

Who Really Won the Battle?
A Study of the Military Theme in *Tristram Shandy*

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I. INTRODUCTION

War metaphors prevail in *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*¹ in which Tristram Shandy, the fictive author in his forties, narrates his life story and opinions on various topics. He leaves off the story of his life to recount uncle Toby's bowling green campaign and to take up the account of his love affair with Mrs Wadman for which the termination of the campaign provides him leisure. The aim of this study is to explore the military theme in the novel by examining Toby, Tristram and Sterne's views on war, the depiction of battle, the mock battles and Toby's amours.

Critics have tended to discuss captain Toby's view on war and his war gaming on the bowling green separately from his amours with Mrs Wadman. Some criticism which discusses Toby's military character has, however, made some cross-reference to this issue. He himself, though, appears to think that his love for his country and for war is no different to his love for Mrs Wadman. His military spirit has clear echoes of chivalry, whose code includes aiding women in general, and widows in particular. For Toby, who is sallying forth to make love to her, the courtship is none other than a siege. In this essay, I shall deal with these three problems as a single issue.

Laurence Sterne would have been quite familiar with military affairs. His father Roger was a commissioned ensign and he related his father's life somewhat proudly in his "Memoirs."² He may have been looking back over barracks life while writing *Tristram Shandy*, but like many other writers on

war, he never actually witnessed battle.

Sterne's information about the science of warfare, fortification and accounts of sieges is culled from Chamber's *Cyclopædia*, Tindal's *The History of England* and his own individual materials, whilst Toby's "apologetical oration" owes its origin to Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Using these sources he has Tristram relate captain Toby and corporal Trim's military episodes and their opinions on war. However, Tristram is not a mere personae of the author. He not only shares Sterne's knowledge, but also utilises his own peculiar sources of information: for example, private stories told to him by uncle Toby, family anecdotes, his father's pocketbook and papers like Toby's "apologetical oration." This authorial pose sets Sterne the author apart from the novel. Therefore, Toby, Trim and Tristram's references to the military theme do not directly reflect Sterne's views on war. They do, however, add up to a substantial commentary of his opinions.

The next chapter will be chiefly devoted to examining captain Toby's apology for war. In the third chapter, I shall study his recollection of King William's martial achievements and his mock military manoeuvres on the bowling green. Then I shall consider his love affair with Mrs Wadman in the fourth chapter, and in the conclusion I hope to show that Sterne appears to have stood somewhere between the ideals of pacificism and belligerence, to have accepted war on the condition that no inhuman atrocity is incurred and to have understood the necessity to know about the reality of war.

II. THEORIES OF WAR

The Treaty of Utrecht brings an end to Toby's war games, makes them useless and hurts him terribly. Walter, an able politician, tries to cheer him up and forecasts that the treaty will raise another war for a new game. But Toby takes it unkindly and delivers an apology for war, which Walter records on paper. Tristram copies it to verify that he is a man of "so sweet a

temperament of gallantry and good principles." (VI, xxi, 368) His defence advances from the continuation of the War of the Spanish Succession to the intolerable misery of war and then to its definition:

For what is war? what is it, *Yorick*, when fought as ours has been, upon principles of *liberty*, and upon principles of *honour* — 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? And heaven is my witness, brother *Shandy*, that the pleasure I have taken in these things, — and that infinite delight, in particular, which has attended my sieges in my bowling green, has arose within me, and I hope in the corporal too, from the consciousness we both had that in carrying them on, we were answering the great ends of our creation.

(VI, xxxii, 370)

Tristram remarks that the "*apologetical oration*" is eloquence in which "the stream" overflows and runs "counter to its course." (VI, xxxi, 367) If it is only a flood of sentiment, it never happens a second time. But Toby uses similar phrases again whilst Trim encourages him before his 'attack' on Mrs Wadman:

as the knowledge of arms tends so apparently to the good and quiet of the world — and particularly that branch of it which we have practised together in our bowling-green, has no object but to shorten the strides of AMBITION, and intrench the lives and fortunes of the *few*, from the plunderings of the many — whenever that drum beats in our ears, I trust, Corporal, we shall neither of us want so much humanity and fellow-feeling as to face about and march.

(IX, viii, 497)

The clarification here is very lucid, though he would have been nervous and his thinking would have been disturbed.

He coherently insists that war should be employed to correct human sin and ambition, and that the aim and object of the military profession is peace. He also believes that the war in which he has fought has been righteous and

praiseworthy. This theory partially mirrors the Christian view of *bellum justum*: "war was a divine scourge meant to punish man for his sins."³ The theory of righteous war had become a deep-rooted tradition in European civilisation since St Augustine laid its foundation in *The City of God*. Boswell has given evidence to the ascendancy of the Christian view of righteous war in eighteenth-century English society: "Indeed we may observe what strained arguments are used, to reconcile war with the Christian religion."⁴ The idea of "humanity and fellow-feeling" is original to Toby, but his war theory is in total line with the traditional Christian view.⁵ Tristram intends to present him as a model soldier of the period.

Here I shall analyse Toby's war theory from another viewpoint: that is, Sterne's manipulation of information. H. J. Jackson has pointed out that the apology for war owes its origin to *The Anatomy of Melancholy* and "Sterne inverted the bias."⁶ The editors of *The Notes* of the Florida edition of the Works of Laurence Sterne have drawn attention to the apology's similarity in tone to Quixote's defence of chivalry.⁷ Sterne may indeed have borrowed from Burton and Cervantes but has avoided some critical issues. He has borrowed specific passages from "Democritus to the Reader" of *The Anatomy*, one of whose subjects is an attack upon war. Within this section Burton makes the cry, "so abominable a thing is warre."⁸ But Sterne has not appeared to pay attention to the bitterness of this cry. He has also borrowed knowledge from Don Quixote, who defends the practice of the knight-errant; but at the same time he does not accept Quixote's chivalric joy of "winning a battle and triumphing over an enemy."⁹ Sterne has chosen such quite contrary issues as Burton's diatribe against war and Cervantes' pleasure of warmongering in order to discard both. These borrowings are noteworthy but obscure his personal viewpoint. Now let us see where Sterne stands on the theory of war.

When corporal Trim reads "Yorick's sermon," Sterne's own sermon is

copied and he practically drops his mask. In this sermon-reading scene, Tristram, the putative author still has the freedom to relate the details of the scene, but Sterne's intentions to present his own "Abuses of Conscience" sermon¹⁰ prevails over Tristram's authorial attitude. Tristram narrates the scene as follows:

"In how many kingdoms of the world has the crusading sword of this misguided saint-errant spared neither age, or merit, or sex, or condition? — and, as he fought under the banners of a religion which set him loose from justice and humanity, he shew'd none; mercilessly trampled upon both, — heard neither the cries of the unfortunate, nor pitied their distresses.

[I have been in many a battle, an' please your honour, quoth *Trim*, sighing, but never in so melancholy a one as this. — I would not have drawn a tricker in it, against these poor souls, — to have been made a general officer . . . I know, replied *Trim*, that I never refused quarter in my life to any man who cried out for it; — but to a woman or a child, continued *Trim*, before I would level my musket at them, I would lose my life a thousand times. — Here's a crown for thee, *Trim*, to drink with *Obadiah* to-night, quoth my uncle *Toby*. . . (II, xvii, 109)

The high notion of war allows Sterne to make an outright attack upon the Romish crusade which sanctified cruelty in the name of religion. On the other hand, Trim and Toby sympathise with unfortunate war victims in accordance with Sterne's own position. He denounces the outrages of the crusades but at no point comes close to deny war itself. It is not unreasonable to believe that he has accepted as an Anglican minister that war is necessarily employed to carry out divine and national justice. But his acceptance of war is significantly reserved in its rejection of inhuman military atrocities.

Sterne has picked up the completely opposite issues of the anti-war view and the joy of warmongering to eliminate both when he transposes Burton

and Cervantes into *Tristram Shandy*. His choices appear to be contradictory and make his attitude to war ambiguous. However, his sermon makes it clear that he stands between pacificism and belligerence, condemning military crimes against humanity.

III. BATTLES AND MOCK BATTLES

Tristram begins volume two with an account of the siege of Namur and adds, "I must remind the reader, in case he has read the history of King *William's* wars, — but if he has not, — I then inform him . . ." (II, i, 67) He makes clear that he has read Tindal's *The History of England* and has utilised it for the description of siege. He shares the knowledge of martial events with the actual author, Sterne, but surely believes that he is using his own source of information. There is a greater distance between the author and the novel, and its putative author. Tristram speaks in his own right.

His description of the siege is centred upon the belief that:

one of the most memorable attacks in that siege, was that which was made by the *English* and *Dutch* upon the point of the advanced counterscarp, before the gate of *St. Nicolas*, which inclosed the great sluice or water-stop, where the *English* were terribly exposed to the shot of the counter-guard and demibastion of *St. Roch*: The issue of which hot dispute, in three words, was this; That the *Dutch* lodged themselves upon the counter-guard, — — — and that the *English* made themselves masters of the covered way before *St. Nicolas's* gate, notwithstanding the gallantry of the *French* officers, who exposed themselves upon the glacis sword in hand. (II, i, 67)

The above battle is a very momentous event for Toby since he received a serious wound in the groin that made him a half-pay officer. Tristram knows this well and has returned to Tindal's fully extended description of the attack for his own account. But his version merely lists the names of places and

fortifications, and becomes half-hearted in comparison to Toby's wound of honour (although Tindal has embedded many moving pieces of description in his account,) — honour, that is, to the king and his redcoats. For example: "all difficulties, which he [the king] did to his immortal glory, the astonishment of his enemies, and the admiration of all *Europe*," "the dreadful eruption of three or four fougades of bombs," "they [the English] returned more animated to the charge" and "they sustained and answered with incredible resolution."¹¹ After that objective and short description, the focus of the narrative soon proceeds to Toby's disorganised and never-completed account of the battle that has eventually given birth to his hobby-horse of war gaming. The point is that Tristram is more interested in explaining what caused Toby's hobby-horse than describing the military performance.

He describes no more battles. Rather, he has Toby and Trim portray them. Here I shall study their descriptions of the battles of Limerick, Steinkirk and Landen from the viewpoint of Tristram who is managing the information of King William's military achievements.

Toby's odd association sets him to relate the siege of Limerick, when Walter argues about "the due contention for mastery betwixt the radical heat and radical moisture" which he believes is "the whole secret of health." (V, xxxiii, 315) Toby and Trim joined the siege as fresh soldiers, but they would never have been able to fight with the Jacobite army due to the incessant and torrential rain. Trim follows Toby in the depiction of the siege:

THE city of *Limerick*, the siege of which was begun under his majesty king *William* himself, the year after I went into the army — lies, an' please your honours, in the middle of a devilish wet, swampy country. — 'Tis quite surrounded, said my uncle *Toby*, with the *Shannon*, and is, by its situation, one of the strongest fortified places in *Ireland*. —

... there was such a quantity of rain fell during the siege, the whole country was like a puddle, — 'twas that, and nothing else, which brought

on the flux, and which had like to have killed both his honour and myself

....
 I infer, an' please your worship, replied *Trim*, that the radical moisture is nothing in the world but ditch-water — and that the radical heat, of those who can go to the expence of it, is burnt brandy . . . (V, xl, 320-21)

But days of uneventful lodgement offer nothing worthy to relate of battle. Yorick hints that they have no memory of battle from their first war, saying, "there was no firing." (V, xxxviii, 319) The siege appears to have stamped a dispiriting and miserable memory on their minds. Trim verifies this misery by saying, "I verily believe, we had both, an' please your honour, left our lives in the trenches, and been buried in them too." (V, xxxvii, 318) Tristram exploits Walter's speech on 'the radical heat and radical moisture' and narrates Toby and Trim's discouraging first military campaign, which foretells their unsuccessful military careers.

Tristram informs the reader of the Battle of Steinkirk and testifies that "there are incidents in some families so pat to the purpose of what is going to follow." (V, xx, 303) "The misadventure of the sash" (V, xviii, 301) which befell Tristram at five years old freezes Trim's blood and makes him decide to answer for it, because the misfortune could never have happened unless Trim had taken the pulleys and lead away from the sash windows in order to make cannons for his mock battles. When Trim comes into the parlour to tell the whole story, Toby is giving an account of the battle to Yorick. Yorick's quick mind picks up the parallelism between the unfortunate case of the sash window and that of Count Solmes, saying, "Had count *Solmes, Trim*, done the same at the battle of *Steenkirk* . . . he had saved thee." (V, xxi, 304) His quick-witted analogy immediately releases Toby and Trim's vivid memories of the battle: "Saved! cried *Trim*, interrupting *Yorick*, and finishing the sentence for him after his own fashion." (V, xxi, 304) Their minds become

heated as they explain how they fought with the French and therefore Yorick has to draw "his chair a little to one side for safety." (V, xxi, 305) Tristram, however, prompts Toby to remember the tragedy of the sash window and then moves toward the subsequent scene of their marching to Shandy-hall. This is a focal point in his narrative and its purpose is to show the sympathy and consideration that exists between the captain and the corporal. He narrates:

if corporal *Trim*, who has behaved so diametrically opposite to count *Solmes*, should have the fate to be rewarded with the same disgrace . . . I would spring a mine, cried my uncle *Toby*, rising up, — and blow up my fortifications, and my house with them, and we would perish under their ruins, ere I would stand by and see it. — *Trim* directed a slight, — but a grateful bow towards his master, — and so the chapter ends.

(V, xxii, 305)

He uses the short narrative of the Battle of Steinkirk as a device to highlight the deep friendship between Toby and Trim.

The account of the Battle of Landen is initially a preface to Trim's love story, but it gives Toby a cue to verbalise his own experience of having seen King William's heroic performance in the field.

Gallant mortal! cried my uncle Toby, caught up with enthusiasm — this moment, now that all is lost, I see him galloping across me, corporal, to the left, to bring up the remains of the English horse along with him to support the right, and tear the laurel of Luxembourg's brows, if yet 'tis possible — I see him with the knot of his scarf just shot off, infusing fresh spirits into poor Galway's regiment — riding along the line — then wheeling about, and charging Conti at the head of it — Brave! brave by heaven! cried my uncle Toby — he deserves a crown — (VIII, xix, 458)

This is one of the rare examples of Toby's eloquence, short but picturesque. The reader can well imagine the invigorating time that Toby spent with the

king in the field from this account, and if he is inattentive he might think that the king won the battle. Toby has put King William's image as a great soldier king in perspective and is simple enough to recognise that the battle was great.

As for Toby, battles have always been great. Even the sodden trenches in Limerick seems to him to be "the noblest grave." (V, xxxvii, 318) He shows concern for the French way of battle in the Battle of Steinkirk. He becomes naively boisterous in his portrayal of battles and usually blind to its rigours. It is Trim who always remembers the hardships and the danger of the battle-field. He remembers that he did not want to die in a soaked Limerick trench, that a dragoon ran over him in Steinkirk and that he received a wound in the knee and was left alone upon the field of Landen. Besides, he vividly recalls the redcoats's defeats, as follows: "there was *Cutt's*, — *Mackay's* — *Angus's*, — *Graham's* — and *Leven's*, all cut to pieces" (V, xxi, 304) in Steinkirk and "the total rout and confusion of our camp and army at the affair of Landen; every one was left to shift for himself." (VIII, xix, 458) Trim is easily agitated while portraying a battle, but he also has too much sense to forget his own involvement in it.

Tristram makes use of the spectacle of Landen to make a bridge between Trim's "the story of the King of Bohemia and his seven castles" and his own love story, which is followed by Mrs Wadman's seductive attack upon Toby with her eyes. As I have pointed out, Tristram never clearly shows concern for the battles themselves. He just uses them to order the affairs of his narrative.

Fascination with relating battle is only a substitute for live military entertainment. Toby's thirst for the knowledge of the plans of fortified towns and military science has never been satisfied and the healing of the wound is delayed. Trim's plan to lay out fortified towns on the bowling green catches his attention and they decamp there to enjoy acting out the manoeuvres. In

the latter half of this chapter I shall examine their mock battles on the green.

Their battle field is the bowling green belonging to Toby's little country house. Tristram notes that

it was sheltred from the house, as I told you, by a tall yew hedge, and was covered on the other three sides, from mortal sight, by rough holly and thickest flowering shrubs; — so that the idea of not being seen, did not a little contribute to the idea of pleasure preconceived in my uncle *Toby's* mind. (II, v, 80)

“Not being seen,” in other words, indifference to those who are not included in play is one of the specific features of children's play. Tristram understands the true nature of Toby's war games which are simply a child's make-believe. This is demonstrated again in the episode of the field-cannon made of two Turkish tobacco pipes:

My uncle *Toby* took the ivory pipe out of the corporal's hand, — looked at it for half a minute, and returned it.

...
The corporal redoubled the attack, — my uncle *Toby* smiled, — then looked grave, — then smiled for a moment, — then looked serious for a long time; — Give me hold of the ivory pipe, *Trim*, said my uncle *Toby* — my uncle *Toby* put it to his lips, — drew it back directly, — gave a peep over the horn-beam hedge; — never did my uncle *Toby's* mouth water so much for a pipe in his life. — My uncle *Toby* retired into the sentry-box with the pipe in his hand. (VI, xxviii, 365)

When his mouth waters, he becomes a child with an attractive and precious toy in his hand. Just as a child is inclined to play with a treasured toy exclusively by himself, he disappears into the sentry-box with the pipe. Infantilism is a feature of his war games on the bowling green.

Toby and Trim fight King William's and the Duke of Marlborough's battles over again. They read the daily reports in the *London Gazette* and take

care over their enactment with order and precision, following the fight as fast as the actual manoeuvres happen. In the first year, the siege on the green is a mere representation of the actual battle, executed "in the plain and simple method." (VI, xxii, 358) But soon they begin to add "some new conceit or quirk of improvement to their operations, which always opened fresh springs of delight in carrying them on." (VI, xxii, 358) Trim tires to do his best to supply "whatever his [Toby's] fancy called for." (V, xix, 302) In the second year, they have "four handsome draw-bridges," "a couple of gates with portcullises" and "a handsome sentry-box." (VI, xxii, 358) In the third year's campaign "a little model of a town" (VI, xxiii, 359) appears on the bowling green. And they add "a very fine" church "with a steeple" (VI, xxiii, 359) in the fourth year. After the fifth year, they start to deploy "half a dozen brass field pieces," "a train of somewhat larger" and Walter's "jack boot" (VI, xxiii, 359-60) cannons. Tristram systematically explains the escalation of their mock battles in chronological order.

Toby's miniature reenactments become something more than a mere copy of the actual battles of the initial year, and would escalate immeasurably (just as arms races shift into higher gear with each new weapon) if there had been no demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk. War and battle multiply themselves extravagantly. Tristram makes the grotesque aspect of war clear through the escalation of the mock battles on the bowling green. As for Toby and Trim, the mock battles are nothing but child's make-believe, but Tristram has presented them as revelations of the grotesqueness of war.

Here I have reached the conclusion of this chapter. Battle is always great to Toby. Trim, however, is not so simple to see it as only fun, and Tristram appears to be indifferent to the account of battles but fully understands the grotesque nature of war.

IV. LOVE-MILITANCY

"Love-militancy" is a term coined by Sterne.¹² The analogy between love and war has been a literary and cultural tradition since Ovid's *The Art of Love*. Tristram follows this tradition and uses the "love-militancy" theme in the explanation of Mrs Wadman's destined advantage in the attack on Toby.

Mrs Wadman fell in love with Toby on the night when he accepted a bed at her house, but not until twelve years later does he learn that they love each other. She has been attacking him for twelve years and he has been laying siege to her for nine months, but their love-militancy has not been rewarded.

When she first sees him, Mrs Wadman had had "many bleak and decemberly nights of seven years widowhood" (VIII, ix, 441) and appears to be in her late twenties.¹³ Tristram portrays her: "A daughter of Eve, for such was widow Wadman, and 'tis all the character I intend to give her — — *"That she was a perfect woman"*" (VIII, viii, 440) She is beautiful, mature and very attractive, but the point is that she is a widow. Widows, unlike spinsters, were generously and kindly accepted in eighteenth-century society and had no bars to their amorous life and free choice of remarriage. In reality, however, they had great difficulty in marrying again. Remarriage was indeed common, but it was due to the fact that eighteenth-century fathers who had lost their wives in childbirth remarried to enable the bereft children to be brought up and to keep a household. Widows had much freedom in love but few opportunities to remarry.¹⁴ And it is true of Mrs Wadman, even though she is a perfect woman. Speed is vital to her; the older she becomes, the fewer chances she will have to marry.

Toby is about ten years older than Mrs Wadman at most.¹⁵ A difference of ten years is not in the least an obstacle to marriage. On the contrary, it is most likely ideal. Tristram tells of Toby's appropriateness for marriage as follows:

she [Nature] had formed him of the best and kindest clay—had temper'd it with her own milk, and breathed into the sweetest spirit—she had made him all gentle, generous and humane—she had fill'd his heart with trust and confidence, and disposed every passage which led to it, for the communication of the tenderest offices—she had moreover considered the other causes for which matrimony was ordained—

(IX, xxii, 517)

Tristram says that nobody is better suited for marriage than he but, on the other hand, he underlines his unfittedness for love: "Of all mortal, and immortal men too, if you please, who ever soliloquized upon this mystic subject [love], my uncle Toby was the worst fitted." (VIII, iv, 437) Toby has the advantage of being the best type of man for marriage and the disadvantage of being the worst type for love. He is the antithesis of Mrs Wadman who is a window who can enjoy many opportunities in love but fewer chances to remarry.

Mrs Wadman earnestly hopes to marry Toby and applies her arts of attraction upon him. The reader is given one of her strokes of "generalship" (VIII, xvi, 447) in this passage:

Whereas, in following my uncle Toby's forefinger with hers, close thro' all the little turns and indentings of his works—pressing sometimes against the side of it—then treading upon it's nail—then tripping it up—then touching it here—then there, and so on—it set something at least in motion.

This, tho' slight skirmishing, and at a distance from the main body, yet drew on the rest... and Mrs. Wadman, by a manœuvre as quick as thought, would as certainly place her's close beside it [Toby's hand]; this at once opened a communication large enough for any sentiment to pass or repass, which a person skill'd in the elementary and practical part of love-making, has occasion for—

(VIII, xvi, 448)

She continues her unrewarded advances for twelve years because of Toby's

enthusiasm for war games on the bowling green. But the opportunity finally comes to her at the termination of the war and its miniature reenactments. This last charge of hers is to capture his affections decisively:

Mrs. Wadman had scarce open'd the wicker-gate, when her genius sported with the change of circumstances.

— She formed a new attack in a moment. (VIII, xxiii, 464)

...
— If thou lookest, uncle Toby, in search of this mote one moment longer — thou art undone. (VIII, xxiv, 465)

...
It was an eye —

But I shall be in love with it myself, if I say another word about it.

— It did my uncle Toby's business. (VIII, xxv, 466)

Her art of attraction has given critics material to suggest her concupiscence. But as I have pointed out in previous essay, this art is the touchstone of the reader's sexuality. It is the reader who is labeled the concupiscent.¹⁶ She has an honest view of remarriage and has to be active in her plans of marrying Toby because she is now about forty years old.

Toby is not only a bachelor, but a virgin. A dialogue between him and Walter concerning Mrs Shandy's dislike of a male-midwife leads to the exposure of his total ignorance of women:

— To think, said my father, 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*. . . — Methinks, brother, replied my father, you might, at last, know so much as the right end of a woman from the wrong.

. . . — — — Right end, — — — quoth my uncle *Toby*, muttering the two words low to himself . . . — Right end of a woman! — I declare, quoth my uncle, I know no more which it is, than the man in the moon; — and if I was to think, continued my uncle *Toby*, (keeping his eyes still fix'd upon the bad

joint) this month together, I am sure I should not be able to find it out.

(II, vii, 82-3)

His confession of virginity and ignorance of women shows, as a matter of course, that he has no experience or notion of love. Trim's authoritative attitude on the subject of love makes him speechless:

— "*It was not love*" — for during the three weeks she [a young Beguine] was almost constantly with me, fomenting my knee with her hand, night and day — I can honestly say, an' please your honour — that** . . . * once. That was very odd, Trim, quoth my uncle Toby —

It never did, said the corporal.

(VIII, xx, 461-2)

He cannot raise any objection or doubt, not because Trim can justify himself but because he does not know what love is. When Mrs Wadman makes her attacks on him, he is like an unarmed town, because she is a widow with the knowledge of matrimony but he is totally ignorant of the fair sex.

Tristram points out that Mrs Wadman is serious and desires to marry Toby and that Toby is well fitted for marriage and easily conquered. This would allow the reader to anticipate that their love-militancy would be rewarded, but the result is quite the opposite. The reason for their abortive love-militancy is that Toby's ideal of marriage is so spiritual that he does not notice the physical or reproductive issues that underlie matrimony. When Mrs Wadman explicates about the sorrows and heart-aches that children impose upon their parents, his simple and very unrealistic reply gives rise to her scornful exclamation: "I declare, said my uncle Toby, smit with pity, I know of none; unless it be the pleasure which it has pleased God — — A fiddle Stick! quoth she." (IX, The Eighteenth Chapter, 526) He believes that the pleasure of having children is nothing more than that that of pleasing God. The terrestrial matter of procreation is, in his mind, directly linked with

celestial pleasure without any consideration of the couple's physical enjoyment. Therefore he cannot discover the true purpose of her inquiries about the wound but mistakes it for "the compassionate turn and singular humanity of her character." (IX, xxxi, 535) Her hope is to live a normal conjugal life. *Tristram* remarks on her natural interest in Toby's wound:

It was just as natural for Mrs. Wadman, whose first husband was all his time afflicted with a Sciatica, to wish to know how far from the hip to the groin; and how far she was likely to suffer more or less in her feelings, in one case than in the other. (IX, xxvi, 528)

When he is informed of the truth, he retreats from the battlefield. He is too gentle to denounce the purpose of her inquiries.

Tristram has proved that however good the conditions may be, blindness to the realistic aspect of love-militancy produces great unhappiness. If I apply the analogy between war and love-militancy to this, Sterne appears to have considered that a man might be thrown into unhappiness unless he recognises the rigorous aspects of war.

V. CONCLUSION

In the chapter on Theories of War, I have demonstrated that Toby's war theory falls in line with the traditional Christian view of righteous war and that both Sterne and *Tristram* accept war although Sterne's acceptance is conditional — war should not incur inhuman outrage. The chapter on Battles and Mock Battles reached the conclusion that battle is great to Toby but that Trim has too much sense to think this, whilst *Tristram* understands the grotesque nature of war. The last chapter on "Love-militancy" proved that blindness to the realistic aspects of love-militancy brings unhappiness to those who are both good and innocent, and that Sterne seems to have proposed that ignorance of the realities of war might cast man into misery.

The military theme in *Tristram Shandy* includes a great variety of issues such as war theory, description of battles, mock battles and love-militancy. Here I wish to make the major point that there are no winners or losers in the novel. In conclusion, Sterne appears to have observed war astutely and reached a personal stance that lies between pacificism and belligerence; he accepted war on the condition that it does not commit atrocities and realised the necessity to recognise the rigorous and grotesque reality of war.

NOTES

- 1 Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. Ian Campbell Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983). References to the text are to original volume and chapter, followed by page number in this edition.
- 2 Laurence Sterne, "Memoirs of the Life and Family of the Late Rev. Mr. Laurence Sterne," *Letters of Laurence Sterne*, ed. L. P. Curtis, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 1-3.
- 3 David McNeil, *The Grotesque Depiction of War and the Military in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press/ London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1990), 26.
- 4 James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman, new edition corrected by J. D. Fleeman, (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 1976), 520.
- 5 Tristram has adopted the traditional and popular cyclical war theory of the period. He says that "*as war begets poverty, poverty peace.*" (I, xxi, 52) (See McNeil, 26 and Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, III: *The Notes*, eds. Melvyn New, Richard A. Davies and W. G. Day, [Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 1984], 109). And Tristram shares this idea with Sterne. Sterne uses the phrase "*as war begets poverty, poverty peace*" in his letter of 7 May, 1763.
- 6 H. J. Jackson, "Sterne, Burton, and Ferriar: Allusions to the *Anatomy of Melancholy* in Volumes Five to Nine of *Tristram Shandy*," *Philological Quarterly*, 54 (1975), 464.
- 7 See *Tristram Shandy*, III: *The Notes*, 431-2)
- 8 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, eds. Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicolas K.

- Kiessling and Rhonda L. Blair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), I, 44.
- 9 Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The Adventures of Don Quixote*, trans. J. M. Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959), 133.
- 10 It was first preached in York Minster on 29 July, 1750.
- 11 *Tristram Shandy*, III: *The Notes*, 126.
- 12 "Love-militancy" appears in VIII, xiv, 445. The *OED* does not record it.
- 13 About the presumption of her age, see my essay "Love-militancy of Mrs Wadman and Toby—A Study of Sexuality of *Tristram Shandy*", *Shuryu*, 53 (1992), 35-7.
- 14 See "Love-militancy of Mrs Wadman and Toby," 38.
- 15 See "Love-militancy of Mrs Wadman and Toby," 37.
- 16 See "Love-militancy of Mrs Wadman and Toby," 39.
- 17 See "Love-militancy of Mrs Wadman and Toby," 48-50.