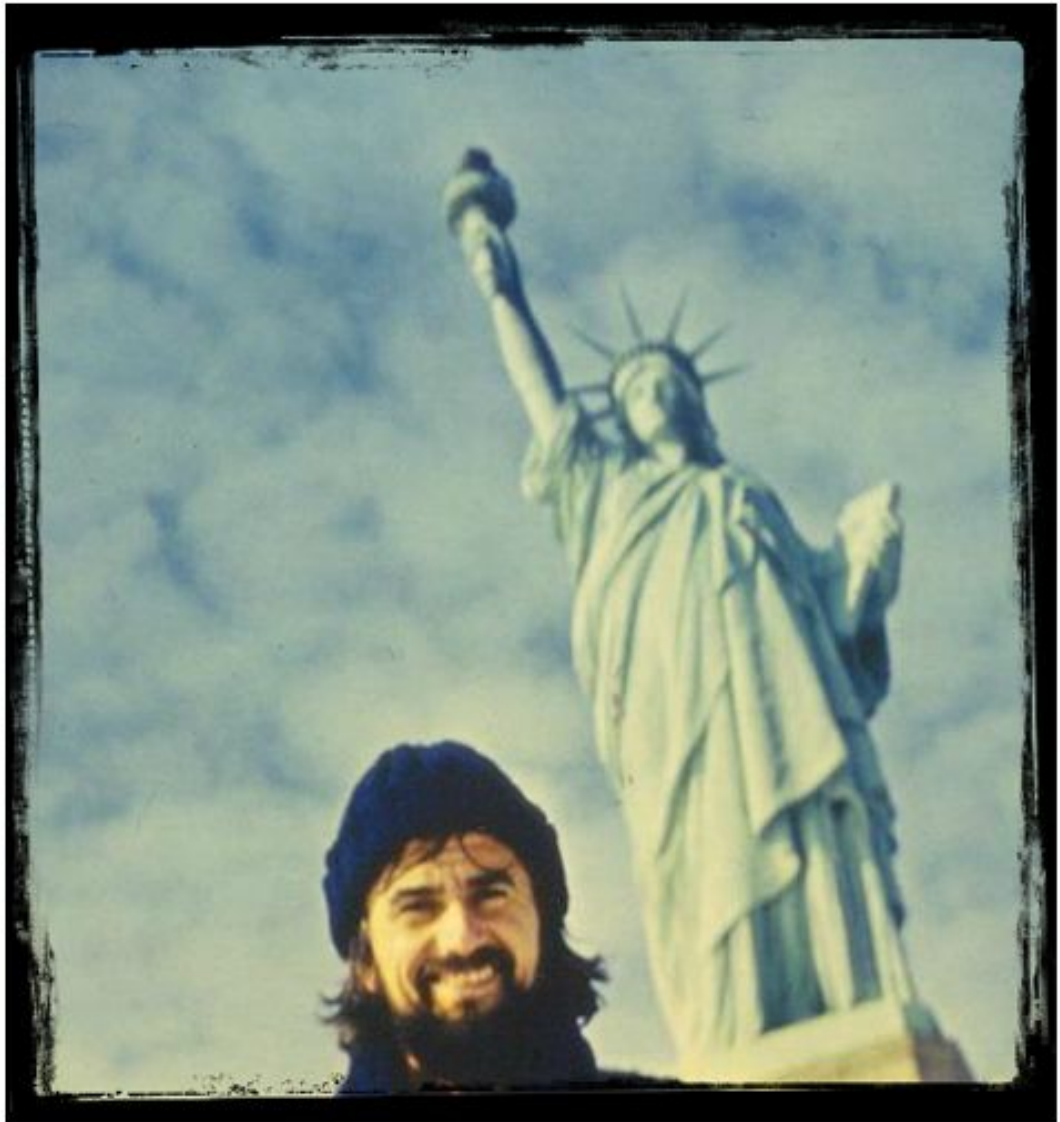


KÖLTŐK, KÉMEK, DETEKTÍVEK, PIRÍTÓS ÉS FORDÍTÁSOK
ÍRÁSOK NOVÁK GYÖRGY TISZTELETÉRE



POETS, SPIES, DETECTIVES, PIECES OF TOAST, AND TRANSLATIONS
ESSAYS IN HONOR OF GYÖRGY NOVÁK

Szerkesztette / Edited by
Zoltán Vajda

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*Költők, kémek, detektívek, piritós és fordítások – Írások
Novák György tiszteletére
Poets, spies, detectives, pieces of toast, and translations:
Essays in honor of György Novák*

Szerkesztette/Edited by
Zoltán Vajda

A kiadvány
a Szegedi Tudományegyetem Bölcsészettudományi
Karának
és Amerikanisztika Tanszékének
a támogatásával jelent meg.

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"Pym, you bastard, where are you?"

Intertextuality in John Le Carré's *A Perfect Spy*

Introduction

Opening his Grimmelshausen at page fifty-five he found five lines down without even counting and on a fresh sheet of paper wrote out the first ten letters of that line, then converted them to numerals according to their position in the alphabet. Subtract without carrying. Don't reason, do it. He was adding again, still not carrying. He was converting numbers into letters. Don't reason. NEV ... VER ... RMI ... IND ... DEW ... There's nothing here. It's gobbledegook. Tune it again at ten and take a fresh reading.

(Le Carré, p. 171)

Pym finally did find out what the message was, the method he had used for decades did not fail at the last occasion, either. He possesses an old edition of Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus*, by the help of which

he is able to decipher the coded messages he receives. For the reader the significance of such a decoding system lies in the fact that a procedure like this can also be applied to the text of the book which Pym is a character in and also a writer of. It is possible to take *A Perfect Spy* as a coded text and decipher it by the means of the same *Simplicissimus* Pym had used for his texts.

This paper is an attempt of deciphering Le Carré's *A Perfect Spy* according to the prescriptions the text provides us with on how to use Grimmelshausen when doing so. The method is obviously not strictly the one Pym employs to understand his messages, but using *Simplicissimus* as a source of references made in *A Perfect Spy*. In other words, the method of approaching the text is that of intertextuality, the concepts and terminology of which can be adopted for the analyses. The results of placing the two texts beside each other are, I think, twofold. Firstly, it is the position of the individual in its context they both concentrate on by telling the life stories of the protagonists, who are themselves writing their autobiographies, constructing the texts we read. Still, there is some difference between the way the two novels are narrated, which on the part of *A Perfect Spy* implies the disintegration of a unified point of view from which the events could be told, and that of Pym, the author, too. *A Perfect Spy* can be looked upon as the postmodern actualization of the baroque moralising of *Simplicissimus* on the situation of the individual within a duplicitous world. The second conclusion to be made is related to the way the texts are connected: one text gives guidelines as for how to handle it by the means of another text, but while tracing the connections between the two,

additional possible intertexts come to surface to make reading more complex.^[286]

To be able to substantiate the above ideas, in the first chapter the theoretical background of looking at the texts and the terminology is cleared. Then this is actualised in relation to the two novels being examined. Next the idea of how to proceed with the analyses is explained according to the instructions found in *A Perfect Spy*, and the evidences of the relation of the two texts are being displayed. In the fourth section the significance of the similarities and differences of the texts are commented on, which is followed by a summary of conclusions and questions deriving from the results elicited.

I. The Method

The approach the *A Perfect Spy* suggests that we should use when reading it is to put it and *Simplicissimus* beside each other and find explanations to some such parts of the former which would be ambiguous without doing so. This technique of finding out the relation of texts to each other to get a better understanding of them is an intertextual approach, if we are after the actualization of one text in the other.^[287] However, the term intertextuality has several interpretations. Here it is being applied in the Riffaterrean sense, as opposed to its wider use.

In the Riffaterrean sense intertextuality is an objective key to the novels' significance.^[288] Significance stands for that component of the text which conveys additional meaning as opposed to 'meaning' that is supposed to be conveyed by the text on a mimetic level.^[289] Thus significance is not apparent at the first reading, it has to be decoded. Decoding is the role of the reader. It is up to him to interpret the sign system of the novel, which consists of the idiolect and sociolect of the writer. The reader can detect references to the sociolect "through and in spite of" the idiolect's interferences.^[290] In short, he has to actualize the text according to the influence of the prevailing social environment of his time. This actualization can also be the product of the relation between text and intertext. Intertext is a mediated text quoted or alluded to^[291], the relation of which to the focused text, the other one, can be termed as intertextual only if there is a difference to be accounted for between the two.^[292] The intertext can textually be connected to the focused one, it is a descriptive system either available to our linguistic competence (presupposition) or is actualised within an other text.^[293]

For Riffaterre there is a strict distinction between aleatory and obligatory intertextuality, the first covering those relations the reader establishes freely to the focused text, the second having a distinct trace in the text in the form of an unintelligibility to be solved.^[294] It is a sign of a new idea of the intertext. This trace of an obligatory intertext creates a need for gap filling, in a way that the reader is not "dependent on his idiosyncracies" when trying to interpret the text.^[295] However determined this

relationship between the inter- and focused text may be, Riffaterre sees no possibility for a finished intertextual interpretation, as reading remains "a seesaw scanning" between the meaning and significance of the text ^[296] for him.

The extensive use of the term puts the relation which in Riffaterre characterised only the connection between the obligatory intertexts and focused texts into a more general framework, saying that intertextual relationships are present among several intertexts in the case of one focused one. The view holds that practically all texts are constructed this way, even if there are no explicit formal sign of this in them.^[297] The general idea is saying that a poem is "inhabited by a long chain of parasitical presences, echoes, allusions, guests, ghosts of previous texts".^[298] What basically means that in this view the Riffatterrian distinction of intertextualities does not exist, all connections among texts, no matter how they were created, are to be respected. This way the text is like a differential network, consists of traces, it refers to something other than itself all the time.^[299] No text has a right interpretation, and also the idea of the author becomes outdated. The opposition of the two interpretations of the term are not reconcilable, as Riffaterre has a concept that the focused text makes a deliberate use of its intertext, while in the other all latent or unintended relations among texts are allowed to be considered.

Those who regard the concept of intertextuality in a more extensive sense than Riffaterre does, see Riffaterre as a tentative formalist, first in how he looks at the text, then in how he tries to take into consideration the social

contextuality of literature. His idea of the text "is no longer referential, but still phenomenal"^[300], comments deMan, meaning that when Riffaterre says a specific textual feature determines the response of the reader, he conditions also a semiotic transfer without the loss of phenomenal substance, and thus is "a classical metaphysican".^[301] deMan attacks the Riffaterrean argumentation by pinpointing a basic opposition in it. He says the formal restrictions were accepted at the beginning in view of a stable interpretation as a result, so Riffaterre's final statements about the seesaw quality of interpretation in the *Semiotics of Poetry* question the use of the formal restrictions put forward at the very beginning.^[302] On Riffaterre's attempt to incorporate social contexts into interpreting a literary work, Rothfield remarks that instead of presuppositions one should take coherent discourses as intertexts, presuppositions being part of those.^[303] This way literary discourse can be integrated with different types of other discourses, losing its distinctive literariness.

Riffaterre has himself reacted to the extensive uses of the term. His distinction between aleatory and obligatory intertextuality has already shown his position. He makes the same distinction when contrasting hypertextuality to intertextuality.^[304] In his view for hypertextuality (his term for the extensive use of intertextuality) there is only the "limitation of language" when choosing compatible counterparts^[305] for a focused text, it is a reader generated loose web of free associations, and destroys the unity of the text. As an opposite of this, intertextuality as a

structured network of text-generated constraints on the reader's perceptions, is objective.

If we take *A Perfect Spy*, it would be possible to use either of the above concepts of intertextuality as a method of approaching it. However, the text appears to determine our choice, as it seems to be a classic example of one formally channelling readers' interpretations of it, because readers of *A Perfect Spy* are provided by specific instructions and examples on how to use *Simplicissimus* when reading. This way in this paper the concept of intertextuality seems justified to be used in the narrow sense, supposing an intertextual relation between the two texts as it is described by Riffaterre. Having collected the textual references on the methodology of decoding in section two, the third is a display of explicit textual similarities between the texts, structured the way references had prescribed them to be.

II. The Task

A Perfect Spy gives us a methodology of deciphering, as is quoted at the beginning of the introduction. However, there is not only that kind of decoding which is possible to be exercised in the case of the text of the novel. There are actual references made in the text that supply a list of concerns to be dealt with when comparing the two books, and also passages on the different possibilities of how to make use of the analogies found.

When codebook *Simplicissimus* is mentioned in *A Perfect Spy*, in most cases there is also a comment saying in what respect it is important. The comments here are displayed in the chronological order of the novel. The first appearance of *Simplicissimus* then is when Axel gives it to Pym in Switzerland, noting that it provides an answer to why Carlsbad does not exist any more (p. 246). Next it is mentioned, Pym and Axel are deciding that this book is going to be the first subject of their studies in German, because it teaches that "the world is a mad place getting madder by the moment, with everything that appeared right almost certainly wrong" (p. 266). In Oxford Pym has the opportunity to express his opinion of Grimmelshausen. He writes a paper arguing that the poet has "marred his work with popular moralising and undermined his validity by fighting on both sides of the Thirty Years War," and that his obsession with false names casts doubt on authorship (p. 340). The next explicit remark mentions the book as an unpaid bill (p. 354). When Pym meets Axel next, the book serves as a means of identifying Pym's position to Axel, that he still remembers its teaching (p. 462). When Axel presents a file with "chickenfood" material, and he comments that it is better than Grimmelshausen, he is referring to the teaching on appearances again (p. 466). Finally *Simplicissimus* serves as a trace in the investigation of Pym's disappearance (p. 159). The tasks in connection with *Simplicissimus* are then to find out about Carlsbad, the comments on the world's quality, its duplicitous nature, the moralising of the writer, his allies, his authorship, and the trace of the book in Pym's disappearance; and connect the findings to *A Perfect Spy*.

The reader is also informed on how it is possible to comb the codebook for answers, thus use it as a communication device, and among others can find the description of an applicable method. Mary displays the recovery of a note from a book, but this procedure is not exploitable for readers. Neither is the way Pym employs, quoted in the introduction, as the exact process of subtracting and converting (which alphabet?), and specific coded sentences are not available. The general description of the procedure the American expert gives seems to be more applicable. When he has not fully revealed the code yet, he speaks of a communication practice based on analytical method:

We looked in particular for non-random texts that would serve as base keys for transposition ... we at once began to detect a progression in the structure. Right now it's still algebra. But it's there. It's a logical linguistic progress. Maybe it's a piece of Shakespeare. Maybe it's a Hottentot nursery rhyme. But there is a pattern emerging that is based upon a continuous text of some such analogue. And we feel -- maybe it's a little mystical -- that the analogue is, well, like the bond between the field and base. We see it as having almost human identity. All we need is one word. ... Then we'll break those messages wide open. (p. 312)

The method seems ridiculous for the British spymaster Nigel, but when the *Simplicissimus* bookcode is run across the transmissions, the results are positive. I think the reader of *A Perfect Spy* is to run the bookcode through the text of the novel itself, trying to find analogues, to break open some of the messages suggested.

III. The Search

What freedom has he found so suddenly that he cannot share it with us? (p. 496)

Provided by a list of topics to be consulted in Grimmelshausen, what we need to do is to find some analogues between the novels in connection with the problems posed. The topics are the ones listed in the previous section.

The first problem is the end of Carlsbad. Carlsbad ceased to exist by the time Axel meets Pym in *A Perfect Spy*. Carlsbad was Axel's hometown, and its territory had been possessed by several countries in its history. First it was Austrian, then German, finally Chechoslovakian. Simpicissimus, I think, lays the foundations of Carlsbad, a Saurbrunnen (sour fountain), with the stone he got as a present during his miraculous journey to lake Mummel. He had intended to do so in order to heal people with the water and also to settle and make his living there, but he was prevented from this and lost his hope there "habe ich alle meine Hoffnung daselbst verloren" (*II. 166*).^[306] The circumstances of the act of founding the town are incidental, unmotivated, even disliked and are kept in secret by the peasants around. This way the act of foundation foreshadows the later history of the town, being the subject of diverse external forces repressing its original features.

The second problem to be discussed is the analogously mad and duplicitous quality of the world

described in *Simplicissimus* and *A Perfect Spy*. For *Simplicissimus* the opinion "nichts Bestandigers in der Welt ist als die Unbeständigkeit selbst" (I. 240) is a basic principle. This idea is found in *A Perfect Spy* as "anything written in living memory is unsound" (p. 340). The difference is that Pym speaks of written memory instead of 'anything in this world'. A variation of the principle actualised to persons is "Hatte ich aber keinen so ansehnlichen Freund gehabt, so ware alle meine Taten strafwürdig gewesen" (II. 48) in *Simplicissimus*, and "It's not what you say, it's who you say it to" (p. 464) in *A Perfect Spy*. As a practical consequence drawn from the above ideas, *Simplicissimus* has learnt that "schwarz sei weiss und weiss sei schwarz; daher kam es, dass ich ihm in der erste alles und aufs letzte gar nichts mehr glaubte" (I. 80) he cannot believe all that others say. This surfaces in *A Perfect Spy*, when the British spies comment on theories: "if you run any succession of coincidences through a computer, you'll find that everything looks possible and most things highly likely" (p. 416). There appears to be a basic common concern for the objectively uncomprehensible quality of the world in both novels.

The next step is to see the popular moralising elements found in them. *Simplicissimus* is obviously occupied with the question of redemption, describes a deep tension between earthly and spiritual necessities, ponders a lot on the nature of time, all popular themes for the literary baroque.^[307] On the other hand, Pym's moralising on redemption seems to derive from the ideological uncertainties of *his* own era, the second half of the twentieth century. The common idea of luck in both books is as it follows "wann das Glück einen stürzen will,

so hebt es ihn zuvor in alle Höhe, und der gütige Gott lasset auch einen jeden vor seinem Fall so treulich warnen" (I. 284) and that "there's a spell of Paradise before every Hell" (p. 442) The position of the soul in this situation in *Simplicissimus* is a potentia to be filled, "der Intellektus sei alls potentia, werde nichts in actum gebracht als durch die scientiam ... oder Übung die Perfektion der Seelen, welche für sich selbst überall nichts on sich habe" (I. 28), which can have a sylleptic relation to the word "potential" in the conversation of Mary and Axel (p. 497), this way suggesting that Pym's soul has been taught the wrong way. In *Simplicissimus* the reason for the damnation of the soul in most cases is "Dann dass die meiste Menschen verdammt werden ist die Ursach, dass sie nicht gewusst haben was sie gewesen und was sie werden können oder werden müssen." (I. 35), which marks Pym's marriage and joining the Firm as phases of his damnation, because they are not the best things Pym can imagine for himself to do: "we end up what we do second best" (p. 532), he comments. The end of the process in *Simplicissimus* is "ewige Verdammnus" (II. 150). It is possible that God comes and puts an end to the world as a result of human wickedness (II. 152). This idea of end may account for the description of Pym's behaviour, who "waits for God to come" (p. 595), probably as a result of his attempt to unveil "word for word the truth" (p. 36) on his past practices. In *Simplicissimus* the protagonist lives in hermitage and hopes for forgiveness, while Pym commits suicide and excludes himself from grace.

The following problem set by *A Perfect Spy* is that of betrayal. The analogues belonging here are narrative rather than textual. The poet Grimmelshausen is said to

have undermined his validity by fighting on both sides in the Thirty Years War. Pym is a soldier of the Cold War, for more than thirty years. Simplicissimus worked for the Germans and the Swedes alike in different periods of his life, Pym worked for the West and the East simultaneously. Both start out as innocent, then become the fools of their masters (Brotherhood with phoney tasks for Pym in Switzerland). Simplicissimus then proceeds to a position when he is called the evil, but all he gets to know about himself in the end is that he is "ein Ball des wandelbaren Glücks, ein Exemplar der Veränderung und ein Spiegel der Unbeständigkeit des menschlichen Wesens" (p. II. 269). Pym is not explicitly described as evil, the word "bastard" used in connection with him, perhaps only in his own mind and writing, (p. 292, p. 397) is the most derogatory epithet of his in the book. He cannot be described more closely than being a "searcher" (p. 498) for love (p. 422), pilgrim with Axel (p. 562) and the hero of the fable (p. 555). The history of the protagonists of the two books both reveal individuals not being able to find themselves stable role in their lives.

Their ability to settle and decide by their own will only comes at the end of their lives, for Simplicissimus when he does not return to the world from his island, for Pym when he escapes. What prevents them beforehand is a succession of external influences shaping them. For Simplicissimus the first such influence is his father, the hermit, who shows him an example of holy life turning away from earthly vices, and teaches him to read and write. Pym's father also gives a pattern to be followed by his son, as he is a creator of phoney companies and enterprises, ruining the lives of others. When he dies, Pym declares himself free (p. 30, 161) to decide to

escape. On *Simplicissimus* another significant effect is exercised by the scribe of his first lord. He is the one who informs him on the impossibility of black-and-white evaluations, and the power of writing that conveys the work of an "Arm im Kopf, der solche Arbeit alles, was er aus dem Tintenfass herauslaugen begehre verrichten müsse" (p. I. 80). This position in Pym's story is taken by Lippie, who teaches him to write and warns him to acquire knowledge in his head to promote himself with (p. 125). On *Simplicissimus* still another effect is made by his only friend, Herzbruder, with whom he shares his plight and fortune, caters for him if sick, goes with him to Switzerland on pilgrimage. The position of the friend is divided in Pym's story, as for Pym Herzbruder's name is echoed in *Brotherhood*, his story in *Axel*. *Simplicissimus* does not betray his friend Herzbruder, but Pym does both of them. This way for Pym the world, apart from being unstable, is also predetermined, "paying" (p. 474), making up for the original debt of betraying *Axel*.

The next topic to consider is the uncertainty of authorship in the two texts. As Pym accused Grimmelshausen, his authorship is questioned by his frequent use of false names. What false names Pym's paper presumably alludes to are those Grimmelshausen adopted for signing the different books of *Simplicissimus*. The first five books of *Der Abendteurliche Simplicissimus Teusch* are written to have been written by Melicher Sternfels von Fuchsaim, the last by German Schleifheim von Sulsfort, who on the last page of the *Continuatio* (book 6) is rewritten to be Samuel Greifson von Hirschfeld. What is more, on the cover of the early edition (that we should use) there is not the name

Grimmelshausen, but a pseudonym created from the letters of it.^[308]

In *A Perfect Spy* there is an abundance of false names for the protagonist, too, but these are not the names of the writers of different chapters. Pym has his worknames, names of towns, for Axel he is Sir Magnus (which can be an ironic version of *Simplicissimus*, a magnification and the same aristocratic title). However, the authorship can be questioned here, too. It is the fact that the events are narrated from points of views different from Pym's that makes authorship uncertain. However, there is a reminder of Grimmelshausen, on the cover of the book there is the name Le Carré, a pseudonym. But in *A Perfect Spy* the identity of the author is not questioned by incongruities of using names, but by the way narration is carried out.

The method *A Perfect Spy* is written with undermines the validity of its authorship, which in turn is closely related to *Simplicissimus*' method. Both books include foreign texts. In *Simplicissimus* the final news of the protagonist at the end of book six are told by Joan Cornelissen von Harlem, while in the case of Pym not only the ending, but whole chapters are told by another narrator, and even the passages about him are not certain to have been written by him, as the third person singular speech can easily be shifted to a point of view different from his (p. 172, p. 209, etc.). Also, in both texts there are letters, documents included to illustrate the narration. A third variant is when specific quotations from specific texts are used. In *Simplicissimus* there is a tendency to show off with the narrator's erudition, as is the stylistic feature of baroque^[309], but also there is the inclusion of a Guevara text^[310] as the final chapter of book V, which

stands for an explanation to why *Simplicissimus* wants to go on pilgrimage. The tendency to give the answer to the question 'why?' by the way of an intertext features *A Perfect Spy*, too. Here there is only one line saying "Goethe has an answer to why" (p. 351), the explanation presumably being the line "In the beginning was the deed" (p. 351) from *Faust*^[311], which is also backed by repeating the sentence in the form of "in the beginning was the spy" (p. 478). The deed of the spy, betrayal is thus defined as a point of origin.

The Perfect Spy is rich in referring to an intertext in the form of proper names and also by explicit allusions like in the case of *Faust* (and *Simplicissimus*). Proper names originate from sources either fictitious or not. In the first place, Pym is also the name of the protagonist of Edgar Allen Poe's *Arthur Gordon Pym*, who is a searcher and narrator like Magnus Pym, escaped from home and is concerned with finding the answers to some enigmas he encountered on his way. He also dies before finishing his story and someone else has to finish it instead of him. The analogues put emphasis on the oncoming fate of our protagonist and the nature of his problem. As another such intertext, Axel's codename Poppy may refer to the American Legion memorial poppy, a medal of remembering the 1st World War and the Americans who died during it. The memorial poppy was worn by Woodrow Wilson in honour of the American war dead on November 11th, 1921, when an unknown American soldier killed in France in the first world war was buried.^[312] Wilson did not attend the ceremony, but took a bouquet of poppies.^[313] The episode when Axel sent a bouquet of poppies for Pym's first wedding may be an allusion to this

instance (p. 537). When naming Axel's and Pym's first common operation 'Greensleeves', the relation between the two was characterised by the text of the song. Brotherhood's workname Marlow may refer to Chandler's sceptic knight, detective Marlowe, who starts out on his investigations without a hope of solution/salvation at the end. This relationship adds to the characterization of Brotherhood and his methods when investigating Pym's case. Explicit remarks on Proust (p. 532) and Kafka (p. 539 - 40) emphasize Pym's concerns with the notion of time and directing his own internal trial. The appearance of Ford's *The Good Soldier* beside *Simplicissimus* on Pym's writing table make us consider the similarities of the former with *A Perfect Spy*, being an autobiography, the story of a life of betrayal.

The significance of all the above listed intertextual relationships revealed from the two text Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* and Le Carré's *A Perfect Spy* is attempted to be evaluated in the following chapter. So far only that is obvious, that the method we decided to use at the beginning of the paper does not seem to work the way we had expected. Although we had set out with the intention of tracing back the relationship of two texts according to the instructions in one of them, the method not only added to a fuller understanding of the relation of the two texts. It also made us pay attention to other, "aleatory intertexts". The prescriptions *A Perfect Spy* supplied for how to use Grimmelshausen when trying to understand Le Carré better revealed one syllepsis, two proper name relations, several textual similarities, but also narrative analogies and the allusions on relationships to further books. We had not expected to meet these latter ones when starting out with the method of intertextuality

in the Riffaterrean sense, as these features are said to be those of the extensive ideas on intertextuality. Still, it seems they would be applicable details to a coherent understanding of the Le Carré text if looked in detail.

IV. Ideas

"Whose initials have you been carving now?" (p. 424)

In the above section those aspects of *Simplicissimus* that *A Perfect Spy* called attention to were considered and this way not only textual, but also narrative and further literary analogues were collected. The possible significance of these similarities and the differences is attempted to be detailed now.

The fate of Carlsbad as a city no more existing is explained in Grimmelshausen by describing its foundation. It was to be a healing spot for the benefit of visitors and possessor, but its existence was kept secret in order not to cause annoyance to the surrounding peasants. Later on it did become a bath, but at the same time was a subject of different powers possessing it, as a result of which as Carlsbad it ceased to exist. The story of Carlsbad is parallel to that of Pym, who intently wants to hurt noone, but his original drives are put out by multiply control over him, and finally he as Pym does not exist any more, but ends up writing about Pym in third person singular.

The position of Carlsbad calls attention to the role of towns in *A Perfect Spy* in general, which complements our understanding of Pym. Vienna is characterised as a divided city, much like Carlsbad: "everyone had a piece of Vienna to play with, the inner city under quadrupartite control" (p. 438). Berlin is also enrolled among the divided cities (p. 438). As a further step, Pym himself is identified as a divided town (p. 438), his inner city obviously under multiply control. Pym sees towns as city-kingdoms (p. 475) each with a different ruler and an own world.^[314] That in turn explains his choice of worknames, which are always names of towns (Colonel Manchester, Mr. Hull, Mr. Gullworth, Mr. Sanderstead, Mr. Canterbury) signifying the worlds in which he is equally at home, the change of names standing for signs of a change of control in him, as in the case of Carlsbad. He as a city is being seiged by three enemies (p. 327). Against the siegers he has a fantasy to be "safe inside the city walls" (p. 338), at once refuted by experience. This fantasy of Pym explains the double value of the sentence "a city has found a home" (p. 33) when he/the city arrives at Farleigh Abbot to write his story. The idea of finding a safe home inside there is questioned throughout the book, first as walls do not give shelter, second as later Brotherhood says, not knowing whether the words are his or those of Pym, that home "is a series of concentric fantasies all with the same truth at the center" (p. 418, 425). This idea echoes the pattern of Carlsbad and Pym himself, standing for one referent but being named in different ways, being questioned in the process.

The individual 'Pym' seems to have ceased to exist, as has Carlsbad. The divided quality of Pym's figure

questions his identity. He seems to be someone the core of whom has disintegrated. In other words he is a subject, who can only get an idea of himself by some fantasies, but his preference of the fantasies he chooses for this has no value whatsoever.^[315] A subject like this has no inner defence system, so is not defended from choosing fantasies which (from a non-subject point of view) are wrong, and can vary without an end.^[316]

The mad and pretentious quality of the world seems to be the reason for all that happened to Carlsbad and Pym. The reason for this quality of the world, the absence of ultimate values, is symptomatised in *Simplicissimus* already. Facts are not facts as can be turned upside down and their value depends on the audience. In *A Perfect Spy* this verdict is reformulated by adding that it is written memory that is unsound, thus questioning the reliability of *Simplicissimus* and in turn that of his own, too. The remark for "everything happened before"(p. 343) may stand for a disillusionment, the realisation that in such an environment there is no starting point, thus no originality, either.

The popular moralising elements in the texts are comments on the quality of the world they show. *Simplicissimus* fights on both sides in the war of religions, but at the time he cares little of consequences. However, the situation induces him to ponder on the instability of the world, describe a tension of opposite drives in himself. When he identifies himself as the ball of Fortune, he is actually using a traditional image of the baroque to comment on instability.^[317] His experience shows him that not even peace ends the madness of the world, so he creates his own type of faith at the end of his

life. Pym is a commentator of instability, too, but he is also involved in a vain quest for 'truth'. He takes part in the Cold War, spends more than thirty years by being a double agent for communist and imperialist ideologies, feels no doubt about it, but knowing *Simplicissimus* he is aware all the way through that at the end he will have to sit down and give an account. Finally he writes the account not for God, but for Axel and Brotherhood and his son, Tom, trying to tell the truth. However, the victims of his life also give their verbal accounts to Brotherhood and always have new elements to add to Pym's story. The included documents have this function, too. Together they make an impression that no final version is possible to be produced. ^[318] This preoccupation with the "circularities of knowledge and experience" is a typical theme for the postmodern. ^[319] The idea of *A Perfect Spy* as containing popular moralising elements of the postmodern can be argued for *further* ^[320] during the review of the following two topics, betrayal and the role of writing.

Betrayal, which for *Simplicissimus* was a remedable sin, for Pym is a basic pattern of life. ^[321] Although before his hermitage *Simplicissimus* betrays his leaders, his own decisions to mend his ways, to beware of women etc., he does not betray his friend Herzbruder, and finally is able to live a life appealing to God. On the other hand, Pym's story is a "lifetime of betrayal" (p. 163), that of his father, his wives, his Brotherhood and Axel, too. He tries to make his life be paying for this, but his escape shows he could not make up for his previous actions, his escape is the betrayal of almost all the pretensions he held up till then. However, he cannot destroy them all as he is Mr. Canterbury there, one role again if our decoding of the

names was right. His hermitage in Farleigh Abbot only results in a novel, but not a possibility for a withdrawal from the world. For *Simplicissimus* there is a place to hide in, a position to be an outsider, while Pym can only get a new cover for the time of writing. ^[322]

The comparison of the protagonists as writers of the books they are characters in gives further arguments for the ideological difference between them. *Simplicissimus* has been writing throughout his life. He had already written actual books by the time he became a hermit (*Black and White, Joseph*). Pym has been planning to write his autobiographical novel since he read *Simplicissimus*, but has only been able to produce scraps, that were not entirely his own. He worked by collecting "matrix" sentences from literary works to be included in his (p. 73, 151). The little we know about what he wrote in Greece is that chapter eight of his book was titled "Overdue Bills" (p. 162), and thus was a reaction to Grimmelshausen (unpaid one, p. 354). As opposed to *Simplicissimus*', Pym's undertaking is not completed and is *functionally* plagiarist. ^[323]

What purpose the protagonists intend to achieve with their book reveals another characteristic difference between them. With what he writes in Farleigh Abbot, Pym has the purpose of writing "word for word the truth" (p. 36) but this intention is questioned as in the course of the novel truth proves to be the core of "concentric *fantasies*" (p. 418, 425., emphasis mine). *Simplicissimus* had the purpose to teach a lesson to readers (*II. 201*), but his occasional meta- or obligatory repetitive remarks inform us that he writes without the intention to be factual (*II. 219*), and that he filters his account as for what effect

he wishes to create (*II. 51*). Pym makes no such remarks. He leaves it for the reader to contrast the perspectives of the other narrators and the documents with his. *Simplicissimus* has an explicit general purpose to achieve, while Pym's story is told for the sake of being told at last, the reader left with instructions on the task of deciphering, which informs about the consciousness of the text.

It is not only the purpose of the texts produced that is different, but also the function they fulfil in their writers' lives, providing another argument. *Simplicissimus* is taught by the scribe that if you have a hand in your head, you can work with that through writing (*I. 80*), which thus proves to be a constructive act. For Pym the knowledge in the head is also an aim (p. 125), but for him this free ability to create is spoilt, as "Peggy Wentworth is the knowledge in my head made strident, a sin I can never expiate" (p. 391) he says, due to his father's heritage on him. *Simplicissimus* hopes for redemption (*II. 194*), for Pym the aim is "to put the record right" (p. 425), "do it once and die" (p. 355, 397). This way the difference in functions can be said to be that *Simplicissimus* has some hope for being able to create his own redemption by contemplating on and writing about his life, while Pym's ability for that is spoilt by his surroundings and writing can have no special aim to achieve, but to be the final in the row of his versions of reality.^[324]

The differences between the fate of the two writers in the texts are also signs of the ideological difference. In *Simplicissimus* the false names in the text make us ask who the author really is, von Sulsfort, von Hirschfeld; or in the case of the old edition someone the letters of whose

name are mixed from the name 'Grimmelshausen'^[325]; or Grimmelshausen himself. In *A Perfect Spy* the the same question has to be asked referring to Pym and to Le Carré. The author may be Pym, who writes his own autobiography, can be Le Carré, or can be David Cornwell, who uses the alias Le Carré for writing spy fiction. The figure of the author is strongly questionable in both texts. The difference between the two is the fate of the protagonist, i. e. that Pym commits suicide at the end of the writing process and knows he will all along, and his only aim is to produce a final version of himself. *Simplicissimus* does not die at the end of the writing process, with writing he has the aim of being forgiven.

The difference of the writer being remembered or killed by writing is that of the context in which s/he is. For the Greeks s/he was remembered by the product. In "today's culture" writing is seen as a sacrifice of the life of the author.^[326] The idea of the death of the author in Barthes' makes possible the birth of the reader, the attempt to fix subjectivity in writing erases that subjectivity, constructs a new one.^[327] Other consequences of the death of the author is the creation of the author-function in his place, which basically turns out to be the readers' creation^[328], as Barthes has also said. Then, we should conclude that von Sulsfort, von Hirschfeld and/or Grimmelshausen as authors, recontextualised in the postmodern had to be killed through writing, to fit the new ideology.

The above statement *alone* could be justified only if we had been consequent with regardig only *Simplicissimus* as an intertext for *A Perfect Spy*. However, also the other possible sources of influence that have been

listed before intensify it. The figure of Pym being a searcher of enigmas, the original deed determining his life as a presupposition from Goethe, the investigation being an interior one, like in Kafka, being a soldier of beliefs. All these "aleatory" intertexts in fact add a new detail to the overall picture of *A Perfect Spy* and do not make it inconsistent. This means that in the case of *A Perfect Spy* the extensive use of the term intertextuality could just as well have been applied as the one we used; the text allows for that.^[329]

V. Scales

Don't look for the truth about him. The truth is what we gave him of ourselves. (p. 248)

At the beginning we set out to investigate into the nature of the *Simplicissimus* - *A Perfect Spy* relationship and to find out about the focused text channelling the readers response to it.

The relationship of the two texts, in spy terminology, has turned out to be that of the communication device and the code cloth inserted into it. The device is the whole text of *A Perfect Spy*, including cover stories and also calling attention to code cloth Grimmelshausen. What is to be learnt from finding it is, in turn, not a specific message, but a trace to be used when investigating Pym's disappearance, a help to *disentangle* him as someone in a

situation where he became devoid of his own individuality.

The prescriptions *A Perfect Spy* provided us with how to read it are, to use the spy terminology again, parts of the game *paperchasing*. This is a method of how to make encounter with someone you do not trust (p. 491). Precisely it means you make an appointment with someone, but when you go to meet him, you only find a message that informs you how to go on to unearth him. This is the pattern of the reading technique we were made to employ in the case of *A Perfect Spy*, being instructed from one book to the other. It seems that the method of actual signs in the book for an intertext Riffaterre created for us to use in this case gives room for several intertexts for one focused text.

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