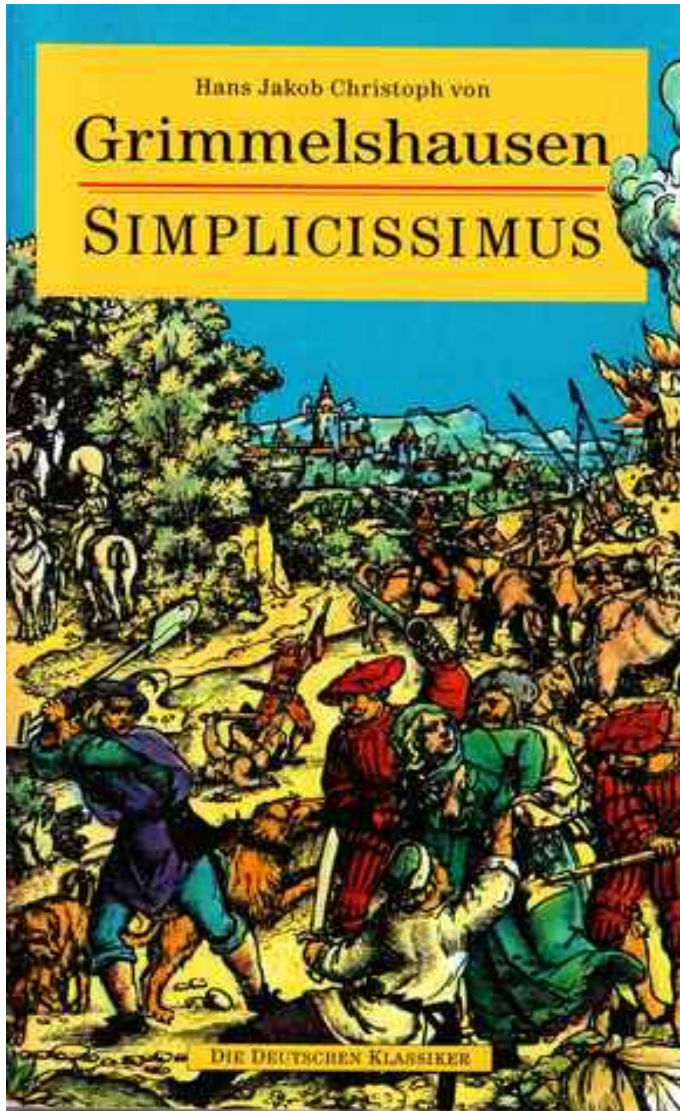

Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen

Der abentheuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch



Title: Der abentheuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch

Author: Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen

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Description

"Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus" ist das unumstrittene Hauptwerk des bedeutendsten deutschen Erzählers der Barockzeit und der erste deutsche Prosaroman, der Weltgeltung erlangte. Der "Simplicissimus" ist ein Schelmenroman, in dem sich derbe Landsknechtsmanier mit Witz und Weisheit, barocker Naturalismus und groteske Satire mit Phantasie und Sentiment verbinden. Beim Lesen, beim Durchblättern schon verwandelt sich dieses dicke Buch zum großen Zeitpanorama, zum deutschen Welt- und Zauberspiegel, der uns mit jeder Seite, bei jedem Nachschlagen und Nachlesen neue Facetten der Vergangenheit und der unvergänglichen menschlichen Eitelkeit enthüllt.

Insightful reviews

K.D. Absolutely: This is one of the ancient books in the *1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die* that I really liked. Originally written in German and published in 1668 by German author Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen (1671-1676), the autobiographical book is considered as the first adventure novel in the German language and greatest German novel of the 17th century.

Its backdrop is the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) that was said to be the longest and the most destructive conflict in European history. It was also one of the longest continuous wars in modern history. The original issue in this war was the conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Holy Roman Empire. However, it spread throughout Europe with other issues involved and with Germany being the most devastated in the end.

The story is about a boy baptized by a hermit this name **Simplicius Simplicissimus** because the hermit thinks that he is simple-minded. Simplicius is 11-y/o at the start of the story, an orphan and a witness of the murder of his loved ones in the hands of bandits. The narration is episodic, does not have a big cohesive theme and similar to the language used by John Bunyan in 1678 religious work, [The Pilgrim's Progress](#) (3 stars). However, this one is a picaresque novel, i.e., it is realistic yet funny most of the time and Simplicius is a roguish poor hero who lives by his wits in a corrupt society. Picaresque genre originated in sixteenth century Spain and flourished throughout Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Spanish novel that started this genre was [La vida del Lazarillo de Tormes](#) (3 stars). Picaresque novels or those with picaresque elements are still being written even up to now. Recent examples of these are Iris Murdoch's [Under the Net](#) (1 star) and Aravind Adiga's [The White Tiger](#) (1 star). Well, this is my first time to have given a 4-star rating to a picaresque novel. Maybe I am truly maturing when it comes to appreciating different literary genres. I think my main issue with picaresque before was its being episodic.

I have many favorite scenes here but the one that really left a mark on me is that scene when the Thirty Years' War is being described. I think this is a good book if you want to read something very descriptive on how was it to be in that war. The weapons were crude and primitive but you'd be amazed how much you can visualize it with the vivid description written by the author. As you can see in the dates mentioned in the first paragraph of this review,

Grimmelshausen did not really experience that war. For me, the ability to describe the war vividly was proof enough for his great capability as a writer.

Sergei: Many, denouncing the corrupt world, used to retreat to the wilderness in the end of their life. Simplicius does that right in the beginning, while he is still a boy and is ignorant of the deeds of people. He doesn't know even his own name, poor simpleton! He is adopted by a hermit who introduces him to Christian faith.

When the hermit dies Simplicius leaves the forest and tries hard to understand the world and people. He is conscripted into military service and goes through the trials of war time. Years of foraging and adventures follow, and Simplicius experiences military triumph and wealth, then poverty again, disease and bourgeois domestic life.

He travels to Russia and France. He travels also to the centre of the earth and gets acquainted with mermen responsible for water supply of all the lakes and seas. That is an extraordinary excursion. However, what Simplicius values most is his attempt of exploring his own soul. The eternal questions torment him: What is man? What can we achieve in this world? "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36).

As Simplicius ends his wild and amusing story, he tells of his decision to abandon the world and become a hermit again, but whether he will persevere in it, he cannot say.

I find this novel perfectly balanced in its structure. I enjoyed Mike Mitchell's translation.

Sherwood Smith: Rereading this after many years is like encountering a massive rewrite. When I first struggled through it in German class, I knew the general facts of the Thirty Years War, but as usual, from the top--the various Kings, Battles, Generals, Princes and Prelates involved.

Grimmelshausen gives us a peasant's eye view of the war. One can see how German culture was being shaped by this disastrous war stretching out over a couple of generations. Simplicius's story begins with his ignorant childhood in the forest, when soldiers come and rape his mother, sister, and the milkmaid, and kill his father, slaughter all their animals, and burn down their house. The milkmaid staggers out of the barn, all disheveled, and tells the boy to run.

The story is bawdy, gross, funny, harrowing, inspiring, instructive, ruminative, and gross by turns. Always sharply insightful, it demonstrates human habits and views that we share today--and then it steps sideways and gives us a glimpse into manners and views that seem quite alien.

We also get plenty of advice, like on how best to get lice out of your clothes (bake them) and the etiquette of male servants picking fleas off their boss's wife. We get a closer look at banquets of the so-called great, and life at all levels. Also, how armies were organized, trained, and run.

Think of this book as a mini series running for a season--it was enormously popular for many,

many years. If you don't read German, get a good translation and unabridged so you get the breezy style and the details.

Jermain Foutre le Camp: Vor diesem Buch, bzw. der Ausgabe dieses urspr. großartigen Werkes ist dringend abzuraten! In einer öffentlichen Besprechung zu diesem Buch heißt es zwar: "Reinhard Kaiser hat das Wagnis unternommen, dieses erste große Volksbuch der Deutschen wieder unter das Volk zu bringen: in einer Sprache, die uns nahe ist. Ihm ist das Kunststück geglückt, Rhythmus, Ton und Geist des ursprünglichen Textes, seine Tiefe und seinen übersprudelnden Witz wieder lebendig werden zu lassen." Doch dem ist eben nicht so. Kaiser vollbrachte kein Kunststück, sondern verzapfte großen Mist. Durch sein "Wagnis" wurde die ursprüngliche Fassung nämlich vollkommen verschandelt; der Rhythmus, Ton und Geist dieses wunderbaren Erzählwerkes von Grimmelshausen ist hierdurch völlig verloren gegangen. Möchte jemand vielleicht demnächst auch noch den Schiller umschreiben, nur weil ein paar seiner Ausdrücke und Formulierungen nicht mehr zeitgemäß sind? used to be ist nur aus dem EichbornVerlag geworden, daß guy so etwas zuläßt? Also: lest bitte die Originalfassung und kauft bloß nicht diese Ausgabe.

Perry Whitford: because the identify implies, this can be the story of a simpleton, raised in isolation and lack of expertise within the distant Spessart quarter of Bavaria throughout the first half the seventeenth century; then, while plundering infantrymen torture and kill his family, catapulted into the big, undesirable global of continental Europe through the 'Thirty Years War'. Simplicius escapes to be raised and taught by way of an aged, pious Hermit ('So I requested him, what be those things, "people" and "village"?') who teaches him 3 very important classes of lifestyles sooner than dying, namely: 'to be aware of oneself: to prevent undesirable company: and to face steadfast.' Thereafter he attempts his hand at a variety of professions: a idiot on the court docket of an area governor, utilizing the license of the jester to speak freely to the nice and good; touring among infantrymen disguised as a tender girl, with comedic consequences; a plundering dragoon, buying a lot wealth, acclaim and the nickname the 'Huntsman of Soest'; a singer in Paris; a quack medical professional etc. On the single hand a what we've got is a pleasant comedic romp, a picaresque, additional embroidered with romance elements, equivalent to the narrator's mystery noble birth, quite a few prophesies, enchantments and witchcraft. But nonetheless this is often lifestyles within the raw, with all of the hardships of the time evidently described: the cruelty and rapine of squaddies and mercenaries, the blood-soaked brutality of war; sodomy, smallpox, fleas, lice and starvation. The seventeenth century syntax might be tricky at times, but when you keep it up you'll be richly rewarded with a zesty and clever narrative, which supplies facts optimistic that folly and hypocrisy have constantly held sway within the world, then as now. So what does the simpleton in attaining via all his adventures? easily that he claim how he has: 'seen with mine personal eyes how males may be extra swinish than pigs, extra savage than lions, extra lustful than goats, extra resentful than dogs, extra unruly than horses, extra silly than asses, extra mad for drink than the brutes, craftier than foxes, greedier than wolves, sillier than apes, and extra toxic than asps and toads'.

Monty Milne: Fart jokes, hermits, cuckoldry, banditry, conflict scenes, love scenes, Anabaptists and papists, and a trip to the centre of the earth within the corporation of water sprites...all wrapped up in immensely long seventeenth century prose. to not everyone's style - yet I enjoyed it. other than that it was once a piece tedious in parts, even for me. I learn Books I and

It is in George Schulz-Behrend's translation, that's in brilliant 1960's American English, now not solely irrelevant while a lot of the narrative feels similar to an acid journey (or so I imagine). For Books III to V I used Osborne's translation, additionally American, yet much less intrusively so, and a section extra antiquated well-liked (though I believe it's the extra recent). I most popular Osborne, no longer least simply because he does not abridge anything. You need to be a section ordinary to love this type of factor at all, so why now not immerse your self within the complete experience?

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