sensualist.<sup>363</sup> Stéphanie Genand marks a mid-eighteenth-century shift that she explains in part by the “montée de la bourgeoisie”: “Devant le recul des valeurs aristocratiques [...] rares sont les romans qui représentent la séduction hors d’un cadre moral; comme s’il fallait, de plus en plus, montrer le libertinage pour le dénoncer.”<sup>364</sup> In many ways, the *justicier* is a mirror-image of the libertine: energetic in pursuit of goals, daring, and possessed of physical and verbal fighting skills. These similarities also made it necessary that he be clearly differentiated from his aristocratic counterpart. Firstly, he cannot be dissolute. In these works, ‘activity’

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<sup>361</sup> Richardson, *Op. cit.*, p. 1499.

<sup>362</sup> Todd W. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory* (Chichester : Wiley Blackwell, 2010), p. 217.

<sup>363</sup> “ ‘le roman libertin à la française’ est en effet un roman d’une élite sociale produit d’une conception aristocratique de l’existence”: Raymond Trousson, ‘Libertins, libertinage’ in [www.bon-a-tirer.com](http://www.bon-a-tirer.com), revue littéraire en ligne, numéro 8, 15 septembre 2003 [March 2013], par. 11.

<sup>364</sup> Stéphanie Genand, *Le Libertinage et l’histoire: politique de la séduction à la fin de l’Ancien Régime*, (Oxford : Voltaire Foundation, 2005), p. 81.

is posited as the opposite of dissolution; the *justicier* is shown to be compelled to attach his actions to moral causes. Bomston says to Saint-Preux: “la vie passive de l’homme n’est rien, et ne regarde qu’un corps dont il sera bientôt délivré ; mais sa vie active et morale, qui doit influencer sur tout son être, consiste dans l’exercice de sa volonté” (p. 287). The *justicier*’s affiliation with military service also serves to negate any appearance of inactivity. His libertine counterpart, by contrast, educated in the aristocratic art of the duel, attaches his violence to selfish ends. René Pomeau argues that the libertine Valmont had wasted military abilities:

Parmi les figures historiques contemporaines, on est tenté de le comparer au maréchal duc de Richelieu. Or Richelieu a servi dans l’armée: il se distingue à Fontenoy; il s’illustre à la tête des troupes françaises pendant la guerre de Succession d’Autriche, en sauvant le port de Gênes de l’invasion ennemie. [...] En contraste, Valmont paraît totalement oisif. Sa naissance, ses talents lui ouvraient, s’il l’avait voulu, une carrière dans la diplomatie ou dans la guerre : comment douter qu’il n’y eût brillamment réussi ? Mais il a préféré n’employer ses dons de stratège qu’à des manœuvres de boudoir. Aucun autre objet ne l’intéresse.<sup>365</sup>

Though the *justicier* could not be a dissolute aristocrat, he did have to be from the nobility, firstly in order to be an officer, but also because someone from outside the upper classes would not possess the necessary authority to intervene in the dealings of either aristocratic ‘villains’ or aspiring bourgeois families. Neither the *justicier* nor the libertine show interest in money, with Clarissa reporting of Lovelace, “money he values not, but as a means to support his pride and independence” (p. 698). But the *justicier* is generous, where the libertine is not. Where the libertine is not able (or willing) to use self-restraint in their treatment of women or in their use of violence, the *justicier* demonstrates extreme self-restraint in both. Chastity, proof of their extreme ‘contrôle de soi,’ is a further inversion of libertine values: chastity/sensibility in opposition to sexual conquest/emotional impotence.

The first page of *Clarissa* presents the factors that demonstrate why the *justicier* cannot resemble Clarissa’s father or her brother James. The novel begins, letter one, with a duel between James and Lovelace. An animosity that had started when the young men were at school erupts into violence when Lovelace attempts to court Clarissa openly. Clarissa’s friend Anna attests, “they say that Mr. Lovelace could not avoid drawing his sword: and that either your brother’s unskilfulness or violence left him from the very first pass entirely in his power” (p. 39). The novel foregrounds the concept that violence compromises judgement and that members of the ancient nobility are more skilled in the violent arts than men from the rising classes. Lovelace slightly wounds James but then

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<sup>365</sup> René Pomeau, *Laclos ou le paradoxe* (Paris : Hachette, 1993), p. 173.

walks away for Clarissa's sake. The Harlowes are a parvenu family and James is a haughty young man casting about for a way to have his status recognised. Morden calls James a "hot-headed young man" and claims that he did "more to ruin his sister than Lovelace himself" (p. 1324). Lovelace is from the ancient nobility, one of the reasons he feels so aggrieved by his treatment at the hands of the Harlowes. Jennifer Low contends that, from the seventeenth century, ideas about honour and status became confused because the steep rise in fortune of the 'middling' classes lead to conflicts. Who should be accorded deference? Reprising themes addressed in the first chapter of this study, Low explains that because anti-duelling campaigners were largely "from the middle ranks," their writings had no influence on the aristocracy because "they failed to see that the defense of his honour was part of the role of the aristocratic man," and she adds that these writers also failed to recognise "the desire for social status that motivated the untitled to ape the nobility."<sup>366</sup> In a novel in which subtle class distinctions matter a great deal, the military officer is a separate 'class' of man who can occupy the slot between these two violent oppositions.

Clarissa's father and brother play roles in what is essentially a *domestic tragedy*. Pierre Hartmann contends that, "l'unité sociale sur laquelle opère la fiction richardsonienne est la *famille patriarcale*. [...] La discorde familiale prend chez lui l'allure qu'elle avait dans la *tragédie antique*." <sup>367</sup> But if Iphigenia was to be sacrificed by her father Agamemnon for the sake of the Trojan War, the tragedy for Clarissa is her discovery that she is to be sacrificed to attain a piece of land; marriage to the boorish Solmes would unite separate properties into a larger whole. Terry Eagleton notes that "[it] was Richardson who commented that the Harlowe's wrangling over property laid 'the foundation of the whole [novel]'. "<sup>368</sup> Clarissa understands all too well why her father insists that she marry Solmes. The men in her family—already rich—are obsessed with further aggrandisement, with making the Harlowes an *opulently* wealthy and *titled* family. She sums it up succinctly: "Hatred to Lovelace, family aggrandizement, and this great motive paternal authority!—What a force united" (p. 82)! Anna argues that the Harlowe men are ruled by "AVARICE and ENVY, [...] two passions that are not to be satisfied" (p. 67). Tom Keymer explains that, "the dilemma of Harlowe Place is strictly speaking insoluble, and in his method of posing it Richardson offers no easy resolutions [...], one

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<sup>366</sup> Jennifer Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 97.

<sup>367</sup> P. Hartmann, *Op. cit.*, pp. 158-9.

<sup>368</sup> Terry Eagleton, *The Rape of Clarissa* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982), p. 56.

side contends for absolute duty and the other for exemption.”<sup>369</sup> Clarissa needed a protector from outside her immediate family, and it had to be a *man* because her mother and Anna are powerless against the violence of the Harlowe men. The libertine and the social climbers are united by their selfishness and their willingness to use violence. The military *justiciers* reject considerations of wealth, rank and personal interest in favour of a morality based on feeling and nobility of the soul. His recompense, if any, will be in the satisfaction offered by his conscience rather than material gain or honours. A military man appears to be the only character in possession of the necessary attributes to intervene in these domestic yet violent scenarios.

### **Sensibility, Chivalry and Manliness**

The *justicier's* specific role is to offer moral correction and to dispense violent punishment. Moral correction or guidance was one of the central aims of sentimental literature, thus its insistence on offering up images of distress in order to demonstrate what could happen if the path of virtue was not rigidly pursued. The primary tool employed to inculcate these lessons was that of sensibility. Images of the suffering Clarissa were meant to move the reader, leaving an indelible moral imprint. In fictions where characters were not always what they seemed, the display of real sensibility (not the feigned sensibility of a libertine) offered the reader evidence of nobility of soul. Membership in the fellowship of sensibility was proof of authenticity and strong feeling and was manifested in a physical reaction, what Markman Ellis calls the “sentimental rhetoric of the body”—tears, sighing, hand-holding, mute gestures.<sup>370</sup> The *justiciers* speak this bodily rhetoric. Engagement with sensibility demanded a kind of courage that libertines did not possess; they are terrified of being rendered vulnerable by sentiment and choose, rather, the path of romantic conquest. What separates the *justicier* from others possessed of sensibility is his ability to use violence. This is a type of militant sensibility with the *justicier* moved to action, adding a sentimental element to a traditional performative masculinity.

Sensibility had a dual-relationship with male violence. It could be a spur to action but could also function as a corrective to male violence. The problem of male violence is at the heart of sentimental fiction. Josephine Grieder argues:

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<sup>369</sup> Tom Keymer, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 139.

<sup>370</sup> Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility, Race, gender and commerce in the sentimental novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 19.

At issue in this sentimental fiction are, thus, not the male virtues of the two nationalities—which are the same—but the masculine vices peculiar to each society. The English propensity for vulgarity, drunkenness, and violence makes a mockery of reason and tranquillity of spirit. French gallantry reduces the women who are its objects to shame, degradation, and misery. Morality cannot exist when selfishness and self-aggrandizement are the accepted norms of male social behaviour: such is the non-national lesson of sentimental novels.<sup>371</sup>

The *justicier* must be capable of using physical violence in both senses—willing *and* able—but only in a morally justifiable context. His moral use of violence is necessitated by narratives in which other characters (mainly men) use violence freely. Affiliation with a national army served to explain his courage and skilled use of arms. Though, as argued in the first chapter of this study, skilled use of a sword—the weapon used in these works—was more a mark of class position than profession. If considered as a new variation of the ‘damsel in distress’, the *justicier* can be seen to display signs of a resurgent chivalry, enabling authors to impart a certain style of heroism that entailed personal intervention and selflessness as well as, it must be said, the lack of psychological depth of his chivalric progenitor.

The question that will be posed by these narratives is how authors ‘explain’ the *justicier*’s interventions on behalf of female virtue in distress. The need for a chivalric ‘hero’ emerged from narratives in which state-sponsored legal means of enforcing justice are ignored or rejected. Anna Howe’s mother argues that Clarissa should publicly prosecute Lovelace in the courts: “the good of society requires that such a beast of prey should be hunted out of it: and if you do not prosecute him, [Mrs. Howe] thinks you will be answerable for all the mischiefs he may do in the course of his future villainous life” (p. 1016). Clarissa refuses to prosecute for several reasons: she believes the courts would not be sympathetic to a young woman who had left her father’s home; she believes her own family were partly responsible for what took place; she believes she would “not survive [her] first appearance at the bar” (p. 1021); and finally, she looks forward to an imminent death to free her from her troubles. Clarissa’s refusal to pursue legal justice suggests Richardson’s reluctance to engage with civil society’s mechanisms of justice, thereby necessitating another means of offering the readers poetical justice.

Historian Jay M. Smith charts an awakening of interest in chivalry in France in the mid century: “signs of the new enthusiasm for the golden age of chivalry showed up

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<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.

everywhere after the middle of the [eighteenth] century.”<sup>372</sup> He continues: “Much textual evidence suggests [...] that contemporaries were drawn to the Middle Ages through a craving for moral lessons, and moral examples, that could speak to a culture convinced of its own corruption and urgently seeking grounds for a patriotic revival.”<sup>373</sup> Its close associations with the aristocracy meant that a full-scale return to chivalric values could not emerge in the eighteenth century, but the signs of its tentative reappearance are perceptible. Michèle Cohen identifies a shift in Britain from “the hegemonic ideal of politeness to a new ideal of gentlemanliness incorporating elements of a revived chivalry. [...] there was enough overlap between politeness and chivalry to explain why the rise of chivalry in the mid- to late eighteenth century has attracted little attention from historians.”<sup>374</sup> She believes that the revival of chivalry was due in part to tensions created by the demands of politeness which created an “anxiety about effeminacy, [...] tensions between masculinity and refinement made it difficult for a man to be at once polite and manly.”<sup>375</sup> Politeness was nurtured by dedicating time to the company of women where a man’s hard edges would soften and his conversational skills would be improved, but the deleterious effect on men from too much time spent in the company of women was a concern. In addition to mitigating politeness, elements of chivalry could also mitigate the effeminizing aspects of sensibility. Katherine Astbury argues that Baculard turned to chivalry in the 1770s to reinvigorate his male characters who had been hampered by sensibility’s demands for a certain passivity.<sup>376</sup> If masculinising elements of chivalry could be revived and re-introduced, the question is what *were* these elements and how could they be deployed in the contemporary settings offered by sentimental literature.

In *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762) Richard Hurd attempted to reclaim chivalry from what he saw as the damage that had been inflicted on it by literature, namely the Romance. He undertook to elucidate the facts of chivalry, teasing them out from history and fiction and giving them a moral sense. During the Crusades, he explained,

We find the strongest and boldest features of [a knight’s] genuine character: *Daring* to madness, in enterprises of hazard: Burning with zeal for the delivery of the oppressed; and, which was deemed the height of *religious* merit, for the rescue of the holy city of the hands of the infidels: And, lastly exalting their honour of

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<sup>372</sup> Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined, The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 159.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>374</sup> Michèle Cohen, “‘Manners’ Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830’, *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 2 (2005), p. 325 and p. 315.

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

<sup>376</sup> “*Sensibilité* makes the notion of a male hero impossible to sustain—in an eighteenth-century setting at least”: Astbury, *Op. cit.* (2006), p. 40.

*chastity* so high as to profess celibacy; as they constantly did, in the several orders of knighthood created on that extravagant occasion.<sup>377</sup>

These ideal qualities are reflected in the *justicier*: the combining of a moral extreme (including chastity) with physical courage, and an ability to use violence for a just cause.

### **Sensibility and Moral Correction in the Family**

The *justiciers* offer moral correction in the demonstration of a militant sensibility in a family setting. They are men of action who are single and childless with responsibilities that take them abroad; they normally participate on the national stage, but in these works, the men intervene in domestic problems which possess a sense of danger and urgency. Before the men can offer (or attempt to offer) moral correction to the families, they must gain *entrée* into the lives of the women in distress. This is strongly foregrounded in *Clarissa* and *La Nouvelle Héloïse* where the extremely virtuous female characters must be seen to, in a sense, *select* their protector or champion. The virtue of the heroines then imparts an elevated status on the chosen men.

The existence of a special relationship between Morden and Clarissa is developed across the novel. Morden says:

I have been out of England [...] about seven years. My cousin Clary was then about twelve years of age: but never was there at twenty so discreet, so prudent, and so excellent a creature. All that knew her, or saw her, admired her. Mind and person, never did I see such promises of perfection in any young lady: and I am told, nor is it to be wondered at, that, as she advanced to maturity, she more than justified and made good those promises (p. 1279).

Clarissa's beloved grandfather made Morden a trustee to her inheritance rather than her parents because, as Anna Howe understood, "your grandfather knew the family- failing" (p. 128). Clarissa remembers that when she was struck with serious childhood illness, "my cousin Morden was one of those who was so earnest in prayers for my recovery" (1159). Belford announces Morden's arrival to Lovelace: "Colonel Morden is just arrived in England. He is now the only person she wishes to see" (p. 1207), after which Anna reports to Clarissa that Morden "declares he will not go out of England till he has seen justice done you by *everybody*" (p. 1313). This right to intervene is one that Clarissa's family do not thoroughly accept. 'Cousin' is a relationship that is at once near or far, depending on the

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<sup>377</sup> Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (London: A. Millar, W. Thurlbourn, J. Woodyer, 1762), p. 22.

desirability of proximity. Clarissa's governess, Mrs. Norton, reports of a meeting to take place between Morden and her family:

Your cousin, I understand, had with difficulty brought this meeting to bear; for your brother had before industriously avoided all conversation with him on the affecting subject; urging that it was not necessary to talk to Mr. Morden upon it, who, being a remoter relation than themselves, had no business to make himself a judge of their conduct to their daughter, their niece, and their sister; especially as he had declared himself in her favour; adding, that he should hardly have patience to be questioned by Mr. Morden on that head. The Colonel, when he came, began the discourse, by renewing, as he called it, his solicitations in your favour (p. 1321).

Lord Bomston's authority to intervene in the family matters of Julie d'Etange and her lover Saint-Preux is cemented by one action: that of possessing the capability of using deadly violence, but ceremoniously withholding it. The young tutor Saint-Preux challenges Bomston to a duel after a dispute; Bomston was a man who has "dans l'Europe la réputation de manier supérieurement les armes, et qui, s'étant battu cinq ou six fois en sa vie, a toujours tué, blessé, ou désarmé son homme" (p. 101). Julie writes a letter to Bomston begging him not to participate in the duel. He then performs the surprising and generous act of apologising to Saint-Preux on bended knee in front of witnesses despite the fact that what he had alleged in their dispute was true and that he was not the aggressor. From that point Bomston occupies a position of extreme intimacy and influence with the couple, and subsequently with Julie's own family. Julie writes, acknowledging the effort it would have cost Bomston to withhold violence: "Amène demain milord Edouard, que je me jette à ses pieds comme il s'est mis aux tiens. Quelle grandeur! Quelle générosité! Oh! que nous sommes petits devant lui! [...] Peut-être vaudrait-il moins s'il était plus tempérant : jamais homme sans défauts eut-il de grandes vertus" (p. 112) ? This is an essential point: the acknowledgement that it requires great self-control on the part of Bomston to withhold violence in defence of his honour. It is not easy to be virtuous, it takes strength. Throughout the important trials that Julie faces before her imposed marriage, she never consults her parents or a religious authority, she confides only in her cousin Claire, and the outsider Bomston.

Morden's first efforts to help Clarissa involve investigative work. His starting point is one of incomprehension. Before he arrives in England, he thinks the affair must be an *ordinary* domestic dispute between parents and child over the arrangement of a marriage, and never imagines the Harlowes would intend Clarissa for a man like Solmes or use such violent means to achieve their ends. He imagines that the fraught relationship between Clarissa and Lovelace must have a basis in *ordinary* romance and could perhaps be resolved with marriage because he imagines that Lovelace is an *ordinary* libertine. He does

not learn of Lovelace's machinations and the rape until after Clarissa's death. No one is providing him with a full and honest account of what has transpired. He senses that he does not have the complete picture and writes to Clarissa, "my dear Cousin, there may possibly be something in this affair, to which I may be a stranger. If there be, and you will acquaint me with it, all that a naturally-warm heart can do in your behalf shall be done" (p. 1300). The detective work permits for an unfolding shock and moral outrage which serve to reinforce Morden's role as an agent of justice.

In his meeting with the family at Harlowe-place, reported by Norton, the Colonel employs the tool of sensibility; reading aloud affecting passages of letters written by Clarissa. This causes all assembled to become upset, most family members falling into tears. But her brother James, dry-eyed, is angered and asks "What was there, in what was read, but the result of the talent [Clarissa] had of moving the passions" (p. 1323)? Morden, suddenly aware of the kind of man he is dealing with, replies, "I see plainly to whom it is owing that all relationship and ties of blood, with regard to this sweet sufferer, are laid aside" (p. 1323). With further passages read aloud, and more tears shed, Morden comes close to achieving the consent of the family to permit a visit between Norton, Clarissa, and her sister Arabella. But at this James declares, "if ever my sister Clary darkens these doors again, I never will" (p. 1324), threatening to leave England for Scotland.

Good God, said the Colonel, what a declaration is this! And suppose, Sir, and suppose, Madam, [turning to your father and mother,] this should be the case, whether it is better, think you, that you should lose for ever such a daughter as my cousin Clary, or that your son should go to Edinburgh, and reside there upon an estate which will be the better for his residence upon it (p. 1324)?

At this, James reacts with outrage causing the family to return to his side. Mrs. Norton describes the scene:

The Colonel, with hands and eyes lifted up, cried out, What hearts of flint am I related to!--O, Cousin Harlowe, to your father, are you resolved to have but one daughter?--Are you, Madam, to be taught, by a son, who has no bowels, to forget you are a mother? The Colonel turned from them to draw out his handkerchief, and could not for a minute speak. The eyes of every one, but the hard-hearted brother, caught tears from his (p. 1324).

James' absence of tears functions as proof positive of his moral inferiority. Morden tells the family he will no longer speak to them, he will change his will to leave everything to Clarissa and adds "in me shall the dear creature have the father, uncle, brother, she has lost" (p. 1324), planning to take her to the Continent with him when she returns to health. Norton explains that Morden "had been obliged to show a humanity, which, however, no brave heart should be ashamed of," a valorisation of Morden's display of tears. Norton

neatly sums up Morden's role in this passage: he is the only character to possess the magnitude to be a moral witness to a family who cannot see their failings and to demonstrate what humanity should resemble, not just to the family (where he ultimately fails), but to the reader. The theatrical nature of Morden's reactions offers visible proof of his sensibility and functions to underscore his moral role.

Morden is unable to 'save' Clarissa but he is present at one of the most important moments in the novel, her exemplary death. In a novel of great length, numerous characters and many events, the only figures attending Clarissa's deathbed, aside from her landlady and maids, are Morden and Belford. Her peaceful death is an example to the reader that for a true Christian, death is not to be feared. Clarissa's death also proves to be the event that cements a friendship between Morden and Belford, who meet at her bedside. Belford writes to Lovelace that Colonel Morden is a gentleman who has received him with politeness, but Morden also tests Belford concerning his friendship with Lovelace, stating "Sir, your friend has been excessively to blame; and you being so intimately his friend" (p. 1350). Morden becomes an important figure in the life of young Belford who is halfway in his self-imposed reformation from libertine to good man. Indeed, Lovelace is angered by Belford's new moralising and chides him by evoking chivalric ideals: "Thou knewest my designs all along. [...] thou shouldst, like a true knight-errant, have sought to set the lady free from the enchanted castle. [...] hadst thou the true spirit of chivalry upon thee [...] then something wouldst thou have had to brag of" (p. 1440). It is Belford who records Morden's reaction as he sees Clarissa for the first time in her deathbed. Referring to him as "the Colonel," he reports that Morden is overwhelmed with grief and unable to speak, there are silent tears and sighs and upward gazes. Forming a dramatic tableau, Morden "folded the angel in his arms as she sat, dropping down on one knee" (p. 1353). At the hour of her death, Richardson creates another tragic tableau; Belford describes entering the room, Clarissa before him in her bed: "the Colonel was the first that took my attention, kneeling on the side of the bed, the lady's right hand in both his, which his face covered, bathing it with his tears." Belford positions himself on the other side of her bed, taking her left hand, "while warm, though pulseless, we pressed each her hand with our lips" (p. 1363). Morden has physically but silently modelled for Belford and for the reader a masculine sensibility that is expressive but not effeminate.

In a novel replete with rewards and punishments, the execution of Clarissa's lengthy and detailed will is of central importance. By choosing Belford to be her executor, Clarissa necessitated that Morden also act as Belford's protector, ensuring that he is

permitted to impose his authority on the Harlowe family. Belford contends “you, sir, must be the mediator between them and me; for I shall insist upon a literal performance in every article” (p. 1381). Morden does so against great resistance from the family and is impressed by Belford’s exactitude in the performance of his duty. In Richardson’s novels these legalistic formalities carry great significance and Morden uses the occasion to formally acknowledge Belford’s complete rehabilitation from libertinism. In the equivalent of bestowing a knighthood on a young man who has come of age, he ceremoniously asks Belford to be his executor: “[Morden] took my hand, seeing me under some surprise: you must not hesitate, much less deny me, Mr. Belford. Indeed you must not.” He explains to Belford that the execution of his will should not be too onerous, adding, “And this is what I think every honest man, who hopes to find an honest man for his executor, should do. I told him, that I was greatly obliged to him for his good opinion of me: that it was so much every man’s duty to be an honest man, that it could not be interpreted as vanity to say, that I had no doubt to be found so” (p. 1464). This new-model ceremony seals Belford’s status as a now honest man, a status that is also rewarded by Richardson; he sees that Belford is married to “a virtuous and prudent wife,” produces a son and heir and is made as “completely happy as a man *can be*” (p. 1493), the italics suggesting that in mortal life, this will always be a circumscribed happiness.

In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, the Baron d’Etange is both the violent aristocrat *and* the tyrannical father, a dangerous combination for a child. Lord Bomston takes it upon himself to help Julie escape from an arranged marriage by confronting her extremely violent father. Saint-Preux, the so-called *séducteur*, is not a dangerous libertine and possesses none of the skills necessary to take on the Baron who has had a life-long career as a mercenary officer and has killed a close friend in a duel. Rousseau, however, acknowledged the potency of the *justicier*/libertine opposition through the creation of a scenario in which Lord Bomston is seen to struggle with the advances of two Italian women, one an aristocratic libertine, the other a courtesan. The libertine dies of an illness induced by her torments. The courtesan is returned to the path of virtue and enters a convent. This struggle provokes Lord Bomston to decide that he will spend the remainder of his days celibate.<sup>378</sup> Rousseau has established Bomston’s moral ‘credentials’ but without imposing on the central narrative.

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<sup>378</sup> This story straddles the novel and its appendix, “Les Amours de Milord Edouard Bomston” because Rousseau felt the details were too ‘romanesque’ for the novel itself: Rousseau, ‘Les Amours de Milord Edouard Bomston’ in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1967), pp. 587-596.

In Julie's dilemma, Lord Bomston is the only character capable of matching the Baron in the violent arts, but what he attempts is to engage the Baron in moral reasoning. He declares to Julie's father: "En un mot, si vous préférez la raison au préjugé, et si vous aimez mieux votre fille que vos titres, c'est à [Saint-Preux] que vous la donnerez" (p. 113). This merely provokes the Baron into outrage; he banishes Saint-Preux from their home and uses physical violence against his wife and daughter, causing Julie's secret pregnancy to end in miscarriage. Bomston then offers to help Julie escape to England to marry Saint-Preux, as well as offering him the use of his English estate, all of which she refuses, again raising the question of who is authorised to intervene in a family dilemma. Julie's cousin Claire (the equivalent of Anna Howe) maintains, "quoique pénétrée d'admiration pour la générosité de milord Edouard, je sentis qu'un homme aussi peu liant que lui n'était propre qu'à ruiner à jamais la négociation qu'il avait entreprise" (p. 115). Julie, too, chastises him lightly arguing, "Mais, milord, vous n'êtes pas marié: ne sentez-vous point qu'il faut être père pour avoir droit de conseiller les enfants d'autrui" (p. 146)? Bomston's intervention here could even be classed, like Morden's, as a 'failure' since not only does he not achieve his aim, but he dramatically inflamed the violence of the Baron.

In the aftermath of Julie's decision, Lord Bomston makes a crucial prediction, pronouncing to Julie: "Je prévois ce qui vous arrivera si vous rejetez mes offres. La tyrannie d'un père intraitable vous entraînera dans l'abîme que vous ne connaîtrez qu'après la chute...vous serez sacrifiée à la chimère des conditions" (p. 137). Over the course of a long novel, and despite Julie's best efforts, his prediction is proved to be true. Mira Morgenstern notes that "Bomston's commentary serves as the second level of moral critique of the patriarchal family. [...] Unlike the Baron d'Etanges, whose concept of family is exclusively allied to blood, Bomston recognises that deeds, not lineage, are what really count."<sup>379</sup> When Julie has married she tells Bomston to use the authority he holds over Saint-Preux to guide him, pleading :

soyez son consolateur, son protecteur, son ami, son père ; il justifiera votre confiance, il honorera vos bienfaits, il pratiquera vos leçons, il imitera vos vertus, il apprendra de vous la sagesse. Ah ! milord, s'il devient entre vos mains tout ce qu'il peut être, que vous serez fier un jour de votre ouvrage! (p. 146)

This role, Saint-Preux's guide and protector, will be Bomston's for the remainder of the novel when he is not occupied by military or political pursuits.

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<sup>379</sup> Mira Morgenstern, 'Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life', *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 119-20.

Correction and rehabilitation of the young libertine Thaley are given a prominent role in Baculard's *Fanny*. Fanny's loving and humble father is tricked into permitting a (false) marriage between Fanny and the aristocrat Thaley. But Thaley is under the influence of the evil libertine Sir Thoward. Whereas Sir Thoward is thoroughly malevolent, the young libertine Thaley is weak and lacking moral guidance and led by his vanity: "Thaley avait beaucoup de vanité, et que ce vice affreux du coeur humain y est souvent plus fort et plus dominant que la nature et l'amour" (p. 38). Thus Baculard has taken the qualities of Lovelace and divided them between two characters. Thaley abandons Fanny, leaving her pregnant and disgracing her family. He marries an aristocratic woman of his family's choosing with whom he is miserable. When his aristocratic wife dies, he falls into a "dissipation scandaleuse" and becomes well-known in all parts as the "héros du libertinage" (p. 76). Thaley encounters a stranger in a café, the aforementioned Windham who had announced his military status through the revelation of his scarred body. Thaley has been discussing the word honour when Windham, who knows Fanny's story, accuses him of knowing nothing about the concept of honour. Outraged, Thaley demands a duel. The two men move outdoors and face one another with swords in hand, Windham says to Thaley:

J'aurai la complaisance, puisque vous le voulez absolument, de me couper la gorge avec vous. Je ne vous demande qu'une seule chose. De quoi s'agit-il ? Je vous ai offensé grièvement, parce que j'ai prétendu que vous ne connaissez pas l'honneur; avant que de nous battre, expliquez-moi, de grace, ce que vous entendez par ce mot honneur, et...tâchez de vous calmer (pp. 80-81).

Windham evokes a theme addressed in the first chapter of this study : the highly subjective nature of conceptions of 'honour'. Thaley, stopped in his tracks by his inability to define honour, searches his mind for "toutes ces definitions si connues et si peu satisfaisantes" (p. 81). Windham has begun the process of engaging Thaley with morality and continues by using sensibility as a tool with which to paint a vivid and pathetic picture of the victims of Thaley's crimes. Thaley, reduced to tears, throws aside his sword, saying "embrassez-moi, généreux inconnu; vous m'éclairez; vous me rendez à moi-même" (p. 83)! Windham reunites Thaley with Fanny, their marriage is formalised and they begin a family. Thaley is fully integrated not just into family life but into society and "le pur amour le conduisit à la pratique des devoirs d'homme, de citoyen et de sujet; il rentra dans le service qu'il avait quitté, s'y distingua, et y obtint les premiers emplois" (p. 106). Here, part of Thaley's rehabilitation is to renew his ties to military service, a path which was valorised by its association with the saintly military officer Windham: "Windham étoit une espèce de créature céleste qui venoit tirer Thaley de la fange de la terre, de cette contagion du vice dont Thoward l'avoit infecté" (p. 89).

The generic constraints of the moral tale, with its necessity to be brief and morally black-and-white, help to illustrate the pointed use of the military *justicier* in all of these works. His efforts are on behalf of a young woman but necessarily transform themselves into interventions on behalf of the young men who have partially contributed to her troubles. Indeed, Clarissa and Julie deflect the *justicier's* attention away from themselves toward young men in need of moral guidance. The *justiciers* engage the young men using sensibility but their ability to use or withhold violence is essential. Windham and Thaley's 'conversation' transpired while facing one another with sword in hand. These relationships invoke the idealised institution of chivalry in which older men shepherded young men, helping to inculcate knightly values, bringing them into the fold. In these narratives, the young men become part of the fellowship of sensibility, learning self-control and becoming valuable members of society.

### **Punishment and The Problem of Vengeance**

In works of fiction in which rewards and punishments must be *seen* to be dispensed, it falls to the *justicier* to enact the violent punishments. Returning to Stephanie Genand's point that the impulse in fiction from Richardson onward was to "montrer le libertinage pour le denoncer," one way in which these libertines were 'denounced' was through their violent elimination. This job had to be allocated to a specific character within these fictions. In the postscript to *Clarissa*, Richardson argued that 'poetical justice' had been achieved by the novel's outcome, with Lovelace "condignly punished" (p. 1498), the enactment of which fell to Colonel Morden. Richardson's interpretation of the "Christian system" that was the basis for his distribution of rewards and punishments does not allow for the possibility of Lovelace's repentance and reformation. Clarissa, in a letter that Morden receives after her death urged, "Remember, my dear cousin, that vengeance is God's province. [...] Seek not then, I beseech you, sir, to aggravate my fault by a pursuit of blood" (p. 1444). Morden learns after her death that Clarissa was raped by Lovelace, placing him in a terrible moral dilemma: should he adhere to his cousin's pleadings or take action against a man who continued to behave in a provocative manner, with his cousin James Harlowe also threatening to take on Lovelace, a venture that would end in failure. If the narratives demand that the libertines be killed then the manner in which the role of the *justicier* is contextualized is significant. Equally significant is what is seen to happen to these men after they have dispensed violent justice.

Tom Keymer explains that the eighteenth-century reader was “accustomed to the straightforward reinforcement or satisfaction of the pre-Richardsonian novel” and found Clarissa’s death difficult to understand or accept.<sup>380</sup> For these readers, the novel’s lack of a “final gratifying resolution which lends a retrospective completeness and meaning to lives and texts, seemed intolerable; most intolerable of all was the absence of *visible* justice.”<sup>381</sup> Visible justice is *public* justice. Lovelace’s death in a private duel in Italy is an honourable death in aristocratic terms. Jennifer Low states that “most revenge tragedy concludes with a bloodbath that effectively purges society of its corruption.”<sup>382</sup> These domestic tragedies feature acts of vengeance but society is still corrupt. For one, the act of vengeance removes from society a member who could repent and contribute, and secondly, they force a moral man to kill. The lack of satisfaction is also created by the inability of this violence to address the original source of the women’s distress, their families. Clarissa argues that the duel is an impious act because, “‘Tis an attempt to take away a life that ought not to depend upon a private sword” (p. 1444). What happens to Clarissa and the other women vis-à-vis their families are private ‘crimes,’ not punishable publicly. In the end, the impasse in *Clarissa* was only ‘resolved’ by her death.

Belford warns Lovelace, “If you seek not Colonel Morden, it is my opinion he will not seek you: for he is a man of principle. But if you seek him, I believe he will not shun you” (p. 1478). When the duel between Morden and Lovelace finally takes place, as it inevitably does, Morden lightly wounds Lovelace and wishes to stop, but Lovelace persists and Morden is forced to mortally wound him. His death is neither instant nor peaceful. Lovelace faints, he vomits blood, convulses and lingers for many hours. The witness, De La Tour, records the last exchange between Lovelace and Morden, spoken in French, “You have well avenged the dear creature [said Lovelace]. But be ye all witnesses, that I have provoked my destiny, and acknowledge, that I fall by a man of honour. Sir, said the colonel, with the piety of a confessor (wringing Mr. Lovelace’s hand), snatch these few fleeting moments, and commend yourself to God. And so he rode off” (p. 1487). This is Morden’s dramatic exit from the novel. Morden came, performed his role, exited, and was not to be integrated into an English hearth and home. Lovelace has died as a ‘man of honour’ because he has been killed by a man of honour, in the manner acceptable to men of their class. But this outcome is problematised in the Conclusion of the novel. Where Belford and Anna Howe are seen to get their rewards (spouses and happy domestic lives), Morden is in

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<sup>380</sup>Thomas Keymer, *Richardson’s ‘Clarissa’ and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 213.

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>382</sup> J. Low, *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

Italy, single, childless, and haunted by his part in Lovelace's death. With hindsight, Morden writes to Belford that "he wishes he had more fully considered those words in his cousin's posthumous letter: 'If God will allow him time for repentance, why should you deny it him'" (p. 1494)?

The moral dilemma faced by Morden is expressed more explicitly and dramatically in Baculard's *Fanny*. Thaley's violent friend Sir Thoward, not susceptible to moral reasoning, insists on duelling Windham. Windham declares his reluctance, "je prends le ciel à témoin que c'est malgré moi que je me porte à cette extrémité" (p. 85). Thoward is felled by one mortal blow from "son généreux adversaire" (p. 85). Windham is distraught, taking the body of Thoward in his arms and abandoning himself to extreme grief: "Il faut, dit-il avec des sanglots, que j'aye commis un pareil crime ! Moi ! Verser le sang humain, détruire mon semblable ! Offenser à ce point la nature et la religion" (p. 86)! His *justicier* role is shown to cause him great suffering. At the end of the tale, Windham, who is aged, single and childless, tells Thaley and Fanny that he is leaving to return to his obscure retreat. They beg him to stay and live with them; he agrees explaining that they will console him in his old age since they are proof that "il est encore sur la terre des coeurs sensibles et vertueux" (p. 105). He has performed his *justicier* function and enjoys a limited integration into society, absorbed into a family that is not his own.

If the libertines must die, Danceny in *Les Liaisons dangereuses* illustrates the most purely aristocratic and least morally contextualised approach in his motivation for taking on this role. While he brings about the complete destruction of the 'villains' of the novel, killing Valmont in a duel and bringing public shame to Merteuil through the distribution of her letters (social death), he makes no claim that the actions he took were to avenge their victims. Danceny argues, "en effet, si vous convenez que la vengeance est permise, disons mieux, *qu'on se la doit*, quand on a été trahi dans son amour, dans son amitié, et surtout, dans sa confiance ; si vous en convenez, mes torts vont disparaître à vos yeux" (p. 459). In this rationalization, he owes it to himself to seek vengeance because of the way in which *he* has been treated, saying nothing of Valmont's true victim, Cécile. Laclos constructs a morally and physically weak boy to kill his brilliant libertine Valmont, a gesture that lends ignominy to Valmont's death, unable to say, as Lovelace had, "I fall by a man of honour." And perhaps this was Laclos' point. Like the other *justiciers*, Danceny will also be denied integration into a happy society. Danceny leaves for Malta to "garder religieusement des vœux qui me sépareront d'un monde dont, si jeune encore, j'ai déjà eu tant à me plaindre ; j'irai enfin chercher à perdre, sous un Ciel étranger, l'idée de tant d'horreurs accumulées, et dont le souvenir ne pourrait qu'attrister et flétrir mon âme" (pp. 471-72). As studied in

the second chapter of this study, the Order of Malta is an ironic choice, having already fallen into disrepute among the French people with its reputation for self-serving violence, libertinage and greed. The world created by Laclos was too French, too aristocratic and too degenerate to contain a Morden, Bomston or Windham (all Englishmen). Violent 'justice' and social shaming are employed, but are not seen to have dealt with the bigger question that is being asked about the aristocratic order generally.

These elements established, it is possible to consider how Sade took them, inverted them and challenged the assumptions on which they were based. In his novella *Faxelange*, Sade's heroine is *not* an eighteenth-century paragon of virtue. The narrator calls Mlle de Faxelange 'romanesque' and 'intéressante' and it will be her imperfection rather than her perfection that makes her a good subject for fiction. She shares with the military officer M. de Goé a delicate love that recalled the "sentiments précieux du viel âge, si corrompus par notre depravation" (p. 54), Sade's indication that their love remained chaste while they waited for marriage. Goé is from the nobility but he is poor and both sets of parents would rather their children make financially advantageous marriages. Nevertheless, the couple promise never to accept the romantic solicitations of another. The sudden appearance of Baron de Franlo changes everything. Both Mlle de Faxelange and her parents are quickly seduced by his opulent lifestyle and she marries him within three months of his arrival. Goé is heartbroken by "notre héroïne infidèle, séduite" (p. 67). On the eve of her marriage he attempts to warn her, saying "la probité dont je fais profession m'oblige à vous avertir qu'on vous abuse : l'homme que vous épousez est un escroc, qui, après vous avoir volée, vous rendra peut-être la plus malheureuse de femmes, c'est un fripon, et vous-êtes trompée" (p. 67). Since Goé can furnish no proof, she does not believe him and, in a display of sensibility, "des larmes coulaient avec abondance des yeux du malheureux Goé" (p. 68). He swears to her, "si jamais ce monstre crois-moi, chère amie, oui, crois-moi...j'irais te chercher au fond des enfers pour t'arracher à lui" (p. 69). He has made himself her champion despite her betrayal and despite her wishes.

Faxelange and Franlo marry and Goé's prophecy is proven. She is taken to the secret lair where Franlo and a large "troupe de bandits" operate a violent criminal operation from a mountain valley base where "la justice n'a jamais pénétrée" (p. 74). Sade's version of libertinism is a twisted version of the Lovelacean model, displaying the same intelligence, ruthless determination, deception and violence. Faxelange says to him, "Mais, monsieur, vous aviez pourtant à Paris tout l'apparence d'un honnête homme." He replies, "Il le fallait bien pour vous obtenir ; j'ai réussi, le masque tombe" (p. 80). Franlo did not set out to seduce virtue; he set out to seduce a suitable (wealthy, beautiful and

seducible) female companion. Franlo is a libertine in the sense of seeking absolute liberty, an aristocrat who does not want to come under the constraints of civil society, unwilling to engage in domesticity by bourgeois rules. As a young nobleman he had fallen into gambling and lost his fortune and his title to one man in a game of cards. He blamed the State for his criminality; the State allowed gambling to occur and permitted a situation in which a young man could lose everything in one game and forever pay the penalty. He used his intelligence and energy to manage his criminal band like an army, even employing military terms; theirs was a violent existence with complete freedom as their entire aim. Faxelange is made to either participate or be killed. She ends by fulfilling her duties to everyone's satisfaction. Like Clarissa, she is taken prisoner and surrounded by criminality, but unlike Clarissa, she has no 'virtue' to protect and she finds some moral footing in the acknowledgement of Franlo as a *husband* to whom she, as his wife, owes loyalty.

Just as in the other fictions, Franlo must be killed. Sade depicts the pursuit of justice occurring through official state channels. Goé followed up his suspicions and discovered Franlo's true identity, and designating Franlo's actions as crimes against the French nation, Goé uses his powers as an army officer to hunt him down: "on ne m'a pas refusé le commandement des troupes, que j'ai sollicité pour rompre vos chaînes, et débarrasser en même temps la France du monstre qui vous trompait" (p. 90). He and two hundred Dragoons on horseback ride into Franlo's lair and conquer his bandits. Franlo is taken prisoner and is to be taken to "le grand prévot de la province" to face state justice. Franlo is desperate to die before this can take place, unable to face imprisonment or ignominious public death. He begs Goé or one of the Dragoons to kill him, but Goé refuses since killing him outright would not be justice, but rather assassination. Franlo begs for a gun with which to kill himself to which Goé, succumbing to Faxelange's entreaties, finally concedes. But Franlo proceeds to turn the pistol on Goé, missing and provoking the response he desired all along: the Dragoons "tombent sur Franlo et le massacrent en une minute" (p. 89). The death that Franlo instigated—sudden, violent, performed by military men—was the death he wanted, worthy of his class and his exploits. Goé, unable to bring Franlo to public justice, did succeed in avoiding the direct role of executioner but he, too, is not permitted by Sade to return to society. After the rescue of Faxelange he informs her of his plan to fight in the war in Germany, explaining "maintenant je ne chercherai que la mort" (p. 90). He obtains his desire and is killed in battle, never having known sexual love.

Putting aside the larger question of why the libertines had to be killed, the men created to perform this duty must also be seen to be eliminated. The place of male violence in society is problematic even when it is shown to be required for the dispensation of

justice. Society is grateful, but when the job is done, it is difficult to re-orientate a man who can kill and has killed as a member of a happy family. Like the knight-errant, he is meant to wander, not to remain among the people for whom he has performed a service. In addition, because of the sensibility they possess, the *justiciers* in this chapter are shown to be irrevocably scarred by their own use of violence, and not permitted to marry or have children. Like the libertines, they are the end of their breed. To return to Walter Scott's articulation of the loss of a role for the knight-errant, "as the law of each state began to be strong enough for the protection of the subject, the interference of these self-authorized and self-dependent champions; [...] became a nuisance rather than an assistance to civil society."<sup>383</sup> But, it must be argued, even in the most developed nation, the law of each state cannot protect every subject nor provide justice for all of society's victims.

## Conclusion

The *justiciers* that have comprised this chapter are from the moral extreme. They are also little written about and have been easy to dismiss as minor characters. The functional nature of their role and their disengagement from earthly ties lead to them have a lack of interiority; in other words, they are not exciting and memorable like Lovelace and Valmont. This chapter has considered the manner in which their interventions are made essential, not just for the capacity to deliver vengeance when required, but also, as Mira Morgenstern has interpreted the role of Lord Bomston, for offering "the second level of moral critique of the patriarchal family."<sup>384</sup> There is an insoluble impasse within the patriarchal family over the formation of marriages that is reflected not just in *Clarissa* and the other literary works in this chapter, but in society of its time. The narratives are heightened to give domestic matters urgency, with the family portrayed as a small kingdom with tyrannical and avaricious rulers. Tom Keymer explains that *Clarissa* was written in the decades when the conflict between parental duties and rights as opposed to a child's duties and rights had reached a deadlock, and no where more so than in the arrangement of marriages.<sup>385</sup> This was perceived as an issue whose stakes were "high

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<sup>383</sup> Walter Scott, *Op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>384</sup> Morgenstern, *Ibid.*

<sup>385</sup> Of note is Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753, "a powerful legal intervention on the side of parental authority, by ruling clandestine marriages void." Keymer argues that "Richardson himself welcomed the Act": Keymer, *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

enough to threaten the all-important familial structures on which society itself is based.”<sup>386</sup> An impasse requires some form of re-thinking or some form of force.

It was for intervention in this dilemma that the *justicier* figure was designed, demanding that he represent morally-contextualised codes of behaviour and specific capabilities. Combining association with a national military with aspects of sensibility and chivalry offered writers the opportunity to imagine a contemporary style of performable masculinity suitable to the new moral contexts found in eighteenth-century sentimental fiction. In the first chapter of this study, I considered how for the nobleman, the ‘doing’ of gender had once been manifested in reaction to risks to his physical existence, a performance that had earned his class’s prerogatives. The noble superiority of the *justicier* can be demonstrated in two ways: he valiantly endures threats to his physical existence in the ancient and idealised style and he reveals his moral nobility through the expression of tears and other physical manifestations of sensibility. The reintroduction of chivalric elements, however, had an effect on gender relations; Richardson’s formulation of ‘virtue in distress’ reintroduced the ‘damsel in distress’ for a contemporary and domestic setting, demonstrating that chivalry makes a victim of the female. Indeed, it is made clear that while Colonel Morden has reverence for Clarissa, and grows to admire Anna Howe, he does not esteem the moral strength of the female sex generally. Samuel Richardson, in setting out a narrative in which female virtue must be *shown* to be tested, creates a female character whose strengths must be subordinate to her superior virtue.

A further concept that unites sensibility and chivalry is their co-existence in a realm in which material wealth is not a mark of superiority. Traditionally, the knight was forbidden from taking part in commerce, a tradition that extended to the *noblesse d’épée* generally right through the eighteenth century. This led to a proliferation of impoverished rural nobility with deep military ties. The situation for British gentry was more fluid explains André Corvisier: “en Angleterre les limites séparant noblesse et bourgeoisie étaient beaucoup plus souples que sur le continent. L’anoblissement était assez facile et les gentilshommes ne dédaignaient pas l’activité marchande.”<sup>387</sup> These more fluid boundaries did not mean, however, that eighteenth-century Britain did not have its own sense of unease with the growth of commercial activity as the dominant force in society. Commerce and money attempted to shed their taint through their perceived role in mitigating societal violence, but the preoccupation with material wealth as the new sign of

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<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102-3.

<sup>387</sup> André Corvisier, *Armées et Sociétés en Europe de 1494 à 1789* (Paris : Presses Universitaire de France, 1976), p. 24.

social excellence brought moral disquiet, as exemplified by the aggressive avarice of the Harlowe family. For the man who succeeds in business and attains material wealth, there exist few channels through which to prove his superiority *publically* except through the display of his wealth and titles. And the Harlowe men are not content to enjoy the *private* reward of domestic happiness. This predicament forms the basis of *Clarissa*: already wealthy, the Harlowe men seek to be titled and ‘opulently’ wealthy—a level of wealth that is visible and cannot be ignored by others. But James Harlowe is not able to wield a sword and he is unable to shed tears: he represents the double-failure of the class marked by social ambition, lacking both the finer qualities of chivalry and the humanity represented by sensibility.

The moral ambiguity created by the role of commerce and wealth is a subject that sentimental fiction was forced to address. Markman Ellis argues that the discourse of sentimentalism articulated the dispute “between the classical aristocratic concept of virtue and the modern conception of behaviour based on trust and benevolence associated with the new commercial society nascent in eighteenth-century Britain.”<sup>388</sup> These were the two poles—both expressed as *ideals*—that represented the ends of a divergent spectrum. Ellis argues that in its ideal form, the aristocratic concept of virtue pre-supposed a citizen who was independent of ties that might render him corrupt—i.e. commercial ties: “It was in the nature of commercial relationships to corrupt, as relationships based on the media of exchange involved dependence, and hence corruption.” The problem, however, was that sort of ideal independence could only be achieved in one way: “this citizen (who was almost always a man) required autonomy of real property, that is to say (in the eighteenth century) landed wealth, independent of commerce and industry.”<sup>389</sup> Authors could negotiate this moral quandary by making the *justicier* a military officer—landed, but neither a fashionable aristocrat nor a dependent man of commerce. The urge reflected in this figure is the desire to create a moral nexus between social classes: to retrieve what was natural and good in chivalry might distance it from class distinction and bring a return to a form of manliness that had been lost to aristocracy and to commerce; to position sensibility as natural would make it an attribute accessible to all virtuous citizens, regardless of class position. The *justicier* figure embodied these qualities while, uniquely, still being able to perform acts of violence in a highly skilled manner. He was *required*.

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<sup>388</sup> Ellis, *Op. Cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

...the *feudal system*, about which the writers of this age have made such a pother, as if it was a new discovery, like the *Copernican system*. Every peculiarity of policy, custom, and even temperament, is affectedly traced to this origin, as if the feudal constitution had not been common to almost all the natives of Europe (1771).<sup>390</sup>

## Conclusion

As the military man moved from non-national archetype (warrior, knight, noble) to nationalised professional, loyalties were transferred from feudal lords to kings and, finally, to states. The shift from the dynastic realm to nationalism was underway in the years that frame this study and would be consolidated but also disturbed by the French Revolution and its aftermath. For the warrior, individual glory had been the reward for valour on the battlefield; for the military professional, selfless service for the state was recompense in itself, with glory being remodelled and financial reward modest and uncertain. This change represents a transformation of the role accorded the military man in society. Simultaneously, but running according to its own imperatives, the battlefield was transformed by technological developments in the weapons of war, a further limitation of the scope for the display of personal valour and a further demand for professionalization. These two fundamental changes—the recontextualisation of warfare and the introduction of firearms—moved nations incrementally toward, as Adam Smith explained, the ‘absolute necessity’ of possessing a professional army. This transformation in the role of the military man demanded adaptations in literature, for so long the medium charged with the glorification of the warrior.

This study has attempted to recapture the societal and cultural perspective of the decades that witnessed the last two European wars before the French Revolution. The main contention of Linda Colley’s landmark *Britons Forging the Nation* is that Britain and France as nations were formed through almost continual wars with one another between the period 1707 and 1837. She explains that “it is a commonplace that this prolonged struggle tested and transformed state power on both sides of the Channel. [...] it led directly to the emergence of a massive military machine which has only begun to be

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<sup>390</sup> Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (London : Penguin, 2008), p. 283.

seriously dismantled since the Second World War.”<sup>391</sup> Historian Geoffrey Parker describes the “military revolution” that occurred in early modern Europe; one measure he uses to mark out the dates of this revolution is the acquisition by the western states of “that first 35 per cent [of the world’s land surface] between 1500 and 1800.”<sup>392</sup> Already in the late eighteenth century, this militarisation and the role played by Britain and France was acknowledged by Jeremy Bentham in his *Plan for an Universal and Perpetual Peace* (1786-1789), in which he singles them out as both the greatest provocateurs of war and the two powers that it was most essential to engage if a perpetual peace was to be established.<sup>393</sup> For Bentham, the greatest obstacle to peace between Britain and France was the question of which would act first—like two men of honour, so loath would either be to make the opening rapprochement.

This thesis has attempted to locate the unravelling of the dynastic realm as it was being superseded by nationalism, focusing on decades in which these two ‘systems’ were in co-existence. This co-existence is symbolised in Prévost’s *La Jeunesse du commandeur*, a novel in which a young man in eighteenth-century France had the opportunity to remain in Paris and uphold family interests or to escape into military service for an ancient chivalric order—a choice that permits him, in a sense, to venture back hundreds of years to a kind of liberty not permissible within codified eighteenth-century aristocratic society. Even libertines such as Valmont and Lovelace had to play by certain rules, and they were dead by the end of the respective novels in which they figured. Prévost’s ‘hero’ forges a successful career and is hailed by all around him, but by the reader, he is reviled. Employing the same fertile territory explored by Cervantes, Prévost reverses the elements of the narrative: the chevalier possesses a real platform for the performance of chivalric adventures, but he uses it exclusively for self-interested purposes, as does indeed, the entirety of the Order of Malta, its mission now irrevocably lost. The possibility of this kind of escape, which had been available to young aristocrats across Europe for hundreds of years, was coming to a definitive close.

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<sup>391</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 2.

<sup>392</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution, Military innovation and the rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 5. Parker cites Daniel R. Headrick who “explained how the Western states increased their global empires from about 35 per cent of the world’s land surface in 1800 to 84 per cent in 1914” in *The tools of empire: technology and European imperialism in the nineteenth century* (Oxford, 1981).

<sup>393</sup> “That, supposing Great Britain and France thoroughly agreed, the principal difficulties would be removed to the establishment of a plan of general and permanent pacification for all Europe”: Jeremy Bentham, *Plan for an Universal and Perpetual Peace* (London: Peace Book Company, 1939), p. 13.

Carl von Clausewitz, in his classic *On War (1832)*, singles out two men for their military genius: Frederick II and Napoleon. Frederick, a figure who embodies the decades under examination in this study, was a warrior king who demonstrated his prowess as a tactician, not in hand-to-hand combat.<sup>394</sup> His influence was partially responsible for the new push toward military professionalization. Historian M.S. Anderson explains:

Admiration, sometimes envious and reluctant, for Prussia's army, the engine of its new-found importance, as well as for its ruler, was now becoming widespread. It can be seen in such things as the adoption in its Habsburg rival from the middle of the century onwards, and late in other armies, of Prussian styles of uniform, or in the publication in 1754 of the first English translation of the Prussian army regulations. [...] 'Never have the European powers kept such large forces in being as since the last peace at Aix-la-Chapelle', wrote a Prussian officer a few years later. 'Little or nothing is heard of troop reductions. The states vie with one another in training their troops, and putting officers and men through constant military exercises. We keep our weapons sharp, and follow the principle that a large and well-schooled army is the best rampart of the state'.<sup>395</sup>

Whereas it is common to trace the emergence of the professional army to the advent of Napoleon, Geoffrey Parker names one factor that distinguishes Napoleon from his predecessors: that of scale.<sup>396</sup> Frederick's importance further elucidates the purpose of a joint examination of British and French history and culture. For centuries Britain was allied with Austria against France, who was allied with Prussia. These relationships were intact during the War of the Austrian Succession. The centuries-old rivals did an about-face in the "Diplomatic Revolution" of 1756, with France allying itself with Austria and Britain allying itself with Prussia. William Pitt claimed of the Seven Years War that "America was conquered in Germany" because Prussian military might permitted Britain to concentrate on colonial ambitions.<sup>397</sup> In one generation, Frederick provoked a change to the long-established European political order.

Developments occurring in the military would bring changes to the representation of the military figure and bring a re-examination of how to depict the 'heroic' in

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<sup>394</sup> "What we rather admire above all is the sagacity of the King in this respect, that while pursuing a great object with very limited means, he undertook nothing beyond his powers, and just enough to gain his object. This sagacity of the general is visible not only in this campaign, but throughout all the three wars of the Great King!": Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (London: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), p. 144.

<sup>395</sup> M.S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 210-212.

<sup>396</sup> "Napoleon's armies may have fought in much the same way as those of Frederick, Marlborough or Gustavus Adolphus; [...] but the scale of warfare was by then so totally transformed that it might be said that another 'military revolution' had occurred": Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 153.

<sup>397</sup> John Cannon, "Pitt, William, 1st earl of Chatham." *The Oxford Companion to British History*. 2002. *Encyclopedia.com*. (June 7, 2012). <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/10110-PittWilliam1stearlOfChthm.html>

eighteenth-century literature. In addition to changes wrought by the technological transformation of the battlefield, the increasing difficulty of representing a warrior hero was further complicated by the tarnishing of the concept of 'glory'. The glorious military hero reached his apogee in seventeenth-century theatre with figures such as Corneille's Rodrigue and Dryden's Almanzor. Paul Bénichou, charting the 'démolition du héros' that began in the seventeenth century, argues that in its inception, the glory associated with violence had been the natural result of the fight for dominance in a harsh world; violence was the *only* option for a man wanting to assert his strength and domination. The eventual "discrédit de la brutalité" accompanied the gradual pacification of European society, engendering a subsequent labelling of glory and heroism as fantasy: "la réduction de la gloire à une idée fausse et irréaliste à joué un rôle capital dans la dissolution de la morale héroïque."<sup>398</sup> Equally, however, as Bénichou acknowledges, it is not surprising that this form of glory should have left a vivid and lasting imprint: "la gloire humaine conçu sous cette forme, la poésie de l'épée, étaient entretenues par une tradition trop puissante pour qu'on n'en trouve pas la trace vivante dans la pensée des siècles modernes."<sup>399</sup> Indeed, an argument that has pervaded this study is that this ancient model of masculinity was still manifesting its power as eighteenth-century writers attempted to conceive new representations of military men; whether reacting against the old model or embracing it nostalgically.

The difficulty in devising a new military hero for the early modern era revealed a dissatisfaction with male violence used as the measure of a man's worth. The question of what determines a man's worth is central to understanding why chivalry and the Middle Ages were a site of contention in the eighteenth century. Chivalry was the 'location' of the ancient nobility's status, offering proof that the ancient nobility possessed, and could still possess, a natural violence employed for selfless causes; this is their strength and the source of their titles and prerogatives. Perceived as a version of 'history,' it was a history that only recognised one class. The insistence on a chivalric past, however, only served to cast aspersions on the contemporary aristocracy. As Jay Smith notes:

On the one hand, the association of selfless qualities with the nobility made a great deal of sense, given the nobility's traditional scorn for profit-seeking and its proud record of generous sacrifice on the field of battle. But on the other hand, utter selflessness hardly seemed the chief characteristic of a class of people whose genealogical pride and disproportionate power and wealth distinguished it from

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<sup>398</sup> Paul Bénichou, *Morales du grand siècle* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1948), pp. 308 & 144.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

other classes and promoted the elevation of familial honour above all other concerns.<sup>400</sup>

In life and in literature, a new class of military man was attempting to insert himself into a new 'history', between the "opresseurs & opprimés," the description forcibly evoked by Maurice de Saxe to express his dissatisfaction with the class fracture in the eighteenth-century army and its impact on military performance.<sup>401</sup> In this world, the only tool available to the subaltern was that of utter professionalism: attempts to outshine the aristocratic officer with demonstrations of professional merit and duty. It is notable that in France, the purchasing of commissions ended with the French Revolution, but in Britain a full professional meritocracy would have to wait: the Purchase System was not abolished until 1871. If chivalry is credited with having provided form to the organisation of violence, professionalism too endeavours to give shape to the state's organisation of violence.

The efforts of writers to represent the new military man reveal the importance of Judith Butler's theory of gender construction to this study. Eighteenth-century writers were devising new 'styles' of masculinity, re-thinking the possibilities available for representing gender construction. The fact that gender is brought into being through performative acts necessitates the repetition of these acts, thereby, over time, giving them coherence. As articulated in this study, for centuries, the man wanting to assert his domination had recourse to only one model: "la poésie de l'épée," a style of masculinity that belonged to one class only. The new push toward contemporary themes and realism demanded a reimagining of the manner in which military masculinity might be 'performed,' with writers still forced to confront the legacy of the ancient model. They could react against it by imagining models in which men asserted their domination without violence, through moral superiority, merit, professionalism or the possession of sensibility. Or, writers could reimagine how the potential for masculine violence might be morally recontextualised for the early modern era, attached to a cause. In Toby Shandy, for example, Laurence Sterne combined elements of an innate warrior masculinity with those of the new man of sentiment. Deploying this figure in the domestic realm, Sterne obfuscates the incoherencies and concerns arising from Toby's propensities by amplifying his sentimental appeal.

In the decades under examination, violent forms of performative masculinity are a flashpoint—shown to be both an asset and a burden. The ability to assert one's

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<sup>400</sup> Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 47.

<sup>401</sup> Maurice comte de Saxe, *Les rêveries, ou, Mémoires sur l'art de la guerre* (A La Haye : Chez Pierre Gosse, 1756), p. 8.

domination through skilled acts of violence is an asset because it permits access to an ancient and admired form of masculinity. It is a burden in its demand to be repeated and its demand for blood. This flashpoint is embodied in the duel—the internecine violence by which the nobility both maintained its superiority and reduced its own numbers. Eighteenth-century literature began to adopt a moral position with regard to duelling and through this positioning, had to contextualise the role of male violence in honour-based culture. Richardson’s Sir Charles Grandison demonstrated a violent but non-lethal performative masculinity, but the continual demand for Grandison to repeat a violent style of masculinity in the public domain was unsustainable; the only solution was to retreat, to withhold his services from the British military and to become a private man away from the city, ‘performing’ only for his wife and immediate family, channelling his passions into patriarchy.

‘Recruitment stories,’ a term I use to describe a recurrent element of this thesis, offers a glimpse of the new professionalism, as well as presenting new contexts for discussing the measure of a man’s worth. A range of fictional young men from outside the upper classes are represented articulating their reasons for pursuing (or attempting to pursue) military careers in novels that situate merit or subalternism as possible alternatives to class hierarchy. Recruitment stories serve as recognition that the military is composed of men who must each present themselves individually. Fielding’s *Amelia*, Smollett’s *Roderick Random* and Godard d’Aucourt’s *L’Académie militaire ou Les Héros subalternes* have an emphasis on great numbers of young men, endless supplies, which permit their nations to be careless in their handling of this human resource. The young men, for their part, are largely forced by personal circumstances to engage in military service, patriotism playing a debatable role. In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau’s Saint-Preux engaged in military service to escape a broken heart, returning after four years with a new martial bearing that women found appealing. Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy* offers the Lockean dimension to the recruitment story—asking whether Toby’s burning desire to join the military was inspired by nature or nurture, a question that is never answered. The interrelated concept of recompense introduced a new class dimension to eighteenth-century military service: in exchange for their recruitment, these men desire forms of recompense that, again, are determined subjectively. Status, a regular income, ‘glory’, sexual allure, professional pleasure (in the case of Toby), stoic duty in the case of Smollett’s Lieutenant Lismahago. Unable to realistically impart status or glory on their heroes, authors bestow them with a recompense the aristocracy had never claimed: domestic happiness.

Placing the responsibility for creating the professional military man firmly in the hands of the state, Adam Smith argued that “it is the wisdom of the state only which can render it [a man’s] interest to give up the greater part of his time to this peculiar occupation: and states have not always had this wisdom.”<sup>402</sup> This relationship is underscored in narratives which illustrate a further consequence of recruitment stories, in what could be called ‘transformation stories’. In the first instance, the narratives demonstrated physical transformations about which the young men took pride: physical strength and agility, new bearing, the allure of the military uniform, the ability to say “I am a military man.” For Chrétien de Troyes’ Percival, his military prowess was inborn and merely awaiting activation by circumstances. A question raised by the eighteenth-century narratives is whether the qualities activated in their ‘heroes’ were innate, a theme strongly suggested in Godard d’Aucourt’s treatment of the young “batteurs de Pavé & de Libertins à Paris.”<sup>403</sup> Also addressed is whether the qualities activated in the man of merit are recognisable by those in charge.

The secondary dimension of the ‘transformation story’ is manifested in the chapter focussed on veterans. The bodies of the veterans had undergone further transformation, bearing infirmities and scars that would not heal, evidence not only of experience, but of the state’s capacity for violence. Having been military men for decades, the veterans were *completely* transformed—permanently ‘othered’ in relation to the civilian population. This transformation permitted the ideological deployment of these characters in an examination of another, larger transformation story: eighteenth-century empire building. Montesquieu, Adam Smith and Rousseau in their political writings, and Smollett and Marmontel in their fictional accounts, engaged with this subject through the story of the transformation of a republic into an empire, a frame that puts great focus on the role of the military man in society. In the idealised republics imagined by these writers, there were no professional armies. Citizen armies served to protect the republic’s borders, not engaging in wars of conquest, leaving men free to be productive in times of peace, but vigilant and courageous in case of attack. The very existence of veterans, therefore, can function as an indictment of a society that devolves its responsibilities.

This subject turns its gaze to the civilian—also in a state of transformation in the eighteenth century. The separation of society into civilian and military professional is represented as a loss. The loss of ‘martial spirit,’ as described by Adam Smith, is the loss of

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<sup>402</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations, Books IV-V* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 285.

<sup>403</sup> Claude Godard d’Aucourt, *L’Académie militaire, ou, Les Héros subalternes* (Lausanne : Marc-Michel Bousquet & Comp, 1745), p. 104.

the ability to perform the ancient and idealised masculinity, sword in hand. Marmontel's Belisarius and Smollett's Lieutenant Lismahago, eulogizing the rustic virtues, remind the reader of the reasons that they have to fear a standing army and articulate the advantages of possessing a strong citizenry. Strong citizens, however, are a threat to the state. In *Bélisaire*, emperor Justinian asks Belisarius whether, in a state defended by a citizen army, "les peuples seront bien soumis?" Belisarius acknowledges that it is a risk to make the people powerful, but argues that if he were the emperor he would say to the people: "je vous mets à tous les armes à la main, pour me servir si je suis juste, et pour me résister si je ne le suis pas."<sup>404</sup> The pre-condition for the security of the emperor would be the happiness of the people. What is the pre-condition for the liberty of the people when the state possesses a standing army? Ultimately, the 'transformation story' articulated in these narratives asks if military service can be considered to be a 'profession' like any other, a moral as well as political question.

A corollary of these republican models, with their focus on the correct relationship between the soldier and the state, is the appearance of military men employing violence in new moral contexts. This concept is taken up in two chapters of this study which focus on the insistence that violence be attached to a cause. In one chapter, the most celebrated sentimental novel in the French language, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, is the location for a discussion of the *mercenaire*, a subject that I have argued is moral in nature. Whereas the buying and selling of the mercenary is an overt financial transaction, society began to demand that the violence of the soldier be attached to a particular cause—that of his own state. The oldest form of military professionalism was becoming synonymous with a weak or corrupt nation since the use of mercenaries announced to the world that its citizens were unwilling to fight for its causes. The new perception of mercenary service as immoral underscores the intensification of national sovereignty: the men and their actions belong to the nation. This subject would be the source of further anxiety in the American Revolutionary War, with Sarah Percy explaining that mercenaries were highly unpopular with the British public during the this war, which was seen as similar to a 'family dispute' that an outsider was being drawn into.<sup>405</sup> In the new moral contexts being devised, there are questions being asked about who has the right to bear arms.

The chapter on mercenaries is, at heart, the charting of a push toward national sovereignty, an indication of trust in the nation to wield justly the power it holds over its

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<sup>404</sup> Jean-François Marmontel, *Bélisaire* (Paris : Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1994), pp. 169 & 171.

<sup>405</sup> Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries, The History of a Norm in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 153.

sovereign peoples. By contrast, the figure presented in the final chapter of this study, while also shown to be fighting for a cause, is a military man who operates outside state channels. A literary figure I call the *justicier* permits the exploration of the potentiality for male violence and its use in the pursuit of ‘poetic justice’ for crimes the state does not see. The chivalric romance was a genre that had represented the ‘violence’ of its hero in the pursuit of a cause, services made necessary by the lawlessness of the age. Richardson demonstrates ambivalence about the use of private justice, with virtuous Clarissa warning Colonel Morden that “duelling, sir, I need not tell *you* who have adorned a public character, is not only an usurpation of the Divine prerogative; but it is an insult upon magistracy and good government.”<sup>406</sup> It is Baculard’s *justicier* who will allow for the possibility of redemption, the transformation of the aristocrat into a good husband and good citizen. In the originating model, Samuel Richardson’s *justicier*, Colonel Morden, was created to form a diametrical opposition to the corrupt aristocratic libertine, Lovelace, a man who refuses to come under the authority of civil institutions or the constraints of domesticity. Private justice harkens back to the idealised ancient nobility, employing ‘natural’ violence for selfless causes; but in these narratives, the dispensation of poetic justice is internecine, mutually destructive to men of the same class.

Evidence of the continuing cross-channel appeal of these themes after the French Revolution is found in Sade’s explanation for the birth of the gothic novel, which he calls the “roman noir anglais.”<sup>407</sup> He surmises that this new genre must have been “le fruit indispensable des secousses révolutionnaires, dont l’Europe entière se ressentait.”<sup>408</sup> Picking up themes introduced by Richardson in *Clarissa*—kidnap, imprisonment, rape, deception, artless virtue against cunning vice—the new genre would move away from contemporary settings and introduce “le sortilege” and “la fantasmagore,” as well as “la plus affreuse invraisemblance.”<sup>409</sup> Is there evidence of a *justicier* figure? It is of note that in Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), set in sixteenth-century France and Italy, the heroine’s rescuer, the chevalier Du Pont, is associated with a national military and seeks to rejoin his regiment at novel’s end. He, too, is denied the reward of romantic love.

The theme of chivalry manifests continuity as well as change in the move from pre- to post-Revolutionary Europe. This study has argued that the Middle Ages functioned as an ideological battleground in the eighteenth century because of its identification with

<sup>406</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 1444.

<sup>407</sup> Sade, ‘Idée sur les romans’, *Les Crimes de l’amour* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1987), p. 42.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid.* Richardson himself had begun these darkening tendencies with subsequent editions of *Clarissa*. Numbering four in total, criticisms concerning Lovelace’s charm led him to progressively blacken his libertine’s character.

feudalism and noble privilege. This battleground would persist and intensify in the post-revolutionary period. Peter Damian-Grint argues that pre-Revolutionary eighteenth-century depictions of the Middle Ages represented “not nostalgia so much as a sense of continuity,” but after the Revolution two new strands developed: “the rabid anti-medievalism in the Revolutionary period,” and, for a certain class, the development of a true nostalgia for a gone by age “when the living continuity with the medieval past had been destroyed.”<sup>410</sup> Chivalry as a continuing locus of ideological anxiety is demonstrated in Byron’s narrative poem *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812-1818), also reflecting developments in the continuing search for the contemporary ‘hero’. Evoking chivalric themes with its title, certain contemporary criticism was centred on Byron’s failure to offer an ennobling picture of chivalry. The anonymous author of *The British Review and London Critical Journal*, which criticized Byron for letting down his own class, advised the reader that the subject of the poem was “certainly neither chastity, nor valour, nor truth; nor fairies, nor damsels, nor deliverers, nor heroes baptized, or infidel; but the narrative of a modern tourist.”<sup>411</sup> Byron was compelled to respond to criticism in the preface to the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the work, arguing that the age of chivalry was “the most profligate of all possible centuries” and that “Burke need not have regretted that its days are over.”<sup>412</sup> In a work which instead announced the Byronic hero, the hero who sought liberty from all of society’s constraints, Byron unburdened himself of the demand that he prop up his class by composing paeans to chivalry and equally unburdened himself of the push toward bourgeois domestic happiness.

A parallel focus of this study has been the tracing of the generic shifts that permitted the representation of the new military man. My contention is that eighteenth-century writers were continually adapting literary forms in order to accommodate the demands of representing this figure, as well as meeting the demands of the reading public. Writers adapted existing forms, borrowing from the epic, the chivalric romance, the picaresque; or they invented new genres, such as the sentimental novel, the moral tale, the epistolary novel, pushing toward realism and a nascent *Bildungsroman*. Furthermore, writers moved freely between all these forms, creating hybrids. It has been my argument that these generic and thematic shifts were a reflection of historical and social

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<sup>410</sup> Peter Damian-Grint, ‘Introduction: Popular Medievalism and Nostalgia’, *Medievalism and manière gothique in Enlightenment France*, ed. Peter Damian-Grint (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2006), p. 13.

<sup>411</sup> Anonymous, ‘Article XVI Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage; a Romaunt by Lord Byron’ in *The British Review and London Critical Journal*, Vol. III (London: 1812), p. 278.

<sup>412</sup> Byron, George Gordon, Baron, ‘Addition to the Preface’, *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, in *The Works of Lord Byron*, Vol. I (London: John Murray, 1813), p. 6.

developments. Georg Lukács, in his explanation for the birth of the historical novel, argues that everything changes “at one stroke with the French Revolution.”<sup>413</sup> He offers an important description of the changes that occurred after 1789, while embracing the ground-breaking work of the eighteenth-century English and French novel. In his view, post-1789 events imparted on European society of all classes the sense of a direct relation to history magnified by the scale of the wars and the creation of new mass armies: “the qualitative difference between mercenary and mass armies is precisely a question of their relations with the mass of the population,” a relationship, as I have argued, that was already articulated by Rousseau in 1761.<sup>414</sup> The effect of the Revolution can be seen in the immediate impact on other literary genres. For Lukács, the introduction of the historical novel is announced by Walter Scott’s *Waverly* in 1814. In their accounts of the moral tale and *Anglomanie*, a cross-channel exchange manifested in sentimental fiction, Katherine Astbury and Josephine Grieder, respectively, explain that these phenomenon faded away after the Revolution, having already, in a sense, fulfilled their purpose of promoting social justice. Astbury describes the post-1789 reader as too sophisticated to need the strong pointers of the moral tale and Grieder surmises that from that time, “the future belongs to nationalism.”<sup>415</sup> Lukács remarks that the Revolutionary armies and Napoleon’s armies “did liquidate, completely or partially, the remnants of feudalism in many of the places they conquered.”<sup>416</sup> The breaking up and ejection of the Order of Malta in 1798 and the formal dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 signalled the demise of two pillars of the dynastic realm, elements that had united societies above the level of the national.

In *War at a Distance*, Mary Favret also views the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars as a line of demarcation, bringing about the “experience of war mediated” that emerged in Britain as a result of the mass scale of the wars occurring on across the channel and the resulting cultural response which “helped to construct the first wartime of modernity.”<sup>417</sup> Arguing for an unbroken continuity originating in Romanticism, Favret believes these writers navigated responses to unseen war that heralded the modern through their literary response to distance, limited knowledge, delayed access to information and the search for appropriate language and forms. The response of culture to

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<sup>413</sup>Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel* (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p. 3; “Scott’s historical novel is the direct continuation of the great realistic social novel of the eighteenth century,” made possible in part by Scott’s intensive studies on the literature of this century: p. 31

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>415</sup> Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France 1740-1789* (Genève & Paris: Librairie Droz, 1985), p. 146.

<sup>416</sup>Lukács, *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>417</sup> Mary A. Favret, *War at a Distance, Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 4 & 9

war returns the perspective to that of the civilian, a figure, as I have argued, who became more 'civilian' over the course of the eighteenth century through diminishing amount of contact with violence in their daily lives. The subject of 'the civilian' announces the great divide that will occur in the British and French experience at the onset of the Revolution and its aftermath; whereas the British public would continue to experience 'war mediated,' for the French public, the border between civilian and military man would become blurred until 1815.<sup>418</sup> This thesis has argued that the dominant phenomenon in French and British society before 1789 was the rise of the professional army alongside an increasingly pacific, bourgeois, and morally concerned civilian population. The new professionalism raised questions concerning the role of merit and glory in the military, questions which will not be resolved, and will in fact be further complicated by the Napoleonic Wars: the British army that defeated Napoleon's army at Waterloo in 1815 was composed of an officer corps who still bought their commissions. It is necessary to look to nineteenth-century literature to trace the evolution of merit and glory in the military, when the last vestiges of the dynastic system had disappeared and its martial values were modified anew in response another revolution: the Industrial Revolution. After 1815, there would be no large-scale warfare involving France and Britain until the Crimean War (1853-56). Until then, the possibility for representing a military man would be in a historical or a colonial context.<sup>419</sup>

As I address one last theme raised in this study, I will end as I began: with Adam Smith and Rousseau. I have argued that arms development has irrevocably changed the modern battlefield, altering the manner in which military heroism can be displayed in warfare, and consequently, how it can be represented in literature. Arms manufacture is a process which runs according to its own imperatives, attributable perhaps to one of the more self-destructive aspects of capitalism or a self-destructiveness within man's very nature. Adam Smith, discussing the subject, uses the passive tense to derogate the development of arms to unseen forces, powers which proceed to demand a type of man capable of using the new weapons:

The art of war [is] the noblest of all arts, so in the progress of improvement it necessarily becomes one of the most complicated among them. The state of the mechanical, [...] with which it is necessarily connected, determines the degree of

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<sup>418</sup> See Erica Michiko Charters, Eve Rosenhaft, Hannah Smith, *Civilians and War in Europe 1618-1815* (Liverpool : Liverpool University Press, 2012) : Using the term 'total war' to describe the Revolutionary Wars, they argue that "total war suggests the erosion of the difference between the civilian and the soldier, either through widespread mobilisation or the inclusion of civilians as legitimate targets": p. 4.

<sup>419</sup> For example, James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans, a Narrative of 1757* (1826) and Thackeray's *The Luck of Barry Lyndon, Esq., a Romance of the Last Century* (1844).

perfection, it is necessary that it should become the sole or principal occupation of a particular class of citizen.<sup>420</sup>

This can be juxtaposed with Rousseau's account of man's 'perfectabilité', in which man veers blindly and incrementally toward progress, technological or otherwise, but in reality works toward his decline: "tous les progrès ultérieurs ont été en apparence autant de pas vers la perfection de l'individu, et en effet vers la décrépitude de l'espèce."<sup>421</sup> The manner in which arms manufacture runs according to its own destructive and seductive imperatives cannot be better illustrated than by the uncontrollable enthusiasm that overcame Toby Shandy when given access to Trim's new 'weapon of mass destruction.'<sup>422</sup> Trim was attempting to replicate technological developments employed by Marlborough's army, a reminder to acknowledge the impact of weapons in earlier centuries.<sup>423</sup> As Tristram lamented, "there's no trusting a man's self with such a thing in such a corner."<sup>424</sup> How culture represents technological change to warfare will continue to pose a challenge in the representation of the military man.

Finally, if this study has argued for a transformation in the representation of the military man in British and French literature, the word transformation suggests a process that is completed. Not only was this process not completed, there are two reasons why the transformation will never be completed: first, culture will never obliterate the image of the warrior hero, an important and archetypal masculinity still present in modern culture. Second, the place of the military man in society, and therefore in literature, will never be fixed because of its dependence on historical and cultural factors, themselves always transforming. This is exemplified in the continuing use of Belisarius, not only in British

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<sup>420</sup> Smith, *Op. cit.*, p. 285.

<sup>421</sup> Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1971), p. 231.

<sup>422</sup> Contents of letters exchanged between Freud and Einstein between the First and Second World War add another dimension to the subject of Toby and Trim's reaction, indicating a psychoanalytic argument to be pursued. Freud argued two principal reasons why there could be no lasting peace among nations. First, explains Anthony Sampson, "is the craving for power, which characterizes the governing class in every nation, and which explains its hostility to any limitation of the national sovereignty"; second, is the power of the "manufacturers and vendors of arms," which Freud saw as controlled by that class. Einstein asked in reply "how is it these devices succeed so well in rousing men to such wild enthusiasm, even to sacrifice their lives?" to which Freud responded "man has within him a lust for hatred and destruction": Anthony Sampson, 'Freud on the State, Violence, and War,' *Diacritics*, 35, 3 (2005), p. 87

<sup>423</sup> Mary Favret cites historians who write of the 'unparalleled' nature of World War I, arguing that there is a danger in seeing technological innovations of our period or any period as 'unparalleled'—this causes us to underestimate the effect of war on all past generations, a tendency which she calls a "reflex of modernity." Likewise she adds, "denigration of the earlier wartime evinces a perverse pride in contemporary technology," and causes us to lose the sense of war mediated and to feel that we have first-hand knowledge": Favret, *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>424</sup> Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 410.

and French culture, but in American literature, beyond the French Revolution and continuing to the present day.<sup>425</sup> Madame de Genlis in the introduction to her 1808 reinterpretation of the Belisarius story wrote:

On a justement reproché à Marmontel d'avoir donné à son Bélisaire les opinions et les sentiments d'un encyclopédiste, et en même temps, d'avoir supposé qu'il était le plus modeste de tous les hommes: ce gout pour l'obscurité, ce dédain de la gloire et de la renommé, unis à toute la philosophie modern, n'a paru à tout le monde qu'un portrait de fantaisie.<sup>426</sup>

This appraisal deems Marmontel's Belisarius to be irrelevant to a society which is continuing to re-examine the subject of glory. The questions surrounding society's demand for the military man, how we contextualise his violence, what do we 'do' with him when his services are no longer required, and how different is 'he' to 'us' will never have one answer.

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<sup>425</sup> For example: *Belisarius, A Tragedy* (1795), by the American, Margaretta Faugères; *Belisarius* (1875), a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; *Count Belisarius* (1938), a novel by Robert Graves.

<sup>426</sup> Genlis, Stéphanie Félicité, comtesse de, *Bélisaire*, Tom II (London : B. Dulau et Co., 1808), p. 157.

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